

# LANGUAGE

## and Society

No. **9** Spring 1983

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## Editor's Note

No longer more English than England, Australia has been through a "cultural revolution", and linguistic diversity is now an acknowledged fact of life Down Under. Albert Jaime Grassby, himself a leading "revolutionary" for a crucial decade, turns this page of history for us to read.

Bringing us back to Canada, linguist Raymond LeBlanc looks at tests that assess the fluency of candidates for work and that may shape their careers, for better or for worse. Are these tests all they are cracked up to be? he asks.

Who hasn't heard the old story — "Well, I learned Parisian French in school, but of course that's no good in this country." In a good-humoured account of an evening with some Anglophone friends, Quebec author Roch Carrier says "Nonsense" and spells out why.

Georg K. Weissenborn traces the development of German-Canadian communities back to the 17th century. He describes their present situation and examines the challenges they face as they look to the future.

Finally, we ask you to fill in a questionnaire. We want to know what you expect and what you need from *Language and Society*. Your answers will help us serve you even better in future issues.

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*The myth of Australia's British heritage is just that — a myth. The reality is multicultural. Since a historic turnaround in policy a decade ago, federal and state governments have recognized and even fostered cultural diversity instead of repressing it.*



**Albert Jaime Grassby** has just completed a seven-year term as Australia's Commissioner of Community Relations. A former member of Parliament and minister of Immigration, he writes with an insider's knowledge of linguistic and cultural developments in Australia. His publications include *The Morning After*, a study of racism in politics.

## The newest people on earth

ALBERT JAIME GRASSBY

**A**ustralia is one of the great cosmopolitan nations of the world with a population of 15 million made up of 140 different ethnic inputs, speaking 90 different languages at home and practising 80 different religions. These facts of demography have brought about a cultural revolution which began in the early 1970s and continues today with a fine promise of bringing about more permanent changes in Australian society than were achieved in China by another much more publicised cultural revolution.

While the cultural revolution has brought about changes in almost every sphere of Australian life, a key to change is the whole approach to education in a multicultural society and the recognition of the languages and cultures of the nation.

Like Canada, Australia shared a common background as a colonial province of the British Empire; like Canada, we were subject to assimilationist policies based on Anglo-conformity for all of our history as a European settlement. The myth of homogeneity, a keystone of assimilationist policy, was maintained by the production of a figure that Australia was 98 per cent "British", which it was in political terms but has never been in ethnic terms. This figure was brought about by counting as "British", all Australian-born, regardless of background, all naturalized citizens and all migrants from the 50 countries of the then British Empire.

Children were taught that Captain Cook "discovered" Australia (he was, admittedly, the last of the great navigators to come here); that "British" convicts, explorers and settlers pioneered a new nation peacefully, ignoring at least six pitched battles, 20,000 casualties in various struggles and the extirpation of nearly the entire founding nations.

In this atmosphere, a knowledge of language other than English was considered almost as an act of hostility to the country; Aboriginal people and their languages were supposed to die out; people with a first language other than English were expected to either be ashamed of themselves or to keep out of sight.

The basic "cultural" teaching in public school systems was associated with British royalty and the glories of the British Empire. Languages described as "foreign" were expected to be learned as an academic exercise by the select few taking university courses. They were not designed to be used for conversational intercourse but to pass examinations, and were restricted almost exclusively to Latin, Ancient Greek, French and German. This was considered quite respectable and acceptable because these were the choices offered in English private schools.

The largest migration into any country in this century, on a per capita basis, changed the face of Australia in the past 25 years. Australians today are the newest people on earth, with 40 per cent of the population the products of migration and with the largest overseas-born work force in the world outside Israel.

### In 1973 — a new doctrine

It was in recognition of the great changes in Australian society and also of the suppressed diversity of previous years that, in 1973, in a paper prepared for the Cairnmillar Institute's Symposium Strategy 2000: "Australia for Tomorrow", the new doctrine of the multicultural society was proclaimed on behalf of the then government. It was taken up as a policy by the state governments of Australia and continued by the present national administration. It was part of Australia's quest for independence and a new political and cultural awareness of itself. It followed the great break with the traditional "melting pot" theory of the United States of America, where assimilation over three centuries has wiped out languages, cultures, heritages and created tensions which led cities to burn and jails to fill. In the decade of the 1970s, both the United States and Canada abandoned assimilation and embraced for the first time the concept of a multicultural society.

Before reviewing the progress of the Australian cultural revolution in terms of language and culture, it is useful to compare the pre-revolutionary days in both countries. The two major ethnic inputs into Canada have been French and English and

there has always been, since Canadian federation in 1867, a recognition that there were at least two languages and two cultures.

Both Canada and Australia continued to share and practise common assimilationist policies. Speaking of Canada, historian Blair Neatby writes in a publication of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages:

"The early decades of the twentieth century were years [...] when loyalty to the British Empire was seen as a test of Canadian patriotism. This was the era of massive immigration, when group settlements of diverse ethnic and linguistic origins provoked concern about the cultural identity of the western region. The situation varied from province to province but an overall pattern can be seen. The English language is regarded as an instrument of assimilation or at least as a means of forging a community with a common language, and the public school becomes the institution which will impose this 'Anglo-conformity'."<sup>1</sup>

This is exactly the same as the situation in Australia, where the pressures for Anglo-conformity were greater and assimilation was pursued with near fanaticism which denied all but one group any validity at all. Cultural aggression in Australia was a fiercer product because of the background of the population. The Anglo-French clash in Canada resolved itself into at least a recognition of the valid existence of the French input.

#### The ethnic mix

The second largest component of the Australian population was not French but Irish. England and France have long been at peace and have been allies for most of the past 200 years. England and Ireland have been at war for the entire period and it is even now not resolved.

The Irish in Australia rebelled, fought and were defeated. They had no great and powerful presence to back up demands for recognition of their language, culture and religion. They were on their own in a British colony in Southeast Asia. It is only today that the Irish 25 per cent of the population

is recognized as making Australia more Irish in content than either the United States or Canada.

*The 25 per cent of the population of Irish origin is recognized as making Australia more Irish in content than either the United States or Canada.*

The next largest ethnic input was German; about 10 per cent of all Australians have a German connection. But two world wars effectively decimated the language and cultural programs and led to the statute books of Australia being littered with prohibitions under threat of fines or jail or both if the heinous crime of teaching in languages other than English was committed.

More than one million Australians have an Italian connection; Italian is the most widely spoken language in Australia after English. The Greek contribution is next with more than 600,000 and Greek is the second most widely spoken community language. In fact, Melbourne, Australia's second largest city, is the third largest Greek-speaking city in the world after Athens and Thessaloniki.

There are more Australians of Maltese birth or descent than there are in the Republic of Malta. However, in the days of Anglo-conformity they were registered as English-speaking British subjects and their identity has been so destroyed that we are planning a project in Malta to find out exactly how many came and when, because the Australian records are so inadequate.

The Asian component has been part of the history of Australia for many centuries. The people of Macassar established permanent links with North Australia for 600 years and contributed technology, language and babies in peace and goodwill.

The Chinese, mostly Cantonese, who have been described by one Australian

historian as the "Irish of China", formed the third largest ethnic input into eastern Australia in the last century. One quarter of Sydney's population at the turn of the century was Chinese. But after killing, persecution and the denial of permission to families to join breadwinners, the population dropped dramatically. Chinese-Australians were forced to adopt such a low profile that a distinguished Chinese-Australian barrister in the State of Victoria in the 1920s prohibited his family to speak Chinese or acknowledge anything but their English names. In another case, a Chinese merchant in Sydney at the turn of the century joined the Caledonians, wore a kilt and played cricket.

The Chinese today have emerged from the cultural ghetto and numbers have doubled in the past 20 years. The Chinese languages are now heard over radio and television and can be read again in Australian journals.

In all this flowering of culture, the most striking change has been in the recognition of the languages and cultures of Aboriginal Australians who make up about two per cent of the population. Nearly 150 years of warfare and two generations of paternalism to "smooth the pillow of the dying race" reduced the original 500,000, established in 574 nations speaking as many languages, to 50,000 a quarter of a century ago. Today, the prospects are for up to 500,000 Aboriginal Australians by the turn of the century.

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Cultural aggression in Australia was fiercer than in Canada and Anglo-conformity more uncompromising and all pervasive. The doctrine was one race, one language and the last massacre of Aboriginal people was in 1926, the year I was born.

So it had to be that Australia's cultural revolution must be rapid, extensive and intensive to avoid the tensions and the violence which are inevitable when today's generations clash over basic rights.

At the formal level in the federal sphere and in the States of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, there are ethnic units designed to recognize the multicultural nature of the society. The Office of the Commissioner for Community Relations has an obligation under law to see that all Australians have a right of access to their language and culture. Western Australia has appointed its first Ethnic Affairs Officer and Tasmania has given notice of a new development in this area. Queensland education is making considerable progress in new language and cultural programs.

*There are 100 newspapers printed in a dozen languages including, for the first time in 100 years, two newsletters in Chinese.*

#### The media respond

The cultural revolution has brought changes in the media. Broadcasting in Australia today in 52 languages goes on not only in Sydney and Melbourne but in Adelaide, (which in many ways was the pioneer), Perth, Canberra, Brisbane and Hobart. We also have regular broadcasts by Aboriginal people and communities.

There are 100 newspapers printed in a dozen languages including, for the first time in 100 years, two newsletters in Chinese. The English-language print media have also responded to the revolution by appointing Australia's first three Ethnic Affairs reporters. They work for newspapers in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. They have also included bilingual segments and, in contrast to the past, carried news in Italian of casualty lists from Italy when the devastating earthquake struck Friuli some two years ago.

A commitment by the national government to introduce ethnic television has been honoured and government multicultural television is transmitted in Sydney and Melbourne. Commercial television stations have moved into programs directed at Australians of Italian and Greek background. Commercial radio has halted its drift to unilingualism and programs in Italian and other languages which survived the desert years have continued.

Australian publishers have discovered that the school population of Australia has many different backgrounds and some 700,000 Australian children have enrolled in school with a first language other than English.

#### Education is the key

Following initiatives by the Office of the Commissioner for Community Relations every State in Australia and the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory have adopted the concept of multicultural education and have embarked on language and cultural programs. South Australia leads the way with nearly half its primary schools offering a second language to all students.

#### Ethnic breakdown of a typical inner city school\*

National origin	%**
Italian	40.0
Greek	17.8
Anglo-Saxon	16.0
Lebanese	7.5
Portuguese	2.15
Asian	1.7
Maltese	1.35
Yougoslav	1.35
Mauritian	.9
Pakistani	.45
Polish	.45
Guyanese	.45
Spanish	.45
Egyptian	.45

\* East Thornbury, a Melbourne suburb.

\*\*This table is the result of an estimate and the total of the percentages is not equal to 100.

*Commercial television stations have moved into programs directed at Australians of Italian and Greek background.*

They take the form of either language maintenance for children who already speak community languages, such as Greek and Italian, or classes for English-speaking children who are usually given a choice, in one case, because of their background, the Irish language.

In addition to these government school initiatives, the Catholic education system, which has between 25 and 30 per cent of all Australian children, has embarked on a wide range of multicultural programs. Further in this area, there are about 100,000 Australian children studying in 30 languages in ethnic schools, which are held afternoons, evenings or weekends.

Looking at Aboriginal education, there have been many recent initiatives designed to introduce all Australian children to Aboriginal culture and, at the same time, ensure that Aboriginal children have adequate access to their own languages and cultures.

I always believed when I was Australian Commissioner of Community Relations that the classrooms of the nation could be the crucibles of tolerance. On taking up the appointment, under the Racial Discrimination Act, 1975, I set education with emphasis on language and culture, as the first priority of the Office in seeking to combat bigotry and racial discrimination.

In pursuance of that objective, a series of conferences have been held in all Australian States to enlist the support of both State, Catholic and independent school authorities for the adoption of new programs of language and culture appropriate to polyethnic and multicultural classrooms.

Referring to language as a tool to combat discrimination, I made the point

in my six Annual Reports to the Parliament of Australia that experience in those years has shown that primary schools which have adopted second language and culture programs for all their pupils, regardless of background, have achieved the best community relations.

Various approaches are used in initiating bilingual programs; in some cases children are taught in their first language up to Year 3 while concurrently studying English; in others, English remains the general language of instruction from Day 1 of school life, but community or other languages are introduced immediately.

#### Support from the parents

When I was Commissioner, my Office carried out a survey of parents and teachers organizations throughout Australia as to their attitudes to second language teaching at the primary level to ensure that:

- students do not lose this heritage;
- students are not divorced from parents by the absence of a common language;
- concept formation is not impeded by the student having only a smattering of both English and the home language, with no adequate knowledge of either.

The overwhelming majority favoured second language teaching at the primary level, where research indicates language learning takes place more easily and more lastingly than at secondary school.

The Australian scene presents an exciting array of language initiatives. Increasing numbers of students in primary schools are taking community languages, ethnic schools are increasing in numbers and in enrolments and a new bridge has been built between some primary schools and ethnic schools by what is known as the "insertion" ethnic school model.

Insertion programs are run by community-based ethnic organizations in collaboration with registered day schools. While funded under the Schools' Commission Ethnic Schools Program, such programs differ radically from after-hours ethnic schools.

Insertion programs cater to multi-ethnic rather than linguistically homogenous clientele since they take place during the normal school curriculum. In Victoria, 28,000 primary school students learn Italian in insertion programs, operated principally by the Italian Assistance Association. Approximately 70 per cent of participating students are not of Italian origin.

Clearly, insertion programs offer a great potential for fostering the teaching of community languages for all. Other benefits include the promotion of inter-ethnic co-operation and improved teaching methods within the existing educational setting.

#### Aboriginals — a special case

For the first time in 200 years, Aboriginal languages and culture are being taught in Australian schools. Although only two per cent of the Australian population, the Aboriginal people have special claims as members of the founding nations of Australia. Their 40,000 years residence represents the oldest continuing civilization on earth.

*The school population of Australia has many different backgrounds and some 700,000 Australian children have enrolled in school with a first language other than English.*

New South Wales, the oldest and most populous State, has recently adopted a program for Aboriginal education, drawn up by the Aboriginal people themselves in conjunction with the State Department of Education.

The main points of the program are to ensure that all schools deal adequately with Aboriginal Australia in terms of history, culture and heritage. The object of this is to ensure that non-Aboriginal children know and understand the background of the first Australians, to combat the old bigotries and stereotypes which divide the communities.

An equally important objective is to ensure that Aboriginal children are made aware of their own background and are given, by the program, a self-esteem based on the history of their people and on identity which has been so sorely battered by the defeats of the past, racist textbooks and bias for most of our history in reporting or describing events associated with Aboriginal people.

The State of Victoria has sought to bring about new initiatives through the Victorian Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, a voluntary body, working closely with Aboriginal education services, a division of the Victorian Education Department. The latter comprises twenty staff members, all but two Aboriginal, and fifty Aboriginal teacher aides work in the schools. Their work includes home/school liaison involving the Aboriginal community in the school, presenting or assisting with Aboriginal studies, developing specialist materials for such courses and helping Aboriginal children with their studies.

Aboriginal Education Services also employ seven resource teachers who travel constantly to cover the State. They advise Aboriginal communities on educational matters and act generally as liaison officers for communities, helping them develop along lines of their own choosing. The resource personnel also teach in special after-school programs.

There are now 11 Victorian communities with their own Aboriginal education committees or co-operatives concerned with education, mostly made up of people who themselves were provided with very limited schooling but who are determined that their children enjoy more equal opportunities. The Aboriginal input into education in Victoria is considerable, much of it from voluntary or low-paid educators who advise on suitable materials, give talks in the schools and take part in in-service training. They give assistance to teachers on how to deal with racism and present Victorian Aboriginal culture as a living thing, with its differences in family relationships, different attitudes to material possessions and totally different history from that of whites.

Transition camps are run before children enter secondary school in recognition of the fact that they are likely to be below average in literacy and numeracy skills by that time.

Though there is an immense amount of activity in Aboriginal education in Victoria, much of it of an innovative kind and carried out by Aboriginal people committed to their task, under-achievement is still more the rule than the exception. It is not known precisely what causes this, but poverty and ill-health are undoubtedly contributing factors. Figures compiled by the Fitzroy Health Service indicate a high morbidity rate and a low level of formal education and skill among adults. Forty per cent of the entire population of the Health Service area were found to have primary education only, 44 per cent were either unskilled or semi-skilled, while 27 per cent were receiving pensions of one sort or another. Only 18 per cent were skilled and there were no professionals.

This low socio-economic status combines with prejudiced attitudes to make it difficult for Aboriginal children to achieve their potential. In order to overcome such massive problems, a large number of Aboriginal adults are working ceaselessly to provide better opportunities for their children.

#### **One school's experience**

An outline of language and cultural initiatives in various Victorian schools epitomizes much of the innovative work being carried out in Australia today. An example of work in the primary area is at Ferntree Gully Primary School with an Anglo-Australian school population of 88 per cent.

The school policy statement affirms the belief that "all children in all schools should participate in multicultural programs". These programs basically concern language and takes into account parental involvement and the use of community resources, thus relating directly to children and their families.

Parents and adults serve as guest speakers on the subject of their home country and the process of migration. They also assist with cooking, languages and handicrafts. In the course of these activities, children become aware of differences in value systems and also of the terminology to discuss differences and similarities, respect and tolerance. It has been observed that "the general tone of the school is obviously influenced by its exposure to the multicultural program's basic philosophy".

It was felt as a consequence that the General Studies course should be revised in its entirety and become a course on multicultural studies: "After seven years at Ferntree Gully Primary School, children will have a wide knowledge and understanding of the main cultural groups in our school, community and Australia".

#### **Secondary schools**

In taking an example of secondary schools in the Brunswick/Coburg area,



where Anglo-Saxons would be in a minority, a cluster of eight secondary schools has combined voluntarily to develop language programs. A survey undertaken in 1980 found that more than 90 per cent of parents were in favour of the teaching of community languages in state schools and of bilingual education. This included 80 per cent of English speakers, the general view of parents being that multiculturalism cannot be separated from the language through which it is learned. Formerly, bilingualism was seen, like working-class dialects, as a problem, so that English teaching tended to take place in a negative framework of deficit theory.

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Concern for community languages in this cluster of schools does not stop at their being taught in the classroom. Information is regularly sent to parents in their own language; meetings may be conducted entirely in Italian, for example, rather than being interpreted from the English. One school's newsletter contains, on the back of the sheet, community language items which are entirely parent-created rather than being translations of the English version.

Some technical schools have also been innovative in the multicultural area. One began the woodwork class in Years 7 and 8 with the making of a spaghetti machine which, given the composition of the classes, was particularly relevant. The same school sees to it that even mathematics teaching

*For the first time in 200 years, Aboriginal languages and culture are being taught in Australian schools.*

is multicultural: for example, by distributing to the students a notional \$100 which has to be changed on a trip around the world into and out of a number of different currencies.

A number of Victorian schools have language awareness programs at the primary level which involve teacher aides, home-school visits and parents. Five community languages may be taught in the one school in the form of greetings, simple language structures and the like. Bilingual children act as resource people and the opportunity is taken to learn about similarities and differences in language and cultural backgrounds. The Catholic Education Office has been an innovator in this regard and has managed to attract funding from the Schools Commission for a number of city and country programs encompassing all primary grades and including a limited number of secondary classes.

A big step forward has been taken by the launching in the State of Victoria of HODJA Publications Project at the Richmond Community Education Centre for the express purpose of producing publications for multicultural and multilingual education. Ideas are gleaned from teachers and community workers: school signs have already been produced in 26 languages and other posters in 28; several multicultural games are available and also an English/Vietnamese mathematics dictionary. The project is funded by the Australian Schools Commission as being "of national significance" and money from sales goes towards further production.

#### Problems remain

Despite all the inspiring things which are happening in the field of multicultural education in Victoria, there are still drawbacks and difficulties. One of these is the tendency for teachers

to think that multiculturalism is something nailed on to the general curriculum, separate and apart and that, provided one has a program entitled "Ethnic Studies", the rest of the curriculum can remain as it is.

Any number of children are still being educated for an Australia which does not exist: unilingual and unicultural.

Multiculturalism is still regarded by many as new and daringly different. Very few schools have an overall mul-

#### Distribution of the main Australian ethnic groups by mother tongue.<sup>1</sup>

Mother Tongue	Number of speakers
Afrikaans and English	12,655*
Albanian	1,380*
Arabic	34,612**
Armenian	4,800*
Bulgarian	1,421*
Czech and Slovak	16,602*
Danish	7,566*
Dutch	64,768**
English	11,446,000*
Estonian	5,313*
Fiji	4,015*
Finnish	10,359*
French	80,988**
German	183,644**
Greek	262,177**
Hungarian	19,618**
Italian	449,521**
Japanese	4,929*
Lettish	14,478*
Lithuanian	7,051*
Macedonian	16,693**
Malay	14,945**
Maltese	36,035**
Mandarin	29,903**
Norwegian	3,306*
Polish	62,945**
Portuguese	8,263**
Rumanian	4,662*
Russian	8,290**
Serbo-Croatian	26,964**
Sinhalese and Tamoul	9,091*
Slovak (see Czech)	—
Spanish	48,299**
Swedish	3,725*
Thai	1,004*
Tonga	448*
Turkish	14,731**
Ukrainian	17,585**
Yiddish	24,000*

<sup>1</sup> This table does not include the 260 Aboriginal languages of Australia. Of these, perhaps 150 to 200 may still be spoken today.

\* Statistical data from 1971.

\*\* Statistical data from 1976.

Source:

H. Kloss and G.D. McConnell, *Linguistic Composition of the Nations of the World, 4. Oceania*, Quebec City, Les Presses de l'université Laval, 1981.



multicultural policy, as distinct from a few programs which tend to be self-conscious and result in a teacher defining the ethnicity of students instead of allowing for self-identification.

Australian education systems need to define just what is a multicultural teacher, and to provide special training and a career path; then no doubt inter-

est would increase and the whole field would take a big step forward. As things are, schools wishing to mount a special program are dubious about their ability to attract a specially trained teacher and about the possibility of attracting funds for more than a year's duration. This applies to primary school language teachers. Essential for continuity is a defined career path for

primary school language teachers of both community and other languages, and of English as a second language. This battle is currently being fought, with a remarkable unanimity being demonstrated by teachers and parents alike.

1. *Language and Society*, No. 1, Autumn 1979, p. 25.

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*These days, passing a second-language test can be crucial to promotion, job security — even the right to pursue an occupation. But the value of these tests is often questioned. What is a good language test?*



After university studies in Canada and France, Raymond LeBlanc became director of the Centre for Second Language Learning at the University of Ottawa in 1970. He is author or co-author of a number of works and teaching materials including *Le français international*, a method for teaching French as a second language, and *Introduction à la linguistique générale*.

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## Moderation in all things

RAYMOND LEBLANC

Second language testing is currently a complex and somewhat chaotic field, its test designers being torn between a 40-year old psychometric tradition and a desire to explore new and uncharted waters.

In this article, we shall very briefly try to place matters in perspective by tracing the evolution of this discipline and by examining the list of basic elements that normally make up a battery of tests.

It is generally agreed that the history of second language testing has had three major periods:

- the pre-scientific period;
- the structuralist-psychometric period;
- the integrative-sociolinguistic period.

### The pre-scientific period

The major feature of this period, which began with the schools of the Roman Empire and ended around 1945, is a teaching method based essentially on grammar and translation. Knowledge of the target language was measured very empirically, the type of measurement being left up to the teacher who used translation (theme and version), fill-in-the-blank sentences, composition and similar exercises and oral testing very rarely. Briefly, one of the failings of this method was the apparent lack of any theoretical bases to justify the use of such techniques. For example, it is difficult to see to what communications skills the theme and version correspond.

Even so, there is nowadays a tendency to return to fill-in-the-blank sentences and compositions, because these two instruments cover all the skills required for communication in writing. We should thus perhaps not condemn the pre-scientific period outright simply because of its name.

### The structuralist-psychometric period

Here we enter the era of scientific testing, born in the late 1940s and still continuing today. This is the reign of American structural linguistics, the theoretical basis for language teaching and, consequently, for testing.

The tests are based on two hypotheses. First, the target language — the language being learned — represents a finite group of difficulties that the specialist can identify by carefully comparing that language to the mother tongue. The level of knowledge acquired can be determined by the extent to which some of these problems are successfully mastered in “valid linguistic situations”. These situations are defined as a linguistic context. In other words, for example, if an element being tested appears in a sentence rather than in isolation, then it is considered to be used in a normal situation.

On this basis, we measure how well the candidate knows, or does not know, certain well-established points of language. These “discrete points”<sup>1</sup> occur in short and neutral stimuli acting as the context. Such micro-contexts contain questions (called “items”) that have only one possible answer, thus ensuring the objectivity of the correction. For instance, to demonstrate that he perceives the difference between nasal vowels in French (in this case, “in” and “an”), the candidate hears “*C’est un écran*”, and he must indicate which picture, that of a screen (*écran*) or that of a ring-case (*écran*), represents what he has heard.

Besides objectivity, the psychometric qualities one expects to find in a test are validity (it must effectively measure what it is supposed to measure) and reliability (it must provide reliable results). This period is thus clearly influenced by both psychometrics and structuralism.

### The integrative-sociolinguistic period

Following the awareness provoked by the generativists who emphasized the creative aspect of language, and by the sociolinguists who were obsessed by all aspects of communication, it is not surprising that in the past few years testing has entered a new era called the Integrative-Sociolinguistic period. Its proponents, particularly Hymes (1972), attempt to show that simply the mastery of the rules (which they call linguistic competence) is far from sufficient to allow the use of a language as a means of communication. What is required, they say, is communicative competence, which comprises

linguistic competence, speaking competence, sociolinguistic competence and interactive competence.

Linguistic competence is mastery of the rules: correct word order, the marks of gender, number, time and person, and the meaning of words and sentences. This is what has been measured until now. Speaking competence is mastery of the rules of organizing a text (oral or written) into a coherent and well-structured whole. Sociolinguistic competence is mastery of the use and interpretation of social conventions related to communication. For example, one would not use the same level of language in making a formal presentation as one would in conversing with old friends. Finally, interactive competence is mastery of the management of communication on two levels: the relationship between participants and the strategies of non-verbal communication, of empathy, and so on.

Clearly, good communication is at the very heart of this method. The test designer must find techniques that enable the candidate to demonstrate his degree of communicative competence. This is generally done by assigning him certain specific tasks, the results of which reveal the level of knowledge acquired.

#### The four skills

The structuralist period emphasized the notion of four skills — oral comprehension, oral expression, written comprehension and written expression which, once acquired, meant that the candidate knew the language. This division into productive (expression)

and receptive (comprehension) skills arose mainly from the need to give the formerly neglected oral dimension of language its rightful place. Thus the structuralist school innovated by establishing specific fields of competence and by reducing a very complex phenomenon — communication — into four strictly linguistic skills. As mentioned earlier, structuralists were criticized for this very approach by sociolinguists, who preach overall communicative competence. In testing, this took a number of forms.

#### Oral comprehension

The object of an oral comprehension test is to verify the degree to which

a spoken passage has been understood by the candidate. Structuralists resolve the problem by atomization, the main technique being the multiple-choice item<sup>2</sup>. They propose, for each item, a number of answers, some of which are false or not particularly appropriate, called decoys or distractors. If he has understood, the candidate should be able to identify the correct answers. For example, when he hears the following and where the suggested choices are:

**She looks after her mother**

- a) She imitates her mother
- b) She takes care of her mother
- c) She sees her mother
- d) She resembles her mother



Born in Montreal in 1929, Normand Hudon has been amusing American and European readers for three decades.

Thousands of his caricatures and illustrations have appeared in Quebec newspapers, *Time*, *Paris-Match* and other publications. The ceiling for the Canadian Pavilion and the mural for the Humour Pavilion at Expo '67 were his work. He lives in Magog, Quebec.

we verify if the stimulus has been understood. According to the structuralist hypotheses, by solving these particular problems, the candidate shows his oral comprehension in all communication situations. This formula has a number of advantages; it is relatively easy to construct, it applies to an indefinite number of candidate groups and correction is strictly objective.

At the same time, however, it is clear that a sentence like **She looks after her mother** never occurs unexpectedly or out of context. One is thus far removed from an authentic situation, which would in fact be the only way to truly evaluate the candidate's ability to communicate. It is better to stick closer to reality. For example, Carroll (1980) suggests a simulated situation in which the candidate is visiting a friend who is out when his girl friend telephones. She leaves a message, which the candidate is asked to pass on. This is an interesting formula in that it presents a plausible situation with a familiar context. The passage is also long enough to allow the subject to "get into it" and to benefit from the context.

However, cases of listening with no interaction are fairly rare. The formal lecture is an example but, even there, we expect certain types of reaction from listeners — taking notes, asking for clarification and so on. In other words, in a normal act of communication, it is difficult to isolate one skill from another. For the purposes of authenticity, the best tests are often those that call for several skills. Take the example of the telephone call: the candidate could just as easily have taken the message in writing as orally. In this way, we not only test comprehension of the message but also the candidate's capacity to retain and retransmit the message using a level of language appropriate among friends. Unfortunately, these tests are difficult to correct objectively and, to ensure their reliability, one must accept compromises such as the artificial multiple-choice items used to assess the comprehension of a real act of communication.

#### Written comprehension

Written comprehension is another

matter. It is a normal act of communication to take a book, a magazine or a newspaper and read them for information or simply for enjoyment. However, a reader is selective, and reads only texts that meet his needs. Hence the difficulty of producing valid group tests. This used to be possible with the structural doctrine and its discrete items, but since the test must above all else reflect reality, such a solution is unacceptable.

Carroll suggests an interesting experiment. Candidates receive a file containing a number of documents on a subject corresponding to some of their needs, as determined in advance. The examiner then attempts to verify various parameters of written comprehension. For example, he asks for a table or graph to be prepared on the basis of data available in a given text, something which a student might very easily be called upon to do. Written comprehension can also be combined with written expression by requiring the student to take notes or prepare a summary. But here again, we come up against the stumbling block of the corrector's objectivity, a problem common to all tests involving expression.

#### Oral expression

Just as it is difficult to imagine real situations in which the speaker does nothing but speak, so it would seem undesirable to propose tests that measure only that skill. We find in the structural technique very restrictive questions such as **How old are you?**, **Where are we?**, and so on. In such cases, the answers enable only a very small portion of the rules to be covered. When oral expression is involved, it is very difficult to attain an acceptable degree of authenticity. The candidate must speak into a machine, to an examiner or to a panel in an interview situation. It is completely unrealistic to expect much naturalness in such situations. And there are additional inconveniences: the interview is time-consuming for both candidates and examiners and difficult to organize and evaluate satisfactorily. If the group is large, marking is impossible because of the time and costs involved. Unfortunately, language tests have been unable to solve this problem. We thus currently tend to associate oral expression

with comprehension and to use one as a measure of the other, which is how we generally use the spoken language. Research in this area appears promising.

#### Written expression

Written expression takes many forms — letters, diaries, notes, summaries, reports, etc. — but it always presupposes the direct participation of the individual, whether in terms of content or form. Today there is a highly-regarded formula that combines this skill with written comprehension. In the closure test, one out of five, six or seven words is omitted from a statement, according to how difficult we want the test to be. The subject is then asked to fill in the missing words (or their equivalent). For example, **The federal government backed down . . . its plan to tax benefits . . . health and dental plans after . . . successful lobby by many organizations.** Here, we start from the principle that the better the person's knowledge of the language, the better able he is to know the missing words. This produces excellent results.

However, this procedure is criticized for measuring only knowledge of the rules — linguistic competence — and for being unable to evaluate other aspects of communication. From a sociolinguistic perspective, these complaints are justified. The best test of written expression is probably the free composition, where, as noted earlier, the candidate must demonstrate that he possesses all the skills required for written communication. This brings us full circle and, in a way, takes us back to the pre-scientific period. However, this return is more apparent than real, for sociolinguists now base this instrument on explicit theoretical foundations.

#### The good language test

With the above in mind, and considering recent newspaper articles, language tests are open to question, particularly in cases where job security, promotion and the right to exercise a profession depend directly on the results. Two points require clarification. First, second language requirements must be based on clearly identified needs that are perceived as real by those to whom they apply. When the very *raison d'être*

of the requirements is questioned, no measurement tool, no matter how good, will produce unanimity. On the other hand, when evaluation of the level of knowledge appears legitimate, the test may be an extremely useful and reliable tool, provided that it includes some of the qualities that are increasingly found in recent instruments.

Second language tests should also measure the mastery of skills that correspond to the real requirements of the trade or profession. In this sense, they should be designed in terms of the candidate and the milieu. These needs are

not determined by the test's designer but by the candidate (or his representative) in consultation with specialists who assist in the learning process. Authenticity should also be respected. The test should help the examiner determine the candidate's ability to communicate using contexts that involve all communication skills. At the same time, it should fully respect all validity and reliability criteria. These psychometric characteristics often create problems with regard to the other desired qualities. Thus, the designer must find what he considers to be the most appropriate solution. Finally, the test should be economical

in terms of the tension to which the candidate is subjected, the time it requires and the administrative conditions in question.

One final remark. It is essential to avoid the language test psychosis and to remember that the instrument must serve the public for which it is designed. The opposite would be both unfortunate and unhealthy.

(Adapted from the French.)

1. Distinct, measurable elements.
2. The term "question" should not be used because an item is not always interrogative.

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*Why should Montrealers speak the kind of French spoken in Paris? Do Torontonians speak New York or London English? Quebec Novelist Roch Carrier challenges Anglophones who swear by Parisian French and pays tribute to the French of his native province.*



Much translated, Roch Carrier is among the contemporary Quebec writers best known in

English Canada. He has won the Prix littéraire of the Province of Quebec and the Grand prix littéraire of the City of Montreal. His novel *La Guerre, yes sir*, adapted for the theatre, has been presented in Europe by the Théâtre du Nouveau Monde and at the Stratford Festival, as well as in Montreal.

## Only in Quebec, you say?

ROCH CARRIER

I was the guest the other day of some very nice people in Victoria, British Columbia.

"Ah! Monsieur is from Quebec", marvelled a redheaded lady with a charming English accent. "When I was there a few years ago I had a bit of trouble with my car. It was up north of Montreal. I stopped at a garage. The man was covered with grease. I told him, 'I seem to have a shimmy in my rear end', but he just looked at me, wide-eyed and replied, in English mind you, 'Yes Ma'am, what's your problem?' I could tell by his accent he was *Québécois*. He hadn't understood me when I spoke French to him. They don't speak French, I mean the real French."

The garage-man had been polite. I had a hunch I would be less so. This wasn't the first time I'd heard a denunciation of Quebec French by someone who didn't know it all that well.

"Well then," another guest went on, in English, "if French Canadians don't speak French, why is Bill 101 imposing French as the official language?"

"Oh dear", the redheaded lady exclaimed, "they do speak French, but not real Parisian French."

At that point I couldn't help asking, "Madame, did General de Gaulle speak real Parisian French?"

"Why, *certainement, mon cher*."

"And when he made his speech on the balcony of the City Hall in Montreal, do you think the French Canadians understood his Parisian French?"

I thought the boat on which we were holding our discussion was going to sink, my hosts were so shaken by my somewhat brutal argument.

I'm a timid soul, but I began to plead as if I were defending my very life. Come to think of it, I was defending my life, for a writer's life is the life of the words in his language.

First of all, I declared that Canadian French is an *avant-garde* language. We have a 20-year head start over French as it's spoken in France. Words unknown to the French were commonplace in Quebec in 1960. And today, in 1983, you can hear them in Paris: modish words like **gadget, marketing, flipper, cool, look, jet, brunch, flash** and **attaché case**.

"Cher, those words aren't French."

"If we use them they become French, just as so many French words have become English. A living language is enriched by borrowing foreign words. And, since we live so close to the United States, it's normal for our language to borrow American words."

"Tell me", another guest asked, "do you speak French or *joual*?"

The redheaded lady industriously refilled my glass.

"*Joual* isn't what you think", I replied. "It's a literary language, scholarly in fact, that's written and spoken only in universities and in the theatre. You must have an excellent knowledge of French to be able to appreciate *joual*."

"But the real people, the man in the street — they speak *joual*", the redheaded lady assured me. "I remember once sitting in a *café* in Westmount Square, listening to the people speaking *joual*. It was charming."

"That's impossible", I assured her. "*Joual* is an invented language, as carefully worked out as any literary language. It's inspired by a genuine working-class language, the somewhat tortured French spoken by factory workers who've had to work in a completely

English-speaking *milieu*, in a language that was foreign to them.

But those ordinary people, if they're watching a play on *Radio-Canada* in which the characters speak *joual*, they'll switch channels because they can't understand it. They're the people who accuse *Radio-Canada* of being vulgar — not the university professors who think they're rubbing shoulders with what they call '*le peuple*'."

"You will concede though, *cher ami*, you do have some expressions that are quite peculiar to you?"

"When I was living in France, if I was very annoyed for some reason or other I'd say '*Je suis tanné*'<sup>1</sup>, thinking I was being *Québécois* to the fingertips. But Balzac used *tanné*. Or to get a rise out of Parisians, I'd call my overshoes my *ciaques*. But it is the very word that Flaubert used! And de Maupassant, Madam, often used *Québécois* words. In fact, many of the words you think of as *Québécois* are of the purest French. For instance, we say '*serrer*' instead of '*ranger*' for putting something away — and so did Victor Hugo, who is — *hélas!* — France's greatest poet."

"No one ever told me . . ."

"There are lots of things you've never been told, *Madame*. Life hasn't been easy for the French language in Canada. You probably don't know that French-language *collèges* were closed for years, for political reasons. The first French-language university, for the same political reasons, wasn't authorized until 1852. In order to preserve the French language, the people had to have good memories and they had to be inventive. It was necessary to remember the French names for what we knew and invent French names for the things we were discovering. And there was no question of asking the

*Académie Française* to authorize the use of a word."

"Why don't they teach us that in school?"

"Because school often conceals reality instead of revealing it."

"If I understand correctly, then, it isn't true that you speak the old French of the *Ancien Régime*."

"Old French is part of the French language too. When I was a student at the Sorbonne, I enrolled in a course on Montaigne. During the first lecture, I realized that it was easier for me to understand than for my French fellow students. Montaigne used words I'd heard my grandmother use. She'd never read a word of Montaigne, but her ancestors had come to Quebec with Champlain. This long tradition kept alive the contributions to our language of several of the provinces of France."

My hosts' faces bore the expressions of people who don't understand.

"Let's drink to the French language of Quebec!" declared the redheaded lady.

I bowed my thanks to her and added: "Your garage-man, *Madame*, used words that Villon used, but he knows some others too, words like *magané*<sup>2</sup> and *enfirouâpé*<sup>3</sup>. And they're as beautiful as any words invented by Rabelais. For a writer, it's an astonishingly rich language."

"But wouldn't it be so much easier to speak English here in North America?"

That remark might have seemed perfidious — but there was the sea, my hosts' kindness, the gentle tossing of the boat, the glasses you could never drain. And yet, despite my languor, I said, "It's probably easier for you to speak **your** English than to speak Oxford English."

"Just as it's easier for you, *cher ami*, to speak **your** very distinctive Canadian French."

Ah, that redheaded lady! How could I possibly answer that!

Just then, a guest who hadn't spoken yet, who had been introduced as a real estate agent, asked for the floor. Solemnly he got to his feet, raised his glass very high, and declared in remarkable French: "You've adapted French to a new environment just as we've adapted English to ours. That kind of adaptability is what distinguishes Canadians. If you're got it, it proves that you're Canadian, like it or not."

"North American, Canadian, *Québécois*, *Beauceron* — it doesn't matter. My language is French and it's understood wherever French is spoken."

"Understanding or not understanding", said another gentleman, a Torontonion who hadn't yet expressed himself in French, "doesn't necessarily have anything to do with language."

I agreed, and asked if any studies had been carried out on the positive effects of alcohol on bilingualism in this country.

I won't recount the rest of our discussion. It became more and more confused until it started to sound like the text for a law on official languages.

Adapted from the French.

1. Je suis tanné: I am fed up.
2. Magané: to be given a rough time.
3. Enfirouâpé: to be fooled by somebody.



**Sheila Fishman**, who translated the Roch Carrier article, came to Quebec from her native Saskatchewan to learn French 15 years ago. That done, she stayed on and became an acclaimed translator of Quebec French literature. In 1974, she won a Canada Council award for her translations of *Le Loup* (*The Wolf*) by Marie-Claire Blais and *Le Deux-millième étage* (*They Won't Demolish Me!*) by Roch Carrier.

*Linguistic and geographic diversity have made for a heterogeneous German community in Canada. This article examines this unique society and the plight of the German language in our country.*



German-born, Georg K. Weissenborn came to Canada in 1951. Interrupting his education in political science and economics, begun at the University of Karlsruhe, he specialized in German studies and took his doctorate at the University of British Columbia in 1970. He teaches at St. Michael's College in Toronto and has contributed to the *German-Canadian Yearbook* since it was founded in 1973.

## Three hundred years of German presence in Canada

GEORG K. WEISSENBORN

In the past three centuries, German speakers have immigrated to Canada from several countries where German enjoys official status and from others where it is a minority language. This diversity of origins, as well as the nature of the German language, its many sometimes mutually incomprehensible dialects and a number of other social, cultural and religious factors have transformed the Canadian German-speaking population into a curiously heterogeneous community. The particular characteristics of this community have combined with the assimilative influences of Canadian society to place the German language in a somewhat precarious position.

Will it remain the mother tongue of German Canadians, or are the forces of assimilation so strong that it will become their second language? This article examines the nature of this unique community and the origins of the plight of the German language in Canada today.

### Origins

German speakers have been immigrating to North America in significant numbers since the mid-17th century. By far the largest recent influx occurred between 1946 and 1971, when 412,373 Germanophones settled in Canada following the Second World War. In 1981, 522,850 Canadians or 2.15 per cent of the population gave German as their mother tongue.

From 1946 to 1951, only German refugees were admitted to Canada. Most came from Eastern Europe, from "language islands" and "colonies" of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and old Russia where the settlement of German minorities had been encouraged for centuries by the Danube Monarchy, by Catherine the Great of Russia — herself a German princess — and by some tsars and local rulers.

German people left their once prosperous settlements in Galicia, Bohemia and Moravia, Gottschee, Bosnia, Bessarabia, Transylvania, the Bukovina, Volhynia, the Don and Volga valleys, the Crimea and other regions.<sup>1</sup> Sudeten-Germans,

Danube-Swabians, Transylvania-Saxons, Gottschee-Germans, Russian-German Mennonites and others arrived in Canada under the official designation of "displaced persons".

In German, these people are usually referred to as *Volksdeutsche*, meaning people who share a common language and ethnicity, but not the same country of origin. At the other end of the spectrum are the *Reichsdeutsche*, a word which, before such terms as *Bundesburger* (from the Federal Republic of Germany) and "GDR Germans" (from the German Democratic Republic) came into use, designated Germans born within the boundaries of what constituted the largest German-speaking country in central Europe between 1871 and 1937.

According to J.M. Gibbon<sup>2</sup>, only ten per cent of German-speaking immigrants to Canada before World War I came directly from Germany (*Reichsdeutsche*), while the other 90 per cent were *Volksdeutsche*.

### High German and its dialects

Schools in German-speaking countries, in isolated Germanophone settlements and in so-called "language islands", strive to teach their pupils High German. Consequently, standardized High German stretches across a number of national boundaries and forms a bond between people who are divided sociologically by different forms of government and linguistically by different dialects. Some German dialects are so fundamentally different from others that only a small number of specialized scholars have mastered them all. It is no exaggeration to say that the history of the German language is a history of its various dialects.

Organically evolved over a long period of time, these dialects, their history and their linguistic geography provide a key to understanding the cultural background of various German-speaking groups. Some of these, like the Saxons and the Swabians, were at one time much more than mere tribes and, indeed, were almost true nations.



Pedestrian migrations in Europe and German emigrations overseas have carried German dialects abroad and, as in the case of *Pennsylfaanisch* or Pennsylvania German, have produced other dialects that show considerable lexical and phonetic differences from those originally spoken in Central Europe. In 1969, one German scholar estimated that there were more than half a million speakers of Pennsylvania German in North America and reported its increasing use as a literary language.

Spoken primarily in Southeastern Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey and Virginia, *Pennsylfaanisch* is derived from the Rhenish Palatinate and shows, besides words borrowed from English, an admixture of the Alsatian, Franconian, Swiss Platt, Swabian, Bavarian and

even Silesian dialects. The Pennsylvania-Germans also continued to cultivate their special brand of High German, the pronunciation of which follows the 16th-17th century South German pattern.<sup>3</sup>

Two-thirds of Ontario's approximately 40 thousand Mennonites may be classified as Pennsylvania-German in origin with a working knowledge of *Pennsylfaanisch*, while approximately one-third come from Russia and speak *Plautdietsch*, the West Prussian dialect.

Linguistic and geographic diversity have thus made for a heterogeneous German community in Canada, one in which German speakers are linked by a common tongue yet divided by different backgrounds. Although the origins of German Canadians have to

a great extent shaped the character of this community, they do not explain the status of the German language in Canada today.

**Mother tongue retention**

Several factors are of considerable importance for the retention of one's mother tongue, which in most cases is also the first language of instruction in school. The survival of an isolated language is greatly determined by the size and shape of the linguistic island where it is spoken, the proximity of that territory to external linguistic influences and the "territorial association" or "banding" of the speakers who settle the area.

In a multilingual society, the resolve to retain one's mother tongue and ethnic identity is often weakened by the temptation to acculturate or assimilate with the dominant group. This influence may come in the form of either gentle persuasion or direct pressure.

Kloss lists six factors that apply to small and large groups that have resisted assimilation through language retention in the United States. Ranking first and foremost is religio-societal insulation, which Kloss explains as a form of withdrawal from the world. These groups "maintain their language in order more fully to exclude worldly influence and perhaps, because change in itself is considered sinful."

His second factor is the time and place of immigration in relation to that of the first Anglo-Saxons. Under this category, French can obviously claim historical priority in Canada and German at best simultaneity. The third factor is the existence of language islands, some of which are German-speaking, as in southern North Dakota and north-eastern South Dakota. The fourth factor, affiliation with denominations fostering parochial schools, concerns German Moravians, Roman Catholics and Old Lutheran synods named after the states of Missouri and Wisconsin. The fifth factor, pre-immigration experience with language maintenance efforts, has particular meaning for the German-speaking immigrants to Canada named in this article. The sixth and last factor, former use as the only official tongue during the

**GERMAN IN CANADA**

Number of people across Canada and in each province and territory, having German as a mother tongue, 1931 to 1981.

	1981	1971	1961	1951	1941	1931
Canada	522,850	561,085	563,713	329,302	322,228	362,011
Newfoundland	445	515	616	80	—	—
Prince Edward Island	175	140	126	24	14	23
Nova Scotia	1,865	2,000	1,523	480	469	989
New Brunswick	1,215	1,110	1,162	193	164	243
Quebec	24,060	31,025	31,589	7,515	5,123	7,295
Ontario	174,545	184,885	183,789	72,686	66,037	82,089
Manitoba	75,180	82,715	83,994	47,996	51,463	57,312
Saskatchewan	59,630	75,885	89,650	99,629	120,177	138,499
Alberta	91,480	92,805	97,666	65,195	62,766	63,410
British Columbia	93,385	89,020	72,473	35,318	15,903	12,066
Yukon Territory	500	560	640	114	61	69
Northwest Territories	385	425	485	72	47	16

Decreases and sudden increases of German speakers are the result of either rapid acculturation, or the arrival of new immigrants. As a result of the Second World War, many German speakers may also have disclaimed their origins. Furthermore, one must consider that both Austrians

and Swiss Germans speak a German dialect or High German as a mother tongue. Author's notice.

Source: *Statistics Canada*

pre-Anglo-American period in the United States, obviously concerns Dutch, Spanish, and French.

Kloss concludes that "no single factor will permit us to explain how early (or how late) in the chain of generations the German language disappeared in the past, or to predict its retention in the future."

Kloss' first factor is of considerable interest when applied to the use of German as a mother tongue in Canada. There follows a comparison, made on the basis of Kloss' factors, of the Lunenburg-Germans of Nova Scotia on the one hand, and the Pennsylvania-German Mennonites, Russian-German Mennonites and Hutterites on the other.

#### German Canadian settlements

In July, 1749, Governor Cornwallis of Nova Scotia requested that London dispatch a number of German Protestants for the purpose of settling the land. The good ship *Ann* arrived in Halifax in September, 1750, with over 300 Germans aboard; by 1752, their number had increased to more than 2,000. In 1753, most of the group left to found the town of Lunenburg.

L. Richter<sup>4</sup> says these Lunenburg settlers experienced the greatest difficulty in securing for their spiritual edification the services of the German-speaking minister they had been promised. Following a rebellion in 1754, they were sent instead the Rev. Jean Baptiste Morreau, a former Roman Catholic priest who had become a minister of the Church of England. It was he who founded St. John's Church in Lunenburg, which the Germans refused to attend. By 1760, they had decided to appoint a schoolmaster at their own expense to assure the survival of their language. But things were to go from bad to worse.

The next minister sent to them by the authorities, the Rev. Robert Vincent of St. John's Anglican Church, banned the German language altogether from school. Children had to learn English or were not admitted.

In 1768, a deputation was sent to the government explaining that the

German community had been without a preacher for fifteen years. In 1770, the issue was even submitted to the Rev. H.M. Muhlenberg in Philadelphia, chairman of the Lutheran Synod. Not until 1772, however, was a German-speaking minister appointed. He subsequently stayed for ten years and, in 1782, was succeeded by Pastor Schmelzer from Germany.

But the trend seemed irreversible, and the St. Andrew's congregation of German-speaking Protestants in Lunenburg was next to come under assimilative pressure, this time from within. The arrival of Pastor Moschell from Germany in 1818 seemed to accelerate assimilation rather than impede it. When Moschell returned to Germany in 1837, he left behind a recommendation that his congregation join the Church of Scotland. It was implemented immediately. Sautter<sup>5</sup> insists that, judging by the speed and ease with which the recommendation was accepted and implemented, the pastor was not the cause of the assimilation. Nevertheless, within the 19 years of his tenure, a whole "language island" disappeared. A.R.M. Lower later wrote that "with the exception of the founders of Halifax and a few settlers around Annapolis, these Germans of Lunenburg, who early lost their language, are virtually the oldest English-speaking Canadians".<sup>6</sup>

It may be argued that the Lunenburgers surrendered to assimilation and sacrificed their mother tongue to save their religion. To what degree this affected their ethnic identity is not the object of this discussion. Suffice it to say that a similar development has been predicted and recommended for the Mennonites by a Germanist who recently said: "We love the German language, and our young will continue to learn and study it. But we will have to instruct our young people in matters concerning the Scriptures and our faith in the language in which they have learned to think, emote and live . . . We are gradually coming to understand that Christian faith and Mennonite belief can also be taught in another language."

The first German-speaking Mennonites came to Upper Canada from Pennsylvania in 1786. Kloss' first five factors

relating to mother tongue retention applied to a large majority of them. To the Russian-German Mennonites who came to the Prairie provinces from 1874 on, Kloss' first, third, fourth and fifth factors are applicable. This is also true of the Hutterites, most of whom came to Canada after World War I.

A recent sociological study conducted at the University of Manitoba, which examined how ethnic groups can maintain separate identities, makes interesting observations on the interdependence of religious observance, mother tongue use, and parochial education. Because of the presence of the Mennonite element, "the Germans, who have parochial schools in Manitoba, . . . considered such education important. The Germans ranked considerably higher than the rest on religion."<sup>7</sup>

In Manitoba, however, due to the preponderance of what Kloss calls "religio-societal insulation" on the part of Mennonites and Hutterites, Germans appear to be retaining both mother tongue and ethnic identity.

#### Second language instruction

In a sense, all the pioneer schools of Upper Canada were established as parochial schools, starting with the 1802 log cabin near Blair, where a Pennsylvania-German named Rittinghaus was the first schoolteacher, down to the best-known "first" log cabin schoolhouse in Waterloo, where the famous Mennonite Bishop Ben Eby himself taught.

Mennonites, Lutherans and Roman Catholics in Waterloo County, the heart of Canada's German-speaking area, took care of their own, independent educational system.

In 1842, the year of the first laws governing education, the townships were divided by the Common School Act into school districts, until separate schools were guaranteed the same rights and privileges as public schools in the 1850s. This signalled the start of a relentless drive to have German taught as a second language, no longer as a mother tongue. The teachers had to demonstrate proficiency in English or French before they were licensed to teach German: most could not meet

the new requirements. Led by the German-language press and armed with Carl Shurz' dictum that "it is not necessary to forget German in order to learn English", the whole community took up the cause in a battle that raged for decades.

School board superintendents like A.E. Ryerson, who himself learned German and was quite sympathetic to its cause, and county school inspectors like T. Pearce, who considered German a "foreign" language in the sense of "alien", came and went, and with them waves of optimism and pessimism. But, long before the First World War finally sealed the fate of the German language and its pioneer press, the development of educational matters had taken an ominous turn under G.W. Ross, Ontario's Minister of Education from 1883 to 1899. Ross is said to have held that individual municipalities should treat languages and customs of ethnic minorities, "should such be found to exist", with respect, "leaving the inevitable process of assimilation to the due course of time." His attitude is paradigmatic for a school system which had begun as parochial, changed to separate, had become "free" and "public", and had, in the course of its development, managed to convert German mother-tongue teaching to second language instruction.

To date, Mennonite and Hutterite colonies have strongly and successfully opposed such trends by offering two kinds of instruction, their own in German

and that of the public school system where English is the language of instruction. This constitutes a form of competition similar to early developments in Waterloo County. A recent report states that Elias Kleinsasser, a 35-year old Hutterite from the Crystal Springs Colony of Ste. Agathe, Manitoba, appears to be the only Hutterite to qualify for a teaching position with the public school system in a Hutterite colony.<sup>8</sup>

### The challenge of the future

As we have tried to show, the assimilative pressure of other languages is nothing new to the Germanophones of many countries. Indeed, the great majority of German-speaking Canadians are *Volksdeutsche*, who have come to Canada with hundreds of years experience in mother-tongue retention from other countries, where they have always constituted an ethnic minority. Furthermore, because of their different origins and religious persuasions, they may be said to form a heterogeneous collectivity, a situation accentuated by the fact that their mother tongue is one of several German dialects, rather than High German. In Canada, they have attempted to retain their mother tongue and their religious beliefs in spite of parochial schools emphasizing the teaching of High German, in spite of assimilative pressures and notwithstanding the total lack of a cohesive language maintenance policy on the part of the German-Canadian community. The fact that they have been largely successful is in itself no mean feat.

In a sense, then, to retain their ethnic identity, German-Canadians must often become trilingual, cross dialectal boundaries and be successful in a country where German does not have official status. Raised with a German dialect, they need to acquire High German as a second language and to learn English or French in the public school system of the dominant culture. Past experience suggests that German-Canadians will continue to accept this formidable challenge.

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7. L. Driedger, "In Search of Cultural Identity Factors", in *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology 12*: 150-162 May 1975.
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## Selected Readings

Darnell, Regna, ed., *Canadian Languages in their Social Context*. Edmonton: Linguistic Research, 1973.

Cybrivsky, Roman A., *Patterns of Mother Tongue Retention among several Selected Ethnic Groups in Western Canada*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, 1970.

## Letters to the Editor

### A matter of statistics

I wish to comment on the tables appearing on pages 5 and 12 of the Autumn issue of *Language and Society* (No. 8).

These tables, on the number of Canadians having English, French or another language as mother tongue, present an erroneously high set of numbers for the "Other" in 1976. This is due to a misreading of the census for that year; you show as "Other" the total of "Other" and "Not Stated". As a consequence, there is a completely misleading set of conclusions with regard to trends, when 1981 figures are compared against 1976 in your tables.

To illustrate, your table on page 12 shows 1.7 per cent of "Other" mother tongues in Newfoundland in 1976, dropping to 0.8 per cent in 1981. This tells the uninformed reader that over half the "Others" disappeared during the intercensal five years. In fact, however, the figure published by Statistics Canada for 1976 was only 0.7 per cent and there was a slight increase, to the 0.8 per cent of 1981, rather than the sharp decrease shown by your table.

In Quebec, your two tables show 444,520 persons of non-official mother tongues in 1976 while Statistics Canada showed 334,050; the difference is represented by the 110,470 persons who failed to state their mother tongue during the 1976 census. Using the correct figures, the population of non-official mother tongues actually increased, from 5.46 per cent in 1976 to 6.61 per cent in 1981; this is quite different from the downward trend shown by your tables.

I have also noted, with some surprise, that the footnote to page 4 and the table on page 5 both show 10.9 per cent for those of English mother tongue in Quebec in 1981, although the correct number is 11 per cent, as shown in the table on page 12 (the actual figure is 10.967 per cent, which should be rounded to 11.0 per cent, not to 10.9 per cent). Was someone trying to bend the facts to more closely approach Professor Caldwell's "something in the range of ten per cent"?

Richard J. Joy  
Ottawa, Ontario

Editor's Note: The following tables update those published in Issue No. 8 on pages 5 and 12, and allow for the comparability of mother tongue census data in Canada, and in the Province of Quebec, for 1976 and 1981. We wish to thank Statistics Canada and both Linda Demers and John Kralt for their assistance.

#### MOTHER TONGUES IN CANADA

Number and percentages of persons in Canada and the provinces and territories having English, French or another language as their mother tongue, 1976 and 1981.<sup>1,2</sup>

Note: During the processing of the 1976 census data on mother tongue, an error was discovered which made it necessary to use a limited number of algorithms to produce the final data. Although different algorithms were used in 1981, it is possible to replicate the impact of the 1981 algorithms on the 1976 data. This has been done for the 1976 data presented in this table with the results that these data are different from those published elsewhere.<sup>1,2</sup>

	Canada			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	14,918,445	61.3	14,198,406	61.8
French	6,249,095	25.7	5,966,707	25.9
Other	3,175,640	13.0	2,827,512	12.3
Total*	24,343,180		22,992,605	

  

	Newfoundland			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	560,460	98.7	550,419	98.7
French	2,655	0.5	2,844	0.5
Other	4,565	0.8	4,462	0.8
Total*	567,680	2.3	557,725	2.4

  

	Prince Edward Island			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	115,045	93.9	110,391	93.4
French	6,080	5.0	6,763	5.7
Other	1,380	1.1	1,076	0.9
Total*	122,505	0.5	118,230	0.5

  

	Nova Scotia			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	793,165	93.6	775,376	93.6
French	36,030	4.3	37,451	4.5
Other	18,245	2.1	15,743	1.9
Total*	847,440	3.5	828,570	3.6

  

	New Brunswick			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	453,310	65.1	442,048	65.3
French	234,030	33.6	227,153	33.5
Other	9,065	1.3	8,059	1.2
Total*	696,405	2.9	677,250	3.0

  

	Quebec			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	706,115	11.0	801,124	12.8
French	5,307,010	82.4	5,054,253	81.1
Other	425,275	6.6	379,053	6.1
Total*	6,438,400	26.4	6,234,445	27.1

  

	Manitoba			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	735,920	71.7	724,148	70.9
French	52,560	5.1	55,366	5.4
Other	237,760	23.2	241,996	23.7
Total*	1,026,240	4.2	1,021,510	4.4

  

	Alberta			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	1,810,545	80.9	1,486,239	80.8
French	62,145	2.8	45,216	2.5
Other	365,035	16.3	306,585	16.7
Total*	2,237,725	9.2	1,838,040	8.0

  

	Yukon			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	20,245	87.4	19,444	89.0
French	580	2.5	531	2.4
Other	2,330	10.1	1,865	8.6
Total*	23,155	0.1	21,840	0.1

  

	Saskatchewan			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	770,815	79.6	709,236	77.0
French	25,535	2.6	27,087	2.9
Other	171,960	17.8	185,002	20.1
Total*	968,310	4.0	921,325	4.0

  

	British Columbia			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	2,249,310	82.0	2,061,593	83.6
French	45,615	1.6	39,466	1.6
Other	449,540	16.4	365,551	14.8
Total*	2,744,465	11.3	2,466,610	10.7

  

	Northwest Territories			
	1981		1976	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	24,755	54.1	23,337	54.8
French	1,240	2.7	1,155	2.7
Other	19,750	43.2	18,118	42.5
Total*	45,745	0.2	42,610	0.2

1,2,3: See page 21 for these footnotes.

\* The population totals shown are the official 1976 and 1981 counts. The sum of English, French and Other may not be equal to the official count due to rounding during calculations.<sup>1</sup>

**MOTHER TONGUES IN QUEBEC**

Distribution of the population by mother tongue for the Province of Quebec, Montreal and Quebec City, 1971, 1976 and 1981.<sup>4,5</sup>

**Note:**

During the processing of the 1976 census data on mother tongue, an error was discovered which made it necessary to use a limited number of algorithms to produce the final data. Although these algorithms were not used in 1981, the 1981 data are available in a format that allows for the replication of the 1976 processing rules. Because the 1981 data presented in this table have been processed using 1976 algorithms, they are therefore different than those published elsewhere.

It should be noted that the data given in the *Mother tongues in Quebec* table are not identical to those given in the *Mother tongues in Canada* table. In the former table, the "not stated" category includes persons who have English, French, and other languages as their mother tongue. In the latter table, these persons have been assigned to one of the language groups. Furthermore, the procedures used to remove multiple responses differ in each table.<sup>1,2</sup>

	1971							
	French		English		Other		Not Stated	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Province of Quebec	4,867,250	80.7	789,185	13.1	371,330	6.2	—*	—*
Montreal	1,819,640	66.3	595,395	21.7	328,180	12.0	—*	—*
Quebec City	458,435	95.4	18,035	3.8	4,030	0.8	—*	—*

  

	1976							
	French		English		Other		Not Stated	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Province of Quebec	4,989,245	80.0	800,680	12.8	334,050	5.4	110,470	1.8
Montreal	1,831,110	65.3	607,505	21.7	295,770	10.6	68,100	2.4
Quebec City	513,895	94.8	15,745	2.9	3,595	0.7	8,925	1.6

  

	1981							
	French		English		Other		Not Stated	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Province of Quebec	5,286,228	82.1	711,287	11.1	386,225	6.0	54,660	0.8
Montreal	1,932,678	68.3	527,532	18.7	337,160	11.9	30,975	1.1
Quebec City	551,176	95.7	15,354	2.7	5,050	0.9	4,500	0.7

\*Due to the unavailability of information on the impact of processing on the 1971 data, it is not possible to apply either the 1976 or the 1981 algorithms to the 1971 data. Consequently, the "Not Stated" population for 1971 cannot be separated from the French, English and Other population.

Footnotes: 1. L. Demers and J. Kralt: *On the Comparability of Mother Tongue Data, 1976-1981*, Statistics Canada (forthcoming publication).  
 2. J. Kralt: *A User's Guide to 1976 Census Data on Mother Tongue*, Statistics Canada, 1980.  
 3. Statistics Canada, Census of 1981.  
 4. Statistics Canada, Census of 1971 and of 1976.  
 5. The 1981 Census data on mother tongue for the Province of Quebec, Montreal and Quebec City were prepared for *Language and Society* by Statistics Canada.

**The so-called "others"**

The 1976 mother tongue figures in the table you added to Gary Caldwell's article on Anglo-Quebec (No. 8 Autumn 1982) are highly misleading. Some 110,450 residents of Quebec did not give an answer to the mother tongue question at the 1976 Census and Statistics Canada published this result in a "not stated" category. Your table present all of these residents as "allophones". As a result, your figures for the "Other Mother Tongue" category in 1976 are much too high. Unfortunately, Statistics Canada has not to date published any adjusted figures which would allow a reasonably sound comparison of the 1976 results with the 1971 or 1981 mother tongue data.

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 University of Ottawa  
 Ottawa, Ontario

**Indigenous languages**

I have read Michael Foster's article on indigenous languages in Canada (No. 7 Winter/Spring 1982) and thought it was of considerable general interest.

From my preliminary perusal of the article, I would like to point out one detail in need of correction. The number of Tahltan (Athapaskan) speakers is grossly overestimated, being listed at 100 – 1,000. On the basis of my research in the area over the past two summers, I have identified a maximum of 50 fluent speakers in the two major settlements – Telegraph Creek and Ishut. It undoubtedly should be classified amongst the extremely endangered languages.

A second point I might mention relates to the sub-classification of Siouan dialects. Recent linguistic research on the Canadian dialects of "Dakota" argues for a significant differentiation between Stoney, as spoken at Morley and Paul reserves in Alberta, and Assiniboine, as spoken in Saskatchewan. There is much greater mutual intelligibility between Assiniboine, Teton, and Santee than between any of these and Stoney. A variety of particular linguistic features which characterize Stoney, as opposed to the other dialects, are already identified. I would question, therefore, the appropriateness of designating Stoney as simply a "variety of Assiniboine". It stands apart clearly as the most divergent of the four dialects.

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### Slavic – not Slovene

I have read with interest Mr. Topaloski's article on Yugoslavia (No. 8 Autumn 1982).

Incidentally, on page 14 of that issue (third column), the term Slavic (or Slavonic), not Slovene, should have been used. Slovene or Slovenian is the language of Slovenia – one of the six constituent republics of Yugoslavia. Also, Cyril (and Methodius) really created the Glagolitic alphabet and it was their disciples who later created the first Slavic (Cyrillic) alphabet.

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### Cultural heritage

We have received and reviewed the reprint of the article "Canada's First Languages" by M.K. Froster (No. 7 Winter/Spring 1982).

In our work to create a higher profile of our Micmac language and to seek survival assistance and support from government agencies and interested public groups, we feel that this article greatly supports our position.

Yours in recognition of our heritage.

Peter Christmas  
Micmac Association of Cultural Studies  
Sydney, Nova Scotia

### The spelling of Yiddish

My eye was caught by the English and French spelling of yiddish in *Language and Society* (No. 7 Winter/Spring 1982). For decades, the established English spelling has been Yiddish (with a capital letter, as in all other English glottonyms). Since this is as English a word as French or Spanish, it should not be italicized except, like all words, when being cited. Incidentally, the English spelling should have been Yidish, but this spelling is now a lost cause.

In French, on the other hand, there is still variation, hence it is still realistic to recommend one spelling rather than another. Naturally, like all French glottonyms, the recommended form should be written unitalicized (except when being cited) and with a lower-case letter. Six variants are found today: with one *-d-* or two; and with *-ch*, *-sh*, or *-sch*. Since neither Yiddish nor French has a geminate /d/, one *d* is better. Since *-sh* is English, *-sch* is German and *-ch* is French, the recommended spelling is *yidich*. This form should be inflected regularly (*écrivain yidich, littérature yidiche, journaux yidichs, revues yidiches*).

David L. Gold  
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### New term for allophone

I have a small comment with reference to the article entitled "Anglo-Quebec on the Verge of its History", by Gary Caldwell (No. 8 Autumn 1982). He uses the term "allophone" at least twice and *although* he includes a footnote defining this term ("Neologism for those whose mother tongue is neither English or French") and *although* I know that this term is gaining some currency in French, I think that it should be avoided in English if at all possible. The reason for this is that allophone is a very well-known and widely used (and indispensable) term in phonology and it would be horribly confusing to have two definitions for this one term in linguistics. There is obviously a need for a term for Mr. Caldwell's meaning, but I think some word other than allophone should be used. I can't offhand think of anything else but I'm sure someone can come up with a better term – and the sooner the better!

The article on Yugoslavia was particularly interesting. I think it is really valuable for us in Canada to see how such situations are handled elsewhere in the world, because otherwise we could easily lose perspective when it comes to certain problems. Let's have more articles on other multilingual countries!

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