



Stratégie nationale
pour la sécurité linguistique

National Strategy for Linguistic Security



Canada

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Context



PREAMBLE

As the face of Canada's francophonie is changing and we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Official Languages Act (OLA), a great number of francophones don't feel comfortable speaking French. Some feel they don't master the language well enough, others fear being judged because of their accent, or believe the way they speak is inferior to that of people in other areas. Affecting people of all ages across the country, language insecurity is a long-standing issue and an cross-sectoral phenomenon that takes many forms.

Both a societal issue and an individual experience, linguistic insecurity is a complex phenomenon. From the get-go, it's important to recognize that this strategy doesn't account for every perspective on the subject. That would be an impossible task, given that some viewpoints are in opposition and that the linguistic insecurity experience varies from one person to the next.

Furthermore, although linguistic insecurity is a phenomenon that is experienced and studied in many communities the world over, this strategy deals with the phenomenon in a very specific context. It doesn't claim to address the concerns of every language minority in Canada. Its orientation, the challenges it describes, the strategies and suggested courses of action are all specific to Canada's francophonie.

That being said, the terms "francophones" and "francophonie" are used here in their most inclusive definitions. Whoever uses French in Canada—either verbally or in writing, whether it's their native tongue, their fifth language, or they are just starting to learn it—can relate to this strategy and feel wholeheartedly welcome within the language community we share.

Moreover, although the Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française (French-Canadian Youth Federation—FJCF) has been involved in the linguistic insecurity file for many years, it does not possess sole ownership over the matter. This strategy aims to respect other initiatives offering simultaneously that also deal with linguistic insecurity.

Although it stems from Canada's francophonie, we truly hope that francophones who are members of minority communities are not the only ones who feel concerned by this strategy. This strategy's reach and implementation will depend on support from the two great language majorities in this country: francophones in Quebec and anglophones throughout Canada.

Lastly, it's worth noting that this strategy is a stepping stone to progress, not a definite solution. This strategy is a living document that will evolve and improve over the years.

To find out more about linguistic security, share ongoing initiatives or explore potential courses of action, visit the website for the strategy at www.snsi.ca.

TOWARDS A COMMON UNDERSTANDING

Our approach has allowed us to compile many definitions of linguistic insecurity. Rather than offer only one, we are offering our take on the phenomenon and seek to establish a common ground from which we can better understand the issue and act together. Our understanding stems, namely, from a literature review and comments received at different steps of the consultations, which help determine certain recurring themes.

Linguistic security is a complex phenomenon, both social and individual, full of emotions. When we exit our comfort zone or we feel vulnerable because of the way we use French, we're living linguistic insecurity. Insecurity can manifest itself as a feeling of shame for individuals getting remarks about their accent, of guilt for parents who aren't able to pass on their language to their children, sadness for people who realize they no longer speak their mother tongue, etc.

Insecurity comes from an action, an intervention, a comment, a menacing context that hurts, intimidates, humiliates or frustrates someone about their language or the way they use it. That is symptomatic of a judgment, not only on the language, but the culture and identity of the people expressing themselves. Throughout the elaboration process for the strategy, many people mentioned the need to share their experiences, to speak about what their peers have experienced, in order to better deal with the emotional aspect of linguistic insecurity.

For many, the language standard is at the heart of the issue, French is a language with many standards, and the idea that there is only one right way to speak, write or use French (standardized French) is still commonly believed. This myth of standardized French has been the source of many criticisms towards French speakers. It has discouraged generations of learners and has been a source of distinction—often negative—between individuals from Canada’s francophonie and the supposed lords and masters of this singular French.

The balance of power is also an important factor of linguistic insecurity.

The balance of power is also an important factor of linguistic insecurity. If you speak French in Canada, you’re identifying yourself as part of a minority. The insecurity found in Canada’s francophonie namely comes from the fact that we are minorities both in regards to the dominant language in North America (English) and our neighbour where French is the language of the majority (Quebec).

Linguistic insecurity isn’t just about accents. We speak many kinds of French in Canada and these variations have evolved over the centuries according to the local needs and realities, often very different from one region to the next throughout the country. So there’s not only regional accents, but also variations in the vocabulary from one community to another. There was a time when each village, perhaps even each family, had its distinctive accent and vocabulary.

It's also worth noting the many levels of language that can be used, depending on the context in which the use takes place (formal, informal, etc.) or the information being communicated (professional, recreational, etc.). All these registers need to be recognized as legitimate, as they represent different situations in which a speaker might be able to use French. It is also important to recognize that all these registers are not all equivalent at all times. Anyone who only masters one register may receive fairly harsh criticism from people they are looking to communicate with if their registers don't match up. The ability to navigate between these different registers, depending on the context, is a great source of confidence, resilience and pride for speakers. It's a skill worth emphasizing more going forward.

Many see the balance of power play out on the level of language registers which distinguish the (standardized) French spoken by leaders (renowned personalities, leaders from the political and associative field, etc.) and their own French which is more colloquial, regional and original. There is a link to be drawn here between linguistic insecurity, language standards and social rank. Linguistic insecurity is a long-standing phenomenon, studied over a century ago in the U.S., and then in Canada as well as internationally. It's a phenomenon found in every environment and affects speakers throughout the world where more than one language is used.

Studies distinguish three categories of linguistic insecurity: status insecurity, identity insecurity, and formal insecurity. Status insecurity is tied to a language's status and prestige. It implies "a negative representation of the sociopolitical status of their language and social group" .

As for identity insecurity, it varies depending on the degree to which "the language is a defining entity of the identity of the community in which it is spoken." When it comes to the relationship between a person's identity and the language used, or the degree to which a person identifies with a collective language identity, it's a matter of identity insecurity.

Lastly, formal insecurity occurs when an individual believes their use of a language varies from the standard. This form of insecurity "comes from the myth according to which a language is a homogeneous and immovable entity, set once and for all. " The influence of standardized French can be felt here, and the wider the gap between standard French and the French being used, the greater the insecurity.

The repercussions of linguistic insecurity can be enormous. For an individual, the ultimate manifestation of linguistic insecurity is silence. French is abandoned rather than keep running up against the perceived marginalization. For our communities, linguistic insecurity results in the disappearance of a community, a free-fall in the number of French-language speakers, fewer people using services offered in French and a gradual erosion of rights. We must act together starting today to ensure French continues to be heard in various living spaces throughout the country.

¹ Calvet, Louis-Jean, « L'insécurité linguistique et les situations africaines » dans Louis-Jean Calvet et Marie-Louise Moreau (dir.), *Une ou des normes? L'insécurité linguistique et normes endogènes en Afrique francophone*, Agence de la francophonie, Collection Langues et développement, 1998, page 27.

² Robineau, Anne et Josée Guignard Noël, *Éduquer en français au Nouveau-Brunswick : Recherche pour appuyer le commissaire*, Ministère de l'Éducation du Nouveau-Brunswick, September 2008, page 163.

³ Dalley, Phyllis, « Former des locuteurs et des locutrices confiants : de la théorie à la pratique », Université d'Ottawa, Faculty of Education, April 2018, page 3.

⁴ Calvet, Op. Cit., page 27.

⁵ Calvet, Op. Cit., page 27.

PREMISE

This strategy focuses first and foremost on perspectives for the future and ways to improve language safety in Canada's francophonie. That's why it's a strategy for linguistic security rather than insecurity. We want to signal from the get-go that this strategy is focused on the positive and firmly turned towards the future.

One thing's for sure: we're not claiming that this strategy can eliminate or cure linguistic insecurity. In fact, since it's a phenomenon that's experienced differently from one person to the next, it would be unrealistic to try to eliminate it. Rather, this strategy aims to reinforce linguistic security, both on the collective and individual level, that and to consolidate favourable conditions for linguistic security.

Moreover, it's worth clarifying how this strategy takes into consideration the individual dimension of linguistic security. Individuals certainly have a share of responsibility to bear in the matter. Each speaker must assume personal responsibility and cultivate their confidence and resilience when faced with situations where it's hard to live in French. But we can't shift the blame to individuals for systemic challenges resulting from factors outside their control. Civil society and the government also have a considerable share of responsibility, and their actions could create favourable conditions for linguistic security for individuals and communities in Canada's francophonie.

We're proposing a strategy that will bring together many types of stakeholders at once: individuals, associations, groups, institutions, governments. Given the complexity of the issue and the fields of intervention, it can seem somewhat reductive to offer such a limited number of challenges, strategies and courses of action.

In fact, given the wide range of partners working together to implement this strategy, the courses of action are almost infinite. This strategy therefore suggests a few courses of action we consider a priority, that take into consideration its premise.

In order to improve linguistic security among Canada's francophones, those who use French must do so out of a deep personal conviction, a source of confidence and personal resilience. They must also feel a sense of belonging to something bigger, a place where it's possible to live and grow in French, to benefit from a range of services and opportunities to express themselves in the language they love.

MAIN DIRECTIONS

The literature review and consultations also allowed us to identify four main sectoral areas from which we developed this strategy. These areas became the four fields of intervention at the heart of this strategy: education, the workforce, culture and media and public policies. A global objective accompanies the fields of intervention.

This approach allowed us to identify problems (challenges) for each field of intervention and the global objective, as well as strategies and courses of action seeking to improve the current situation in various regards.



A global objective

FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

Although actions in each field of intervention will certainly lead to progress in regards to linguistic security, we believe concerted action from all stakeholders will be required to reach our global objective.



CHALLENGE

- 1.1 Strengthen the feeling of belonging, the confidence and language resilience throughout Canada.



STRATEGIES

- 1.2 Make all Canadians aware of the cultural, regional and language diversity among Canada's francophonie.
- 1.3 Support and equip francophones that wish to lead a personal initiative to build their language confidence and resilience.



PRIORITY COURSES OF ACTION

1.4

Lead a national campaign (through social and traditional media) promoting cultural, regional and language diversity among Canada's francophonie.

1.7

Develop and distribute resources supporting francophones that wish to lead a personal initiative to build their language confidence and resilience.

1.5

Encourage and equip people who wish to facilitate and take part in awareness dialogues around the question of linguistic security.

1.8

Foster research and research sharing around linguistic security.

1.6

Develop and distribute resources demystifying and explaining linguistic security.

1.9

Increase the number of exchange opportunities allowing Canadians to live in Canada's francophone communities.



What we want to do differently

in education

FIELDS OF INTERVENTION



OVERVIEW OF THE FIELD OF INTERVENTION

The crises that lead to the right to French-language education, to French schools, school boards, commissions, divisions and school districts, to francophone post-secondary institutions, are examples of will (community, collective, political), recognition, affirmation and advocacy. They are initiatives that showcase the resilience and determination of francophones across the country that defended and demanded their rights publicly and repeatedly, giving our communities places where French is taught and constantly heard.

Thanks to sustained, long-term collective efforts, Canada's francophonie now boasts a vast network of daycare services, schools, colleges and universities supporting French-language education throughout Canada. Add to this continuum immersion schools, French as a second language learning programs, groups in favour of bilingualism, adult education, etc. These instances, institutions and resources are also involved in the vitality of French in Canada, and foster an increased feeling of linguistic security for all those using French across the country.

This network has developed various remarkable expertise, approaches and tools (language and cultural planning, identity building, etc.) and has innumerable allies for linguistic security. Throughout the country, schools are building relationships between students and community resources that will allow them to keep growing in French throughout their lives; devoted teachers encouraging students to use French in their day-to-day lives, adults choosing to learn French and send their children to French or immersion schools, etc.

But even with all the gains listed and the active leaders in the community, much remains to be done to optimize the education field's contribution to strengthening linguistic security in Canada's francophonie.

On one end, we need to complete the French-language education continuum in Canada. Improving access to early childhood services in French and ensuring access to post-secondary education in French everywhere, for everyone, are essential elements of a strategy seeking to strengthen linguistic security.

On one end, we need to complete the French-language education continuum in Canada. Improving access to early childhood services in French and ensuring access to post-secondary education in French everywhere, for everyone, are essential elements of a strategy seeking to strengthen linguistic security. But simply adding new links to the education chain isn't enough. Important consolidation work needs to occur to ensure continuity of action and coherence within the existing continuum.

Although many educational spaces already stand out through their initiatives to strengthen linguistic security, approaches and success still vary from one area, community, even school or classroom to the other. Not all teachers are trained to know about the language diversity in Canada's francophonie or are aware of the role they can play to strengthen linguistic security for learners.

In fact, since education is under provincial jurisdiction, policies and approaches regarding French-language education vary from one province and territory to the next. There's no doubt that aligning certain practices (namely when it comes to the initial training, ongoing training and identity building) would prove extremely helpful for linguistic security.

Moreover, the increased recognition of language variations and registers is essential to strengthening linguistic security. It's also essential that classrooms become safe spaces for learners to speak. Opportunities to speak should be more plentiful, and learners shouldn't constantly feel judged when they're speaking French. In order to ensure these concerns are taken into consideration, which could dramatically increase the confidence and resilience of the next generation of French speakers, it seems imperative to ensure

initial and ongoing training that will provide tools for teachers and education professionals working throughout Canada's francophonie, while multiplying opportunities for learners to speak in a safe and validating environment.

Unfortunately, generations of francophones were subjected to the harmful effects of linguistic insecurity, to the point they are hesitant to speak French today.

On the other hand, we also know that education doesn't end within a school's four walls. Linguistic security also depends on access to an array of life spaces that make the use of French an everyday thing. Establishing and maintaining these francophone living spaces is a responsibility shared by education professionals, families, and many community partners. Among those stakeholders, parents are especially in need of support and resources to better accompany and assist their children. Parents are at the heart of a child's identity building. Unfortunately, generations of francophones were subjected to the harmful effects of linguistic insecurity, to the point they are hesitant to speak French today. Those people find themselves in a difficult position when it comes to building their child's language confidence and resilience. That's why it's paramount that parents benefit from resources allowing them to discuss and contribute to their child's linguistic security, so that they may feel fully involved in francophone living spaces throughout the country.

But although the education community, parents and other education partners are all allies to strengthen linguistic security in education, they remain external players. These allies can certainly work together to create winning conditions, but an important part of the work must be done directly by the learner. Linguistic security also involves introspection and taking charge individually to build confidence and resiliency, so that speakers take advantage of opportunities and capitalize on francophone living spaces around them.



CHALLENGES

- 2.1 Make every educational establishment a bastion of linguistic security.
- 2.2 Strengthen the linguistic security of the students, outside the school.



STRATEGIES

- 2.3 Equip parents with tools so they can strengthen their child's linguistic security.
- 2.4 Multiply and enhance the ties between school and other francophone life spaces.



PRIORITY COURSES OF ACTION

2.5

Ensure initial training and ongoing training opportunities so members of the education community can refine their knowledge about Canada's francophonie, variations of French and linguistic security.

2.6

Integrate modules about linguistic security, specifically cultural, regional and language diversity, language registers and French variations to the curriculum across the country.

2.7

Multiply initiatives that integrate accessible francophone models (artists, athletes, leaders, etc.) to education.

2.8

Recognize the legitimacy of language variations and help learners navigate multiple language registers.

2.9

Multiply safe and valorizing speaking opportunities for learners in order to build their confidence and resilience.

2.10

Ensure access to post-secondary education in French everywhere, for everyone.



What we want to do differently

in the workforce

FIELDS OF INTERVENTION



OVERVIEW OF THE FIELD OF INTERVENTION

Although the francophone economic space represents an important part of Canada's GDP, it is recognized that that French isn't the dominant language when it comes to business in Canada. In fact, getting the business community to recognize the advantages of an active offer has been a bit of a mixed bag. In francophone communities throughout the country, where one business proudly advertises its services in both official languages, its neighbour—who is just as able to offer service in French—never makes it known.

Moreover, we recognize the fact that being a francophone, or being “bilingual” influences work perspectives and experiences for Canadiens and Canadians in the workplace.

Moreover, we recognize the fact that being a francophone, or being “bilingual” influences work perspectives and experiences for Canadiens and Canadians in the workplace. Whether in the public service or the private sector, language skills and an accent can affect career perspectives and performances. And yet, outside certain environments (education, public service, association network, etc.), even in companies with many francophones, opportunities to work in French are limited. Many companies aren't fully exploiting the potential of French to develop new markets.

It's worth doubling down on convincing companies of the potential windfalls from active offer. A key element of strengthening la linguistic security lies in bringing together and connecting companies throughout the country. Those who get involved in such networks quickly come to see how their ability to conduct business in French can lead to new opportunities. They also recognize that fostering a work environment where francophones feel comfortable exchanging in French, whether with employees or customers, even in a company where the owner and most of the employees aren't francophones—increases satisfaction within the team.

We must increase the number of companies who are aware that their employee's language skills are a marketable asset for the company, and where the use of French is encouraged both internally and with customers and partners. But beyond increased recognition of French's transactional value, we also wish to encourage pride and a sense of belonging to Canada's francophonie from the business community. If companies show their language offer through pride and belonging, rather than strictly for money, it will be a catalyst for increased linguistic security in our communities.

Finally, we must simultaneously encourage all Canadians to request service in French—not only with government services, but in all their interactions with a wide range of companies in the private sector—in order to show there is a need and an interest from customers.



CHALLENGE

- 3.1 Communicate the added value bilingualism and an active offer of services in French, from a financial standpoint.



STRATEGIES

- 3.2 Encourage companies to consolidate and promote their ability to offer services in French.
- 3.3 Foster workplaces where employees have the opportunity to chat and work in French.



PRIORITY COURSES OF ACTION

3.4

Develop and promote resources (website, video vignettes, etc.) to show companies the advantages of an active offer of services in French.

3.5

Explain to companies the importance of showing their sense of belonging to francophonie.

3.6

Provide tools for employees so they are better equipped to discuss the questions of active offer of services in French and the language spoken in the workplace with their employer.

3.7

Offer incentives (promotional tools, shout-out on social media, etc.) to companies that promote an active offer of services in French and the use of French in the workplace.

3.8

Create discussion opportunities for companies from different communities across Canada's francophonie.

3.9

Favour an approach based on reciprocity in initiatives bringing together companies from Canada's francophonie and their counterparts from Quebec.



What we want to do differently

on a cultural and media level

FIELDS OF INTERVENTION



OVERVIEW OF THE FIELD OF INTERVENTION

Globalization and the digital era have facilitated and accelerated access to content (books and periodicals, songs, TV shows, videos, podcasts, games, apps, blogs, etc.) and experiences (shows, exhibits, etc.) from across the world. However, content and experiences from our areas, showcasing our communities, our artists, our accents, our realities, are still too rare. This content fuels a sense of belonging to francophonie, while its absence undermines linguistic security by isolating those who speak French. Francophones are demanding content that not only speaks to them and about them, but that looks and feels like them. Where such content exists, they tend to get drowned in the ocean of worldwide content Canadians can access instantly. Much work remains to be done to raise the profile and increase access to content coming out of our communities.

Since we're discussing the digital culture, among other things, it's important to discuss social media. It's especially important when it comes to linguistic security. First, social media make up a French living space, namely for the younger generations. Although the space is virtual, its importance for those who live there is concrete and paramount. Also, social media is a forum that facilitates access to a vast array of content. In that sense, it represents a first-rate cultural corridor. Yet, a lot of work remains to be done in order for Canada's francophonie can truly take advantage of the opportunities offered by social media.

Culture is the beating heart of Canada's francophonie. The work of artists and arts organizations creates opportunities to come together around the language that unites us. Shows, festivals, publications and exhibits from francophone artists and arts organizations each mark an opportunity to celebrate French. Reading a book in French, listening to a podcast, or tuning in to a series or movie from our community, recognizing an accent from back home on the radio, on TV or online brings us together and makes us feel like we belong to a community without borders. Each cultural experience strengthens a person's linguistic security.

Furthermore, artists are ambassadors for our language, in all its diversity. When a local artist tours throughout our communities, they help liven up a province, a territory, a region, perhaps even the entire country. Then, when an artist from Manitoba goes to Quebec, France or the United States, for example, they bring with them the riches of Canada's francophonie. Their role as an ambassador of francophonie grows as the reach of their activity spreads.

For all these reasons, we believe it is imperative that Canada develop a true Canadian cultural policy. Such a national framework would help better develop, support and promote arts and culture in Canada's francophonie as well as abroad.



CHALLENGES

- 4.1 Ensure that media better reflect the cultural, regional and language diversity in Canada's francophonie.
- 4.2 Increase the reach of our artists, arts organizations and cultural products from Canada's francophonie.



STRATEGIES

- 4.3 Increase the amount of French-language content coming from Canada's francophonie and make it more accessible.
- 4.4 Diversify the accents and variations of French heard among traditional broadcasters.



STRATEGIES

- 4.5 Increase the mobility of artists and arts organizations from Canada's francophonie.
- 4.6 Facilitate access to cultural products (books, periodicals, audio recordings, etc.)



PRIORITY COURSES OF ACTION

4.7

Give Canada a National action framework for culture, a Canadian cultural policy that aims to develop, support and promote arts and culture, and ensure an important amount of space is reserved for Canada's francophonie.

4.8

Create a national observatory on arts and culture to better document Canada's cultural situation and the impacts of the sector in Canada and abroad.

4.9

Increase and diversify the funding (grants, tax credits, regulatory measures) allowing the creation of content from Canada's francophonie.

4.10

Ensure the media—including our public broadcaster—shows more content from Canada's francophonie (both in traditional and digital media) and ensure this content reflects a full range of proposals in response to the needs and interests of a diversified audience (entertainment, news, documentary, fiction, variety, animation, etc.)

4.11

Ensure the vitality and modernization of cultural and community infrastructure (media, locations, organizations, networks, etc.) in Canada's francophone communities.

4.13

Increase the promotion of opportunities (festivals, etc.) that allow people to come together around francophone cultural activities.

4.12

Increase the number of performance by artists from Canada's francophonie in communities from their home province, and elsewhere.

4.14

Develop partnerships to increase the profile of content from Canada's francophonie and make it more available on various platforms (Spotify playlists, Netflix, Tou.tv, ONF.ca, dubbing by voices from Canada's francophonie, etc.)



What we want to do differently



when it comes to public policies

LES DOMAINES D'INTERVENTION



OVERVIEW OF THE FIELD OF INTERVENTION

Linguistic insecurity namely stems from the status held by a language and the perception of that status by the speakers. Public policies help codify the status, to define its meaning and structure its reach. They also allow the governments to confirm the ways they plan to make sure this status is valued and preserved, namely through certain rights enshrined in laws.

And yet, since the Official Languages Act (OLA) was adopted in 1969, French has enjoyed a very specific status within Canada, which grants it symbolic, legal, and political recognition. This status at the federal level—strengthened namely through the language rights enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, by the mandate of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and certain articles of the Broadcasting Act—has been repeated at other levels of government. Many provinces, territories and municipalities have passed laws or measures granting a specific status for French or looking to protect the place of French.

And yet, at the same moment we were celebrating the 50th anniversary of the OLA, the legitimacy of French as an official language was being questioned in certain areas of the country. Clearly, the added value of two official languages remains misunderstood, and even with the current and historical legal framework, both official languages are not quite equal.

Beyond the statutory recognition, true linguistic security rests on policies that rely on positive measures supporting the vitality of French throughout Canada. Such policies, programs and other measures will make the entire country one big place to live in French. These policies need to focus on providing tools to language communities, so that they can be directly involved in their growth. The policies need to be developed and implemented

at all levels of government, through true and constant dialogue communities themselves. This would mark a renewed commitment from the government towards official languages and would directly strengthen linguistic security Canada's francophonie. The prospect of such a renewed commitment allows us to imagine a future where each speaker feels completely comfortable living in French wherever they are in Canada, whether in a social, family, professional, cultural, recreational, community or commercial context.

In that sense, renewing a close and systematic collaboration between Canada's francophonie and Quebec is a must. We hope for softer borders and increased collaboration between all francophone bodies across the country to help advance a common goal: ensuring French remains a dynamic and vibrant tongue throughout Canada. Regardless of their location, French speakers share a common future.

The place of French in Canada isn't in the footnotes or only in the roots of a shared heritage. Not only will francophones across the country need to come together, but la linguistic security in Canada will need to become a priority for the anglophone majority, as well as allophones. Creating a space to live in French throughout the country must be a project that rallies all of Canada. To do so, the Canadian government must increase its efforts to promote French as an official language and rally their peers at the provincial, territorial and municipal level, along with its community partners, around a true strategy to recognize the value of both official languages.

The federal government will need to assume leadership in order to strengthen la linguistic security throughout the country and implement positive measures that foster the development and vitality of communities. Francophones expect tangible commitments to foster the growth of French in Canada and strengthen the linguistic security of those who speak French to be among the government's priorities at any given time.

That means, among other things, that the government of Canada must get a francophone perspective when developing, implementing and evaluating its programs and policies—in any field.

That means, among other things, that the government of Canada must get a francophone perspective when developing, implementing and evaluating its programs and policies—in any field. That also requires that French become a truly horizontal priority throughout government, for all departments, agencies and bodies of the federal government—including in its intergovernmental relationships with provinces and territories as well as its international engagements—rather than one file among others within a portfolio given to a single department. Lastly, that requires that language rights be given the force of law, and that failing to respect obligations set forth in the law be met with tangible repercussions.



CHALLENGE

- 5.1 Consolidate the legislative framework surrounding la linguistic security at all levels of government.



STRATEGIES

- 5.2 Modernize and consolidate the federal legislative framework.
- 5.3 Increase and strengthen the legislative framework at the provincial, territorial and municipal levels.



PRIORITY COURSES OF ACTION

- 5.4 Modernize Part VII of the Official Languages Act to foster full empowerment among Canada's francophonie and ensure positive measures are systematically taken to support communities.
- 5.5 Entrust the responsibility of implementing the Official Languages Act to a central government agency; explicitly state the roles and responsibilities of the various federal bodies in regards to implementing and confirming the repercussions for any public body that would fail to meet its obligations as laid out in the Act.
- 5.6 Implement an inter-government strategy to promote and highlight both official languages, in Canada and abroad. Ensure the various levels of government and official language community stakeholders are involved in this initiative. This strategy should celebrate the importance of two official languages as a pillar of Canadian identity and highlight their added value to society.
- 5.7 Review the legislative framework surrounding Société Radio-Canada in order to compel the public broadcaster to grant cultural, regional and language diversity from Canada's francophonie a prime showcase on its airwaves, namely on the national network.
- 5.8 Consolidate and improve the laws and measures supporting linguistic security at the provincial, territorial and municipal levels.



Call to action

This strategy marks a step forward for linguistic security for francophones across Canada.

We invite all bodies and partners across Canada's francophonie to read it, but most importantly, decide how they will act. Because let's be clear: the time to act is now. We heard it on many occasions throughout the consultations that lead to this strategy: linguistic insecurity has been making individuals vulnerable and stunting the growth of communities for too long now.

Success will depend on the efforts of the governments, departments, agencies, organizations, groups as well as individuals, since every individual has the personal responsibility of cultivating their inner strength and increasing their self-confidence and resiliency in the face of the many language challenges in their path.

Success will depend on the efforts of the governments, departments, agencies, organizations, groups as well as individuals, since every individual has the personal responsibility of cultivating their inner strength and increasing their self-confidence and resiliency in the face of the many language challenges in their path. We must dare to rethink the way we do things, dare to open up to change and recognize the ways of the past may no longer be what we need today.

All stakeholders will need to work together in order to implement this strategy and create winning conditions for spaces where anyone can live in French anywhere in Canada.

Acknowledgements



The Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française (FJCF) would like to acknowledge the collaborative work that has led to the achievement of this Strategy.

The FJCF is delighted that stakeholders from across the country, from different backgrounds and with varied expertise, have shown themselves willing to recognize the importance of demystifying linguistic insecurity and the need to address it.

The members of the Working Group on Linguistic Security have, through their commitment, their vision and their expertise, testified to the manifestations of linguistic insecurity in the communities they serve, guided the discussions and proposed solutions.

The linguistic security working group is consist of:

- L'Association canadienne d'éducation en langue française (ACELF)
- La Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA)
- Canadian Teachers's Federation (CTF)
- La Fédération culturelle canadienne-française (FCCF)
- Le Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada (RCCFC)
- La Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF)
- La Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones (FNCSF)



The FJCF thanks them for their support and their trust.

This strategy has been made possible thanks to the financial contribution of the following partners:

- The Government of Canada
- Farm Credit Canada (FCC)
- La Cité
- The Canadian Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue
- The Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA)
- The Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)
- Canadian Teachers's Federation (CTF)
- RDÉE Canada
- The Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF)
- The Fédération des aînés et aînées francophones du Canada (FNCSF)



The FJCF thanks them for believing in this project.

The team of experts made up of Eric Dubeau, Raphaëlle Mercier, Noémie Théberge and Sylvie Lamoureux, was attentive to concerns and able to propose a multisectoral approach in developing and writing the Strategy.



The FJCF thanks them for their dedication.

The FJCF would also like to recognize the contribution of Daniel Boutin, a master's student at the University of Ottawa, for his work in analyzing the results of the fall 2018 survey.

Last but not least, the Federation wishes to acknowledge the contribution of all those who participated in the process leading to this strategy and to thank each person and each group who will participate in its implementation, because each and every one is part of the solution.

Annex 1

Lexicon

Linguistic security concerns everyone, and we want this strategy to be accessible to each person in Canada. This is why we feel it's important to define the meaning of certain terms used in this document.

CONTENT

Since the digital shift, the cultural sector uses this term more often to refer to a wide range of media products (books and periodicals, songs, TV shows, videos, podcasts, games, apps, blogs, etc.)

EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

The professionals in the education continuum (educators, teachers, principals, superintendents, professors, deans, etc.), parents and others who accompany the learners.

FRANCOPHONES

This strategy uses a definition that includes all those who use French. We don't distinguish between those for whom French is a first language, a second language, or one of many languages.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION CONTINUUM

The institutions that ensure French-language education in Canada (daycare, elementary school high school, college, university, adult education, etc.). For the purpose of this strategy, French immersion establishments, Core French and French as a second language programs are also a part of the continuum.

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

We speak many types of French in Canada. The language evolved differently from one end of the country to the other, as an abundance of regionalisms (terms frequently used in one or many regions) and accents will confirm. Furthermore, successive waves of immigration continue to help diversify and enrich Canada's various types of French. The term "language diversity" takes into consideration all the variations of French, whether in regards to accents, vocabulary, register, etc.

LANGUAGE REGISTERS

Language variations noticeable by the change in tone, vocabulary, etc., according to the context (social, cultural, professional, etc.) the speaker find themselves in. A level of expression that changes according to different communication situations. Although there are many language registers, they don't all have the same social value.

LANGUAGE STANDARD

The idea that there exists one and only one way to speak, write or use a language—in this case, French. Some will use the terms “standard French” or “reference French”: a highly standardized form of French the speaker is called upon to compare—most often unfavourably—to their use of the language.

LIVING SPACES

It's important that opportunities to use French and live in French be made available often and everywhere, and that francophones possess enough confidence and resilience to seize these opportunities. This strategy aims to multiply spaces where you can live freely in French, and encourage French speakers to do so even when conditions aren't optimal (where francophones aren't the only participants in an activity, or in an office where most people only speak English, for example). The subject of “standardizing” (making standard or more acceptable) the use of French. It is, however, important not to confuse that “standardizing” with efforts to ensure a standardized use of French (in accordance with the rules of standard French).

RESILIENCE

Ability to resist negative pressure and overcome the everyday language challenges a French speaker can experience (ex. keep speaking French within a group, even when we're in a language minority and could switch to the language of the majority).

SPEAKER

Person using a language; in our case, French.

Annex 2

Overview of the initiative

The Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française (FJCF) has been working on the linguistic security file since 2014, but it hasn't been working alone. In September 2016, guided by an approach focused on dialogue and collaboration, FJCF gathers several partners to build a working group on linguistic security. Since then, the group has been guiding the work on this matter.

The members of the work group are:

- Association canadienne d'éducation en langue française (ACELF)
- Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA)
- Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants (FCE)
- Fédération culturelle canadienne-française (FCCF)
- Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada (RCCFC)
- Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF)
- Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones (FNCSF)
- Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française (FJCF)

Among the steps that led to the creation of this national strategy, it's worth noting:

INVENTORY



- Literature review (Fall 2018)
 - ✓ 64 documents
 - ✓ Over 2,000 pages
 - ✓ Academic texts, legal documents, briefs, articles, presentations, etc.



- Public survey (Fall 2018)
 - ✓ 1374 respondents
 - ✓ Respondents of all ages; from 10 provinces and 3 territories



- Call for memorandums (Winter 2019)
 - ✓ 5 memorandums received



- Conversation guide (Winter 2019)
 - ✓ 25 conversation reports

REFLEXION DOCUMENT (SPRING 2019)



- Identifying the four great areas of the eventual strategy
- One fundamental question: What do we want to do differently?

NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM (SPRING 2019)



- 157 participants
- Youth delegation: 30% of registrations
- 8 sectors represented
- Participants from 10 provinces and 3 territories

PRODUCTION OF VIDEO VIGNETTES (FALL 2019—WINTER 2020)



- Covering each of the four major fields of intervention
- Starring leaders and actively involved youth in each of the four fields of intervention
- Shot in Moncton, Ottawa, St-Boniface, Edmonton.

Annex 3

Some results from the national survey

In the fall of 2018, in the midst of preparing for the National symposium on linguistic security and in order to open up the reflection on linguistic security to as many people as possible, the FJCF launched a public survey through social media. Between October 18 and November 28, some 1,374 people took the survey.

The survey turned out to be an especially rich source of information in regards to experiences with linguistic insecurity and certain identity trends. However, please note that the following section is not presenting the conclusions of a scientific study. It is rather meant to enrich the common understanding through the sharing of certain survey results.

PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS



- Respondents of all ages and parts of the country.



75% of respondents live in New Brunswick, Ontario or Quebec.



71% are women;
26% are men;
1% are in transition;
1% are other;
1% prefer not to say



71% urban



29% rural



Self-identification:

10% are from a visible minority;
5% indigenous identity

SOME STRIKING OBSERVATIONS



- Although French is the first language of 74% of the respondents, only 66% of respondents stated that French is their preferred language for communicating and only 55% of respondents identify as francophone;



74% french is their first language
66 % french is their preferred language
55 % identify as francophone

- 39% of respondents identify as bilingual; 6% identify as anglophone;



6 % anglophone
39 % bilingue

- The perception of being able to live in French varies according to the age of the respondents. Respondents aged 19 to 45 (45% of the total number of respondents) are those who believe most strongly that they can live in French;



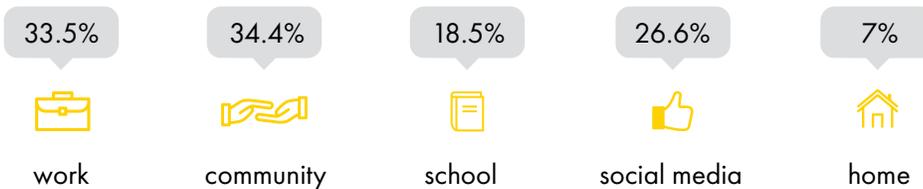
19 years old

45 years old

✓ can live in French

- The majority of respondents are more or only likely to listen to music and watch TV shows in English;

- Linguistic insecurity is felt at all ages, but seems to affect a greater number of young respondents:
 - ✓ A higher trend to talk about linguistic insecurity can be observed among young respondents.
 - ✓ A gradual downwards trend of the feeling of linguistic insecurity can be observed according to the age of the respondents.
- Linguistic insecurity is experienced in any environment, namely work (33.5%) and the community (34.4%), but also school (18.5%), social media (26.6%) and even at home (7%).



- The sources of linguistic insecurity are numerous, and often external, but the greatest number of respondents indicated that we ourselves are a source of linguistic insecurity.



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