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Challenging Education and Media in a Pluri-lingual Society

by:

Enrico W. del Castello. B.A., Hon. B.A.

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and
Research in partial fulfilment for the degree of

Master of Arts

in Canadian Studies

Carleton University

OTTAWA, Ontario

December 1, 1995

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**"Challenging Education and Media
in a Pluri-lingual Society"**

**submitted by Enrico Del Castello, Hons. B.A.
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts**

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January 1996**

Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to show how the policy of multiculturalism in Canada has evolved, and how the policy has communicated its goals through language retention programs, and through media. The research will consider the various types of perceptions that have been formulated about the idea of cultural and linguistic retention in a pluri-ethnic society such as Canada.

In 1969, Book IV of the Report of Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, although not mandated to study the idea of pluri-ethnicity, advanced recommendations to preserve the cultural and linguistic contributions of *the other ethnic groups* since *they constituted a significant component of Canadian society*.

More specifically, Book IV of the Report of the Royal Commission has been hailed as the precursor to the policy of multiculturalism. Later policies that have made reference to Book IV have generated interpretations of multiculturalism that seem to have a philosophical distance from the concepts elaborated in the Book. There seems to be considerable variance of interpretation between existing policies of multiculturalism and some of the observations contained in Book IV.

After more than twenty years of official multiculturalism the different interpretations and the diverging views between Book IV and the present multicultural policies have created a vacuum which is undermining the very existence of multiculturalism; lack of elaboration of fundamental principles has left

the implementation of multiculturalism prey to many different philosophical and political trends.

Canada is, *de facto*, a pluri-ethnic and a pluri-lingual society. However much the degree of retention by one group or another of language and culture may vary, the fact remains that significant levels are either maintained or revived (through waves of recent immigration). That being the case, pluri-ethnicity is a constant factor that needs to be addressed.

Revisiting Book IV of the Royal Commission, this thesis argues, would go a long way to dissipate the clouds of the present policies and engender positive institutional changes.

Acknowledgments

I cannot thank enough people who have helped me in the long itinerary of the thesis; *in primis et ante omnia*, my thanks to Professors Claudia Persi Haines and Bruce McFarlane who, through their professional guidance have led me through the course of the thesis. I wish to thank Professor Kenneth McRae, who has followed with interest the development of the thesis, Professor Stan McMullin, Director of the School of Canadian Studies, who has been considerate with me. I am grateful. I thank Peter Stockdale for his guidance and encouragement.

The subject matter I chose is both timely and interesting. It is with a great sense of challenge that I approach a subject matter of which I have known both the academic and practical side. This is a rare and timely combination that I cherish.

More than twenty years of personal investment in Heritage Languages Programme and community affairs have complemented well my academic research in this field: I have been with the Ottawa Roman Catholic School Board for ten years, where I spent my first seven years dealing with ethnocultural groups and more directly, for three years, I was Coordinator of the Heritage Languages Programme; I have been for twenty years the director of programs for the Italian Canadian Youth Formation Centre, a language school that I founded in 1974; I was for three years the Executive Director General for the National Congress of Italian Canadians where I had the opportunity of travelling around the Country and abroad, and in which I had the special portfolio of education as it refers to heritage languages and shared

ideas and gave conference at various workshops; during such mandate I was also one of the witnesses before the Standing Parliamentary Committee on Multiculturalism where I tabled and defended the views of the National Congress as they related to the then proposed Bill on multiculturalism; I exchanged views on the subject with many ethnocultural groups across Canada.

In my present duties as Press Attaché to the Commissioner of Official Languages, I gained further helpful insights for my thesis. One final note: the accomplishment of this thesis is as well, a product of both my professional experience and family: I want to sincerely thank my colleagues Monique Matza and Johanne Gravel, the Chief Librarian Rosemarie Benoit and her staff Donna Hellmann and Kippy Campbell. I have valued and cherished the silent but committed interest, patience and support of my wife Filomena and of my three children Cristina-Stella, Sonia-Assunta and Riccardo-Nazario.

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INTRODUCTION

Multiculturalism:

A Growing Concern for Advocates and Adversaries

Canada is a plural nation with a variety of ethnic, racial, religious, and political identities. Some societies have more diverse populations than others; Canada is among the most polyethnic.

Leo Driedger, 1989 ¹

The presence in Canada since before Confederation of various aboriginal cultures, two major European linguistic cultural groups and ethnocultural groups is recognized as an added feature of Canadian identity, as opposed to the more common principle that a nation is carved out from one or more dominant cultures. The preoccupation with ethnocultural [including aboriginal] diversity, however, is relatively recent and it is only in the last few decades that the debate has really taken on significant proportions.

Many infrastructures and institutions have had to adapt and adopt new models in order to accommodate the changing dynamics of Canadian society. The debate on multiculturalism is pervasive and has, of necessity, become a constant political, educational and sociological preoccupation.

Does the policy of multiculturalism work or is it the formalization of divisions? Is it a viable political and cultural possibility for a country to adopt, or is

¹ Driedger Leo, The Ethnic Factor: Identity in Diversity, (Scarborough McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1989), p 3

it a political catalyst for electoral gains? What are the communication tools which are best suited for the implementation of multiculturalism? These are some of the questions this research intends to investigate.

Since 1971, multiculturalism has been at the forefront of the Canadian political forum. It has had its allies and its adversaries; its survival has largely depended on different interpretations and changing roles. The notion of multiculturalism has made the transition from political theory to policy and in 1988 it evolved into law. Federal law has officially proclaimed multiculturalism to be a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society.

This research will focus, as the title suggests, on the implementation process and the application of the policies from two specific perspectives: media and education.

1. The Problem

Although Canada's commitment dates back to the 1920s² and although there is a long and progressive history of the development in accepting cultural pluralism, it would seem that the political process in this regard has not yet succeeded in establishing itself on secure grounds within Canadian society.

The reasons for the above-noted statement are many and diverse: they are all part of a complex discourse which must be considered in its totality. The theory of multiculturalism has the potential to be translated into feasible political practice but,

² Report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic, (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1987), p. 13.

notwithstanding the fact that various Canadian governments have sought different ways to protect and to promote it, there is still a risk for the law to have little relevance when faced by the many challenges existing within Canadian society today. Implementation can only survive through meaningful and communicative efforts. The recognition of pluri-ethnicity is not only a viable political expedient but it is in fact a way that considerably enriches society.

The debate on multiculturalism has stretched from policy to law and it has reached the stratosphere of the political philosophy of Canada: the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

This thesis, then, proposes a discussion of some of the key elements in multiculturalism. A careful examination of the aspects that should be regarded as significant testing grounds will show whether multiculturalism has been successfully communicated through its implementation. Multiculturalism, says the law, is a "fundamental characteristic of Canadian society".³ What is the impact and the significance of this declaration and how does the system respond to the needs of this law?

This thesis will address these considerations and will assess the implementation process of multiculturalism by looking into areas and interests that are strictly intertwined among themselves in relation to multiculturalism.

³ House of Commons, An Act to Preserve Multiculturalism, (Passed July 28, 1988.) (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1988).

In every paper, article, book or report that deals with multiculturalism there seems to be a considerable discussion about the context of multiculturalism and its various facets; but there has been no indication that an elaboration of a prescriptive definition of multiculturalism is an objective worth pursuing.

Multiculturalism can be everything to many people and have little significance for just as many people. By not defining a theoretical framework, politicians and policy-makers alike have had the distinct advantage of creating a constant fluctuation within the policy of multiculturalism which, accordingly, has allowed itself to different interpretations depending on the circumstances and on different audiences.

That is why a prescriptive definition of multiculturalism is needed taking into account the sociological, economic, demographic and regional realities of Canada.

2. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis will be divided into five chapters: it will analyze the context and policies related to multiculturalism; it will deal with the range of areas which are affected or permeated by multiculturalism in Canadian society and it will analyze how the policies have been reflected in reality.

Furthering this discussion, the thesis will focus, as well, on the efforts advanced by governments to reach the proposed objectives of multiculturalism. An attempt will be made to identify those public institutions, programmes or infrastructures in education and media, that by law, initiative, or direct interaction with ethnocultural groups, have had to implement strategies in order to face the

challenge of a pluri-lingual clientele. These would include schools, trustees, Boards of education and the rest of the educational institutions and their interaction with multiculturalism. As far as media are concerned, the focus will be the dual role that media have played in relation to multiculturalism which includes the role played by ethnic media and the dissemination of information related to multiculturalism by major media.

The Heritage Languages Programme and its role in the educational spectrum and the Ethnic Broadcasting Policy of the Canadian Radio and Television Commission, (C.R.T.C.) related to multiculturalism, including the general impact of mass media, will be discussed.

The thesis will also determine how these agents were able to: "enhance and preserve the contribution made by ethnocultural groups" (Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, 1969) and it will deal with some of the results and those areas that are considered key aspects when implementing multiculturalism.

This thesis will be concerned as well with the theoretical framework for an analysis of multiculturalism and discuss a prescriptive definition of multiculturalism. Any society concerned with its cultural diversity is aware that public education (in its broadest meaning) plays one of the most important roles in shaping the cultural values of that society. A country such as Canada, that, at least politically, has committed itself to the preservation and the enhancement of its cultural diversity, has looked upon education as a key element in this process. Education is not confined

to the classroom; just as important are the educational and communicating roles that are played by the media and other institutions.

These arguments, corroborated by an account of the realities that ethnocultural groups have to contend with, should provide a basis for opening an objective argument about the implementation of multiculturalism in Canadian society.

The research is divided into the following chapters:

- Chapter I - Preoccupations and Dynamics: The Survival Stage**
- Chapter II - A Theoretical Framework for analysis**
- Chapter III - Response to the Policies in Education**
- Chapter IV - Challenging the Media**
- Chapter V - Multiculturalism: the B. and B. Revisited**

It is the objective of the thesis to attempt to find out how policies and programs have pursued and communicated the objective of fostering plural-culturalism.

Chapter I identifies both the historical and the political context of the theory of multiculturalism. It seeks to answer the questions: why it came about, what were the political and demographic forces behind it and what were the formal political expressions which addressed the issue of the Canadian plural-cultural society. Canadian governments at all levels have preoccupied themselves with these issues and, as a result, policy statements, formal declarations, entrenchment of collective rights, and institutional changes have all attempted, according to different

perspectives, to deal with multiculturalism with a distinctively Canadian approach, that differs from the American concept of the melting pot.

The chapter, therefore, by giving an account on the various formal attempts, (which for practical reasons will be termed: "formal manifestations") by governments and institutions alike which deal with the complex issues in multiculturalism, also examines their strengths and their weaknesses. It is argued in the chapter that the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, though not mandated to address the issue of multiculturalism, set standards that have hardly been surpassed and should have been more carefully considered by policy-makers and others.

In brief, the hypothesis introduced in Chapter I is that the Royal Commission focused on media and education as the two social agents that could have carried the mandate of fostering ethnocultural appreciation and that, although this was manifestly the case in the proclamation of the policy, media and education were not sufficiently challenged. The chapter is a prelude to Chapters III and IV where education and media are carefully considered.

Chapter II establishes a theoretical framework for analysis that will be based on the empirical evidence and focus on the existing theories that are either in favour or against multiculturalism.

The chapter will demonstrate that, as pluri-ethnicity is a reality which the Canadian state must face, there are really two options available: either

multiculturalism is called a failed social experiment, or multiculturalism is indeed treated as a social experiment that enriches and develops society.

As things stand, given more than twenty years of multiculturalism, Canada has arrived at a crossroads regarding multiculturalism: to simply utter once again the existing policy would be insufficient; it might lead to the eventual collapse of multiculturalism *in toto* and contribute to the defeat of the liberal values and *projet de société* underpinning that policy. The education of the very young for the purpose of language retention is not an end in itself. the sharing of different ethnocultural roots for adults is a recipe for a resourceful and modern society; the vision of multiculturalism encompasses complex social arrangements and provides for larger horizons.

Furthering the discussion of Chapters I and II, **Chapters III and IV** have the following objectives: a) submit reasons as to why education and media are two social agents that should be singled out in order to carry out the mandate of multiculturalism; b) introduce evidence to the fact that education and media have partially addressed these questions and that, since the political engagement has distanced itself from education and media, these have not yet reached a full potential. It will be argued in these chapters that, though imperfect and inconsistent, the various attempts by media and education to resolve and understand multicultural issues have been significant, tangible and have concretely contributed to the development of multiculturalism. In spite of the various efforts and the human and

financial resources that have been poured into it, however, multiculturalism is still being perceived as being at the margin of the Canadian social arrangement.

These chapters will demonstrate as well that institutional change, though slow and tortuous at times, has had to face, in a tangible way, the challenge posed by a multicultural and multilingual environment: both education and media have palpably touched the realities of multiculturalism.

Chapter V concludes, from the arguments made in the research, that old policies and theories have neither evolved nor translated in practical terms. Therefore, a sober second thought dedicated to Book IV of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism will be needed at this juncture.

Competing social interests over the last two decades have favoured *pro-tempore* solutions rather than long-term plans. The lack of well-defined parameters for the policy of multiculturalism has promoted different perspectives of multiculturalism without a unified global vision.

The chapter is therefore engaged in the elaboration of a working formula for multiculturalism which follows the spirit and the recommendations of Book IV and the intent of the first policy of 1971. Both suggest that, if multiculturalism (understood as: "the cultural contribution of the other ethnic groups") is to survive in any significant way, it will do so by challenging education and media. In the end, what seems to be needed is a clearer approach with a programme based on existing experiences and on a substantial revisiting of Book IV of the Royal Commission. Only then, it will be argued in the last chapter, will the Canadian social experiment

on multiculturalism gain significant momentum and be a model for analysis for any modern society in the twenty-first century.

The concluding remarks will further elaborate on the relationships that exist between the implementation of political theories and policies and linguistic and cultural retention. Key factors will be reviewed in light of the findings of the research and the implications of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism will gain a clearer perspective.

3. Scope and Methodology

As noted, in 1988 the government of Canada passed the Multiculturalism Act. The Act was a result of an already existing policy on multiculturalism as well as of the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism.

In 1993, the political landscape of the Parliament of Canada changed drastically, reflecting the opposite views that existed within the Canadian society. One of the policies coming under constant attack and being poorly defended, has been multiculturalism. The Multiculturalism Act, the inclusion of rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and various forms of either federal or provincial measures have not been able to dissipate the clouds that are still over the policy of multiculturalism, which, after more than twenty years, is either misunderstood or outrightly rejected.

The research in the thesis examined all the formal instances in which multiculturalism was uttered; these include the most important documents at the federal level that either discussed or proclaimed multiculturalism to be an integral

part of Canadian society: the multiculturalism policy of 1971. The Canadian Human Rights Act, the Constitution Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedom, the Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, the Ethnic Broadcasting Policy of the Canadian Radio and Television Commission, the Multiculturalism Act, Bill C-18 (the Act to establish a Department of Multiculturalism that was passed in 1988 and the Heritage Language Institute Act, not Enacted).

In addition, the thesis has taken into consideration those measures that institutions have taken in order either: a) to respond to the recommendations made by laws and policies, or b) to attempt to address the pluri-ethnic fabric of the public which they were dealing with.

The thesis has especially examined Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism since Book IV was cited as the precursor to multiculturalism in many instances.

As special emphasis was placed in Book IV on Media and Education, the thesis has looked at these two social agents and at the measures that they have taken to address multicultural issues.

The sampling or analysis of designated institutions or policies therefore is representative of the most important federal and provincial measures that have been taken to address multiculturalism. The sampling includes three strata: 1) political manifestations (policies, laws, reports, declarations); 2) measures taken by media and

education and 3) current perceptions surfacing from the presence, or absence of policies.

As far as methodology is concerned, information was gathered using multiple lines of evidence: for each of the strata being analyzed the research carries out spot checks identifying weaknesses and strengths. As policies refer to Book IV as the predecessor of multiculturalism, Book IV is thoroughly analyzed and used as reference.

If the hypothesis (concerning media and education among others) that was advanced by Book IV still holds some validity after more than twenty-five years, and if the problems observed by Book IV still exist and resemble the actual problems, then this thesis will argue that, notwithstanding twenty years of official multiculturalism, there is very little that has been understood and that policies have not evolved in a progressive way. Moreover, the multiculturalism policy seems difficult to defend since it is increasingly facing a rather hostile attitude.

The research spans a period of approximately twenty-five years from the publishing of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism to the present. The observations reflect on the merits and the attributes as well as the problems and the misunderstandings that multiculturalism has created over a period of time.

In addition, for the purpose of illustrating evidence, a quantitative and qualitative analysis of every major Canadian newspaper over the period of 20 months span, (from January 1994 to August 1995) has been carried out. The analysis

will suggest the tone, the issues and the major aspects that are reported by media, thus giving an indication of the role of the media both as a carrier of information and a consumer of multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism is obviously a very pervasive policy that is not contained nor restricted only to media and education. For research purposes, however, the thesis will strictly limit itself to these two social agents as it is argued that these two are among the most important elements, especially when trying to come to terms with a complex social experiment as multiculturalism.

CHAPTER I

Preoccupations and Dynamics: the Survival Stage

Many prominent Canadians had voiced their pride that Canada was not a melting pot of people as was the United States, but a country where immigrants and their descendants were encouraged to maintain some degree of distinctiveness. One such spokesman was John Murray Gibbon, who in 1938 published a book entitled The Canadian Mosaic, celebrating the Canadian way.

Frank G. Vallee ¹

Since Canada adopted an official policy on multiculturalism, that was later enacted into a law, and since the policy of multiculturalism (and by extension the Multiculturalism Act) continue to draw controversy and misunderstanding after more than two decades, then questions must be asked.

The problem is particularly important for two main reasons: a) the policy of multiculturalism is related to the social and demographic reality of Canada, since nearly ten million Canadian residents are neither of French or British background and b) considerable efforts and human and financial resources have been dedicated to the policy without an apparent universal understanding of it, capable of settling on-going controversies constant since the inception of the policy in 1971.

¹ Frank G. Vallee, The Mosaic a Generation Later: Issues and Trends (The John Porter Memorial Lecture, Centre for Immigration and Ethnocultural Studies, 1990) p. 2.

The multicultural policies of Canada are totally at odds with the traditional vision of Canada based on two founding [or Charter] groups; yet the need to address the demographic reality of the country has been a continuous preoccupation since before Confederation.

Formal recognition of multiculturalism came as a national policy on multiculturalism in 1971. The era preceding 1971 consisted in a gradual acknowledgement of the legitimacy of ethnic diversity in Canada, since the need to deal with the ethnic factor in Canada has been a subject of prolonged interest for policy-makers, linguists, sociologists, demographers and other social scientists. A series of national [federal] and provincial programs came about as a result of all these interests. The establishment of a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism followed; a federal law of the Parliament of Canada recognized multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canada, and several other manifestations were either directly or indirectly related to the major policies or actions taken by different governments.

The objectives of this chapter, therefore, are to look at the interaction that the notion of multiculturalism has produced between political theory and its evolution, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the formal manifestations as they relate to multiculturalism.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; the Canadian Constitution and the Federal Law on multiculturalism, and the establishment of a government agency that formally looks at multiculturalism, are all instances that have formalized the

notion of multiculturalism in Canadian society and that have dealt, in one way or another, with the philosophical principles of linguistic and cultural diversity.

The term "ethnic" was readily used by Book IV of the Royal Commission as applicable to all Canadians; moreover, the Book talked about "the other ethnic groups" implying that English and French, although they constitute the two charter groups, are also part of the larger Canadian ethnocultural context.² This thesis agrees with this principle, and the term will be used accordingly.

Various ethnic groups are concerned about protecting and enhancing the quality of their profile; it is inevitable that relationships with politicians and government agencies are constantly developed and maintained. Formal manifestations declared by governments are partial responses to pressures that ethnic groups apply to improve their status.³

1.1. Immigration, Mosaic and Multiculturalism

Long before multiculturalism became a public notion, many Canadians scholars had postulated that Canada differed from other countries and especially from the United States since successive Canadian governments favoured cultural pluralism within one nation-state.⁴

² The Commission, however, preferred the term "cultural group" hence the term "ethnocultural group" that has since entered common parlance.

³ Jean R. Burnet and Horwax Palmer, "Coming Canadians" An Introduction to a History of Canada's Peoples (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988), Chapter 8, p. 152.

⁴ John de Vries and Frank G. Vallee, Language Use in Canada (Statistics Canada, Minister of Supply and Services 1980) pp. 24-25

In the early part of this century the international immigration market was as competitive as it is today, although it was influenced then by different political and socio-economic circumstances and by different labour demands.

Like many other nations such as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States, Canada has been competing to recruit immigrants. Therefore, Canadian governments have formulated various strategies to attract immigrants and to accommodate their needs, with the objective of making Canada the preferred choice of migrants from other parts of the world.

As early as 1901 questions in the Canadian census suggested a preoccupation with the language diversity and immigrant influx. In the 1950's and early 1960's the government of Canada had, through the Citizen Branch, published and distributed literature which promoted Canada as a country ready to acknowledge and grant some form of recognition to "other" languages and cultures.⁵

Both the rate of natural increase and the aging Canadian population could reduce future population size unless they are countered by immigration, (Vallee, 1990). Therefore, the market for attracting migrants has never really gone away, it only differs in strategies according to Canada's political and economic circumstances. In the 1990's different labour demands are in place but, essentially, the global market for immigration faces constant international competition.⁶ The large waves of immigration to Canada of people of non-English and non-French

⁵ Ibid. p. 2-16

⁶ Op. Cit. Frank G. Vallee The Mosaic a Generation Later: Generations and Trends pp.2-16

descent, however, has raised fundamental questions about the type of society that was being built, a society which had been defined as early as 1938, as a diversified, multiracial, pluri-lingual and pluri-cultural "mosaic."

It was Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism that divided the socio-political reasons of the host society from the linguistic and cultural needs of Canadians of origins other than French or English ancestry who had been formally recruited. For Canada this was a reinforcement of the historical antecedent concerned with the maintenance of some distinctiveness for immigrants that had been invited to the country and promised accommodation in exchange for hard labour.⁷

In 1969 the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism decided that, by that time, "the other ethnic groups" had significantly contributed to Canadian society, and that their social, economic, cultural and linguistic contributions had to be formally recognized, thus making Canada, a society which had manifested its collective will to exist as a pluri-lingual society.

Table 1⁸ is a chronology of the formal manifestations (at the federal government level) related to multiculturalism that will be discussed in this chapter.

1.2 Book IV: Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism

Appendix A is the summary of recommendations of Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. The recommendations of Book IV

⁷ Ibid. pp. 4-12

⁸ Table 1 in this thesis indicates the kind of formal manifestations which are related to multiculturalism under federal jurisdiction that were formulated as a result of a national policy on multiculturalism.

included a variety of measures that dealt with a broad meaning of multiculturalism. Book IV communicated quite well the importance of finding venues that should keep and increase the pluri-ethnic demographic fabric of Canada by ensuring that languages and cultures other than English or French could find a relatively significant place in Canadian society.

At the same time, as noted in the introduction, while Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism constituted the stepping stone for a national policy on multiculturalism, it never directly contemplated multiculturalism,⁹ as Book IV was not an independent study but was only part of a major Report.

More specifically the mandate of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was to find out what Canadians thought about the issue of cultural diversity within a bilingual and a bicultural context. The Commission looked at other societies faced with linguistic and cultural diversity, and examined the treatment of the two languages in the federal administration. Included in the Commission's mandate was the examination of the contribution of ethnocultural groups and of the steps or measures that were deemed appropriate to safeguard the different cultures. The Commission advocated integration instead of a multiculturalism policy for Canada.¹⁰

Whether Book IV of the Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission was the precursor or the proponent of the multiculturalism policy has been debated at length.

⁹ Maurice Lamontagne, Language and Society, Special Report, (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, Summer 1989,) Volume 27, p. 8.

¹⁰ Ibid.

However, Book IV did formally introduce the discourse on ethnocultural integration; it was the first time in Canada that an official document separated socio-political integration from cultural and linguistic integration. Although this separation was not explicitly sought, the identification of these two forms of integration formed an important boundary that has been developing ever since. In the introduction to Book IV the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism noted the following:

Every Canadian should be able to enjoy all of his natural and civil rights, within one of the two societies. Those of neither French or British origin should have the same opportunities as citizens who belong to the two societies by birth...The individual must have complete freedom of choice in his integration; the receiving society must, through its institutions, assure him equal opportunities for personal fulfilment.¹¹

The implications of the sixteen recommendations suggested in Book IV, by the Royal Commission, (see Appendix A) had perhaps a broad scope and they were complex to carry out; the official policy on multiculturalism that followed in 1971 suggested, by comparison, a less significant involvement on the part of the government. For instance, whereas Book IV had explicitly argued that the term ethnic was to be attributed to all Canadians, the policy provided for a different interpretation, which almost relegated the term ethnic to ethnocultural groups other than French or English.

¹¹ House of Commons, Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups, (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1969) - Book IV, p. 5.

A close analysis of some recommendations shows the depth and the objectives of the agenda that the Royal Commission had proposed for ethnocultural groups within a bilingual framework. Although French and English societies were considered "dominant cultures," the recommendations, if further elaborated, would have had a profound impact on Canadian society. For the first time "the other ethnic groups" emerged in a way that had hardly ever been envisaged before.

The recommendations of the Royal Commission were prescriptive, precise, to the point, and very specific about the kind of action the Royal Commission was suggesting and to which institutions the Commission thought to be best suited to carry out the objectives of each recommendation.¹² Education and media were very clearly singled out.

Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism ostensibly placed the onus of implementation on governments, educational institutions, and mass media. It underlined clearly that, as it is true of the two dominant cultures, unless all levels of governments, educational institutions and mass media made a serious commitment toward the cause of "the other ethnic groups", there would be little hope of preserving the contribution of other ethnocultural groups within Canadian society.

The first two recommendations dealt with socio-political rights such as employment equity, the rights to citizenship and those to participation in political office.

¹² C.F.R. Appendix A.

Five recommendations underlined the need of teaching languages other than English or French at all levels, from public schools to universities; encouraged universities to grant recognition for studies in modern languages; recommended that universities expand their fields of humanities and the social sciences in areas other than those related to English or French.

The six recommendations which followed specifically dealt with mass media and the need to address the issues of linguistic plurality; these recommendations opened a broad range of perspectives since they were addressed to all major players: the Canadian Radio and Television Commission (CRTC); the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC); the National Film Board; radio programming and community programming. The recommendations advocated an end to the proscription on the use of other languages (than English or French) for broadcasting by the CBC, and delegated to the CRTC the responsibility of finding ways of best addressing the non-English and non-French components of programming by encouraging privately owned television and radio stations to participate in these ventures. The recommendations further argued that radio and television should have determined themselves how their participation could have significantly contributed to the maintenance of languages other than English or French.

The concluding set of three recommendations encouraged government at all levels to find appropriate financial means to carry out the maintenance of languages other than English or French, including the broadening of the mandate of the

Canadian Folk Arts Council and that of the then Museum of Man (Museum of Civilization).

Book IV of the Report concentrated on examining the role played by the ethnocultural groups in the history of Canada and the contribution they had made to Canadian life. Book IV is divided in three parts; part one gives a historical account of the various phases of immigration to Canada; part two examines the economic, political and social contributions of Canadians of non-French and non-British origin; part three takes into consideration language patterns, education, the media of communications and arts and letters. The terms of reference of the Commission were as follows:

Taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution.¹³

Book IV was quick to point out that what counted most in the concept of an "ethnic group" was neither one's ethnic origin nor one's mother tongue; rather it was depicted as an individual's sense of belonging to a group and the group's collective will to exist.

The Report further explained that the phrase "the other ethnic groups" most clearly meant that English and French groups were also considered as "ethnic groups".¹⁴

¹³ Op. Cit. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book IV, p. 2

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 92.

The notion of cultural pluralism or cultural mosaic began to take shape in Canada as far back as the 1920s.¹⁵ This early theory argued that ethnocultural diversity could be compatible with national unity. However, while cultural diversity in Canada was *de facto* a social reality, this situation was only recognized in the late 1960s. In 1969 the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism argued that:

Since economic, social and linguistic factors all play a part, the French community, being economically weaker than the English, cannot easily attract immigrants. This is evident in Montreal and elsewhere in Canada. Because of this imbalance between the two societies, most members of non-British, non-French groups gravitate almost instinctively to the English side.¹⁶

The above comment was then reversed in 1985, by what the MacDonald Commission noted about English Canada; it practically resolved that French Canada had, by then, become as multicultural as English Canada.¹⁷

Both the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and the MacDonald Commission expressed their serious concerns about the safeguard of the multicultural component in Canadian society. Education and policies must live a healthy reciprocal and interdependent relationship if any policy, such as multiculturalism, is to be translated into a working social reality.

¹⁵ Report of The Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, Building The Canadian Mosaic, Ottawa The Queen's Printer 1987, p. 1.

¹⁶ Op. Cit. Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, The Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups, (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1970) Book IV, 1969. pp. 5-6.

¹⁷ House of Commons, Report of the MacDonald Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, The Institutional Context, (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1985) Volume 1, p. 8.

Education and media, underlined the Book IV of the Report, are among the most important agents that have to be challenged in order to carry out the mandate of multiculturalism.

The recommendations of Book IV were based on extensive consultations and several presentations; Book IV presented a realistic scenario of the times in which it was written. It underlined the problem areas and created the possibility for further elaboration. Evidence backing discussions and the arguments that were followed by the recommendations was convincingly researched and put forward.

1.3 The Multiculturalism Policy of 1971

The policy of multiculturalism of October 1971 was allegedly based on many of the recommendations of Book IV since the policy specifically referred to non-British and non-French groups and to the fundamental concern of bilingualism and biculturalism in the context of the coexistence of the French and English communities.¹⁸

The policy of multiculturalism was, as well, the first formal manifestation directly related to the recognition that cultural diversity was an issue which needed to be formally addressed by policy-makers and could be considered the central "Manifesto" for the philosophy of multiculturalism. One statement from the policy specifically underlines the key words of this philosophy:

National unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one own's individual identity; out of this can grow respect

¹⁸ Op. Cit. Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book IV: The Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups. (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1970) p. 3

for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumptions.¹⁹

As also noted in Book IV, the multiculturalism policy argued that integration in the broad sense did not imply the loss of an individual's identity, i.e. his/her language and culture.

At the same time, the policy of multiculturalism is said to have diminished the argument on multicultural retention²⁰. This was a logical consequence. As Book IV never claimed to be an authoritative report on ethnocultural issues, it could only open the way for further reflection: since this never really happened, to have claimed Book IV as the basic proponent of the multiculturalism policy is the equivalent of having left a vacuum between the policy and the steps that have to ensure that policy. It was argued in the policy that the Canadian cultural reality was comprised of two official languages but no official culture; as a result, measures should have been taken in favour of all languages and cultures that are part of the Canadian reality.

When the government of Canada launched its official policy on multiculturalism, the policy was based on the principle that multiculturalism was complementary to bilingualism. The complementary elements of multiculturalism to bilingualism as set out in the policy, however, are somewhat hard to perceive since the policy was mainly concerned with assistance to ethnocultural groups in cultural

¹⁹ Walter J. Temelini, Multiculturalism: from a Canadian Policy to a World Philosophy, (Windsor: University of Windsor, May 1993), p. 5.

²⁰ Op. Cit. Maurice La Montagne, Language and Society, p. 11.

exchanges, language training, heritage languages teaching and citizen participation, thus leaving the *status quo* in most areas and accommodating the ethnocultural communities with grants for programmes already in existence. This was a rather odd fashion to complement one policy because multiculturalism had high philosophical standards, and its vision was based on Book IV, but its practical implementation relied on programmes and infrastructures that were already marginal at the time.

There seems to be little indication, therefore, that the recommendations of the Royal Commission contained in Book IV had a significant and lasting impact on the formulation of the official policy on multiculturalism; in it there is not the same emphasis as far as language teaching and various modes of integration.

The national policy of multiculturalism formally recognized the cultural diversity of Canada but remained at the status of an official declaration from 1971 to 1988.

Meanwhile, official languages reached a formal and legal status under the Official Languages Act of 1969, later revised in 1988. A rigorous, quasi-judicial implementation of the Act and its provisions was sought by the appointment of a Commissioner of Official Languages whose tasks are those to monitor constantly and independently the status of services in both official languages from federal institutions to citizens; to promote official languages in education, and act as an ombudsman.

The policy of multiculturalism showed that the Government of Canada shared only in principle the view of the Royal Commission that there cannot be one cultural

policy for Canadians of British and French ancestry, another for the aboriginal people, and a third for all others.²¹

But adherence to one's ethnic group, according to Book IV, was not so much by one's own origins or mother tongue as it was by one's sense of belonging to the group, which the Royal Commission called "*Collective will to exist*" of the group.²² The policy of multiculturalism supported two official languages and no official culture by declaring that no ethnic group or culture should have had precedence over any other.

It is perhaps at this juncture that the multiculturalism policy and Book IV had a philosophical encounter, that is the principle of the "collective will to exist of a group". The principle however, as enunciated in Book IV and, later revisited by the multiculturalism policy, was made clear in June 1987 by the Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism²³ and later enacted in the Multiculturalism Act of 1988.

1.4 The Canadian Human Rights Act

The first formal recognition through legislation of cultural diversity in Canadian society happened in 1977 with the enactment of the Canadian Human Rights Act, which prohibited discrimination based on: *race, national or ethnic*

²¹ Press Release, Office of the Prime Minister, October 8, 1971.

²² Ibid.

²³ Report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic. (Ottawa: the Queen's Printer 1987).

*origin, colour, religion, age, sex, marital status, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted.*²⁴

The Canadian Human Rights Act provided ethnocultural groups with a reliable socio-political guarantee but changed the perspective of the multiculturalism policy by shifting the focus on human rights. This was a significant step since individuals (rather than groups) were now formally recognized in the socio-political arena. However, such provisions, although necessary in any modern society, did not help nor guarantee the principle that ethnic groups with a clear sense of identity should be able to retain their own linguistic and cultural heritage. The federal policy on multiculturalism first, and later the Act were the only two measures that addressed linguistic and cultural retention.

1.5 The Constitutional Context and the Canadian Charter of Rights

The Human Rights Act recognized, *de facto*, the diversity of Canadian society and the need for a more equitable social status for every Canadian; it entrenched in legislation the concept of pluri-ethnicity in one nation state.

The most formal declaration of the pluri-ethnic fabric of Canada is the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; the multicultural reality of Canada, formally recognized in this way, then became a fundamental characteristic of Canada. The recognition in the Charter of the pluri-ethnic fabric of the nation is a formally recognized status quo. Ethnocultural identities were entrenched in the Canadian constitutional process and became part of the new constitutional debate.

²⁴ Report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, Building The Canadian Mosaic, (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1987), p. 17.

In 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was entrenched in the Canadian Constitution. As a result, fundamental rights and freedoms of individual citizens are less prone to change since the Charter also takes precedence over all legislation.²⁵

The process of arriving at a Canadian Charter of Rights has been seriously scrutinized. As the patriation of the Constitution represented, or was intended to represent, a new chapter in Canada's history, there were expectations that a more popular approach would have characterized the formulation of a document as the Charter.²⁶ True to Canadian tradition, however, the process (as with many of the formal manifestations) was left, by and large, to politicians. The whole question of politicians drawing the parameters in the constitutional and legislative debate of the country is now being challenged and a new power relation is being negotiated. The Charter has been called "a creature of smoke and mirrors".²⁷

In the Charter collective rights of minority groups and ethnic groups alike, according to the constitutionalist Stuart Rush, are either ill-protected or disregarded altogether.²⁸

²⁵ Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, A Guide For Canadians, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1982), p. 2.

²⁶ Gail Starr, Popular Rights in (and out of) the Constitution, Socialist Studies 2: Critical Perspectives on the Constitution. (Ottawa: Society for Socialist Studies 1984), p. 13.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 9.

²⁸ Stuart Rush, Collective Rights and Collective Process: Missing Ingredients in the Canadian Constitution. Op. Cit. Socialist Studies, p. 19.

It is important to question the practical impact of the measures included in the Charter on Canadians of non-French and non-British origin, since in principle these measures could form the basis for legislation to protect the cultural contribution of other ethnocultural groups, as it has been done for two dominant cultures. But apart from the social guarantees and the freedoms expressed in the Charter, there appears to be little formal indication of what Canadians may do in terms of retaining and protecting their multicultural heritage. The preservation of the multicultural heritage is officially recognized, but Section 27 of the Charter falls short of addressing specifically linguistic and cultural preservation. In fact, the interpretations of Section 27 vary considerably.

The insertion of multiculturalism in the Charter has raised many questions and kept alive the controversies that multiculturalism continues to provoke.²⁹

Professor Ian De Faveri, of the University of Alberta, explains that, unlike Stuart Rush, Brian Bullivant, in his book The Pluralist Dilemma in Education, argued that: *"Multiculturalism is a manipulative device used to perpetuate control over ethnic groups."*³⁰

This definition of "ethnic group" does not seem to be consonant with the seemingly more established concept, advanced by Book IV, that all Canadians share the term ethnic since pluri-ethnicity is a given reality in Canadian society.

²⁹ Canadian Human Rights Foundation, Multiculturalism and the Charter: A Legal Perspective, (Toronto: Canadian Human Rights Foundation, 1987), p. 2.

³⁰ Kach Nick et al. Multiculturalism: Perspective and Reactions, (Edmonton: Department of Educational Foundations, University of Alberta, 1986), p. 21.

Furthermore, individual rights as declared in the Charter are already recognized for all ethnocultural groups in common law. The collective rights of ethnic minorities, as Stuart Rush argues, seem to have been left out.³¹ Therefore, the collective will to exist (as described in Book IV) is neither protected nor encouraged. The result is that the "collective interest" debate in Canada is on the rise at least from within other groups (i.e. women, aboriginals, disabled, etc.).

Accordingly, constitutional status given to cultural diversity is, as well, a new and complex state of affairs.

On the one hand, some experts judge that constitutional status to the concept of multiculturalism is provided specifically by section 27 and section 15 of the Charter, (see Appendix B.1). These sections ought to be read and interpreted together, as professor Clare F. Bekton, a constitutional expert, explains:

Section 15 [of the Charter] is one of the most important guarantees in the Charter for the protection of the multicultural heritage of Canadians. The wording of section 15 can be interpreted so as to prevent discrimination while still allowing for distinctiveness between groups of individuals. There is often a fine line between discrimination and the recognition of the uniqueness of cultural values and section 15 must be interpreted to facilitate both. Section 27 is an important statement of principle which must be read with section 15 to ensure that the guarantee of equality is interpreted in a manner that is consistent with the preservation of multicultural values.³²

³¹ Op. Cit. *Socialist Studies*, Stuart Rush, p. 18.

³² Op. Cit. Multiculturalism and the Charter, p. 1.

On the other hand, there are other scholars who in fact think that sections 15 and 27 strengthen the concept of biculturalism.³³ An opinion expressed by Gerald

A. Beaudoin demonstrates just how controversial this issue is:

On parle en français du "patrimoine multiculturel" et, en anglais, de "multicultural heritage". Le constituant n'emploie pas l'expression "multicultural rights". L'article 27 édicte que la promotion, le maintien et la valorisation du patrimoine culturel constituent un "objectif" et que. . . "Toute interprétation de la présente Charte doit concorder avec (cet) objectif. . ." "Qu'est-ce à dire? L'article 27 n'est-il qu'un vœux pieux, n'est-il rhétorique? N'est-il qu'une règle d'interprétation? Au bout du compte, il semble bien qu'il finira par signifier ce que la Cour suprême dira qu'il signifie."³⁴

Constitutional experts are thus divided on a number of issues with respect to the implications and the impact that sections 15 and 27 have on Canadians of non-British and non-French origin. It appears, then, that a formal manifestation about the multicultural reality of Canada, even at its highest level, can be very easily challenged and/or subject to several interpretations. As a result, at least in theory, different implementation processes could take place and/or be legislated accordingly. Programmes related to multiculturalism may potentially adopt either creative or regressive interpretations of multiculturalism since they stem from varying degrees of understanding and cross-cutting political cleavages.

³³ See Appendix B.

³⁴ Ibid. p. 17.

The courts have been struggling with the interpretation of sections 15 and 27 (see Appendix B.1) and the full impact of this struggle is yet to be appraised.³⁵ Most scholars and constitutional experts agree on the fact that section 27 is of a declaratory nature and has little value if taken by itself. It appears, however, that the two sections, if considered together, support the notion that equality does not mean sameness: this would mean that each ethnocultural group (including English and French) and their related cultures should be considered as unique, and therefore different, but deserving equal status.

Professor Cornelius Jaenen, a historian, explains that multiculturalism challenges a simple notion and that it cannot be understood or even implemented unless several points are brought together. His position on multiculturalism seems to be a valid perspective from which to adopt a departure point. According to Jaenen, Canadian multiculturalism is: a) a social reality; b) a political policy, and c) a cultural ideal.³⁶

Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is divided in two subsections. Subsection 15(1) affirms equality rights before and under the law and equal protection and benefit of law, without discrimination. Subsection 15(2) supports the possibility for affirmative action programs "for the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups" as cited in subsection 15(1). Subsection 15(2) has the potential of being a very significant statement for the

³⁵ Ibid. p. 8.

³⁶ Op. Cit. Multiculturalism Perspectives and Reactions, pp. 1, 2.

advancement of multicultural programs. That is the opinion of the majority of legal scholars.³⁷ The question, however, is how that potential is going to be exploited and how it can be best implemented. In brief, section 15 of the Charter has reinforced the possibility of establishing affirmative action programs and other measures that governments or other agencies can take so that equality for all Canadians can be achieved. It seems, on the one hand, that governments, generally speaking, may get a good sense of direction from sections 15 and 27 of the Charter in terms of addressing the cultural contribution of the other ethnic groups (as Book IV noted). On the other hand, the debate at the level of the Charter is still at large and in a sense the Charter would have to be interpreted: *"In a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians"*³⁸ so that the practical execution would be returning into the hands of politicians.

The Charter has at least succeeded in further fostering the debate on multiculturalism. There is, as demonstrated above, the issue that the debate on the Charter is still very much unresolved and that, in fact, legislative measures are the only ones that can make a difference between the political declarations and the implementation process.

1.6 The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism

³⁷ Op. cit. Gail Starr et al., p. 13.

³⁸ Section 27, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982.

In 1985 the first federal-provincial-territorial conference on multiculturalism took place and in the fall of the same year the establishment of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism provided for the first formal study of the multiculturalism policy since its inception. Two years later, in 1987, the Committee published its report.

The Committee reviewed the policy of multiculturalism as well as every measure that had been taken by governments, including provincial legislatures (Appendix C), agencies, institutions, corporations and their relationship to multiculturalism.

The Parliamentary Committee did not, however, consider necessary a formal elaboration of Book IV of the Royal Commission. It decided to evaluate existing policies or programmes without looking at the fundamental *raison d'être* of a multiculturalism policy. As had happened to the first multiculturalism policy, the Committee based its review on existing documents on multiculturalism, thus creating a further distance from the discussions that had begun in Book IV of the Royal Commission.

Although the objective and the terms of reference of the Committee were meant to give a fresh look at the principle of multiculturalism, reiterating a policy with the addition of some new elements was the result of the Committee's Report.

The Committee concluded that the 1971 policy on multiculturalism was practically outdated and that it was necessary to formulate a new one in view of the fact that, by 1987, close to forty per cent of Canadian society was made up by

people of non-British and non-French origin.³⁹ It is arguable, however, how a policy that states philosophical principles could be either old, outdated, or revised. The basic elements of the policy needed a link with the measures suggested in Book IV; that link has not been provided yet.

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism had suggested implicitly that existing initiatives related to the preservation of languages and cultures, while performing a laudable task, were not considered to be meaningful steps.⁴⁰

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism reiterated these arguments by explicitly declaring void the effects of the official policy of multiculturalism:

The multiculturalism policy of 1971 is clearly insufficient and out of date. It does not have the ability to respond to the needs of today's multicultural society. There is a sense that this 15-year old policy is floundering. It needs clear direction.⁴¹

At issue with every recommendation advanced by the Parliamentary Committee is the fact that the Report, even though it was the result of extensive research and wide consultations, was essentially repeating, 16 years later, what had been proposed by Book IV of the Royal Commission.

³⁹ Multiculturalism and Citizenship, Canada Detailed Ethnicity Data Canada, Provinces Territories, CMAs 1986 Census of Canada. (Policy and Research Multiculturalism Canada), March 1989.

⁴⁰ Op. Cit. Book IV, The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups, Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Chapter VI, pp. 148-160.

⁴¹ Op. Cit. Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic, Report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1987), p. xi and pp. 50-53

The measures suggested by the Committee and later enacted by Parliament really tell the story. In addition, only three of the eighteen recommendations of the Committee were ever put in place, one of them being the Multiculturalism Act.

1.7 The Multiculturalism Act of 1988

In its preamble, the Multiculturalism Act declares that multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society;⁴² but after a number of statements concerned with the enunciation of principles as to why Canada should have a policy of multiculturalism, it becomes a wish list by encouraging the adoption of measures by various governments.

The Act is divided in ten sections, and it is structured as follows: Section 1, the preamble, sets out the socio-legal context of the Act. This section cites the Canadian Constitution, the Citizenship Act, the Canadian Human Rights Act and the fact that Canada is a party to international conventions on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. It denotes the commitment of the government to introduce a multicultural policy *"designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians, while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada."*

Section 2 identifies the federal institutions which are affected by the policy of multiculturalism.

⁴² In a presentation to the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism in May 1988, the author of this thesis, (E. del Castello), among others, specifically recommended to include that multiculturalism was a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society as this principle was not included in the first reading of the Act.

In Section 3 the official multiculturalism policy of Canada is declared; the section describes the policy commitment that Canadian society and federal institutions ought to have. Naturally, this is the most important part of the Act. It seems that this section falls short of the preamble to the Act. The section is full of verbs such as "promote", "may", "encourage", "recognize" and "foster"; the wording of the section does not give a clear indication of how objectives are to be pursued, nor does it reflect the intentions set out at the beginning of the Act. The measures mentioned in the Act are not very detailed (as opposed, for example, to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism), and the mandate of the Act itself cannot be placed within a specific framework.

The Act, in brief, does not call for clear measures related to language and cultural retention. In Section 3 at least two paragraphs, specifically 3.1 and 3.2a, contain the wording "ensure"; they are, therefore, more assertive. However, since individual rights to equality and equal treatment before the law are already present in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in the Human Rights Act, and also entrenched in many provincial legislations,⁴³ here they seem to be unnecessary and probably redundant.

Sections 4 through 7 describe the implementation procedures of the multiculturalism policy of Canada. A careful reading of the sections reveals the same tone of Section 3 and most of the observations outlined for Section 3 are applicable to these sections as well. These sections lack specificity and, therefore, lend

⁴³ Cfr. Appendix C.

themselves to broad interpretations, thus reducing the whole Act to a weak instrument of the legislature.

The coordination, the mandate of the minister responsible, the responsibilities of other ministers, and those of an advisory council, that are included in these sections, do not in any way indicate a specific orientation, nor do they talk about specific tasks that may be clearly identifiable.

From a close reading of it, the Act on multiculturalism is not intended for any purposes other than attempting, once again, to deal with the historic preoccupation for cultural plurality and with the need to reconcile it with two dominant cultures. The change of the 1971 policy into law, without major fundamental rethinking about the implementation process, has left the concept of multiculturalism still at large, lost in its own rhetoric and guided by very general orientations that give governments and institutions a great deal of latitude in interpreting it. The Act, as passed, clearly shows that the work of the Parliamentary Committee on Multiculturalism was a political exercise rather than an evaluation process.

The Act concludes with the suggestion that an annual report be given to Parliament and that a permanent review by a Parliamentary Committee be established. In fact, the language in the Act does not allow for specific and identifiable parameters; a formal Parliamentary review has not occurred and a ministry of multiculturalism was first established and then withdrawn.

The significance of the Multiculturalism Act, however, cannot be underestimated. By reiterating within a legal framework what had been known before as official policy, the Act has given legal recognition to the principle of cultural equality and projected multiculturalism as a lasting and fundamental characteristic of Canadian society as a whole.

The formal declaration for a multicultural Canada was the policy of 1971. The Multiculturalism Act should have constituted the final measure of evaluation; it provided a less-than-reliable instrument to be cited when fostering the implementation process of multiculturalism.

By comparison, in the Official Languages Act there are "duties" instead of responsibilities that governments and institutions must implement.⁴⁴ Duties related to official languages are far more contained. They are evaluated by a Commissioner of Official Languages; he/she is also an ombudsman for both official languages; he/she is charged as well with the responsibility of receiving complaints from the public, and overseeing the performance of federal institutions in matters of official languages. A similar formula for the Multiculturalism Act, the provision of a Commissioner or other federal authority,⁴⁵ who can go before courts when the law is not respected, could have been envisaged.

In the last analysis, the Act itself does not provide the necessary structures to support or make accountable its own mandate.

⁴⁴ Official Languages Act, 1969 Parliament of Canada.

⁴⁵ Op. Cit. Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic, Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Multiculturalism. Recommendation N.11, p. 4 .

The concept of multiculturalism has surfaced in many formal ways in the socio-political arena, yet its general treatment has not succeeded in firmly establishing it. Formal manifestations and programs that were conceived in this fashion have also kept alive controversies and doubts about the notion of cultural diversity and its acceptance.

The absence of specific implementation guidelines has produced a diversity of views on the subject of multiculturalism, and programs related to it, among English and French communities and among Canadians of other ethnic origins. The stance that emerges from the manifestations that deal with multiculturalism is a sort of half-way measure since it neither helps nor closes the argument on multiculturalism. After almost twenty years from the formulation of the policy, editorials openly declare themselves against multiculturalism⁴⁶ and some go to extremes by suggesting that the ethnic vote should be somehow limited and, in some instances, totally forbidden.⁴⁷

The notion of multiculturalism and the support given to ethnocultural communities have been and continue to be openly challenged, thus increasing controversy. In an essay published in the Ottawa Citizen, P. K. Natta, an economist and a member himself of an ethnocultural community, affirmed that multiculturalism, as we know it, has actually fed racism and created an isolationist

⁴⁶ Lise Bissonnette, Le Devoir, January 24, 1994.

⁴⁷ Mackenzie Porter, The Toronto Star, February 6, 1989.

movement.⁴⁸ Many others such as Lise Bissonnette, José Leandro Urbina, Michael Valpy and Neil Bissondath have expressed their disappointment at the Caravana concept and multicultural festivals, as well as to the whole concept of multiculturalism. This trend has never really stopped; quite the contrary, books and/or articles have been written openly denouncing and criticizing the whole philosophy of multiculturalism.⁴⁹

The manifestations of multiculturalism and the positive or negative comments that are related to it seem to point to one argument: multiculturalism, over the years, has (perhaps unintentionally) isolated Canadians of non-British and non-French background, and the term multiculturalism has constantly been applied to Canadians of non-British and non-French origin. Non-committal and declaratory guidelines in formal manifestations of multiculturalism have eroded the possibility for clearer mandates; they have also been responsible for confusing the term integration with assimilation and, as a result, building on the concept of an equal status for cultural minorities has been a difficult task. Official positions on multiculturalism, by themselves, have not mandated federal or provincial institutions to carry out major changes so that other cultures and languages may receive a treatment comparable to that of the two dominant ones. Rather, manifestations have produced parallel lines

⁴⁸ Pan K. Natta, The Ottawa Citizen, Saturday, April 29, 1989 p. B3.

⁴⁹ J. L. Urbina, Caravan: "Notes from a Piece of the Mosaic", Toronto: This Magazine, February 1989
 Neil Bissondath, Selling Illusions : The Cult of Canadian Multiculturalism in Canada, (Middlesex: Penguin Books 1994), Michael Valpy, The Globe and Mail, June 1994, Laponce, J.A. Languages and Territories, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), Reid Scott, Lament for a Nation: The Life and Death of Canada's Bilingual Dream (Vancouver: Arsenal Press, 1993), Jean Lafontant L'État et les minorités (Saint Boniface: Presses Universitaires de saint Boniface, 1992).

instead of converging ones: it is still very difficult to reconcile multiculturalism with bilingualism under the present circumstances.

The variety of manifestations in which the concept of cultural pluralism is formally expressed in the provinces, however, can be interpreted as a positive factor in keeping with the national and historical concern about Canadian ethnocultural minorities. It shows that some measures have been taken in an attempt to deal with the reality of cultural and linguistic pluralism in each given province. Provincial policies also tend to be more specific and, therefore, more effective, since they deal with issues such as education, health and social services, and labour standards.

The unstable factor, however, stems from the fact that formal manifestations related to multiculturalism do not have minimum standards nor do they have viable infrastructures that are capable of monitoring and supporting the various initiatives, policies and laws. Although it is reasonable to expect the provinces to differ in goals and strategies, it is evident that a common denominator is absent and should be provided.

Two problems can be identified: 1. people of non-British and non-French origin reside in significant numbers all across Canada (cfr. **Table 2**), hence all provinces should be equally concerned about cultural pluralism; 2. most provincial policies and programs on multiculturalism display a wide variety of strategies that are loosely related among themselves and sometimes contradictory. The whole question of federal policy formulation, therefore, is reduced to the lowest level of a political compromise: a combination of political pressures applied by ethnocultural

groups and political expedients that vary according to numbers. Political pressures and political expedients may not necessarily take into account the fundamental premises of cultural pluralism; rather, they may be seen as short-term strategies such as grants and forms of assistance on the one hand, and the gaining of the non-English and non-French vote on the other.

To isolate multiculturalism, for the purpose of maintaining alive cultures and languages which do not have a status nor a formal function of their own other than heritage-keeping, would also be questionable. It would run in contradiction to the status of a nation that has formally declared that its *modus vivendi* is to accept a pluri-ethnic society and that, at least in principle, all languages and cultures should be taken into account as part of the Canadian Heritage.

There is little evidence that formal manifestations have dissipated the clouds of this dilemma. The evidence in this chapter points to the recurring fact that federal manifestations, while reasonably attempting to address the pluri-ethnic reality of Canada, have not promoted nor effectively encouraged those infrastructures which can support and monitor the multiculturalism policy.

Multiculturalism as an exclusive domain of the ethnic groups is a divisive experiment subject to criticism and extinction. The survival of the pluri-ethnic fabric of Canada can constitute a cultural ideal worth pursuing. Unfortunately, so far, formal manifestations do not seem to have secured this ideal.

This chapter identified the federal formal manifestations related to the principle of multiculturalism. It noted, as well, that these manifestations have

generated a disparity of views that is yet unresolved. In other instances formal manifestations have shown a weak posture, and provoked some controversial opinions. Some have actually caused contradictions, conflict and redundancy.

The relationship between policies of multiculturalism and their implementation is problematic because it lacks specificity and, most importantly, all formal manifestations lack the proper infrastructures that could attempt to monitor and assess the evolution of multiculturalism in various domains. Broad mandates are the norm in lieu of definite and real objectives, as in the case of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

Although formal manifestations implicitly or explicitly recognize that Book IV of the Commission was the initiator of the discourse on multiculturalism, it seems that the policies and laws that were implemented after the publication of Book IV deviate from the notion of respecting and cherishing the cultural contribution of the "other" ethnic groups. In some way manifestations do not seem to have continued to focus on the collective will to exist of ethnocultural groups and on the need to foster that will, as the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism clearly did.

Historically, the notion of popular participation in the Canadian legislative and Constitutional debate is far removed; the BNA Act, the Canadian Constitution and its patriation, and the law on multiculturalism are all good instances.⁵⁰ This process, only very recently under attack, is being challenged by groups that have

⁵⁰ Op. Cit. Stuart Rush, p. 18.

understood the need for being more vocal. But this challenge is also far from being resolved in a practical manner. Its end result may indeed shift the locus of political power. This is something politicians from all sides may not welcome since changes to the basic traditional structure would entail shifting political interests in a most radical way; evidence of this is found in the 35th Session of Parliament (1993-) where Members of Parliament are finding it increasingly difficult to stay away from popular participation.⁵¹

In all the manifestations that have been discussed in this chapter it is possible to discern the omission of a definite commitment to the principle of multiculturalism, and the lack of feasible infrastructures. The first policy on multiculturalism hailed Book IV as its predecessor; because of it, all the formal manifestations on multiculturalism which followed the policy took for granted that there was a direct relationship between Book IV and the concept of multiculturalism. However, it was the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism that consistently made reference to the fact that the research submitted within Book IV of the Report was incomplete, and therefore inadequate as a basis for the development of a full-blown implementation of a policy of multiculturalism, let alone a Multiculturalism Act. As a matter of fact, every other formal manifestation related to multiculturalism seems to have omitted the fundamental reality that Book IV was only a partial attempt at addressing pluri-ethnicity within a national bilingual and

⁵¹ Every political party is increasingly becoming subject to popular scrutiny, electronic town halls, public forums, and televised speeches have become an almost inevitable occurrence in search of public approval, even the Bloc Québécois has found it necessary to publicize its philosophy in order to receive a broader popular support.

bicultural structure. Many interpretations of multiculturalism have been produced without a fundamental discussion on its merits as a formative social advantage to society.

The chapter which follows will show that Canada is at a crossroads: over twenty years of multiculturalism have not favoured an understanding of it; quite the contrary, in Canada's own Parliament it is being argued that multiculturalism is a divisive experiment.

CHAPTER II

A Theoretical Framework for Analysis

The political culture of Canada is like a colourful tapestry. When examined closely a tapestry can be separated into different strands or elements. Only when these basic units are interwoven and viewed together as a whole is the unique basic design of the tapestry visible.

(David Bell 1990) ¹

After having described the formal manifestations of multiculturalism and given consideration to the context as it relates to the implementation of policies, it seems fair to engage in a discussion that will bring forward the arguments that have both sustained the debate on multiculturalism and opposed it at the same time. Indeed, as already demonstrated in Chapter I, the debate has stretched in as many directions as possible with varying degrees of interests and perspectives. Multiculturalism is a very pervasive subject matter, one that cannot apply to one issue alone. A theoretical framework will allow the possibility to focus on some of the more significant elements related to the implementation of multiculturalism.

¹ David Bell, Political Culture in Canada, Canadian Politics in the 1990s, fourth edition, Canadian cataloguing in publication data, p. 105.

2.1 Multiculturalism Defined

The launching of the multiculturalism policy was an important moment in Canadian history. As the world is undergoing deep ethnic conflict, Canada has so far formally accepted cultural pluralism and can be considered an important model.

The Canadian Council for Multicultural and Intercultural Education on May 24, 1984 adopted and formulated a concept of multiculturalism in the following declaration:

Multiculturalism fosters a society and a Canadian identity in which people and groups of all cultures are accepted. Multiculturalism promotes human and group relations in which ethnic, racial, religious and linguistic similarities and differences are valued and respected. The principles or tenets that are inherent in multiculturalism are:

- 1) Equality of status of all cultural and ethnic groups within the framework of our officially bilingual country.
- 2) The freedom of all individuals and groups to the retention and development of their cultures as part of the Canadian identity.
- 3) Equality of access by all individuals and groups to employment and promotion, services and support.
- 4) A commitment to sharing our cultures within the mainstream of Canadian society.
- 5) An undertaking to participate in Canadian citizenship and the democratic process in terms of both rights and responsibilities.
- 6) A belief that individuals have the freedom to choose the particular cultural attributes they prefer within the framework of our democratic principles.
- 7) Respect for and observance of human rights and civil liberties as exemplified in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the common law, and human rights codes.

Multiculturalism includes all Canadians and is for all Canadians.

In spite of this and similar declarations, multiculturalism has taken on a secondary importance since the early eighties. First, the promise of re-integrating the province of Québec in the constitutional family has lasted more than a decade and, though unsuccessful, it has successfully gained more attention. Second, there is the perception that somehow multiculturalism is out of hand; third is the fact that, over the last two decades, multiculturalism has lived with its own contradictions, becoming therefore more vulnerable and open to criticism.²

Multiculturalism in the nineties is facing a crisis; a series of social and economic problems has heightened it because multiculturalism, notwithstanding the many formal manifestations, has largely remained a marginal exercise.

Multiculturalism continues to be interpreted in a complex way and its policies have been applied inconsistently. The public reaction to multiculturalism has been mixed and, at times, totally negative; as a result, the policy of multiculturalism has received an uneven support across Canada.³

Canada is indeed at a crossroads; reworking old policies, as it has been done up to now, will no longer serve a purpose. The government will continue to encourage a marginal social experiment, rather than going to the root of the problem and dealing with radical restructuring:

² Stella, Hryniuk et al. 20 years of Multiculturalism. (Winnipeg: St. John's College Press, 1992) Kas Mazurek, "Defusing a Radical Social Policy: The Undermining of Multiculturalism", p. 20-27

³ Jean Leonard Elliott and Augie Fleras, Unequal Relations: An Introduction to Race and Ethnic Dynamics in Canada, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1992), pp. 272-273 and p. 288.

The essence of that disease is that Multiculturalism has en lemic structural contradictions that require tremendous political and social will to remedy.⁴

As our society approaches the twenty-first century it needs renewed socio-political arrangements that are quite different from the kind of symbolic gestures that were made in the seventies or even in the eighties. Total restructuring of both private sectors and governments have occurred with great speed and with the highest disregard for values or notions that only a few years ago seemed untouchable.

A rather simple but all-encompassing definition of multiculturalism is found in the Italian dictionary Le Monnier edited by prof. Gian Carlo Oli:

Multiculturalismo s.m. Appartenenza o partecipazione a diverse culture. "Politica rivolta a riconoscere, all'interno di uno stesso paese, l'identità culturale e linguistica di ciascuna delle componenti etniche" (Temelini) (comp. di multi e culturalismo) (Author's translation)

Multiculturalism. Adhering/pertaining to or participating in different cultures. Policy aiming at recognizing, within the same country, the cultural and linguistic identity of each of its ethnic components (Temelini).⁵

Language and culture, language loss and attempts to retain language all fall within the realm of managing linguistic diversity within one national entity.

Policies have overtly come in conflict with one another. The notion of bilingualism and biculturalism versus multiculturalism and of these two versus

⁴ Op. cit. 20 Years of Multiculturalism, Hryniuk et al, p. 20.

⁵ Gian Carlo Oli Ed. Dizionario della lingua italiana (Firenze: Edizioni Le Monnier 1994). Translation by the author of the definition by Walter J. Temelini, p. 1209.

aboriginal cultures have all encountered philosophical conflicts at different junctures. Moreover, all of these policies have claimed the right to be a "fundamental" characteristic of Canada. But all of these policies have been equally contested as being divisive and counterproductive to a nation-building process. However, neither opponents nor advocates can claim victory because, on the one hand, it seems that these policies have fuelled linguistic controversy for those who oppose the concept of multiculturalism; on the other hand, policies have created expectations for those endorsing it. Results, therefore, are being scrutinized by both sides, with different conclusions. Canada can be defined both as a bilingual and a multicultural country but it is difficult to assess where the medium between these two definitions is to be. Within this framework, it is even more difficult to embody the significance and the value of aboriginal languages and cultures that, according to Fleras (1986), are facing extinction because of the oral tradition.

The multiculturalism policy set in motion a variety of irreversible changes in Canadian society. Apart from its failures and successes, its biggest achievement is perhaps the fact that it sparked a debate that goes beyond the notion of peaceful intercultural tolerance. Media and education become an integral part of this process since they target communities and languages.

2.2 Language Loss and Language Retention

At the core of this argument is the educational system and complementary to it are the media. All of the linguistic groups mentioned (official languages minorities, Aboriginals and non-French and non-English ethnocultural groups) have,

without exception, attempted to incorporate a language component of their own in the core curriculum of day schools.⁶

Notably not everyone has succeeded and there are success stories and many grand failures. Official languages minorities claim their constitutional rights, aboriginals claim inherent rights, and non-official languages are engaged in a protracted struggle to show that linguistic diversity is an enrichment to Canadian society. Each group has used the best leverages at its disposal, numbers, rights, history, competitiveness, racial harmony and a host of more or less advantageous reasons as to why the educational system has to take care of the problem.

The politics of language and culture (including official languages and aboriginal languages) are part of a complex and varied scenario that has a political point of departure but falls on the shoulders of the educational system (and by extension on the media) without an appropriate filter able to rationalize the concept of an equi-linguistic principle, (concept first mentioned in 1979, by A. Davidson Dunton,⁷ one of the Commissioners of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism) that every group, in one way or another, advocates.

The issue of minority languages can be a powerful symbol of unity and identity, and, at the same time, a disruptive force for intergroup conflict and social

⁶ Angie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, Multiculturalism in Canada: The Challenge of Diversity, (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1992), pp. 142-157.

⁷ A. Davidson Dunton, "The Muddy Waters of Bilingualism", Language and Society, (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Ottawa: Volume 2, 1979), pp. 7-10.

change.⁸ Yet, as David Bell underlines, in the opening quotation of this chapter, there are two ways to look at a tapestry: the focus is either on the different strands or on the design as a whole. Language diversity in Canada still needs to be addressed: with millions of Canadians of non-English or non-French origin it is difficult not to make the case for managing linguistic diversity and for the need to reconcile it with the concept of unity in diversity. A comparison between **Table 3** (Home Language and Mother Tongue) and **Table 2** (Ethnic Origins: the Nation) in this thesis shows how the home usage of non official languages is in a constant state of erosion. Statistics Canada numbers indicate that, over a period of twenty years, the use of mother tongue, by groups that have resided in Canada for a longer period of time, decreases considerably; as shown in **Table 3**, language usage loses grounds as waves of immigration from one country decrease, whereas the use of the mother tongue increases when the numbers of more recent incoming immigrants increase. So that a larger ethnocultural group that has been in Canada for a longer period of time, may lose the use of the mother tongue in comparison with groups of smaller more recent immigrants. A case in question, as the table shows, is the Italian-Canadian group, which is third in numbers, (**Table 2**) but comes fourth in the use of mother tongue.

The Chinese group, being the product of the most recent wave of immigration, (but numbering half of the Italian-Canadian group), has recently taken the third place in the use of mother tongue. The information provided by Statistics

⁸ Op. Cit. Fleras and Elliott, p. 146.

Canada, therefore, clearly suggests that assimilation, rather than integration, is more likely to occur, if present policies continue to be exercised.

Book IV of the Royal Commission did indicate that the common will of the group had to be an important factor in avoiding the loss of any language. At the same time, the will of a group to exist can succumb to external pressures if appropriate infrastructures are not put in place to ensure the continuation of the "collective will" of the group.

This being the situation, one would normally ask where is the logic of even attempting to address such a complex problem. Although there is not one solution that could possibly satisfy all of the points of view, there is in fact enough evidence to suggest that there are considerable values and benefits to the claim that promoting in young students the maintenance or retrieval of ancestral languages may enhance their educational development. Moreover, multilingual skills are, in the long term, a benefit to the country at large, as they encourage cross-cultural understanding and contacts in both domestic and international environments.⁹ It is the "basic design of the tapestry" that gives a sense of the whole.

Benefits, therefore, seem to be worth the struggles and the growing pains that the concept of multicultural and linguistic retention has brought to the surface. That is specifically the reason why this thesis argues that the key to the implementation process occurs through education and media.

⁹ Jim Cummins, Heritage Languages in Canadian Schools: Fact and Friction, (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. (Speech, April 1991.)

In an article which appeared in Language and Society (Winter 1985, Vol. 15)

Terence Macnamee and Hillary White expressed the following concerns:

If immigrant parents want their children to learn their culture in a new land, it becomes essential that the culture be clearly and carefully explained - and the language consciously and actively cultivated.¹⁰

Included in this framework for analysis are the various political and educational concepts that have formed around the idea of multicultural education. Academics and policy-makers alike have in fact tried to formulate various concepts of multicultural education:

Language is the basis and expression of our existence: it is a miracle tool which defines our essence, our personality, our identity, our nation. In this sense all the languages spoken in Canada, the official languages, the native languages, and the heritage languages define both Canada and the Canadian people.¹¹

Different perspectives arise and show the complexities and the challenges that are faced by the implementation of multicultural policies in education and through the media.

The first challenge is a geographical one: the linguistic demography of Canada; just by looking at numbers and where these numbers are concentrated, one can see that several areas of the country are largely unilingual and others are

¹⁰ Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Language and Society (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1985), Winter 1985, Volume 15, p. 22.

¹¹ Romulo Magsino and Miriam Yu Multicultural Education: Concepts, Issues and Practices, (Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Multicultural Education, Language, Education and Intercultural Education 1991), p. 27.

essentially multilingual. Most Canadians, after twenty-five years of promoting official languages, are in fact unilingual.¹² Many Europeans, without a pan-European policy on languages, are at least bilingual.¹³ A second challenge seems to be the attitude towards second or third language learning in Canada.

If language is a window through which we look at the universe in a certain way (Leo Driedger 1989) then it is good logic that to see the world in different ways is a positive development of language learning since it engenders a sense of self-development as well as it stimulates favourable attitudes towards other cultures and, by extension, it gives the potential of understanding the meaning of unity in diversity.

The understanding of Canada's linguistic demography is essential to the discourse on multiculturalism and/or the way in which various programs in education have developed over the years. Leo Driedger, in his book, The Ethnic Factor, divides Canada in four distinct zones: 1. the Québec heartland, French and multicultural, 2. The Atlantic provinces, Anglophones and Anglocultural, 3. Upper Canada, English and multicultural and 4. the West: Multicultural and English.

A detailed explanation of how this came about is given in conjunction with the history of Canada and has a strong relationship with time and circumstances. The first and oldest wave of immigration into the West was subject to

¹² Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Annual Report 1992 (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1993), p. 10.

¹³ Leo Driedger, The Ethnic Factor, Identity in Diversity. (Scarborough: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1989), pp. 103-120.

Angloconformity. Later, waves of immigration entered a Canada that was more readily accepting the ethnic factor and that gave the possibility of opening the debate on language retention, ethnocultural contribution and ultimately multiculturalism. So Upper Canada and the heartland of Quebec both recognized the need for accepting ethnocultural diversity within their mainstream, while the Atlantic provinces have remained in a sort of isolation from the rest of the country, largely because of their physical and historical condition. These combinations have resulted in two generally identifiable regions: a bilingual and multicultural belt in Southern New Brunswick and most of Ontario, as well as part Western Québec, and in the North a multilingual and multicultural belt, embracing aboriginal cultures and languages. This is, as well, a product of historical and physical circumstances.

In this context, and with these parameters, the interest in multiculturalism was not only philosophical but also practical. In countries such as Switzerland and Belgium, which have several languages and cultures, the development of ethnocultural movements has been a tribal one (i.e. territorial residency); the difference in Canada is that the movement of people is an urban and industrialized phenomenon.

In a tribal movement boundaries and group cohesion are essential, but in an industrialized movement people move for economic reasons, without concerns for sharing a common border. Switzerland, in particular, but also Europe in general, are good examples of tribal movements; although moving towards economic and political union, people are, by and large, centred in singular ethnicities. Massive

waves of immigration from developing countries, with time, will change this reality for the European countries, but it is nevertheless a different situation from the Canadian context.

The ethnocultural presence in Canada consists of a relatively recent experiment which allows for the survival of ethnicities irrespectively of their physical environment. This situation challenges even more the Canadian multilingual and multicultural context; while it may be possible to organize multicultural initiatives in large urban centres it is difficult to do so in other parts of the country even where there are members of some ethnocultural groups in significant numbers.

Linguistic diversity, as a socially recognized advantage within one nation state, is a very interesting concept; languages do not compete against one another as Jean Laponce or Scott Reid suggest;¹⁴ languages are, in fact, complementary to one another. Over and above the academic research, there is enough empirical evidence which supports the assumption that language differentiation is also a source of cultural variety and of the development that results from it. Ethnic identification, as this thesis will demonstrate, is regarded by many scholars as a positive, personal attitude.

The level of interaction is in fact the element that embodies the dynamics of multiculturalism. The symbolic value attached to ethnic identity translates in many ways, and the most important way in which it is translated is ostensibly language.

¹⁴ Jean Laponce, Languages and their Territories, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 70. Scott Reid, Lament for A Nation: The Life and Death of Canada's Bilingual Dream, (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1993), p. 18.

The term: "language retention" is to be understood in a rather open fashion, by removing its strictest meaning, which would imply that retention is only true when somebody already possesses the language. I would submit that it is possible to broaden this term and apply it collectively rather than individually. The non-French and non-British ethnocultural groups are, in a sense, the heirs to the different languages and they are looking at ways to "retain" their languages and cultures in various ways, some groups being more successful than others.

Language retention implies, therefore, a number of strategies that include teaching the language as an immersion programme, using the language as a medium of instruction for other subjects, learning a language as a third language and by using all the methods and multimedia materials available in that language (television, newspapers, computers etc.). Since culture/language are directly referred to in the policy of multiculturalism, the promotion of heritage (and ancestral) languages has been justified as an integral part of any policy related to multiculturalism. The evaluation of research on data related to the Heritage Languages Programme was carried out (among others) by Cummins and Danesi (1990) who concluded that:

Virtually all the evaluations reviewed, whether of enrichment or transition programs, show clearly that time spent with the minority language as the medium for instruction results in no academic loss to the students's progress in the majority language. In some cases, in fact, students who received less English instruction performed significantly better in English academic skills than comparison groups in all-English programs.¹⁵

¹⁵ Jim Cummins and Marcel Danesi, Heritage Languages: The Development and Denial of Canada's Linguistic Resources (Toronto: Our Schools/Ourselves Foundation, 1990), p. 133

Like this study many others have shown much of the same results, all pointing to the fact that retention of the home language is in fact an advantage rather than a disadvantage. Studies have also demonstrated that the usage of a heritage language at home with children of pre-school age does not constitute a handicap (Cummins and Mulcahy, 1978)¹⁶. Again, it has been shown that children who knew another language when they went to school for the first time, were better at discerning linguistic ambiguities than their unilingual friends. In addition, children who continue to develop their competence in another language show greater sensitivity to linguistic meanings and greater flexibility in their thinking as compared with unilingual children (Lambert 1990).

In a study, the authors Swain, Lapkin, Rowen and Hart concluded that the interdependence of literacy-related skills across languages included a transfer of knowledge and learning processes across languages so much so that it helped students in the acquisition of subsequent languages.¹⁷

Therefore, a considerable amount of research demonstrates that the use of a heritage language as a medium of instruction is not only feasible but is desirable as it gives clear academic advantages to those who benefit from these programs.

Mother tongue retention is a very positive factor for the development of minority children. Generally speaking, in one form or another many ethnocultural

¹⁶ Jim Cummins and R. Mulcahy, Orientation to Language in Ukrainian-English Children, (Toronto: Child Development, 1978)

¹⁷ J.W. Berry and J.A. Laponce, Ethnicity and Culture in Canada: The Research Landscape, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994) pp. 436-456.

communities have attempted to retain language and culture through Heritage Languages Programmes.

The debate on multiculturalism is centred around a socio-cultural perspective that is best accomplished through education and media. Society culture and socialization are interconnected in transmitting both social skills and cultural knowledge. In brief, fostering the maintenance of another language in minority children (whose mother tongue/home language is a language other than English or French) is, in fact, gaining considerable social and academic skills essential to the self-development of the individual and the learning of English and/or French.

What has happened in Canada is that culture and language do not have a natural locus in the sense that languages and cultures (except for the aboriginal ones) have been imported and have created a space of their own according to economic reasons rather than tribal ones. Lastly, language retrieval and language maintenance or retention have to be functional and publicly acceptable; without these conditions minority children who are expected to maintain or retrieve a language will see no purpose in maintaining or learning a language that has a limited use. For instance, many immigrants brought with them dialects, which are for the most part used either at home or communicating with peers and relatives. The need to acquire the standard variation of the ancestral language would derive from the place that the school attributes to that language and from the quality and quantity of materials available in that language; (books, television, newspapers, trips to the country of origin etc.). If language retention and/or retrieval does not get a prominent, dignified status,

language loses its potential. Motivation to maintain and learn/retrieve an ancestral language is directly related to its social place and usefulness in society.

There is no need, I would submit, to stress any further the importance of the retention and/or retrieval of ancestral languages in ethnocultural minority groups other than English or French. To support the vitality of the many languages and cultures that are part of the "Canadian Tapestry" (cfr. David Bell) would be of benefit to the whole country. Clearly, among other factors, education and media stand as the two social agents challenged with the task of transmitting a sense of the whole.

Non-French and non-English ethnic groups are not the only ones to see language retention as an important vehicle for one's own identity in a plural society as Canada. In the province of Québec where the largest concentration of Francophones is present, the feelings for language and culture retention run so high that exceptional socio-political measures for safeguarding language and culture are perceived to be necessary.

Non-French and non-English ethnocultural groups' identities feel challenged by the two dominant cultures and, in turn, the dominant cultures feel threatened by the presence of the many other cultural groups. This, in the end, is the dilemma which every party involved is facing.

2.3 Language and Culture

Canada has long been regarded as a model for a bilingual, bicultural society, but in many ways the presence of two major European linguistic and cultural groups,

together with aboriginal groups since the very beginning of Confederation, has set the precedent for the recognition of more than one ethno-cultural presence. There was at the beginning of the Canadian Confederation a form of socio-linguistic compromise that included at least the French, the English and the Aboriginal element, each of these having a distinct identity.¹⁸ Legitimacy to the claim of cultural and linguistic retention therefore, has been transferred over to other ethnocultural groups.¹⁹

Heritage Languages Programmes are the largest national attempt of language retention. The objective of the Heritage Language Programme is to provide Canadians whose ancestral background is neither British nor French some basis for their individual linguistic and cultural development. Given many years of formal recognition of multicultural diversity, the Canadian demographic context cannot simply turn, as some critics would suggest, into one big "melting pot". Cultural diversity has been cultivated enough that it has become an accepted vision of Canada. In fact the opposite is true: Canada has continued to accept dramatic increases in immigration levels.²⁰ When becoming Canadian citizens immigrants have been told that retention of one's own culture and language is not only acceptable but is in fact encouraged. The international interaction that exists in terms of trade barriers and cross cultural exchanges is increasingly creating pressures to

¹⁸ Op. cit. Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Multiculturalism, p. 13.

¹⁹ Leo Driedger, The Ethnic Factor Identity in Diversity. (Scarborough: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd. 1989) pp. 371-379.

²⁰ Op. Cit. Jim Cummins and Marcel Danesi, Heritage Languages: The Development and Denial of Canada's Linguistic Resources (Toronto: Our Schools/Ourselves Foundation, 1990), pp. 102-103.

acquire other languages. It does not matter how much the non-French or non-English groups are either integrated or assimilated into Canadian society, the reality is that if present trends continue, Canada will continue to receive waves of immigration.

The goal of teaching languages other than English or French is not only to promote proficiency in another language but also to lead the young Canadians to an appreciation for the other languages and cultures that are part of their society.

Together with the benefits defended by the proponents of heritage languages, are the various arguments advocated by those who see the teaching of languages other than English or French as a socially divisive experiment, one that builds barriers and balkanizes the schools and communities as well as doing damage to students' curricula. The reasons that are given are that programs are too costly and that it is educationally retrograde to include other languages and cultures within one national fabric.²¹ Critics of multiculturalism think that bilingualism also is a political accommodation rather than a recognition.²²

The extent to which it is worth retaining a heritage language comes not just from maintaining communicative skills in another language, but most importantly from the fact that students develop at the same time a deeper conceptual and linguistic proficiency that is strongly related to the acquisition and development of the host language (French or English). Basically, students learn, as well, general

²¹ Fernand Girard, L'État et les minorités: L'utopie du multiculturalisme, (Saint Boniface: les presses universitaires de Saint Boniface, 1992) pp. 95-105.

²² Op. Cit. Lament for a Nation: The Life and Death of Canada's Bilingual Dream, pp. 79-82.

academic skills. In short, maintenance of an ancestral language provides the possibility of transferring cognitive and academic skills across languages:²³

More recent studies show that [maintenance and/or retrieval of ancestral languages] far from being a negative force in children's personal and academic development, bilingualism can positively affect both intellectual and linguistic progress. A large number of studies have reported that bilingual children exhibit a greater sensitivity to linguistic meanings and are more flexible in their thinking than are monolingual students (see Lambert 1990 for a review). In general, it is not surprising that bilingual children should be more adept at certain aspects of linguistic processing. In gaining control over two languages systems, the bilingual child has had to decipher much more language input than the monolingual child who has been exposed to only one language system. Thus the bilingual child has had considerably more practice in analyzing meanings than the monolingual child.²⁴

In a way, as the quotation explains, it is the socio-linguistic interdependence among languages that makes the process of learning another language even more attractive in terms of its advantages. The level of interdependence varies with the kind of program being administered to the student and it has a direct relationship to the amount of exposure to the language the student receives.

2.4 The Canadian Parliament in the 1990s

It is quite apparent that over twenty years of official multiculturalism and twenty-five years of recognizing official languages have not succeeded in dissipating

²³ Jim Cummins, Bilingualism and Special Education: Issues in Assessment and Pedagogy, (Clevendon Multilingual Matters LTD. 1984) pp. 142-151.

²⁴ Op. Cit. Jim Cummins, Heritage Languages: The Development and Denial of Canada's Linguistic Resources, (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1990) pp. 69-70.

the tensions even at the highest levels. The Reform Party of Canada has openly attacked the policy of multiculturalism by including it in its official policy book:

The Reform Party of Canada opposes the current concept of multiculturalism and hyphenated Canadianism pursued by the Government of Canada. We would end funding of the multiculturalism program and support the abolition of the Department of multiculturalism.²⁵

The debate over the value of pluri-ethnicity continues to spark friction and misunderstanding. When the Official Languages Act was passed in the House of Commons, 25 years ago, the votes were 197 for and 17 against;²⁶ 25 years later this vote would have definitely different results.

For the record, and for the purpose of illustrating how different the perceptions are today in the House of Commons, it will be sufficient to report a few of the statements related to official multiculturalism, made by Members of the 35th Parliament:

Mr. Elwin Hermanson: "...If you reject the idea that culture can be designed or engineered by the state, then it only stands to reason that the development, preservation and promotion of our multicultural heritage should be left to individuals, private associations, or in some cases lower level of government."²⁷

Mr. Jack Ramsay: "This formula of special rights cannot succeed in a multicultural society such as

²⁵ Reform Party of Canada, Principles and Policies: The Blue Book, (Calgary: Reform Party of Canada, 1991) p. 35.

²⁶ House of Commons, Hansard, May 27, 1969.

²⁷ Ibid, June 7, 1994, pg. 4971 (English).

Canada. We must ensure that all Canadians stand equal before the law, regardless of race, language, culture or religion. This bill violates that principle. This may be the greatest failing of the Yukon First Nations Agreement. It grants special rights based upon race and ethnic origin and destroys the principle of equality of citizenship in Canada."²⁸

Mr. White: "...We cannot make a strong nation by emphasizing the differences through multicultural policies, differences through bilingual policies, differences through special aboriginal policies, patronage and other political toys. We are a federation of 10 equal provinces. We are the true north strong and free. We are our home and native land and we will be always a united Canada."²⁹

And finally another Member of Parliament, Mr John Williams:

"Language fractures a country. In a multicultural, multi-language situation, it is perhaps the most divisive thing that we have to deal with, not only in this country but we see it around the world. A large part of the tensions in Yugoslavia today are racial, ethnic and language oriented. The divisions in the Soviet Union are degenerating into nationalism and cultural ethnic groups and language again. Around the world language is a problem."³⁰

No matter how informed or misinformed these statements are, the point is that they represent a substantial form of debate that is presently going on in the highest Canadian public forum. The composition of the 35th Parliament is indicative of the political, but also real fragmentation that exists among voters and politicians

²⁸ Ibid, June 13, 1994, pg. 5253 (English).

²⁹ Ibid, June 7, 1994, pg. 4955 (English).

³⁰ Ibid, April 18, 1994, pg. 3147 (English).

alike: the Reformers on one side, the Bloc Québécois, devoted to the separation of the province of Québec, on another, and a government that is facing two extreme positions.

2.5 The Debate at the Crossroads

Whether multicultural policies are going to withstand the test of time is to be seen; but, more important, is the question whether education and media are going to follow the trend of extreme views or whether they are going to take leadership roles in accepting the challenge in dealing with the reality of a pluri-ethnic society.

On the one hand, the evidence of the public debate seems to indicate an increased tension; on the other hand, the demolinguistic reality of Canada is increasingly pointing to the fact that in many urban centres ethnocultural groups other than English or French will constitute a majority. Canada has many more ethnocultural groups than it ever did. This is precisely why the debate is at the crossroads: many years of official multiculturalism have produced expectations and disappointments, successes and failures, but, most of all, they have legitimized the pluri-ethnic and the pluri-linguistic fabric of Canadian society. Therefore, it is either necessary to call multiculturalism a failed social experiment, or it is important to review policies radically, in order to communicate the objectives of multiculturalism and to give the policies appropriate infrastructures and means to carry out their mandates.

Consequences of an ethno-linguistic debate give arguments for and against from opposite views. For instance, as far as bilingualism is concerned, there are

people in favour of official languages who would argue that although bilingualism is a good policy it has failed poorly.³¹ In the same way some advocates of heritage languages would argue that the teaching of other languages, although worth pursuing, has not lived to expectations, or, in the worse cases, has failed altogether and completely missed the goals.

There are, as well, arguments that consider official languages and multiculturalism as complementary to one another; or some others which totally reject the idea that these two policies are compatible. However, more and more the research in this field points to the benefits to be gained by both the maintenance of a mother tongue, and the concurrent acquisition of other languages, as in the case of children who operate in bilingual or trilingual settings. Somewhat peculiar is the argument still made today by some elementary school teachers of fully bilingual programs who will note to parents that a third language may be an actual obstacle to learning, or a factor that slows the learning process.³²

This latter notion is in total contradiction with the findings that learning more than one language creates a common ground of interdependence of academic skills, as enunciated by Jim Cummins (1991). It seems nevertheless to be a real perception that is common among elementary teachers of different schools across the country. Teachers, in short, should be appropriately informed on the research pointing to the fact that learning/retention of a third language is an academic and a social advantage.

³¹ Scott Reid, Lament for a Nation: The Life and Death of Canada's Bilingual Dream, (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1993), p. 84.

³² Actual conversation and observation with day-school teachers in the course of interviews

It seems however, that even when they are informed, they take issue with the teaching of another language. It is incumbent upon the school system to dispel these myths. Political perceptions are important and they can colour in a significant way the success or failure of certain initiatives; multiculturalism and the learning of many non-official languages within one country are not immune from political perceptions. It seems that opposition to the teaching of languages other than English or French may be related to the status they presently occupy in the school system and that the academic research concerning language learning/teaching is perceived as unimportant by the general public.

Academic research conducted by experts in the field of heritage languages convincingly concludes that children's academic development is stimulated by their interacting at home in their mother tongue or home language:

In summary, rather than potentially jeopardizing minority children's academic prospects (not to mention their potential for full bilingual proficiency) by advising parents to use English [French] in the home, educators should encourage parents to strongly promote children's conceptual development in their mother tongue by reading to them, telling stories, singing songs, and so on. Despite the endorsement of "multicultural education" in schools systems across Canada during the past 20 years, parents from ethnocultural backgrounds continue to report that educators advise to switch to English [French] in the home. This is perhaps an indication of how superficially "multicultural education" has been interpreted by some faculties of education and school systems.³³

³³ Jim Cummins and Marcel Danesi, Heritage Languages: The Development and Denial of Canada's Linguistic Resources, (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1990) p. 62.

Therefore, if educators continue to have and to give the political perception (perhaps wilfully ignorant of the research), that retaining or cultivating languages other than the one being taught in the schools is a negative factor or an obstacle, the debate is indeed still at large, lost in a difficult political meander.

2.6 The Canadian Polyglot Prism

Terms like "mother tongue" and "home language" are commonplace in the research that suggests that learning another language is an advantage rather than a disadvantage. They are central terms of reference. These terms, however, do not tell the whole story and; in fact, the Canadian multilingual reality has many facets.

Mother tongue in Canada could mean different things. It may mean, for instance, that children can have two mother tongues as a result of either exogamy or choice. Home language can vary, as well, it is not uncommon for children to use one or more languages (or dialects) at home, while having another mother tongue. To add to these complexities, different statistics from both research and official Statistics Canada documents are not consistent, nor do they provide continuity.

Although the objective of this study is not an attempt to discuss the different linguistic competencies of children entering the school system, at the same time, the realization of the complex pluri-linguistic situation suggests the need for special attention that education should have for the demolinguistic reality it faces.

The Canadian linguistic setting has been influenced by waves of immigration. This means that the mother tongue of many Canadians is a non-official language. In the 1991 Census, nearly four million Canadians reported a mother tongue other than

English or French.³⁴ However, as it can be seen from **Table 2** in this thesis, Canadians of origin other than British or French were nearly ten million in 1986. The discrepancy in the two sets of figures suggests that mother tongue maintenance declines in subsequent generations.

For many ethnocultural minority groups the result is language loss and assimilation. Four scenarios illustrate the transfer patterns occurring within ethnocultural communities. (1) At first, within a highly enclosed community a group of new Canadians share a language of origin; their mother tongue is also their home language and the language that is commonly used in their community. Gradually, second and third generations acquire the language(s) of the host country.

On the one hand, (2) second and third generations may become bilingual (i.e. mother tongue maintenance and acquisition of one of Canada's official languages). On the other hand, (3) second and third generations may, as well, lose their language of origin, and adopt only one or both official languages of Canada.

It is also true however, that (4) generations that follow might want to retrieve their ancestral language and transfer it on to their children. In the first case, the ethnocultural community is isolated from the host society; in the second case, integration with the host society occurs, while in the third case the result is assimilation and the loss of ancestral language. The fourth case illustrates the phenomenon of retrieval, which is partly supported by the Heritage Languages Programme in various provinces of Canada.

³⁴ Statistics Canada, Languages in Canada, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1994) Catalogue No. 96-3131 F, p. 23

Not all the children of an ethnocultural community are encouraged to retrieve, and, therefore, learn *ex novo* their ancestral language. For some of them, a variety of that language may still be the home language; for others that ancestral language is a mother tongue, the only language that they have been exposed during the pre-school years. The children's various level of competence both in their language of origin and in one of the official languages may vary. As varied are their attitudes both towards the host language, and towards that ancestral language that they are encouraged, or sometimes forced, to learn.

It becomes quite obvious that the minority children's competence in the host language and their linguistic and cultural backgrounds in pre-school years play a crucial role in their cognitive development, and in the way they learn once they enter the education system. Linguistic competence and attitudes also play a significant role in the educational programmes where children are expected to maintain and/or retrieve their ancestral languages. It follows that teaching ethnocultural minority children both in the elementary schools and in the Heritage Languages Programme is a very challenging and delicate task that only sensitive, well informed and qualified educational system should attempt to perform.

In her book Bilingualism or Not, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas defines mother tongue under four headings: 1. Origin, 2. Competence, 3. Function and 4. Attitudes.³⁵ Very briefly these definitions refer to instances where mother tongue can reasonably be expected to exist. It is a complex scenario, intertwined with

³⁵ Tove Skutnabb-Kangas Bilingualism or Not, (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters LTD, 1981) pp 12-57

sociological and linguistic factors, all of which are heavily dependent on the situations that occur within a home, outside the home, and in the educational setting. All of these instances are reflected in the Canadian context: a child may have a mother tongue by origin if the language is consistently spoken first by one of the parents; two mother tongues, if the parents speak two different languages to the child. Language competence is, as well, a factor which determines mother tongue. The functional use of the language is related to the language most used. Lastly, but also very important, is the attitude toward the language that may shape the child's sense of identification with that language, or cause an outright rejection of it.

It seems reasonable to expect that, if any of the above linguistic/cultural conditions emerge from the Canadian context, particular measures would be in place in order to address the children's needs and the minorities' sense of belonging to a specific culture. It should not be forgotten that almost fifty per cent of Canadians of origin other than English or French have demonstrated the "collective will" to exist as cultural and linguistic entities within the Canadian society.

Therefore, language learning other than English or French goes even beyond the scope of cultural and linguistic retention for the sole purpose of maintaining the pluri-lingual heritage of Canadians; it actually hinges on the social development of the child and the basic human need to feel accepted in a new environment as well as feeling part of the whole. If linguistic assimilation is occurring, it is unclear whether this is, in fact, the preferred choice. Given the numbers that have resisted it, it would seem that this is not the case.

The Canadian polyglot prism, as complex as it may be, and as difficult as it may seem to maintain and/or resolve, needs to be addressed.

2.7 Capitalizing on Resources

As it may appear obvious, any pluri-lingual state has innumerable linguistic resources, that even if when underdeveloped, are at least potentially a useful pool for intellectual and cultural development. As each culture or cultural group strives for its survival and comes in contact with other cultures and other languages, it benefits from exchanges and at the same time it normalizes, so to speak, the learning environment for many languages at the same time.

The attitude that considers it normal, and very positive, to learn concurrently two, three or more languages can send a clear message (far from the politics of it) that the retention/retrieval of languages other than English or French is really added value for the cognitive and social development of children.

In Canada the development and the learning of other languages is, to some extent, an accepted principle. This should not be under-valued; in fact, exploiting this factor to its fullest potential would seem to be the only logical thing to do. To be functionally a pluri-lingual state, Canada must depend on good communications that policies and political leadership give to the concept of a pluri-lingual society; hence, acceptance for the development of many languages should not be political tokenism but a conscious resolve to respect and develop fully the intellectual capacity of Canadians of every origin. These are responsibilities that cannot be left

to private enterprises and community groups; the former would always have a business orientation, the latter, an ethnocentric focus.

Institutional change and political change do not seem to go hand in hand. Institutional change is subject to political change and is very slow; political change is quick but is subject to political pressures that change according to different economic, social and demographic situations. Although these two processes are *de facto* incompatible with each other, they are, in a sense, dependent upon each other. It is precisely the odd interdependency factor that causes a lot of stress and anxiety over the debate on linguistic retention and, by extension, on multiculturalism in general. The B. and B. Commission was successful in splitting the political argument from the institutional one and advocated change as a normal course of action that governments and institutions alike should have taken at that time. In the more than twenty-five years that followed, governments and institutions have attempted to address pluri-ethnicity and linguistic retention from different perspectives; yet, although multiculturalism is entrenched in declarations, its implementation still remains a complex issue.

It was noted in the previous chapter how multiculturalism has been addressed by governments with different policies and how these have affected the debate. The chapters that follow are in fact the reverse of the medal, the question being how institutions have responded to policies and how policies have been translated into programs addressing pluri-ethnicity.

Education and media were specifically identified by Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Education and Media have implemented, or reacted to, multiculturalism not only as a result of the policies and the various formal manifestations, but most importantly because they had to face up to the demographic realities that, to a certain extent, they have ignored over the years. Institutional changes have been slow and varied, primarily because the policies themselves and those implementing them seem to have lacked a sense of direction. In the face of this, institutions have resorted to a reactive rather than a proactive approach; the next two chapters will demonstrate just how and why the reactive approach raises serious concerns.

CHAPTER III

The Response to the Policies in Education

...Language is the most central human attribute, discoveries that result in deeper understanding of language can profoundly affect what we think of ourselves and our place in the course of...cultural development--particularly our place in the present and future social world. ...Without language there would be no possibility of culture and cultural development...

Prof. Carlos P. Otero, 1988¹

The argument that "without language there could be no possibility of culture and cultural development" introduces the perspective of this chapter. It is in this venue that a comprehensive approach to multiculturalism is understood in this thesis. Multicultural and multilingual development is considered as an evolutionary process in modern day societies which are faced with large multicultural components.

Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism closely examined the relationship between culture and language. The Book argued that early years in children are particularly important. It challenged the educational system as a whole, but specifically the elementary levels, to find solutions and working arrangements that could accommodate the need to retain the different languages and cultures that were already part of the Canadian fabric.

¹ Carlos Otero, P. Ed., The Politics of Language, Noam Chomsky, (New York: Black Rose Books, 1988) p. 17

Over and above the principle of respect to the cultural contribution of other ethnocultural groups, Book IV examined language transfer patterns in order to find out both the position and the potential that various languages had in Canada at the time. The authors noted the extraordinary cultural and linguistic diversity which Canada, at that time, already had. They also noted that in large urban centres with high concentrations of a specific group the language of origin was likely to be transferred on to the second generation; whereas in rural areas smaller concentrations of ethnocultural groups showed a much lower level of mother tongue retention. As well, the issue becomes more complex because the loss of mother tongue increases for groups that are the result of older waves of immigration, while, obviously, mother tongue maintenance is more prominent in groups formed by more recent waves of immigration.

Book IV, advocated the teaching of languages other than English or French, because it recognized both the need to preserve and maintain languages which had been part of Canada for years, and the need to ensure that new immigrants coming into Canada could keep their languages while integrating into mainstream society.

Book IV explicitly argued that teaching of other languages (other than English and French) in the elementary school curriculum would create useful skills; that it would be a means of intellectual stimulation if included in the secondary school curriculum, and finally that, although official languages were to remain English and French, the working knowledge of many other languages within one state would constitute an important asset for the whole of Canadian society.

Multicultural education today is a broad concept that covers a variety of policies, programs and perspectives. In their book, Jean Leonard Elliott and Augie Fleras wrote that multicultural education has two main perspectives: one is enrichment, which targets all students; the other is empowerment, which would include radical revisions of the school curricula as school systems now know it.² In Book IV, twenty-five years ago, it was argued that both models were needed but that the system to follow was clearly the model of empowerment, even if it did require a radical change.

Policies and idealizations of multiculturalism do have, at the centre of their reasoning, cultural and linguistic retention. The crux of the argument, therefore, concerns the kind of tools or infrastructures that are available to Canadians of ethnic origins other than French or English, so that multicultural and pluri-lingual retention can be properly articulated.

3.1 Framework

The subject of multicultural education is a complex and vast one. Changes to curricula or school policies occur at different administrative levels. In an attempt to carry out a good analysis and compare policies and programmes, Heritage Languages Programmes have been isolated as the major structural unit within the educational arena that is most directly concerned with the teaching of languages other than English or French.

² Jean Leonard Elliott and Augie Fleras, Unequal Relations. (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, Canada, 1992) pp. 304-307.

Provincial and territorial Ministries of Education have the overall responsibilities to formulate legislation concerning educational programmes, to set these policies and to create academic guidelines. Most importantly, they have the mandate to allocate human and financial resources within the educational system. The Boards of education are organized in a different manner throughout the entire country depending on demographic, linguistic and regional variations. They do have, however, the responsibility for carrying out the plans and the guidelines, and for following the academic curricula that are created and provided by the various provincial ministries of education. Boards play a significant role in the development and in the implementation of these policies by allocating resources at the local and regional levels.

The individual schools also have an important role as they deal with the day-to-day decisions. There is no doubt that principals and teachers of day schools have a big impact on children of all ethnic origins; first impressions and attitudes about multiculturalism at this level, are the ones that most directly affect the Heritage Languages Programmes.

Finally, other members of the educational process are parents and trustees of Boards of education; parents have the specific function of getting involved at the community level; at the school board level, or, in some cases, even at the provincial level. Their contribution is crucial.

Trustees are important because as elected officials they are part of the decision-making body of any Board of education and, therefore, their role is central to the kind of priorities that any school board establishes.³

Multiculturalism is, of course, a federal policy, filtered down to the provincial systems in as many levels as the ones just described, with as many different interpretations.

The objectives of this chapter are simple: to explore the implementation of multiculturalism in the educational systems by focusing on Heritage Languages Programmes and to review some of the obstacles that prevent their effective implementation.

The practical recognition of multiculturalism relies on the fundamental support of the educational process as it relates to language teaching.

Professor Jeffrey G. Reitz has conducted significant investigations on ethnic groups in Canada and formulated a model of ethnic cohesiveness;⁴ his findings demonstrate that language is the single, most important element in a culture, and that over half of the total content of a culture comes from, and is manifest in, its language. Reitz successfully argues that integration is followed by assimilation unless it is counterbalanced by the cohesiveness of the ethnic group.

The single, most important factor, in minority group culture, cohesion, and ethnic identity, is language. Ethnic language retention is more important than church

³ Carol Fator and Henry Frances, Multicultural Education: Translating Policy into Practice. (Toronto: Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, 1991) pp. 5-8.

⁴ Jeffrey G. Reitz, The Survival of Ethnic Groups, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980) pp. 90-123.

affiliation, residence in an ethnic neighbourhood, or even marrying within the ethnic group.⁵ Thus, substantial emphasis on language in a multicultural policy can be significantly justified.

Chapter I demonstrated that formal manifestations, while having an important declaratory value, have a marginal impact; they have, in part, been an answer to the pressures exercised by some of the groups, but in so doing they seem to have fallen short of their objectives. It also appears that the multiculturalism policy, with respect to ethnic groups, has not taken into consideration the argument that language plays the most important role for the identity of a minority group. Language retention, as understood by the dominant English and French cultures, has instead prompted a divisive atmosphere. National boundaries, in the post-cold war era, are no longer identifying themselves with languages, due to greater mobility and the liberalization of trade barriers.

Unifying the concepts of national-state-language (as is happening in the former Soviet Union and, most notably in the former Yugoslavia), seems a regressive discourse. In Canada, changes made to the Official Languages Act in 1988, which were aimed at the promotion and development of French and English minority communities, may have in turn caused a partial exclusion of other ethnocultural groups from a fuller participation in the bilingual national context.⁶ Changes of this nature, as well as the understanding of the policy of multiculturalism

⁵ Ibid. pp. 115-119.

⁶ Official Languages Act 1988, (Ottawa: the Queen's Printer, 1988) Part VII, sections 41 & 42, see Appendix B, 2.

as the exclusive domain of "ethnocultural non-English and non-French groups", go against the spirit of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism which advocated, instead, integration within a pluri-lingual and pluri-cultural society that recognized two official languages.

In fact, in Canada there is a low level of intercultural understanding since ethnic tensions and the lack of tolerance in accepting ethnocultural diversity in Canadian are on the rise. In 1990 one Canadian in three was intolerant of minorities, that works out to be a significant 60% percent of the population.⁷

As illustrated in the previous chapter, the 35th Session of Parliament in 1995 seems to reflect the above-noted reality. The degree of intolerance and unacceptance is even reflected at the political level. As already mentioned, the Reform Party of Canada that stands at 52 seats (one seat away from official opposition status) includes in its political objectives the abolishment of the whole concept of bilingualism and multiculturalism.

Survey after survey returns to the perennial question of the ethnocultural society versus the melting pot concept. When 40% of the Canadian population (Census 1991) is neither of British nor French origin,⁸ high levels of intolerance, as the ones that have been mentioned in Chapter II of this thesis, should draw some concern.

⁷ Beltrame Julian, The Ottawa Citizen, Feb. 23, 1990 - Angus Reid Survey Results.

⁸ See Table 2.

In 1969, Book IV of the Report of Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism recommended that institutions should have assured equal opportunities for the personal fulfilment of every Canadian.⁹ Book IV explicitly set out the difference between integration and assimilation. While favouring integration into the mainstream of society, it described assimilation as a potential, personal choice not to be encouraged. The argument was that integration, together with the preservation of cultural and linguistic roots, was a far more desirable and positive factor that enriched society at large.¹⁰

Due to the considerable social change experienced by Canadian society with respect to the role and the increasing presence of ethnocultural minorities in the last twenty years, the school, as one the most important social agencies of socialization, has found itself at the centre of the multicultural debate. As this chapter will outline, teachers and teacher education have yet to face the full challenge of this debate that is only present, in a marginal way, in restricted circles of educators.

As mentioned, social scientists and popular writers alike have all underlined the importance of ethnic identity as related to language in Canadian society, by stressing that the most persistent and marked cleavage is seen as linguistic rather than ethnic.¹¹

⁹ Op. cit. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book IV, p. 5

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 5.

¹¹ S.D. Berkowitz, Model And Myths in Canadian Sociology, (Toronto: Butterworths & Co 1984) Department of Sociology, University of Vermont, p. 114.

2

PM-1 3½"x4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
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PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS

As discussed, (J. Reitz: 1990) ethnocultural groups see language retention as the most important symbol for their identity in a plural society as Canada. It seems that partial proof of this is the enormous participation and overwhelming response that Heritage Languages Programmes have enjoyed over the last twenty years.

3.2 Heritage Languages Programmes

Heritage Languages Programmes, under other names, have been in existence for a long time in Canada. However, they officially appeared in the early 1970s, and were later formalized by provincial legislatures. Heritage Languages Programmes are part-time educational programmes which generally aim, as a major part of their mandate, at language and cultural retention for young Canadians (Jr. Kindergarten to Gr. 8) of non-English and non-French origins across Canada. Although, both in terms of numbers and budgets, they are the single, largest educational activity that is charged with the responsibility of cultural and linguistic retention, in the 1990s these programmes are still facing formidable opposition:

If multilingualism is regarded as a valuable asset both for the individual and for the society, then why do so many Canadians vehemently oppose the teaching of heritage languages? Why do many parents who demand that their children be given the opportunity to become bilingual in French and English protest angrily at the fact that their tax dollars are being used to teach the language of immigrant children? Why is it appropriate to promote multilingualism in private schools as the Toronto French School but not in the public school system? Is multilingualism good for the rich but bad for the poor? ¹²

¹² Jim Cummins and Marcel Danesi, Heritage Languages: The Development and Denial of Canada's Linguistic Resources, (Montréal: La maîtresse d'école Montréal, 1990) p. 2

The number of programmes, their frequency, and the student population vary according to regions and provinces. Since their inception, Heritage Languages Programmes (H.L.P.) have generated both interest and controversy; for the most part, they operate outside of the regular school hours. The H.L.P. are but one tool, yet they have impact on many people.

The official launching of the Heritage Languages Programme in many provinces of Canada was a historic moment for many groups. It was the first time that a number of Ministries of Education were getting partially but formally involved in the teaching of a third language at the elementary level. The programme was applauded and it gave rise to a host of Saturday schools.

3.3 Advantages and Disadvantages

The debate on heritage languages has stretched from controversial and bitter issues, in some instances, to minimal resistance or tacit acceptance in others.¹³ The advocates of heritage languages have seen these programs as academically advantageous for minority students and as a tool favouring communications within families. The adversaries of heritage languages have instead seen heritage languages as costly programs that are socially divisive and educationally retrograde.¹⁴

In fact, both of the above views may well be short-sighted; both sides of the argument are centred on ethnic groups rather than language, thus adding in both

¹³ Jim Cummins, Bilingualism and Minority Language Children, (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1981) p. 4.

¹⁴ Ibid p. 5

cases a negative perspective with consequences that, as this chapter will attempt to point out, are not necessarily always auspicious.

A debate, on Heritages Languages Programmes, such as the one just described, is bound to create friction and seems destined to keep up divisions rather than fostering intercultural enrichment. Since the acceptance of intercultural enrichment reflects a more relaxed environment, the responsibility of language and culture learning cannot be solely entrusted to non-English and non-French ethnic groups.

The teaching of non-official languages under antagonistic circumstances can be a *pro-tempore* politically advantageous programme, but it does not address the more fundamental question of cultural and linguistic retention based on an equal status for all languages used by Canadians of different origins. It does not accept the reality that *de facto* Canada is a pluri-lingual society and *de jure* Canada is already multicultural. Book IV had noted in its findings that part time schools (Heritage Languages Programmes) while complementary, were not adequate to carry on the teaching of other languages.

If linguistic and cultural retention is by and large the domain of ethnocultural groups, then the socio-political and demographic realities will weaken the collective will of a group by determining how and when a culture and a language are to survive.

Jim Cummins makes the following comments concerning Heritage Languages Programmes and the policies related to them:

Policies have generally acknowledged, either explicitly or implicitly, the value of Canada's linguistic resources, but issues of administrative feasibility, cost and the primacy of French as a second language outside of Québec have placed constraints on the levels and forms of public support considered appropriate.¹⁵

The issue of giving the task of cultural retention to individual groups, without any significant guidelines on the part of governments, would also seem to be in direct contradiction to all formal manifestations. Political declarations, at least in theory, have a completely different departure point since they have underlined multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society. No fundamental characteristic could possibly be retained and cultivated for any significant period of time, unless supported by a more constructive commitment. The guidelines for hiring teachers of heritage languages under official policies read: "The instructors hired by the Boards for these classes (H.L.P.) need not have Ontario certification but should have qualifications acceptable to the boards, principals and the parent's groups" (Ontario Ministry of Education Memorandum N.7, 1977). The term "acceptable qualifications" is not defined.

In 1969 the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism argued that steps were necessary to safeguard the contribution that the many cultures and languages had given to the quality of Canadian life. Their recommendation was as follows:

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 13

We recommend that the teaching of languages other than English or French, and cultural subjects related to them be incorporated as options in the public elementary school program, where there is sufficient demand for such classes.¹⁶

Although Heritage Languages Programmes have been attempting, in a marginal way, to respond indirectly to these recommendations, the teaching of languages other than English or French are not yet incorporated in the public elementary school programmes as the recommendation first suggested.

The approximate number of community schools involved in heritage languages teaching is well over two thousand, the number of students is very close to two hundred thousand and the number of languages taught is at least 62. On a national scale, Heritage Languages Programmes spending amounts to millions of dollars. It is difficult to reach a significant agreement on the exact numbers, on the participation of students and the number of programmes and teachers in Canada.¹⁷ All of these programs receive partial funding from the province in which they are located as well as federal grants, and provincial programs are often overlapping. Some programs that are actually in operation in smaller communities may not be accounted for in available statistical data.¹⁸

¹⁶ Op. cit. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book IV, p. 141

¹⁷ Canadian Education Association Heritage Languages Programs in Canadian School Boards, Special Report (Toronto: 1991), p. 3.

¹⁸ A review of different sources from Secretary of State (Heritage Canada) and Boards of Education across Canada indicate that some overlapping has taken place in documenting different programs, some of the smaller groups do not seem to appear of official lists and their presence is noted in some Boards of Education list only

There is no officially adopted or standard definition of the concept of heritage languages. Terms like "heritage languages", "non-official languages", "community languages", "international languages" (Ontario 1994) and "minority languages" have all been used interchangeably in Canada and in other countries. A generally accepted definition seems to be the one used by the Ministry of Education of the province of Ontario: "Any language other than French or English".

There are three major models of Heritage Languages Programmes in Canada. All of these programmes receive partial funding from the various provinces according to the various provincial funding criteria, some federal grants and, in some instances, cultural grants from other countries. As well, all Heritage Languages Programmes receive community support in various forms.

The first model is the bilingual Heritage Language Programme which is carried out within the regular public school system; this model involves the use of a language other than English or French as a medium of instruction for about fifty per cent of the school day. This programme is the most difficult to arrange, and is also the least popular of the three. While receiving provincial funding, this model functions as private schools. Where they exist, they are very successful (eg. Jewish Community Schools in Montreal and Ukrainian Schools in Winnipeg).

The second model involves programmes where heritage languages are taught either as a subject or as part of an extended day or in the available time for optional activities. This model is not very popular either, because students are asked to follow heritage languages courses in lieu of recreational or extracurricular activities;

students stay in school for an extended day or at a time when recreational activities are taking place outside regular school hours. Except for the Toronto Metropolitan area, where both student population and teachers' resources may not be a great problem, in the rest of Canada this model is very difficult to organize; finding a significant number of students within one school and freeing up occasional teachers for only a portion of the day is equally difficult. They are only an option if teachers, school timetables and students find a common ground.

The third model consists of programmes administered by Boards of Education in cooperation with the ethnocultural communities themselves. These programmes usually received federal funding under the now defunct Cultural Enrichment Programme.¹⁹ They are, for the most part, offered on Saturday mornings, or after school, or week days, but always outside of the normal school hours. These programmes are by far the most attended of the three. If they are so popular, it is because they represent the easiest logistical and administrative arrangement: a) students are out of the school environment; b) school buildings are free; c) part-time instructors are more easily found to teach for a few hours on a week-end; d) there is an extremely low level of interaction between Board of Education, instructors and students; and, e) Boards of Education can offer Heritage Languages Programmes without any of the support programmes, normally available to teachers and students during the day school. None of the above, of course,

¹⁹ The 1990 federal budget completely eliminated the Cultural Enrichment Funding Program for Heritage Languages. The program was introduced in 1977 (Secretary of State Estimates 1990) Ottawa, the Queen's Printer, 1990.

constitutes a consideration for the students who are, in fact, the prime target of the programme.

The description of the organization of Heritage Languages Programmes illustrates that H.L.P. are directly under the control of the provincial authorities that are mainly concerned with the administration of programs rather than the direct instructional aspects. National policies (or curriculum guidelines) on the teaching of heritage languages are limited to very general objectives in many cases, in some province they are non-existent. Even within provincial boundaries, Heritage Languages Programmes follow separate models according to the various Boards of Education.

Although H.L.P. are fragmented and have been the cause of considerable debate and struggle within provincial jurisdictions, they have shown a remarkable capacity to survive. The range and the scope of the different H.L.P.s across Canada are not homogeneous. The evident lack of a national concept and policy on heritage languages teaching has in fact encouraged different initiatives and a *quid pro quo* attitude that has in turn resulted in different interpretations on the significance and the impact that heritage languages should have according to different regions and/or provinces. Fostering language retention and instruction has largely been a task left to the individual communities rather than educators. Success has been dependent upon the political pressures that ethnocultural groups (according to their numbers and in different regions) have been able to exercise.

The complexity of the approaches to Heritage Languages Programmes has allowed for extremely different circumstances. In some instances, as in the case of bilingual Heritage Languages Programmes, results have been very positive, but this is only true for a few groups.²⁰ If the teaching of heritage languages in Canada is a reflection of a multicultural approach to education, partial success can be claimed.

3.4 A Personal Perspective on Heritage Language Schools ²¹

What has happened to Heritage Languages Programmes across Canada is very much a reflection of what the federal laws have inspired. There are three aspects that should be observed when analyzing multicultural education. All of these aspects are closely related to heritage languages teaching: the ethnocentric focus of Heritage Languages Programmes, the constitutional reality that education is a provincial responsibility, and the general socio-political status of Heritage Languages Programmes in different provinces of Canada.

First, by having an ethnocentric focus, heritage languages curricula do not have a global vision nor a *sequitur* in the High School years: fragmentation is a result that is almost implicitly encouraged. As noted, in almost all cases Heritage Languages Programmes are clearly separated from the operation of the day schools as well as from the educational programs. They are classified as "community

²⁰ Op. Cit. Cummins and Danesi, 1990. pp. 23-50

²¹ (The author of this manuscript has been directly involved in Heritage Languages teaching since 1972, first as a teacher then (1974) as a director of programs and many other initiatives related to it. In the course of performing his duties, extensive travel across Canada, many contacts with similar initiatives, participation in provincial and national organizations and symposia have inspired some useful insight into the field of heritage languages teaching. Testimony submitted in this research, therefore, will also be drawn from the above-noted personal and direct experience.)

education", which notably includes a variety of educational and interest courses. Guidelines are designed for the needs of specific groups rather than for those of the students at large. In the majority of instances teaching is left to the capacity and resources of the communities. Educationally, pedagogical goals are diverse according to different groups and boards: there is no firm educational policy for heritage languages. Heritage Languages Programmes are only limited to elementary levels.

The development of resources and professional training for instructors is at best only a sporadic and intermittent kind of experiment. Major urban centres (Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver) are the ones that benefit the most from professional development programs, because of the concentration of numbers of students and of human and financial resources.

With governments and Boards of Education alike facing financial challenges in the nineties, Heritage Languages Programmes have taken a "back burner" position; some Boards of Education are radically restructuring and reducing their ways of budgeting for Heritage Languages Programmes, and the granting structure in the province of Ontario has not changed for the past ten years.²²

Heritage languages class sizes are hardly a priority, whereas class sizes with the rest of the educational system are usually part of collective agreements in the regular school programmes. Children accepted into heritage languages classes are grouped by combining age, day-school level and the level of knowledge of the

²² Ottawa Roman Catholic Separate School Boards and Ottawa Board of Education policy directives, 1995.

language. The result is an approximation of these three criteria dominated by the day-school level. Therefore, in the heritage languages class there is not the same homogeneity as in the day-school classroom. The further constraint of instruction being relegated to week-ends or to after-school hours greatly limits the capacity of teachers and administrators to deal with classroom sizes, age groups and different levels of language competence.

Except for a few cases, Heritage Languages Programmes in every province continue to be at the periphery of education to date. The First National Conference on Heritage Languages in 1985 echoed these concerns but did not produce an effective follow up.²³

As noted, governments have generated interest and facilitated Heritage Languages Programmes and, at face value, heritage languages have been extremely successful under the circumstances, while, at the same time, they have raised the level of consciousness about learning languages other than English or French. But provincial governments have not yet passed legislation which would give the H.L.P. the security of continued existence within the regular school day, which is common practice with other educational goals when included in provincial Education Acts.

²³ Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, Report of the First Conference on Heritage Languages, (Ottawa The Queen's Printer, 1985).

3.5 Heritage Language Class: a Diary²⁴

It is about 9:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning, students begin to gather in front of the school waiting for the bell to ring. Teachers arrive, as well, and they meet in the staff-room to prepare for the day ahead; some parents are talking to teachers outside the staff room. The director quickly reviews some items with the teachers and, very soon after that, the school bell rings and children begin to enter the classrooms as if it were any normal school day. Other students arrive later with parents excusing themselves as they had to do "altre cose", "other things". Classes get under way and a quasi-normal school day routine begins.

A quick moment for announcements over the P.A. system, some other classroom's chores and the "day" gets to a formal start. The teacher begs the painstaking question of the day: did anybody have some time for homework? Well, the answers are colourful, justified and plausible. In the end, the teacher finds out that a few dedicated students have done some homework and it is time to review it together. Among themselves the students pass a few comments in English, the teacher patiently reminds them to talk in the language of instruction, and a good number of them makes an honest effort in doing so. A little of everything, depending on the creativity and the initiative of the teacher and the cooperation of the students, is given in the way of a lesson that is half-planned and half-improvised.

²⁴ This author in 1974 founded the "Italian Canadian Youth Formation Centre"; later, in 1977, when Heritage Languages Programmes were officially launched in the province of Ontario, became coordinator for 13 language schools within the Ottawa Roman Catholic Separate School Board. Many of the experiences related in the diary are the result of personal interactions with students, teachers and directors of all the other Heritage Languages Schools as well as direct interaction with the administration of many other Boards of Education in the province of Ontario and elsewhere in Canada.

There is a pause at about 11:00 for approximately 20 minutes or so, and in the span of a half-hour, lessons resume and it is already time to plan for the end of the day. Amidst different activities, students from different classes are getting together for special projects or other cultural activities. In approximately 40 minutes the school day comes to an end and teachers meet in the staff-room again to review the day and plan long-term activities and other matters.

The meeting with teachers is crucial for the functional administration of the school, but, as in the classroom, time is of the essence and another day is soon over. The children have come and gone in a little more than two hours in which students and teachers have each tried to cope with each other, to grasp the essentials and to make the best of what is really a difficult situation for both. During the lesson, the students have responded each according to their age, capacity, their good will and that of their parents and their own level of knowledge of the language studied. All of these variables are present and significantly different in almost every heritage language class. Teaching, as a result, is challenging for many reasons.

The students' ages, competence of the language, interest in the course and working habits (that come from attending different schools and different school systems) are all competing with one another and it is up to the teacher to use the best possible strategy given these limitations. These would be, at least in principle, easily avoidable circumstances if students were attending language courses within the regular school day and in one Board of Education, as Book IV had suggested.

On the one hand, all students are to be considered as equals in a class; on the other hand, all students are different. A teacher's grasp of the classroom is crucial; as noted, the children's competence of the languages varies from mother tongue level (first language at home), to second language (rarely spoken at home) to foreign language (never spoken at home); in addition children may go, in their day school, to a French school, to an English school or attend a bilingual programme, all of which are different in their pedagogical approaches. The Saturday school is situated between a partial immersion programme and a second-foreign-language class.

The children are, in a sense, following a teaching model that is only true of the Saturday school. There cannot exist a structured curriculum within the present framework; teachers are not necessarily qualified as language teachers nor do they need to possess the mastery of the language taught. A heritage language teacher realizes that the instructional curriculum for any given class is situated between a general program with some objectives for the academic year and a much less structured agenda for the Saturday lesson. This brings together, therefore, two elements that, from the beginning, are incompatible with one another.

There are thirty-four Saturdays of instruction in a normal H.L.P. during the academic year. This is equivalent to a total of 85 hours of instruction per year that include extra-curricular activities, the latter involving dance classes, singing classes or other sport or community-related activities. In addition, Christmas concerts and other school activities, which fall on Saturdays, take away some teaching time as

well. Students, as in the day school, are not at a 100% attendance. On Saturdays, attendance is generally poorer than on weekdays for seemingly obvious reasons.

Classes start at 9:30 in the morning and end at 12:15; classes can also run in the afternoon but, in any event, teaching time must not exceed 2.5 hours of instruction per week. Courses are only funded on the basis of 2.5 hours per week, and teachers are paid accordingly. Teachers, students, and directors are expected to behave as if a Saturday was a normal day of instruction; students are also expected somewhat to perform according to their assigned levels. But age, rather than linguistic competence, is often the practical factor in placing the student in a classroom because heritage languages can only be taught and funded at the elementary levels. Saturday school teachers are expected to perform almost in the same way that a fully trained teacher has to perform in his or her class during the week.

The above-noted is an unfortunate situation, far from the recommendation of Book IV, which suggested including languages other than English or French in the regular curriculum. It might also be one of the reasons which permits adversaries of heritage languages to claim that another language may be an obstacle rather than an advantage; the status of heritage languages programme is so low in the educational scale, that its perception may be also its worse enemy.

The reality of some heritage language classes ostensibly portrays the fact that multiculturalism and education are still apart. Teachers and students of heritage languages are in a sense creating an artificial reality each time classes of heritage

languages are held. It is as if both teachers and students attempt to play their "role" with no script to follow.

Language teaching, under the conditions that have just been described, becomes a cumbersome task; Heritage language classes are sometimes reduced to a bargaining tool to gratify parents, since children, for the most part, are conscious of the fact that teaching is neither formalized nor fully recognized in the school system. A heritage language course (aside from the academic and social advantages that have been discussed) has no tangible impact on the day school of the child.

Whether the student fails or succeeds a year, whether the student has attended two years or eight years of heritage language, the academic advantages are abstractions that the student may only appreciate at a later stage. What remains in the student's mind is that the Saturday or out-of-school hours are busy, that there are additional tasks to do with no apparent consequence or reward, and that it does not really matter whether results are good or mediocre for they have no bearing on the school year. It is almost a course divested of its official status; it gives no motivation, and the school system makes no attempt to recognize the academic work performed by students in heritage language classes. In fact, as previously noted, some teachers even consider it a hindrance to academic performance.

On the other side of the spectrum, parents whose children attend heritage languages classes create expectations for themselves and for their children. In the end, the children who succeed are not only taking heritage language on a week-end; they are supported at home by their parents, and the use of the language is not

limited. In these cases, the "heritage language" is an important aspect of the life of the children that read, communicate, interact in that language; for them the heritage language class is, without a doubt, complementary to their social and intellectual development.

Whatever the situation may be, and depending on the different circumstances, if such an atmosphere does not foster or create the adequate set for the teaching and the maintenance of a culture, the Heritage Languages Programme is then simply a "band aid" approach to relieve political pressure.

I have seen that teachers across Canada and many heritage languages schools have had limited opportunities for professional development; poor texts; extreme time constraints and structures that are inadequate to support their activities or those of the children. If it is true that language should play an important role in shaping the social reality of individuals, any language which is taught under the circumstances that have just been described, probably does as much harm as good.

Typically, teaching in a heritage language class is not structured, nor entirely left to improvising. The combination of practical obstacles, lack of resources and limited preparation and experience on the part of teachers are difficult challenges to meet. Twenty-five years ago, Book IV of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism noted these problems; today, these problems still exist.

Teachers who are part of a Saturday Heritage Languages Programme have, among others things, to address two important concerns: the first is their own

diligence in professional development and linguistic upgrading, and the second is the ability to resolve the difficulties that a heritage language class has to face.

However diligent a teacher may be, self-motivation in heritage languages teaching is the thermometer that can tell the true story. Teaching heritage languages is a small portion of the work week, thus it does not constitute a priority for the overwhelming majority of teachers. If day school teachers were charged with the teaching of languages other than English or French, this would simply not be the case.

As previously outlined, the heritage languages teachers are expected to perform as professional teachers, in large-size classes that are made up of students who come from different schools, different grades, different school systems and sometimes different educational environments. For the most part, however, those teachers face the situation with little linguistic or pedagogical training and little time at their disposal.

The class, of course, is an additional concern; the variation in students' ages, preparation, language competence, willingness to participate in the programme are all part of the logistical and didactical challenges faced by Saturday school teachers. In addition, class sizes and a general lack of time to assist students individually make the task even more difficult and unrewarding.

Saturday teachers have, as well, administrative duties which need to be performed within deadlines, such as maintenance of class registers, class lists, report cards, preparation for professional development and communication with parents.

Instructors-in-charge or directors of programs operate under similar constraints with differences pertaining to their duties. In a part-time operation, administrative and instructional duties are fiercely competing one against the other; as administrative duties have mandatory deadlines, instructional ones end up by losing. Obviously, the result is that children end up being shortchanged.

The children in the class of a heritage language school, generally speaking, are performing really well. Research submitted in this thesis proves beyond any doubt that the retrieval, learning or retention of a mother tongue is not only a positive academic event but is, as well, a social and developmental advantage. Over and above the fact that communities and researchers alike have accepted that the teaching of heritage languages is a positive factor, the obvious seems to be forgotten: children who are the prime target of these programmes have responded well to these challenges and, therefore, children should be given more consideration.

It is important to value and to celebrate the achievements of children in heritage languages. Added value can only come in the form of a more systematic approach to heritage languages teaching, one that recognizes both the work performed by the children and gives a more adequate learning structure, possibly within the regular school day, where numbers warrant it. Only then, I would argue, will children view heritage languages as a more normal component of their educational process and feel more positive towards it.

3.6 The Ontario Royal Commission on Education

The Report of the Commission For the Love of Learning was released in 1994.²⁵ In the report a number of recommendations address the problems faced by the Heritage Languages Programmes. More specifically, the report states in another fashion, but with the same substance, the same problems that were identified by the B. and B. Commission and the other reports that have preceded it. Included in the report is the distinct possibility of establishing pilot projects so as to integrate international languages teaching (formerly Heritage Languages Programmes) within the regular school hours. Because the Report was issued by a provincial Royal Commission, it will have a more direct impact on education than a federal one, although the implementation of its recommendations at the end of a government mandate is heavily dependent on the political will of the government that follows.

The Report For The Love of Learning is a serious attempt to tackle some of the most important challenges of today's educational system in the province of Ontario. In doing so, the commissioners in the report have addressed a number of key questions. The International Languages Programme, however, were only tentatively explored, and while that is a good beginning, these languages were still treated as a peripheral entity rather than as an integral part of the educational process.

Ethnocultural groups are encouraged by the fact that provincial and federal governments have publicly declared the intention to review their policies.

²⁵ Royal Commission on Learning, Province of Ontario, For The Love of Learning, (Toronto: The Queen's Printer, 1994).

Boards of education, however, are free to set up their own policies with respect to community education. Therefore, one of the most crucial places where implementation faces great difficulties is at the Board of Education level and, ultimately, in the schools. Hence, provincial and federal policies continue to have only a limited and indirect impact on the "educational priorities" of any provincial Education Act.

Notwithstanding its undisputed success, the introduction and the implementation of the Heritage Languages Programmes seem to have been simply a response to political pressures. It must be borne in mind, however, that Heritage Languages Programmes are being delivered during the formative years of the children; hence the children's educational needs have to be addressed. The elementary years of school have a permanent impact on children; hence the contact with the heritage language at school will have a lasting impression.

Any language training system that operates in the fashion described in this thesis, can only be labelled as superficial. It seems that the language of origin, learned formally in a less-than-apt situation, will be deemed by the students to be of less importance than other subjects, including other languages, that are learned in a more adequate way, that is within the normal timetable of a school day.

Heritage Languages Programmes are charged with giving non-English and non-French students the opportunity to learn or retain the language of their parents' homeland, hence to become conversant with that culture and to undergo a self-identification process useful to their personality and the environment that surrounds

them. The very serious lack of attention to the formal educational status occupied by Heritage Languages Programmes is heightened by the fact that children placement in terms of linguistic competence cannot, under the present circumstances, be dealt in a manner which is consistent with the realization of the fact that "mother tongue" retrieval and/or maintenance require a different approach from second, third or foreign language acquisition.

3.7 Some Observations

An overview of the practical problems that are central to the operation of a Saturday school provides evidence on the status of Heritage Languages Programmes. From a historical perspective, heritage languages have gained significant popularity since they were first established. When groups first attempted the organization of these programs, they were met with considerable resistance from Boards of Education, teachers of the day schools, and sometimes even from parents themselves. As the programmes gained some form of official recognition and funding in each of the provinces, the attitude towards heritage languages teaching changed, but only partially. Nevertheless, governments, boards of education and ethnocultural groups could now claim the existence of official provincial policies.

The fact that funding was channelled through the boards of education provided a significant financial incentive for Boards to organize Heritage Languages Programmes, since these initiatives were offered to the community on a cost recovery basis and under the full supervision of the Board, as detailed in Memorandum N° 7 of 1977 of the Ontario Ministry of Education. The same was

also true in most provinces with only minor variations. The official recognition that each of the provinces gave to Heritage Languages Programmes constituted a significant step that generated interest among educators and the various ethnocultural groups.

The response by the various communities was a tremendous increase in student enrolment. Educators had then to face the new challenge of having many students who were going to school for six days and who were being taught languages other than English or French. The students themselves had to adjust their own social timetable to this activity which now limited their free time. In addition, educators became soon concerned with the pedagogical viability of these programs and administrators were faced with the organizational challenges that Heritage Languages Programmes presented.

Notwithstanding the large amount of interest generated by Heritage Languages Programmes, if they continue to remain outside of the school day, they may not be the best venue to carry the mandate of cultural and linguistic retention. It is still widely believed that the best place for teaching heritage languages is in the traditional day school setting, as it is the case for the bilingual programmes that have been mentioned earlier in this chapter.²⁶

A language, when taught without appropriate infrastructures, becomes an obstacle, it is deprived of its functionality, and slowly ceases to be the banner of a culture. A language that is maintained as an end to itself does not foster the process

²⁶ John Mallea & Jonathan C. Young, Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1984), p. 231.

of self-identification that a child needs. Mother tongue plays an important role in the day school as well as in the social and intellectual development of the child. When children, for example, are tested for academic placement in the school, tests do not take very much in account the fact that children coming from a different language group may have different realities than the English and French milieu.²⁷ In other words, testing of children is also an interesting area to explore in order to understand why the language factor is so relevant.

These observations are reinforced by research that indicates that children who are more comfortable in their mother tongue are also performing better in other languages; it also means that the testing does not take into account cultural differences among children. In many instances, children who have been tested, are taken out from the regular day programme and placed in special education classes. If, for instance, consideration were given to the fact that the child has a right and a need to know his/her mother tongue, giving that language a more weighted consideration would probably go a long way in that child's academic progress.²⁸

There are, however, some factors which indicate that heritage languages teaching is a positive experience and there have been some important results which should not be overlooked. For example, response and involvement are two such factors that cannot be ignored: ten ethnocultural groups in five major cities across

²⁷ Samuda Ronald J., New Approaches to Assessment and Placement of Minority Students, A review for educators, (Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education, 1990).

²⁸ Jim Cummins, Bilingualism and Special Education: Issues in Assessment and Pedagogy, (Clevendon, England: Multilingual Matters LTD. Bank House, 1984).

Canada have strongly supported the concept of language retention through heritage languages.²⁹ The non-official language survey, which was conducted to investigate the main characteristics of non-official languages knowledge and use in Canada, revealed that many groups believed in language retention. Their responses were from moderate agreement to strong support; 70% of the respondents in the survey agreed that language retention was a desirable objective.³⁰ The survey suggested, as well, that language is usually lost, almost always, in a single generation; seven out of ten immigrants retain their language and in the second generation one out of ten is able to remain fluent; fluency usually disappears in third and subsequent generations.³¹

These findings are in contrast with the desire of groups to retain their language and with their "collective will to exist"; in a sense, they confirm the Statistics Canada findings about home language (**Table 3**). This does give evidence that non-official language teaching has not provided the adequate infrastructures to support the "collective will". The decline of the mother tongue maintenance means also the decline of home language maintenance. Should then the purpose of Heritage Languages Programmes be that of retrieving the languages of origin of the immigrant groups, in order to stall the apparently constant erosion of Canada's multilingual and linguistic richness?

²⁹ Op. Cit. Mallea and Young, p. 218.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 217.

³¹ Ibid. p. 218.

In 1984 the authors of Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education, O'Bryan,

Kuplowska and Reitz concluded:

The educational institutions themselves currently make only minor attempts to develop and support interest in ethnic attachments. Lack of opportunity to study and use the language during the high school and university years when the child is further removed from parental contact may reduce interest in the ethnic language and the motivation to retain it.³²

In the 1990s, this same reality still persists, since no substantive progress has been made to improve the situation. As confirmed in this chapter, Heritage Languages Programmes are still confined to the elementary years, and, given the marginal way in which Heritage Languages Programmes are treated, they have little follow-up in high school years and only limited interest is shown at the university level.

In fact, what is even more alarming is that multiculturalism is being openly challenged, and with it, the whole question of language and cultural retention is actually being treated as if it was damaging. Some Members of the 35th Parliament and the general public, as noted in Chapter II, are becoming increasingly annoyed at the concept of heritage languages as if it were something very negative. This chapter demonstrates that if anything, it is the way in which the entire notion of multiculturalism and multicultural education has been approached, to date, that needs to be scrutinized further.

³² Ibid. p. 220.

If the educational system is not open to the challenges of addressing international language teaching in the empowerment model suggested by Book IV, and if Heritage Languages Programmes are destined to stay as they are, it seems that multicultural education will have troublesome days ahead.

To continue administering heritage languages in the same way that they have been dealt with in the last twenty years is to ensure an almost certain collapse of the programmes themselves. Indirectly, but very clearly, the Report of the Royal Commission predicted this situation, and the danger is becoming increasingly true:

Multiculturalism today is coming under open attack. Whereas a decade ago multiculturalism was almost never publicly assailed, now it is being undermined and questioned from many quarters...Even established academics have begun to question the degree to which multiculturalism has eroded national and communal social goals and values, a new sizeable political party (the Reform Party) has appeared, which has the elimination of multiculturalism as one of its main political platforms.³³

Heritage Languages Programmes, however, remain the most direct attempt aimed at language retention; they are a direct expression of parents and communities in providing for language retention/acquisition. They are, in a sense, an instrument that signals "the collective will to exist", and one of the major tools at the disposal of ethnocultural groups. Imperfect as they may be, Heritage Languages Programmes have given more than ample evidence that, even under their present structure, they

³³ Stella Hryniuk, et al. Twenty Years of Multiculturalism: Successes and Failures, (St. John's College Press, 1992), p. 18-19.

have given very positive results to children who follow them.³⁴ In order for language retention/acquisition to be a reality in a multicultural society, Heritage Languages Programmes should in some way be contributing to the cultural existence of a group.

It seems evident that this reality is yet to be achieved. It is up to the educational system to take on this challenge, because the educational system is the only locus where language and culture retention can be properly articulated. The school, even in modern day's society, continues to be at the centre of the child's intellectual and social development.

The task of international/heritage language retention and/or acquisition in the schools seems to be beyond any Heritage Languages Programme as presently conceived.

If linguistic distinctiveness is a basic component of personal identity for members of a cultural groups, and collectively, Canadian governments and ethnocultural groups believe that it is quite proper for them to maintain this distinctiveness via language, then it follows that the groups should have a right of access to an adequate learning situation. The first and only major report, so far, on the implementation of multicultural education, sponsored by multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada in 1991, commented on the implementation process as follows:

It is clear from this first major study of the state of multicultural, race and ethnic relations and anti-racist

³⁴ Marcel Danesi, "Revisiting the Research Findings on Heritage Language Learning: the Interpretive Frames" The Canadian Modern Language Review, Heritage Languages, Vol 47, no. 4 (Welland, Ontario: 1991), pp. 650-657.

education that there is a continuum along which these educational institutions can be placed. At the one end of the polarity are a large number of ministries, boards and schools (throughout Canada) who continue to function as if the assimilationist model of education is still the only option.³⁵

As outlined, in small centres where ethnocultural communities exist in small numbers, it is difficult to find appropriate resources for teaching, for well trained teachers, or even for professional development programs for teachers. In large urban centres, where ethnocultural communities have a significant numerical presence and where they play a greater socio-political role in society, it seems that, while programs and resources are sometimes available, they are largely dispersed and ineffectual.

Monitoring of Heritage Languages Programmes is, as demonstrated in this chapter, only encouraged at the administrative level; the need for resources, training with certification for teachers, and adequate infrastructures are still to be addressed in a manner which is consistent with the will of the ethnocultural groups and the declarations of various governments. These needs vary from group to group, from school board to school board, and from province to province.

The experience of teaching in a heritage languages school is both frustrating, and rewarding. It is frustrating since it imposes a great number of limitations on time, resources and organization. It is rewarding because somehow it opens a dialogue with the community, a dialogue that has to be kept in constant

³⁵ Op. Cit. Carol Tator and Henry Frances, p. 147.

perspective. It is, more than anything else, an advocacy program which has to make children understand the concept of a multicultural community. This in itself is a formidable task.

The chapter that follows explains how the media have had a parallel role in the national debate concerning multiculturalism. While having a public that is entirely different from that of the heritage languages, the media too, have argued over the frustrations, the successes and opposing views about multiculturalism. If properly challenged, they might have a pivotal role to play in this debate as well.

CHAPTER IV

Challenging the Media

Communicating globally, at the root of it all, is learning to value the uniqueness of other cultures, and confronting and defeating our own personal prejudices about them.

Al Wann, Chicago 1993.¹

Directly related to the role of education in linguistic retention are the media. In a sense, they have a role that runs parallel to that of the Heritage Languages Programmes. Media, however, have a larger responsibility since their public is much larger and includes all Canadians. They are the most crucial forum where opinions about issues may be formulated and debated.

David Taras in his book The Newsmakers, describes the power and the influence of the media as follows:

...Journalists legitimize and celebrate the views of those at the apex of power. In their view, "news represents who are the authorized knowers and what are their authoritative versions of reality".²

¹ Al Wann, Chicago IABC International Conference, Multiculturalism Committee Reception 1993. (San Francisco: Communications World, International Association of Business Communicators, December 1993, No 11) pp. 22-26

² David Taras, The Newsmakers, The Media's Influence in Canadian Politics (Scarborough: Nelson Canada 1990) p. 25.

Programmes for enhancing the quality of linguistic and cultural retention and broadcasting (considered as an acceptable educational medium in modern society) are vehicles which foster societal and cultural values.

Like education, the media have a role to play in the multicultural debate. Unlike education, however, they are driven by different factors and depend on audiences or readership; they operate, therefore, in distinctively independent sectors all of which need a different marketing approach. Whereas education had a relatively direct response to the policies, the same cannot be said of media for a variety of reasons. This chapter makes a distinction between major media - intended as both electronic and print media - and community ethnocultural media - understood as community-based electronic and print media. On the one hand, major media mirror society at large and attempt to deal with multiculturalism as part of the whole among many other issues; on the other hand, ethnocultural media mirror the communities which they serve and are the banners of the policy of multiculturalism.

Ethnocultural media, while fulfilling a crucial community role, are somewhat dependent on the success of the multicultural policy within Canada and the continued "will to exist" of ethnocultural groups other than English or French. Major media, as they may have a leadership role in what is perceived as "news", have the onus to foster a responsible debate about the pluri-lingual and multi-racial reality of Canadian society. A responsible debate of this kind, this chapter argues, has not exactly occurred.

This chapter therefore, will respect the above-noted distinction and will focus, on the one hand, on policies that have both been fostering multiculturalism in the mass media and what has been accomplished by ethnocultural media; on the other hand, it will consider the role and the impact of major media, as a meaningful "power broker" in the debate concerning the policy of multiculturalism.

Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism placed special emphasis on education and on the media. In the previous chapter we treated the role of education in the multicultural process; in this chapter we will examine and discuss the role that the media have played in relation to multiculturalism. As in the case of education and the Heritage Languages Programmes, the scenario is a complex one. There are several aspects to examine and there are successes and failures. An attempt will be made in this chapter to examine a number of issues, among them: a) the ethnic media and the major media (print and television), b) the role played by these two in the multiculturalism debate, c) ethnic broadcasting and the issue of language retention through media, as well as the dual responsibility of media in general, which is to inform the public at large and contribute to societal debates.

The premise of this chapter is that, as Book IV pointed out, ethnic media and major media both have a responsibility towards all Canadians. On the one hand, ethnic media embody and advocate linguistic and cultural retention while also supporting integration of ethnocultural groups in the host society; on the other hand, the major media (print and electronic) have an information role that may help the

shaping of policies as well as supporting of the cultural retention issue, viewed from a pan-Canadian perspective. On the role of the ethnic media we are reminded by

Book IV that they render an important service:

The many and varied publications that make up the ethnic press render a number of important services. They interpret the events and customs of Canadian life to immigrants unacquainted with the country's two official languages. They inform their readers [audiences] of activities and issues within their cultural group. They act as spokesmen for the interest and viewpoints of particular cultural groups and of immigrants in general.³

While ethnic media charge themselves with these tasks, they have but a complementary role; major media have a larger, perhaps more crucial role which has to do with dealing with the majority of Canadians and exercising a leadership role in terms of the multicultural debate.

A book critical of the multiculturalism policy, authored in 1994 by Neil Bissondath, entitled Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada, generated a large number of articles in all the major print media of the country as well as extensive discussions and commentary on the major broadcasting networks both private and public; French and English media all participated in the debate that the book had sparked, even if the book was largely a personal attempt reflecting on the notion of multiculturalism and calling it a failed social experiment. The perspective of the book, was simple: "Multiculturalism is a policy flawed from its inception". The policy, according to Bissondath, has an "emphasis on the ancestral

³ Op. Cit. Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book IV, p. 181.

homelands".⁴ Be that as it may, the data, the information and the analysis provided in Chapters I and II of this thesis and the formal manifestations of multiculturalism themselves, illustrate a vision that is far more complex than just an "attachment to ancestral roots or folklore".

The point of mentioning the book and the debate that it sparked, however, is to provide evidence that the media in general, once given the news of the book and its content, went after it as a sensational kind of news, hence contributing substantially to the controversy. The debate engaged in by many journalists, was frequently ill informed, shallow in its content and very often superficial. It reflected, in a way, the general public's feeling about multiculturalism which, even after so many years, was so little understood. Many articles called for an end to official multiculturalism, although only a few revisited the policy with some detail, and some members of ethnocultural groups expressed disappointment with the whole exercise.

Evident, in this instance, was the leadership role that media had in terms of a public debate concerning multiculturalism. Media, as noted, are power brokers and their influence goes hardly unnoticed; their reading public, for print media, and, their viewing/listening audiences, for electronic media, are also policy-makers and, if media are "the mirror of society", then policy-makers and leaders are subject to tremendous influence:

⁴ Neil Bissonndath, Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada, (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1994) pp. 128-129.

The power of journalism is exercised in a number of ways. The most salient fact is that journalists, as a group, can prevent some aspects of a politician's or a government's message from reaching the public. They can do this by not covering events such as speeches or news conferences that are important to politicians, or covering them in such a way that political appeals are filtered, blunted, or discredited. Journalists determine which eight - or twelve-second visual clips or which quotations will be used in their stories. They also decide how much attention to give to the views of the opponents, and to the political motives behind a particular proposal, appointment or policy, and the flaws that may exist in it. They can screen some messages while widely exposing others. They have the power to take events out of one context and recontextualize them so that they fit the media's requirement for a good story. Collectively, they have the power to be the gatekeeper of public information. Moreover, news organizations are the "arbiters" of the political system: they have the power to legitimize and delegitimize leaders, policies, and institutions.⁵

Nothing could be more true when talking about multiculturalism; although a lot of information and data have been compiled, analyzed and published, during the many years of official multiculturalism, the public perception is still antagonistic, and public debates on multiculturalism seem to be greatly removed from its context. The policies have in part succeeded in bringing some attention to the argument of multiculturalism. The media have a responsibility to present all the sides of the argument and ensure that the debate will be unbiased by their own agenda or that of any other interlocutor in the debate. Policies alone, as in the case of Heritage

⁵ Op. Cit. David Faras, (1990) p. 41.

Languages Programmes, will not be sufficient to change the opinions and the biases of the public at large when it comes to multiculturalism.

In an article entitled "Second Thoughts". published in the Cape Breton Post on January 20, 1994, reference to a new study on multiculturalism was made and the article noted that the authors, sociologists Jeffrey Reitz and Raymond Breton observed:

Comparing Canada's cultural "mosaic" to the U.S. "Melting pot" the researchers found no differences in attitudes towards minorities in the two countries, little differences in earnings by minority immigrants, and no differences in rates of assimilation. This would not be the first time a cultural engineering project by government produced little or no effect in proportion to the effect.... Culture and language are hard to manipulate, unless government is willing to adopt strong-arm tactics such as Quebec has done in an effort to protect French. Still official policy does serve a purpose, if only to express an ideal. There is nothing wrong with Canada's self definition as a place where it's all right to be different ⁶

There are many key concepts in this statement. According to the authors, "official policy" has the important purpose to express an ideal; this, to some extent, has been done by the various policies related to multiculturalism. The statement continues by affirming that "culture and language" are hard to manipulate; this is true, but that is exactly why "government alone cannot do it", and that is why the statements made by Book IV over 25 years ago are still valid today: the education system has to be challenged and media have to be challenged into leading an

⁶ Jeffrey Reitz and Raymond Breton, as quoted in the: Cape Breton Post, January 20, 1994, p. A3

informed debate. To date, the debate on multiculturalism in public fora does not seem to have evolved.

4.1 The Media and Information

The media are generally considered in many ways to be "the mirror of society"; indeed, if they are, then their responsibility is clear. John Porter and Wallace Clement, as well as other scholars, have successfully argued, however, that the owners of media empires are part of a larger fabric of societal control (David Taras, 1990). Moreover, media seem to be "biased in favour of existing arrangements of power".⁷

Given the linguistic demographic landscape of Canada and given the fact that the major media favour existing power arrangements, two hypotheses can be drawn: a) media could not act out of their own initiative in terms of multicultural programming, according to the complex linguistic landscape of Canada; and b) media, at least in theory, would be viewed as extremely radical if they took the initiative of challenging the existing arrangements that, by and large, respect the notion of a bilingual and bicultural country; their credibility would be at risk and they might lose the audience/readership upon which they depend.

It is much more preferable for media to address multicultural issues as they appear through the accepted power structure (i.e. in the House of Commons or reporting occasional sensationalism based on folklore or Caravana experiences) and as if they were a marginal issue. The ethnic media, as noted by Book IV, have

⁷ Op. Cit. David Taras, (1990) p. 13.

dedicated themselves to communities and have addressed quite significantly the issue of language retention through information.

Michael Ignatieff, correspondent for the Globe and Mail in London, England, underlined, in a CBC symposium, that in Canada we suffer from the "narcissism of minor differences" (July 1994) and that journalists in Canada are limiting themselves to let other people or the establishment talk without providing any real analysis, and, in so doing, by avoiding real journalism. In his opinion, real journalism, over and above reporting what is said, must also be accountable for discovering the truth and for doing a constant reality check of points of view which are presented to the public. It seems that a "reality check", as far as multiculturalism is concerned, has not occurred.

4.2 Quantitative Analysis

As noted in this chapter, the media have a dual role; they inform, and they participate in, or initiate, social debates. The debate on language retention and on multiculturalism, has been a difficult and uninformed one, precisely for the reasons given by Cummins and Danesi (Heritage Languages. The Development and Denial of Canada's Linguistic Resources, 1990). Society, in general, cherishes multilingualism and, in Canada, although the potential of learning other languages is clearly evident, there is still considerable debate concerning the divisive role played by the learning of other languages within the Canadian ethnocultural context.

An analysis, carried out by the author, of over 251 articles from all the major dailies of Canada, over the period of more than a year, suggests the fact that the

public at large and policy-makers should engage in an informed debate about multiculturalism and its advantages. According to all evidence, so far, the debate engaged by the media has been reactive, superficial and not well informed.

The analysis of articles from major Canadian dailies constitutes a relatively good example of how superficially news about multiculturalism and its policies are treated and, at the same time, it demonstrates the marginality of the debate. By isolating some of the issues that are especially pertinent to this research, it is possible to see to what extent the public is being informed and, more importantly, to what degree the debate is informed, fair and transparent.

Eighteen issues were identified; in the analysis negative or positive values were attributed to each of the articles read. Most of the arguments reflected issues which are well known, but the reporting on the various issues was rather reactive and controversial in its nature. The few times that the articles were presented a positive side, it was usually because advocates of the policy of multiculturalism were either reacting to something written by the media themselves, or to the book by Neil Bissondath.

The articles expressed rage and misunderstanding on both sides, each side trying to counter the other but far removed from the essentials; in the name of official multiculturalism practically every societal problem was discussed. The large number of articles written on multiculturalism suggests, on the one hand, that there is a desire to debate the issue; on the other hand, that neither opponents nor advocates are willing to engage in a clear and more significant debate.

From the analysis, issues were identified, numbered and evaluated as follows:

1. Support for policy/useful,	56 articles	- 3.70
2. Support for integration,	35 articles	+ 5.34
3. Absence of racism,	33 articles	- 7.97
4. Costs,	28 articles	- 0.61
5. Education,	15 articles	- 4.80
6. Federal government image,	15 articles	- 8.53
7. Cultural/multicultural identity,	14 articles	- 8.00
8. Responsibility/government,	13 articles	- 7.00
9. Benefits,	8 articles	+ 4.50
10. All Others,	6 articles	- 5.67
11. Race,	6 articles	- 5.50
12. Responsibility/individual,	6 articles	+ 8.00
13. Support for affirmative action,	5 articles	- 5.40
14. Minorities,	5 articles	- 8.00
15. Language,	3 articles	- 5.67
16. Jobs,	1 article	- 7.00
17. Marriage,	1 article	+ 1.00
18. Majority,	1 article	- 7.00

Each of these issues had significant and substantive coverage by major dailies over a 20 month period (1994-95). The evaluation of the articles was carried out by using standard values normally attributed when doing a media analysis of this kind. In order to provide a more rigorous, scientific sampling, more data and more variables would have been required. The main objective of the analysis, however, was to find out the quantity, the level, the tone and the extent of the debate on the policy of multiculturalism; therefore, only articles on the subject of "multiculturalism" were monitored.⁸ Evaluation on the tone of the articles is attributed on the scale of 1 to 10 for positive or - 1 to - 10 for negative tone. A 1 to 5 value (negative or positive) is considered moderate; 6 to 8 high; and 8 to 10 very high (see graphs on pages 131-132).

The four most talked about issues were: **Support for the Policy** (-3.70) the **Support for integration** (+5.34), **Absence of Racism** (-7.97); and **Costs** (-0.61). **Support for the Policy** (-3.70) and **Costs** (-0.61) received a lot of coverage, but they were not treated very negatively; the reason for the mildly negative treatment is that arguments in favour or against go back and forth and, at the end of the day, the negative coverage is the more prominent one. The question of **Racism** is clear: nobody thinks that this is an easy problem nor that it does not exist. Two issues reported on positively give a sense of the debate as it is being covered: a) **Integration** (+5.34), by carefully reading the articles, one is not certain that integration has the same meaning intended by the Royal Commission on

⁸ Bowden MII Media Monitoring Services. (January 1994 to August 1995) Library, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Ottawa.

Bilingualism and Biculturalism; in fact the term is most probably confused with assimilation; and b) **Multiculturalism as the responsibility of the individual** (+8.0) is also positive, but the majority of the articles suggest, however, that although multiculturalism is somewhat beneficial, new Canadians have to "integrate" (intended more as "assimilate") as soon as possible and to assume the responsibility for the costs of programs and other initiatives in favour of cultural and linguistic retention.

The findings of the analysis demonstrate how little and superficial information there actually is in the public forum about multiculturalism. More importantly, and perhaps even more distressing, is the fact that the above views are dangerously reflected in official party platforms and the opinions expressed in the House of Commons by members of the Reform Party.⁹ Three issues which also received a fair amount of coverage are **Education** (-4.80), **Cultural identity** (-8.00), and the **Image of the federal government** (-8.00). All three were covered by a total of 14-15 articles and treated in a fairly negative way. These three issues are crucial to the survival of multiculturalism; if the federal government is perceived very negatively in terms of promoting multiculturalism, and if articles concerning education dismiss multiculturalism and the notion of multi/cultural identity, clearly this is evidence that multiculturalism is either not well defended or poorly implemented.

⁹ Op. Cit. Chapter II, 2.4, Reform Party of Canada Building New Canada, Principles and Policies, The Blue Book: Calgary: 1991, p. 35.

Articles on Multiculturalism

Source: OCOL Library - January 1994 to August 1995

Total Number of Articles = 251

Number of articles

Impact of Articles
Source: OCOL Library

Average tone = -3.7

The **Image of the federal government** concerns grants, immigration issues, and the promotion of multiculturalism and ethnocultural diversity. "*What we have to get rid of is the idea of official sanctioned ethnicity*", wrote The Globe and Mail , (Oct. 10, 1994); the federal government is seen as the main culprit in establishing official multiculturalism both by the French and the English media. There is an overwhelming consensus that it is not **The responsibility of Governments** (-7.00) to run or to promote multiculturalism.

The whole question of **Cultural/multicultural identity** is viewed as a threat to "Canadian" cultural identity; this is a term which provokes a lot of confusion, resentment and anger. Many who write about Canadian cultural identity dismiss the multiculturalism policy as being a marginal question whose only existence is based on political tokenism.

There is a general, albeit weak consensus that diversity is generally a positive factor, so **Benefits** (+4.50) receive a moderate support. This support, however, is not very clear because, when talking about **Majority** (-7.00) and **Minority** (-8.00) that consensus on the benefits of diversity fades away. All **other issues** (-5.67) concerning political representation, multicultural festivals, citizenship and immigration, different funding programs and other initiatives seem to receive a fairly negative assessment, confirming, in a sense, what has been demonstrated so far in this thesis: the policy of multiculturalism is not well received, nor well communicated.

Multiculturalism, it appears, should be left up to the individual. The "Collective will", so eloquently talked about by Book IV of the B. and B., never comes into play, nor does it seem to have a role. Mentions of the Royal Commission are sparse, uninformed and only quoted as a point of reference; the term multiculturalism is given different meanings and various interpretations, none of which seems to be clear. **Education** (-4.80) or the teaching of other languages is seen as "*spending out of control*" (Globe and Mail Oct. 5, 1994). Neil Bissondath's book received considerable coverage and modest but significant approval for its publication even from the Francophone press (Le Devoir, Le Droit, Le Soleil, Société Radio-Canada). In her article of Le Devoir of January 24, 1994 Lise Bissonnette wrote: "*Le Multiculturalisme canadien et l'interculturalisme québécois ne reposent sur aucune notion claire des exigences de base de la citoyenneté. Les repères sont flous*".

It becomes imperative, then, to be able to discern what are the arguments intrinsically related to the learning and the retention of other languages and to separate them from other views (either positive or negative) that are portrayed in the media.

Media as education, especially in Canadian society, have played and continue to play the role of a significant social agent; an agent which concerns itself with depicting information, and social and cultural change.

Affirmative Action (-5.40) for ethnocultural groups is not well received either by the public or by the media in general; it is viewed as a fracturing phenomenon and as a useless expense for taxpayers.

What emerges from most of the articles is a feeling of reverse discrimination. **Jobs** (-7.0): especially in times of recession this issue is bound to create friction. Immigration and the influx of immigrants are almost always seen as "taking away" other jobs from Canadians. **Language** (-5.67): language is only understood in a negative sense. It is truly peculiar to note that in general the knowledge of other languages is praised (Cummins & Danesi 1990), but that articles speculating about language retention (i.e. heritage languages) suggest that caution should be exercised because "*Insidious ethnic conflicts a lesson for Canadians*" (Edmonton Journal May 3, 1994). There is talk of tribalism (Globe and Mail June 21 1994) and of losing pride (Toronto Star September 16, 1994). **Race** (-5.5) has a negative tone, and it does not seem to be different from the issue of jobs. This is a difficult debate that often ignores the reality that *de facto* Canada is a multiracial country, "*Canadians build copies of their own countries*" writes The Toronto Sun, (September 16, 1994). **Marriage** (+1.0) or endogamy, not a highly covered issue, does not suggest many problems.

The media are key elements in the socio-political and cultural life of Canada as well as in any other modern society; they play a complementary role to that of education and must be taken into consideration when talking about multicultural and language learning and retention. Freedom of expression and of the press is extremely

important in a democratic society. Nonetheless, it seems a little strange that a book such as the one by Neil Bissondath that, by its own admission, discusses multiculturalism in a visceral and superficial way, should receive so much press coverage as to spark a national debate, and that Neil Bissondath should be anointed by one of Canada's most influential newspapers as "*One of the most prominent critics of Multiculturalism*"¹⁰ while the numerous, more informed and analytical books on multiculturalism (a good number of them mentioned in this thesis) receive neither the attention of the media, nor the kind of negative criticism that stimulate a responsible debate.

For the purposes of this thesis, the role of the Canadian media is therefore twofold: first, media are agents of information; second, they are participants in the evolving debate on multiculturalism. Both of these roles are crucially important to multiculturalism, as well as being interdependent. If media do not attempt to understand multiculturalism, Canadians are not being informed as they should.

4.3 Media and Ethnocultural Broadcasting

The creation and the maintenance of communication within ethnic groups is an intense concern for Canadians of ethnic origin; obtaining information on the former homeland and about Canada in a language and a context that one can understand can play a significant role in the maintenance of ethnic identity.

In 1970, the Report of the Special Senate Committee offered the following comments with respect to ethnocultural media:

¹⁰ Kirk Marin, "Multiculturalism Policy Criticized". The Globe and Mail, June 27, 1994, pp. A1-A4

Ethnic editors conceive their first purpose (although they usually list it farther down their scale of priorities) to be the preservation of the cultural and linguistic heritage of the old land.¹¹

These comments are as true in 1995 as they were in 1970. The role of preserving cultural and linguistic heritage has not gone away; in this the ethnic media can proudly attest to some significant level of success. With the advent of new electronic technology and the information highway, ethnocultural media have been successful in broadcasting or publishing news that is timely, interesting and capable of capturing the mind of all ages, thus allowing for the transmittal of cultural values to younger generations.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism identified "the need to support multilingual/multicultural broadcasting and the need to urge the public and the private sectors to reflect the multicultural reality of this country."¹²

When the ethnic press first began, many immigrants had very little formal education. But the immigrant experience made a large portion of immigrants become literate so that they could read newspapers or listen to programs in their mother tongue as well as in their second language. At first, the reality of a sudden psychological and physical isolation created the need for communicating within ethnocultural groups. Later, the need to communicate within one group was

¹¹ The Senate of Canada, The Uncertain Mirror, Report of the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media, (Ottawa the Queen's Printer 1970) Volume 1, Chapter 7, "The Most Mixed Medium", p. 179.

¹² House of Commons, Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic, Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, (Ottawa: the Queen's Printer 1987) p. 21.

transformed into the will to contribute to Canadian society as an ethnocultural entity other than English or French. Immigrant groups which brought the tradition of newspapers in their own language, started, as well, a unique Canadian experiment: by using in the press their ancestral languages, they made them part of the Canadian socio-linguistic fabric. The first Italian newspaper Lo Stendardo was actually published in Canada in 1898¹³ as were a number of other ethnic newspapers.

In Canada, a considerable amount of broadcasting in languages other than English or French began in 1930 and the 1940s. By 1955 there were about sixty-two hours per week of third language broadcasting on radio. By 1973 there were 320 hours per week on AM radio, 137 hours on FM radio, 24 hours on conventional television and 45 hours on cable television, for a total of 256 hours. The majority of these broadcasts originated in Montreal. By 1985 ethnic broadcasting had become a significant reality: six ethnic AM and FM radio stations, one television station, a regional pay television network and two satellite-to-cable network (Chinavision and Telelatino). As well, 52 conventional AM and FM radio stations provided 257 hours per week of third language programming and seven conventional television stations provided 102 hours per week. In addition, single language programming were offered on closed circuit (such as community cable programming) on the cable FM band and special programming for ethnic broadcasting.¹⁴

¹³ Jean Burnet, Coming Canadians: An Introduction to a History of Canada's Peoples, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988) pp. 197-198.

¹⁴ Ibid. pp. 204-210.

By 1995 ethnocultural print and electronic media have flourished in many forms; ethnic print media, that include weeklies, magazines and dailies, total 167, written in 42 different languages; there are 270 ethnic radio programs broadcasting in 58 different languages; and there are 82 television programs broadcasting in 43 languages. All of these are of a commercial nature and on a cost-recovery or profit basis.¹⁵ Community cables offer the possibility of community programming. Both the life and the content of these programs are heavily dependent on volunteers; that is why it is very difficult to assess both their situation and their impact on the various communities. Given the above, it would appear that ethnocultural communication is doing quite well; given modern technology, the broadcast media could contribute significantly in terms of linguistic and cultural retention.

The CBC has interpreted its mandate to be limited to the two official languages, but has been under some pressure to change its policies; the main agents that created this pressure were the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, the C.R.T.C., and the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism.

4.4 The Canadian Ethnic Broadcasting Policy

In 1984 the C.R.T.C. issued for public discussion "A Proposal for an Ethnic Broadcasting Policy for Canada". The terms of reference of the proposal were the following:

- the proposed definition of an ethnic program

¹⁵ Ethnic Media & Markets, Summer-Fall 1995, Media Information Network, CARD Publications 1995, Toronto.

- the proposed definition of ethnic radio and television stations
- the proposed changes to the current regulations
- the brokerage of ethnic programs
- the role of ancillary services

Ethnocultural groups, advocating for an Ethnic Broadcasting Policy, along with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, always thought that such a policy should have been an integral feature of the Canadian Broadcasting system. In particular, representatives of ethnocultural groups believed that such a policy would enable them to:

- a) overcome cultural barriers among groups
- b) increase access to conventional radio and television cable services
- c) foster cultural appreciation among all Canadians and
- d) assist immigrants in the interpretation process and acquiring at least one of Canada's official languages.

If ethnic broadcasting has flourished the way it has, it is in part due to this policy.

4.5 Definitions of Ethnic Programs

In order to issue licences, the policy adopted five definitions applicable to ethnic programs:

- 1) programs in a language other than French or English
- 2) a program in French or English that is directed specifically to racially distinct groups whose first language (within their country of origin) is either French or English

- 3) English or French specifically directed to specific groups who have lost their language origin
- 4) English, French and a third language
- 5) French, English programming directed to any ethnic group or mainstream audience that depicts Canada's cultural diversity.

Given all of the above, there are two questions that need to be answered in terms of the multiculturalism process: a) in what way would this policy address the needs of all Canadians? and b) exactly what has happened since the establishment of the policy? Book IV did not call for a specific ethnic broadcasting policy; it suggested, rather, an integrated approach to already existing policies.

By reading this policy, the Multiculturalism Act, or whatever other formal manifestation on multiculturalism, the assumption seems to be that "ethnic Canadians" have a different status from all the other Canadians that are not included in "the other ethnic group". This separation advocates a kind of *status quo* which says that Canadians of any origin other than English or French, who have been here for generations, are treated as "New Canadians" in need of integration, social services, and programmes to be used as political palliatives so that they can feel welcome to Canada.

The Ethnic Broadcasting Policy seems to be concerned more with the effects these programs or stations may or may not have, rather than concern itself with the larger reality of a pluri-lingual Canada.

To foster culture appreciation and promote encounters among all Canadians, cultural groups should not translate an ethnic program or station into some strict definition. As in the case of education, a Canadian broadcasting policy has to attempt a qualifying approach to culture and culture diversity.

As the school system has to integrate, within the regular curriculum languages other than English and French, a broadcasting system has to recognize that language diversity can only be exercised through an integrated approach, one that does not discriminate. A broadcasting policy reflecting Canada's linguistic and cultural diversity which is bound to licensing rules seems somewhat limited in its scope. Regulations are of a significant and practical importance; but the issue of cultural diversity and media would probably be better addressed within wider parameters.

In a progressive discourse, wider parameters would allow for broadcasting policy exploiting to the maximum the multi-lingual and multicultural potential existing within Canadian society. Multiculturalism would go beyond its "ethnic barriers" and it would constitute an asset for Canada, both nationally and internationally.

The Commission (C.R.T.C.) acknowledged some of these concerns and encouraged all broadcasters to increase their efforts to provide adequate levels of multicultural programming within their own schedules. The solutions provided within the policy seem to reflect an *ad hoc* system which addresses some situations

in major centres such as Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver. In other parts of the country, however, ethnic programming does not seem to have the same advantages.

There is no real freedom without responsibility. Broadcasting, that allegedly aims at being a model for freedom of expression, seems to decline implicitly the responsibility to contribute to the promotion of cultural diversity among Canadian citizens.

The Ethnic Broadcasting Policy does not appear to promote such creativity, nor does it encourage a socio-linguistic conscience in broadcasters. Ethnic programs on community cables are left to groups who are "encouraged" to produce "high quality" programs; however, with little or no supervision and few financial and human resources, quality exists only at the lowest common denominator. The Ethnic Broadcasting Policy, therefore, does not seem to address the needs of all Canadians. As a result, both the ethnic groups other than English or French, and Canadians of English or French extraction are left with the erroneous perception of a Multicultural Canada and continue to share only in a very small way what could be instead a much more constructive and beneficial approach.

Since such policy is concerned with regulatory matters and an *ad hoc* solution to the discourse on multiculturalism, its development is based more on administration than being on issues and concerns. Ethnic programmes have followed regulations, but have avoided the more fundamental issue of transmitting to the public at large the multicultural and multilingual reality of Canada. The result has

been the emergence of ethnic clusters that live in isolation from each other. Hardly a reflection of David Bell's tapestry quoted in Chapter II.

Larger Canadian corporations such as C.B.C. or C.T.V. (probably because of this policy) have not altered their own programming in spite of the provisions that are included in the policy. Any broadcasting system should inform, educate and entertain Canadians, and, as already noted, the CBC should also contribute to the development of a Canadian cultural identity. If indeed multiculturalism is an integral part and a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society, this means that no one culture is superior to another. Former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau envisaged a bilingual central state that formally recognized cultural diversity in principle:

...there cannot be one cultural policy for Canadians of British and French origin, another for the original peoples and yet a third for all others. For, although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian, and all should be treated fairly.¹⁶

Multicultural reality also means to recognize both regional and cultural diversity. The traditional approach has been from a multilingual perspective, but there should be a shift in focus to a completely different multicultural broadcasting and programming. Content related to the different cultures, and to the languages spoken by Canadians should be in a sense, a reflection of the multicultural aspects

¹⁶ Notes for a speech of the Right Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Ottawa House of Commons, October 1971

of Canadian society. Lack of recognition for this argument may give the message that ethnic diversity may not contribute to the cultural development of Canada as a whole.

Multicultural programming, in short, should be an integral part of a more inclusive Canadian Broadcasting Policy rather than the focus of an isolated Ethnic Broadcasting Policy that finds it necessary to differentiate ethnic stations and broadcasting. Such a policy could find its way into the general mandate of the CBC.

A creative and experimental broadcasting system may find the balance that is needed to respond to a multicultural reality:

That role is not being played at the present time by the major players in the Canadian broadcasting system. The CBC for example. Indeed it's ironic that CBC international broadcasts in twenty languages-- thirty before the budget cuts-- but provides no similar service to Canadians speaking languages other than English or French.¹⁷

Although the above-noted statement was written in 1975, the basic message remains the same; CBC continues to receive budget cuts in 1995; however, the message concerns the principle of being creative and responding to a social pluralistic reality that is even more drastically changed than two decades ago.

And it should be noted further that:

Schools have taught us to expect that people should live in separate national states. But the historical record shows that ethnic homogeneity was a barbarian trait; civilized societies mingled peoples of diverse

¹⁷ Victor Paddy, Third Language Broadcasting in Canada, (Ottawa: Research Documentation Centre CRTC, 1975)

backgrounds into ethnically plural and hierarchically ordered polities.¹⁸

At the risk of over-simplifying the issues, it can be said that the role and the influence of the media can be articulated in several ways; some examples, though not exhaustive, may be the following. Media, as noted in this chapter, do influence public opinion and this would seem clear from what has been discussed so far. Yet media also touch upon several other issues that would seem to influence the political elites and constitute a powerful influence on the trajectory of people who may want to influence political elites; as a consequence they are by extension a powerful influence on popular and political culture.

Media can succeed in presenting opposite views by making them available to the general public. The media, their influence, and their social importance can be expressed in three philosophical currents. The first is a conservative view which simply sees western media in general as a subversive force that can at times give too much exposure to violent acts, crimes or, in the case of international politics, for instance, can give undue publicity to terrorist groups. The second, a liberal view, posits that media have an important and positive social role that centres on the lack of communication between two opposing factions. A third, perhaps more realistic view, describes media as the reflection of the interests of various parties and can

¹⁸ William H. McNeill, Poliethnicity and National Unity, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986) p. 1.

serve the cause of the dominant groups at the expense of subordinate groups in a domestic context as well as on the international front.¹⁹

The above views, however they interpret the media, all focus on the influence that media (both print and electronic) have on the social fabric of a society. It is logical, therefore, that when analyzing the implementation of a multicultural policy for Canada, media present an important ingredient for analysis. Since it is widely accepted that media in modern society have a significant impact, then media can potentially play a concrete role in promoting or destroying cultural diversity within one national society.

Media can either adopt a regressive discourse and be subservient to dominant groups, or they can choose an orientation which could give ample space to the discourse on multiculturalism.

If multiculturalism belongs to all citizens, then media have a particular responsibility in serving that reality in all instances and do not need to underline the presence of other cultures only when it pertains to specific groups. Furthermore, the acceptance of this reality means in practice that while there is no specific recognition for any one culture, at the same time there is the possibility of enhancing cultural equivalence by servicing all cultural sectors represented in the Canadian populace.

Both major print and electronic media could attempt to understand more deeply the essential elements of a pluri-lingual society. They might probably succeed where policies have failed, because they lacked momentum and a clear

¹⁹ Herbert J. Gans, Deciding What's News, (New York: Random House: 1980) pp. 29-38.

sense of direction. To support these speculations it may be useful to quote Harold Innis, who in his book, The Bias of Communications, wrote:

"As force [communication] is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. It is therefore, on opinion that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and the most military governments as well as to the most free and popular."²⁰

Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, arguably, seems to have set very important precedents in terms of paving the way to multiculturalism, even if the task of the Royal Commission was only marginal. Book IV of the Royal Commission considered the implications that media faced in a pluri-lingual and multiracial society and it noted that facing the challenge was an effort worth pursuing, since it would enhance the quality of the Canadian way of life.

Policies related to multiculturalism which followed Book IV of the Royal Commission did not articulate well the fact that pluri-ethnicity within a national entity is not only an enriching factor but is, as well, an integral part of the development of society. As a consequence, while there is a common concern and a common starting point in the debate, the end results seem to be divergent philosophies.

Book IV of the Royal Commission looked at bilingual publications and at the ethnocultural press of the time; at the CBC policy, at the Northern Service of the

²⁰ Harold A. Innis, The Bias of Communications, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984) p. 4.

CBC, and at CBC international. It also reflected upon the role that the National Film Board of Canada may have played in a pluri-cultural, pluri-lingual country.

The conclusions of Book IV on this issue spoke of the benefits that all media would have had in return, if they had engaged in a constructive debate. At that point media had been attributed a leadership role that would have fostered and promoted ethnocultural relations for the purpose of informing all Canadians about the richness of the many languages and cultures which they had at their disposal.

Book IV called upon the CRTC to remove restrictions on private and public broadcasting in languages other than English or French; even the CBC, Book IV argued, should have recognized the place that languages other than English or French had within its own programming.

In today's competitive electronic and print media market the need for Canada to recognize its pluri-cultural fabric in a more concrete fashion is even more pressing. Nations are getting together for social, economic and developmental reasons; globalization is on the fast-track and the information highway and the five-hundred channel universe are close at hand. Capitalizing on existing Canadian resources for multicultural broadcasting is as valid an issue as capitalizing on Heritage Languages Programmes in multicultural education.

Canada's tourist trade, for instance, brings in \$20 billion income a year. Ethnocultural groups in Canada have a purchasing power of more than \$60 billion per year; the federal government's expenditures related to multiculturalism are about

\$14 million a year.²¹ Economically speaking, investment in ethnocultural broadcasting can be easily understood: it is reasonable to conceive that private and public broadcasting systems will continue to increase their financial dependency on their audiences.

In its introduction, the Special Senate report on Mass Media entitled Mass Media: the Uncertain Mirror, (tabled in 1970) stated:

The widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public...a free press is a condition for a free society.²²

The statement may seem dated, only because it was pronounced a long time ago, but it is even more true today when media empires in Canada are becoming fewer, larger, and monopolized by a few powerful communications giants, hence probably limiting "diverse and antagonistic" views to be heard or read. (Taras 1990)

The role of the media in a society such as Canada is crucial in the multiculturalism debate. Its potential is yet to be fully exploited and its leadership is necessary to the promotion of intercultural harmony and to a better understanding of what ten million Canadians represent.

Challenging the media to rise above sensationalism and to engage in a significant debate is to follow what the recommendations of Book IV were suggesting.

²¹ M. V. Naidu, Canadian Multiculturalism: a Discussion (Brandon: University of Manitoba, 1995), p. 18

²² Op. Cit. The Senate of Canada, *Associated Press v. United States*, 326 U.S. 1,20 (1944), Volume I, p. 3

The chapter which follows will revisit Book IV and the efforts that it made in order to challenge education and media to contribute to the implementation of multiculturalism in a pluri-lingual society.

CHAPTER V

Multiculturalism: the B. and B. Revisited

Multiculturalism has done little more than lead an already divided country down the path to further social divisiveness..

Neil Bissondath, 1994¹

This thesis has given an indication of the practical instances concerning the implementation process with respect to multiculturalism. Data associated with education and media have been discussed. The objective of this chapter is to revisit the work done by Book IV of the Royal Commission; compare it with the present situation and evaluate the policy of multiculturalism, and finally elaborate on the consequences that multiculturalism may potentially face if it is not given fuller support than it presently receives.

As the opening quotation of the chapter suggests, and as the whole research has attempted to demonstrate, there is still considerable controversy concerning multiculturalism. It also seems that because of a number of problems, among them a lack of infrastructure, loss of a vision and a superficial debate, its continued implementation is uncertain. If multiculturalism continues to be a political expedient, it cannot have a peaceful existence. In the first chapter of the thesis the recommendations of Book IV of the Royal Commission were briefly analyzed. In

¹ Neil Bissondath, Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1994), pp. 89-90.

this chapter the research and the rationale that Book IV submitted in order to arrive at those recommendations will be discussed. An attempt will be made to demonstrate that not only Book IV was, as everyone acclaimed, a milestone for multiculturalism, but that in fact it called for more reflection, more adequate research, and for an elaborate *projet de société* of which both the Book itself and the recommendations in it, were only the beginning. Book IV, in its introduction, suggested the need to include a systematic study of the whole question of ethnicity.²

The recommendations of Book IV did have a significant impact on the formulation of the multiculturalism policy, but to have left the recommendations without a systematic approach, as Book IV suggested, and to have gone from Book IV to an official policy declaration, was the equivalent of not giving the policy of multiculturalism the opportunity to build solid sociological foundations. Thus a vacuum between Book IV and the multiculturalism policy was created. It is precisely this distance between the recommendations of Book IV and all the past and present policies related to multiculturalism that has left the concept of multiculturalism isolated, fighting for its own survival and left prey to many conflicting interpretations. A link between Book IV and the present policies is a *conditio sine qua non* if multiculturalism has to find more stable roots in Canadian society.

A review of Book IV of the Royal Commission has to be done through the experience of more than twenty years of official multiculturalism. In this thesis reference to the concept of "multiculturalism" has been generally used: a) to refer to

² Op. Cit. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book IV, Foreword.

the Canadian social reality; b) to refer to the federal government's policies; and, c) to refer to the ideology of cultural pluralism and to what that implies for the federal policy.³

An examination of the formal manifestations or policies related to multiculturalism shows that such manifestations and their various interpretations, while sensitizing society and having partial success concerning the promotion and the cultivation of pluri-culturalism, may have fallen short of the needs that the notion of the survival of many languages and cultures within one nation state may entail. While formal manifestations related to multiculturalism have attempted to address the need to maintain an equitable situation among all Canadians, at the same time there are many misunderstandings when talking about language and cultural retention.

As discussed, different cultures and languages can be retained/acquired without the fear of losing an identity or a sense of nationhood, as the first policy of 1971 recognized. The official recognition of diverse cultures and languages does not, nor is intended to, favour ethnocentrism. On the contrary, given the appropriate infrastructures, official recognition of different languages and cultures promotes a more open and modern society. At present, the policy of multiculturalism seems to have embraced a range of concepts that are difficult to identify. Since its inception, the term has acquired various interpretations that in turn have provided for various programs which have not been consistent. To view multiculturalism in the proper

³ James Curtis et al., Social Inequality in Canada: Patterns Problems, Policies; (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Canada Inc. 1988.) p. 235.

perspective is to identify those elements that, in the Canadian socio-linguistic reality, are most suitable to deal with Canadian multiculturalism.

The basic assumption of multiculturalism is that it concerns a national entity with a heterogeneous social component, which essentially involves social divisions, political differences, and diverse ethnic and religious segments of the populations. In brief, multiculturalism involves a plural society where the ethnocultural components are both willing (cfr. B & B) and able to maintain their linguistic and cultural differences. Political scientists argue, on the one hand, that social homogeneity and political consensus are regarded as more conducive for a stable democracy, but they also note, on the other hand, that plural societies have had significant success.⁴

By acquiring various interpretations, multiculturalism has ended up being contradictory and superficial. At present, the Multiculturalism Act has attempted to address some very important Canadian socio-political and cultural realities. In Book IV the concept of "multiculturalism" has not been used and Book IV's objectives were to assess past experiences and trace a new course. Indeed, in its conclusions Book IV gave the essence of the research conducted by the Commission and launched an appeal with a vision which has hardly been surpassed:

Throughout this Book we have called attention to areas where further research is needed. In some of these we have reported the result of the research carried out for us, including preliminary work on ethnic voluntary associations, ethnic schools, and ethnic press. Some of the research needed could be done under the auspices of the cultural and research organizations of particular groups.

⁴ Arend Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies, (New York: Yale University Press, 1977), Ch. I, p. 1.

...However, the research that is most vital should focus on relations between cultural groups. Such studies will require the use of the most sophisticated methods of research and also complete attachment on the part of scholars. Universities, especially the divisions of the humanities and social sciences, will necessarily be involved. We hope that there will be Canadian scholars of many ethnic origins in the universities who can use their training and personal experience for developing insights into Canadian society. We are certainly not advocating ethnocentrism in the study of ethnic relations in Canada, for to do so would be to desert the principles that have guided this study.⁵

The multiculturalism policy, as launched in 1971, was aimed at four main areas: a) assistance to cultural groups; b) overcoming of barriers to increase full participation; c) cultural interchange in the interest of national unity; and, d) assistance in official language training. At the beginning, the policy's main objectives were cultural retention and organizational development for ethnocultural communities. With time, social integration and race relations gained more importance. At a later stage, issues concerning economic contributions and economic equality were added to the multiculturalism program agenda.

In short, whereas in the beginning the policy of multiculturalism was considered a feeble attempt to pay greater attention to Canadians of non-English and non-French backgrounds⁶, in a few decades it has become the active promotion of a cultural ideal. The policy recognizes that the diversity of cultural backgrounds in

⁵ Op. Cit. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book IV, p. 226

⁶ Arend Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Society (Binghamton, N.Y. Yale University Press, 1977) pp. 127-129.

Canada is a fundamental national characteristic that has to be dealt with and the Multiculturalism Act deals with the issue. As demonstrated, while there are many statements and declarations about multiculturalism, there are no clear guidelines for multiculturalism which allow an unequivocal interpretation that can, in turn, give it a clear mandate.

The make-up of Canadian society has always been demographically multicultural and multiracial; when Europeans came to Canada, the country was already hosting over fifty Inuit and native Indian cultures.⁷ However, while the demographic reality is self evident, the idea of formally recognizing pluri-ethnicity was set in motion only by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. More specifically, Book IV of the Report elicited so much interest that it provoked the policy response in 1971.

The policy on multiculturalism was based on the assumption that, in order to have an open attitude towards ethnocultural groups and to respect cultural diversity, individuals must have confidence in their own cultural origins.⁸ In fact, Book IV went beyond simple recognition, by stating that ethnocultural groups had been contributing to the social fabric of Canadian society and that their languages and cultures were an integral part of the Canadian cultural baggage.

The rationale for the need of the setting up of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was the growing friction between the French and the

⁷ Op. Cit Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, p. 13.

⁸ Ibid p. 16

English communities in the 1960s. During this period French Canadians began identifying themselves as Québécois rather than Canadians and a formal separatist movement began taking shape.⁹

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism tried to address the tensions that existed between two dominant theoretical perspectives in Canadian society: a) assimilationist and b) survivalist.¹⁰ While these terms may be self explanatory, it is important to consider them briefly.

The "assimilationist" perspective reinforced the idea of the "melting pot" and it postulated assimilation as an inevitable process from which immigrant groups could not escape. The "survivalist" theory attempted to address and clarify the status of one ethnic group (namely the French) within a larger society (English Canada).

The result was that in "English Canada", Angloconformity prevailed and thus it was noted by the Commission that non-English and non-French ethnic groups were largely identified with English-speaking Canada.

French Canadians did not embrace the assimilationist perspective; non-French immigrants who resided in the province of Québec did not want to be assimilated into French Canada and French Canadians did not want them to assimilate. Instead, the latter were more preoccupied with the defence of their own status.

Franco-conformity was not equal to Anglo-conformity. French Canada feared that

⁹ Rita M. Bienvenue, Ethnicity and Ethnic Relations in Canada, (Toronto: Butterworth & Company 1985) pp. 65-66

¹⁰ Ibid. pp. 68-69.

non-British and non-French immigration would undermine the bicultural perception of Canada.¹¹

While the concept of survivalism has stressed the importance of English and French ethnicity within Canada, assimilation in its classical meaning has gained popularity within non-French and non-English ethnic groups in Canada. This perspective legitimated group identity and made the principle of ethnicity a socially acceptable affirmation that was viewed, however, only as an extension of the British North American Act, which recognized the two "Charter" groups as English and French.¹²

The Royal Commission also examined the ethnic tensions that were prevailing between the English and the French communities. Both dominant cultures were themselves the subjects of a certain amount of ethnocultural influence; for, it is quite obvious that by accepting groups into a social context alterations and changes would occur.

Book IV of the Report confirmed the fact that social interactions which were occurring on reciprocal basis were influencing Canadian society at large, but these were positive and welcomed changes. According to it, it was possible to expect that the multiracial and multicultural demography of Canada would have significant impact on the English as well as on the French cultures. While new immigrants were adapting to a new way of life, at the same time Canadians of English or French

¹¹ Eli Mandel & David Taras, A Passion for Identity, (Toronto: Methuen Press 1987) pp. 94-95.

¹² Op. Cit. Bienvenue, p. 67.

extraction were also exposed to the new situations and new cultures and languages that were being introduced into Canada.

Indeed, as noted in the previous chapter (Reitz and Breton, "Second Thought", in The Cape Breton Post, 1994), notwithstanding the politically acclaimed difference between the Canadian cultural pluralism and the American concept of the melting pot, less effort was spent in Canada to maintain ethnocultural differences than in the United States, where considerable efforts were made to recognize cultural pluralism in the American society.¹³ As Reitz and Breton well underlined in their study, "social engineering cannot be accomplished by the state alone". Language and culture can be protected and promoted by the state but they must also be supported by key institutions and infrastructures. In short, promotion and implementation go together.

The concept of cultural pluralism in Canada had been, for a long time, a superficial and declaratory philosophy. Canadian society tolerated immigrants for its own economic needs rather than for humanitarian reasons.¹⁴ Immigrants for their part had significantly contributed to the social and cultural life of the country. The Royal Commission therefore, (though not mandated to do so) was faced with the task of recommending more concrete steps that would entrench the concept of cultural pluralism.

¹³ Op Cit. Mandel, p. 91.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 92.

The sixteen recommendations of Book IV discussed in Chapter I were concerned with socio-political issues, education and cultural retention in general. The Report noted that Canadians of ethnic origin other than British or French had contributed well to Canadian political life in many ways and their degree of political participation and representation had significantly increased over the years. However, fair employment practices and legislation prohibiting discrimination were not yet in place. As a result, the recommendations that the Royal Commission formulated advocated fair employment practices, enactment of legislation avoiding discrimination, and legislation that would abolish special privileges for British subjects, when applying for Canadian citizenship.

During the early years of the policy of multiculturalism, programs had focused on issues related to cultural retention and the organization of ethnocultural groups. In later years Heritage Languages Programmes and political involvement gained relevant importance. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism identified, by and large, the same areas that had been identified by the B. and B. Commission, except that its recommendations were more closely related to the re-organization of the political administration of the policy. Naturally, the Parliamentary Standing Committee had the benefit of the experience of eighteen years of multiculturalism policy, together with more established ethnocultural communities that were ready, at this juncture, to give a much larger and more significant input.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee noted that the multiculturalism policy was insufficient and out of date; it could not fulfil the needs of a multicultural society such as Canada, and it did not have a clear direction.¹⁵ But the policy in itself, this thesis argues, should not be deemed to be obsolete; since the policy (just as the Act) was an official enunciation of principles to be respected, a manifesto.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee based its recommendations and observations on hearings, submissions and deliberations; it also reviewed multiculturalism policies in all provinces of Canada. In the end, it concluded that no structural support had been given to multiculturalism and, that, as a result, an adequate implementation of the policy was not possible, nor guaranteed.

Therefore, it was the contention of the Parliamentary Standing Committee that a renewed multicultural policy, a Multiculturalism Act and a full Ministry of Multiculturalism, would provide, together, the necessary infrastructure to support multiculturalism and its various programs. As explained, only 3 of 18 recommendations were adopted and, although the rationale was to consider implementation first, the Multiculturalism Act distanced itself quite significantly from what both the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism had proposed, and from what the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism had recommended.

What emerges from the interpretation of the elements which were supposed to renew and reinforce the concept of Canadian multiculturalism is that each of them

¹⁵ Op. Cit Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, p. xi.

played a complementary role. The new policy constituted the philosophical grounds; the Act constituted the official declaration of a national commitment, and the Ministry was to provide its organizational and administrative infrastructures. Since the Act provided for Parliamentary accountability, the Ministry could be used to execute the principles and the objectives of the Multiculturalism Act. The practical problem is that neither the Act nor the Minister of Multiculturalism have legislative powers over education, which is under provincial jurisdiction, or media, which operate autonomously. It is up to the institutions, as Book IV had noted, to face the challenge.

Over the years, bureaucratic structures related to multiculturalism and multicultural programmes have served only non-French and non-English ethnocultural groups. In addition, it seems that the French and the English components of Canadian society have been alienated by the concept of multiculturalism. Bilingualism and multiculturalism continue to be at odds with each other, and, as noted in Chapter III, (p.83) the Official Languages Act of 1988, (O.L.A.) set out new guidelines for the active promotion of the official languages minorities. Government-funded multicultural programmes and other policies seem to have developed the concept that multiculturalism is "for all Canadians" but that in fact it relates only to the realm of the "other ethnic groups". This is contrary to what Book IV affirms. It notes that: *"nothing should prevent the other ethnic groups from being attached to their cultures"* and, at the same time, that keeping alive different

cultures "*should be encouraged, for society as a whole can only benefit from*"¹⁶. An examination of multicultural programs and procedures does not reflect these observations.¹⁷

When the government first launched the idea of a National Heritage Languages Institute, the Minister responsible clearly indicated in a public interview that the English and French groups were so well served under the rest of the legislation that they did not have to be serviced by the National Heritage Languages Institute.¹⁸ If that was the case, why would other groups of Canadians need a Heritage Languages Institute, a Multiculturalism Act, a Standing Committee or even a Ministry in order to guarantee what should in principle be already guaranteed under the Constitution, and carried out by the existing bureaucratic structure?

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism had made the point that "the other ethnic groups" implied that Canada was *de facto* a multi-ethnic and multi-racial society and that, therefore, measures had to be taken to address this reality. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism came to the realization that what had been reported by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, with respect to the lack of services to ethnocultural groups, was, to a certain extent, and in spite of some obvious changes, still true. This fact in

¹⁶ Op. Cit. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, p. 12

¹⁷ Government of Canada, Operation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, Annual Report 1990-91 (Ottawa The Queen's Printer, 1992).

¹⁸ Interview with the Hon. G. Weiner, Minister of State for Multiculturalism, on the Announcement for the National Heritage Language Institute. May 1988.

itself is the most evident proof that bureaucratic structures and policies either had not fulfilled the mandate of multiculturalism, or were not equipped to address it.

As presently conceived and administered, multiculturalism as related to government's intervention can almost be perceived as a form of interference. It appears that great efforts are made to control the activities of granting structures for groups when they try to avail themselves of government programs.

While the Multiculturalism Act and the renewed policy are positive steps, their vagueness is counterproductive; because of it they largely remain at a declaratory stage. This is some distance from considering multiculturalism as a societal *status quo* of Canada. Rather, formal manifestations of multiculturalism seem to be designed as tools to be used by ethnocultural groups in order to gain political space. The Parliamentary Standing Committee identified, among other things, the need for the proposed Ministry of Multiculturalism to ensure that other ministries are made aware of multicultural policies, that is, to act something like an ombudsman for ethnocultural groups.

An act, or any other government-sponsored activity related to multiculturalism, important as that may be, must be more than a sensitizing agent for the larger Canadian public. It is equally important to have an act which, by declaring a principle and a commitment, ensures that principle and commitment are observed and respected.

Sensitization has a positive value but this can be generated by the non-English and non-French ethnocultural groups themselves. On the one hand, to

conceive a ministry, or any other policy, as sensitizing agents, is really reducing their role, and, on the other hand, the fact that governments have concerned themselves with multiculturalism is a strong indication that the ethnocultural groups other than the English or French have at least gained some economic and political strength. A positive element in the process is that both groups and government have been concerned with promoting multiculturalism; the groups have applied pressure, and governments have responded to that pressure by reinforcing the promotion of multiculturalism.

Assistance to ethnocultural groups, however, must be carried out in a manner that is consistent with real needs and that is consonant to the assistance given to charter groups. Political responses are very important but they are limited and not well defined. Any differentiation between the bicultural reality and the multicultural reality causes frictions and constitutes the basis for criticizing the policy of multiculturalism. In its rationale Book IV addressed this issue and dealt with it in an unequivocal fashion:

The presence in Canada of many people whose language and culture are distinctive by reason of their birth or ancestry represents an inestimable enrichment that Canadians can not afford to lose. The dominant cultures can only profit from the influence of these other cultures. Linguistic variety is unquestionably an advantage, and its beneficial effects on the country are priceless. We have constantly declared our desire to see all Canadians associating in a climate of equality, whether they belong to the French or English society. Members of "other ethnic groups" which we prefer to call cultural groups, must enjoy these same advantages and meet the same restrictions. Integration, with respect for both the spirit of democracy and the most deep-

rooted human values, can engender healthy diversity within a harmonious and dynamic whole.¹⁹

Ethnic diversity is far more complex than just an association with language. If multiculturalism, as viewed today, and the concept of "Bilingualism and Biculturalism" are separated from each other, they become totally at odds with each other. But, if the orientation of the above statement is followed, then a complementary relationship can be formed in a concrete way. The statement is a crucial one: by making a connection between languages and cultures and the question of integration within diversity, Book IV is suggesting that society at large (and not government alone) must ensure that diversity within Canada is not lost.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming evidence that both research and policies agree on philosophical grounds, Chapter III and Chapter IV in this thesis suggest otherwise. Heritage Languages Programmes are being taught in a manner which is not consistent with either research or policy statements. The situation, with respect to heritage languages teaching has in fact deteriorated; ethnocultural groups, other than English or French, that have settled in Canada during older waves of immigrations, as this research has suggested in its findings, are having a difficult time in retaining their languages. A good number of them have lost the use of their mother tongue in a relatively short time span of some twenty years; students from these groups are now in a "language retrieval" mode or second or third "language acquisition" when taking heritage languages classes.

¹⁹ Op. Cit. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book IV, p.14.

It seems that the ethnocentric focus of Heritage Languages Programmes has, in a way, favoured isolation rather than harmonization. Children following heritage language classes outside of the day-school hours are most clearly singled out. Teaching of heritage languages has not been an easy task and it is far from being a complementary form of instruction which enriches and helps both the intellectual development and the integration into mainstream society.

The massive adherence to the programmes across Canada seems to clearly suggest one thing: the collective will to exist of ethnocultural groups other than English or French. As far as the functionality of the Heritage Languages Programmes, the record speaks for itself. It has to be said that, by and large, heritage languages classes held outside of the school hours, are for most students the only possibility offered by Boards of Education to attend international language courses at the elementary level. Heritage Languages Programmes, in some cases, have also eroded the possibility of high school language teaching, as school boards have relegated the teaching of most other languages outside the school day. Where languages are taught as part of the elementary school day, this has proven to be successful; but such cases are only few and far between and accessible to a very limited number of students only.

On the one hand, Heritage Languages Programmes have been very popular, on the other hand, they have somehow created the perception that governments are uselessly overspending (as noted in Chapter II and Chapter IV).

Heritage Languages Programmes have scored political victories; they have been able to deflect the pressure that the school system would have probably otherwise received. Many years of heritage languages classes have shown, however, that the problem of cultural and linguistic retention has not gone away. In fact, it has probably deteriorated.

Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, in 1969, talked about mother tongue retention. The presence in Canada at the time of relatively small (if compared with today's statistics), but significant numbers of ethnocultural groups other than those of English or French origin, had already prompted the signal in Book IV that cultural and linguistic retention needed to be addressed in a proactive fashion and that corrective measures had to be taken. Obviously this has not occurred.

Today's educational system is left with the administration of huge and challenging Heritage Languages Programmes. As described, they are educational programmes outside the school hours; they use *ad hoc* methods; while communicating to both the public at large and the students themselves the wrong perception about language retention and intercultural interaction; they often produce dubious results.

Heritage Languages Programmes are confronted with problems within because they have to accommodate different competence levels and different linguistic needs in spite of many limitations in terms of allotted time, support structures and teaching resources.

The negative way in which the Heritage Languages Programme is perceived outside, by the general Canadian public, is the other problem. In joining the Heritage Languages Programme, ethnocultural groups other than English or French have, in a sense, been singled out. This situation provides an easy target for the opponents that come from a variety of sources. They include some media, Members of Parliament and other groups, (which in some instances, unfortunately, include teachers) that see the Heritage Languages Programme only as a waste of taxpayers' money, dedicated to the perpetuation of ethnic divisions within the Canadian state.

In Chapter IV it has been demonstrated how the media have portrayed the public perception of multiculturalism as a controversial policy; a policy that is both poorly understood and poorly communicated, and one that engenders mostly negative reactions. As noted, the media have demonstrated a sustained interest in the policy of multiculturalism, but reference to the policy has only been articulated in a controversial fashion, by paying attention to the negative sentiments the policy has sparked, without balancing opposite views and therefore producing a biased debate.

On the one hand, this is a reflection of what the policies themselves, as explained in Chapter I, have inspired; on the other hand, it is, as well, the lack of an informed debate about the real issues that have to do with a pluri-lingual society as Book IV would have articulated it. Implementation of the policies has not been a very aggressive process; the media, therefore, have treated the policy as having a secondary importance except for those cases where it generated controversy.

There are at least two needs that should be addressed when considering the recognition of a plural society: the first is to create the possibility of language retention, if a language differs from the official languages; the second is the possibility of cultural expression beyond language and beyond the boundaries of an ethnic group. To keep cultural expression within one group is to create isolation; to manifest it publicly means to cultivate mutual understanding and lessen the political resistance to the intermingling of peoples. It would seem that every time an official step is taken to recognize a language within a plural society, the degree of tolerance and acceptance by other groups rises significantly.²⁰

Book IV looked at the economic contribution of new Canadians; the political process, the social patterns, the language transfer patterns, the education system, the media of communication and the arts and letters. Observations in each of these issues had, as noted, an echo in the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism. As this thesis notes, however, the observations made twenty-five years ago have gained only the partial attention of various institutions since the actual policy of multiculturalism is still at the margin of the socio-political spectrum. A new formula for multiculturalism is not needed. There are many official statements which proclaim the usefulness and the advantages of multiculturalism, but multiculturalism is a process which is dependent upon many factors for its implementation. The provisions in the Multiculturalism Act alone cannot be held

²⁰ William H. McNeill, Poly-Ethnicity and National Unity in World History, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1985) pp. 57-81.

responsible for its implementation. The harmony within diversity, as understood by Book IV, must find its right chemistry.

Chemistry for a Working Formula of Multiculturalism

A working formula of multiculturalism should be aimed at two basic principles: 1) the nurturing of an ethnic identity (by extension languages and cultures); and, 2) the full acceptance of a pluri-lingual society. Scholarly research suggests that language retention is a key factor in promoting ethnic group cohesion.²¹ The retention of a language will provide the opportunity for those who retain it to participate in the ethno-linguistic community and in the cultural activities associated with that culture and its growth and development. Language retention, therefore, should not only be attached to the survival of ethnicity, but also to its growth and development. Language, seen as something more than just an inheritance or an accident of birth, has a far more important value when removed from ethnocentricity. In short, the retention and sharing of language and culture should reach the summit of its potential and adequate infrastructures should ensure that this is so. To retain a language only "halfway" is to ensure a slow, but most certain loss.

Cultural assimilation, it appears, may come about because members of an ethnic minority group are afraid to lose the status that apparently comes with linguistic and social integration into the dominant society and also from the established values of the dominant society. Therefore, the second principle of

²¹ Op. Cit. Rita Bierman, p. 106.

fostering widespread acceptance of a multi-lingual society is just as important as language retention in suggesting a working formula for multiculturalism. The fact that Canada has accepted to be officially a multicultural society has profound implications; it is intrinsically related to every aspect of the political, social, cultural and economic life of Canada.

Previous chapters have demonstrated that institutions such as media and education, which have only partially contributed to the implementation of the policy of multiculturalism, have scored superficial or modest success. The results need little elaboration: today the antagonistic attitude toward linguistic and cultural retention and multiculturalism in general is more evident than ever. Political arrangements have cured only the symptomatic nature of multiculturalism and not its main challenges.

A definition of culture cannot be halted at a technical level; proponents of culture learning argue that defining and understanding culture(s) is essential and urgent and that it is the ideal, if not the only, means available to modern society for coming to a better understanding of the modern world. Culture is the result of interrelationships and interactions between a natural environment and a human one: it is a human event.²²

²² John E. Walsh, Humanistic Culture Learning, (Honolulu: East-West Culture Learning Institute, The University Press of Hawaii, 1979), p. 3.

It seems quite evident that a country where almost a third of its population comes from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds should call itself multicultural.²³ Multiculturalism, therefore, began with a formal institutional recognition of cultural diversity; however, policy commitments towards the full respect of the concept of multiculturalism should be entrusted to agents capable and willing to carry out the mandate of the policy.

Multiculturalism has been portrayed as the cultural ideal which accepts, recognizes and encourages cultural diversity in a formal manner. The formulation of a principle constitutes the first, important step. In a pluri-lingual society as Canada, where all groups seem to be willing and equally capable to maintain their linguistic and cultural identity, cultural groups can, because of demographic, economic and institutional resources, interact in a positive fashion among themselves and share cultural values. Positive intercultural relations foster tolerance as described in other words in Book IV.²⁴

Acceptance, value and respect for all cultures provide a fair balance among all the cultures and languages represented in Canada. Book IV argued for a dignified status for all the languages and cultures; implied in its research was the point that there should be the freedom to retain one's own cultural and linguistic origin while at the same time living in harmony with the two dominant cultures. Book IV also suggested that its recommendations, being backed by commitments and beliefs,

²³ Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada. Detailed Ethnicity Data Canada. Provinces, Territories, CMAs 1986 Census of Canada. (Multiculturalism Canada), March 1989

²⁴ Op. Cit. James Curtis et al. p. 243.

could lead to true respect and observance of the rights of different languages and cultures. This, in a sense, is true multiculturalism, although Book IV never used the term.

On the practical side, the policy of multiculturalism has only secured a very partial and timid response, far from what Book IV had recommended, and institutions have been moving towards multiculturalism from separate concepts and different interpretations:

Ad hoc adjustments involving enrichment are more commonplace than a radical restructuring. Nor does there appear to be any wholesale move to reject the assimilationist ethos of the school system (Cummins and Danesi-1990). Discriminatory structures are not easily dismantled in the light of entrenched interests and ideologies. The Education system is only one institution among many, reflecting the values and the attitudes prevailing at large. Only when all institutions act in unison can the possibility of implementing genuine reform be optimized.²⁵

The first steps in understanding multiculturalism, therefore, are a) to remove it from the various biases that this policy has introduced; and, b) to have institutions such as the education system and the media acting in unison in order to facilitate a genuine reform. The leadership roles of these two latter institutions are essential, this thesis has argued, to a successful implementation of multiculturalism. Then, if Canadian society collectively expresses the will to exist as a multicultural entity

²⁵ Op. Cit. Jean Leonard Elliott and Augie Fleras, pp. 306-307.

within a national framework. adoption of the ideology is not only the logical step, but a natural conclusion.

In the first chapter evidence was submitted to indicate that in Canadian society there exists a genuine historical will to accept and foster the interests of a national pluri-ethnic fabric. This cultural ideal, however, has met with a considerable degree of difficulty. The notion of the term multiculturalism has probably encompassed more than it needs and, at times, has not been clearly expressed. The term, removed as it is from English and French central interests, has created political cleavages, and provinces such as Québec have preferred to abandon it altogether and call it interculturalism.²⁶

Language and culture have important places in a pluri-lingual society such as Canada. Official bilingualism should not mean, therefore, that other languages should be cast aside; it should mean that the national medium of communication is bilingual while linguistic diversity remains a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society.

As noted in one of the concluding remarks of Book IV, and previously discussed in this Chapter, multiculturalism is the existence of cultural and linguistic diversity within one national frame of reference; it gives full and formal recognition to the historical and contemporary realities of that society, thereby ensuring that cultural and linguistic diversity are observed and respected and that they are reflected in every aspect of the socio-political, cultural and economic life of that

²⁶ Multiculturalism Canada Education: Cultural and Linguistic Pluralism in Canada, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services 1985) p. 9.

society. This framework represents the right to linguistic retention and the right to cultural expression within a larger and culturally diverse society; it gives, in a way, the right chemistry for a kind of multiculturalism that is more focused on the richness of the cultural and linguistic resources of society than on the political identification of ethnocultural groups.

If the ideology associated with multiculturalism is examined in light of the policies that have been formulated so far, the ensuing results are not surprising because the various interpretations and the programs which were related to it were completely removed from the concept of harmony within diversity, as explained in Book IV. It is critical, then, to assess the impact that the ideology of multiculturalism, with no apparent support from policies, laws or infrastructures, has had on media and education as they deal with the daily reality of a pluri-ethnic society.

The evidence in this research has demonstrated that the present orientation towards multiculturalism is insufficient and that policies and law have not guaranteed a proper commitment on the part of the government and other institutions to the concept of multiculturalism.

It is possible, however, to suggest the kind of agents which should be considered as key elements to carry out such a broad mandate. It has been shown that non-English and non-French ethnocultural groups in a multicultural society face two problems: 1) linguistic and cultural survival; and, 2) formal acceptance.

In Canada, for the past four centuries schools have been one of the major institutions to transmit the basic values of society. Thus, if a society is multicultural, the schools should be entrusted with the recognition and the practice of that reality. Their task should be twofold: a) to ensure that curricula are permeated by the recognition of cultural diversity in the society; and, b) to make certain, as much as possible, that linguistic and cultural retention of all cultural groups is promoted in a formal way without imposing negative connotations on non-official language learning.

Schools in Canada have the clear potential of achieving these two goals by tapping the resources available to them in the various ethnolinguistic communities and by making those resources full participants in Canadian society. Although education in Canada is a provincial responsibility, this does not mean that the implementation of Book IV's recommendations (3 to 7) in the school system need to be carried out in ten different ways to be left to ten provincial interpretations. The process, to date, has been a divisive one.

The teaching of languages other than English or French should be conducted in a more dignified and efficient way than it actually is in Heritage Languages Programmes, and in a manner that is consistent with a formal and more profound consideration of the recommendations advanced by the Royal Commission and the teaching of the two official languages. To do any less means to diminish the value of "other" languages, to erode the chance of survival for those languages and,

therefore, to lessen the diverse ethnocultural identity of Canada and of the groups it represents.

The active promotion of an ideal such as multiculturalism can establish a solid framework within which a progressive discourse can be sustained. Both Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism have carefully examined the multicultural realities of Canadian society and have shown remarkable similarities over the span of eighteen years. In both reports, education and media have been pointed to as far-reaching vehicles which can assist the implementation of multiculturalism in Canada in a concrete way.

The policies and laws, instead, while endorsing the principles of Book IV, clearly rejected the notions that multiculturalism implies multilingualism and that language and culture are indivisible.²⁷

The social needs of a pluri-ethnic society are inherently related to cultural survival and mutual understanding. Linguistic and cultural retention have to be examined very closely²⁸ since they are at the base of a sense of identity and belonging. By conceding an equal cultural space to every group, multiculturalism has the potential for proposing an advanced theory of nationalism which is founded on intercultural and interlinguistic association.

The recognition of the potential of multiculturalism is a relatively recent issue which has yet to be placed in proper perspective. By trying to discuss

²⁷ Op. Cit. James Curtis et al., p. 237.

multiculturalism, an attempt has been made to identify its role and discover elements that can help it to fulfil its mandate.

When multiculturalism is well understood, it can generate interest for a more demanding role from its implementation process. Its role has to be clear and unequivocal about its *raison d'être*: it should ensure the survival of ethnocultural-ethnolinguistic identity for all Canadians. The law stemming from an accurate definition should in turn mandate governments's infrastructures to carry out the responsibilities of the implementation process. This does not, at present, seem to be the case. The chemistry for a working formula is found in Book IV.

Conclusions

The thesis has given an indication of the practical instances in the implementation process; it has provided the necessary data and the explanations that justify the preoccupation with two very important areas related to multiculturalism.

The first chapter considered the formal manifestations associated with multiculturalism; Chapter II has examined the definition of multiculturalism and the uncertainty still around it, even after so many years of official multiculturalism. Chapters III and IV have analyzed the responses, or lack thereof, of institutions such as education and media. Chapter II has also demonstrated that multiculturalism, though at the crossroads and in dire need of being understood, is a socio-political *projet de société* worth pursuing and that the cultural contribution made by non-English and non-French ethnocultural groups has shown the potential for very

positive developments. Ensuring measures that safeguard that contribution is equivalent to promoting a more complete personal and societal fulfilment.

Finally, it can be generally argued that policies on multiculturalism have not been very assertive, nor have they encouraged clear responses or infrastructures capable to sustaining their objectives. As a result, policies have generated, as seen in Chapter III and Chapter IV, mild responses that have not been properly articulated, nor well communicated or received.

Heritage Languages Programmes, faced with the realization of missing their objectives, are surviving probably because of numbers, but not necessarily because of their performance. Media, for their part, will possibly continue to display the controversial side of the issue since assertiveness is more likely to come from opponents rather than from governments which play, and will probably continue to play, a reactive, rather than a proactive role. The fact that Heritage Languages Programmes have survived for so long does not necessarily mean they will continue to do so indefinitely.

The findings in Chapter III and Chapter IV have reasonably demonstrated that the *status quo* is a difficult one to maintain.

The formula discussed in this chapter reiterates both the spirit and the intention of Book IV of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. If formal manifestations do not seem to have translated the thrust of the Royal Commission into reality, then multiculturalism has been affected by political, rather than institutional change. Political change is a quick but often

superficial process; institutional change is slower but often more radical. The Royal Commission very clearly challenged institutional change.

The Royal Commission was directed to report on the role of public and private organizations and this was done. It seems unclear whether the political will of the time was aiming at long-term or short-term objectives in order to address the contribution of other ethnocultural groups. What is clear is that, notwithstanding almost twenty-five years of official multiculturalism, the notion is being seriously challenged.

It does seem that revisiting Book IV of the Report of the Royal Commission is a logical step to take. This would provide for a sober second thought that would challenge media and education in ways in which they were never really challenged:

It is disappointing that multicultural policies seem to be totally insensitive to the complexities of language retention, usage and learning in the Canadian context. It seems that multicultural policies benefitted very little from the extensive research conducted and reported by the B and B Commission.²⁸

Language and culture for Book IV are one indivisible concept: language helps us to express ourselves and culture identifies and distinguishes us. A variety of languages and cultures within one society enriches the whole of society. As far as Book IV is concerned, there are no substitutes for the school at the elementary level and the media to achieve these goals. Hence, it is essential that both institutions engage in this project if the full potential of the benefits is to be realized. This is

²⁸ Op. Cit. Stella Hryniuk, Marck Debicki et al., p. 34.

particularly true when the policy of multiculturalism, and the concept associated with it, are under increasing attack. Neither the educational system nor the media appear to have completely understood the warnings and the advice of Book IV.

The advantages of properly maintaining another language other than the majority language(s) in a modern society, coupled with the necessity for the cognitive development for children of ethnolinguistic minorities, hardly needs to be defended:

Minority children whose mother tongue is valued and put on the same footing as the majority language by being used as a language of instruction are in a better position to "integrate themselves".²⁹

The concept for the need of harmony within diversity expressed by Book IV cannot be ignored at this juncture. If it was true twenty-five years ago, it is even more pressing now, when the presence of non-English and non-French cultural groups in Canada has more than doubled and when these groups have been led to believe that Canada formally recognizes diversity. Like education, the media have to exercise their leadership by playing an active and informed role.

By and large, Heritage Languages Programmes and day schools are isolated from each other. While students live one reality, these two educational curricula have two different foci. On the one hand, efforts are sought to maintain cultural and linguistic identity of non-English and non-French students; on the other, notions of

²⁹ Fove Skutnabb-Kangas: Bilingualism or Not, the Education of Minorities. (Clevendon, England: Multilingual Matters 1981), p. 143.

multiculturalism are imparted that are not necessarily compatible with the ideal of cultural and linguistic sharing as advocated by Book IV.

The term "Multicultural Education" refers, according to guidelines issued by the department of multiculturalism, to a system or program of education that reflects and embodies the cultural diversity of Canadian society.³⁰ In essence, to achieve these goals, it would mean to address institutional changes.

The media, too, have a paramount task. They should engage in an informed, unbiased debate on multiculturalism. The ethnic media also have a supporting role, both for safeguarding language and culture and for providing a forum for multiculturalism.

In the final analysis, the greatest danger to multiculturalism lies in the lack of attention that is given to its great potential.³¹ Adversaries of multiculturalism who cite the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia as examples of ethnic division and tensions forget one important factor: for a long time these countries have preached and practised the assimilationist model in its most rigorous interpretation. Today there seems to be some evidence that this model does not work. By comparison, the European countries of the European Community and the more open democracies have been relatively resilient to ethnic tensions and have grown closer together.

³⁰ Secretary of State, Multiculturalism Sector: Policy Implementation Issues for Multicultural Education at the School Board Level. (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1984), pp. 8-22.

³¹ Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education (VOX 1988:20) (Cummins and Danesi 1990:99 and Elliott and Fleras 1992:271).

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The respect and the active cultivation of different languages and cultures within one nation-state can only end up serving the common good, greatly enriching society and providing an advanced model of socio-political arrangement. Language and culture cannot, and should not, be treated as political entities, which is exactly what Book IV of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism most clearly tried to avoid. The Royal Commission argued in favour of considering the essence of language and culture, which is to educate, cultivate, and to develop human beings socially and intellectually.

TABLE 1**FORMAL MANIFESTATIONS RELATED TO MULTICULTURALISM**

1963 - 1971	-	<u>Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism;</u> <u>Book IV: The Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups.</u>
1971	-	<u>Multiculturalism Policy.</u>
1977	-	<u>Canadian Human Rights Act.</u>
1982	-	<u>Constitution Act and Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.</u>
1985	-	<u>Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism.</u>
1985	-	<u>Ethnic Broadcasting Policy of the C.R.T.C.</u>
1986	-	<u>Report: Equality Now! (Special Committee on Visible Minorities).</u>
1987	-	<u>Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic.</u>
1988	-	<u>Multiculturalism Act.</u>
1989	-	<u>Bill C - 18 Establishment of the Ministry of Multiculturalism and Citizenship.</u>
1990	-	<u>Heritage Language Institute (NOT IMPLEMENTED).</u>

Source: Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism.

Table 2
ETHNIC ORIGINS

	British and French origin by Province	%	Official Minority %	Other Origins	%	Totals
Newfoundland	537,390	93.27%	2.01%	26,610	4.72%	564,000
P.E.I.	112,735	81.23%	8.90%	12,355	9.87%	125,000
Nova Scotia	676,205	72.12%	6.12%	187,945	21.76%	864,150
New Brunswick	633,010	56.88%	33.14%	68,850	9.80%	701,860
Québec	5,573,565	81.40%	4.95%	880,995	13.65%	6,454,490
Ontario	4,989,385	49.52%	5.91%	4,011,785	44.57%	9,001,170
Manitoba	402,200	33.01%	5.31%	647,120	61.68%	1,049,320
Saskatchewan	358,900	32.64%	3.37%	637,795	63.99%	996,695
Alberta	973,485	38.28%	3.32%	1,366,780	58.40%	2,340,265
British Columbia	1,365,775	45.51%	2.42%	1,483,810	52.07%	2,849,585
Yukon	9,730	38.35%	3.32%	13,630	58.33%	23,360
N.W.T.	12,570	22.41%	2.89%	39,445	74.70%	52,020
Canada Totals	15,645,000	38.18%	24.35%*	9,377,005	37.47%	25,022,005

* 82.32% of Francophones reside in the Province of Québec and 17.68% in the Provinces and Territories

Source: Statistics Canada, Census data 1986; 1991 Census data did not produce a similar table however, by comparing numbers and percentages (non-French and non-English) there is no significant difference

Table 3
HOME LANGUAGES

1971			1981		
Home Language	Number	%	Home Language	Respondents	%
Italian	425,230	2.0	English	16,122,020	66.9
German	213,350	1.0	French	5,828,845	24.2
Ukrainian	144,755	0.7	Italian	344,480	1.4
Greek	86,830	0.4	Chinese	181,485	0.8
Chinese	77,895	0.4	German	147,120	0.6
Portuguese	74,765	0.3	Portuguese	123,960	0.5
Polish	70,960	0.3	Greek	88,300	0.4
Hungarian	50,675	0.2	Ukrainian	81,475	0.3
Dutch	36,170	0.2	Aboriginal	77,310	0.3
Yiddish	26,330	0.1	IndoPakistani	62,680	0.3
English	14,446,000	67.0	Polish	50,130	0.2
French	5,546,000	25.7	Other	440,135	1.8

1986			1991		
Home Language	Number	%	Home Language	Respondents	%
English	16,595,535	66.3	English	18,664,635	69.1
French	5,798,470	23.2	French	6,639,360	23.6
Italian	271,835	1.1	Chinese	430,090	1.6
Chinese	230,480	0.9	Italian	288,290	1.1
German	112,550	0.4	Portuguese	152,530	0.6
Portuguese	105,420	0.4	Spanish	145,050	0.5
Greek	72,550	0.3	German	134,460	0.5
Aboriginal	67,750	0.3	Punjabi	123,775	0.5
IndoPakistani	65,790	0.3	Polish	117,150	0.4
Spanish	55,760	0.2	Greek	93,160	0.3
Polish	55,150	0.2	Arabic	82,450	0.3
Other	431,040	1.7	Vietnamese	79,585	0.3

Source: Statistics Canada, The Daily, January 12, 1993 Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1993.

APPENDIX A**ROYAL COMMISSION ON BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM****Book IV:****SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. We recommend that any provinces that have not yet enacted fair employment practices, fair accommodation practices, or housing legislation prohibiting discrimination because of race, creed, colour, nationality, ancestry or place of origin do so, and that this legislation be made binding upon the Crown and its agencies. We further recommend that all provinces make provisions for full time administrators of their human rights legislation. (§ 152.)
2. We recommend that the same conditions for citizenship, the right to vote, and to stand for election to public office be accorded to all immigrants, with no regard to their country of origin. (§ 378.)
3. We recommend that the teaching of languages other than English and French, and cultural subjects related to them, be incorporated as options in the public elementary school programme, where there is sufficient demand for such classes. (§ 378.)
4. We recommend that special instruction in the appropriate official language be provided for children who enter the public school system with an inadequate knowledge of that language; that provincial authorities specify the terms and conditions of financial assistance for such special instruction; and that federal authorities assist the provinces in mutually acceptable ways through grants for the additional cost incurred. (§ 383.)
5. We recommend that more advanced instruction and a wider range of options in languages other than English and French, and in cultural subjects related to them, be provided in public high schools, where there is sufficient demand for such classes. (§ 390.)
6. We recommend that Canadian universities broaden their practices in giving standing or credits for studies in modern languages other than French and English both for admission and for degrees. (§ 443.)
7. We recommend that Canadian universities expand their studies in the fields of humanities and the social sciences relating to particular areas other than those related to the English and French languages. (§ 458.)

8. We recommend that the CRTC remove restrictions on private broadcasting in languages other than English and French, except those restrictions necessary to meet administrative and legal responsibilities of the licensees and those that also apply to English-and French-language programmes. (§ 538.)

9. We recommend that the CBC recognize the place of languages other than English and French in Canadian life and that the CBC remove its proscription on the use of other languages in broadcasting. (§ 539.)

10. We recommend that the CRTC undertake studies in the field of broadcasting in other languages to determine the best means by which radio and television can contribute to the maintenance of languages and cultures and that the CBC participate in these studies. We further recommend that these studies include pilot projects on either AM or FM radio in both Montreal and Toronto. (§ 542.)

11. We recommend that research be undertaken through the CRTC concerning the nature and the effects of the portrayal of other cultural groups on both publicly - and privately-owned English- and French-language radio and television stations. (§ 546.)

12. We recommend that the national Film Board undertake to publicize the fact that it produces prints of many of its films in languages other than English and French, particularly in regions where there are concentrations of persons who speak languages other than English and French. In addition, we recommend that the voluntary associations of cultural groups stimulate interest among their groups in the use of these films. (§ 553.)

13. We recommend that the National Film Board continue and develop the production of films that inform Canadians about one another, including films about the contributions and problems of both individuals and groups of ethnic origin other than British and French, and that the National Film Board receive the financial support it requires in order to produce such films. (§ 555.)

14. We recommend that the appropriate federal, provincial and municipal agencies receive the financial means they require to maintain and extend their support to cultural and research organizations whose objectives are to foster the arts and letters of cultural groups other than the British and French. (§ 642.)

15. We recommend that the administrative costs of the Canadian Folk Arts Council or a similar body be provided for out of public funds through the Citizenship Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State. (§ 643.)

16. We recommend that the National Museum of Man be given adequate space and facilities and provided with sufficient funds to carry out its projects regarding the history, social organizations, and folk arts of cultural groups other than the British and French. (§ 646.)

N.B. The recommendations concerning **education and media** have been highlighted.

APPENDIX B

1) The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Section 15

(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Section 27

This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.

Source: The Canadian Charter of Human Rights, A Guide for Canadians, (Ottawa: The Queen's printer 1982) pp. 15, 16, 29, 30.

2) The Official Languages Act (1988) Part VII

Advancement of English and French

Section 41

The Government of Canada is committed to

- a) enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development and
- b) fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian Society.

Section 42

The Secretary of State of Canada, in consultation with other Ministers of the Crown, shall encourage and promote a coordinated approach to the implementation by federal institutions of the commitments set out in section 41.

Source: Official Languages Act (1988) (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1988) p. 25.

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF PROVINCIAL MEASURES RELATED TO
MULTICULTURALISM

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Official Policy	n/a
Legislation	n/a
Key Minister	n/a
Key Department	The Cultural Heritage Advisor is the Senior Official
Advisory Body	none
Coordinating Mechanism	Cabinet Committee on Cultural Heritage
Programs	n/a
Other Departments	Human Resources Education Provincial Museums
Human Rights Commission	Human Rights Council

ALBERTA

Official Policy	yes
Legislation	Alberta Cultural Heritage Act (1984) Department of Culture Amendment Act (1987)
Key Minister	Minister of Culture
Key Department	Department of Culture and Multiculturalism (headed by Assistant Deputy Minister) Alberta Cultural Heritage Foundation (1978)
Advisory Body	Alberta Cultural Heritage Council
Coordinating Mechanism	Cabinet Committee on Cultural Heritage
Programs	Cultural Heritage, Heritage Language, social, economic and educational areas
Other Departments	yes, through the Cabinet Committee

SASKATCHEWAN

Official Policy	yes
Legislation	The Saskatchewan Multicultural Act (1974)
Key Minister	Minister of Culture and Recreation

Key Department	Department of Culture and Recreation
Advisory Body	Saskatchewan Multicultural Advisory Council (1974)
Coordinating Mechanism	The Ministers' Committee on Multiculturalism (1986) areas
Programs	Cultural Assistance, Cultural festivals, Heritage Languages program, Hosting Grant, Museum Assistance Program, Historic Sites Programs
Other Departments	yes, through the Ministers' Committee
Human Rights Commission	Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission

MANITOBA

Official Policy	yes
Legislation	The Manitoba Intercultural Act (1983)
Key Minister	Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation
Key Department	Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation
Advisory Body	Manitoba Intercultural Council
Coordinating Mechanism	The Ethnic Committee of Cabinet
Programs	Project and operational funding Group development, Cultural retention, Supplementary Heritage Language Classes
Other Departments	Education, Employment Services and Economic Security, Manitoba Arts Council
Human Rights Commission	Manitoba Human Rights Commission

ONTARIO

Official Policy	yes
Legislation	Ministry of Citizenship and Culture Act (1982) (some attention to sharing of pluralistic cultural heritage)
Key Minister	Minister of Citizenship and Culture
Key Department	Department of Citizenship and Culture
Advisory Body	Ontario Advisory Council on Multiculturalism and Citizenship (1973)
Coordinating Mechanism	The Cabinet Committee on Race Relations
Programs	Newcomers Services Citizenship Development Native Community Wintario (cultural grants)
Other Departments	Education: Heritage Languages Programme

Human Rights Commission	Attorney General, Correctional Services, Natural Resources, Community and Social Services, Environment, Labour, Ontario Housing Corporation Ontario Human Rights Commission (Several Regional Offices)
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QUEBEC

Official Policy	yes - Interculturalism - not Multiculturalism
Legislation	Ministère des Communautés culturelles et de l'immigration - Loi (1981) Quebec Human Rights Charter (1982) Conseil des communautés culturelles et de l'immigration - Loi (1985)
Key Minister	Minister of Cultural Communities and Immigration
Key Department	Ministère des Communautés culturelles et de l'immigration
Advisory Body	Conseil des Communautés culturelles et de l'immigration
Coordinating Mechanism	Interdepartmental Committee (Act 1985)
Programs	Funding for integration and access to Social Services
Centres	Heritage Languages and Ethnic media Community Centres for Immigrants
Other Departments	yes, through the Interdepartmental Committee
Human Rights Commission	Commission des Droits de la Personne du Québec (several Regional Offices)

NEW BRUNSWICK

Official Policy	yes
Legislation	n/a
Key Minister	Minister of Labour and Human Resources and Minister of Historic and Cultural Resources
Key Department	Cultural Development Division in above-noted Departments
Advisory Body	Ministerial Advisory Committee on matters pertaining to the multicultural nature of New Brunswick (1986)
Coordinating Mechanism	n/a
Programs	Funding for groups
Other Departments	n/a

Human Rights Commission

New Brunswick Human Rights Commission
(several Regional Offices)**NOVA SCOTIA**

Official Policy	yes
Legislation	n/a
Key Minister	Minister of Culture and Recreation and Fitness
Key Department	n/a
Advisory Body	n/a
Coordinating Mechanism	n/a
Programs	Funding for ethnocultural groups for multicultural and cultural activities
Other Departments	Social Services
Human Rights Commission	Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (several Regional Offices)

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Official Policy	yes
Legislation	n/a
Key Minister	Minister of Cultural Affairs
Key Department	Department of Community and Cultural Affairs
Advisory Body	n/a
Coordinating Mechanism	n/a
Programs	Funding for ethnocultural groups for multicultural and cultural activities
Other Departments	Education, Industry, Health and Social Services, Justice, Legal Aid, Tourism
Human Rights Commission	Prince Edward Island Human Rights Commission

NEWFOUNDLAND

Official Policy	No formalized policy as of 1987, statement of Mission provided by Newfoundland and Labrador Multicultural and Folk Arts Council
Legislation	n/a
Key Minister	Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth
Key Department	Department of Culture Recreation and Youth
Advisory Body	n/a
Coordinating Mechanism	n/a

Programs	Funding for ethnocultural groups for multicultural and cultural activities
Other Departments	Education, Social Services, Career Development, Tourism
Human Rights Commission	Newfoundland Human Rights Commission

N.B. Although some of the information in this Appendix may have changed since 1987, the information provided gives a good indication of the various approaches and measures adopted by the provinces in order to deal with multicultural issues.

Source: Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1987).

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