

LANGUAGE SHIFT AMONG THOSE OF ABORIGINAL MOTHER TONGUE IN CANADA

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Résumé — Une analyse des types de changement de langue, de la langue maternelle à la langue principale utilisée en famille, a été entreprise en utilisant des classifications spéciales des autochtones à partir du recensement canadien de 1981. En insistant sur le changement de la langue maternelle aborigène à la langue anglaise utilisée en famille, on a constaté, avec l'utilisation des méthodes Loch-linéaires, que les différences de genre dans le changement étaient relativement peu importantes par comparaison avec les différences en âge et en origine ethnique. Les personnes plus âgées et les enfants étaient moins susceptibles d'avoir fait l'expérience du changement de langue que les jeunes et les adultes d'âge moyen. Les autochtones non reconnus légalement et les Métis ont fait l'expérience du changement de langue le plus important. Ils sont suivis par les autochtones reconnus et les Inuits respectivement. Les effets exercés par l'environnement étaient plus prononcés chez les autochtones dans les régions sud des provinces subissant plus de changement de langue que chez ceux du nord, et plus de changement survenant dans les régions nord des provinces de l'ouest que dans les régions nord des provinces de l'est.

Abstract — An analysis of patterns of language shift from mother tongue to principal language used in the home was undertaken using special tabulations of native persons from the 1981 Census of Canada. Stressing the shift from aboriginal mother tongue to English language used in the home, it was found, using log-linear methods, that gender differences in shift were relatively unimportant compared to differences in age and ethnic origin. Older persons and children were less likely to have experienced language shift than young and middle-aged adults. Non-status natives and Métis underwent the most significant shift in language, followed by Status Indians and Inuit, in that order. Locational effects were pronounced, with natives in the southern parts of provinces undergoing more language shift than those in the north, and more shift occurring in the northern parts of western provinces than in the northern parts of eastern provinces.

Key Words — language shift, linguistic assimilation, aboriginal language, native language, language transfer

Introduction

It has been said that language shapes the thoughts of those who use it (Whorf, 1956). If this is true, the loss of a language portends the loss of thought patterns peculiar to that tongue. Whether one takes this viewpoint or not, most would agree that each language is a special repository of concepts, images and history — a unique way of organizing an environment.

Many years ago, Edward Sapir (1933) contended that language represents a basic expression of collective social identity. More recently, Reitz (1974) asserted that language retention is an important element in the survival of the ethnic community itself. He said, "Perhaps language retention is the cultural characteristic that best reflects current and continued ethnic cohesion; it is perhaps the most distinctively ethnic activity" (Reitz, 1980:117).

Knowledge of a language helps to define the boundaries of the ethnic group utilizing that language (Hertzler, 1965). If a person knows the language, it is an important sign of membership. By contrast, failure to learn the language may signify that one does not belong to the group, or that one does not value membership sufficiently and is not worthy of inclusion. Social exclusion of these "deviants" may in turn weaken the group.

Most sociological studies of assimilation have not paid much attention to language assimilation (cf. Gordon, 1964). A few (Barth, 1969; Fishman *et al.*, 1965; Weinstock, 1969) in the United States and Canada have cited it as a

variable to consider, Weinstock going so far as to say it is necessary for the retention of ethnic group solidarity, a position many would find extreme.

In Canada special interest has been shown by scholars not only in the speaking of official languages, but also in the retention of non-official languages (deVries and Valee, 1980). Robinson (1985) examined 1971 data on language retention of native Indians from the public use sample tape. Utilizing simultaneous equations models, she found evidence that age, sex, education, rural residence, and province affect language retention.

In another recent report (Burnaby and Beaujot, 1985), special concern is expressed for minority languages, such as the aboriginal languages, which are not reinforced by continual immigration from a home country. For these languages there is no homeland, no reservoir of language speakers, outside North America. If such aboriginal languages are lost, they are gone forever. Moreover, many of the aboriginal languages are spoken by only a few persons. If their place of residence is near many non-native speakers, disproportionately rapid assimilation will occur — assimilation which may mean the death of languages and the extinction of cultures.

A fear of many natives in Canada is that those patterns which make them culturally distinct will be lost through assimilation into the larger society (Ponting and Gibbins, 1980). There are others who wish to see assimilation speeded and feel that the hope of aboriginals in Canada lies in education and success along conventional lines in the standard occupational structure. Some would attempt a compromise in which success is sought in the white society, but the good things of the native past and culture are retained.

Whatever one's position on this complex issue, it seems clear that the continued presence of aboriginal languages in Canada is a force which links natives with their culture and which retards assimilation of the aboriginal peoples who use these languages. Aboriginal languages may also be an important source of cohesion for the native ethnic community. Policy planners will find it important to monitor whether the aboriginal languages of the past are continuing to be used by native persons in this country.

The Study

In the 1981 Census of Canada, data were gathered which permit a more complete analysis of aboriginal language shift. Until 1981, data on language shift of aboriginal languages into European languages in Canada had been gathered by linguists (Chafe, 1962, 1965; Foster, 1982), by the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and by the Census of

Canada (Government of Canada, 1984, 1985). However, in 1981 it became possible, using data from the census, to separate native ethnic origins, their languages of first use, and those used in their homes for all provinces of Canada, and to analyze factors associated with language shift. In 1981 it also became possible to identify aboriginal languages separately; however, in this study, aboriginal languages are reported as a single category.

Although improvements were made in the 1981 census, several problems emerged. In addition to possible undercounting of native persons, some respondents were unclear as to the meaning of aboriginal ethnic origin categories. Other persons claimed official Indian status for themselves, even though by law they had lost this status. There were also categories of persons who did not claim Indian status, but who probably should have. Since the census, substantial efforts have been made to unscramble these difficulties (Boxhill, 1984). Although the use of the term "Indian" was de-emphasized in the census, a number of persons from India claimed Indian status and had to be removed from the native census categories. On the census schedule, aboriginal ethnicity information was separated from other ethnic responses, and the choices of Inuit, Status or Registered Indian, Non-status Indian, and Métis were printed on the schedule to facilitate choice. More than one ethnic origin response was permitted in the 1981 census, and the patrilineal determination of origin was eliminated. If the respondent mentioned at least one native ethnic origin, the respondent was counted among the native population in this study.

The Variables

We have examined variation in aboriginal language shift according to the following five variables: province, location within the province (north-south), age, gender, and native ethnic origin. These were variables provided in a special tabulation of native persons in Canada by the Secretary of State. Other variables such as education and ethnic endogamy would be useful to examine, but were not available to the researchers at the time of the study.

Language Shift

For some years questions have been asked in the census on mother tongue and language used in the home (Kralt, 1976). The special tabulations presented in this paper now permit us to analyze the relationship for Canada as a whole, for provinces and territories, and for north-south divisions within provinces, by age,

gender, and native ethnic origin. It is possible to analyze differential linguistic shift between aboriginal languages, French, English and other languages, but in this report we shall concentrate on the shift from aboriginal languages to English, considering all aboriginal languages together. This represents the overwhelming majority of language shift from aboriginal language in Canada.

In the Canadian census, mother tongue is defined as the first language learned in childhood which is still understood by the respondent. Persons who no longer understand the first language they learned, report as mother tongue the next language learned if it is still understood. Language used in the home is the language the respondent speaks most often at his/her home at the time of the census. "Language shift" refers to the proportion of those who began life with an aboriginal mother tongue and now use some other language as the main language used in the home. The assumption that language shift is identical with linguistic assimilation has been criticized (Castonguay, 1984), in that the term "linguistic assimilation" conveys the impression that a person has lost the ability to use his or her mother tongue. This may not be true for those who now use English as their principal language of home use.

There are also problems with these measures in the matter of multiple languages spoken. For instance, speaking an aboriginal language at home is often coupled with the use of an official language outside the home. Previous to 1976, an arbitrary choice was often made where two or more languages were listed. Since 1976, records are made of multiple language entries.

Two additional terms should be reviewed. "Net linguistic assimilation" is the difference in the number of those speaking a mother tongue and the number using the language as principal language spoken at home. This measure is a "net" measure and obscures the actual number of transfers from aboriginal to English and from English to aboriginal. "Language transfer," by contrast, is the comparison of an individual's mother tongue and the language that same individual now uses at home. This report is a study of language shift based on language transfer data.

Province

Variation in language shift is examined for all the provinces and territories of Canada with the exception of Prince Edward Island and the Labrador section of the province of Newfoundland (where numbers of aboriginal speakers are small). We hypothesize that in provinces and territories which are remote from major population concentrations, there will be less shift of aboriginal language. We foresee low shift in the Northwest Territories and such relatively remote

provinces as Newfoundland. Provincial effects are somewhat confused in that many provinces such as Quebec have areas that are very remote in the north and very near large urban areas in the south. Provinces such as Ontario and British Columbia, where many native persons live rather close to major urban centres, should have higher rates of language shift.

Location

Location within the province is a proxy for geographical proximity to major centres of non-aboriginal language, with resulting greater risk of occupational and social exposure to non-aboriginal languages. The northern parts of provinces should, other things being equal, be more remote from large communities, and natives living there should more often retain their aboriginal mother tongue, undergoing language change less frequently than in the southern parts of provinces. We have data for the northern and southern parts of the provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. The more northerly territories — the Yukon and Northwest Territories — were classed as entirely northern, as they are located to the north of the northern parts of the other provinces. Newfoundland was also classified as northern, because geographically it is somewhat more northern than the remaining provinces, and it is more remote and includes substantial areas which are sparsely populated. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were too small in area to effect a north/south division. They were classified as totally southern.

Age

Natives at very young and very old ages have less contact with the occupational structure, have more home contact and will be more likely to retain their aboriginal mother tongue. Older native persons belong to cohorts in which aboriginal languages were more frequently used and in which learning English was not so important as it is for younger persons. Young children as well have had fewer years for language drift from an original mother tongue to occur, although their greater exposure to formal education will eventually increase language shift. As they are usually still living with their family of origin, their language use will reflect the dominant patterns already established at that place. Young adults and middle-aged persons will undergo linguistic shift more readily due to greater contact with and demand for them to speak English.

Gender

Males will retain aboriginal language more than females, who will shift more readily. Females, when they marry or cohabit, are more likely to adopt the language spoken by the man they marry or live with. They are also more likely to seek educational and occupational opportunities away from the home and the reserve (Jarvis, 1987a, 1987b), which will increase shift.

Ethnic Origin

This variable is sometimes referred to as Indian status, but the term "status" may be confused with socioeconomic status. We use three categories of ethnic origin: Inuit, Status Indian, and Non-status/Métis. We reason that relative remoteness will reduce shift to the greatest degree among the Inuit, followed by Status Indians — many of whom live on reserves remote from urban places — and that Métis and Non-status natives will demonstrate the greatest shift of aboriginal mother tongue into English. Métis and Non-status native persons also have fewer institutional supports to preserve their aboriginal linguistic heritage.

Statistical Methods

In order to determine the relative importance of each independent variable's association with language shift and to estimate effect parameters for these variables, various log-linear models were applied to the data (Knoke and Burke, 1980). Data were formatted into a six-way cross-tabulation including language spoken (two categories), north/south location (two categories), native ethnic origin (three categories), province (11 categories), gender (two categories) and age (five categories).

A baseline model specifies no relationship between language spoken and each of the independent variables. This baseline was compared with a set of models containing each of the possible two-way associations between language and the other variables. Then a model with each of the possible two-way associations was compared with a set of models containing each of the possible three-way associations between language and pairs of independent variables. The resulting comparisons indicated which variables had the largest association with language change.

Many cells in our cross-tabulation of north/south location by province by status by gender by age were empty. Since we included all census respondents

in our analysis, empty cells indicated that there were no persons in the population with the specified characteristics. Thus, these empty cells were treated as structural zeros. Structural zeros were not taken into account in the computation of association or effect parameters.

The second step in the analysis consists of the computation of effect parameters for each of the independent variables. We report multiplicative parameters which show how membership within categories of the independent variables affects the odds of language shift, net of other variables in the model. Parameters below 1.0 indicate lowered odds of shift, while values above one indicate increased odds of shift.

Language is coded either as English or as same aboriginal language as mother tongue. English was selected since among aboriginal speakers a vast majority (96.8 per cent) of those who change language, shift to English. In fact, the percentage shifting to some other language is small enough that some cell values were suppressed by Statistics Canada to preserve confidentiality. These suppressions introduce inaccuracy when they occur frequently, and the overall number shifting from aboriginal languages to some language other than English is small. As a check on the results, however, we have also estimated these models using any language other than mother tongue (including English) in place of English. Differences between the two sets of results were very slight and will be noted later in the paper.

Data on aboriginal language are derived in most of Canada from the census 20 per cent sample. The number of observations is very large, which reduces the value of statistical tests. Even effects which are trivial in magnitude will be statistically significant. Thus, tests of statistical significance will not be reported in this paper. Any effects which we describe, however, are statistically significant at least at the 0.001 level.

As the findings are based on tabulations from Statistics Canada, actual numbers are randomly rounded to numbers ending in "0" or "5". This produces substantial proportional random variation in data cells with small numbers, but does not produce a great effect when large numbers are present in the cells.

The Findings

Only 28.1 per cent (140,570) of native persons reported in the census began life with an aboriginal mother tongue. Of these, 71.2 per cent are still using their mother tongue as their principal language of use in the home. Of the 40,530 who have changed to a different language, 96.8 per cent adopted English as their

language in the home. Another way of saying this is that the overall odds of shifting to English language are 0.392.

The log-linear partitioning of association between independent variables and language is reported in Table 1. The baseline model excludes any terms for the association between language and the other variables considered. The second panel of the table reports the percentage reduction in the baseline chi-square obtained by including terms for the association between each independent variable and language.

TABLE 1. LOGLINEAR ANALYSIS OF ASSOCIATION BETWEEN
LANGUAGE ASSIMILATION AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Baseline χ^2 - specifies no relationship between LR language assimilation and other factors.	22919.5
Percentage of baseline due to two-way association between language assimilation and:	(percent)
North/South location within province	29.0
Ethnic Status (Inuit, Status, or Metis)	13.2
Province	22.5
Gender	1.1
Age	15.5
All two-way effects combined:	76.0
Percentage of baseline due to three-way association between language assimilation and:	
North/South location and ethnic status	.0
North/South location and province	9.8
North/South location and gender	.3
North/South location and age	.3
Ethnic status and gender	.0
Ethnic status and age	1.1
Province and gender	1.3
Province and age	3.0
Gender and age	.8

The distinction between northern and southern sections of the province has the single largest association with language, accounting for nearly 30 per cent of the baseline association. Province ranks second in magnitude of association with a reduction of 22.5 per cent. Age and ethnic status are of approximately equal importance, each contributing around 15 per cent to the total association between language and independent variables. Finally, gender has a very small influence with only one per cent of the association. By including each of the

possible two-way association terms, we can account for 76 per cent of the baseline association. (The separate percentages for each independent variable do not add to the total of 76 per cent because there is some shared association among variables.)

The bottom panel of the table evaluates the three-way interactions among language and pairs of independent variables. Only one of these three-way interactions is very large. The difference between northerners and southerners varies across provinces. When this effect is combined with the two-way effects, the resulting model accounts for over 85 per cent of the baseline association. (We were unable to evaluate the interactive effects of province and ethnic status because of the large number of structural zeros in the marginal.) That leaves only 15 per cent to be explained by the remaining three-way interaction terms, the ten possible four-way interactions, the four five-way interactions, and the six-way interaction. The association attributable to these higher order interaction terms is not large enough to be important. In sum, a model including the main effects of each independent variable, and the term for the interactive effect of north/south location and province, accounts for most of the association between language and independent variables. Other higher order interaction terms are negligible.

Effect parameters from the model containing all main effects are reported in Table 2. Two sets of effects are presented. The first column contains effects for each variable when it is the only variable in the model. The second column reports similar effects, except that other variables have been included. Thus, column one is a zero-order association, and column two is the partial association controlling other variables. Parameters show the multiplicative effect of being in a particular category of the independent variable on the odds of shifting to English. For example, a value of "0.5" would indicate that people in the specified category are one-half as likely to shift when compared to the average, and a value of "2.0" indicates twice the odds of shift.

As we anticipated, northern residents are less likely to shift than southern residents. Indeed, southerners are over twice ($1.463/0.684 = 2.138$) as likely to shift as are northerners. There is a slight attenuation of the effect when other variables are controlled, but the basic conclusion still holds.

Of the ethnic status groups, Non-status/Métis are the most apt to shift. Status Indians have slightly above-average odds of shift, while Inuit have a very low rate of shift. The odds of shift among the Non-status/Métis is nearly triple ($1.577/0.574 = 2.747$) that for the Inuit. Controlling other factors actually increases the discrepancy between the Non-status/Métis and Inuit groups.

Provinces also vary substantially in the degree of shift. British Columbia and the Yukon have the greatest odds of shift, and Newfoundland and New

TABLE 2. MULTIPLICATIVE PARAMETERS FOR THE EFFECT OF EACH VARIABLE ON LANGUAGE ASSIMILATION

Variable	Value	Effect on the odds of assimilating to English without controlling other variables	All other variables controlled
North/South	North	.684	.721
Location:	South	1.463	1.388
Ethnic Status:	Inuit	.574	.524
	Status Indian	1.105	1.103
	Metis	1.577	1.730
Province:	New Foundland	1.359	2.782
	Nova Scotia	.622	.394
	New Brunswick	1.327	.869
	Quebec	.635	.611
	Ontario	.955	1.028
	Manitoba	.837	.786
	Saskatchewan	.916	.686
	Alberta	1.109	.902
	British Columbia	1.765	1.483
	Yukon	1.571	1.930
	N.W.T.	.625	1.200
Gender:	Male	.949	.949
	Female	1.054	1.054
Age:	0-14	.793	.877
	15-24	.967	1.029
	25-34	1.254	1.280
	35-64	1.180	1.143
	65+	.881	.757

Brunswick are not too far behind. At the other end of the distribution, Nova Scotia, Quebec and the Northwest Territories have the least shift. Other provinces are close to average. Some of the province effects are substantially altered when other variables are included in the model. This is largely because of the province's north/south location. For example, the effect for Newfoundland is much larger in the second column because Newfoundland has much higher shift than other northern areas. Likewise, the partial effect for Nova Scotia is smaller because Nova Scotia's rate of shift is far less than that for southern areas. New Brunswick has low shift for a southern province, and the Yukon and Northwest Territories have relatively high shift considering they are located exclusively in the North.

Females are only slightly more likely to shift than males, and controlling other factors makes little difference.

The youngest (under 14) and oldest (over 65) age groups are least likely to shift, while shift is highest in the 25-64 age categories. Control for other variables shifts the relative position of the young and the old, probably because the young are more concentrated in northern locations where fertility is high and shift is low; however, the basic pattern still holds.

Finally, we consider the interaction between province and north/south location. Interaction terms can be difficult to interpret, especially where there are structural zeros. An alternative approach is to create a new region variable which contains each possible north/south location within province as a separate category. Effect parameters for this new variable are reported in Table 3. For provinces with only a north or south region, the effect parameter in Table 3 is similar to the parameter in column one of Table 2. For provinces with populations in both north and south, the average of the north and south effects from Table 3 are approximately equal to the effects from column one of Table 2.

Results from Table 3 support the conclusions regarding north/south and provincial differences noted above. Moreover, the ratio of north to south effect parameters within regions (see column three of Table 3) informs us about the nature of the interactive effects of these variables on shift. The shift discrepancy between north and south is much greater in the east than in the west. This pattern arises because shift of northern residents is substantially greater in the western half of the country.

TABLE 3. COMBINED EFFECT PARAMETERS FOR THE EFFECTS OF PROVINCE, NORTH/SOUTH LOCATION, AND THE PROVINCE BY NORTH/SOUTH LOCATION INTERACTION ON LANGUAGE ASSIMILATION

Province	<u>North/South Location</u>		Ratio
	North	South	North/South
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	(multiplicative effect)		
New Foundland	1.312	—	
Nova Scotia	—	.599	
New Brunswick	—	1.277	
Quebec	.236	1.186	.199
Ontario	.803	1.911	.420
Manitoba	.632	1.481	.427
Saskatchewan	.724	1.013	.715
Alberta	.923	1.296	.712
British Columbia	1.560	1.892	.825
Yukon	1.599	—	
N.W.T.	.594	—	

Identical models were estimated after combining English and "other language" such that shift from aboriginal to any other language rather than shift from aboriginal to English language becomes the dependent variable. Results are virtually unchanged for the variables north/south location, ethnic status, gender and age. Some of the effect parameters from Table 3 are somewhat different. The two largest differences are in southern Quebec where the effect becomes 0.298 (compared to 0.236 in Table 3), and in Nova Scotia where the effect becomes 0.624 (compared with 0.599 in Table 3). Our basic conclusions, however, remain unchanged. In short, this new analysis yields similar results indicating that shift to English and loss of mother tongue are basically the same process.

Conclusions

Analysis of the loss of aboriginal mother tongue and consequent shift into other languages was undertaken using special tabulations from the 1981 Census of Canada. We found that shift into English is almost identical to shift into all other languages, because English language shift represents almost the entire linguistic shift that is occurring in Canada among aboriginal language speakers.

The present analysis has been instructive in that we have learned that patterns of language shift are due only in a small way to gender differences in shift and due to a rather larger extent to age and ethnic origin differences. Moreover, the effects of these variables on shift are in large measure, but not completely, preserved in the multivariate analysis, taking all other variables into account.

Older persons and children are the least likely to have altered their language used. This is not surprising in the case of children who have had little time in which to alter home and life circumstances. However, with older persons, the lack of shift is probably due on the one hand to their belonging to a cohort of persons who have spent their lives speaking aboriginal languages rather than English and, on the other hand, due to a lifetime pattern of reduced exposure to employment, education and other social contacts with the world outside their local community.

Ethnic origin differences portray a pattern of low shift among Inuit and extremely high shift among Non-status native persons. Inuit often live in areas remote from daily contact with English language. On the other hand, Non-status native speakers have few institutional and social constraints to maintain an aboriginal language. They are more often removed from the reserve or from a colony or other setting which would permit a community of aboriginal language speakers to reinforce aboriginal language use. Fewer Non-status natives begin

life with an aboriginal mother tongue, which increases the likelihood that those who do will be forced to accommodate.

The greatest effects on shift are locational in nature, due to north/south position within the province and due to the effect of particular provinces. The only major three-way interaction is also locational in nature, suggesting greater shift among northern aboriginal speakers the farther west the province is located in Canada. Locational patterns demonstrate greater shift in the southern parts of provinces and that the western provinces have greater shift in their northern parts than the eastern provinces.

Such geographical effects, though interesting, do not specify what social and economic factors are responsible for the patterns. Rather, they suggest hypotheses for future research. For instance, English language shift in Quebec appears to be reduced by the predominance of French language in that province. New Brunswick's shift into English is also less than expected, where there also is a substantial French-speaking population. The Prairie Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have substantial rural populations which speak languages other than English. The effect on English language shift of rural populations for whom English is not the mother tongue should be investigated more carefully.

North/south differences are probably a proxy for differences in the relative isolation of communities in the provinces (Beaujot and Burnaby, 1985). The more isolated the community, the less the propensity for linguistic shift. Smaller communities are also less likely to foster linguistic shift than are larger towns and cities.

Another area for future research is the effect of the number of aboriginal languages on speed of shift. It has been said that the large number of aboriginal languages in British Columbia, many with small numbers of speakers, contributes to greater shift into English (Burnaby and Beaujot, 1985).

There may be other reasons contributing to the greater propensity of aboriginal speakers in the northern areas of western provinces to shift. For instance, more rapid shift may be due to greater levels of interprovincial migration into western provinces. Or, alternatively, intraprovincial migration patterns may be a factor.

Differing levels of education, workplace exposure and linguistic endogamy also need to be taken into account and may contribute to provincial differentials in linguistic shift. If native speakers in one province have a greater likelihood of becoming educated or of working away from home, the chance of linguistic shift would be increased.

But such explanations are conjectural at this time. They suggest the need for additional analysis using variables such as aboriginal and non-aboriginal rural linguistic patterns, migration, exposure to educational and workplace ex-

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perience, as well as family variables such as marital history, and more precise measures of remoteness from large population centres. More exact measures of linguistic shift also seem to be needed. For instance, principal language used in the home does not portray the extent to which other languages are known or used. A person may be actively involved in a job or school situation where English is used, yet use a different language in the home out of deference to an older person who does not speak English.

Policy planners will be interested to observe from these data that there is a reasonably rapid departure of aboriginal languages from the Canadian scene. Language shift is not occurring in all parts of the Canadian aboriginal population at the same rate. In some groups, it is occurring slowly; among others, it is almost completed. It must be decided quickly whether this change represents a serious loss of cultural patterns and community identity for the aboriginal groups involved, whether measures should be instituted to assist in the preservation of languages, or whether language shift should be allowed to take its course without intervention.

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