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"Do Not Use for Comparison with Other Censuses": Identity, Politics, and Languages Commonly Spoken in 1911 Canada

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Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the decennial census in Canada has posed questions about language. The 1901 enumeration asked three questions: "can speak English?"; "can speak French?"; and "Mother tongue (If spoken)?" Officials then used the completed census schedules to compile a summary table that was published in the official report of the enumeration. This table totalled the number of respondents in each census district across Canada who could, and could not, speak English or French, and those who could speak both English and French. Ten years later, the census included one question about language; residents in 1911 were asked to specify their "language commonly spoken." Surprisingly, no summary tables about language were included in the published volumes that reported on the enumeration; while the aggregate results for all the other questions were provided as expected, the official report on the 1911 census completely omitted any results from the language question.

Why were the results of the language question omitted from the official published report of the enumeration? Why were the three language questions of the 1901 census rejected in favour of a new single question in 1911? And, from the perspective of the early twenty-first century, what can the 1911 census enumeration of language tell us about the linguistic dynamics of the making of modern Canada?

These questions probe to the heart of our understanding of Canada in the rapidly changing geopolitical, economic, and cultural context of the period surrounding the First World War. In recent years, scholars have increasingly emphasized how Canada reached new heights of national confidence and international recognition during this period. Perhaps the most robust research has

focused on the ways in which Canadian efforts on the battlefield played a key role not only in the Allied victory but also in domestic nation building; indeed, the battle of Vimy Ridge has been frequently depicted as a turning point in Canada's emergence as an important country on the world stage. But, scholars have also emphasized that, during the same decade, Canada descended to new lows of internal conflict as the two "founding peoples" fought each other not only about conscription in 1917 but also about other sensitive issues such as the language of instruction in public schools. The historian Robert Choquette has concluded that, in these years, "no solution seemed possible to the linguistic, cultural, racial and religious strife" between French and English; the two groups were quite literally "at each other's throats."[1] The domestic violence of this era is captured in the image of disenfranchised school trustees and parents – some armed with hatpins – asserting their determination to educate their children in French by forcefully barring police officers from entering an Ottawa school.[2]

Throughout the decade of the First World War, events in Europe and those in Canada were linked in public debate. In 1913, Henri Bourassa described the government of Ontario as "more Prussian than Prussia" for having issued Regulation 17, banning the use of French in schools after the first two grades. Bourassa depicted the enemies of French Canada as being located within Canada rather than on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean: "The enemies of the French language, of French civilization in Canada, are not the Boches on the shores of the Spree; but the English-Canadian anglicizers, the Orange intriguers, or Irish priests. Above all they are French Canadians weakened and degraded by the conquest and three centuries of colonial servitude. Let no mistake be made: if we let the Ontario minority be crushed, it will soon be the turn of other French groups in English Canada."[3] Taken together, the contrasting images of nation-building Canadian troops fighting shoulder-to-shoulder in Europe while armed francophone trustees faced off with anglophone school inspectors in a divided Canadian community illustrate the competing interpretations of national cohesion and conflict in the early twentieth century. In this context, the 1911 census enumeration of language provides a strategic window through which to view the interplay of official perspectives, public debate, and household dynamics at the beginning of a key decade.

The following discussion contributes to this effort by drawing upon the rich and diverse corpus of evidence contained within the Canadian Century Research Infrastructure (CCRI). By using each question of the decennial census enumerations between 1911 and 1951 as the core organizing source, the CCRI offers a digital archive based on the completed manuscript census schedules, government documentary records, political debate at the federal and provincial levels, and public discussion – especially as reported in newspapers.[4] As a

first step in realizing the analytical potential of this research infrastructure for the study of language, the discussion begins with an analysis of the formulation of the 1911 question and then moves to an examination of contemporary public debate as the enumeration began on 1 June 1911. The focus then turns to what was actually written on the census schedules and to how this evidence was treated at the time by census officials. Surprisingly, it turns out that these officials did, indeed, tabulate the answers to the language question before deciding not to publish the prepared summary tables. Against this background, the CCRI data provide, for the first time, a way to explain this decision in the sociodemographic and political context of linguistic controversy during the period surrounding the First World War.[5]

Developing the 1911 Census

The results of the 1901 enumeration provide the point of departure for understanding the 1911 census question on language.[6] The mother tongue question proved to be especially problematic both for census officials and for respondents. The 1901 instructions to enumerators defined mother tongue as "one's native language, the language of his race" and noted specifically that, while the respondent should be able to speak the language, it might not be the language "in which he thinks, or which he speaks most fluently, or uses chiefly in conversation."[7] The focus of official attention was not those born in Canada – whether anglophone or francophone. Rather, the three questions were especially designed to triangulate on foreign-born residents. As census officials made clear in the published volumes of the census, they sought to measure the extent to which immigrants were being "absorbed and unified" in Canada by identifying and counting languages other than French and English that were still being spoken in Canada.[8] The assumption was that the ability to speak a mother tongue other than French or English would decline among those in the process of becoming true Canadians. In keeping with this view, the language questions were located on the 1901 census form with the education-related questions and, like questions about one's ability to read and write, were addressed to those 5 years of age and over. The implication was that those who spoke neither French nor English by this age but who still spoke some other mother tongue deserved official identification and counting, presumably with a view towards corrective public policy action.[9]

It quickly became clear, however, that the mother tongue question confused enumerators as well as respondents. The census returns show that a number of people gave answers to the mother tongue question that census officials were not expecting such as "Austrian," "Doukhobor," and "Canadian." Were certain

people trying to assert a specific identity by giving these answers? A small percentage of those enumerated also gave multiple responses to the language question. Although census officials believed each person could only have one "mother tongue," some Canadians – whether enumerators or respondents – did not share this assumption. Overall, the total number of unexpected responses to the 1901 language question was not large. Nevertheless, these cases indicate that there was a difference between some individuals' assumptions about their own identity and officials' assumptions about how the census would be completed.[10]

Hoping to avoid these pitfalls the second time around, census officials modified – and, they hoped, clarified – how language was to be treated on the 1911 census schedule. At first glance, the three questions asked in 1901 appear to have been replaced by one question in 1911, "language commonly spoken." But, the instructions to enumerators for this question include the key components of the three language questions in 1901. In keeping with the earlier emphasis on English and French, enumerators were instructed to write an "E" in the column if the respondent "commonly spoke" English, and an "F" in the column if the respondent "commonly spoke" French. The instructions also readily anticipated that respondents might "commonly speak" both languages, and thus, enumerators were told to write both "E" and "F" in the column for those cases. Census officials did not define the criterion of "commonly spoken" but, rather, left that decision in the hands of enumerators and respondents – an omission that, as will be examined, became a central focus of public debate.[11] The language question in 1911, as in 1901, appeared on the same part of the census schedule as questions about the length of time spent at school and one's ability to read and write. It was asked of all Canadians 5 years of age and older. Also as in 1901, enumerators were instructed to pay special attention in posing the language question to those born outside of Canada. But, unlike the earlier enumeration, which asked for every person's "mother tongue," the instructions to enumerators in 1911 included this concept only in reference to those who had been born outside of Canada and who did not speak English or French as their "language of origin or race." Enumerators were to fill in the census schedule as follows: "For foreign-born persons whose mother tongue is neither English nor French and who have acquired either or both of these languages, the name of the language of origin or race, if spoken, will be written out in full on the line and the initial letter "E" for English or "F" for French, as the case may be, will be entered in the space above the line." For those born outside Canada who had not learned "either of the official languages of the Dominion, namely English and French," enumerators were told to enter the name of their language "commonly spoken." In this way, census officials tried to use the language question

to triangulate on immigrants in 1911 just as they had in 1901. To correct some of the earlier results – such as when enumerators had written down "Canadian" as a mother tongue – the 1911 instructions included a list of languages "likely to be spoken in Canada," and enumerators were urged to "avoid giving other names when one given in this list can be applied to the language spoken."[12]

The instructions to enumerators reveal that the seemingly straightforward question of "language commonly spoken" included the ambition of census officials to measure the process of assimilation by counting how many foreign-born persons had learned English, French, or both. In pursuing this ambition, the enumeration assumed that only people born outside Canada could be expected to "commonly" speak a language other than French and English. In this way, for example, the instructions overlooked the importance of Aboriginal languages among Canadian-born respondents. Enumerators were cautioned not to assume that those born outside Canada spoke the dominant mother tongue associated with their birthplace; census officials did not want someone born in Poland, for example, recorded as speaking a "foreign" language simply because he or she was born in Poland. For example, census officials recognized that someone born in Poland might speak German or Russian as his or her mother tongue, and they wanted this information accurately documented. Enumerators were instructed to obtain the precise information "by diligent inquiry in every case."[13]

Carrying Out the 1911 Enumeration

Before, during, and after the enumeration began on 1 June, newspaper editorials and articles reported on, and expressed concern about, the language question on the 1911 census.[14] The political and cultural consequences of the enumeration for French-speakers were foremost in public discussion. In large part, these concerns sprang from an overarching fear that the French-speaking population of Canada would not be counted properly. Francophone newspapers and community leaders wanted to ensure that the census revealed a strong and vibrant French Canadian presence in as many communities as possible. An editorial in *La Presse* the day before census taking began reminded readers that the census offered an opportunity to show English Canadians that French Canadians were "toujours vivants, qu'en dépit de tous les obstacles, leur nombre augmente et qu'ils ne connaissent pas de défection."[15] The editorial reported that newspapers outside Quebec were arguing that assimilation was proceeding apace and that the French-speaking minority was being absorbed into the English majority. Why did Canada need two official languages, some English newspapers argued, if so many French Canadians were now speaking English?

The newspapers especially worried that it would be more difficult for French Canadians to obtain services and facilities such as schools in French if the number of French-speaking residents were reported to have decreased from the 1901 to the 1911 figures, or if it appeared that more French-speaking people were learning and "commonly speaking" in English. Jules Tremblay, secretary of L'Association canadienne-française d'éducation d'Ontario wrote a letter on the issue that was printed in both the *Ottawa Citizen* (in English) and *La Presse* (in French) in the week before the census enumeration began. Tremblay stressed that an accurate count of French-speakers was most important because it determined the "avantages et des privilèges que nous pourrons obtenir quant à l'enseignement du français dans les écoles, dans l'emploi de la langue française dans l'administration publique et dans tous les services d'utilisés publiques, comme les chemins de fer, les compagnies de navigation, d'électricité, de gaz, de tramway, et autres."[16] The secretary of the association also stressed that "the English-speaking population is trying to prove that the last census was not exact and that the French population of Ontario is not 200,000,"[17] as some French Canadian leaders had estimated.

For Tremblay and others, the primary concern was that French-speaking residents outside Quebec would be enumerated as speaking English. One reason for this possibility was the fact that those who lived among English-speakers were likely to speak some English; the French press worried that such residents would be enumerated as only English-speaking. This possibility would be made more likely by the fact that enumerators outside Quebec were characteristically anglophone. The result would be that an individual's "commonly spoken" language might be recorded as English when, in fact, the individual "commonly spoke" French. As *La Presse* explained in an editorial, "la langue communément parlée par [les francophones qui n'habitent pas au Québec] dans la plupart des circonstances extérieures de la vie, est naturellement anglais, bien que la langue parlée dans leur famille soit la langue maternelle, le français. S'ils respondent que la langue qu'ils parlent communément est l'anglais, c'est autant de perdu dans le recensement pour l'élément canadien-français."[18]

On 31 May, *L'Action sociale catholique* reiterated the danger for French communities outside Quebec, arguing that if these French-speakers reported that they most commonly spoke English, they would be "rangés parmi les anglophones, et l'influence de notre race baissera d'autant plus que se multipliera le nombre de ces naifs."[19] In other words, French Canadians were naive if they believed that enumerators would accurately record them as French-speakers if they lived outside of Quebec.

It appeared to some that the language question was designed to render French-speaking people outside Quebec statistically invisible, or at best, irrel-

evant. The press commented on the ambiguity of the language question repeatedly, trying to make sense of the instructions to enumerators and their ramifications. As the editorial quoted above noted, a "language commonly spoken" could be defined either as the language one spoke most often or as the language one spoke most fluently. Since census officials offered no official explanation in the instructions to enumerators, how would census takers interpret the question? For *L'Action sociale catholique*, the answer was simple – "language commonly spoken" had to be interpreted as "mother tongue"; "language commonly spoken" really meant the language learned at one's mother's knee, the one used with one's family, the one that came to one's lips at home, not the one used for "quelque banale relation d'affaires."[20]

Editorials and articles increasingly suggested that no matter what language people "commonly spoke" in their daily lives, census enumerators were, in practice, treating the question as if it asked for "mother tongue" – just like in 1901. The confusion was exacerbated when *La Presse* quoted the minister of agriculture himself, Sydney Fisher, who told the paper that in asking the language question, "recenseurs et recensés devaient entendre la langue maternelle."[21] As census officials attempted to move away from the "mother tongue" question used in 1901 by asking people what language they "commonly spoke," the minister responsible for the census undermined these efforts as the enumeration actually began by equating the two questions in public discussion.

As the enumeration continued in early June 1911, it became increasingly clear that the new language question was not able to account for the "mother tongue" of French- and English-speakers, despite Minister Fisher's interpretation. One ambiguity arose from the instructions that told enumerators to mark those who spoke only French or only English with an "F" or "E," and those who spoke both English and French with an "E" as well as an "F." Even before the enumeration began, newspaper commentators anticipated that census officials would be stymied about mother tongues when respondents were recorded with both an "E" and an "F." In an editorial on census day, *La Presse* informed readers that, according to an unnamed source, the order in which enumerators wrote "E" and "F" would indicate which language was a respondent's "mother tongue." Specifically, the newspaper explained that French-speakers who also spoke English would be enumerated with an "F" followed by an "E," and vice versa for English-speakers who also spoke French. *La Presse* judged that a method in which "tout dépend d'une lettre placée avant ou après"[22] was hazardous and complicated; nevertheless, the newspaper initially expressed confidence that French-speaking Canadians could be duly counted in this way. However, by the next day, *La Presse* told readers that it now realized that there was nothing in the actual instructions to guide enumerators on the proper

ordering of responses to the language question. The editorial reported that the census commissioners in Montreal claimed that they had added these specific instructions for their enumerators but the newspaper was not reassured, since there was no way to know if all census takers had received special instructions in this regard. Moreover, *La Presse* predicted that enumerators were likely to stick to the letter of their written instructions, and there was a "grande risque de faire du recensement une belle bouillie."[23]

Because of the formulation of the question, and the chance that enumerators might not record respondents' answers in the appropriate order, the French-language press repeatedly advised French-speaking readers to answer "French" first and foremost in all cases when asked what language they "spoke commonly." *L'Action sociale catholique* stated, "Il est de nécessité absolue que tous les Canadiens-Français fassent inscrire la langue française comme langue communément parlée par eux. Et nous entendons par Canadiens-Français même les nombreuses familles de la province de Québec qui portent des noms anglais quoique canadiennes-françaises depuis plusieurs generations." Even if they spoke English as "commonly" as French, French Canadians were advised to say "French" first so that the letter "F" would be written first in the column, thereby implying French Canadian identity. This strategy was seen as especially important for French Canadians in minority-language communities such as those in Ontario. *La Presse* even argued that French Canadians should claim to speak only French, even if they could speak English, since the government had left French Canadians outside Quebec no other way to ensure that the census reflected "la place vraie qu'occupe la langue française en Canada."[24]

La Presse also advised readers to pay close attention to the way enumerators recorded their answers.[25] *Le Devoir* instructed readers in capital letters to "INDIQUENT LEUR LANGUE MATERNELLE EN LA NOMMANT LA PREMIÈRE."[26] *L'Action sociale catholique* urged French Canadians to ensure that they were enumerated as French-speaking first since so much was at stake: "pensons aux conséquences du recensement pour notre nationalité."[27]

As the enumeration proceeded, newspapers reported on myriad difficulties that the language question was said to be causing on Canadian doorsteps. In some areas, the language barrier between English-speaking enumerators and French-speaking respondents was reported to be especially problematic. On 10 June 1911, for example, *La Presse* reported several instances in which French Canadian families in Montreal were being undercounted by an English enumerator who had knocked on a door and found the household head – the father – absent. Being unable to understand the mother and children, who spoke only French, the enumerator had left only one form for the father to complete and submit to census officials, so the wife and children of the family were appar-

ently not counted.[28] In other cases, the language of the form itself posed a problem even when French was the common language used on both sides of the front door. On 10 June 1911, *La Presse* reported that Montreal business owner Adélard Deslauriers had refused to complete the census form given to him because it was in English. When he asked the enumerator, J.L. Tremblay, for a French copy of the form, the enumerator replied that the government had not given him any French forms.[29] The Census Act did include provisions for enumeration in all languages, including the hiring of interpreters, with specific attention to those districts "populated by 'foreigners.'" However, the process to hire interpreters was complicated, and as one enumerator admitted, "We can't perform miracles ... if some people do not speak English and we can't speak their Babel of tongues, what are we to do?"[30] Although the CCRI contextual database does contain newspaper articles that refer to the need for interpreters in areas where foreigners live, there are no references to interpreters being used in French-speaking areas. The result was multiple reports during June and July in newspapers in Quebec and Ontario about the "improper" enumeration of French Canadians. One report, appearing in *Le Moniteur* of Hawkesbury, Ontario (and reprinted in *L'Action sociale catholique*), claimed that one enumerator in Ontario had systematically recorded French Canadian families in his district as speaking both English and French, writing "E" before "F" in the column. *Le Moniteur* was upset that nothing was being done to correct this injustice. An editorial in *La Presse* claimed that many such errors had occurred during the enumeration, and that it was impossible to correct them: "Si un énumérateur intervertit, délibérément ou non, l'ordre des initiales qui peut seul faire connaître la langue maternelle de la personne nommée, l'erreur est irremediable. Le commissaire ne peut pas deviner que cet ordre a été inexactement inscrite."[31] Although other misplaced or "incorrect" data could be corrected, such as claims that an infant could read, for example, the accuracy of answers to the language question depended on the enumerators. Newspapers made it clear that they doubted the enumerators' ability to do a proper and complete count.

This point was further underlined when several newspapers reported, in early July, that census officials had failed to enumerate an entire parish in Montreal. One newspaper reported that the area contained 135 families, 119 of whom were French Canadian Catholics.[32] Over the next few days, *La Presse* and the *Montreal Daily Star* investigated and reported on several similar incidents in parishes in and around Montreal.[33] These reports continued throughout the month of July. Census officials claimed that simple errors in communication and outdated enumeration maps were the cause, but people on the ground in the "missing" parish of St Alphonse d'Youville ascribed a more insidious

motive. The parish priest, Father Simard, called the omission discrimination, "the result of which will be that the increase in our French-Canadian citizenship will not be shown." Simard continued, saying that he believed that "these tactics are intended to force us to reduce what some people call our pretensions and what we call our rights." [34] Rather than a simple oversight, the government was purposefully trying to undercount French Canadians in order to minimize their claims to language rights.

On 7 June, *L'Action sociale catholique* reprinted another report from *Le Temps*. The story was about a man in Russell, Ontario. When he told the enumerator he spoke French, he saw the enumerator write "F.E" in the language column. When the man explained that he had read in *L'Action sociale catholique* that the enumerator was supposed to write what he said, and asked him to change the entry, the enumerator refused to do so. The man also reported that he saw that those enumerated before him, who lived around him and were French-speaking, had been enumerated as speaking both French and English. "Voilà comment nous allons être traités," *Le Temps* continued, and asked that "les recenseurs qui font preuve de cette incompétence ou de cette mauvaise foi soient congédiés immédiatement." *Le Temps* implored enumerators to follow their instructions strictly, and to not use their own judgment or prejudice.[35] One problem, of course, was the fact that the instructions to enumerators said nothing about ordering the letters "F" and "E" to reflect the respondent's "mother tongue."

Examining the Completed Manuscript Census Schedules

Beyond what was reported at the time about the 1911 enumeration, there is the question of what was actually written on the completed census schedules. What did census officials in Ottawa discover on these schedules when they examined the results of the enumeration? Did they find that the newspaper reports about the difficulties of the language question were accurate? Was this the reason why the results were not published at the time?

To begin addressing these questions, examples from the enumeration in Russell and Hawkesbury, located just south of the Ottawa River on the border between Ontario and Quebec, allow comparison with those described in the newspapers during the enumeration. These communities are part of a geographical area that scholars have labelled "the bilingual belt."[36] The population along the Quebec-Ontario border, and in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, has contained a greater concentration of bilingual speakers since the earlier nineteenth century. Not surprisingly, residents in this area were often recorded in the 1911 census as commonly speaking French, English, or both languages,

although there was considerable variation both within households and across census subdistricts. Moreover, enumerators did not always respect the age requirement. For example, Joseph Marion, his wife, Josephine, and their children were all listed as "French" in the "racial or tribal origin" column, while both parents and the two older of their five children were recorded as speaking both French and English. In contrast, their 8-year-old son was recorded as speaking only French. Surprisingly, no language was recorded for their 6-year-old while, as would be expected, the language question was also left blank for their youngest child who did not meet the 5-year-old age threshold stated in the instructions to enumerators. However, in other cases, young children were listed as having a language; in the Duford family, Lillian, aged 4, was recorded as "F E," as were her parents and eight other children in the family.

Some residents who were reported as of French origin were enumerated as speaking only English, which is noteworthy given the Village of Russell's reputation as being a predominantly French-speaking community. For example, Fabien and Anne L'evia, along with their 13-year-old granddaughter Leuella Wethington, were enumerated with an "E" only. The manuscript census schedules also raise questions about the ways in which enumerators ordered the letters "E" and "F" according to a respondent's "mother tongue." Differences within households are especially puzzling. For example, all four members of the Letour family of Russell were listed as "French" in the "racial or tribal origin" column. Dolore Letour and his wife Nora were listed as "F E" in the language column, but 7-year-old Evelyn and 4-year-old Lloyd were both recorded as "E F." Perhaps young Evelyn and Lloyd were attending school in English, and so were enumerated with an "E" before an "F." Another example is that of 2-year-old Arthur Deguerre, who was not only erroneously enumerated but also surprisingly recorded as commonly speaking only English, even though his four adolescent sisters and both his parents were recorded with an "F E."

In contrast to cases in which English was listed when French would have been the expected response, there are isolated examples of the opposite result. Moffat Stearns, born in 1907, was enumerated (in error given his age) as speaking both French (listed first) and English, despite the fact that his older sister and parents were listed as English-speaking Irish-origin Presbyterians. One explanation might be the family's hired help, enumerated directly after Moffat – a French Canadian named David Coussineau. Perhaps the enumerator inadvertently recorded "F E" for both Moffat and David, or maybe David was teaching young Moffat to speak French.

The 1911 manuscript census returns in these two neighbouring communities in the easternmost corner of Ontario also suggest that, beyond surprising differences within households, certain subdistricts reflected quite different

approaches to the language question by enumerators. In Russell Township, for example, D. Cumming, Jr, recorded very few school-aged children or adults as speaking only French. The Laveau family was a typical example: the parents, the grandfather, and the three children aged 8 to 10 were listed as "F E," while the two younger children, aged 5 and one, were listed as speaking only French. In Cumming's district of 871 people, only one household was enumerated as speaking French only, while ten household heads were recorded as speaking French first, then English. In contrast, the enumerator in Embrun, Ontario (7 km east of Russell), was named Lionide Champagne. Almost all of the 622 people in his district listed "French" as their origin, and at least three-quarters were recorded with a single "F" in the language column. People of similar backgrounds in adjacent subdistricts could be enumerated differently, perhaps because of their own choice or perhaps because of the enumerator's perceptions or his interpretation of the language question.

Census Officials Confront the Completed Returns

Examples from the completed manuscript schedules illustrate that the concerns raised in newspaper articles about the enumeration of the language question were certainly not far-fetched; nevertheless, census officials were undoubtedly surprised that the preoccupation with French became predominant in public debate in 1911. The way that they had posed the question and carried out the enumeration reflected their own preoccupation with the English and French language ability of immigrants, not Canadian-born French- and English-speakers. But, as 1911 progressed, census officials must have realized that the language results would be publicly scrutinized with increasing interest in the status of francophones living outside Quebec, especially as events unfolded in Ontario, where the debate about the language of school instruction was heating up again after simmering for more than a decade.[37] Vocal leaders of the English-language majority were increasingly expressing concern that the children of French Canadian parents were not receiving an effective English-language education. In turn, French-speaking parents were pressing the government to establish bilingual normal schools so that their children could receive a better quality French-language education.

On the heels of the census enumeration, the provincial government, led by Conservative MPP Sir James Whitney, tasked Francis Walter Merchant, chief inspector of schools, to investigate and report on conditions in Ontario's bilingual schools. Merchant did not submit his report until 1912, but in the closing months of 1911, the *Toronto Daily Star* printed a series of articles based on its own investigations at schools in some of the province's more rural and

French-speaking districts. In late November 1911, the newspaper announced that "investigation by Star correspondents in Essex in the west, in Prescott and Russell in the east, and in the northern districts have already furnished ample demonstration that to thousands of Ontario children the schools of the Province are not furnishing a real knowledge of English."[38] The paper found the conditions of most bilingual schools to be deplorable, and the teachers, unilingual (unilingual meaning, uniformly, French-speaking). The paper strongly believed that English should be the only language of instruction in Ontario's schools. French children were ill-served by bilingual schools because "a French-Canadian child who does not understand English is seriously handicapped in the race for life, living on a continent of a hundred million English-speaking people."[39] Throughout November and December, the *Star*'s headlines raised the spectre of a French population growing at a more rapid rate than Anglo-Ontario (based on figures from an ecclesiastical census) and claimed that "over 50,000 French Now Know No English." This number was estimated – rather casually – from the 1901 census.[40] It was in this context that the results of the 1911 census held the potential to fuel the language controversy since population numbers played such a powerful role in the public debate; as Choquette has emphasized, a "battle of statistics marked [the] whole period" leading up to, and following, the institution of Regulation 17 in 1912.[41]

In this heated political context, it might be assumed that the reason why the language question was not reported on in the published volumes was that census officials realized, after reviewing the completed schedules, that the "language commonly spoken" question had not been enumerated successfully and, therefore, abandoned any effort to compile the results. In fact, however, officials at the Census and Statistics Office (CSO) prepared summary tables for the language question just as they did for the rest of the enumeration. When the first volume of the official census report was published in 1912, Archibald Blue informed readers that "all other tables of population are in process of compilation" including those of "language spoken" and that the tables would be "made ready for the press."[42] No results were ever published; however, the work was indeed completed and documented in the form of a handwritten pre-publication table entitled "Language Spoken by Sex, Canada and Provinces, 1911." The document includes a note, carefully printed in block letters, in the top right-hand corner of the first page: "DO NOT USE FOR COMPARISON WITH OTHER CENSUSES." As will be discussed, this brief note may further explain why the summary tables were never published.[43]

As promised by the title, the pre-publication table presented aggregate totals of the language responses for Canada, for each province, and for males and females. In addition, however, the table also provided summary totals by

birthplace divided into three categories of Canadian-born, British-born, and foreign-born; within these categories, the totals were further divided into two age groups of under 10 years and 10 years and older. These age divisions are unexpected in light of the instructions to enumerators to collect responses for those older than 5 years. The responses were grouped into five language categories: English, French, German, other languages, and English and French. The separate categories for English, French, and German emphasize the three most commonly spoken languages in Canada, while the single "English and French" category is surprising given the debate over the careful ordering of the listing of languages for bilingual residents.

The decision to compare language by birthplace reflected the interest of census officials in tracking immigrants' language acquisition. The table shows how many "foreign-born persons" spoke English, French, or neither language, and how many of each category were under the age of 10 and how many were older; in turn, these figures can be compared with the figures for different areas of the country.

Overall, the table reports that 64 per cent of the nearly 753,000 foreign-born persons in Canada spoke English at the time of the 1911 census, while 24 per cent spoke a language other than English, French, or German.[44] The "other" category raises an important question – what happened to the multiple responses in the hands of census officials? The instructions to enumerators specified that people born outside Canada who still spoke their "mother tongue" could give such multiple responses. For example, a person who spoke English but still understood and spoke Russian as a mother tongue would be recorded with an "E." The enumerator would then draw a line and write "Russian" underneath it. Technically, this person could be categorized "English" or "other languages," or both. However, the numbers reveal that the response for each individual was only placed in one category by the census officials who compiled the summary tables. So, when the census forms were tabulated, were these people with multiple responses categorized as English-speakers or within the category of "other Languages"?

Preliminary tabulations of the CCRI data suggest that census officials placed some multiple responses in the "other" category, while they grouped some other responses with the English- or French-speakers; see discussion below of tables and figure 5.1 comparing unpublished Census and Statistics Office (CSO) compilations with those of the CCRI. It is not clear, however, what "rule" census officials applied to make this tabulation. Perhaps, when a language other than English, French, or German was listed first in the column, officials interpreted this as an indication that the person "commonly spoke" her or his mother tongue; even if she or he was able to speak English or French,

Table 5.1 · Speakers of English and French by province (*n* and %), Canada, 1911: According to the Census and Statistics Office

Province	*Speakers of English and French* n *(% of population)*
Alberta	10,003 (3)
British Columbia	5,632 (1)
Manitoba	14,168 (3)
New Brunswick	32,623 (9)
Northwest Territories	5 (0)
Nova Scotia	20,793 (4)
Ontario	76,219 (3)
Prince Edward Island	5,919 (6)
Quebec	277,670 (14)
Saskatchewan	9,343 (2)
Yukon	353 (4)
Canada	*452,728 (6)*

Source: Reproduced from unpublished Census and Statistics Office manuscript table.

these were not the languages she or he was most comfortable speaking. These cases highlight the way in which "language commonly spoken" certainly did not make counting Canadians' language use any easier.

In light of the concern in public discussion regarding the size of the French-speaking population, the "English and French" category appears especially relevant to the decision not to publish the language data. Although newspapers had repeatedly emphasized the special instructions that enumerators were to pay close attention to the order of the lettering of "E" and "F" in the language column, the census officials grouped together all bilingual responses when compiling the summary tables. The result was that, unless French Canadians had answered only "French," they would be included in the English and French total. It might be surmised that, despite their own instructions, census officials only wanted to know how many Canadians were bilingual and, thus, did not feel the need to compile totals within separate "English and French" and "French and English" categories. But, it seems more likely that they realized that these instructions had, in fact, failed to be implemented in consistent ways, especially in bilingual regions. As can be seen in table 5.1, nearly 453,000 people were classified as speaking English and French, 90 per cent of them Canadian-born. In total numbers, Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova

Table 5.2 · Speakers of English only and French only (%), by province and all of Canada, 1911: According to the Census and Statistics Office

Province	*Commonly spoken*	
	English only (%)	*French only (%)*
Alberta	82	2
British Columbia	85	0
Manitoba	78	4
New Brunswick	72	18
Northwest Territories	8	1
Nova Scotia	91	4
Ontario	90	4
Prince Edward Island	88	5
Quebec	15	69
Saskatchewan	78	3
Yukon	76	1
Canada	*66*	*22*

Source: Reproduced from unpublished Census and Statistics Office manuscript table.

Scotia had the largest bilingual populations, but as a percentage of each province's population Prince Edward Island had the greatest per capita number of English- and French-speakers, after Quebec. As would be expected, the higher percentage of bilingual residents in the Maritime provinces reflected the strong Acadian presence.

In the absence of other documentation related to the handwritten summary tables, the deliberations of census officials during their work remains unknown. In the heated political context of the time, however, census officials must have realized that the results of the 1911 language question related directly to the continuing debate about language of instruction in public schools. In late 1911, the *Toronto Daily Star* told readers that there were 38,000 French-speaking residents in Ontario at the time of the 1901 enumeration who could not speak English; the newspaper then asked, "How many are there today? Has the number increased or decreased? What have the bilingual schools been doing in the meantime?"[45] If published, the data in the French and English category could have been seen as justifying many of the fears expressed in the newspapers before and during the enumeration. The single "English and French"

category would, inevitably, be seen as an attack on respondents who were – or should have been – enumerated as "F E." Moreover, the results for those counted as French-speaking would be seen as fulfilling the prediction made by Jules Tremblay, secretary of L'Association canadienne-française d'éducation d'Ontario, who had criticized the census on the eve of the enumeration, as an English-speaking effort to show that the French-language population of Ontario was under 200,000; if the French-speaking total were added to the bilingual total for the province, the summary table reported only a maximum of 173,620 for the French-language population. From the opposite point of view, these language results confirmed the suspicion of those who feared the continued strength of French outside Quebec not only in certain communities of Ontario but elsewhere, as well, especially in New Brunswick, where the French and bilingual categories reached a total of almost 100,000.

The CCRI Language Data for 1911

The CCRI evidence allows us to retabulate the 1911 results and, thereby, to enhance our understanding not only of public discussion and the work of census officials but also the patterns that emerge from charting and mapping the responses as freshly compiled a century after the enumeration itself. Figure 5.1 illustrates the differences between the approaches of the census officials and the CCRI. Overall, the proportions are very similar. It should be noted, however, that the CCRI data do not infer language for the approximately 7 per cent not entered or uncodable, most of whom were children under 5 years of age, so its total numbers equal 93 per cent of the official census totals. One would expect each language grouping to also be 93 per cent, but the census officials assigned a higher proportion to "English and French" (~97%) and a lesser proportion to "other languages" (~90%.) Therefore, the CSO table appears to have been based on assignment rules that went beyond the approach used by CCRI coding of reflecting verbatim data entry as much as possible.

The CCRI also enables research on the proportions and changing geography of bilingual speakers listed with English first and those listed with French first. Table 5.2 shows the percentages of each of these groups as they appeared on an unpublished Census and Statistics Office table. Table 5.3 indicates the percentages of each of these groups as derived from the CCRI 5 per cent sample weighted microdata. One feature is that the percentages of English-only and French-only are smaller using the CCRI data than in the unpublished CSO summary table. For example, the Ontario CCRI results diverge noticeably from the official summary table (English-only 90% vs 82%). Table 5.3 shows that, in the

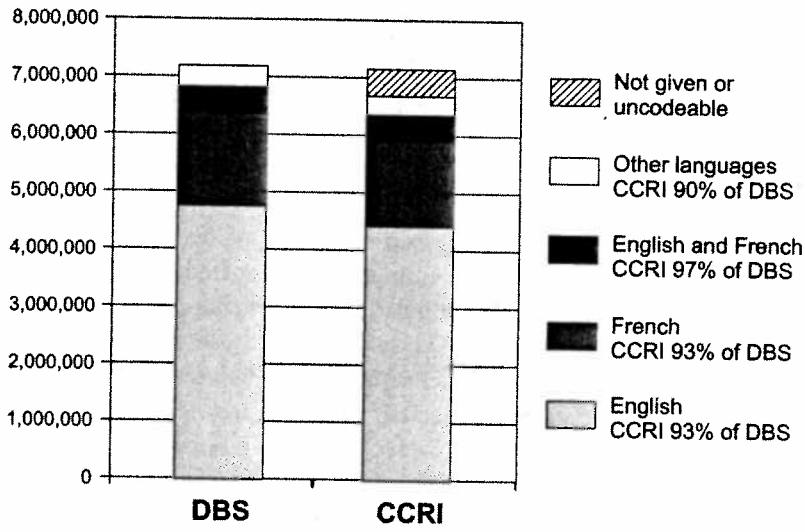

Figure 5.1 · Dominion Bureau of Statistics (DBS) and CCRI data compared regarding "language commonly spoken" in Canada in 1911.

Sources: Census and Statistics Office unpublished table; numbers derived from weighted microdata, CCRI 1911 microdata database, and CCRI geographical database.

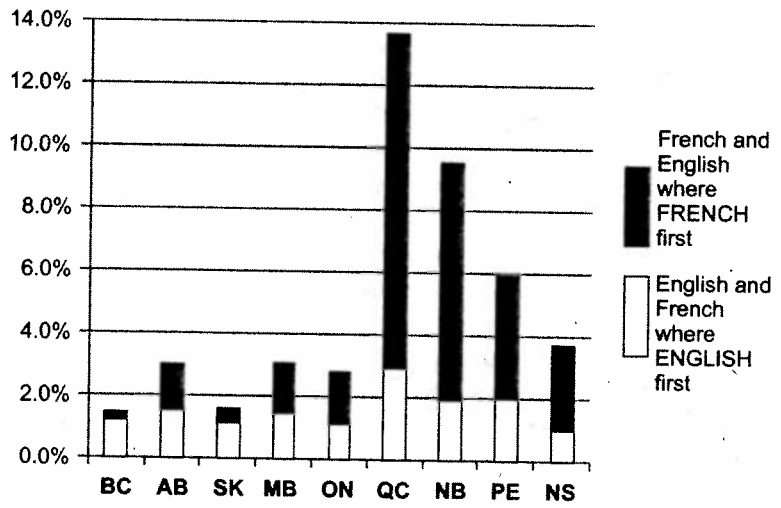

Figure 5.2 · Bilingual speakers of both English and French as percentage of total population, indicating proportions giving French first (F-E) and English first (E-F), by province, Canada, 1911.

Source: generated from weighted microdata, CCRI 1911 microdata database and CCRI geographical database.

Table 5.3 · Speakers of English only, French only, and English and French (%), by province and all of Canada, 1911: According to CCRI 1911 weighted 5% sample

Province	*Commonly Spoken*		
	English only (%)	*French only (%)*	*English and French (%)*
Alberta	66	2	3 (E 1.5, F 1.5)
British Columbia	72	0	1 (E 1, F 0)
Manitoba	63	3	3 (E 1.4, F 1.6)
New Brunswick	68	15	10 (E 2, F 8)
Northwest Territories	12	2	0 (N/A)
Nova Scotia	82	4	4 (E 1, F 3)
Ontario	82	3	3 (E 1, F 2)
Prince Edward Island	83	5	6 (E 2, F 4)
Quebec	14	65	14 (E 3, F 11)
Saskatchewan	62	2	2 (E 1, F 0.5)
Yukon	68	1	7 (E 6, F 1)
Canada	*58*	*21*	*6 (E 2, F 4)*

Source: weighted, CCRI 1911 microdata database.

eastern half of Canada, higher proportions of bilingual speakers listed French first, including in the Maritimes and Quebec, as well as, to a lesser extent, in Ontario. These proportions are then illustrated graphically in figure 5.2.

Mapping the French and English responses from the CCRI data allows us to see this geographical variation in more detail, thereby revealing a number of noteworthy trends. Each map is divided into census districts (modified to group urban areas together.) The colour of the district corresponds to the percentage of the population reported to be bilingual; the darker the shade of grey, the greater the proportion of people speaking both French and English.

Figure 5.3 shows the general picture across the country as well as a map enlarged for the eastern half, and the Montreal area. Western Canada included a few isolated enclaves of bilingual residents. In the east, the most bilingual areas were in the city of Montreal and south of the city in the Eastern Townships. There are also several census districts on both sides of the Ottawa River (the Quebec-Ontario boundary), where from 10 per cent to as much as 25 per cent of the population spoke both languages, thereby forming the "bilingual belt" mentioned above.[46] The map shows how census districts further east down the St Lawrence River contained fewer and fewer bilingual speakers. Proportions

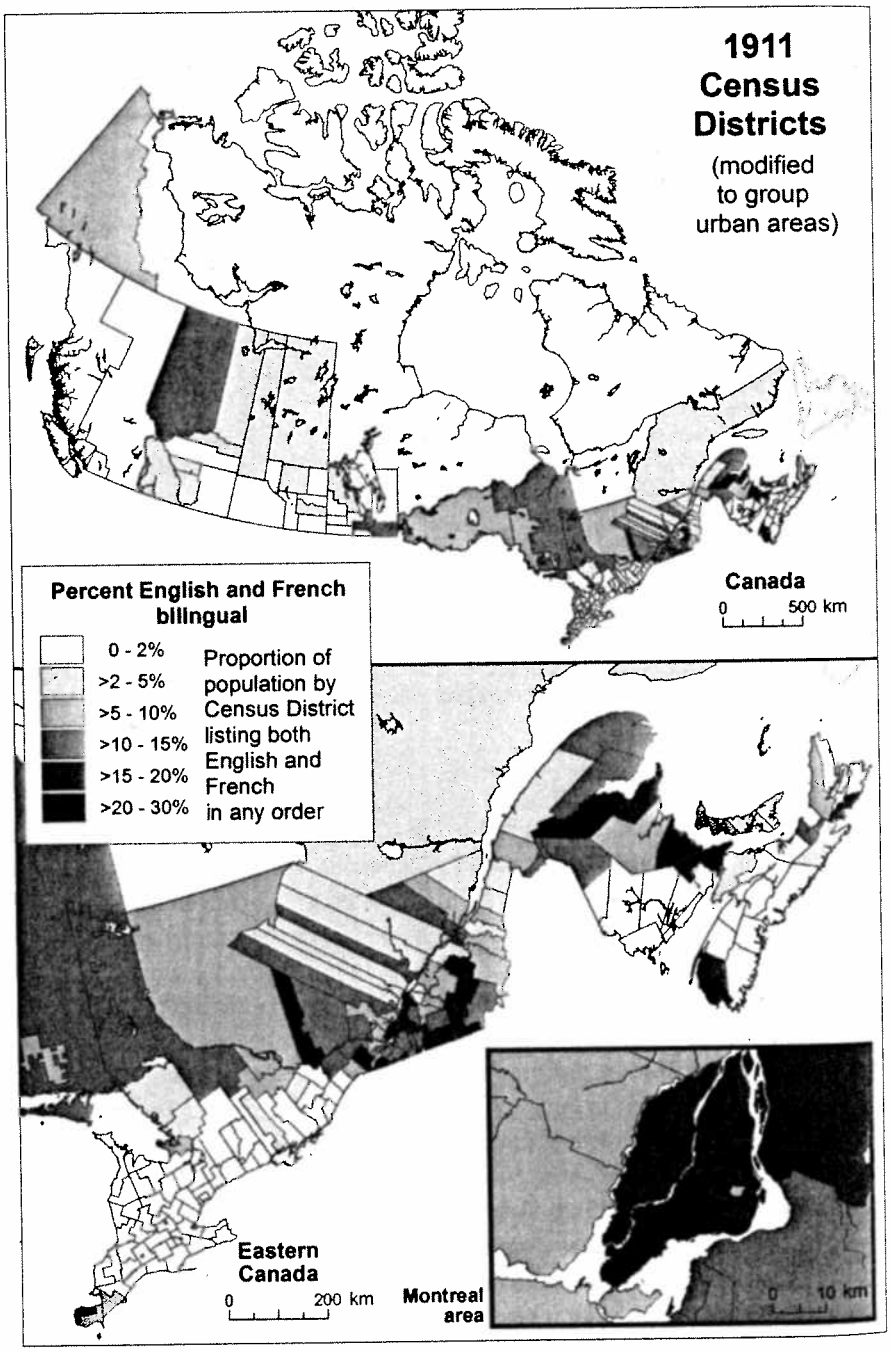

Figure 5.3 · Proportions of bilingual English and French speakers, in any order, by (modified) 1911 census district: Canada, Eastern Canada, and Montreal area.

Source: generated from weighted microdata, CCRI 1911 microdata database and CCRI geographical database.

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in Quebec generally were still higher than those in southern Ontario, with the exception of a pocket in the extreme southwest near Windsor (Essex North district). In Northern Ontario, between 5 per cent and 15 per cent of the population was bilingual. The pattern in the Maritime provinces illustrates the distribution of bilingual speakers, generally corresponding to areas known to have a strong Acadian presence: the northern coast of New Brunswick, the Cape Breton Island area, the extreme southern reaches of Nova Scotia, and central and eastern Prince Edward Island.[47]

The maps in figure 5.4 are similar to those in figure 5.3, but proportional circles have been added to represent absolute numbers of bilingual speakers. These have been divided into pie segments for those who were listed as French first in the census (black) and those who were listed as English first (white). Mapping absolute numbers puts the relative magnitude of bilingual population into perspective. For example, the dominating size of Montreal (approximately 107,000 people) compared with the isolated circle in rural northern Alberta (Edmonton non-urban, about 3,400 people, a small but significant number considering its surroundings). The proportion of "French first" versus "English first" may reflect the underlying nature of the bilingual population – for example, the pies in the western half of the country generally show a predominance of white, "English first" responses. There are a few unexpected outliers that arise here, as well. There was, for example, a high proportion of "English first" responses in eastern Quebec's Gaspé census district.

The maps in figure 5.5 display these values in more detail for the "bilingual belt" area of eastern Ontario and western and southern Quebec. The top map duplicates the representation in figure 5.4 of pie charts for total bilingual speakers, segmented by "language first." The bottom map's bar charts show percentages of French only, English only, and bilingual with French or English first, which describe the linguistic relationships within the population more completely, especially the position of the bilingual population within the host environment. For example, Labelle in Quebec and Russell in Ontario have similar-looking pies, similar numbers and proportions of bilingual-speakers. Their bar charts, however, show a completely different profile, with Labelle having a host population dominated by unilingual French-speakers, but Russell containing a much more bifurcated population split between unilingual French-only and English-only groups. Among the "bilingual belt" census districts, Russell, Prescott, Wright, and Argenteuil show more of this split profile, while Labelle, Soulanges, Stormont, and Glengarry are more dominated by French only or English only.[48] Whether this split profile is truly indicative of "two solitudes," or whether it may be exaggerated by enumerators' methods or other inconsistencies in the census-taking process itself is open to future research.

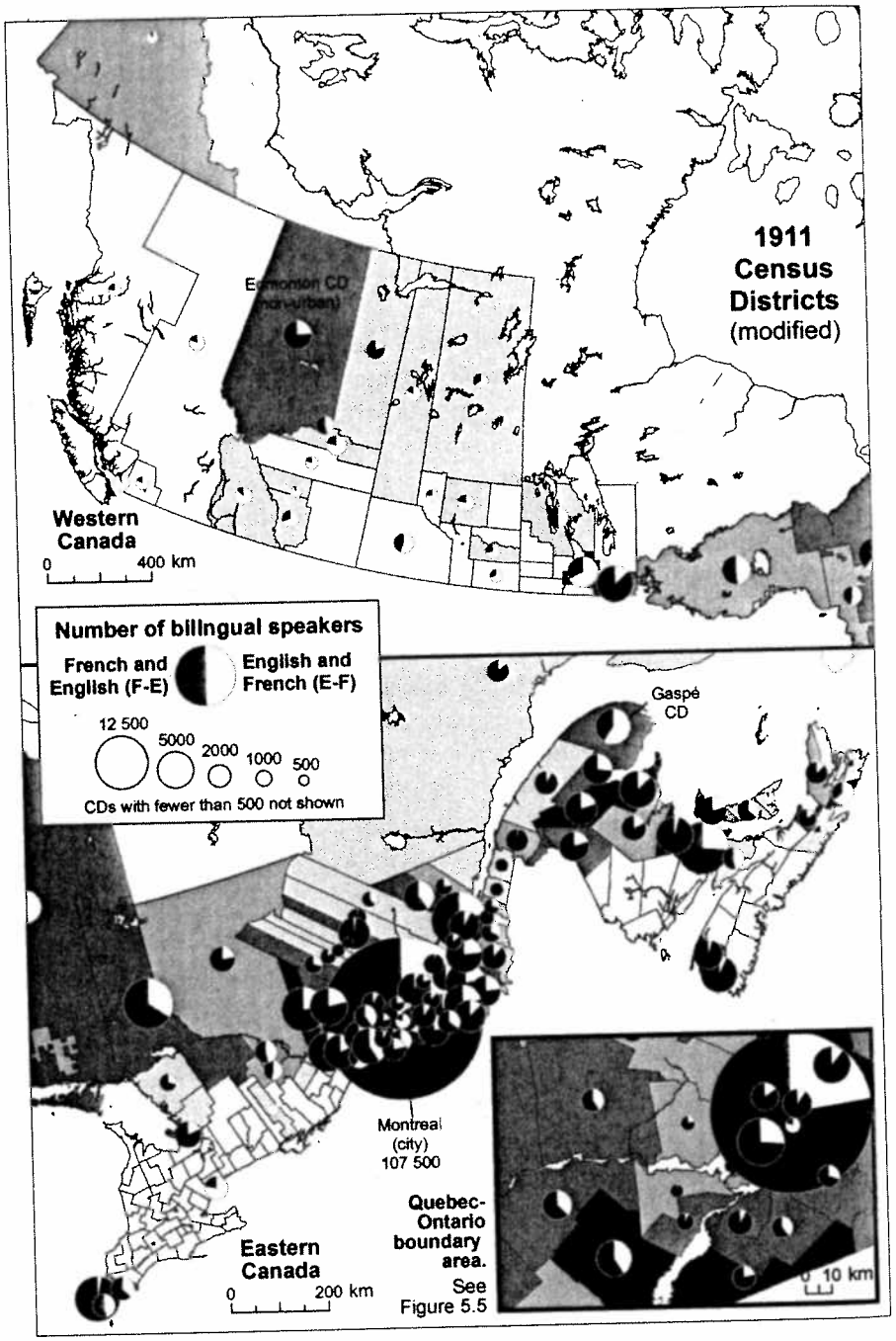

Figure 5.4 · Absolute numbers of bilingual English and French speakers, in any order, by (modified) 1911 census district: Western Canada, Eastern Canada, and Quebec-Ontario boundary area.

Source: generated from weighted microdata, CCRI 1911 microdata database and CCRI geographical database.

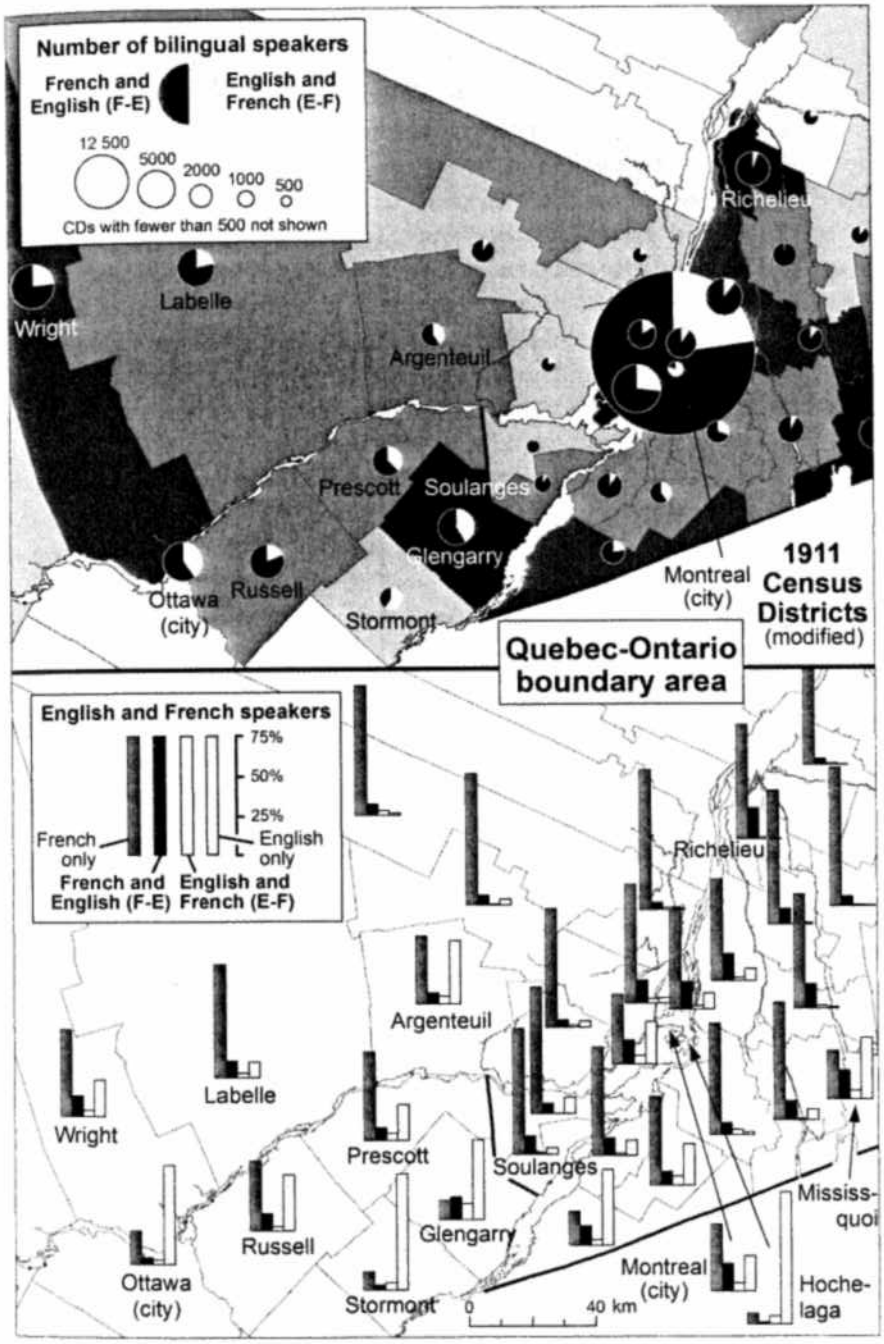

Figure 5.5 · Numbers and proportions of speakers of French only, English only, French and English (F-E), and English and French (E-F) in the Quebec-Ontario boundary area, by (modified) 1911 census district.

Source: generated from weighted microdata, CCRI 1911 microdata database and CCRI geographical database.

Taken together, the 1911 census data on language suggest that Canada was already composed of "linguistic regions," the term used by Richard Joy when he examined the 1961 census.[49] This fact explains the contemporary perception in Ontario that "there would be no bilingual problem were it merely one in ten, throughout the province. Were the quarter of a million French-speaking people in Ontario scattered throughout the country, there the matter would end. Instead, there are whole counties almost solidly French."[50] At the same time, the CCRI data do not support the claim that some counties in Ontario were "almost solidly French" since considerable diversity characterized even the counties in the bilingual belt, the most densely French-language region of Ontario. It should be emphasized, however, that the CCRI data do justify much of what newspapers perceived at the time: the official instructions to enumerators and the interactions at doorsteps all contributed to ambiguous results that could be used to confirm in contradictory ways the competing fears about language patterns expressed by both French Canadian leaders and English-only proponents. On the one hand, the 1911 census language results could be read as evidence of an English-language majority's attempts to minimize the continued importance of French, especially outside Quebec. Each feature of the enumeration worked against the identification of French-speakers, particularly for those in minority-language settings where the "commonly spoken" language outside the home was English, and where enumerators were characteristically anglophone. French Canadian leaders could, therefore, be expected to interpret summary tables of the answers to the 1911 census question on language as evidence that, despite official rhetoric, the demise of French in Canada was under way. On the other hand, those who expected the voluntary assimilation of French-speakers into the English-language majority could be similarly disappointed and disturbed by the same census results. Despite the ways in which the enumeration was conducted, the results showed that French was still a "commonly spoken" language outside Quebec – especially in specific areas of New Brunswick and easternmost Ontario, as the Merchant Commission would soon report.

Conclusion

The focus on Canada's official languages before, during, and after the 1911 census overshadowed any public discussion of languages other than French and English. The fact that no summary tables were published at the time further limited attention to the changing landscape of language in Canada. Although immigrants were the focus of official attention, and the size of the French-language population was a preoccupation of public discussion, the myriad

other languages recorded by census enumerators in 1911 document an increasingly multilingual Canadian population. For this reason, the CCRI data related to language offer a particularly promising window to enhance our understanding of the making of modern Canada.

Further research on the importance of Aboriginal languages is especially warranted since census officials made a concerted effort in 1911 to enumerate all residents, even in northern communities (an effort not replicated for many decades[51]). The result is that more than 65,000 people were reported as speaking an Aboriginal language in 1911, and thus this enumeration offers a unique chance to improve our understanding of the complexity and diversity of First Nations communities across Canada (as Gustave Goldmann demonstrates in the next chapter in this volume). Further research opportunities are also offered by the evidence of significant language groups such as the 140,000 people reported speaking a Slavic, Celtic, or Scandinavian language or the more than 10,000 people reported as speaking multiple languages other than English and French.

For such future research, the CCRI census microdata are indispensable, but not sufficient as illustrated by the preceding analysis that demonstrated the value of the CCRI contextual data of official documents and contemporary newspaper coverage. The archival research at Statistics Canada that uncovered the manuscript Census and Statistics Office tabulations of the 1911 census question proved to be especially informative about the context within which the language question was meaningful for Canadians. In addition, our ability to compare the officials' tabulations with the CCRI sample census data helps provide an analytical framework for interpreting both sets of numbers. Similarly, our ability to examine the names of enumerators and what they recorded about respondents in various communities helps illuminate the spatial patterns of linguistic dynamics across Canada. Taken together, these features of CCRI enable analysis of the 1911 language responses as well as offering the prospect of comparison with other years; however, as with all historical evidence, the census data cannot be simply taken at face-value but rather must be understood in the larger context within which they were created.

In this context, the multifaceted CCRI evidence reveals how the apparently straightforward language question on the 1911 census enumeration collided with the complexity of language as a perceived and lived experience in early twentieth-century Canada. While devised to be an effective way to record the spoken language of Canadians, the language question on the 1911 census did not provide census officials with results that they were prepared to publish. Nonetheless, the events of the following decade continued to increase attention to questions of language and made imperative that census officials find ways to

avoid the failure of 1911 in preparing for the 1921 enumeration. Their decision was to revert to the approach of 1901 but to revise the three questions and to move them on the census schedule from their previous position with the other education-related questions to a new grouping of questions entitled "race, language, and religion." In one sense, this grouping linked language to what were seen as enduring personal characteristics rather than to variable educational abilities. But, the instructions to enumerators redefined mother tongue as the "language of customary speech employed by the person," a completely different understanding from that used in 1901, when the mother tongue of a person was defined as "the language of his race." This must be kept in mind since, unlike the official decision not to publish the summary tables for the 1911 language question in order to avoid comparisons with the previous census results, the volumes that reported on the 1921 enumeration included the mother tongue question without even cautioning readers about the extent to which it was not comparable with its initial use in 1901.

Census officials did adopt for 1921 the decision in 1911 to only record a "language other than English or French spoken as Mother Tongue." And the instructions to enumerators specified that only those "whose racial or tribal origin is not described in column 21 as belonging to one of the British races ... or to persons of French origin" should be asked to answer the mother tongue question. Most importantly for public debate, the implication now was that the response to the racial or tribal origins question would identify a person as French Canadian. In this way, census officials downplayed the significance of language as a component of "origin" for French Canadians and British-origin residents while still maintaining the emphasis on language as an indicator of nation building. Along the way, census officials also began using the new expression "ethnic group," in keeping with the rapidly changing efforts to construct collective identities based on specific individual characteristics.

In these and other ways that will undoubtedly emerge as research continues on the twentieth-century census enumerations, the continuing changes to the language questions reflected deep conceptual shifts in the evolving debate about identity and behaviour that remained a preoccupation of public discussion. Indeed, if we glance forward to public debate about the 1921 enumeration, French-language newspapers now warned French Canadian respondents to respond with "French" to the question on racial or tribal origins. Commentators were worried, in 1921, that persons with English fathers and French mothers, or persons with English-sounding names, would be enumerated as belonging to the English "race."[52] Newspapers continued to interpret the census questions for readers; however, this time, instead of focusing on the importance of answering "French" to the language question, newspapers paid special attention

to racial or tribal origins. *L'Évangéline*, an Acadian newspaper, told readers to "prendre bien soin de se dire de race française," to Question 21. About Question 24, the mother tongue question, the newspaper simply wrote, "Ne vous regarde pas."[53] *Le Droit*, a Franco-Ontarian newspaper founded in 1913 to oppose Regulation 17, did not even include Question 24 in its explanation of the census questions in May 1921. Like *L'Évangéline*, the paper told readers to respond with "French" to the racial and tribal origins question, and added that French Canadians should answer "no" to the "Speaks English" question only if they did not understand the language at all.[54] In other words, the new view towards the 1921 enumeration was that French Canadians had more to fear from not being classified appropriately in terms of racial or tribal origins than they did from how they answered the language questions.[55]

The changing ways that census officials, and federal, provincial, and community leaders, as well as individuals across Canada viewed the speaking of, and actually used, different languages reflected the complex interrelationships between the turbulent domestic and international forces that characterized the early twentieth century.[56] While Canada was attracting immigrants from diverse linguistic communities, the question of what language or languages would be seen and used as "Canadian" in different contexts was contested even with respect to the official languages of French and English. In 1911, the focus of census officials on immigrants was overwhelmed in public discussion by the provincial preoccupation with promoting the speaking of English, especially by students from French-speaking homes. Along the way, the emergence of new expressions like "mother tongue" and "language commonly spoken," as well as the changing definition of familiar words like "race," and for the first time in 1921, "ethnic group," produced ambiguous, competing, and often contradictory features of nation building during the decade of the First World War. As illustrated by the language question in the 1911 census, the Canadian Century Research Infrastructure enhances the possibility of developing interpretations of these features that do justice to the complex and changing character of policy and practice in the making of modern Canada.

Notes

1 Robert Choquette, *Language and Religion: A History of English-French Conflict in Ontario* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1975), 193.

2 Ibid., 196.

3 Mason Wade, *The French Canadians, 1760–1967*, rev. ed., vol. 2 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1968), 671.

4 For an overall description of this interdisciplinary, multi-institutional, and internationally connected initiative, see Chad Gaffield, "Conceptualizing and Constructing the Canadian Century Research Infrastructure," *Historical Methods* 40, no. 2 (2007): 54–64. The CCRI built on previous projects on the nineteenth-century censuses as well as on the Canadian Families Project for the 1901 enumeration; see http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/cfp/index.html. For research assistance on the language question, the authors are indebted to Jo-Anne McCutcheon, Adam Green, and Barbara Lorenzkowski.

5 Until recently, very little attention was paid to the language questions on the Canadian census, especially those censuses taken before the later twentieth century. Among the small number of studies, see John De Vries and Frank G. Vallee, *Language Use in Canada* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1980), and John Edwards (ed.), *Language in Canada* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). The increasing international attention to the census as a source for the study of language is illustrated by D.I. Kertzer and D. Arel (eds.), *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in National Censuses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

6 Although 1901 was the first census to pose language questions in Canada, the 1891 census did divide respondents into "native-born" and "born outside Canada," while further subdividing the "native-born" into "French-speaking" and "all others." In keeping with the approach of the CCRI and related projects, Kris Inwood and colleagues have constructed a public-use sample of the 1891 returns along with documentation on how to interpret the results of the enumeration; see http://www.census1891.ca/.

7 Canada, Census Office, *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901*, vol. I, *Population* (Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1902), xx.

8 Ibid., viii.

9 Canadian officials were certainly not alone in connecting language to nation building at this time. In the United States, as Jennifer Leeman has shown, "the census has historically used language as an index of race and as a means to racialize speakers of languages other than English, constructing them as essentially different and threatening to U.S. cultural and national identity." See Jennifer Leeman, "Racializing Language: A History of Linguistic Ideologies in the U.S. Census," *Journal of Language and Politics* 3, no. 3 (2004): 507–34.

10 For further discussion and analysis of the responses to the language question in the 1901 census, see Chad Gaffield, "Linearity, Nonlinearity, and the Competing Constructions of Social Hierarchy in Early Twentieth-Century Canada," *Historical Methods* 33, no. 4 (2000): 255–61, and Chad Gaffield "Language, Ancestry, and the Competing Constructions of Identity in Turn-of-the-Century Canada," in Eric W. Sager and Peter Baskerville (eds.), *Household Counts: Canadian Households and Families in 1901* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2007), 423–40.

11 As Joshua Fishman has emphasized, the phrasing of this language question is highly unusual in census questions that do not characteristically focus on "current facilities" in this way; see "Language Maintenance," in Stephen Thernstrom (ed.), *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap

Press, 1980), 629. Fishman concludes that census data on language practices are notoriously "suspect."

12 Canada, Department of Agriculture and Statistics, *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911: Instructions to Officers, Commissioners and Enumerators* (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1911), 38.

13 Ibid.

14 These editorials and articles were drawn from the CCR1's on-line contextual database, which contains more than 15,000 articles from nearly 170 publications, covering the 1911, 1921, 1931, 1941, and 1951 censuses.

15 "Les Canadiens-Français et le recensement," *La Presse*, 30 May 1911, 4.

16 Jules Tremblay, "Le Recensement et Nos Compatriotes d'Ontario," *La Presse*, 30 May 1911.

17 Ibid.

18 "Les Canadiens-Français et le recensement," 4.

19 "Recensement 111," *L'Action sociale catholique*, 31 May 1911.

20 Ibid.

21 "Les Canadiens-Français et le recensement," 4.

22 "La Langue Communément Parlée," *La Presse*, 1 June 1911, 4.

23 "Les Problèmes du recensement," *La Presse*, 2 June 1911, 4.

24 "Les Canadiens-Français et le recensement," 4.

25 "La Langue Communément Parlée."

26 "Le Recensement Est Commencé," *Le Devoir*, 1 June 1911.

27 "Recensement," *L'Action sociale catholique*, 3 June 1911, 11.

28 "Recensement Défectueux," *La Presse*, 10 June 1911, 36.

29 "Les incidents du recensement," *La Presse*, 10 June 1911, 36.

30 "The Interpreter Trouble," *Toronto Daily Star*, 1 June 1911, 3; "The Lot of the Census Taker in the Ward Is Anything but an Easy One," *Toronto Daily Star*, 1 June 1911, 2.

31 "Le Recensement," *La Presse*, 15 June 1911, 4.

32 *Evening Guide*, 6 July 1911.

33 See, e.g., "Encore des oublis dans le recensement," *La Presse*, 7 July 1911, 1–2; "Encore vingt-cinq familles victimes du recensement," *La Presse*, 8 July 1911, 32; "Encore de plaints au sujet du recensement," *La Presse*, 10 July 1911, 14; "Census Omissions," *Montreal Daily Star*, 6 July 1911, 10; "More Complaints of Oversights by Census-Takers," *Montreal Daily Star*, 7 July 1911, 17; "More Census Blunders," *Montreal Daily Star*, 11 July 1911, 10.

34 "Overlooked by Enumerators: Parish in Quebec Claims that It Has Not Been Counted Yet," *Globe*, 6 July 1911, 2.

35 "Le Recensement dans Russell," *L'Action sociale catholique*, 7 June 1911, 8.

36 Donald Cartwright and Murdo MacPherson, "Population Composition," in Donald Kerr and Deryck W. Holdsworth (eds.), *Historical Atlas of Canada*, vol. III, *Addressing the Twentieth Century, 1891–1961* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 36.

37 Debate during the previous decade about language of instruction in Ontario schools included the use of German, the third most important language in

Canada at the time; see the sophisticated and probing sociocultural analysis of language in Barbara Lorenzkowski, *Sounds of Ethnicity: Listening to German North America* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2010). The School Acts of Alberta and Saskatchewan designated English as the official language of instruction in 1905, limiting the use of French to the primary grades. English was made the sole language of instruction in Manitoba public schools in 1916.

38 "What One Little Blue-Eyed Irish Girl Is Able to Do," *Toronto Daily Star*, 28 Nov. 1911, 16.

39 *Toronto Daily Star*, 12 Dec. 1911.

40 "Ontario's French Population Grows from 158,000 to 250,000 in Ten Years," *Toronto Daily Star*, 6 Nov. 1911, 1.

41 Choquette, *Language and Religion*, 174.

42 Canada, Census and Statistics Office, *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911*, vol. 1, *Areas and Population by Provinces, Districts and Sub-districts* (Ottawa: C.H. Parmelee, 1912), viii.

43 This document was saved as part of the uncatalogued collection of historical documents held at Statistics Canada which was systematically examined during CCRI research activities; along with other key documents, it is now included in the digital archive of the CCRI.

44 The decision by census officials to omit publication of summary tables of the 1911 language question even extended to the supplementary tabulations related to the foreign-born population. Despite the intent of census officials to use language to measure immigrant "absorption," no mention of language was made in the Census and Statistics Office, *Special Report of the Foreign-Born Population: Abstracted from the Records of the Fifth Census of Canada, 1911* (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1915).

45 *Toronto Daily Star*, 6 Nov. 1911, 1.

46 Cartwright and MacPherson, "Population Composition," Plate 4.

47 Jean Daigle and Robert LeBlanc, "Acadian Deportation and Return," in R. Cole Harris (ed.), *Historical Atlas of Canada*, vol. 1, *From the Beginning to 1800* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), Plate 30.

48 This linguistic profiling would help address the questions raised earlier regarding the suspicion that local political characteristics such as the attitude of enumerators may have affected the order of responses, or the recording of bilingual or unilingual responses. If this were the case, it may be possible to see these reflected in specific district profiles, or in geographical patterns. For example, the profile for Glengarry seems anomalous in the much higher proportions of bilingual "French first" responses compared with unilingual French. More detailed microdata analysis would help establish if the results were related to these potential causes rather than reflecting the actual proportion of English first- and French first-speakers.

49 Joy, *Languages in Canada*.

50 *Toronto Daily Star*, 6 Nov. 1911, 1.

51 Aboriginal languages are specifically excluded from the 1921 enumeration.

52 See "Encore le recensement – Fanatisme et incompétence," *Le Droit*, 17 June 1921, 10; "Le Recensement – Ce qu'il faut en penser," *Le Droit*, 29 June 1921, 3. And, in at least one case, a man complained that his children were recorded as being of the French race because they were born in Quebec, even though he himself was English. See "Letter: Taking the Census," *Montreal Daily Star*, 8 July 1921, 8.

53 "Le Recensement," *L'Évangéline*, 19 May 1921, 1.

54 "Préparez-vous au Recensement," *Le Droit*, 28 May 1921, 7.

55 Further research is also warranted on the 1916 census of the Prairie provinces which used the three language questions posed in the 1901 enumeration of Canada. The census report included multiple summary tabulations with a special focus on those listed as not being able to speak English.

56 One important example of the increasing scholarly interest in reinterpreting nation building in twentieth-century Canada is José E. Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945–71* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006). How research enabled by the CCRI can enrich such efforts is also suggested by the other chapters in this book.