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The French Language in Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, 2001 to 2016: Facts and Figures

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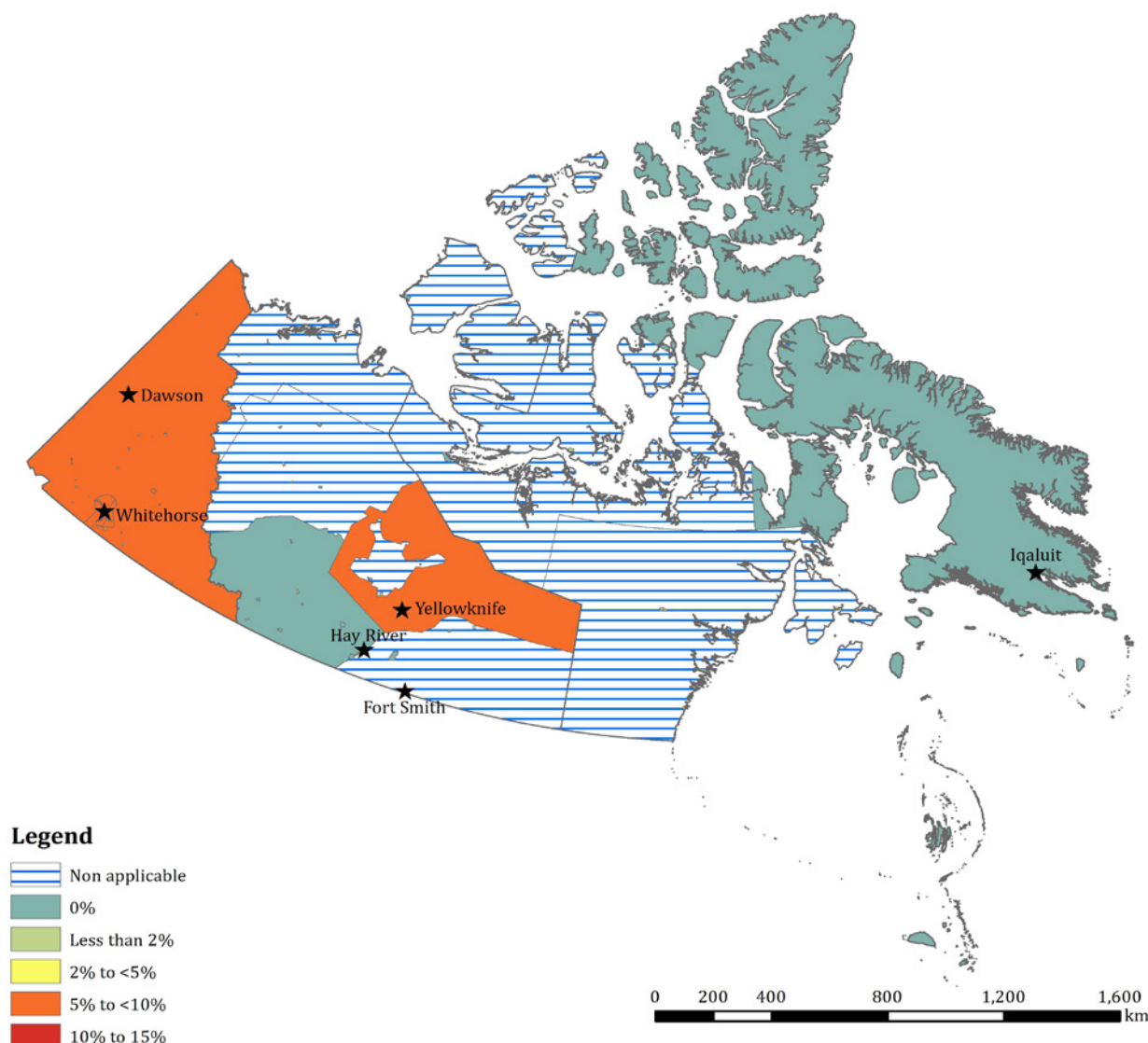
The French Language in Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, 2001 to 2016: Facts and Figures

by Alejandro A. Páez Silva

The purpose of this document is to present an overview of the prevailing trends observed between 2001 and 2016¹ for the French language in the Territories as a whole. To this end, the document provides census-based information on the population² who have French as a first official language spoken, mother tongue, language spoken at home or language used at work as well as on the population who reported speaking French well enough to conduct a conversation. Wherever relevant, facts on each individual territory (i.e. Yukon, Northwest Territories or Nunavut) are provided.

Map 1

Proportion of the population with French as a first official language spoken, census subdivisions, Territories, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2016.

1. See the document entitled *Methodological Document on the 2011 Census Language Data* (Catalogue no. 98-314-X2011051) for notes on the comparability of the 2011 Census language data to that of prior census years.
 2. Refers to all persons excluding institutional residents. Users should note that in the 2001 and 2006 censuses, institutional residents did not receive the long form questionnaire from which most language data were collected.

- In 2016, 3,505 persons had French as a first official language spoken and they represented 3.1% of the total population of the Territories.
 - ▶ Since 2001, the number of persons for whom French is a first official language spoken rose by 58.2%, that is, by an additional 1,290 persons in that time.
 - ▶ The largest increases in the population with French as a first official language spoken among the territories occurred among those residing in Yukon rising from 890 to 1,640, an 84.3% increase. By comparison, this population rose by 35.0% in the Northwest Territories (+320 persons) and by 51.8% in Nunavut (+215 persons).

Table 1
Selected French language indicators, territories, 2001 to 2016

	2001		2006		2011		2016		2001 to 2016 growth
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	percent
Total population¹	92,285	100.0	100,580	100.0	106,460	100.0	112,635	100.0	22.1
French as first official language spoken ²	2,215	2.4	2,610	2.6	3,040	2.9	3,505	3.1	58.2
Knowledge of French ³	7,150	7.7	8,465	8.4	9,515	8.9	10,915	9.7	52.7
Knowledge of French only	115	0.1	180	0.2	170	0.2	210	0.2	82.6
Knowledge of English and French	7,035	7.6	8,285	8.2	9,345	8.8	10,705	9.5	52.2
French as mother tongue ³	2,450	2.7	2,660	2.6	3,245	3.0	3,820	3.4	55.9
French spoken at home ⁴	2,315	2.5	2,670	2.7	3,515	3.3	4,205	3.7	81.6
French spoken most often at home ⁵	1,115	1.2	1,320	1.3	1,815	1.7	2,150	1.9	92.8
Only French spoken at home ⁶	510	0.6	620	0.6	770	0.7	925	0.8	81.4
Mostly French spoken at home ⁷	485	0.5	560	0.6	850	0.8	900	0.8	85.6
French spoken equally often with another language at home ⁸	120	0.1	140	0.1	195	0.2	325	0.3	170.8
French spoken regularly at home (in addition to the main language)	1,200	1.3	1,350	1.3	1,700	1.6	2,055	1.8	71.3

1. Refers to all persons excluding institutional residents.

2. Following method I in part IV of the *Official Languages Act*, the 'English-French' multiple response is equally redistributed among the 'English' and 'French' single responses.

3. Includes both single and multiple responses.

4. Includes both single and multiple responses to both part A and part B of the question.

5. Refers to French spoken most often at home with or without additional languages spoken regularly.

6. Includes persons who reported only French in Part A of the language spoken at home question (spoken most often) and did not report a language to Part B (spoken regularly).

7. Includes persons who reported French to Part A of the language spoken at home question (spoken most often) and reported at least one other language to Part B (spoken regularly).

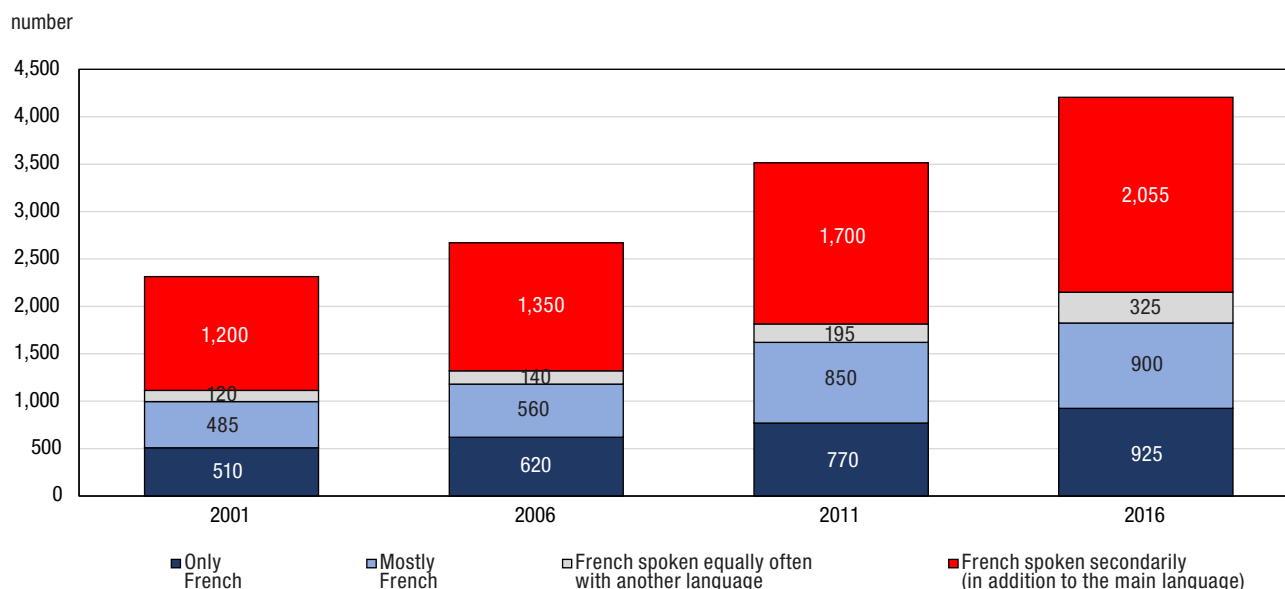
8. Includes persons who reported French and another language to Part A of the language spoken at home question (spoken most often).

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016.

- As of 2016, the number of persons able to conduct a conversation in French, either exclusively or in combination with another language, stood at 10,915 and represented 9.7% of the Territories' total population.
 - ▶ In the 2001 to 2016 period, the number of persons who report being able to conduct a conversation in French increased by 52.7% (+3,765 persons) in the Territories. Among the three territories, the largest increase of this population in both relative (+69.7%) and absolute (+2,050 persons) terms occurred in Yukon.
- Similarly, in 2016, the number of persons who reported being able to conduct a conversation in both English and French stood at 10,705 in the Territories which represents an English-French bilingualism rate of 9.5%. The English-French bilingualism rate in Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut stood at 13.8%, 10.3% and 4.3% respectively.
 - ▶ Since 2001, English-French bilingualism in the Territories increased by 52.2% (+3,670 persons). Over the same period, the English-French bilingual population increased by 69.6% in Yukon, 36.7% in Northwest Territories and 50.2% in Nunavut respectively.

- As of 2016, the population who reported having French as their mother tongue,³ whether exclusively or along with other languages, stood at 3,820 in number. Collectively, this population represented 3.4% of the Territories' total population.
 - In 15 years, in the Territories, the number of persons who report having French as their mother tongue increased from 2,450 in 2001 to 3,820 in 2016, that is, by 55.9%.
 - Over the same period, the population with French as a mother tongue in Yukon grew by 84.3% while that of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut grew by 29.5% and 55.4% respectively.

Chart 1
French spoken at home, territories, 2001 to 2016¹



1. See the document entitled *Methodological Document on the 2011 Census Language Data Catalogue* no. 98-314-X2011051 for notes on the comparability of the 2011 Census language data to that of prior census years.

Sources : Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016.

- In 2016, the number of persons who reported speaking French at least regularly at home was 4,205 or 3.7% of the Territories' total population. In the same year, the number of persons who reported speaking French at least regularly at home in Yukon stood at 1,950 whereas in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut these figures stood at 1,635 and 620 respectively.
 - Between 2001 and 2016, the population who reported speaking French at least regularly in the Territories increased by 81.6%, that is, by an additional 1,890 persons. The largest contribution to this growth occurred in Yukon where this population experienced an increase of 125.4%, that is, an additional 1,085 persons.
- Among those who reported speaking French at least regularly at home in 2016, 2,150 persons reported speaking French most often⁴ and 2,055 reported speaking French as a secondary language in addition to the main language. These two populations represented 1.9% and 1.8% of the Territories' total 2016 population respectively.

3. In some cases, the number of respondents whose mother tongue is French is higher than the number given for the population with French as a first official language spoken. As part of the logic used to derive the population with French as a first official language spoken, those who have French as their mother tongue but can no longer speak it well enough to hold a conversation are not included. Similarly, those who can hold a conversation in both English and French and have these languages as their mother tongues but speak English most often at home are likewise excluded from the population with French as a first official language spoken.

4. Includes French spoken equally often with another language at home.

- Between 2001 and 2016, the number of persons who reported speaking French most often⁴ at home rose by 92.8% which translates to an additional 1,035 persons. Similarly, those who reported speaking French as a secondary language in addition to the main language at home increased by 71.3% or by an additional 855 persons.

Table 2
French used at work, territories, 2001 to 2016

	2001		2006		2011		2016		2001 to 2016 growth
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	percent
Working population¹	54,335	100.0	60,985	100.0	62,955	100.0	66,060	100.0	21.6
French used at work ²	1,475	2.7	1,860	3.0	2,230	3.5	2,610	4.0	76.9
French used most often at work ³	360	0.7	515	0.8	475	0.8	705	1.1	95.8
Only French used at work ⁴	70	0.1	150	0.2	90	0.1	155	0.2	121.4
Mostly French used at work ⁵	200	0.4	285	0.5	315	0.5	380	0.6	90.0
French used equally often with another language at work ⁶	90	0.2	80	0.1	70	0.1	170	0.3	88.9
French used regularly at work (in addition to the main language)	1,115	2.1	1,345	2.2	1,755	2.8	1,905	2.9	70.9

1. Refers to persons aged 15 years and over who worked at least once in the reference period.

2. Includes both single and multiple responses to both part A and part B of the question.

3. Refers to French used most often at work with or without additional languages used regularly.

4. Includes persons who reported only French to Part A of the language used at work question (used most often) and did not report a language to Part B (used regularly).

5. Includes persons who reported French to Part A of the language used at work question (used most often) and reported at least one other language to Part B (used regularly).

6. Includes persons who reported French and another language to Part A of the language used at work question (used most often).

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001, 2006 and 2016; 2011 National Household Survey.

- In 2016, there were 2,610 persons who used French at work at least regularly. They represented 4.0% of the working population of the Territories. More specifically, this population stood at 1,190 in Yukon, 920 in the Northwest Territories and 500 persons in Nunavut.
 - Between 2001 and 2016, the number of workers who reported using French at work at least regularly increased by 76.9% (+1,135 persons) in the Territories, compared with a 21.6% increase for the working population.
- Among those who reported using French at work at least regularly in the Territories in 2016, 705 workers used French most often⁵ and 1,905 workers used French as a secondary language. Respectively, they accounted for 1.1% and 2.9% of the working population of the Territories.
 - In the 2001 to 2016 period, the number of workers who reported using French most often⁵ in the Territories increased by 95.8% (+345 workers) whereas those who reported using French as a secondary language increased by 70.9% (+790 workers).
 - In other words, the increase among those who reported using French as a secondary language in addition to the main language at work accounted for 69.6% of the growth in the use of French at work over the 2001 to 2016 period.

5. Includes French used equally often with another language at work.