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Hungarian in Canada: A macro-sociolinguistic analysis

Abstract

The present study focuses on two Canadian-Hungarian communities, providing a macro-sociolinguistic analysis of their language use. First, we briefly describe Hungarian as a pluricentric language and its presence in Canada. Second, a macro-sociolinguistic description of the communities is given, focusing on five topics: (1) the source of acquisition of Hungarian, (2) the choice of language in the private and public spheres, (3) speakers' self-evaluation of language competence, (4) their regional and national attachment, and (5) the prestige of Hungarian in the community and attitudes towards the various varieties of Hungarian. Our results show that in spite of the desire to maintain the heritage language, a shift to the majority language can be observed through loss of domains of heritage language use among second- and third-generation speakers. Finally, our results are compared to available data on similar studies carried out in other Hungarian-speaking areas, thus providing opportunity for comparison of non-dominant varieties of Hungarian in different settings.