

A painful legacy: A critical discourse analysis of Canadian government discussions on residential schools ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpted from abstract:

Indigenous language rights in Canada have been historically marginalized, with the residential school system being integral to their attempted erasure. These schools stripped Indigenous children away from their homes to undergo forced assimilation grounded by colonial language policy which saw the Indigenous peoples as impediments to their progress. The schools have since closed and the Canadian government has apologized for their role, deeming them as part of the nation's grim history. This paper explores how this shift in discourse occurred and what it says of Canadian language policy. Using critical discourse analysis, nexus analysis, and language management theories to analyze historical government data, the results find that initial shifts in discourse were superficial, while more contemporary discourse marked a unanimous shift away from past ideology. Colonial language policy was discontinued with this stark discursive change, yet despite vocal support for Indigenous languages rights, the long lack of actual policy suggests that lingering colonial legacies of language values may be firmly rooted in Canadian society.

Region: Canada ^[4]

Tags: residential schools ^[5]

indigenous rights ^[6]

cultural identity ^[7]

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