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<p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>The purpose of this study is to provide a picture of how official language minorities are accommodated in three provinces in Canada (New Brunswick, Ontario and Quebec) as well as Canada as a whole. The nature of the study is exploratory and comparative. The comparative design of the study allows for comments on the differences and similarities between the cases on the selected issues i.e. public services, internal use, the legislature, legislation, the courts and judicial system, education and official declarations. The aim is not, however, to provide an empirical explanation with regard to the solutions used in the accommodation of minorities in the selected cases.</p> <p>There are, and always will be, linguistic minorities in all parts of the world. It is important to find solutions to the difficulties such minorities face or risk negative outcome like language loss or escalation of minority grievances into outright conflicts. Canada is somewhat of a pioneer when it comes to language policy. The existence of the francophone minority of Canada has in a significant way shaped the politics of the country e.g. it has been a significant contributing factor in the development of the Canadian federal model. This decentralized federal structure means that the constituent units have extensive autonomy to shape their own language policies. We can find different kinds of solutions to the "language challenge" within Canada. For this reason Canada is an interesting case for research on language issues.</p> <p>The theoretical framework of this study deals with different normative approaches to language rights, policy or rights options, issues relevant to language policy and models for the implementation of language rights through autonomy arrangements.</p> <p>A limitation of this essay is that the empirical material is composed of Canadian language legislation. Legislation and law reflect the social reality and goals of a society and can therefore lend insight into how language issues have been confronted in the provinces of interest as well as in Canada as a whole. Legislation does, however, not show the whole reality, it is not an exact reflection of society and hence the study must be read with this in mind. The study is of a qualitative nature and the number of cases is small, instead the selected cases have been analyzed in detail.</p> <p>The study shows that the different units have indeed tackled the "language challenge" in different ways. The federal government has used a policy of bilingualism in an attempt to unify the country. Also New Brunswick has opted for a bilingual language regime, with equality of status for the two official languages. Ontario on the other hand has no stated official language, but extends some services to the francophone minority population of the province. Quebec grants official language status only to its majority language, French. English language rights are granted as exceptions to the rule of French dominance.</p>			
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