

**Summary of the impact study:  
The legacy of the *R v. Beaulac* decision**

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This study analyzes the celebrated Supreme Court of Canada decision in *R v. Beaulac*. The focus of this case was the language rights guaranteed by section 530 of the Criminal Code, but the Court took the opportunity to re-examine the analysis framework for language rights in general. The study also looks at case law related to language rights in order to illustrate jurisprudential trends that have emerged since the *Beaulac* decision. In particular, it dwells on the interpretation given to language rights and trends that have developed in jurisprudence.

The author begins with an overview of decisions that preceded the *Beaulac* case in order to demonstrate the extent to which this decision broke new ground. The study then turns to the *Beaulac* decision itself, giving a brief account of the facts of the case before summarizing the conclusions of the Court. Lastly, the decision is analyzed in order to contrast it with those that preceded it, showing that the decision moved away from what the Court had asserted in the past, rejecting the restrictive interpretation that had prevailed hitherto. The *Beaulac* decision adopted a broad, liberal and purposive interpretation of language rights.

The study continues with an analysis of decisions rendered after the *Beaulac* case. The author identifies a number of trends by grouping certain decisions together. In examining them, she concludes that a significant number of decisions have made use of the interpretative principles and philosophy of *R v. Beaulac* to extend the scope of some Charter provisions or constitutional principles. She also notes the new importance granted to ordinary statutes that guarantee the linguistic rights of official-language communities. Although the majority trend has followed the conclusions of the *Beaulac* decision, the study highlights a small group of decisions that seem to be tending towards a more restrictive, cautious approach in their interpretation.

Lastly, the author addresses the future of language rights in Canadian jurisprudence. Although some textbooks assert that a change in the interpretation of these rights is unlikely, the few most recent decisions in the field might suggest the contrary.