



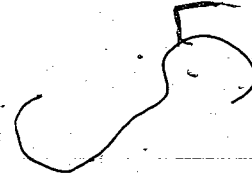
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**SECONDARY FRENCH IMMERSION : A COMPARISON OF THOSE STUDENTS  
WHO LEAVE THE PROGRAM AND THOSE WHO STAY**

by

**CYNTHIA C. LEWIS**

**B.A. University of British Columbia 1970**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS (EDUCATION)**

in the Faculty

of

Education

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SECONDARY FRENCH IMMERSION: A COMPARISON OF THOSE STUDENTS WHO LEAVE  
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## ABSTRACT

This study describes the opinions and attitudes of students who have left the secondary French immersion program between grades 8 and 11. These students are then compared to students who are still enrolled in the program. Finally, students in the immersion program are compared to students in the regular English program concerning attitudes and opinions about secondary school experiences.

Students in four British Columbia school districts who had transferred from the immersion program were identified and matched on the basis of academic achievement with a group of students still in the immersion program, who were then matched with a group of students from the English program.

Results of the questionnaires administered to the transfer students revealed that the most significant factors in their decision to leave the program were dissatisfaction with the quality of instruction and the content of the immersion courses, the degree of difficulty of the courses and the notion that better grades would be obtained in the English program. Some students, ( 23.8%), particularly from one school, indicated they left the program to register in another special program.

Comparisons with the students still in the immersion program reveal that significantly more immersion students believe that a bilingual education will lead to better job opportunities and that the bilingual program provides a better education. Significantly more immersion students feel

they are sure of attending university . Comparisons between the immersion students and the regular program students revealed that regular students are significantly more satisfied with the quality of instruction and the content of their courses.

Three profiles of transfer students were constructed. Those who are dissatisfied with the quality of the instruction and the content of the courses represent 44% of the transfer group. Those who leave the program because of the difficulty of the courses represent 33% of the group and those who leave the program for another option such as the International Baccalaureate Program represent 24% of all the transfer students.

Recommendations arising from the study are that the quality of instruction and the content of the courses be considered a priority, including instructional strategies that foster communicative use of the language. Secondly, students in immersion are a heterogeneous group of varying academic ability and therefore the expectations and objectives of the program need to make it possible for most of this group to succeed. Finally, secondary immersion programs should offer as broad a variety of academic and non-academic electives as possible,

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
APPROVAL.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
CHAPTER ONE- INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
Description of Immersion Programs.....	7
Objectives of the Study.....	9
Thesis Organization.....	10
CHAPTER TWO- A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	13
Introduction.....	13
French Immersion Programs.....	13
An overview of French immerion programs.....	13
Early vs late immersion.....	15
Issues in immersion programs.....	18
Studies of secondary immersion programs in Canada.....	26
Recent studies of secondary immersion students in British Columbia.....	33
A summary of the issues in secondary immersion programs.....	36
Studies of Secondary Education.....	38
Secondary school retention studies.....	38
Trends in secondary education.....	44
Alternate programs at the secondary level.....	47
Concluding Summary.....	49

<b>CHAPTER THREE- METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>51</b>
Description of the Sample and Procedures.....	51
The establishment of the sample.....	53
Sample Selection Procedures.....	57
Procedures for the school.....	57
Procedures for the research assistants.....	57
Pilot Study.....	60
Instruments.....	61
Design of the Data Analysis.....	62
The rate of transfer.....	62
Description of the results per group.....	62
Comparisons between groups.....	63
Student profiles.....	63
Limitations of the Study.....	64
The Data Analysis.....	65
<b>CHAPTER FOUR- RESULTS OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>66</b>
Introduction.....	66
Rates of Transfer for the Immersion Program.....	67
Questionnaire Results for the Three Groups.....	69
Introduction.....	69
TRANSFER STUDENTS.....	69
IMMERSION STUDENTS.....	81
STUDENTS IN THE REGULAR PROGRAM.....	92
Comparisons among the Three Groups of Students....	95
Comparing the transfer students and the immersion students.....	95
Comparing the immersion students and and the regular students.....	109

Profiles of the Transfer Students.....	113
Conclusions about the profiles.....	118
CHAPTER FIVE- DISCUSSION.....	119
The Transfer Students- What We've Learned:.....	119
The Immersion Students- What We've Learned.....	125
Conclusions About the Comparisons of Transfer Students and the Regular Students.....	129
Recommendations.....	131
Implications for Further Study.....	140
APPENDIX A- QUESTIONNAIRES AND RAW DATA.....	143
REFERENCE NOTES.....	158
REFERENCES.....	159

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Subgroups of the sample.....	56
Table 2. Actual returns on the sample per district...	60
Table 3. Enrollment figures and transfer rates.....	68
Table 4. Reasons for pursuing a bilingual education. Transfer students.....	71
Table 5. Reasons for leaving the program. Transfer students.....	73
Table 6. Reasons for pursuing a bilingual education. Immersion students.....	83
Table 7. Levels of satisfaction with the program. Immersion students.....	85
Table 8. Comparison of numbers of boys and girls. Transfer students and immersion students....	96
Table 9. Comparisons of reasons for a bilingual education. Transfer students and immersion students.....	98
Table 10. Comparisons of the opinions of the transfer students and the immersion students.....	100
Table 11. Comparisons of anecdotal remarks. Transfer students and immersion students.....	103
Table 12. Comparisons of the use of French outside of school. Transfer students and immersion students.....	106
Table 13. Comparison of plans for the future. Transfer students and immersion students...	108
Table 14. Comparisons concerning satisfaction with certain aspects of the program. Immersion students and regular students....	110
Table 15. Comparisons about future plans. Immersion students and regular students....	115

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

French immersion programs, in existence since the late 1960s in Canada, are a unique approach on the part of the public education system to respond to linguistic, political and cultural needs expressed by anglophone Canadians wishing their children to become functionally bilingual. Briefly, French immersion refers to a program by which English speaking students are initially taught 100% of the time in French, their second language. The next stage, depending on the program, continues the instruction in French for most of the subjects and also adds English language arts.

The emergence of the need for the immersion approach to the teaching of a second language stemmed from the changing social structure of Quebec during the 1960s (Genesee, 1984). Parents saw the future necessity of bilingualism in order for their children to compete in the job market but were concerned that traditional second language programs would not be able to meet the challenge of bilingualism. Therefore French immersion programs were started in the public school system in Quebec as experimental methods of intensive second language instruction. Financial support for such programs became available in the early 1970s from the federal

government as part of their emphasis on bilingualism and biculturalism.

Since the beginning of French immersion programs in Canada, the number of students in the program across the country has grown considerably, from 40 000 in 1978 to 148 000 in 1985 (Canadian Parents for French, 1986). In British Columbia the program has grown to include 32 of the 73 school districts offering French immersion during the 1984-1985 school year (Ministry of Education, British Columbia, 1986). In that year the program enrolled 15 486 students in the province, compared to 4 363 in 1980.

The spread of French immersion programs across Canada, as well as in Quebec, is due to the original reason for the program, that of wishing to ensure future generations of bilingual adults able to work in French and in English. Since that time, however, parents have identified additional motivational factors which make immersion popular. A founding member of the Canadian Parents for French (Gibson, 1984) explains that parental reasons for choosing French immersion may include a desire for a more challenging program, a belief in a more rigorous approach to study skills and the conviction that the knowledge of languages is a good thing and that the mastery of one language may lead to the study of others.

In a recent Gallup poll conducted by the Canadian Parents for French (Shapson, 1985), 87% of the parents with

students presently enrolled in immersion programs said that they wished their children to continue in the immersion program to at least the end of secondary school. In British Columbia the program is expanding rapidly and yet it is still in the stages of infancy, particularly at the secondary level. Ten school districts are presently offering secondary immersion programs as a follow-up to the early and late elementary programs. Yet as of 1985 (Shapson, 1985), 70-80% of the children enrolled in immersion were still in the primary grades. The remainder of the school districts are preparing to offer the secondary program as soon as their students reach grade eight.

The secondary immersion program presently includes 1 487 students in twenty secondary schools in British Columbia. Although the official policy concerning the secondary immersion program is still to be officially approved by the Ministry of Education, the accepted objective of the secondary immersion program is to maintain and enhance the second language skills of the immersion students and to prepare them for use of the language in their daily lives and /or for further studies in the language at the post-secondary level (Mills, Note 2). In the secondary immersion program students in grades 8 to 10 usually take three or four of their eight courses in French and in grades 11 and 12 two courses and then one course respectively. Recently polled graduates of immersion at the secondary

level said their primary reason for continuing through the program was to truly master the language (Day and Shapson, 1985a, 1985b).

One of the criticisms which has been leveled at French immersion programs (Burns, 1983) has been that it is an elitist program best suited to above average students, but more importantly to students from families who will transport their children some distances to go to school and who take an active interest in the education of their children. Genesee (1984) maintains that immersion programs are successful with students of a wide range of abilities. If immersion programs are to be equitably available to students from all parts of Canadian society, the investigation of why some students choose to leave the program must provide insight into the realities of the programs as a whole.

Several issues have been raised concerning the quality and the implications of immersion programs in the public school system (Shapson, 1985). One of the most pressing issues for secondary immersion programs and therefore for the program as a whole is the transfer of some students back to the regular program at the secondary level.

It is important that the extent of transfer from the program should be an issue for study in the development of the program. Only a few studies have been completed of secondary immersion programs elsewhere in Canada (Morrison



et al, 1979, 1982). School districts in British Columbia which have only recently started the program and those that are to follow need direction as to the best sort of program to offer and they need information as to the characteristics of the students opting for the program at the secondary level.

Reasons why students transfer from the program (Morrison et al, 1979) may include their change in emphasis regarding future job opportunities, the lack of choice of electives imposed by the necessity of taking some compulsory courses in French or the frustration of the increased level of difficulty of the immersion courses at the secondary level. A considerable number of transfer students in the Morrison study (1979) mentioned that they thought they could achieve higher marks in the English program and that these results would be important to them for entrance to post-secondary institutions. But many students also said that they planned to continue to use and to improve their French in the future.

This study will undertake a comparison of the attitudes and opinions of the students who transfer and those who remain in order to better understand the characteristics of these two groups and the relationship of these to the characteristics of the secondary immersion programs.

Issues in secondary immersion are further compounded because immersion students are also members of the secondary

system as a whole. In British Columbia, secondary graduation requirements were changed in 1982 to include the completion of provincial examinations in Grade 12 (Ministry of Education, British Columbia, 1982). Other additional changes in compulsory subjects have supposedly made the requirements for graduation more rigorous. In order to assess the relationship of the secondary immersion program to secondary programs in general, a third group of students in the regular English program are included in this study. Some comparisons will be drawn between their attitudes and opinions and those of the present and former immersion students.

The four districts of Coquitlam, Surrey, Vancouver and Langley, where the present study is conducted, were among the first in the province to offer immersion programs and therefore can be considered the pilot districts for the program at the secondary level.

The impetus for the present study came from the direct concern of one of the school districts about the number of students transferring from the program sometime between Grade 8 and Grade 12. The supervisory personnel of this district began working with the staff of the two secondary schools involved to investigate the problem. It was at this point that the author, upon the encouragement of the supervisory personnel, became involved in a pilot study of the problem. This study consisted of a short questionnaire

completed by some of the students who had left the program and an open-ended discussion with a small group of these students.

When the results of this pilot study were analysed, it was decided that a more formal study should be conducted and that the results would be more acceptable to generalization if more school districts were included. The four districts approached had all established secondary immersion programs that were at least four years old at the time of the study.

Because the study was to include four major school districts in the province and because the results would furnish useful recommendations important to other school districts, the Ministry of Education of the province of British Columbia agreed to provide partial funding for the project .

#### Description of Immersion Programs

There are several variations depending on the province and the school district, but principally two sorts of immersion programs now exist. In what is called the early immersion program, children begin their experience with the language at Kindergarten in a 100% French environment and continue in this total Immersion situation until the end of grade two. From grade two to grade six or seven they receive from 20% to 50% of their instruction in English. Most districts have chosen to maintain a lower percentage of

English instruction in the program on the basis of research results which support the conclusion that the Language Arts skills of the pupils will be as good or better than students in the regular program by the end of grade five regardless of the percentage of the day dedicated to English (Genesee, 1984). In addition, research seems to suggest that the intensity of the French program should be kept up at the intermediate grades so that the progress made by these students does not start to plateau ( Genesee, 1979).

The alternative to an early immersion program is the late immersion program which begins in grade six in British Columbia. Eleven school districts offered late immersion programs as of the 1985-1986 school year (Modern Language Services, Ministry of Education, 1986). In most cases these programs begin in grade six with 100% French instruction and continue in grade seven with 80%.

After the elementary experiences in early or late immersion, secondary immersion programs are offered in B.C. in order to maintain and enhance the skills acquired at the elementary level. For both early and late immersion students in the ten school districts presently offering secondary immersion, 40 to 50% of the subjects from Grades 8 to 10 are offered in French. A student enrolled in the program must take certain subjects in French at each level. Usually these subjects include " Français", Social Studies, and one or two other subjects which vary from district to district and

sometimes from school to school. In Grade 11 the students take 25% of their program in French, usually Social Studies and Français. In Grade 12 only Français is designed for the immersion students. At the end of the program students qualify for a special Ministry of Education certificate stating that they have graduated from the immersion program (note 2).

### Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are addressed by the following questions.

1. What is the actual rate of transfer from the secondary immersion programs in the four school districts included in the study?

This study will document the numbers and percentages of students between Grades 8 and 11 who left the secondary immersion program during the last two years. This may include students who moved to another immersion program in another school district as well as students who left the immersion program.

2. How may we describe the attitudes and opinions of the students who transferred from the program and of those students who remain in the program?

3. How may we compare and contrast the attitudes and opinions of the transfer students, of the immersion students and of the students in the regular English program? How do the characteristics of these students differ and how do they relate differently to the characteristics of the program?

4. Is it possible to construct certain profiles of the different types of students who have transferred from the secondary immersion program?

5. What recommendations may be made concerning the future directions of the secondary immersion programs?

If the original impetus for the study was the perceived problem existant in one school district, then surely the results of the study will provide some direction for districts who are about to embark on the program for the first time, as well as for the districts that were directly involved in the study.

### Thesis Organization

In Chapter 2 of this study a review of the literature pertinent to the study is presented and discussed. An overview of immersion programs provides an introduction to the discussion of the major issues in immersion as perceived by researchers. The few existant studies of secondary immersion programs are reviewed. Several secondary school

retention studies are investigated for the identification of major trends in student attitudes and for applications of the design of the studies to the one at hand. Some general trends in secondary education are also discussed, as they may apply to the three groups involved in the study.

In Chapter 3 the methodology of the study is described. The sample and the groupings for the study are identified and the process that was followed to obtain the samples is explained. The procedures followed in the collection of the data are outlined. The pilot study which was conducted before the construction of the questionnaires is discussed as it affected the questions included in the instruments. The instruments are then described in detail. The methods of analyzing the data are then presented, including the design of the comparisons drawn between the three groups involved. Finally the limitations of the study are discussed.

In Chapter 4 the results of the study are presented, beginning with the statistics concerning transfer rates from the immersion program. The results of the questionnaires are explained and discussed. Descriptive data for each of the three groups in the sample is complemented by summaries of the anecdotal remarks of the respondents. Profiles of certain student characteristics are presented as a way of organizing and summarizing the multiple factors related to the information concerning the transfer group.

In the fifth and final chapter the conclusions that may be drawn from the results are discussed. Student characteristics are discussed in the light of how they may assist educators in better meeting the needs of a variety of learners at the secondary level. Certain recommendations about program characteristics are suggested that should be useful both to school districts where secondary immersion is established as well as to districts where the program is still being implemented.



## CHAPTER 2

### A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

This chapter will provide discussion of the pertinent literature related to the major themes of the study. This will include an overview of French immersion programs as they have developed in Canada and in British Columbia, a description of the models of late and early immersion, consideration of the major issues related to French immersion and description of previous studies completed about secondary immersion programs in Canada. A second part of the chapter will consider some of the literature on secondary education, related to studies of high school retention, practice in secondary education and alternate programs.

#### French Immersion Programs

##### An overview of French immersion programs

The uniquely Canadian phenomenon of French Immersion programs within the public school system began in the early 1960s in Montreal. The stimulus for the demand for such programs among English speaking parents in Quebec is attributed to the emergence of changing attitudes concerning

the use of French in the business community as a result of the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s (Genesee, 1984).

Parents in Quebec at this time wished to see their children grow up to be bilingual adults able to participate in the job market in Quebec. They were, however, looking for a more intensive language program than the French as a Second Language program, which was not intended to lead to functional bilingualism.

The experiment of immersion schooling was therefore positively supported by parents. At the same time, as a result of recommendations arising from the adoption of the Official Languages Act in 1969, monies were available from the federal government to help implement and support such programs (Shapson, 1984). The success of the program in Quebec led to the implementation of such programs across Canada. The growth of the program has been rapid, having expanded from one class in 1962 to over 148 000 students ~~across Canada~~ in the 1984-1985 school year (Canadian Parents for French, 1986).

The enthusiasm of the parents for such programs was accompanied by concerns about the effect of the immersion program on other aspects of the child's education such as his progress in English language arts and in other academic subjects. Because the program was started with the help of experts in Linguistics and Neurology such as Dr. Wilfred Penfield of Montreal and Dr. Wallace Lambert of McGill

University, and because research was urgently needed to answer the questions so justifiably raised by parents, researchers have undertaken many studies of the program as it has expanded (Genesee, 1984).

### Early vs late immersion

A description of the basic models for the early and late French immersion programs occurs in Chapter One.

Comparison studies of early and late Immersion students have been conducted at the Grade 8 and 9 levels in Montreal (Genesee, 1979) and at the Grade 10 and 12 levels in Ottawa (Morrison, 1985). Genesee found no significant differences in achievement in the areas of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and written skills between early and late Immersion students after the late immersion students had spent two years in the program. Both groups also compared favorably with non-immersion students in English Language Arts and in other academic subjects. He did find that students in the late immersion program performed less like real Francophones in an oral language situation than students in early immersion.

Morrison found significant differences between early and late immersion students in all areas of French Language Arts, the early immersion students scoring higher. However, the two groups overlap in their achievement results so that the strongest late immersion students perform as well as the

weakest early immersion students. By Grade 12, some of the differences between the two groups became harder to detect, particularly in the area of written expression.

Early immersion students spend between 6 000 and 7 000 hours exposed to French by the end of high school and late immersion students spend between 3 000 and 4 000 hours. The achievement of the students in the late immersion program seems considerable considering the difference in the number of hours of exposure to the language. There are two factors proposed by Genesee which account for the relative lack of difference between the two groups. One is that some of the early immersion students by the intermediate level pass only 50% of their day in French. The intensity of contact with the language seems to play an important role. Genesee has also suggested that students in early immersion level off in their progress because of less contact with the language, less motivation and more grammatically based teaching strategies.

Swain and Lapkin (1986) found that students at the grade 3 and grade 6 levels in early immersion speak mostly in words and phrases in the classroom and therefore have little opportunity for extended conversation in French. They call for more opportunities for students to use the language in functional situations with native and non-native speakers and they propose that these opportunities provide occasions

for mini- language lessons more valid than traditional grammar exercises.

Secondly, it is recognized that motivation of late immersion students has a great deal to do with their success. Students who have made a conscious decision to pursue the program at this level are highly interested and this has a positive effect on their rate of learning (Genesee, 1979).

Contrary to what one might expect, both groups use their French very little outside of school whether they live in a Francophone environment like Montreal or in a non-Francophone environment like B.C. (Shapson, 1982). Therefore programs work equally well across Canada.

The follow-up program at the secondary level is essentially the same for both early and late immersion students. The details of which courses are offered in French in addition to "Français" differ from district to district, but generally students across Canada are expected to take 40 to 50% of their course work in French during grades 8 to 10, followed by one or two courses in their senior years (Mian, 1984, Halcrow, 1982). In British Columbia students are usually required to take the program as a package and in most cases may not take partial requirements (Tafler, Note 7, Wilton, Note 8). The completion of the program entitles the student to receive a bilingual graduation certificate from the Ministry of Education.

## Issues in immersion programs

A number of issues have been raised by researchers in their studies of immersion programs. The following questions are relevant to the questions raised in this study because they relate to either the student characteristics or the program characteristics involved in French immersion.

1. Is the success of immersion programs due to the fact that most of the students come from upper middle class families?

Burns (1983) has warned those in charge of implementing immersion programs that part of their success must be due to the fact that children now in the program come from upper middle class families where there is a high level of success in any educational program and that the programs must be extended to include children of all backgrounds before we can really say that they work. He fears the consequences of offering an elitist program which could in the long term alter the equity of the Canadian job markets. Genesee (1976) contends that there should be no reason why students from lower socio-economic backgrounds should not be successful in the program although no studies have been conducted to support this. The consequences of this accusation of elitism for the immersion program at the secondary level are particularly important to consider. If the clientele of

immersion programs at the secondary level become some sort of select group the warnings of Burns could come to pass.

2. Can children with lower IQs be successful in the early immersion program and in the late immersion program?

Comparisons made between the achievement of children of below average IQ and average or above average IQ in the early immersion program have shown that the below average students perform at below average levels in academic areas and in reading and writing tests but they perform no lower than their counterparts in the English program. They do, however, perform at average levels in communicative skills in French such as listening and speaking (Genesee, 1976). The concrete, experiential teaching strategies used in the early years of immersion provide many opportunities for these types of learners to succeed. Genesee does suggest also that the late immersion program might not provide as conducive an atmosphere for below average students because more abstract processes are applied by students of this age group.

When we consider the program at the secondary level, several concerns come to mind. In British Columbia so far, the courses offered to students at the secondary level are largely academic, such as French Language and Literature, Social Studies and Mathematics (Halcrow, 1982). ~~Elective~~ courses with less of an academic flavour have not been

offered because of timetabling problems, the lack of availability of teachers and the complexity of offering options. This means that the secondary immersion program may be more designed for average and above average students and may be weeding out less than average students purely on the basis of what kinds of courses are obligatory in French.

Some programs outside of B.C. appear to be already sensitive to such problems. In a high school in Toronto that began its secondary immersion program in 1979, some electives such as Art and P.E. and Health have been offered. Also, the French and Social Studies programs offered to Immersion students have been designated "Enriched" in recognition of the quantity and sophistication of the work expected of the students (Mian, 1984). Students at this school have a choice of taking three or four of the courses in French. Which courses to offer to students in the Immersion program and whether to make all the courses obligatory are decisions that will certainly affect the appeal of the program to a wide range of students.

3. Can children with learning disabilities be successful in the program?

Bruck (1985) continues to study the effects of leaving Primary grade pupils with learning difficulties in the program and the consequences of transferring them from the program. The conclusions from her research are that the



pupils encounter no more problems than they would in the English program and that therefore they are best left in the program with appropriate support services. Furthermore, a study completed comparing Grade 2, 3 and 4 children who left the program with academically weak children who remained in the program suggests that academic success is not the sole predictor of transfer. Attitudinal-motivational factors played an important role with the transfer children. The transfer pupils liked school in general but learning French less than the children who remained in the program.

Interestingly, their attitudes could not be matched with their parents' attitudes or socio-economic status. The same findings could possibly be similar for students at the secondary level. Whether or not a student having difficulty with the program should transfer out may be a question of motivation rather than academic potential. Bruck adds that the attitudes displayed by the children were linked to personality characteristics which did not change once the children left the program. These students would probably be affected by the nature of the interpersonal relations with the teachers.

4. Is the lack of contact with French speakers a factor which is negatively affecting the ultimate success of the program?

Genesee (1984) has found in numerous studies that students in Immersion in Montreal use the French that they are learning very little outside of school considering the environment surrounding them. Students in other anglophone areas of Canada achieve just as high levels of bilingualism as students in francophone areas. Shapson (1985) and Krashen (1984) also call for increased opportunities for students to use the language in real life situations. Students in the Immersion program in B.C. (Tafler, 1983) speak very highly of the opportunities that they had to interact with real speakers of the language during exchanges. It is suggested by research studies (Shapson and Day, 1982) that students in immersion will never sound like francophones until they have experienced some relatively long term contact with real speakers of the language.

Certainly this need to interact with French speakers has a great deal to do with the motivation of the students to continue studying the language. Genesee (1984) suggests that one of the reasons why late immersion students compare so favorably to early immersion students after only two years in the program is that the level of motivation of the early immersion students has dissipated after a number of years in the program. They are accustomed to the classroom situation in French and have developed a comfort level concerning interacting with other anglophones in the second language. This suggests that in the secondary program

increased incentives are needed and fresh approaches would be healthy for the attitude of the students towards their progress in the language. Mian (1984) mentions several ways in which the Toronto program is attempting to motivate students to seek out opportunities to use their French in first hand situations such as the formation of film clubs, excursions to theatres and restaurants and exchanges to Quebec, France and Switzerland.

5. How important is it that the graduates of the immersion program see continued opportunities to improve their language skills at the post-secondary level?

Stern (1978) and Shapson (1985) challenge the universities to meet the needs of immersion students arriving at post-secondary institutions by providing courses other than the traditional language and literature options where students would have the opportunity to pursue studies which interested them in their second language. As an example of this, Wesche (1984) reports an interesting experiment with a Psychology 100 class at Ottawa University where students who took that class in French in what Krashen (1984) terms a sheltered language situation were compared to students who took the regular French language course appropriate to their level. The students who took the Psychology class made as many gains in language skills as the

group who studied the language itself. They did as well as the students in the regular classes in terms of the content of the Psychology course. They also became more confident about their ability to use French in real life situations than did the students in the language class. Secondary Immersion programs could learn from this experiment that interesting options offered in French may be more appropriate attitudinally and just as effective linguistically as courses that continue to study the language itself.

6. Do specific teaching strategies and approaches to the pedagogy of the language play a significant role in the success of the program ?

Carey (1984) suggests that much more research is needed into what actually goes on in Immersion classes. He feels that how to get the most out of early and late immersion programs is related to the best possible teaching approach for the age and grade level of the student. It cannot be substantiated that more attention to the grammar of the language at the upper levels will in fact result in better usage on the part of the student (Krashen, 1984). Recent studies of language acquisition (Krashen, 1984, Swain & Lapkin, 1986, Cummins, Note 1) suggest that students acquire language best through actively using it with a purpose in both oral and written form.

In secondary programs, the importance of motivation and opportunities to make real use of the language cannot be ignored. In the classroom this use would take the form of student centered activities and choices of assignments designed to make creative use of the language. Cummins (note 1) described writing projects where students write for a particular audience and edit their work with peers and finally an expert, usually the teacher. Errors are a natural and desirable risk taking step on the part of the student (Cummins, Note 1). Carey further suggests that increased cultural exposure and interaction with speakers of the language is the only way to ensure increased cultural understanding of the Francophone community, which all must agree is an affective objective of the Immersion program.

It appears from the discussion of immersion research in this overview of the program that there are many issues still to be resolved which directly affect decisions that are being made in secondary immersion programs. Let us now examine the conclusions of studies which have directly dealt with issues in secondary immersion.

## Studies of secondary immersion programs in Canada

In 1978 in Montreal Cziko, Lambert, Sidoti and Tucker surveyed the first group of 17 grade 11 students to complete the early immersion experience along with their parents and compared their opinions about their competence in French and their future plans with 21 students and their parents from the regular English program where students had taken daily classes in French since Kindergarten. Not all the students who followed the immersion program until the end of elementary school in grade 6 took follow-up courses in high school. What the students actually did in high school is not at all described except by individual case in the anecdotal case studies of each family. The program was somewhat less structured at that time.

The questionnaire contained closed questions designed to find if any significant differences existed between the students in the immersion program and the students in the English program and also left room for anecdotal comments. As would be expected there was a significant difference in how the two groups rated themselves in competencies in French. However, it is still surprising that even in the immersion group and even in Montreal only 8 of the 17 immersion students felt that they were competent enough to attend a French university. There were no significant differences in the frequency of the use of French in the

community between the two groups. The immersion group did say, however, that they had frequent opportunities to use their French in the community. They said that they were much more likely to continue conversations in the community in French if they were started in French.

The comments made by the pilot group and their parents contain frequent remarks about what it was like to be the pilot group. The majority of the parents and students felt that the program had some necessary growing pains and that it was absolutely necessary to continue to offer the program in a more organized manner at the secondary level.

Many of the parents had provided opportunities for their children to use French outside of school by enrolling them in sports activities conducted in French, for example. The students felt that the only way left for them to improve their French now would be to be surrounded by French speakers somehow in classes or in a living situation. Some mentioned that they needed to learn the real "joul" of the streets and that they should have been taught more slang along with the standard French.

Hence we see that speaking French among English speaking classmates is not the same experience, nor is living in a French environment where it is possible to use the language but not at all necessary. Most of these students suggest that they would have enjoyed being "submersed" in an exchange or in a French high school.

This study provides much information, some of which has already been acted upon in school districts across Canada. In British Columbia all school districts which have immersion students at the secondary level from the early or the late Immersion programs have provided a sequential secondary program to meet the needs of these students (see note 2). Finding the best combination of factors to meet the needs of the wide range of immersion students is the impetus for this study.

Let us consider now the study which is the most closely linked to the study at hand, a study completed in 1979 in the Ottawa and Carleton school districts concerning why students from the late immersion and the high school bilingual programs chose to transfer from the program at the high school level (Morrison et al, 1979). Two groups were studied. The 136 Grade 9s surveyed represented 77% of the population of 176 students who had taken late immersion from the Grade 6 level and then dropped the program at the end of grade 6, 7 or 8. High School begins in grade 9 in Ontario. Most of these students, 105 in all, dropped the program in the transition to high school before starting grade 9. The second group, the grade 12 students, represented 65% of the total population of 65 students who had left the program between Grade 9 and Grade 12, 42 students in all. The total numbers of students in the program at that time were not presented.



The questionnaire asked students to identify the one major reason they had entered the program. Two-thirds of the grade 9s and half of the grade 12s said it was to get a good job. This question forced students to make a choice in what was probably a combination of factors, but it is interesting that this instrumental reason dominated. Other reasons were the enjoyment of learning new languages, parental pressure and the challenge.

The secondary program was offered in eleven schools in the two districts involved in the study. It was possible to take only part of the secondary Immersion program and many of the students who had transferred from the program were still taking one or sometimes two courses. The majority of the students were therefore still demonstrating an interest in increasing their French proficiency.

The questionnaire asked students to react to 29 possible reasons why they dropped the program by indicating whether each was a major factor, part of the reason or had no influence. The results give some indication of the major areas of concern of the students. About 62% of the grade 9s cited the difficulty of the program or the concern for grades as a major reason. The reputation of the program must have played a part as these students had not yet started the program at the secondary level. In contrast, only about 25% of the grade 12s listed the concern for marks as a factor. The next major concern for the Grade 9s seemed to be

the choice of courses and the reputation of the school. The grade 12s said that the options available outside of the immersion program were a factor. Among other factors some students, about 25% of the grade 12s, expressed disappointment in the quality of courses and teaching. The grade 12s also mentioned boredom with the program in 10 out of the 42 cases.

In another study in 1982, Morrison et al published the results of the research conducted in the Ottawa and Carleton school boards comparing the proficiency of early Immersion students and late immersion students at the grade 10 level. A second part of the study surveyed grade 12 students and a group of graduates of the program concerning their use of French outside the classroom, their future plans, whether they felt that their knowledge of French would play a significant role in their futures and their evaluation of the secondary Immersion program.

Morrison found significant differences between the achievement of the early immersion students and the late immersion students in all aspects of French language. She also found that students in the secondary immersion program continued to improve in reading scores between grades 10 and 12. The implications of these findings are that the differences between early immersion students and late immersion students should be attended to at the secondary

level and that students do continue to benefit from the program at the secondary level.

The surveys completed by grade 12s and by graduates of the program provide interesting insights into attitudinal and motivational aspects of the program. Among the grade 12s over 80% said that they wished to continue to learn French at the Grade 13 and the university level. They felt confident about their skills in French, particularly in the areas of listening and reading. This seems to demonstrate a growth in the program when we consider the results of Cziko et al (1978) where the students did not seem very confident about their French.

The students in Morrison's study expressed three major concerns about the program. First of all, they felt a wider selection of options would enhance the program. Secondly, they felt more emphasis should be placed on opportunities to speak the language and use it in real life situations during the secondary program. Finally, they felt the program could benefit from better-equipped teachers in terms of language and expertise in the subject areas.

Among the graduates of the program, 30 to 50% were taking French at university. They mentioned difficulty in finding the appropriate level of course for their background. Over 2/3 of the graduates said that they engaged in some sort of activity to increase their proficiency in

French. They shared the same areas of concern about the program as the grade 12s.

In 1985 Morrison et Bonyum published a follow-up report comparing the 1980, 1981 and 1983 graduates of the bilingual secondary programs in the Ottawa and Carleton school boards. The three cohorts of students produced similar results in all aspects of the study. The one major positive aspect of being in the bilingual program was still job opportunities, mentioned by 42%, and followed by the opportunity of learning a second language, mentioned by 25%. The one major negative aspect of the program was seen to be the restricted choice of courses, mentioned by 28% of the group, followed by poor teaching, mentioned by 7% of the group. Grade 12 and 13 students in the bilingual program in 1984 said that what they liked the most about being in the program was the French literature courses and the outings, field trips and exchanges. Suggestions for improvement to the program were few, but some mentioned the need for more oral work and better teachers.

Because the questionnaires used in these surveys were open-ended, no statistically significant conclusions can be drawn from the data. No questionnaires were given to students who had transferred from the program or to regular English program students as a comparison. The suggestions made for the improvement of the program are nevertheless helpful to the decision-makers and researchers doing further

work in secondary immersion. It is particularly useful to now be able to compare the results in Ontario with results in British Columbia.

### Recent studies of secondary immersion students in British Columbia

Day and Shapson (1985) polled forty-five 1985 graduates of the secondary immersion programs in two of the districts involved in the present study. The 1986 graduates have also been polled and the 1985 graduates have been tracked and polled one year after graduation from high school. The objectives of the study are to assess the students' attitudes towards various aspects of their experience, to determine their intentions for the future and to information about how useful French was to them after high school.

Students in both districts rated themselves quite positively concerning their French language skills. They also felt quite positivey about bilingualism and their motivation to learn French.

The students' opinions about the program are very pertinent to the present study, even though only students still in the program were polled. The following comments and results are the most significant to the present study.

1. About half the students in each district said they would have rather taken something else in French other than Social Studies, for example. The suggestions for what courses could be offered were varied, indicating that students would like a wider choice of courses. These results are comparable to the results for the Ontario students (Morrison and Bonyum, 1985).

2. A large majority of the students said their reasons for taking part in the secondary immersion program were related to the desire to have truly mastered the language. Many had participated in an exchange or some other experience where they were able to use their French in a truly Francophone environment and they very much valued their experience.

3. In one district 57% of the students said that they had at some time or another considered leaving the program. They said a desire to finish after so many years of commitment kept them going. When asked why some of their friends left the program, reasons most often given were related to dissatisfaction with the teachers and the quality of instruction.

4. Major suggestions for the program included improving the quality of instruction and the organization of the courses, and diversifying the choices of French courses. Some students mentioned that more emphasis should be given to

oral and written language skills and that a greater variety of courses were needed.

5. A large majority of students in both districts said they gained in cultural understanding by being in the program. Over 90% of the students said they would be using their French in the future and the same number said they would be going to a post-secondary institution.

Some insight into the attitudes of the secondary immersion students in B.C. is also provided in the summary of a panel discussion involving eight immersion students in grades 8 through 11 from both early and late immersion reported in 1983 (Tafler). This is one of the few occasions that educators have had in British Columbia to hear first hand about the reactions of the students to the secondary immersion program. Students spoke positively of their experience. They especially mentioned the exchange trips to Quebec as being very important in giving them an opportunity to finally use their French. Students in B.C. said they now valued the language as a unifying factor among the cultural groups of Canada.

There was less agreement among the students concerning the disadvantages of the program. One cannot expect all the students to have reacted to the program in the same way. Two of the eight students mentioned the heavy homework. Some

felt more options and more functional subjects should be offered in French.

The majority of the panel noted that students in Immersion needed some sort of special recognition for their efforts at the end of elementary school and at the end of secondary school. In general, one would say that the tone of their remarks indicated that the program was hard work, but that it was worth it.

#### A summary of the issues in secondary immersion programs

What conclusions can be drawn from these studies involving secondary immersion students? Are there common themes amongst their findings? The following list of points reoccur in several of the secondary immersion studies completed in B. C. and in the other parts of Canada.

1. Generally we may say that the existence of a follow-up program of high quality is looked upon as a desirable thing by the students. They plan to use their French in the future through job opportunities, travel and interaction with speakers of the language.

2. The students also stress the need for opportunities to use the language in real life situations. They value such opportunities as exchanges and field trips.



3. According to the students the program should strive to gauge itself to a reasonable level of difficulty. Some students perceive that the program is more geared to the above average type of student who has little need for individual help.

4. Special recognition of the hard work the program demands would be motivational to students. Students are sensitive to the possibility that their marks will be lower if they stay in the immersion program but that in fact they are working as hard or harder than students in the regular program.

5. Students have said they would like to see more choice in the type of courses offered in the immersion program. They also stress the importance of opportunities to speak the language during class and to practice their oral skills.

6. The teacher factor is an important one amongst students in the secondary immersion program. Students are sensitive to the understanding of the teachers and to the appropriateness of their varying expectations for achievement.

## Studies of Secondary Education

### Secondary school retention studies

It is useful to discuss the literature involved with secondary school retention studies for several reasons. First of all, the methodological approaches used may be helpful for the study at hand. Secondly, results of such studies may indicate some general trends in student attitudes towards secondary school which may coincide with attitudes discovered in the present study.

There are of course some very major differences between students who transfer from the immersion program and those who leave school completely. Students in the immersion program who transfer out are not abandoning education entirely and can still pursue academic options in the English program. They can transfer from the program at any age. The students who leave secondary school must generally wait until the age of sixteen and then their decision seems a much more final one.

With this consideration in mind, let us examine a study completed by the United Community Services of the Greater Vancouver area (Levens, 1970). This study is a literature review of many studies completed concerning drop-outs both in Canada and the United States. The investigators conclude that the educational system is considered to have an ever

expanding social role and that it is being asked to educate students for change in modern day society. However, the hypothesis is suggested that certain practices and features of the public schools work against this expanded role of education and this results in dissatisfied students and thus drop-outs.

This study groups the many variables involved in describing drop-outs into three broad categories. These are variables clustered around educational failure, those concerning the perceived irrelevance of the experience and those describing the lack of involvement of the students with the educational process.

Certain practices of the secondary system in general are associated with these groups of variables. Segregation of high ability and low ability groups leads to labelling and biased expectations towards groups of students who are less likely to succeed and more likely to fail. The content of the courses often has little perceived relevance to the world outside with its rapidly changing knowledge base. Various rules and non-democratic practices tend to infantilize students and therefore remove ways for the students to become involved in decision-making processes.

This clustering of variables associated with drop-outs has led the investigators to conclude that school related and program related factors tell us more about why students leave the system than do student related factors such as IQ.

and socio-economic status. This study recommends some fundamental changes to the secondary system which would help it to appeal to a broader selection of today's adolescents. It especially appeals to the system to find ways to relate what is learned in school to the outside world and to involve students in the decision-making processes involved with their education.

This study also found that teacher expectations once set were very difficult to reverse. If a student became perceived as prone to difficulty or failure then this mould became very hard to break. This could be even more of a factor in the secondary immersion program where students often have the same teachers more so than in the regular English program.

A research study completed in Toronto (Young and Reich, 1974) compared attitudes of students who had dropped out of high school with a matched sample of students who had not left the system. They felt that previous studies of drop-outs had lumped all the factors together and had produced a hazy profile of the typical drop-out which was so broad that it was not very helpful.

The researchers chose the in-depth interview technique to collect their data. The sample was extensive, with 544 out of a possible 921 drop-outs being interviewed. Another 272 students still in school were matched with half of the

drop-out sample on the basis of program, achievement, grade, sex, age and school attended and then interviewed.

Former catalogues of reasons why students dropped out were not found to be helpful because so many of the reasons given were interrelated. The in-depth interviews helped to build the profiles of six patterns of dropping out among the sample. One group (23%) was called the classic drop-out group because they exhibited the classic characteristics associated with dropping out such as low academic achievement, poor attendance, negative attitudes and lack of credits towards graduation.

The largest group (53%) were the work-oriented group who preferred work to school and left school to go to a job. Other groups included the homemaker group (6%), the family supporters (7%), the cultural isolates (2%) and the intellectual elite (3%). This last group, the intellectual elite, tended to be high achievers who had become disenchanted with the school system.

The results of the study also compare the characteristics of the school leavers with the characteristics of a matched sample of students who were still in school. The responses of the students still in school were also able to be grouped into similar categories. They were grouped as the career oriented (42%), the academically oriented (28%), the discontented reformers (19%), and the potential classic drop-outs. It appears that

there is little difference between the work oriented group of school leavers and the career oriented group other than that they view staying in school as a means to the end of getting a good job.

The approach of this study in grouping the subjects around major themes of characteristics clarifies the complicated sets of variables and would do the same for our study of students who leave the immersion program. Comparing the students to those who stayed helped to clarify how the school leavers are like and unlike those who stay in the program so that strategies for change in the program may be considered. The students that leave should not be considered atypical and misfits of the system.

In the Toronto study, the drop-out and the stay in group shared similar attitudes towards the other students, relationships with teachers, general coursework and extra-curricular activities. The drop-out group had significantly more negative attitudes towards rules and regulations and teaching methods.

The most comprehensive study of dropouts completed recently in the United States is called High School and Beyond (Ekstrom et al, 1986). This longitudinal study completed between 1980 and 1982 followed students from their tenth year to their senior year in high school. It tracked the students who had dropped out along the way as well. The

study asks who drops out and why some students drop out and not others.

In a discussion of this study, Wehlage and Rutter (1986) point out that the dropout rate has not gone down since the late 1960s but rather up and that schools do not seem to be responding to what they know about dropouts. They suggest that the emphasis be changed to consider what could be wrong in the school factors that cause the students to drop out instead of concentrating on what could be wrong with the student. In the High School and Beyond study three groups were compared, the dropouts, the stay-ins and the college bound students. Only in comparing the three groups do the factors that make the difference really come to light. The three recommendations of this study could be considered relevant for any secondary program including the immersion program.

If the secondary school is to succeed in meeting the needs of a wide variety of students, the following practices must occur. First of all, schools must have an enhanced sense of accountability towards all students. Secondly, there should be a renewed effort to establish legitimate authority in the institution. The final recommendation is that there be a redefinition of school work to allow a greater number of students to achieve success and satisfaction. (Wehlage and Rutter, 1986)

## Trends in secondary education

It is useful to consider what is being said about the effectiveness of secondary school in general because some of the issues found in the immersion program may be the same factors as those affecting secondary education in general.

In 1984 John Goodlad completed a report called A Place Called School in which he discusses the results of an extensive study of the public education system in the United States. The sample for this study included 38 schools in seven states. Techniques included surveys to parents, teachers and students, interviews with teachers and many classroom observations. Schools were chosen to represent a spectrum of demographic factors such as socio-economic status, rural and urban environment and racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Here is a short summary of those of Goodlad's findings that are the most related to the present study.

1. In the secondary classroom observations, it was found that students spent 21.9% of class time listening to lectures or explanations and 20.7% of their time doing written work. Oral discussion and verbal practice took less than 10% of the total time.



2. Students tended to prefer subjects in which they took more of an active rôle such as the arts, vocational courses and P.E. Foreign language results were interesting because the observers saw the students take a more active role in these classes and saw them as being very business like and fast paced. They were however less popular and perceived as more difficult among students. We cannot equate the sort of foreign language course being referred to with the Immersion courses, but nevertheless the trends discovered do suggest that the more the opportunity for the student to participate actively the better the students respond. Goodlad concludes from these results that the scenario of what goes on in classrooms is fairly dull but he is encouraged by the fact that there is evidence that students do respond when more motivational techniques are used.

3. Goodlad finds from looking at the way schools are organized that certain practices of dividing students into groups of winners and losers, of academics and of technical students and of advantaged and dissadvantaged are built into the system. Practices such as ability grouping and tracking reinforce this system. Immersion programs have been regarded in the past as appealing to a more upper class portion of parents and have been accused of creating a linguistic elite (Burns, 1983). Does the secondary immersion program perpetuate certain educational and social hierarchies?

Therefore there may be little accomodation for the non-academic student.

4. Despite the many factors that Goodlad found to be the same of all the schools studied, he did also reveal certain factors that were happily different about the more positive educational settings. The satisfaction level surrounding schools and classrooms could be directly related to the climate of the environment. Climate refers to the amount of time spent controlling students, the amount of concern the teacher showed for individual students and the fairness and appropriate level of difficulty of the tasks assigned. In these classrooms, students showed more regard for one another and were less competitive and found one another more interested in education.

Goodlad's observation that the climate of the environment contributes to the satisfaction of the students is similar to the results of the extensive study of the effect of improved interpersonal skills upon school climate and achievement of students completed by David Aspy et al. (Aspy, 1977). This study found that training teachers and administrators in clarification techniques and in empathy skills had a measurable effect on levels of satisfaction and on achievement.

### Alternate programs at the secondary level

Discussions of alternate programs at the secondary level may reveal some factors worth consideration in this study because the secondary immersion program is in a sense an alternate program itself.

Ducharme (1983) suggests that despite the budget cuts and the drop in enrollment that have been affecting secondary programs in Ontario, alternate programs have grown. He sees them as fulfilling a need to counteract the factory model of education and suggests that indeed the secondary schools of the future could begin to look like a series of alternatives. Schools will be forced to offer specializations and emphases and technology may permit them to operate more like learning/centres rather than full time institutions.

Maurice Gibbons (1984) reexamined the alternate secondary program called "Walkabout" ten years after its inception in a number of schools in Canada and the United States. He calls on educators to rethink the traditional classroom setting and move towards a paradigm of self-directed learning. Walkabout and Challenge Education ~~programs~~ programs started a decade ago are still thriving and the rapid expansion of knowledge, technology and "high-tech" are all the more reason to start teaching students to stay

in touch with themselves and to take charge of their own lives.

In British Columbia there are examples of different alternate secondary programs which have experienced success. One such program is the International Baccalaureate program. This program prescribes a heavy academic program in grades 11 and 12 which is rewarded by advanced placement at several Canadian universities (Loch, Note 4). This program (I.B.) is referred to several times in this study as it is a program to which some of the students in question do transfer.

In the Vancouver school district two similar alternate programs are offered at the secondary level (Allendale, Note 5). These programs have grown since their inception thirteen years ago and there is a waiting list for entrance to them. They provide an academically oriented enriched curriculum in an atmosphere of participation and responsibility. Students' acceptance into the program is dependent upon their motivation and their self-discipline.

These alternate programs have in common that they all appear to be thriving and they all offer options to the impersonal atmosphere of regular high school settings. The secondary immersion program is somewhat similar in that the students become a close knit group. They go to several classes with the same teachers and the same students year after year. This could provide an opportunity to do something special with these circumstances. There does seem

to be a place for alternate programs in secondary schools today.

### Concluding Summary

The following issues raised by a review of the literature concerning French immersion programs , secondary level immersion programs and trends in secondary education in general will be useful to keep in mind during the description of the present study which will follow beginning in Chapter 3.

1. Issues concerning French immersion programs in general include concerns about whether or not immersion is successful with students of a broad range of abilities from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds.
2. There is concern particularly at the upper intermediate and secondary levels that the students need increased opportunities to use the language in real life situations and that curriculum which takes a highly academic and formalized approach to the study of the language has a counter productive effect.
3. The need is emerging for as broad a variety of choice as possible in courses at the secondary level in immersion programs and in the regular English program. It is recognized that students have a variety of different motivational reasons for wishing to complete their secondary education

and that students need to see what they are doing as useful to them in the future. This must be as true for students in the secondary immersion program as it is for students in the regular program.

4. Recent studies in secondary education point to the importance of the students taking an active role in the educational process at all levels from the day to day activities in the classroom to the selection of options and the rules and procedures of the school.

5. Studies of dropouts have differentiated the group that leaves from those that stay in the system. It has been suggested that the way to attack the dropout problem is to consider what is wrong with the system that fails to meet the needs of a certain group of students instead of concentrating on what is wrong with the students.

6. Researchers have found that the tone of the classroom can make a great difference to learning. Some studies reinforce the importance of the quality of the interactions between teachers and students.

7. Discussion of alternate programs at the secondary level indicates that there is a place for these programs in the secondary system.

CHAPTER 3  
METHODOLOGY

The chapter begins with the description of the sample of students involved in the study and the groups used as a basis of comparison. The secondary immersion programs in the school districts from which the samples are drawn are also described. The procedures used for tracking the students and constructing the sample are outlined. The pilot study is discussed as it affected the contents and the style of the instruments which were constructed specifically for the study. The instruments are then described. Finally, the design and a description of the data analysis are presented.

Description of the Sample and Programs

Data and information were obtained from students of four school districts: Surrey, Vancouver, Coquitlam and Langley. These districts were chosen because they were the only districts in the lower mainland region of Vancouver where the secondary immersion program had been underway for at least four years. Start up complications would not then be a factor in the results. Here is a brief description of the characteristics of each of the school districts and their secondary immersion programs.

District 1 (Surrey)- The second largest school district in the province, with a total student enrollment of 33 376

(Cameron, Note 3), situated to the southeast of Vancouver and including both suburban, urban and rural neighbourhoods. The secondary immersion students included in the sample were drawn from late immersion students in two high schools in the district, situated over 15 kilometres from one another at the north and south ends of the district.

District 2 (Coquitlam)- A large school district with a total school enrollment of 21 087 , mostly suburban in nature, situated to the east of Vancouver. The secondary students included in the sample were drawn from both the early and the late immersion programs. One junior secondary school receives students from the early immersion program, one receives students from the late immersion program and one receives students from both programs. The senior secondary school receives all the junior high students for grades 11 and 12. There is no distinction made in curriculum between these students at the secondary level (Wilton, Note 8).

District 3 (Langley)- A smaller school district with an enrollment of 14 954 students located in a suburban and rural area to the east of Surrey. Students included in the sample attend two secondary schools offering the secondary immersion program to students who have completed the late immersion program. It is to be noted that students in Langley who entered the Late immersion program in Grade 6 were interviewed and screened for satisfactory work habits



and average and above reading ability before securing a place in the program.

District 4 (Vancouver)- The largest school district in the province, with a total student enrollment of 51 128, located in the largest urban center. The secondary immersion programs are housed in two high schools on the west side of the school district. One school only offers a program for the students from several early immersion schools as well as for the students from the francophone program (Programme Cadre Fran\ais). The other high school offers a program for the students of the late immersion program from one elementary school only. This is the third year of the secondary immersion program at that school.

#### The establishment of the sample.

It was decided that three groups would be established for the sample: a transfer group, an immersion group and a group from the regular English program. Here is a brief description of the groups and of the process used to arrive at the three groups.

Group 1- the transfer students.

The numbers of students who had transferred out of the secondary immersion program in each school between June 1984 and September 1985 were established. Then the students who were still attending the same secondary school where the

program was offered were identified and became the first group in the sample. The sample includes students from the late and the early immersion programs as well as some students who were in other programs at the elementary level.

Group 2- the immersion students.

An equal number of students to the number in the transfer group who were still in the immersion program at that school at the same grade levels were matched on the basis of academic achievement and became the second group.

Group 3- the students in the regular English program:

An equal group of students at the same grade levels in the regular English program were also matched on the basis of academic achievement and became the third group.

The total sample is divided into the subgroups described below. See Table 1 for a graphic representation of the subgroups.

Subgroup i - those students enrolled in grade 8 during 1983-84 school year who transferred from the program sometime after June 1984. They were in grade 10 when they completed the questionnaire.

Subgroup ii - a comparison group of students still in the program in grade 10 when the questionnaire was completed.

Subgroup iii - a comparison group of students in the regular English program in grade 10.

subgroup iv - those students enrolled in grade 9 during the 83-84 school year who transferred from the program sometime after June 1984. They were in grade 11 when they completed the questionnaire.

Subgroup v - a comparison group of those students still in the program in grade 11 when they completed the questionnaire.

Subgroup vi - a comparison group of students in the regular English program in grade 11.

Subgroup vii - those students enrolled in grade 10 during the 83-84 school year who transferred from the program after June 1984. They were in grade 12 when they completed the questionnaire.

Subgroup viii - a comparison group of those students still in the program in grade 12 when they completed the questionnaire.

Subgroup ix - a comparison group of regular English grade 12 students.

Subgroup x - those students enrolled in grade 8 during the 1984-85 school year who transferred from the program before

September 1985. These students were in grade 9 when they completed the questionnaire.

Subgroup xi - a comparison group of those students still in the program in grade 9 when they completed the questionnaire.

Subgroup xii - a comparison group of regular English grade 9 students.

Table 1

Subgroups of the sample

	TRANSFER GROUP	IMMERSION PROGRAM	REGULAR PROGRAM
GRADE 10 (1985-86)	Group i*	Group ii	Group iii
GRADE 11 (1985-86)	Group iv*	Group v	Group vi
GRADE 12 (1985-86)	Group vii*	Group viii	Group ix
GRADE 9 (1985-86)	Group x**	Group xi	Group xii

\* transferred out sometime after June 1984

\*\*transferred out sometime during or after Grade 8(84-85)

## Sample Selection Procedures

### Procedures for school

The sample selection and the distribution of the questionnaires were conducted by a PhD student and a team of three trained assistants. \*

Prior to data collection each individual school aided the research assistants in identifying samples by:

1. collecting class lists of French immersion students enrolled in Grade 8 to 12 in 1983-84, 1984-85 and 1985-86.
2. collecting class lists of regular English students in grades 9 through 12 in the 1985-86 school year.

### Procedures for the Research Assistant

At each individual school, the research assistants completed the following procedures.

1. Students who transferred from the French immersion program between June 1984 and September 1985 were identified by reviewing class lists. The time of transfer and the present school of the students were identified. Information was recorded on a special sheet designed for that purpose.
2. The academic achievement of these students according to the categories of Average (C to B-), Above Average (B and

above) and Below Average (below C) in English, French, Math and Social Studies, was determined using June 1985 grades on the students' permanent records. The overall average of the above subjects and the individual subject scores were recorded.

3. If the student no longer attended the school in question the student was dropped from the sample at this point. Students were also dropped from the sample if they changed schools between the time of tracking and the time of data collection, or if they were absent or refused to fill out the questionnaire. Students in two schools were mailed questionnaires and asked to return them by mail also because a convenient time could not be arranged by the administration of the school for these students to complete the questionnaires at school.

4. A comparison group of an equal number of students eligible for the above group was established among the students still in the immersion program. The sampling method used is referred to as Systematic with replacement. This is performed by dividing the total still enrolled sample by the number required for the sample (e. g.  $21/7 = 3$ ). The researcher then selected a smaller number than the one calculated (e. g. 2) as a starting point. Every third student was included in the sample. If the enrolled students could

not be matched to students in the transfer sample, sampling was continued. For samples where there were fewer students remaining enrolled than transfer students, the entire sample was included but not matched to the transfer group.

5. An equal number of students from the regular English program were matched to the sample of students still in the program. The sampling procedures described above were used. The actual return is lower than the number intended because some students were ill or refused to complete the questionnaire or the school was unable to arrange a convenient time for students to complete the questionnaires and so they were mailed to students. Please see Table 2 for the actual numbers in each group by district who completed the questionnaires.

Table 2

Actual returns on the sample per district

	TRANSFERS		IMMERSION		REGULAR	
	N	R*	N	R*	N	R*
District 1	21	16	23	21	21	16
District 2	37	28	57	49	53	39
District 3	5	3	8	8	8	7
District 4	57	37	87	50	83	49
Total	120	84	175	128	165	111

\*actual return

Pilot study

In the winter of 1985 one group of 15 transfer students in one district completed an open-ended questionnaire compiled by the researcher based on a review of the literature. The results of this pilot study led to the development of the questionnaires finally used in the study. About half of the same students participated in the formal study, but over one year later.



Comments concerning both the positive and the negative aspects of the program were studied to give direction to the sorts of questions that should become part of the instruments. General areas to focus upon included students' opinions concerning the short term and long term benefits of the program, their perceptions of positive and negative features of the programs, their feelings about the organization and components of the program and their feelings about the quality of instruction and the expectations of the teachers in the program.

#### The instruments

1. Through communication with district administrators, the numbers of students in the program at each grade level for the period of June 1984 to September 1986 were identified.
2. The comments and the information collected in the pilot study led to the construction of the questionnaires. The design of the instruments was intended to provide descriptive information about each of the three groups in order to construct descriptive profiles of the different types of students who transferred from the program. Parallel questions were constructed between the three instruments in order to be able to later compare one set of descriptive data with another and to identify issues where the groups think similarly or differently. The questions sought out information concerning reasons for pursuing a bilingual

education, attitudes towards certain aspects of the program, the use of French outside the classroom and plans for the future. Other questions explore attitudes toward secondary school in general. The design of the questions allows for statistical analysis and comparison between groups as well as extensive opportunities for anecdotal remarks on behalf of the respondents. Please refer to Appendix A for copies of the questionnaires .

### Design of the Data Analysis

#### The rate of transfer

The rate of transfer from the secondary immersion programs in the districts involved in the study is established by comparing the numbers of students enrolled in the program at each grade level from June 1984 to September 1985.

#### Description of the results per group

The results of the questionnaires are summarized per group and the anecdotal remarks have been categorized and tallied by question.

The results were not analyzed in terms of early immersion and late immersion groups because of the differences in the programs for each school district as described earlier in the chapter. Once at the secondary level in each school, no programatic distinctions were being

made between early immersion and late immersion students at that time.

### Comparisons between groups

The responses of the students who have transferred from the program are compared to the responses of the students who are still in the program both statistically and in terms of the nature and frequency of the anecdotal remarks. The responses of the immersion students will then be compared to the responses of the students in the regular program concerning common issues about high school in general.

### Student profiles

The design of the construction of the profiles is similar to the design of a study completed concerning drop outs in Toronto (Young and Reich, 1974). Young and Reich compared attitudes of students who had dropped out of school with a matched sample of students who remained in school. Young and Reich found that former categories of reasons why students had dropped out were inappropriate because so many of the reasons given were interrelated. Through student interviews, six profiles of students who drop out were constructed. Profiles of the students who stayed in school were also compiled. Then the two sets of patterns were compared.

Profiles of the transfer students in the present study help delineate the student characteristics that come into play with students in secondary immersion programs. They

should also identify certain key relationships between the students and the program characteristics which most influence them.

#### Limitations of the Study

The following are considered to be the methodological limitations of the study.

1. The students who left the program at the end of grade 7 and did not choose to continue at the secondary level are not included in the sample.
2. The students who transferred from the program and also transferred from the school where the immersion program is offered were not included because of anticipated difficulty in tracking these students. Only partial information was available from districts as to the whereabouts of these students.
3. Students who left the school between the time of tracking and the time of data collection were dropped from the sample.
4. In two schools questionnaires were mailed to students and they were asked to return them by mail because a convenient time to fill out the questionnaire was unable to be arranged. See Table 2 for a summary of the return rates.

### The Data Analysis

The data were analyzed in the following manner.

1. Frequencies, percentages and means were calculated for the responses of each group.
2. Anecdotal remarks were categorized and summarized for the three groups.
3. T-test and Chi-square analyses were used to compare the responses of the transfer group and the immersion group and then the immersion group and the regular group.
4. Profiles of the transfer students were constructed by determining 3 categories of students on the basis of what the students said were very important factors in their decision to leave the program. Then the profiles described other patterns of responses for each of the categories.

CHAPTER 4  
RESULTS OF THE STUDY  
Introduction

In this chapter the results of the major questions asked in the study are presented. The results are presented in the following order.

1. The rate of transfer from the secondary immersion programs in the four districts is documented.
2. The results of the questionnaires given to each of the three groups, transfer students, immersion students and regular program students, are presented (frequencies and summaries of anecdotal remarks per group).
3. The results of the questionnaires for the transfer students are statistically compared to the results for the immersion students still in the program. Then the results for the regular program students are compared to the results for the immersion program students.
4. Finally, profiles are constructed of the transfer students according to clusters of their attitudes about their experiences in the program. Parallel profiles are constructed for the students still in the immersion program.

Implications of the results of the study for the secondary immersion program are discussed and

recommendations arising from the results are made in Chapter Five.

#### Rates of transfer from the Immersion Programs

Enrollment figures were collected by grade for each of the schools in the participating districts starting with the 1983-84 school year. These figures included students who had transferred into the program as well as students who had transferred from the program. We have no way of knowing how many students did not actually leave the program, but rather transferred to another immersion program in another district.

Table 3 summarizes the rate of transfer for all four districts between June 1984 and September 1985. As can be seen from the table, the heaviest rate of transfer seemed to occur after Grades 9 or 10.

Table 3

Enrollment figures and transfer rates

GRADE	SCHOOL YEAR			N*	%**
	1983-1984	1984-1985	1985-1986		
8	290b	307a			
9	198c		250a	57	19%
10	165d		189b	101	35%
11			101c	97	49%
12			86d	89	54%

\*Number of transfers since June 1984 or September 1985

\*\* Percentage of transfer

Cohorts a,b,c and d= Each letter represents the numbers in each class in 1983-1984 or 1984-1985 and then in 1985-1986.

Total of a,b,c and d= 960 (1983-1984 and 1984-1985)

Total of a,b,c and d= 626 (1985-1986)

Difference (number of transfers)= 334

Total overall rate of transfer (334/960)= 35%

Note- Figures for the 1984-1985 school year were not included as they were not available at all schools.



## Questionnaire Results for the Three Groups

### Introduction

In this section the questionnaire results (frequencies and anecdotal remarks) are presented by group according to responses to families of questions. Copies of the questionnaires and raw data for each of the three groups may be found in the Appendix A.

Results do not add up to 100% for each question because students could check more than one response or some students made no anecdotal remarks or made two or more different remarks in the space provided. Some direct quotations have been included where they are useful in understanding the nature of the results.

### TRANSFER STUDENTS

1. Early vs late immersion students leaving the program.

The percentage of students from the early immersion program who had transferred was 51.2% while for the late immersion students it was 34.5% (n= 84). Other cases such as being Francophone or having come from another program accounted for 14.3% of the transfers.

2. Perceptions concerning the usefulness of a bilingual education.

a) Reasons for undertaking a bilingual education.

A summary of the results of this question are presented in Table 4.

The most important reason for pursuing a bilingual education according to the transfer students was for better job opportunities; 88% indicated that this was a very important or moderately important reason. The satisfaction of knowing another language was also notable, with 84.6% percent indicating this reason as moderately important or very important. There were very few "other reasons" written in by the students than were listed on the questionnaire, the most frequent other reason being that the student's family spoke French.

b) Plans to use or maintain their French in the future.

A large majority of the transfer students (88.1%) indicated that they were indeed planning to use or maintain their French in the future.

The majority of students took the opportunity to elaborate on the answer to this question through anecdotal remarks. Their explanations include :

planning to use their French in job related ways	(n= 28, 34%)
using French in travel and living in other cultures	(n=26 , 31%)
using it in further education	(n=19, 23%)
using French in family related activities	(n=13, 16%)

Table 4

Reasons for pursuing a bilingual education  
Transfer students N= 84

	Very import.	Moder. import.	Slight. import.	Not import.	Mean*	Rank
The satisfaction of knowing another language	54.8%	29.8%	13.1%	1.2%	3.4	(2)
Better job opportunities	57.1%	31.0%	9.5%	1.2%	3.5	(1)
A better education	27.4%	50.0%	15.5%	6.0%	3.0	(3)
The challenge of learning another language	19.0%	33.3%	32.1%	14.3%	2.6	(4)
The development of cultural understanding	20.2%	27.4%	32.1%	17.9%	2.5	(5)

\*mean based on a 4 point scale where 4 is very important and 1 is not important.

It is interesting to note that although these students have transferred from the program, at least 34% still feel that they will be able to use their French in job related ways and that 31% would like to use their French to travel or to live in French-speaking areas. Only 23% mentioned that they would study French in further education.

### 3. Reasons for leaving the program.

This is the key question for the transfer students.

Please see Table 5 for a summary of the results.

The following reasons were seen by over half the transfer students as somewhat significant or very significant factors in their decision to leave the program: objections to the content of the courses in French (73%), a perception that better grades would be obtained in English (68%), a dissatisfaction with the quality of instruction (69%), difficulty with the courses in French (57%) and a perception that the expectations of the teachers in the immersion courses were too high (53.5%). Almost all of the students who indicated that they left the program to enrol in another special program specified the International Baccalaureate (I.B.) program (23% of all the transfer students). In one school 15 of the 35 cases representing 18% of the total of 84 transfers were I. B. transfers.

Table 5

Reasons for leaving the program  
Transfer students N=84

	Very significant	Somewhat significant	Not significant	Mean*	Rank
I felt I already knew enough French.	8.3%	16.7%	75.0%	1.33	(10)
I didn't like the content of the courses	28.6%	44.0%	27.4%	2.01	(3)
I didn't like the choice of courses.	20.2%	29.8%	50.0%	1.70	(7)
Scheduling affected other electives.	27.4%	19.0%	52.4%	1.74	(6)
I was having difficulty with the courses.	33.3%	23.8%	42.9%	1.91	(4)
I felt I would get better grades in English.	39.3%	28.6%	32.1%	2.07	(2)
I found the teacher's expectations too high.	4.5%	19.0%	46.4%	1.88	(5)
I was not satisfied with the quality of instruction.	44.0%	25.0%	31.0%	2.13	(1)
I didn't like the idea of having to write Prov. exams in Eng. in subjects that I had taken in Fr.	9.5%	20.2%	67.9%	1.40	(9)
I didn't feel Fr. would be useful to me in the future.	4.8%	3.6%	90.5%	1.13	(11)
I wanted to enrol in another special program.	23.8%	2.4%	58.3%	1.59	(8)

\*Mean based on a three point scale where 3 is very significant and 1 is not significant.

Here are some quotations which reflect the nature of the comments anecdotal remarks of the transfer students about why they left the program.

The main reason why I dropped the course was because of the workload which was affecting my other marks, which I considered more important to my future job plans.

The teachers were not fair to the kids that were slow learners.

I am sure that in a few years it will be a great program but right now I don't think the curriculum is set enough.

It was very boring and in Socials they were doing a different program than people in the English program.

I thought when I get to Grade 12 I'm going to know nothing on the final.

I couldn't enroll in Immersion and the I.B. program at the same time.

In the question asking whether marks received in the immersion courses reflected the amount of effort put forth by the students, 56% said that they did. However, almost half of the transfer group took the opportunity to comment that the evaluation system was in some way unjust.

no-depends on teacher,

no return for hard work (n= 38, 46%)

unmotivated, could work

harder, got grades anyways (n= 9, 11%)

Some of the following quotations reflect the interpretation of the students about what is fair.

The teachers seemed to grade us as if we were actually French.

I think that if you like the course and make an effort to understand you'll do well.

My English marks went down as a result of my French courses.

The instructions weren't clear and the expectations too high.

I worked really hard and my grades did not show it at all.

In relation to whether students' grades had changed since transferring to the English program, 66.1% said their grades had gone up in French, meaning that they were still enrolled in a French as a Second Language course. Fifty-two percent (52%) said that their marks had gone up in Social Studies. Only 35.7% said they had improved in Math but not all students had been taking Math in French as a part of secondary immersion. Others said their grades remained the same for the large part.

When asked specifically about the degree of satisfaction the transfer students had felt with the selection of the courses and the content of the courses in immersion, the students were more dissatisfied (36.9%) with the content of the courses than with the choices offered (29.7%). Suggestions for courses that could be offered indicated that the students would like more choice in the number and

the types of courses to be taken. Suggestions made are summarized as follows:

more selection,

non academic, electives (n= 17, 21%)

not Consumer Ed., less

compulsory courses (n=6 , 7%)

c)more oral courses (n= 10 , 12%)

#### 4. The use of French outside the school setting.

The fifth theme of questions centered around the perceptions of the student concerning the use of French in real life situations. A high percentage of the transfer students (77.4%) considered exchanges to be useful or very useful, whether or not they had actually taken part in one.

The transfer students felt that they didn't use their French very frequently outside the school, but that the three situations where they used it the most were in speaking to other French speaking people (29.8% said frequently or always) , when speaking to relatives (23.8%) and when travelling (23.8%).

#### 5. Future plans

In relation to the future plans of the transfer students, 66.7% said it was very likely that they would go to university and 46.4% also said they would very likely



travel. Thirty-five percent said they would very likely look for a job and only 23.8 % said they would very likely attend a college or other post-secondary institution. A large percentage plan to attend some sort of post-secondary institution, and when asked about language preference, 51.2% said they would like to attend an English-speaking university and 42.9% said they would like to attend a bilingual university, if possible.

6. Attitudes about the positive and the negative aspects of the experience of being in French immersion.

First of all, here is a summary of what the students liked best about the program:

experience of learning the language, exchanges, using the language	(n=70, 83%)
friends, close knit group	(n=16, 19%)
challenge, bright class better education, some good teachers	(n=7, 8%)

It is clear that what pleased the students the most about the program was the here and now experience of learning and living in the language.

Here are some quotations concerning the favorable perceptions about the program.

I liked to be able to speak French, to be that much more above English students. I also like being with the same people every year. We sort of became a family.

The Communications course. It was fun and I understood what was going on. I can understand French and I can speak; I just can't write it.

I liked the idea that I was learning a second language to educate myself; I understand French and I like to speak the language whenever possible.

In the younger grades we had such a good time. We got to go on many field trips and the course outline was very organized. French immersion provided me with a challenge and for that I am truly grateful. I wouldn't change a thing in the early years of my French immersion experience.

The comments concerning the negative aspects of the program as identified by the transfer students mostly have to do with the students' feelings about the content of the courses, with their perception of the quality of instruction or with the student's relationships to the teachers involved.

They may be summarized as follows:

teachers too demanding, (n= 37, 45%)

poorly trained

too difficult, demands, (n= 23, 28%)

pressure

poor quality of courses,

lack of interest, no oral (n=23, 28%)

lack of selection, choice (n= 17, 20%)

The following quotations may illuminate the various concerns of the transfer students. The different interpretations of what is a positive and what is a negative aspect suggest that we are dealing with several different types or profiles of students.

- not very much emphasis in certain subjects like Socials (content)
- books aren't very useful (rely on teacher)
- don't use much French in B.C.

The teaching staff was inadequately prepared to teach students with different levels of learning. They either expected too much or didn't teach anything at all relevant to the course.

We were called a lot of names due to our program. We were sometimes called last for sports and activities in elementary school. In other words, we were classified as a lower class.

I found the pace was too fast for me. I couldn't grasp some of the information and I'd fall behind.

You do not speak enough orally in class, and the Socials and Consumer Education courses are not learning ones but memorizing ones.

Too much grammar is expected of us; there was a lot of work that was unnecessary and very hard, too much homework that took up a lot of my free time.

Not only does it use electives, but courses are invented just to meet the government requirement of 40%. I would rather have less French than have courses like Communications.

#### Suggestions for the program

Again, in the suggestions for the improvement of the program, many of the comments are teacher-related. Some

have to do with adding more variety and choice to the program:

more variety of courses,  
less compulsory, combine  
L.B. with Fr. imm., offer  
Fr. for ex-imm. students (n=25, 30%)

higher quality, better teachers,  
more teachers (n=30, 36%)

more oral work, interaction (n=14, 17%)

Some of the following remarks lend further explanation to these categories of suggestions by the transfer students.

Make it more interesting and follow the same program as the English.

Make a firm curriculum and screen the teachers on personality instead of just resume.

The teacher should go at a slower pace and see to every student's needs. He should make the course interesting yet still educational.

-more interaction between other French schools (exchanges), French community (Centre Culturel)

Perhaps more of an emphasis on cultural aspects of French (studies on French-speaking nations, visits to French areas in Vancouver, etc.) Classroom discussions on a variety of topics could also be encouraged.

Number of courses taken and materials studied should be optional (except language). Could be compared to the International Baccalaureate programme.

7. Opinions about high school in general and other remarks.

The large majority of the transfer students (78.5%) said they were satisfied or very satisfied with high school in general.

Here is a summary of the types of remarks made about high school in general:

more responsibility, (n=12, 14%)

less strict, better

teacher relations

more interest, motivation,

choice (n=15, 18%)

less exams, more thinking (n= 8, 10%)

#### IMMERSION STUDENTS

##### 1. Numbers of students from early and late immersion.

Within the sample of students still enrolled in the immersion program, 46.1% are from early immersion, 44.5% are from late immersion and 8.5 % are other cases such as coming from a Francophone background.

##### 2. Reasons for pursuing a bilingual education.

As can be seen from Table 6, many of the immersion students attached importance to all the reasons for pursuing a bilingual education listed in the question. The most

frequently mentioned as very important or moderately important was for better job opportunities (96.1%).

A vast majority of immersion students (91.4%) said they were planning on using or maintaining their French in the future.

The following ways of maintaining and using French in the future were mentioned:

job related practice	(n=63, 50%)
travel, living in another culture	(n=52, 41%)
in further education	(n=20, 16%)
in family situations	(n=9, 7%)

Table 6

Reasons for pursuing a bilingual education  
Immersion students N= 128

	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Unim- portant	Mean*	Rank
The satisfaction of knowing another language.	41.4%	49.2%	9.4%	0	3.32	(2)
Better job opportunities	78.1%	18.0%	3.4%	0.8%	3.73	(1)
A better education	43.8%	42.2%	11.7%	1.6	3.27	(3)
The challenge of learning another language	21.9%	19.7%	37.5%	10.9%	2.63	(4)
The development of cultural understanding	20.3%	30.5%	32.8%	14.8%	2.57	(5)

\*mean based on a 4 point scale where 4 is very important and 1 is unimportant.

3. Levels of satisfaction with certain aspects of the program.

Table 7 provides a summary of the results of the question dealing with levels of satisfaction concerning specific aspects of the program.

From these results we can see that students seem the most satisfied with the amount of French they are learning (74.2% satisfied or very satisfied) and the least satisfied with the choice of courses (37.5% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied), their marks in the immersion courses (30.5%), the content of the immersion courses (24.2% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied) and the quality of instruction (23.7%).

Some of the following quotations add detail to the results provided by the student ratings.

Capabilities have been good, but the quality of instruction poor. Teachers were not organized, prepared or challenging and interesting. More discipline is needed in the classroom.

The amount of films and such in French is very limited in courses and books at our level in vocabulary are stupid or if they are interesting the language is too hard.

I would like to be learning more French at this time instead of it becoming stagnant (like it is).

It's harder to achieve high marks in French than it is in English.

I plan also to take I. B. My French immersion courses do not qualify as I. B. French.

The courses I am taking right now are very good and I'm enjoying them and learning a lot.



Table 7

Levels of satisfaction with the program  
Immersion students N=128

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Undec. or neut. sat.	Dis sat.	Very dis.	Mean*	Rank
The amt. of French I am learning	13.3%	60.9%	12.5%	12.5%	0.8%	3.73	(1)
The content of the courses	8.6%	32.8%	33.6%	24.2%	0.0%	3.26	(6)
The choice of courses	4.7%	29.7%	28.1%	35.9%	1.6%	3.00	(7)
The scheduling of the courses	7.0%	50.0%	25.0%	10.9%	2.3%	3.50	(2)
My marks in the immersion program	14.1%	33.6%	21.9%	26.6%	3.9%	3.27	(5)
The expectations of the teachers	7.8%	44.5%	30.5%	14.8%	2.3%	3.40	(3)
The quality of instruction	14.1%	28.1%	32.0%	18.8%	3.9%	3.31	(4)

\*mean based on a 5 point scale where 5 is very satisfied and 1 is very dissatisfied.

When asked if the grades received in the French immersion courses reflected the amount of work put into the courses, 61% of the immersion students said yes. The immersion students added the following variety of comments:

No, unjust, teacher related  
work harder than Eng. (n= 28, 22%)

Unmotivated, don't work and  
still get by (n=36, 28%)

According to the results of the questionnaire, students are required to take three or four courses out of eight in French for Grades 8, 9 and 10. These courses include Francais, Social Studies, and two others among Math, Communications, Consumer Education, Science and P.E. The school determines which courses will be followed in French and students are usually either enrolled for all four courses in French or they are not allowed to register for any. In Grade 11 students take Fran\ais and Social Studies; sometimes there is a French course when Fran\ais is divided into Language and Literature. In Grade 12 students take one immersion course, Fran\ais. When asked about what other courses could be offered, the students had a wide variety of suggestions for electives. They seemed to indicate their need for choice and for some non-academic courses that could be oriented towards discussion. Twenty-four percent (24%)

of the immersion students suggested a wider variety of electives while 4% specifically suggested that Consumer education was not a good choice to be offered in French because the terms were complicated and there were no materials available in French.

The possibility of having to write provincial exams in English in subjects that were studied in French was a concern for 54.8% of the immersion students. Thirty-nine percent (39%) said it was not a concern.

#### 4. The frequency of the use of French in real life situations.

Students in the immersion program still do not tend to use their French very frequently outside of class time. Students indicated they used their French mostly when talking with other French-speaking people (30% responded always or frequently) and when travelling (25.8%).

Although students do not use the French they are learning extremely frequently, their attitude towards exchanges indicates that they would highly value such opportunities to interact with speakers of the language. Most of the students (84%) said that exchanges were very important or quite important as experiences for immersion students.

#### 5. Future plans.

A large majority of the immersion students (77.3%) said it was very likely that they would be going to university and another 25.8% said they would be going to college or some other sort of post-secondary institution. Thirty-one percent mentioned travelling as very likely and only 19.5% said they would likely look for a full time job.

English-speaking universities appealed to 46.2% of the students while bilingual universities appealed to 49.2% of the immersion students.

#### 6. Positive and negative attitudes about the program and suggestions for its improvement.

There were many positive remarks concerning the experience of learning the language and the enjoyment of being able to use it. The following themes were notable:

experience of learning and using the language, exchanges, oral	(n= 96, 76%)
world cultural understanding	(n= 19, 15%)
challenge, bright class, some good teachers	(n= 17, 13%)
friends, small close knit group	(n= 24, 19%)

The following quotations from students about their positive experiences in the program add depth to the preceding summary of remarks.

The introduction to French authors and poets and the added study of grammar that can also be applied to English courses.

That we are learning another language. It also makes us work harder so I think that in some ways we will be better able to cope with more work in the future.

I like knowing another language and being able to understand a little bit more about the world.

You stay with the same group of people so you don't get as nervous during oral presentations.

It's fun, a challenge and I think it will help me later on in the future.

The activities such as immersion exchanges. We benefited a lot from many of the extra-curricular activities. The courses are challenging.

The major negative aspects of the program mentioned seem to center around the lack of choice of courses, the quality of the content of the courses, the motivational factors related to the teachers and the fact that sometimes the students will have the same teachers for the same subjects for several consecutive years. The following themes provide a summary:

Inappropriateness of some courses where terms, materials difficult and inferior

(n= 29, 33%)

harder than English, too much work, hard to

understand, interferes with English	(n= 13, 10%)
quality and preparation of teachers, attitude of teachers	(n= 28, 22%)
tedious, boring content, repetitive	(n= 38, 30%)
repetition of same teachers	(n= 25, 20%)
lack of choice, electives, input from students	(n= 75, 59%)

The following remarks may serve to clarify this summary of the anecdotal remarks.

It limits the un-academic side of you. You have less electives, especially in the junior years.

We should not be forced to take a course in French if we don't want to. eg. Consumer Education

The material that we use in the courses is not as advanced as in the English courses and sometimes there just isn't the material in French to use.

During elementary school I had many problems that were overlooked. Now they are extremely evident. The program gets frustrating.

Courses are too hard, so lots of people drop out, so their parents won't bug them about their marks.

Being together in one class with two teachers (same teachers every year)

There is nothing negative about the program as a whole ; just make sure you get good teachers.

The suggestions made for improvements to the program follow directly from the comments concerning the negative aspects. Students recommend more choice of courses and

teachers and would like to feel motivated to use the language. Here is a summary of the major points:

a larger variety of  
good teachers (n= 53, 42%)

more oral, more opportunity  
to use the language (n= 26, 20%)

more interest, motivation (n= 42, 33%)

more choice, electives (n= 79, 62%)

The following remarks reinforce the suggestions.

There should be more creativity and interest in the courses. If a person has chosen the French program because they like French, then the course should be fun.

More subjects in French; more exchanges (elementary and secondary school) for longer periods of time. Get better teachers and we shouldn't be stuck with the same teachers all the way through high school. It's boring!

Better organization, more teachers.  
Structured closer to normal English courses.

I think that if you're doing poorly in a French immersion course, and you are capable of better in the English course, you should be able to switch that course but still be in French immersion.

#### 7. Attitudes and suggestions about high school in general.

A large majority (89.9%) of students in the immersion program said they are satisfied or very satisfied with high school in general.

Here is a summary of the anecdotal remarks they made concerning high school in general:

more electives needed	(n= 14, 11%)
need better teachers, more help	(n= 14, 11%)
am learning, enjoying	(n= 28, 22%)
less stress, exams, less rote learning	(n= 16, 13%)
smaller classes, more funds materials	(n=11, 9%)
more extra-curricular	(n= 9, 7%)

### STUDENTS IN THE REGULAR PROGRAM

#### 1. The type of program being followed.

Fifty-one percent (51%) of the regular English program students said they were following a university entrance program and another 41% said they were taking a combination of programs that would still permit entrance to post-secondary institutions.

#### 2. The satisfaction level with various aspects of the program.

Students seemed reasonably satisfied with particular aspects of the regular English program. A large majority (82%) of the students said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the amount they were learning. The lowest level of satisfaction was with grades received, where only 53% were satisfied or very satisfied, and with the



expectations of the teachers, where only 54% were satisfied or very satisfied.

Students added the following types of anecdotal remarks when asked to rate specific aspects of the program:

positive, school, teachers, program (n=23, 22%)

negative, teachers, interests, demands (n=16, 15%)

negative, space, funds  
large classes (n= 9, 9%)

When asked whether or not marks reflected the amount of work put into courses, 78.4% of the students said yes and 21.6% said no. The following anecdotal remarks clarify somewhat the answers:

no, unjust, teachers (n= 11, 11%)

don't work (n=10, 10%)

### 3. Plans for the future

Fifty-three percent (53%) of the students in the regular program said they were very likely to go the university and another 25% said they would be attending a college or other post-secondary institution. Fifty percent (50%) said they would be looking for a full time job and 27% said they would travel.

### 4. Positive and negative aspects of the program.

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the students in the regular program said they were satisfied or very satisfied with high school in general. Here is a summary of the

anecdotal remarks they made. The most positive aspect of the program seemed to be the choice involved in the courses and the selection of studies available. The most frequent negative comment had to do with the content of the courses and the demands made on students. This comment may have been shaded by the fact that most of these questionnaires were completed near the end of the year where pressures are the greatest. Some students (17%) mentioned that teachers were good and others suggested that the quality of teachers could be improved and that the teachers could do more to help students (30%). The following provides a summary of the remarks concerning the positive aspects of the program:

course, selection, organization	(n= 86, 83%)
teachers good	(n= 18, 17%)
friends, social aspects	(n= 27, 26%)

Students' opinions about the negative aspects of the program are as follows:

courses, content, demands,	(n= 72, 69%)
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teachers, quality, demands, personality	(n= 29, 28%)
rules, administration.	(n= 8, 8%)

d) overcrowding, lack of funding (n= 10, 10%)

Finally, suggestions are summarized below:

more choice of courses, less exams, pressure	(n= 78, 75%)
better teachers, more help	(n= 31, 30%)
more social aspects	(n= 15, 14%)
funding, class size	(n= 19, 18%)

## Comparisons Among the Groups of Students

### Comparing the transfer students with the immersion students

The questionnaires were designed to allow some comparisons between the answers of the transfer students and the answers of the immersion students. The discussion of the results of these comparisons have been organized around certain key questions.

1. Are there more early immersion students transferring from the program than late immersion students?

Among the immersion group, 46.1% came from early immersion and 44.5% from late immersion. Among the transfer group, 51.2% were from early immersion and 34.5% from late immersion. According to the Chi-square analysis there was no significant difference between the ratio of early vs late immersion students enrolled in the program and the ratio leaving the program ( $\chi^2=1.07, df=1, p>.10$ )

2. Are there proportionally more boys than girls transferring from the program or visa versa?

Table 8 represents the numbers of boys and girls among the transfer group and the immersion group. The difference proportionally between the two groups is not significant ( $\chi^2= .235, df=1, p>.10$ ).

Table 8

Comparison of numbers of boys and girls

Transfer group and immersion group

	TRANSFERS	IMMERSION
BOYS	38.0%	34.6%
GIRLS	61.9%	65.4%

2. Comparison of reasons given for pursuing a bilingual education (see Table 9).

While the most important reason for pursuing a bilingual education for both the immersion students and the transfer students was for better job opportunities, the immersion students are significantly more committed to this reason ( $t=3.14, d.f.=209, p<.01$ ). The attitude of the immersion group that a bilingual education provides a better education is also significantly more positive ( $t=2.35, df=209, p<.05$ ). Differences between the two groups are not significant concerning other reasons including the satisfaction of knowing another language.

3. Do the students in immersion plan to maintain their French in the future any more than students who have transferred from the program?

Both groups overwhelmingly plan to use or maintain their French in the future (89.2% of the transfers and 91.5% of the immersion group). The summaries of the anecdotal remarks for this question in the descriptions of the results for each group provide further information (see p.70 and p.82 for the transfer group and the immersion group respectively).

Table 9

Comparisons of reasons for a bilingual education  
Transfer students and immersion students

	Mean scores*		t values
	Immersion group	Transfer group	
The satisfaction of knowing another language.	3.3	3.4	0.79 n.s.
Better job opportunities	3.7	3.5	3.14**
A better education	3.3	3.0	2.35*
The challenge of learning another language.	2.6	2.6	0.35 n.s.
The development of cultural understanding	2.6	2.5	0.42 n.s.

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

\*mean scores based on a 4 point scale, where 4= very important and 1= unimportant

4. Are the opinions of the immersion students concerning certain aspects of the program any more favorable than the opinions of the transfer students as they relate to their decision to leave the program? (See Table 10 for a summary of the comparisons.)

The responses to the question about reasons for transfer among the transfer students and those about satisfaction with the program among immersion students may not be compared statistically because of the nature of the questions. The transfer students were asked to indicate on a three point scale which reasons for transfer were a significant part of their decision to leave while the immersion students were asked to rate their satisfaction with aspects of the program on a five point scale. Therefore the number of transfer students indicating that each aspect was a somewhat or very significant reason for transfer is compared to the number of immersion students dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with that aspect.

Firstly, 73% of the transfer students said that the content of the courses was a somewhat significant or very significant reason for their decision to leave the program. In contrast, 24% of the immersion students were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with this aspect. Secondly, the majority of transfer students (69%) said was a somewhat

Table 10

Comparisons of the opinions of the transfer students and the immersion students a

	Transfer students Reason for transfer n=84	Immersion students Dissatisfied n=128
Content of the courses.	73%	24.2%
Choice of the courses.	48.6%	37.5%
Scheduling of the courses.	49.9%	13.2
Grades in the immersion courses.	68.9%	30.5
Teachers' expectations	54.1%	17.1
Quality of instruction	68.9%	22.7

a- The contents of the questions were in slightly different contexts and the scales were different, the transfer question being a 3 point scale and the immersion question a 5 point scale. Therefore, no statistical analysis was undertaken.



significant or very significant factor in their decision to leave the program was the quality of instruction; among the immersion students, 22.7% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with this aspect. A third aspect which seems as much of an issue for the transfer students in comparison to the immersion students is the grades in the immersion courses, as 68.9% of the transfer students said this was a factor in their leaving the program; 30.5% of the immersion students were dissatisfied with their grades. One factor which the transfer students rated as a factor for transfer is the expectations of the teachers. About half of the transfer students (54.1%) said this was a reason for transfer but only 17.1% of the immersion students were dissatisfied with this.

Finally, 50% of the transfer students said they were dissatisfied with the choice of courses while 37.5% of the immersion students said this was a significant reason for transfer. This might indicate that the transfer students could have accepted the lack of choice if it hadn't been for other factors.

In summary we may say that there are definite gaps in the levels of dissatisfaction between the immersion students and the transfer students. At least 30% of the immersion students being more satisfied than the transfer students with the following aspects of the program: content of

courses, the scheduling of the courses, grades in the immersion courses, the teachers' expectations and the quality of instruction.

The anecdotal remarks about what the students liked best and least about the program and what suggestions they would have for improvements to the program are interesting when one compares the answers of the transfer students with the answers of the immersion students. Please refer to Table 11 for a summary of the comparison of these anecdotal remarks.

Both the immersion students and the transfer students look very positively on the opportunity that immersion provided them to learn the language. Both groups see the negative aspects of the program to be associated with the content and the interest level of the courses and with teacher related factors. The immersion students pointed out that one tends to have the same teachers for the same subjects year after year. The main suggestion for the transfer students was in the area of the selection of teachers, while the immersion students continued to make suggestions about the content, interest and choice of courses.

In the question as to whether the amount of work expended in the immersion program was reflected by the grades received, 61% of the immersion students and 56% of the transfer students said yes. A Chi-square analysis demonstrated that there is no significant difference about attitudes on this question ( $\chi^2 = .51, df = 1, p > .10$ ).

Table 11

Comparisons of Anecdotal Remarks a

	Immersion students n=128	Transfer students n=84	
<b><u>Best aspects of the program</u></b>			
a) experience of learning another language, real opportunities, exchanges	76%	84%	
b) challenge	13	8	
c) academic and future related	10	3	
d) for cultural contact and world understanding	15	0	
e) for the friends, group	19	19	
<b><u>Negative aspects of the program</u></b>			
a) inappropriateness of the courses, difficulty, workload	33	28	
b) lack of interest	30	28	
c) quality and attitude of teachers	22	45	*
d) repetition of same teachers	20	-	
e) lack of choice, selection	59	20	*
<b><u>Suggestions for improvement</u></b>			
a) more oral, interest, encouragement, motivation to use language	53	17	*
b) more choice, less compulsory	62	30	*
c) better teachers, better monitored	42	36	

a-Only anecdotal remarks representing more than 10% of the group have been included here.

\* more than a 20% difference between groups.

The anecdotal remarks of the transfer students and the immersion students about the amount of work expended for the grades received further illuminates the attitudes of the two groups on what seems to be an important issue for both groups.

	Transfer students	Immersion students
a)yes, fair	13%	20%
b)no,work harder than grades show	46%	22%
c)unmotivated, don't work and still succeed.	11%	28%

Among the transfer students there seems to be a fairly large group who felt they were working hard and not succeeding at the program. Fewer immersion students feel like this although 28% seem to feel unchallenged.

When asked about suggestions for other courses which could be offered 21% of the transfer students and 24% of the immersion students suggested more selection, including some non-academic courses. Twelve percent of the transfer students made special mention of the need for courses geared towards oral work. The two groups seem to think similarly that more selection would appeal to the students. Here is a comment from one student which sums up many of the feelings expressed.\*

I violently object to taking similar courses to English where terminology (Consumer Ed.) is vital. I think there should be a choice involved in the

selection of courses offered to be taken in French. There should be an entire curriculum provided in both French and English and the choice should be left up to the student as to the number and selection of courses.

5. Do students still in the immersion program perceive themselves as using their French outside of school any more frequently than do the transfer students?

Please see Table 12 for a summary of these comparisons.

Neither group responded that they make more than occasional use of their French language skills outside of the classroom. The most frequent use of the French for the two groups is with other French speaking people, which received a mean score of 3.1 for the transfer students and 3.0 for the immersion students (3 being occasionally). Travelling received the second highest score of 2.5 and 2.8 (2 being hardly ever). These two situations represent real communicative scenarios where French would be naturally useful as opposed to such uses as watching French TV or talking with classmates where English is the first choice.

T-test analysis revealed that there were no significant differences between the two groups on any aspect of this question, except that the transfer students said they used their French more with relatives ( $t=2.81, df=209, p<.01$ ).

Despite these indications that neither group uses French very much in non-school situations, both groups (78.4% of the transfer students and 82.8% of the immersion students) indicated that exchanges were an important or very important way of helping immersion students to achieve their goals.

Table 12

Comparison of the use of French outside school  
Transfer students and immersion students

	Mean scores*		t value
	Immersion group	Transfer group	
Speaking with relatives	2.0	2.5	2.81*
Speaking with friends	2.2	2.4	1.67 n.s.
Speaking with other French people	3.1	3.1	0.27 n.s.
Listening to TV or radio	2.2	2.3	1.05 n.s.
Writing letters	2.3	2.0	1.64 n.s.
While travelling	2.9	2.6	1.58 n.s.

\*mean based on a 5 point scale where 5= always and 1= never.

\*p < .01

n.s.- not statistically significant

6. Are there any differences in future plans between the transfer students and the immersion students?

Please see Table 13 for a summary of these comparisons.

There was a significant difference between the number of immersion students and the number of transfer students likely to go to university ( $t= 2.10$ ,  $df= 210$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The transfer group said they were more likely to find a job than the immersion students ( $t=2.07$ ,  $df=205$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The responses of the transfer students indicated that they were more likely to travel ( $t=2.90$ ,  $df=203$ ,  $p<.01$ ). These results suggest that the students that stay in immersion were more definite about going to university.

In the question concerning what sort of university the students would like to attend, slightly more immersion students (49.2%) said they would like to consider a bilingual university but there were still a substantial number (42.9%) of transfer students who showed interest in the bilingual institution. This difference was not significant ( $t=.84$ ,  $df= 203$   $p>.10$ ).

7. Are there any differences in the opinions of the two groups about high school in general?

The vast majority of both groups said they were satisfied or very satisfied with high school in general. Means were 4.1 (on a 5 point scale) for the immersion students and 3.9

Table 13

Comparison of plans for the future  
Immersion students and transfer students

	Mean scores*		t value
	Immersion group	Transfer group	
Going to university	2.7	2.6	2.10*
Going to college or technical school	1.9	2.0	.07 n.s.
Getting a job	1.7	1.9	2.07*
Travelling	2.1	2.4	2.90**

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

\*mean score based on a 3 point scale where 3=very likely and 1=unlikely.



for the transfer students; there was no a significant difference ( $t= 1.63$  , $df=209$ ,  $p>.10$ ).

#### Comparing the immersion students with the regular students

The immersion students and the regular program students were compared on the following questions.

1. Are the opinions of the students in the regular program about certain aspects of their high school experience any different than the opinions of the immersion students about parallel aspects of the immersion program?

Please see Table 14 for a summary of the comparisons on six aspects of the program. Students, in the regular program are more positive about the content of their courses ( $t=3.97$ ,  $df=236$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The regular students are also more positive about their choice of courses ( $t=4.89$ ,  $df=237$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Thirdly, the regular program students said they were more satisfied with the quality of instruction ( $t=2.09$ ,  $df=233$  ,  $p<.05$ ).

More of the regular program students (78.4%) thought grades reflected the amount of work put forth by students than did immersion students (61.0%). This is a significant difference ( $\chi^2=6.81$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

Table 14

Comparison concerning satisfaction with certain aspects of the program  
Immersion students and students in the regular program

	Mean scores*		t value
	Immersion group	Regular group	
Content of the courses	3.3	3.7	3.97***
Choice of courses	3.0	3.6	* 4.89***
Scheduling of courses	3.7	3.5	1.66 n.s.
Grades in the courses	3.9	3.3	0.77 n.s.
Expectations of the teachers	3.5	3.4	0.68 n.s.
Quality of instruction	3.6	3.3	2.09*

\*p<.05

\*\*\*p=.001

\*mean score based on a 5 point scale where 5=very satisfied and 1=very dissatisfied.

2. Are there differences in the future plans of the two groups?

Please see Table 15 for a summary of these comparisons. In relation to future plans, more immersion students than regular program students said they would very likely attend university within one or two years of graduating ( $t=3.96$ ,  $df=232$ ,  $p<.001$ ). More regular program students than immersion students said they would find a job ( $t=5.91$ ,  $df=228$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

2. Are there differences in the satisfaction levels about high school in general between the immersion students and the regular program students?

Ninety percent of the immersion students said they were satisfied with high school in general as opposed to 78.4% of the students in the regular program, not a significant difference ( $t=1.37$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $p>.10$ ).

Table 15

Comparisons about future plans  
Immersion students and students in the regular program

	Mean scores*		t value
	Immersion Group	Regular Group	
Going to university	2.7	2.4	3.96***
Going to college or technical school	1.9	2.0	0.39 n.s.
Getting a job	1.7	2.3	5.91***
Travelling	2.1	1.9	1.63 n.s.

\*\*\*=p<.001

\*mean scores based on a 3 point scale where 3=very likely and 1=unlikely

## Profiles of the Transfer Students

The transfer students were grouped according to their reasons for leaving the program. This allowed the formation of three different descriptive profiles of their attitudes and opinions about the program and about the usefulness of French to them now and in the future. The transfer students were grouped into the following categories.

1. Students who are dissatisfied with the quality of instruction. Thirty-seven (44% of the transfer students) answered that this factor was a very significant reason for leaving the program.

2. Students who are having difficulty with the courses offered in French. Twenty-eight (33% of the transfer students) cited this as a significant reason for leaving.

3. Students who left the program to take another special program. Twenty-four percent (24%) fell into this group.

The profiles of these three groups of transfer students were as follows.

1. Students who are dissatisfied with quality of instruction.

These students all said (37/37=100%) that the quality of instruction was a very significant reason for leaving the

program. They responded to other key questions in the following manner.

Very significant, or  
moderately significant  
reason for leaving

I didn't like the content of the courses.	83.7%
I felt I would get better grades in th English program.	70.2%
I found the teachers' expectations of immersion students too high	64.8%

Students dissatisfied with the quality of instruction do not seem to feel that the immersion courses are the parallel courses to those offered in the English program. They feel they would learn more and have better teachers in the English program. Sixty-one percent (61%) of this group is from early immersion and 31% from late immersion. This might indicate that the early immersion group is tiring of the program and no longer finding it motivating.

These same students are dissatisfied with the program as it exists for them but they are not necessarily negative about the experience of learning French. Many of the transfer students said the best thing about the program was the experience of learning and using the language and 89% of the transfer students as a whole said they would like to maintain their French in the future. The anecdotal remarks reflect a feeling on the part of this group that the teachers should be more understanding of the students in the

secondary immersion program and try to put some interest into the course content. Here are some quotations from students in this group which may clarify their feeling about the program.

I think there should be one course in Immersion where it is oral because it's a lot more useful than knowing how to write.

Much material was unnecessarily repeated year after year.

The program was very unorganized in the older grades. Course work was not significant.

Provide more oral projects and the note taking straight off the board without knowing what it is about should be cut out.

I feel it was hard as a student to go through a program as unstructured as this one. All the teachers had different expectations in writing and in reading.

Some teachers do not have enough enthusiasm. All they do is give out photocopied sheets and make you fill out a bunch of questions.

## 2. The students who are having difficulty with the immersion courses.

These students (28/28 =100% of this group) said they are having difficulty with the courses offered in French and feel they could get higher grades in the English program. They responded to certain related questions in the following manner.

A very or moderately  
significant reason for  
leaving

I didn't like the content of the courses offered in French	78.8%
I felt I would get better grades in the English Program.	92.9%
I found the teachers' expectations of immersion students to be too high.	85.7%
I was not satisfied with the quality of instruction.	64.3%

Forty-nine percent (49%) of this group was from early immersion and fifty-two percent is from late immersion which is proportionate to the total numbers in the secondary program where slightly more late immersion students were in the program than early immersion students at the time of the study.

These students as well, like the majority of all the transfer students, enjoyed the experience of learning the language and plan to maintain it in the future. They seem particularly disappointed about what happened to them in high school and about their inability to keep up in the immersion program. They also seem frustrated about not receiving help when they were having difficulty. Here are some anecdotal remarks to support this profile.

I went for after school help but couldn't grasp the concepts of the vocabulary.

The grammar part is very hard.



It's hard to get help from parents who are not bilingual and some things such as Math should be taught in English.

The teachers are too strict and expect too much. The amount of work expected is too much. There could be a more friendly atmosphere.

I even got on the honour roll when I left the program. When I was in the program I was near failing.

I tried hard but the teacher didn't have any patience at all.

3. Those students who have left the program to take another special program.

All the students in this group (20/20=100%) said that they left the program to pursue another special program. Fifteen of these students come from the same high school where they transferred to the International Baccalaureate program. They responded to certain other questions in the following manner.

A very or moderately significant reason for leaving

I didn't like the content	65%
I didn't like the choice of courses.	50%
I was not satisfied with the quality of instruction	50%

These students may share some of the concerns of the other two groups, particularly concerning the content and the quality of the courses. They are, however, highly achieving students to be eligible for the I.B. program.

### Conclusions about the profiles

The students who have transferred from the immersion program form three mutually exclusive groups based on their reasons for transferring from the program but they share some of the same concerns. The students still in the immersion program form rather a homogeneous group based on their level of satisfaction with the program; the key element seems to be that 74.2% of this group is satisfied with the amount of French they are learning. This satisfaction appears to keep them in the immersion program despite some dissatisfaction with other aspects.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The discussion of the results of this study is organized in the following manner.

1. The transfer students- what we've learned
2. The immersion students- what we've learned
3. Comparing the transfer students and the immersion students
4. Comparing the immersion students and the regular students
5. Recommendations - what we can do something about!

#### The transfer students- what we've learned

For the purposes of clarity the conclusions will be presented in point form.

1. More students transfer from the program after Grade 9 or 10 than in other grades. This may be due to the fact that after two or three years in the program the students have become more and more dissatisfied with the content and the quality of the courses, particularly if they have had the same teacher for those years. Also, they may become more concerned with getting the best marks possible for

university entrance and they may be thinking of provincial and scholarship exams in grade 12. The policy of government examinations at grade 12 may be a pressure which influences students to take options which will guarantee them the best marks. One would think that taking Social Studies, which is compulsory anyways, and "Français" would not be too high a price to pay to stay in the program at grade 11 and 12 but if one thought that these subjects in French would be draining and marks would be lower then there would be reason to transfer. Morrison (1985) also found that 25% of the immersion students she studied would have preferred Geography and History courses in English

Also, the entrance into the pre I.B. program occurs at Grade 10 and the program starts at Grade 11. As well, students may be interested in other kinds of specialisations in Grade 11 and 12. In some districts students transfer from the Junior High to the Senior High at the end of Grade 10 and this added choice of school may be a factor. It is a limitation of this study that only transfer students who had left the program and stayed at the same school could be polled.

2. It is encouraging that the transfer students see the reasons for pursuing a bilingual experience so positively and that they intend to maintain their French in the future. They certainly do not feel that the experience was a waste

of time or that they will not use their French in the future.

This situation seems ironic. One could not have asked for more positive results in the opinions of the transfer students about the experience of learning the language and about the usefulness of that experience for the future. Yet these students, one third of all the students that began grade 8, and possibly more, do not see the secondary immersion program as the vehicle for their continued involvement with the language.

3. In order to better understand the combinations of factors operating in the decisions of this group to leave the program, three profiles of the students involved have been constructed. These profiles overlap about some factors but they are still useful in understanding the basis for certain recommendations to the program. The largest profile, those students concerned with the quality of instruction and the content of the courses, seek more of a guarantee that they will receive the same educational experience in French as they would in English. They have a high level of satisfaction with high school in general. Most had been in the English program for at least a year when they filled out the questionnaire.

What the students meant by the quality of instruction or the lack of it can be somewhat defined by the nature of the

anecdotal remarks. Some mentioned a lack of interest and a certain repetitiveness about the content of the grammar. Others mentioned the lack of oral work and opportunities for discussion. These remarks have been made before by students in secondary immersion programs (Day and Shapson, 1986a&b, Morrison et al, 1979, 1984). The students seem to be calling for a more communicative use of the language in the secondary classroom, allowing for discussion and less written drill and practice. This need is supported by recent research findings and recommendations (Cummins, Note 1, Swain & Lapkin, 1986).

Swain and Lapkin's study of teacher talk and student talk in grades 3 and 6 revealed that students need more extended interactions in French and they suggest that the situation must be even less conducive to student talk at the secondary level, as Goodlad confirms for secondary classrooms in general (1984).

These sorts of remarks from students also suggest that the teaching style in secondary immersion program may only be appealing to the learning style of a certain percentage of learners, namely what McCarthy (Note 5 ) would call the abstract conceptual quadrant. The interpretation of her work suggests that curriculum should be designed to take into account all learning styles of the students ( Guild & Garger, 1985 ).

The second profile, comprising one third of the transfers, describes students who were having difficulty in the program and who felt they were not receiving the help they needed to be successful. They seek more understanding from the teachers and perhaps a less academic emphasis to the courses. They felt that the teachers did not take into consideration that they were still second language learners. According to them, too many demands were put on them in terms of their written French and in terms of the homework load of the program. Burns (1983) claims that less than above average students are being forced out of the program and that secondary immersion programs must start gearing themselves to more than an elitist group.

The third profile, one quarter of the transfers, represents those students who leave the program to pursue another special emphasis. In terms of the I.B. program, it is considered to be even more work and more difficult than the immersion program but it is also considered to be of a very high quality (see note 4 ). Some of these students sought a higher degree of motivation and interest in the I.B. program. Alternate secondary programs seem to have a place in the secondary system (Ducharme, 1983), so one may not interpret as negative the fact that some students switch to another alternate program as long as it isn't the quality of the immersion program which deters them.

4. The teacher factor comes out quite strongly in many of the anecdotal remarks of the transfer students. Both in terms of methodology and in terms of the difficulty of the course, the abilities of the teachers involved to work positively with their students seem to play a crucial role. This reminds us of Aspy et Roebuck's research (1979) which stresses the importance of the quality of teacher interactions as well as of Goodlad's conclusions (1984) about the importance of the tone of the classroom in making the difference towards a productive educational environment.

Obadia (1984) and Tardif (1985) remind us of the importance of specific teacher training for teachers in the immersion program. Because the secondary immersion program is growing so quickly to keep up with the growth of the program in general, there is strain on the school districts involved to find qualified subject specialists who are also trained as immersion teachers. Teachers who have been hired from a Francophone context or another field of experience may take time to realize fully the special circumstances of immersion students. Available materials written for Francophones need adaptation as well. Teacher training programs for secondary immersion have a challenge ahead to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding system.



## The immersion students- what we've learned

1. The immersion students are very positive about reasons for pursuing a bilingual education. They highly value the satisfaction of knowing another language, the usefulness of French for future job opportunities and the development of cultural understanding through bilingualism. They also perceive a bilingual education to be a better education although this seems to be qualified by some of the factors with which they say they are less than satisfied. Bonyum (1984) found that students continue to value their bilingualism several years after leaving the program. It is encouraging to know that the long term goals of the program are being realized in this manner for those students that remain in the program.

2. Three-quarters of the immersion students are satisfied with the amount of French they are learning in the secondary immersion program. Immersion students also highly value the experience of exchanges and excursions to use their French. One quarter to one third of the immersion students, however, are dissatisfied with the content of the courses, the choice of courses, the expectations of the teachers, their marks in the immersion program and the quality of instruction. They seek courses more oriented to oral use of the language, where they would have an opportunity to use their

communication skills. They would like to have a wider variety of teachers who use a greater variety of motivational strategies. They suggest more elective courses and some non-academic courses in French. They do not see the usefulness of courses where terminology and vocabulary obstruct the meaningful use of the language, as was mentioned about Consumer Education in French. Again, the research about the communicative approach (Cummins, Note 1, Swain & Lapkin, 1986) and about learning styles (Gulld and Garger, 1985 ) would support these recommendations from the immersion students.

Immersion students also object to taking courses in French where the content is perceived as being inferior to the English course. As well, they are concerned that their grades might be lower because they are taking the course in French. The pressures of graduation requirements, examinations and university entrance competition may be working against programs such as the secondary immersion program, which ask something more difficult from its participants. Having the secondary French immersion option recognized as a special commitment (Mian, 1984) and providing incentives via sheltered content courses at the university level (Shapson, 1985) would be two ways of further valuing the program.

3. There does seem to be a place for alternative types of programs in secondary schools today (Ducharme, 1983, Loch, Note 4, Allendale, Note 5). The secondary immersion program is an important alternative for its participants. It seems to be serving valid objectives and will develop further through the clarification of objectives and methodology,

3. The large majority of immersion students are satisfied with their experience at high school in general. They are university bound, yet they say they will maintain their French more in job situations than through further study in French. Half of the immersion students and half of the transfer students said they would prefer to attend a bilingual post-secondary institution if possible. Again, as suggested by Shapson (1985), Edwards et al (1984) and McGillivray (1985), this seems to indicate that if content courses were available for students in French at local universities that they would be welcomed by many immersion students.

### Conclusions about the Comparison of Transfer Students and Immersion Students

The large majority of both transfer students and immersion students value the satisfaction of knowing another language and the importance of the language for job opportunities. A lower percentage of both groups value the

challenge of learning the language and the benefits for cultural understanding. Neither group uses their French extensively outside of the school context and yet both groups plan to maintain their French in the future, largely through job situations. They seem to attach more importance to real life uses for their French such as exchange experiences or talking to other French speaking people. This has been the case since the first study of the opinions of immersion students (Cziko et al, 1978).

What then does distinguish the student who transfers from the one who does not? The anecdotal remarks of the students seem to suggest that the immersion students still believe they are continuing to learn more French and although they are concerned by the various aspects of the program mentioned, they still feel it is worth staying in the program. There also may not be another program that attracts them more. The transfer students, on the other hand, seem to feel that the disadvantages of staying in the program for them have outweighed the amount of French they would gain by staying in the program.

This is where teacher difficulties, mentioned by about one quarter of the transfer students, really become crucial. If a student knows he/she does not learn well from a particular teacher, for whatever the reason, and he knows he will have that teacher for the same subject or a different subject next year, that may be enough to cause him to

transfer. What will happen to the students when they transfer to English is unknown to them at the time of transfer, but at the very least they know that they will receive a greater variety of teachers. For the students who seek more challenge from secondary programs, the still more rigorous I.B. program is available to them.

Conclusions about Comparisons Between the Immersion Students and the Regular Program Students

The students in the regular English program are more satisfied with aspects of their secondary school experience such as the content of their courses, the choice of courses available to them and the quality of instruction. About half of the immersion students and half of the regular program students are satisfied with their grades and the expectations of the teachers, although more regular program students thought the amount of work they did was reflected in their grades. Nevertheless, fewer regular program students than immersion students are satisfied with high school in general.

These results seem to indicate that immersion students are satisfied with secondary school in general but have specific concerns about the immersion program that students in the regular program do not.

From the anecdotal remarks of the students in the regular program we find that these students suggest that high school

should have even more choice and that more responsibility should be given to students at the secondary level. This attitude would confirm Wehlage et Rutter's (1986) recommendation that schools expand what they consider to be useful to include options to suit more students. One third of the regular students also mentioned the need for better teachers. Some students mentioned the increase in class size and the effects of financial restraint on their experience. Some students in each group mentioned the stress of provincial exams and the weighting of the exams so heavily on their final grade to be not a true evaluation of what they had learned. Both groups suggest that their best experiences at high school are those that are directly related to real life situations and to usefulness for the future. Both groups see the way to make their education useful to them is to give them more control over what happens to them in the system. This is an argument used to support alternative secondary programs (Gibbons, 1984, Ducharme, 1983). If the secondary immersion program can succeed in offering students continued growth in the language, which they value, then it has a future as one sort of alternative program.

More immersion students plan to go to university and more students in the regular program plan to find a job after completing high school. This would suggest that even after the students in the two groups had been matched on the basis

of achievement there are more academically oriented students amongst the immersion students. Some of the transfer students are those that did not fit into this above average group. Again, the warnings of researchers such as Burns (1983) cannot go unheard.

### Recommendations

The recommendations based on the conclusions of this study deal with the characteristics of the program which can be adapted and considered as more and more elementary immersion students reach the secondary level in British Columbia. It should be remembered when considering the generalizability of the results of the study, that the Ministry of Education was in the process of finalizing the curriculum and the prescription of materials at this time. Once materials are widely available the tasks of secondary immersion teachers will be facilitated.

The conclusions of this study apply to the four districts involved but the recommendations are intended to apply to any district implementing a secondary immersion program. In order for participating districts to further consider the implications of their own results individual district profiles have been provided to each district involved.

The recommendations involve the following aspects of the program.

1. Objectives of the program.

The objectives of the program do not seem clear to many of the students who transferred and to a substantial number of the students still in the program. They would like to increase their skills in French but are sometimes faced with the feeling that the content of the courses is suffering and that they are working harder for poorer grades because they have elected to do something extra in secondary school. Therefore, the recommendations about the objectives of the program are:

a) that in courses offered in French every effort is made to ensure the quality of the content and that these courses be in fact parallel curriculum to the English courses. Also, students should not be penalized because the course is being offered in French by more work, inappropriate or too difficult materials or an overemphasis on the correctness of the written French when used in content courses.

b) that in the "Français" courses themselves, the objectives of using and improving the quality of the students' French in the four skills be equally stressed. The emphasis in language arts, whether in French or in English, should be on the use of the language in meaningful and creative ways. Emphasis on the writing process and writing for a purpose has experienced success among first and second language students (Cummins, Note 1). Oral interactions where



students speak in extended sentences to native speakers or to one another functionally serve as mini- language lessons (Swain & Lapkin, 1986).

The students in immersion enjoy using the language with French-speaking people. They see being in immersion at the secondary level as a time to continue those oral skills. It must be remembered in all aspects of the program that the students are anglophone and that immersion is a second language acquisition program. Because the students have assessed themselves as being the least confident about their written and oral skills (Day & Shapson, 1985, McGillivray, 1985), they need the opportunity to interact as naturally as possible using oral language, which transfers to an increased facility of written communication (Cummins, Note 1). Recent research into language acquisition (Krashen, 1984) would suggest that students learn very little about the usage of a language through the isolated study of grammatical components. The perspective of the students about the language and the recent developments in language acquisition must be taken into consideration when developing the objectives of the "Français" courses at the secondary level.

2. The choice of courses and the number of courses required at the secondary level.

It is suggested by all three groups in this study that the element of choice is important to students at the secondary level. The prescriptive program of compulsory courses required to receive the provincial graduation certificate in bilingual studies is perhaps not appropriate for all students wishing to maintain their French at the secondary level. For some students the cost of restricted choices is too much. Some students dropped the program because of restricted choices. Those would include students who opted for the I.B. program as well. Others transferred from immersion because of difficulty with one subject in French or a belief that a particular subject like Math or Social Studies would be better suited to them in English.

The intent of the immersion program at secondary school is to maintain and enhance the language skills of the participants while offering a parallel experience in the content areas. Because of timetabling restrictions, the small numbers of secondary immersion students in any one school at the beginning of the program and the challenge of finding fluent French speaking teachers in the content areas, the secondary program in B.C. has opted for the all or nothing approach for inclusion in the program. Schools have largely offered compulsory academic courses such as Social Studies, Math and Consumer Education as part of the program. It is now time in the maturity of the program to attempt to broaden the perspective of the program to enable

it to meet the needs of the wide range of students that are arriving at the secondary level.

Specifically, the secondary immersion program would better meet the needs of a wider range of students if the following changes were implemented.

a) Students should have a choice of whether to pursue the bilingual graduation certificate by completing the number of courses presently required or to enroll in a minimum of the courses offered provided they continue to take the immersion "Français" course. This would allow students to decide on the value of the graduation certificate compared to their own needs. In this way the I.B. students could also possibly continue with the appropriate level of Français while in the alternate program.

b) The schools should make every attempt to offer some other electives at some point, particularly during the junior high years of the immersion students. Some courses that were mentioned by students were Foods, Drama, Media, Journalism, Civilisation and P.E. or Community Recreation. Many of these courses have some hands-on qualities, could involve activities in the French-speaking community, are more discussion and participation oriented. They would involve vocabulary and speaking patterns of a less academic nature, requiring more informal, every day use of the language. They could also treat cultural aspects, such as in Drama, Foods

and Civilization. Development of these courses would be a challenge for teachers, but the courses would not have to be offered every year. They could be offered in alternative years as to coincide with students in Grades 9 or 10 and/or 11 or 12. In summary, some creativity needs to be injected into the secondary immersion curriculum.

3. The content of the courses and the choice of courses have been discussed. This leads us to the most crucial elements of the program, the teachers and the teaching strategies. One of the most crucial points that arose from John Goodlad's (1984) extensive study of schooling was the importance of the tone of the classroom created by the teacher. In his discussion of the beginnings of the secondary immersion programs in Langley, principal Dale Halcrow (1982) could not emphasize enough the absolutely primordial role of the teacher in the success of the program. David Aspy et Roebuck reconfirm in their work (1977) the importance of the quality of interactions between teacher and students, and in fact between all individual members of the educational scene, parents, administrators, support staff, teachers and students. The many theories and studies about learning styles (Guild and Garger, 1985) emphasize the importance of understanding and providing for the diversity of teaching styles and learning styles found among individuals. Teachers are called upon to offer

teaching and learning experiences of a broad enough variety to appeal to all sorts of learning styles amongst students.

All of these ideas from educational literature have a bearing on the teachers of the secondary immersion program as it has a bearing on all teachers. It is particularly relevant here because the students in this study seem to be telling us that what they have experienced so far has been appropriate for only a part of the students. How, then, may the "quality of instruction" be adapted to appeal to a more diverse group of students?

a) Emphasis must be placed on the training and retraining of teachers for the immersion program and particularly perhaps for the secondary program. In this manner teachers may become expert at adapting materials for use in immersion programs and may through discussion and experimentation develop methodology which responds to the needs of the learners.

b) Teachers need to take the time to listen to the opinions of the students concerning the program. Some sort of class meeting format for students in immersion may be appropriate, or some sort of representative council to discuss issues of concern. Students need a vehicle, led by teachers skilled in interpersonal relation, through which to have input into the program and also through which to share some of the responsibility for the program and their level of

participation in it. This could also be a means of planning optional special events for students where they could use their French in situations outside of school.

c) Teaching strategies should be as varied as possible, balancing the four language skills and giving students choices about how to demonstrate their knowledge. Students need variety of presentation and choice of assignment style as much as possible. The anecdotal remarks of the students cry out for this need for diversity. The emphasis must be on meaningful, functional oral and written communication rather than on drill and practice of isolated grammatical points.

d) Teachers and students need to work together on the evaluation components of the immersion courses. The fact that the immersion students and the transfer students think that the marks they receive in the immersion courses do not reflect how hard they work more than the regular students is an indication of the lack of clarity in the objectives of the program and a certain gap in communication between teachers and students in the program. Students should be able to predict the marks they will receive. The least we as teachers can offer our students from the evaluation procedures used in our secondary programs is a clearly defined set of criteria that students understand and to which they can compare themselves.

The fact that many students think they would receive better marks in the English program would indicate that some immersion teachers need to reevaluate their expectations and assure parallel content between English and French languages of instruction. In fact, in content, teaching approaches and evaluative procedures, all teachers in a department should be working together, whether the course is offered in English or in French. Discussion of the grading procedures should take place with students to assure them that evaluation criteria in English and in French courses are parallel.

4. What considerations does this study suggest for post-secondary education? As Shapson (1986) pointed out, the post-secondary institutions in British Columbia have all but ignored the presence of immersion students at their doorstep. There is every possibility that many of the transfer students and the immersion students would be interested in taking one elective or more in French as a way of maintaining and using the language. Not all these students will be interested in taking French Literature to this end. Subjects such as Psychology, Anthropology, Political Science, Canadian Studies and Fine Arts come to mind as possibilities to be offered in French because there is a discussion element to the curriculum, the terminology is straightforward and a lot of junior students in Arts and

Science enroll in these courses. As Wesche (1984) points out about successful experiment of this nature in Ottawa, the class needs to be a language sheltered situation, but the content is not diluted.

Secondly, surely Grade 12 immersion "Français" is worth credit for its first year university equivalent. If the Languages Departments of universities are interested in attracting the most highly motivated and skilled anglophone students they have ever seen come out of the secondary system, they will start responding creatively to the desire of these immersion students to use their French in interesting ways.

#### Implications for Further Study

The results of this project suggest the following questions which could constitute areas of further study.

1. What are the principal teaching strategies used in certain secondary immersion courses and how do these compare to the strategies used in the equivalent English classrooms? How do students feel about the appropriateness of the different teaching strategies? Do certain strategies bring about better achievement, and in which of the language skill areas? The questions center around the need for further investigation of the notion of quality of instruction.

Further studies might involve interviewing teachers and students and observing and recording information about the



interactions in classrooms. These further studies would shed more light on the nature of the anecdotal remarks found in this study.

2. How would students taking the full immersion option (all courses offered) compare to students who only took one or two courses of the package in terms of their French language skills and in terms of their levels of satisfaction with the program? To investigate this question would necessitate that some schools undertook a pilot program in this area.

3. How would the language skills of students who took "Français" plus Social Studies in French progress in comparison to students who took "Français" plus an elective like Drama. How would students' language skills progress if they didn't take Français at all, but only took the content subjects?

4. How would students' language skills compare depending on the teaching approaches used in the "Français" course itself? Would students learning through the communicative approach and the writing process make more progress or be more satisfied than those students learning through more structured, grammatical study of the language?

5. What happens to the transfer students and the immersion students in their years after high school? A long term follow up study could lend insight into the ways that these

students used their French in the future and into whether or not staying in the program until the end of high school made any difference in the long run.

The recommendations arising from the conclusions of the study are not impossible to implement as long as objectives for the direction of the program are clear. The objectives must be to offer students in immersion as many ways as possible to maintain and develop their French within the framework of their secondary school experience.

It is encouraging to know that these students have demonstrated a great deal of satisfaction about their skills in the language and have enjoyed the experience of learning the language. The immersion program is successful in many ways and has evolved, since its inception, as a program which responds to the needs of its learners. It is an example of how the public education system can reflect the changing social fabric of Canadian society. One may be optimistic that the results of this study have pointed the way to enable the immersion program to continue to do so.

A P P E N D I X A

(Transfer students)

OFFICE USE ONLY

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QUESTIONNAIRE  
IMMERSION PROGRAMS AT HIGH SCHOOL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: Male  Female  Present grade: \_\_\_\_\_

This questionnaire is designed to obtain information about your background in French, your opinions of the immersion program, and your plans for the future. Your responses are strictly confidential; your name will not be revealed. Only group results from all students combined will be presented. We have asked for your name only to match information from other questionnaires that you will be completing for the research study.

We may wish to contact you in the future for a follow-up study. Please provide two permanent addresses where you could be reached by mail and/or by telephone in the next few years (parents, close relatives, close family friends, etc., who are not likely to be moving).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

N=84

1. In which grade did you start the French immersion program?

Kindergarten or grade one  51.2%    Grade 6  34.5%    Other  (Please specify) 14.3%

2. How long were you enrolled in the immersion program in the following grades?

	All year	Part of year	Not enrolled
Grade 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 90.5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4.8	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.6
Grade 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 61.9	<input type="checkbox"/> 7.1	<input type="checkbox"/> 27.4
Grade 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 25.0	<input type="checkbox"/> 10.7	<input type="checkbox"/> 48.8
Grade 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.6	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.4	<input type="checkbox"/> 54.8

3a) How would you rate the following reasons for pursuing bilingual education? (For each item, circle the number that best corresponds to you answer.)

	4 Very Important	3 Moderately Important	2 Slightly Important	1 Unimportant
The satisfaction of knowing another language.	54.8	29.8	13.1	1.2
Better job opportunities.	57.1	31.0	9.5	1.2
A better education.	27.4	50.0	15.5	6.0
The challenge of learning another language	19.0	33.3	32.1	14.3
The development of cultural understanding.	20.2	27.4	32.1	17.9
Other (please specify): _____ _____				

b) Do you plan to use or maintain your French in any way in the future?

Yes  88.1%    No  11.9%

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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How much did the following factors influence your decision to leave the immersion program? (For each item, circle the number that best corresponds to your answer.)

	3 Very Significant	2 Somewhat Significant	1 Not Significant
I felt I already knew enough French.	8.2	16.7	75.0
I didn't like the content of the courses being offered in French	28.6	44.0	27.4
I didn't like the choice of courses being offered in French.	20.2	29.8	50.0
Scheduling affected other electives I wanted to take.	27.4	19.0	52.4
I was having difficulty with the courses offered in French.	33.3	23.8	42.9
I felt I would get better grades in the English program.	39.3	28.6	32.1
I found the teachers' expectations of immersion students to be too high.	34.5	19.0	46.4
I was not satisfied with the quality of instruction.	44.0	25.0	31.0
I didn't like the idea of having to write Provincial Exams in English in subjects that I had been studying in French.	9.5	20.2	67.8
I didn't feel French would be useful to me in the future.	4.8	3.6	90.5
I wanted to enroll in another special program (please specify if applicable)	23.8	2.4	58.3
Other reasons (please specify):			

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_

5a) Do you think that your grades reflected the amount of effort you put into the immersion courses?

Yes  56.0% No  44.0%

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_

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5b) How have your grades changed since leaving the immersion program?

	Gone up	Stayed the Same	Gone down
In French	<input type="checkbox"/> 63.1%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25%	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.6%
In Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/> 52.4%	<input type="checkbox"/> 32.1%	<input type="checkbox"/> 11.9%
In Math	<input type="checkbox"/> 35.7%	<input type="checkbox"/> 41.7%	<input type="checkbox"/> 10.7%
In other subjects (please specify the subjects)			
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. How satisfied were you with the following aspects of the French immersion program?

	5 Very Satisfied	4 Satisfied	3 Undecided or Neutral	2 Dissatisfied	1 Very Dissatisfied
a) the selection of courses	2.4%	32.1	34.5	22.6	7.1
b) the content of the courses	3.6%	25.0	33.3	28.6	8.3

Do you have any suggestions about what other courses could be offered? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Since leaving the immersion program, how often have you used French outside of school in the following situations? (For each item, please circle the number that best corresponds to your answer.)

	5 Always	4 Frequently	3 Occasionally	2 Hardly Ever	1 Never
Talking with friends.	1.2%	8.3	41.7	23.8	21.4
Talking with relatives.	7.1	16.7	23.8	15.5	34.5
Talking with other French-speaking people.	14.3	15.5	44.0	13.1	10.7
Listening to T.V. or radio.	4.8	8.3	33.3	19.0	32.1
Writing letters.	1.2	15.5	15.5	15.5	46.4
Travelling.	11.9	11.9	28.6	16.7	29.9

8a) Did you ever participate in an exchange program with French-speaking students?

Yes  47.6% No  52.4%

b) How important would you say exchange experiences are in helping immersion students achieve their goals?

Very important  51.2%  
 Important  26.2%  
 Undecided or neutral  11.9%  
 Slightly important  4.8%  
 Not at all important  3.6%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

9a) Within one or two years of completing high school, how likely is it that you would: (For each item, circle the number that best corresponds to your answer.)

	3 Very likely	2 Somewhat likely	1 Unlikely
Attend university.	66.7	22.6	10.0
Attend a community college or technical school.	23.8	45.2	28.5
Find a full-time job.	34.5	25.0	40.5
Travel	46.4	44.0	8.3
Other (please specify):			

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

b) If you are planning to attend college, technical school or university, please specify the kind of institution that would likely be most attractive to you right now.

English-speaking  51.2%      French-speaking  1.2%      Bilingual  42.9%

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_



10a) What did you like best about the immersion program?

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b) What would you say are the negative features of the immersion program?

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11. What suggestions do you have for changes in the French immersion program?

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12. How satisfied are you with secondary school in general?

Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	19.0%
Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	59.5%
Undecided or neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	17.9%
Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.4%
Very dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.2%

Please comment: 

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13. What suggestions would you have for changes in high school programs in general?

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14. Are there any other comments that you wish to make?

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THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

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QUESTIONNAIRE  
IMMERSION PROGRAMS AT HIGH SCHOOL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: Male  Female  Present grade: \_\_\_\_\_

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This questionnaire is designed to obtain information about your background in French, your opinions of the immersion program, and your plans for the future. Your responses are strictly confidential; your name will not be revealed. Only group results from all students combined will be presented. We have asked for your name only to match information from other questionnaires that you will be completing for the research study.

We may wish to contact you in the future for a follow-up study. Please provide two permanent addresses where you could be reached by mail and/or by telephone in the next few years (parents, close relatives, close family friends, etc., who are not likely to be moving).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

C

1. In what grade did you start the French immersion program?

Kindergarten or grade one  Grade 6  Other  (Please specify)  
 46.1% 44.5% 9.4%

2a) How would you rate the following reasons for pursuing a bilingual education? (For each item, circle the number that best corresponds to your answer).

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Unimportant
The satisfaction of knowing another language%	41.4	49.2	9.4	0.0
Better job opportunities.	78.1	18.0	3.1	0.8
A better education.	43.8	42.2	11.7	1.6
The challenge of learning another language.	21.9	29.7	37.5	10.9
The development and cultural understanding.	20.3	30.5	32.8	14.8
Other (please specify): _____ _____				

b) Do you plan to use or maintain your French in any way in the future?

Yes  91.4% No  6.3%

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the French immersion program? (For each item, circle the number that best corresponds to your answer.)

	5 Very Satisfied	4 Satisfied	3 Undecided or Neutral	2 Dissatisfied	1 Very Dissatisfied
The amount of French I am learning. %	13.3	60.9	12.5	12.5	0.8
The content of the courses.	8.6	32.8	33.6	24.2	0.0
The choice of courses.	4.7	29.7	28.1	35.9	1.6
The scheduling of the courses.	7.0	50.0	25.0	10.9	2.3
My marks in my immersion program courses.	14.1	33.6	21.9	26.6	3.9
The expectations of the teachers.	7.8	44.5	30.5	14.8	2.3
The quality of instruction.	14.1	28.1	32.0	18.8	3.9
Other (please specify): _____ _____					

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you think your grades reflect the amount of effort you put into your immersion courses?

Yes  60.9% No  37.5%

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which courses are you taking in French?

Français  Math  Social Studies

Other  (Please specify the subjects): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you have any questions about what other courses could be offered?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is the possibility of having to write Provincial Exams in English in subjects subjects that you have been studying in French a concern to you?

Yes  54.8% No  39.1%

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. How often do you use French outside of school in the following situations? (For each item, please circle the number that best corresponds to your answer.)

	5	4	3	2	1
	Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Hardly ever	Never
Talking to relatives.	6.3	4.7	18.8	18.8	51.6
Talking to friends.	0.8	3.1	35.9	35.9	24.2
Talking with other French-speaking people.	12.5	19.5	38.3	20.3	9.4
Listening to T.V. or radio.	1.6	2.3	34.4	35.9	25.8
Writing letters.	4.7	14.1	22.7	25.8	32.8
Travelling.	7.8	18.0	39.1	22.7	12.5

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9a) Did you every participate in an exchange program with French-speaking students?

Yes  58.6% No  40.6%

b) How important would you say such experiences are in helping immersion students to achieve their goals?

- Very important  53.9%
- Quite important  28.9%
- Undecided or neutral  10.2%
- Slightly important  3.9%
- Not at all important  2.3%

10a) Within one or two years of completing high school, how likely is it that you would: (For each item, please circle the item that best corresponds to your answer.)

- Attend university. %
- Attend a community college or technical school.
- Find a full-time job.
- Travel.
- Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

	3 Very Likely	2 Somewhat Likely	1 Unlikely
Attend university. %	77.3	18.8	3.9
Attend a community college or technical school.	25.8	39.8	31.3
Find a full-time job.	19.6	28.1	48.4
Travel.	30.5	43.8	21.1

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

b) If you are planning to attend college, technical school or university, please specify the kind of institution that would likely be most attractive to you right now:

English-speaking  French-speaking  Bilingual

Comments: 46.1% 2.3% 49.2%

11a) What do you like best about the immersion program?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b) What would you say are the negative features of the immersion program?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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12. What suggestions do you have for changes in the French immersion programs?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. How satisfied are you with high school in general?

- Very satisfied  21.1%
- Satisfied  68.8%
- Don't know  7.0%
- Dissatisfied  1.6%
- Very dissatisfied  0.8%

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. What suggestions would you have for changes in high school programs in general?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. Are there any other comments that you wish to make?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

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QUESTIONNAIRE  
PROGRAMS AT HIGH SCHOOL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: Male  Female  Present grade: \_\_\_\_\_

N=111

1a) Which of the following best describes the program in which you are enrolled this year?

- University entrance  51.4%
- A commercial program  5.4%
- An industrial arts program  1.8%
- A combination  40.5%

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

b) Have you ever been enrolled in a French immersion program? Yes  3.6% No  96.4%

If so, in what grade did you leave the program? Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the program in which you are enrolled. (For each item, circle the number that best corresponds to your answer.)

	5 Very Satisfied	4 Satisfied	3 Undecided or Neutral	2 Dissatisfied	1 Very Dissatisfied
The amount I am learning.	13.5	68.5	11.7	6.3	0
The content of the courses.	9.9	61.3	20.7	7.2	0.9
The choice of courses.	14.4	47.7	23.4	12.6	1.8
The scheduling of the courses.	12.6	53.2	24.3	6.3	1.8
My grades.	18.0	35.1	18.0	25.2	3.6
The expectations of the teachers.	9.0	46.8	29.7	12.6	1.8
The quality of instruction.	10.8	49.5	28.8	8.1	2.7
Other (please specify): _____ _____					

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you think your grades reflect the amount of effort you put into your courses?

Yes  78.4% No  21.6%

Please comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Within one or two years of completing high school, how likely is it that you would: (For each item, please circle the item that best corresponds to you answer.)

Attend university  
Attend a community college or technical school  
Find a job  
Travel  
Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Unlikely
Attend university	53.2	27.9	14.4
Attend a community college or technical school	25.2	45.9	27.0
Find a job	50.5	26.1	19.8
Travel	27.0	37.8	33.3

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. How satisfied are you with secondary school in general?

Very satisfied  6.3%  
Satisfied  72.1%  
Undecided or neutral  16.2%  
Dissatisfied  5.4%  
Very dissatisfied  0.0%

- 6a) What do you like best about the secondary program?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- b) What would you say are the negative features of the secondary program?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



7. What suggestions do you have for changes to the secondary school programs?

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8. Are there any other comments that you wish to make?

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THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

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