

Motivation to Study Core French: Comparing Recent Immigrants and Canadian-Born Secondary School Students

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As the number of Allophone students attending public schools in Canada continues to increase (Statistics Canada, 2008), it is clear that a need exists in English-dominant areas to purposefully address the integration of these students into core French. I report the findings of a mixed-method study that was conducted to assess and compare the motivation and investment of secondary Allophone and English-speaking Canadian-born students to study core French. Both the quantitative and the qualitative results show that Allophone students are more motivated to study French than their English-speaking Canadian-born peers.

Key words: multilingual language motivation, second language motivation, applied linguistics

À mesure que le nombre d'élèves allophones dans les écoles publiques du Canada s'accroît (Statistique Canada, 2008), il est clair qu'il faut, dans les régions où l'anglais domine, s'occuper nommément de l'intégration de ces élèves dans les cours de français de base. L'auteure présente les conclusions d'une recherche menée à l'aide de plusieurs méthodologies en vue d'évaluer et de comparer la motivation et l'implication d'élèves du secondaire, soit allophones, soit anglophones et nés au Canada, vis-à-vis des cours de français de base. Les résultats tant quantitatifs que qualitatifs montrent que les élèves allophones sont plus motivés à étudier le français que leurs pairs anglophones nés au Canada.

Mots clés : motivation et apprentissage d'une langue seconde, linguistique appliquée

Linguistic diversity among immigrants is identified as a challenge to official language duality in Canada (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2002). Addressing this challenge is particularly pertinent because since 2000, Canada has received a higher proportion of foreign-born immigrants than in the previous 70 years (Statistics Canada, 2001); this number has continued to increase according to the 2006 census results (Statistics Canada, 2008). In addition to the greater number of immigrants, the new millennium has also brought greater linguistic diversity to Canada through immigration. The Allophone population, immigrants whose first language (L1) is neither French nor English, is approximately 26 per cent. The challenge to official language bilingualism is intensified, at present, because the federal government is striving to “double the proportion of secondary school graduates with a functional knowledge in their second official language” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 27). The inclusion of Allophone students in the study of a second official language could provide a means to contribute to the federal goal. There are, however, policies and practices that provide means to exclude Allophones from the study of a second official language, while research provides evidence to support their inclusion.

The present study involves an examination of the motivation of Allophone students to study French in an English-dominant context where they continue to study English as a second language. More precisely, this article presents a response to the question: How does the motivation to study core French as a Second Language (FSL) compare between Allophone students, who begin their study of French in secondary school, and grade-9, English-speaking, Canadian-born students who began the study of French in grade 4. Before presenting the student perspectives, I examine in the following literature review the question of inclusion of Allophone students in the study of French from three perspectives: (a) policy, (b) practice, and (c) research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Policy

Federal language policy in Canada remains silent on the subject of Allophones studying both official languages. To date, policies of the federal government have limited the study of FSL to Anglophones (Government

of Canada, 1967; Government of Canada, 1985) while supporting Allophones to gain one official language, not both.

In the provinces and territories, the study of second languages varies from being compulsory to optional. In Ontario, the context for this study, the study of French is obligatory from grades 4 to 9. However, Ontario, the province with the highest proportion of immigrants in Canada, has no curriculum for introductory French (i.e., French for students who have no background in core French¹) at the secondary level. The Ontario Ministry of Education also has policies that allow Allophone students to be excluded from participating in the core French program, which is obligatory in principle for all students (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1994; Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999). The use of such policies to exclude Allophones from studying French has also been documented in practice.

Practice

Core French. In 1988, Calman conducted a review of core French in the former North York Board of Education in Ontario. Encouraged by teacher and administrator concerns about the integration of Allophone students in core French, Calman decided to collect and review data on Allophone students' inclusion in core French. Teachers cited the difficulties Allophone students have participating orally in French, completing their assigned work, writing in French, and catching up to their peers' level of French. Some school principals interviewed by Calman expressed the opinion that French presents an additional, perhaps unnecessary, obstacle for Allophone students. Calman discovered that the Allophone students performed as well as their Canadian-born peers as measured by the study's listening test.

As in Calman's (1988) review, the teachers in Carr's (1999) research identified challenges in the integration of Allophone students into core French. Carr's study group of 14 generalist teachers, who in addition to mainstream courses also taught core French, identified the need to integrate Allophone students as one of their biggest concerns. Some teachers in Carr's study were concerned that these students, who had not yet

¹ The study of the French language as a subject, in Ontario, is usually for 40 minutes a day beginning in grade 4.

mastered English, were required to learn French, whereas other teachers saw the French class as a time in which they could function almost on par with their English-speaking peers.

Taaffe, Maguire, and Pringle (1996) discovered a variety of practices pertaining to the inclusion of Allophone students in the study of French within one school board. Within the Ottawa-Carleton School Board and under the provincial policy that requires the study of French, the researchers discovered schools that practised withdrawing Allophone students from French and other schools that required that all students attend FSL classes. Similar to Calman (1988), where Allophone students participated in the core French program, Taaffe et al. (1996) found that these students performed as well as their Anglophone peers.

By means of a questionnaire given to all secondary school principals and guidance heads in a large urban school board in southern Ontario, Mady (2007) discovered that, contrary to policy, none of the administrators mandated FSL courses for all their Allophone students.

The variety of practical experiences presented above – from concern for, to encouragement of Allophone students' participation in FSL programs, from obligatory integration of Allophone students in FSL to their exclusion – suggests that decisions on the inclusion of Allophone students in French are made without knowledge of the students' perspectives. Such decisions in combination with the increasing number of Allophone students in Canada highlight the need to examine more purposefully the views of the Allophone students about studying core French to better inform parents, teachers, administrators, policy makers, researchers, and students.

Previous Research

In the previous section, I have noted that policy and practice provide means to exclude Allophone students from the study of French; however, research that investigates minority students studying French in Canada (e.g., Dagenais & Day, 1999; Genesee, 1976; Taylor, 1992) suggests that Allophone students may have advantages in learning a second official language and thus, supports their inclusion. The following four studies in particular are relevant to the question of inclusion of Allophone students in core French because they are conducted in the official

language-learning context of Canada and the participants are minority-language students.

First, in their comparative study of grade-8 French immersion students' French proficiency, Bild and Swain (1989) compared an English L1 group to two minority language groups: an Italian group and a heterogeneous non-Romance L1 group. The results of the oral and written tests indicated that both groups of bilingual students significantly outperformed the English L1 group.

Second, in 1988, Hart, Lapkin, and Swain compared the French proficiency test results of two groups of middle immersion students: an English L1 group and a bilingual group. The bilingual group outperformed the English L1 group in four of five French test measures, the fluency rating being the exception.

Third, in a core French setting, Calman (1988) compared the grade-8 French listening comprehension tests results of Allophone students ($n=40$) to those of the mean results for the district as a whole ($n=808$). She found no significant difference between Allophone students' performance and that of the system as a whole, indicating that those Allophone students who entered French in grade 6, as compared with their Canadian-born peers who began French in grade 3, performed at a similar level of achievement by grade 8.

Fourth, in her comparative study, Carr (2007) tested the oral and written performance in English of Allophone students enrolled in the Intensive French program² as compared to Allophones enrolled in the mainstream English program. Carr found significant differences in growth in the areas of English oral language and broad language ability by the Allophone students in the intensive French program as compared with their peers in the mainstream English program.

In sum, the rationale for my question centres on the necessity to consider the potential new clientele to second official language learning as provided by the increasingly diverse immigrant population. Whereas federal and provincial policies do not ensure access to FSL for Allophone

² An FSL program delivery format that offers learners a concentrated exposure to French which involves an increase in the allocated hours, usually from a half to a full day exposure to French over one semester usually in grade 5 or 6.

students, research suggests that FSL may be an appropriate program for them.

THE STUDY

Participants

The participants for this research study (101 in total) were secondary school students in a southern Ontario high school who were studying French in three different courses: (a) 30 Allophone students beginning the study of French in secondary school, (b) 33 grade-9, Canadian-born students studying at the academic³ level, and (c) 38 grade-9, Canadian-born students studying at the applied⁴ level. Participants were selected because they were all doing their compulsory secondary school French credit.⁵ After the successful completion of the course, grade 9 or Allophone core French, the study of French becomes optional.

METHODOLOGY

For the mixed method study on which I have based this article, I gathered quantitative data through a questionnaire and qualitative data through interviews. The objective of the study was to examine Allophone students' perspectives on their study of French as compared to the perspectives of their Canadian-born peers. The discussion here is limited to the qualitative data.

Instrument

The interviews (n=12) followed a semi-structured format (Appendix A). All the interviews took place in English despite my offer to have the interview conducted in the language of a participant's choice.

³ Academic courses aim to develop students' knowledge and skills through the study of theory and abstract problems.

⁴ Applied courses focus on the essential concepts of a subject, and develop students' knowledge and skills through practical applications and concrete examples.

⁵ The Allophone students at an introductory level and the Canadian-born students in year 5 of their French study.

Pilot of Interview Questions

In view of the limited research examining Allophone students studying a language of another minority, I conducted focus group interviews to help me expand and refine the study's interview protocol before conducting the individual interviews. The focus group participants were FSL students from three different courses: (a) six Allophone students studying French for the first time in high school, (b) six grade-9 students studying at the academic level, and (c) six students studying French at the applied level. Student participation was solicited through announcements over the public address system and announcements by the students' French teachers. A content analysis of the transcribed data shed light on ideas not only that had been previously identified in literature but also variables that I had not foreseen. I included additional questions about Canadian identity in the interview and questionnaire, for example: What is Canadian identity? Does learning French provide a part of Canadian identity? How will a Canadian identity impact your future? – (for the Allophone participants).

Study interviews

Following the pilot interviews, I conducted semi-structured interviews with six participants on two occasions. The participants were chosen using typical case sampling (Glesne, 1999) based on the answer most frequently occurring for the questionnaire items. The two students who were closest to having the modal response for each variable according to their class grouping were invited to participate. Two typical case representatives from each class grouping, Allophone, grade-9 applied and grade-9 academic, participated in the interviews. The semi-structured interviews were conducted at the school during the school day, usually during participants' lunch period. I intended to spend an hour with each participant; however, each interview took less than half an hour. I surmised that the participants may have been uncomfortable with a stranger one-on-one and were therefore not forthcoming with detailed information. I then invited two representatives of each group to a second interview together, hoping that with a peer the participants would feel more comfortable to share their opinions. These additional interviews

lasted approximately 25 minutes each. The second series of interviews asked the same questions, requesting clarification and more detail.

Qualitative Data Analysis

All interviews (12 in total, each of the 6 participants was interviewed twice) were recorded and transcribed. The participants were given the opportunity to confirm their transcripts. After the transcript confirmation, I read through the interview transcripts, highlighting and coding potentially pertinent information. The research categories emerged from the data: (a) instrumental motivation, (b) integrative motivation, (c) learning context, (d) influence of significant others, (e) acculturation levels, and (f) the importance of learning French.

FINDINGS

Instrumental Motivation

The interviews yielded data pertaining to the category of instrumental motivation, defined as a “utilitarian value of linguistic achievement” (Gardner & Lambert, 1959, p. 266). For example, the participants provided qualitative data in relation to the desire (a) to get a good job, (b) to be educated, and (c) to get good marks. The interviews revealed a collective desire to get good marks. The motivation behind the desire to get good marks, however, differed between the Allophone and the Canadian-born groups. The Canadian-born participants’ responses indicated that they wanted to get good marks to maintain a good average as indicated in the comments below:

I guess I won't take it [French] again because I want to have a pretty average mark in every subject.(grade-9 applied, participant A)

I have to do good in school in order to be on the hockey team.(grade-9 academic, participant A)

Although the Allophone participants were also motivated to get good marks, they expressed different reasons behind that motivation:

If you're gonna get good marks, you're gonna get a good job. (Allophone, participant A)

Good marks means that you are learning French really well. (Allophone, participant A)

My family came here to get a good life, for a good education and a good job. Because my parents can't study right now, I do. (Allophone, participant B)

The interview data indicate that the Canadian-born participants were motivated by marks themselves, whereas the Allophone participants connected marks to the broader view of getting a job, learning a language, and having a good education. One Allophone participant expanded the picture, connecting his marks to his family responsibilities. The participant claimed that his family came to Canada for his future; therefore, he was obliged to get good marks so that he could continue with post-secondary education to get a good job and provide for his family.

In addition to providing clarification of the motivation to achieve good grades, the interviews also added clarity with regards to the participants' desire to get a job and to be educated. The Canadian-born participants' responses denied the impact of French on their future prospects. The rejection is clear in the following responses to the question "Will French affect your future plans?"

No, it won't make a difference. (grade-9 applied, participant A)

I don't think so. (grade-9 academic, participant B)

In response to the specific question about French impacting their job opportunities Canadian-born participants replied:

I don't know. I have no clue. I haven't thought about that yet. (grade-9 applied, participant A)

I don't really think French is that important because like you don't really have to know it to get a job so I don't really concentrate on it. (grade-9 academic, participant B)

These responses emphasize the participants' belief that knowing French would not have an impact on the participants' ability to get a good job.

In fact, none of the grade-9, Canadian-born participants mentioned any jobs for which French would be useful.

The Allophone participants clarified their comparatively more positive responses regarding being educated and getting a good job with the following statements:

The reason why I came to Canada was only to gain a good education. (Allophone, participant A)

I have to be educated to get a good job. French would be useful for banking. (Allophone, participant B)

I like French 'cause lots of people told me that you can get a good job. That's why I really wanted to learn. (Allophone, participant B)

These responses unveil the Allophone participants' belief that French would help them get a good job. It also shows that they connected being educated to getting a good job. In contrast to the Canadian-born participants, Allophone participants interviewed expressed responsibility to their families. This responsibility includes getting a good job and a good education, which they believe Canada is offering. Both participants explained that their parents came to Canada for their children's futures. They also said that although their parents did not speak English or French or have good jobs, they were expected to get a good education and eventually a good job.

Integrative Motivation

The interview data revealed categories related to integrative motivation, the "willingness to be like valued members of the language community" (Gardner & Lambert, 1959, p. 271). All six interview participants expressed concern about their ability to speak French, which influenced their motivation to visit French-speaking countries, speak French, and learn French:

I remember when you go to a French place they will talk to you in French and I don't know French that much. (grade-9 academic, participant A)

If I could speak French well I would like to go to Paris or something but I can't so I don't want to. (grade-9 applied, participant A)

It is hard to speak French. I don't know French that much. (Allophone, participant A)

Through the interviews, the participants distinguished between the general desire to travel and the more specific desire to travel to French-speaking countries. This distinction was due to a perceived inability or a lack of confidence in speaking French. The length of time studying French did not provide a distinction between the groups. Both the Allophone participants, who had been studying French for half of a term, and the grade-9 participants, who had been studying French for more than five years, expressed discomfort using French with Francophones.

These interview responses also provided a distinction in context: in-class use of French and out-of-class use of French. The interview responses indicated that use of French outside the classroom, to French-speaking people or while travelling, was recognizably different and lowered participants' confidence. Such clarifications highlight Norton's (1993) claim that confidence is not fixed but understood in relation to social context. The participant-made distinction between in-class use of French and out-of-class use poses a challenge for French teachers whose purpose for language teaching in the classroom is to help students use the language outside the classroom. The results of such a connection could be a motivation, a state in which the students see no relationship between their actions and the consequences. Dörnyei (2000) claims that such a state would result in students discontinuing their study of French. The school context for the present study reflects this possible result because fewer than 15 per cent of the grade-9 students chose to continue with the study of French when it became optional in grade 10.

Context of Learning

Highlighting their heightened comfort in class, the participants confirmed the distinction made between in-class and out-of-class use of French as noted in the following description of their French-learning experience:

We are learning and the teacher can help, so it is easy. But it is hard to speak it because it is the opposite of what we know. It is the opposite of English. (grade-9 academic, participant A)

I am comfortable with the people because not everyone in the class knows French. (grade-9 academic, participant B)

As we learn more French it is easier for us. Nothing is hard in the life; you just have to struggle for what you want to do. (Allophone, participant B)

Although the participants claim that French is not easy, they gain comfort from the teacher who is there to provide support. The Allophone participants optimistically claimed that as time progresses French becomes easier. Although the participants find French difficult, they are comfortable using French in class. This comfort, however, is not transferred to comfort outside class as demonstrated under the category of integrative motivation. The dilemma, then, is how to keep students motivated when (a) they find French difficult and (b) French remains useful only if used outside the classroom.

Influence of Significant Others

The participants elaborated on their in-class comfort in the interviews because representatives from the three groups identified the support of their teacher. Despite the fact that there were three different teachers represented, the three participant groups revealed that their teachers encouraged them to study French. The participants, however, made a distinction between the influence of their teachers and that of their parents. The Canadian-born participants explained the difference between teacher encouragement and parent encouragement as suggested in the following statements:

If I show my parents my French mark is 68 per cent they don't care. They will say that is all right. But if it were math, English or science they would be much more disappointed because they feel that math is a much more important subject. (grade-9 academic, participant A)

My parents have always thought that it is not a big deal, that it is not a big part of the schoolwork. They would encourage me in math but not in French. (grade-9 applied, participant B)

These statements emphasize the underlying point that although there is not overt negativity towards French, the Canadian-born participants have understood from their parents that French is of less importance than other subjects.

The Allophone participants' statements, however, reveal a supportive parental attitude in regards to the study of French as evident, which is demonstrated in the following conversation:

C. Mady: Can you explain to me what this means. It says "my parents encourage me to study French" but you said no.

Allophone participant B: To helping to French, to my parents are helping me with my French.

C. Mady: Oh, so they can't help you?

Allophone participant B: Yeah, because they don't know French.

C. Mady: Oh. But do they think it's a good idea that you take it or a bad idea?

Allophone participant B: Good idea.

The other Allophone participant interviewed indicated a supportive parental focus on education regardless of subject area by stating:

We really need to learn French. Our parents don't know French; they don't really know English. Mostly they want us to study and get good marks, and a good job. (Allophone, participant B)

The above statements clearly indicate that the parents put Bourdieu's and Passeron's (1977) use of the term "cultural capital" into practice by encouraging their children in certain directions. Bourdieu and Passeron define "cultural capital" as knowledge and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups in relation to specific sets of social norms. They claim that some forms of "cultural capital" have a higher exchange value than others. These parents, having this knowledge, encourage their children more in English, which has a higher exchange value in getting a job in southern Ontario than does learning French. Although not negative toward French, the Allophone parents similarly rec-

ognize that the learning of English increases the probability of success in studying, getting good marks, and getting a good job, and thus increases access to stability in Canada.

Acculturation

In his acculturation theory, Schumann (1986) suggests that the closer one group is, socially, to the target language group, the greater the opportunity for acculturation and thus the greater the language motivation and acquisition. He may, therefore, have anticipated that the Allophone participants, having a greater social distance from the French, would be less willing to acculturate. A distinction from Schumann's acculturation theory becomes apparent throughout the interviews. I asked the participants what it meant to be Canadian before I asked them if French was connected to being Canadian. The Canadian-born participants responded with uncertainty:

Canadian? Hum, I am not sure. (grade-9 applied, participant B)

I don't know-being born in Canada or living in Canada maybe (grade-9 academic, participant A)

The two Allophone participants were able to answer this question with more certainty:

You have to adopt Canadian culture in your life. (Allophone, participant A)

It is important for me to be Canadian because if you go somewhere else you are from Canada-right! If you don't have the citizenship then you can't say you are a citizen. (Allophone, participant B)

In response to the question of whether knowing French is associated with being Canadian, all participants' responses were similar to those of their own classmates while different from those of the other classes' replies. This distinction seems to correspond to Schumann's (1986) acculturation strategies. In responding negatively to the question of whether French is part of being Canadian, the participants in the applied class seem to be adapting Schumann's preservation strategy, in which lang-

uage learners reject the target group. In the interviews this group responded to questions with comments such as:

C. Mady: *Do you think it (knowing French) is part of being Canadian?*

Applied participant A: *No*

C. Mady: *You don't have to know French to be Canadian?*

Applied participant A: *Yeah, you don't, I don't think so, no.*

C. Mady: *Do you think it (French) has anything to do with being Canadian?*

Applied participant B: *No, . . . it is their own choice whether they want to speak French or not.*

The interviews with the participants in the academic class yielded a more positive response from one participant and less certain response from the other:

It's like they say, "it's good to know your mother's tongue because it is in your blood" and I think it's the same as being Canadian. (grade-9 academic, participant A)

Not entirely but it kinda does. Canada is known for French and English speaking . . . A little, here and there, because Quebec is part of Canada and that is where they speak French so I guess it would be part of [being] Canadian. (grade-9 academic, participant B)

The participants in the academic class provided more positive responses than those in the applied class while still expressing some uncertainty. These responses from students in the academic class may reflect Schumann's (1986) adaptation strategy which he describes as one adopted by language learners who are willing to adapt their lifestyles to that of the target group, and they do so to varying degrees.

The Allophone participants agreed that knowing French is part of being Canadian as made evident through the interviews:

C. Mady: *Is learning French part of being Canadian?*

Allophone participant A: *Yeah, of course.*

C. Mady: *Is learning French part of being Canadian?*

Allophone participant B: *Yeah it is true . . . If we live in Canada that means we speak two languages.*

Similar to Schumann's (1986) assimilation strategy, the Allophone participants not only think that French is part of being Canadian, but they are also striving to adopt a Canadian lifestyle, which for them includes French.

In sum, the participants did not group themselves according to Schumann's assimilation strategy. According to Schumann's theory, the Canadians should have a greater social connection with the French and thus have had the greater opportunity for acculturation. The Canadian-born participants, however, demonstrated congruence with the integration strategies that yield the lower degree of language motivation and acquisition. The Allophone participants, on the other hand, have had the greatest social distance from the French, yet they appear to choose the integration strategy that offers the highest degree of language motivation and acquisition.

The inconsistency with Schumann's (1986) theory may be explained in two ways. First, the Canadian-born participants may not see themselves as having a group identity. This lack of group cohesiveness is indicated by their inability to respond to the question "What is Canadian?" and their diverse responses to the question "Is French part of being Canadian?" A second explanation for the lack of correlation with Schumann's theory is that the cohesiveness of the Allophone participants' responses to these questions may indicate a group identity. This group, however, acts in contradiction to Schumann's theory by being more motivated to study French than those participants who share a degree of connection to the French. This may be because of the inability of Schumann's theory to account for motivation in the quest for cultural identity.

Importance of Learning French

The interview data revealed a range of responses, as highlighted in the following statements related to the question "Do you think a compulsory credit in French is a good idea?"

Oh yeah, you have to. I think we should because there are two languages in Canada so you should learn them—like if you visit somewhere else you don't need somebody else to help you. (Allophone, participant A)

Yeah it is good. . . . What the school does is right because they want us to adopt Canadian ways. They want to tell us that you are in a new country. Now you are in a new environment. Now you have to adopt according to your new country. I think it is good.
(Allophone, participant B)

Yeah, because Canada is a two-language country but it also has other languages to it from immigrants and stuff but I think they should learn it for travel and stuff between Canada. (grade-9 academic, participant A)

I don't know. It is just part of school. (grade-9 academic, participant B)

No, I was wondering why we had to learn it and it was dumb.(grade-9 applied, participant A)

No, I think everyone who is willing to speak French could have the opportunity. (grade-9 applied, participant B)

Again, the Allophone participants revealed that language learning is more than simply learning a language. Their interview responses revealed that learning French is connected to adopting a new identity. The Allophone participants strived to get what the Canadian-born participants already have: a Canadian identity. The Allophone participants' responses go beyond compliance with the Ministry of Education's requirement to eagerness to learn French. On the contrary, the Canadian-born participants' responses were diverse, ranging from agreement to discord. Such variance in response reflects their freedom to respond as individuals. This diversity is consistent with a group more secure in its cultural identity and therefore perceiving that they do not need to learn French.

Summary of Qualitative Findings

These interview findings detail the Allophone participants as willing French language learners, more willing than their Canadian-born peers. Different from their peers, the Allophone participants saw French as a means to a variety of desirable outcomes: (a) a good education, (b) a good job, and (c) a Canadian identity. The interviews also revealed commonalities among the groups as the participants distinguished between in-class and out-of-class use of French, highlighting their self-

professed inability to speak and discomfort in speaking French outside the classroom.

DISCUSSION

My qualitative data reveal a motivational pattern indicating a sense of responsibility from the Allophone participants that was not present in the Canadian-born participant responses. The Allophone participants claimed responsibility to get a good education and a good job. Their parents, who came to Canada for their children's futures, instilled this sense of responsibility in them. The parents encouraged the Allophone participants to get a good job and a good education, something that the parents could not get as readily at this time in their lives. This heightened sense of responsibility may have then influenced the Allophone participants to strive in school. The Allophone participants included success in French as part of this determination to do well in school in Canada.

The interview findings document the greater degree of motivation on the part of the Allophone participants and highlight their desire to adopt a Canadian cultural identity. They expressed their desire to belong to the Canadian community through their stated desire to gain citizenship and to learn French which they consider part of being Canadian.

Norton (1993) states that the research that examines the learner group neglects the role of human agency. In regards to the learner group, the present study reveals that Schumann's (1986) group differences may have failed to take into account the role of individual agency as suggested by Norton (1993), as well as a possible group agency in the quest for cultural identity. In the interviews, the Allophone participants confirmed their motivation to study French. This motivation, however, is such that it contradicts Schumann's (1986) theory of acculturation where social distance and degrees of acculturation determine the extent of motivation. The Allophone group, with the greatest social distance from the French community, may have adopted the strategy of assimilation, which would allow for the greatest degree of acculturation and thus motivation.

This differentiation from Schumann's (1986) theory may be explained by the quest for a new cultural identity on the part of the Allophone participants. The interviews allowed for insights regarding the

relationships of power among this study's groups. Contrary to past research, which attributes language learning motivation to an individual learner, or a learner's group identity as described by Schumann, I suggest that the Allophone group in the present study notes individuals who are taking responsibility for a group in hopes of gaining power for themselves and their group. Norton (1993) would use the term *investment* rather than *motivation* to describe the Allophone group's socially and historically constructed relationships to French.

Norton (1993) also uses Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) term "cultural capital" to better describe her idea of investment. Bourdieu and Passeron argue that some forms of "cultural capital" have higher exchange values than others and are therefore better investments. Norton (1993) then claims that learners invest in language learning, understanding that they will reap returns and have access to symbolic and material resources that may otherwise remain unattainable. In relation to the present study, the Canadian-born participants did not seem to see the necessity of investing in learning French. The Canadian-born participants denied that French would help them to get a job, for example. Already reaping the rewards of their Canadian citizenship, access to education and jobs for example, the Canadian-born participants claimed ignorance as to what being Canadian meant and they rejected the possibility that French was part of being Canadian. On the contrary, the Allophone participants invested in learning French in hopes of gaining a Canadian identity, which according to them involved learning French. The Allophone participants expressed the returns on their investment in terms of gaining citizenship and access to better jobs.

Return to the Research Question

How does the motivation to study core FSL compare between ESL students who begin their study of French in secondary school, and grade-9 students who began the study of French in grade 4?

The qualitative findings of this study show the Allophone group was not only more motivated to study French but also differentially motivated. In light of various policies and practices that can lead to the exclusion of Allophone students from the study of French, the present study provides data that, with further research, could support their inclusion.

Additional research could investigate whether including Allophone students in core French would provide support for the federal goal to increase the number of bilingual graduates in Canada. Further research is also needed to examine whether core French provides Allophone students with a subject that they want to study and one in which they can be successful.

This study also presents a practical challenge stemming from the participants' distinction between in-class use of French and out-of-class use of French. The three groups of participants expressed an unwillingness to communicate in French outside the classroom. The result of students not perceiving themselves as capable of using French outside the classroom would make the subject irrelevant to them. Future research could, then, investigate the presence and implications of such distinctions.

The results also put forth challenges that differ from those cited by educators in previous research (e.g., Calman & Daniel, 1998), where educators expressed concern about Allophone students coping with core French. Given that my study indicates that the Allophone students are, at minimum, motivated to study core French, inclusion of the Allophone community in core French leaves questions for educators to consider: (a) is it appropriate to advocate for the inclusion of Allophone students in core French and (b) is it suitable to create and deliver a curriculum to meet Allophone students' needs because the Ontario Ministry of Education has yet to address the French learning needs of this community?

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions

1. Can you tell me when and why your family came to Canada? -
Allophone students only
2. What importance was given to education in your country? How was that communicated to you?-Allophone students only
3. Did you learn other languages? How? When?
4. How would you describe your motivational state to succeed in school now as opposed to in your country?
5. To what do you attribute your academic success in Canada?

Direct Questions

1. What are your favourite school subjects?
2. Can you describe a time when you were motivated to study French?
3. How does studying French influence your future plans?
4. Have you come into contact with anyone who speaks French?
5. Have you had any friendships with francophone people?
6. Has anything happened in your personal life that influenced the way you feel about French?
7. How did you feel when you learned that you had to take a French credit?
8. What is Canadian identity?
9. Do you feel part of Canadian society?
10. Is learning French a part of Canadian identity?
11. How will a Canadian identity impact your future?-(for Allophone students)
12. Is it important to maintain or improve your mother tongue skills? How do you do that?-for Allophone students