LANGUAGE and society

SPECIAL ISSUE

No. 12 Winter 1984

THE IMMERSION PHENOMENON

English-speaking Canadians come to grips with the country's language duality

A bold approach to second-language teaching is producing a new generation of English-speaking youngsters across Canada who are remarkably fluent in French. This special issue examines the concept of immersion through the eyes of parents, teachers, administrators, researchers and others.

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LANGUAGE and SOCIETY is a magazine of information and opinion published by the Commissioner of Official Languages, Max Yalden. The quarterly magazine encourages a reflective approach to language matters, both Canadian and international, while providing a forum for informed debate on the issues.

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Copies of the magazine may be obtained free of charge from the same address.

Articles may be reprinted with a credit to *Language and Society*, a publication of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada.

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Printed in Canada ISSN 0709-7751

COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
COMMISSAIRE AUX LANGUES OFFICIELLES

THE FRENCH IMMERSION PHENOMENON

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French immersion ... a Canadian experience

Language and Society has explored a wide range of issues since its inception in 1979. As a journal dedicated to informing our readers of the variety and richness of linguistic experience, we have tried to follow as eclectic a policy as possible.

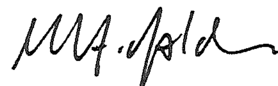
At the same time, we recognize that there are some developments on the language scene whose importance and complexity cannot be adequately covered in a single article, or even two or three. French immersion in Canada is a striking example, and this twelfth issue of *Language and Society* is therefore given over entirely to a subject that may well be the most important educational development in the linguistic affairs of our country over the last twenty years or more.

We are fortunate to have Dr. H.H. Stern, formerly Head of the Modern Language Centre of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, as special editor for this issue. Dr. Stern is an internationally recognized expert in the field of second-language teaching and an authority on French immersion and he has been able to bring together a remarkable collection of thirteen original articles which look at the immersion experience from virtually every significant point of view.

Those of us who are involved with language policy and bilingualism on a daily basis may be inclined to assume that what French immersion is all about must be common knowledge to almost all Canadians. But despite its remarkable growth it is still available only to a relatively small number of students and remains a mystery to many people who are not directly involved with language education. We hope that this special issue, by reaching persons other than professionals and parents who are directly involved, will help to fill the information gap.

French immersion is a Canadian success story of the first order, and researchers have come from many countries to have a closer look and to see whether it can be duplicated elsewhere. As well as being a remarkable pedagogical adventure, the growth of immersion has been an object lesson in social change. Praise is due not only to interested parents and organizations like Canadian Parents for French, but also to teachers, school trustees, and professionals in ministries of education who have had the foresight and courage to move so far and so fast to revolutionize the teaching of French as a second language. Some legitimate questions remain, to be sure, and Dr. Stern has given ample space in the following pages to those who have doubts about the programme, whether as a method of teaching French or a way of reducing the distance between our two major linguistic communities. But one thing is certain: whatever one's personal reaction, the linguistic climate in Canada has been profoundly altered by the immersion revolution.

It is a fascinating subject of potentially great significance to Canadians. I very much hope, as a result, that our readers will find that this special issue has been helpful in demystifying the subject and bringing to a wider public the findings of a number of people who have been intimately involved with the programme.



Maxwell Yalden

A bold approach to second-language teaching is producing a new generation of English-speaking youngsters across Canada who are remarkably fluent in French. This special issue examines the concept of immersion through the eyes of parents, teachers, administrators, researchers and others.

The immersion phenomenon

H.H. STERN

H.H. (David) Stern, professor emeritus in the Department of Curriculum of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto, is a Killam Research Fellow. The founding director of the Modern Language Centre of OISE, a position he held from 1968-81, he now works as a freelance language consultant, author and lecturer.

This entire issue of *Language and Society* is devoted to a single topic: French immersion and its influence in Canadian education. No one interested in language policy, language education, and bilingualism in Canada can afford to ignore this unique form of bilingual schooling which has made such a powerful impact on the language scene and the sociopolitical climate in Canada. While immersion education has been a characteristically Canadian response to a uniquely Canadian language situation, its lessons are not confined to Canada. It has implications for other bilingual settings and for second-language pedagogy in general anywhere in the world.

"Immersion" has become a household word for many families and many educators in Canada. But to a number of readers of *Language and Society* it may be far less familiar, and it is therefore appropriate to explain briefly what is meant by immersion.[1]

French immersion is a phenomenon of English-speaking educational systems in Canada. It represents a determined attempt on the part of Anglophones to overcome inveterate difficulties and inhibitions to learn French as a second language. Immersion classes are therefore intended for children whose home language is English (and, in some instances, e.g. in the case of immigrants, a third language) and who, with the consent of their parents, are willing to undergo a large part of their schooling through the medium of French. A French-immersion class is not primarily a language class. It is a class in which subjects other than French, such as mathematics, history, art, or physical education, are presented in French. French immersion is teaching *in* French, not teaching *of* French. The intention is that the new language is to be learnt by use while learning something else and not by formal language instruction. Several articles in this issue explain and discuss how, why, and how well immersion works.

The immersion teacher is usually a native-French speaker or has a near-native command. He/she provides all the instruction in French but is conscious of the fact that the pupils are non-Francophones. The teacher attempts to coax his/her class gradually and gently into the use of French by example and encouragement. Thus, typically in a kindergarten or grade 1 immersion class, the teacher is the only one who speaks French at first; the children continue to use English until gradually they too begin to use French with the teacher and increasingly with one another. In so-called *full immersion*, all instruction — except of course English as a subject, where and when it occurs — is entirely in French for one whole school year or, frequently, for two or even three years. Beyond these full-immersion years, education gradually becomes increasingly bilingual. The figure 1 on page 50 (Lapkin-Swain, this issue) illustrates three different typical immersion patterns. The overall effect is therefore one of bilingual education. In so-called *partial immersion* the proportions of instruction in French and instruction in English are more evenly balanced from the outset.

Immersion is most frequently offered from the earliest years of schooling in kindergarten or grade 1 or 2, as so-called *early immersion.* If immersion is offered in later years of schooling instead, say, from grade 4, it is described as *delayed immersion* or as *middle* or *intermediate immersion.* If it is offered in grades 6, 7, or later, it is called *late immersion.*

Middle or late immersion is usually preceded by some years of conventional French instruction.

Immersion classes are voluntary; they are offered in a school district as an alternative option to the regular English-based school programme. They are usually set up as a stream in an English-medium school. In some places, so called *immersion centres* have been established in which the immersion effort is not confined to the class itself but the whole school environment is one of French immersion.

French immersion began very tentatively in 1965 as an experiment in a single school in the vicinity of Montreal, the St. Lambert Elementary School, at the initiative of an active parents' group (see page 48), and from there, over the next decade, spread across Canada so that in the current year, it is estimated around 115,000 children are in one or another of the different immersion programmes.[2] The table on page 7 will give an idea of the phenomenal growth and spread of French immersion across Canada.

It should be pointed out that, simultaneously, more conventional forms of teaching French as one among several subjects — usually referred to as *core French* — have also spread. In fact, the vast majority of children learn French in core-French classes in elementary and secondary schools, and not in immersion programmes. One of the criticisms that has been made of immersion is that it has introduced an element of social elitism into Canadian schools, a criticism that is also referred to in a number of the articles in this issue.[3]

Some school systems have introduced a kind of halfway-house compromise between immersion and core, so-called *extended French*, in which one subject other than core French is taught in French and added to the regular core-French course, thus offering an opportunity for further exposure to French in an immersion-like situation. Core French has suffered — perhaps unfairly — in public esteem when compared with immersion. Recently, the question has been raised whether core French could not be strengthened by immersion-type activities in order to provide *all* students with some of the benefits of the more successful immersion approach. The present issue of *Language and Society*, however, is only concerned with immersion and not the other options of French instruction in Anglophone Canada.[4]

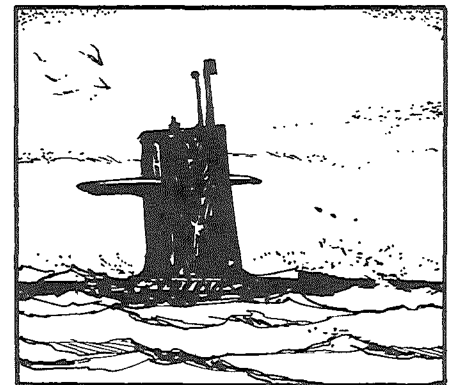
At this point it is also worth mentioning that Francophone educators, as a rule, have not chosen the immersion route in the teaching of English as a second language in Francophone schools. The language issues for Francophone education do not offer an exact parallel to those in Anglophone schooling. These issues, which are no less important than those we deal with in this number, are only mentioned in two papers; not surprisingly, one of them deals with immersion schooling in the bilingual province of New Brunswick, and the other is the concluding article of the issue from Quebec. But in the context of the topic we are focussing on here, the complexity of language education for Francophones can regrettably not be given all the attention it requires.

Over the two decades of immersion education much experience has been gathered on the merits as well as on the problems of this form of bilingual schooling. Immersion has also been the subject of a great deal of research from its early beginning to the present day. It is probably one of the most thoroughly investigated educational innovations.[5]

The articles in this issue of *Language and Society* reflect the experience of parents, teachers, administrators, researchers, and others who have been in contact with the immersion question for many years. This collection of papers, therefore, represents a stocktaking and at the same time a questioning on where to go from here.

Judith Gibson, a Vancouver parent, looks at immersion from the point of view of a mother whose children are in immersion. Claire Mian writes about her experience as an immersion high school teacher in a Toronto suburb, while André Obadia, the first president of the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers, considers the special problems of teaching and teacher training for immersion. Russell McGillivray writes about immersion from the point of view of a highly experienced educational administrator who has been involved in immersion education for many years.

The impact of immersion on language teaching at the university level is considered by Marjorie Bingham Wesche. Dr. Wesche also describes a promising immersion-type experiment involving Francophone students learning English as well as Anglophone students learning French.



From partial . . . to full immersion

The gradual spread of immersion to other languages is indicated in the next two articles: Ellen Adiv, a research officer of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, describes double immersion in a trilingual situation in a Montreal school. In Edmonton, immersion has been applied to the bilingualism of minority children in schools in which one language is English and the other language German, Ukrainian, Hebrew, Chinese, or Arabic, as we will read in an article by James Jones, the Supervisor of Second Languages of the Edmonton Public Schools.

Social and political implications of immersion present themselves in different guises in the different

contexts of this vast country. The case study by Viviane Edwards, the Co-ordinator for Second Language Services in the New Brunswick Department of Education, illustrates legal, social and educational consequences of immersion in the officially bilingual province of New Brunswick.

Leaving aside the concluding article by Dominique Clift, the four remaining papers are contributions by distinguished university scholars who have observed, studied, and thought about the immersion phenomenon. Gilles Bibeau, counteracting the tendency to shower praise — perhaps somewhat uncritically — on the immersion approach, raises issues and asks searching questions which cannot be ignored. Some of the points he makes are in fact addressed by the two subsequent papers on research. Sharon Lapkin and Merrill Swain, who for many years have been among the foremost researchers on immersion and who have recently published a review of ten years of immersion research in Ontario,[6] have summarized their main research findings and suggest new research questions. Their contribution also includes interesting comments on immersion by immersion students themselves.
A critical question that is often raised and also echoed in Gilles Bibeau's paper is whether the level of proficiency reached by immersion students is adequate. The article by Birgit Harley on how well children learn French in an immersion programme is a searching study of the French proficiency of some of the immersion children which attempts to be fair and at the same time realistic. Stephen Krashen, a leading American applied linguist, who recently spent a sabbatical term at the University of Ottawa and looked at immersion at close quarters, offers an international perspective and a theoretical appreciation of immersion and its significance for language-teaching theory and practice.

In the concluding paper, Dominique Clift, a Quebec journalist and observer of the Canadian scene, reflects on immersion in the context of cultural pluralism and the tensions of regionalism versus centralization that characterize the sociopolitical scene in Canada today.

In short, the set of articles in this number should enable readers to obtain an overview of the current state of affairs in French immersion and to gain a better understanding of its achievements, possibilities, and problems.

Elementary and secondary student enrolment in French immersion programmes, 1982-83

Province	School population[a]	Students in immersion	%
Newfoundland	142,394	819[b]	0.6
Prince Edward Island	25,203	1,644	6.5
Nova Scotia	174,505	869	0.5
New Brunswick	99,684	8,759[b]	8.8
Quebec	136,429[b]	17,472	12.8
Ontario	1,694,528	53,982	3.2
Manitoba	194,287	7,580	3.9
Saskatchewan	200,643	3,287[b]	1.6
Alberta	440,174	12,122[d]	2.8
British Columbia	498,836	7,756	1.6
Yukon	4,524	128[b]	2.8
Northwest Territories	12,760	102	0.8
DND Schools (Europe)[c]	2,687	408	15.2
Total	**3,626,654**	**114,928**	**3.2**

a *Excludes pupils enrolled in French-language schools.*
b *Figures provided by Department of Education.*
c *Students in DND (Department of National Defence) immersion classes in Canada are included in provincial enrolments.*
d *Estimate (80% of students of schools where French is the language of instruction).*

Source: Statistics Canada except where noted.

NOTES

1. For an earlier account of French immersion in *Language and Society*, see H.H. Stern, "Immersion Schools and Language Learning", 5: 3-6, 1981.

2. The beginnings, early developments, and first research studies of immersion are described in W.E. Lambert and G.R. Tucker, *Bilingual Education of Children: The St. Lambert Experiment*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House, 1972; see particularly Appendix A: "Parents as Change Agents in Education: The St. Lambert Experiment" by O. Melikoff. The growth of immersion, a few years later, is reviewed by H.H. Stern, "French Immersion in Canada: Achievements and Directions", in *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 34:836-54, May 1978. For a recent overview of immersion across Canada, see a special issue on immersion of *Dialogue*, 1,4 (May 1983), the Newsletter on the Teaching of English and French as Second Languages, published by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.

3. The social impact of immersion in one part of Canada, i.e. Northern Ontario, was recently studied by G.E. Burns and P. Olson, *Implementation and Politics in French Immersion*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1981.

4. The relative merits and shortcomings of core French, extended French, and French immersion have frequently been debated during the last ten years or so. An extensive research study on this subject was carried out in the mid-seventies; see H.H. Stern, M. Swain, R.D. McLean, R.J. Friedman, B. Harley, and S. Lapkin, *Three Approaches to Teaching French*. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education, 1976. See also B. Harley (ed.), "Alternative Programmes for Teaching French as a Second Language in the Schools of the Carleton and Ottawa School Boards." Special issue of *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 3,2 (Nov. 1976). Core French and English in Canada is the subject of a recent issue of *Dialogue* (vol. 2, no. 1, Nov. 1983).

5. For comprehensive reviews on immersion research, see Lambert and Tucker, *op.cit.*; M. Swain and S. Lapkin, *Evaluating Bilingual Education: A Canadian Case Study*. Clevedon, Avon, U.K.: Multilingual Matters, 1982; and F. Genesee, "Bilingual Education of Majority Language Children: The Immersion Experiment in Review", in *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 4:1-46, 1983.

6. See the title of their work in Note 5.

French immersion programmes

French Immersion Enrolment, Grades in Which Offered and Number of Schools Where Offered, by Province[a] 1976-77, 1978-79, 1980-81 and 1982-83.

		Enrolment	Grades	Number of Schools
NEWFOUNDLAND	*1976-77*	56	K and 1	1
	1978-79	193	K to 4; 6 to 8	5
	1980-81	392	K to 5; 7 and 8	5
	1982-83	819[b]	K to 10	10
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	*1976-77*	304	1 to 3; 7	6
	1978-79	820	1 to 5, 7 to 9	13
	1980-81	1,280	1 to 11	14
	1982-83	1,644	1 to 12	16
NOVA SCOTIA	*1976-77*	46	P, 6 and 7	2
	1978-79	363	P to 8	10
	1980-81	590	P to 7	12
	1982-83	869	P to 12	15
NEW BRUNSWICK	*1976-77*	2,504	K to 8	32
	1978-79	3,763	K to 9	35
	1980-81	5,532	K to 12	47
	1982-83	8,759[b]	K to 12	81
QUEBEC[c]	*1976-77*	d	d	d
	1978-79	d	d	d
	1980-81	18,000	K to 11	d
	1982-83	17,472[b]	K to 11	d
ONTARIO	*1976-77*	12,363	K to 8	156
	1978-79	15,042	K to 8	160[b]
	1980-81	17,119	K to 8	180[b]
	1982-83	53,982	K to 13	359
MANITOBA	*1976-77*	1,290	K to 8	14
	1978-79	2,521	K to 10	21
	1980-81	4,286	K to 12	32
	1982-83	7,580	K to 12	50
SASKATCHEWAN	*1976-77*	338	K to 8	2
	1978-79	1,208	K to 12	13
	1980-81	1,603	K to 12	14
	1982-83	3,287[b]	K to 12	30
BRITISH COLUMBIA	*1976-77*	862	K to 7	10
	1978-79	2,094	K to 10	24
	1980-81	4,368	K to 12	45
	1982-83	7,756	K to 10	72
TOTAL	*1976-77*	**17,763**		**233[e]**
	1978-79	**26,004**		**281[e]**
	1980-81	**53,170**		**335[e]**
	1982-83	**102,168**		**633[e]**

a *Alberta is excluded since it makes no distinction between programmes designed for Francophones and French immersion programmes for Anglophones.*

b *Figures provided by the Department of Education.*

c *As in other provinces, French immersion programmes are designed for students whose mother tongue is not French.*

d *No figures available.*

e *Does not include Quebec.*

Source: Statistics Canada

Satisfied with the progress of her two children in immersion, a B.C. mother still sees a need for parents as well as educators to be vigilant. French immersion has still a long way to go.

For my kids, it's French without tears

JUDY GIBSON

Along with having two children in immersion classes, **Judy Gibson** is a founding member and former president of the B.C. Chapter of Canadian Parents for French (CPF). From 1978 to 1981, she was an active member of the CPF Board of Directors. As well, she has written articles on core and immersion-French programmes for a number of the organization's publications.

After seven years, having children in early French immersion has become a way of life. All four of us have adjusted, just as other families organize their lives around music lessons and recitals or 5 a.m. hockey practice.

Living in Port Coquitlam, B.C., my husband and I first heard about immersion from an enthusiastic neighbour. She explained that the students learn French much as they acquire their first language, by hearing and using it during normal day-to-day activities; they use French, she said, for all their school subjects from kindergarten through grade 2, for all subjects but English Language Arts in grade 3, and for about half the subjects in grades 4 through 12. This seemed a far more natural and less painful way to learn a second language than the old half-hour-a-day which had left us both with some knowledge of French grammar but unable to carry on the simplest of conversations.

"Mom, I want to learn French songs."

When our daughter, Erin, asked to go to the school where she could "learn French songs like my friend Julia, because I already know the way *we* sing them," we began seriously to consider enrolling her in immersion. At a public information meeting we heard about the consistently positive findings of cross-Canada research and learned of our school district's many years' experience. Reassured, we decided to give it a try. Knowing a second language, particularly at no cost to any other aspect of their education, could only be an asset for our children. Whether they eventually used it at work, while travelling, or just to have access to a broader range of information and literature, Erin and her younger brother, Garth, would have acquired a useful skill. We also hoped that this intensive exposure to a second culture would stimulate an interest in the world beyond their community and tolerance and understanding of others. If we couldn't afford to travel, then bringing a little of the world to them would have to do.

Parent-motivating factors

Many factors motivate parents to enrol their children in early-French immersion. The most obvious is a desire, for whatever reason, to have their child become proficient in French, but this is rarely the only consideration. Some parents feel that a five-year-old who is already reading will not be challenged in a regular English kindergarten. Others believe that kindergarten will be boring after two years of preschool. Many are convinced today's high school graduates do not acquire adequate language arts and study skills. Unwilling or unable to send their children to private schools, they take advantage of a programme, offered in the public school system, which should, by its very nature, emphasize these aspects of education. A few families would rather their children learned their own heritage language, perhaps German or Japanese. If this isn't available, then French will do: knowing any second language is worthwhile, and their success might encourage them to study a third or fourth later on.

Kindergarten is often looked upon as a trial period. After all, a student can be switched to the English programme at the end of that year with little or no harm done.

However, by March, an hour in the classroom is usually enough to convince the most cynical parent of the value of immersion. Indeed, it may be a humbling experience, as it was for my husband. Although the students were

obviously responding to the teacher cheerfully and appropriately, sometimes in English, sometimes in beautifully accented French, *he* had not understood a word she said. No matter what their original expectations, by the end of the first year almost all parents just want their children to continue their rapid and seemingly effortless acquisition of French.

Our own children had this opportunity because we were in the right place at the right time. Two years earlier, in 1974/75, the closest French-immersion school was 20 km away, in the same school district but in a different municipality. At that time only six B.C. schools in three districts (Vancouver, Victoria, and

Erin and Garth

Coquitlam) offered immersion, and it was just as scarce in every other province. Since we probably wouldn't have heard about the programme from neighbours or wouldn't have paid any attention to the sketchy information sheet provided (sometimes on the counter, sometimes only if one knew to ask the principal for it) on kindergarten registration day, Erin and Garth would be unilingual by default.

French immersion classes in Canada began —at the suggestion and insistence of parents, not as an experiment initiated by educators— in the mid-1960s. The programme continues to grow and spread, due in no small part to the efforts of parents who are members of an organization called Canadian Parents for French.

Founded in March 1977, by 35 parents from across Canada, Canadian Parents for French (CPF) is a voluntary association of over 6500 families working in every corner of the country to support and improve French second-language learning opportunities, including core French, extended French, all types of immersion, and extracurricular activities.

CPF works at the national, provincial, and local levels to ensure that the best possible programmes are available. Despite the phenomenal success of French immersion, many school boards are still unwilling to implement it. But now, through CPF, families have easy access to a vast pool of information and experience. Conferences, workshops, and manuals provide parents (and educators) with research results, statistics, practical how-to information, and much-needed moral support.

The word on immersion is spreading

Our family learned about immersion by chance. Nowadays, several years later, our local library and recreation centre advertise story hours, craft classes, even floor hockey in French, offered at the request and with the assistance of our CPF chapter. "Experienced" immersion parents speak at meetings organized by co-op preschools and the school district. Information on immersion is distributed through preschools, clinics, the Welcome Wagon and others. Articles about French immersion are written for the local paper. Rare is the parent of our community who is not aware of the programme's existence. Across Canada, people of all backgrounds are now hearing about French immersion through the efforts of CPF volunteers.

We enrolled Erin in immersion on the basis of a brief summary of research, the recommendation of a neighbour, and a gut feeling that she would benefit rather than suffer. Now, before making this decision, parents can read CPF's *So You Want Your Child to Learn French!* Having enrolled their child in French immersion, they can obtain a pamphlet on *How To Be an Immersion Parent*. Newsletters keep them up-to-date with news, research results, ideas and resources, and extracurricular enrichment activities. And when a family moves, it can use the CPF *Immersion Registry* to find a new school.

Of course, the increasing demand for French immersion is due to its success. It's still a matter of satisfied parents telling others. The existence of a national support group like Canadian Parents for French has simply sped up the process, so that today many thousands more families are able to make an informed choice — and the choice is there for them to make.

Immersion is not for all parents

The decision to enrol Erin and Garth in French immersion *has* affected our lives. For instance, the immersion school is more than 3 km from home. When Garth was in kindergarten, I had to drive back and forth three times each day. Next September Erin will have to take two buses to reach the closest junior secondary school which offers continuing immersion. However, I know of parents who have been driving up to fifteen times as far, day after day, year after year, because they are committed to having their children learn French. I know others who have had three children in three different schools.

Participation in before-and after-school activities is limited by transportation complications. However, my children have lunch with their schoolmates and enjoy the noon-hour programmes. At Guides and soccer they meet children from their own neighbourhood. Already they have friends throughout the city — friends not just because they live nearby, but because of shared interest. All of this increases both chauffeuring and the size of birthday parties: immersion is not for the lazy, or insecure parent! Having a six-year-

old patiently, but firmly, correct your pronunciation every time you attempt to show off your high school French can be disheartening. Assisting with homework is sometimes a problem: math is math, but my French grammar gave out in grade 2. And it's a most peculiar sensation to have a teacher translate, for your benefit, a conversation between herself and your child.

We make an effort to expose Erin and Garth to French outside of school. They have attended summer day camps, films, children's plays and "Francofête". We encourage them to read French books, but with only moderate success since they began reading in English (a matter of weeks after they began reading in French), as the vocabulary in English books is so much more familiar. However, both children quickly learned that I was more tolerant of TV if it was tuned to cartoons or Battlestar Galactica in French.

Many immersion parents are motivated to take French lessons. Their child's success rekindles a desire to learn a second language, or they want to help with homework. Certainly more and more Anglophones who would not otherwise do so are interacting with Francophones and attending French cultural events (often with their children interpreting). The net result is enrichment for the whole family.

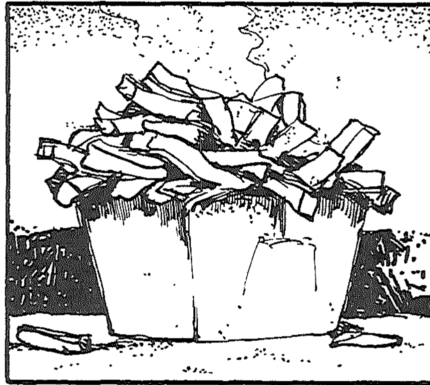
Having siblings in the regular English programme doesn't seem to cause any unusual family rivalry or conflict. Often these children are inspired to enroll in late immersion.

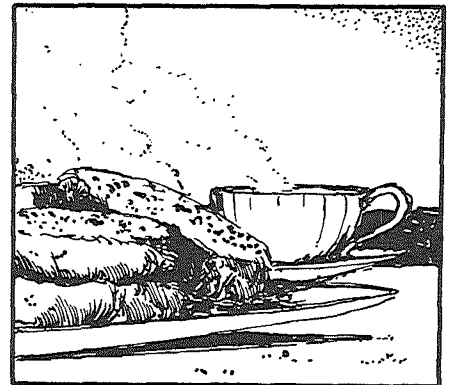
Conflict in the schoolyard is also far less than might be expected. Schools which house both the immersion and English programmes (known as "dual-track" schools) usually make an effort to integrate the two groups through joint participation in assemblies, field trips, and clubs. Many principals recognize the opportunity to promote cooperation and understanding between two "different" groups. The French immersion students themselves make a real effort to foster harmony: Erin says they don't speak French at recess because that would be impolite in front of someone who wouldn't understand. If she and her classmates are called "French fries", they just call their taunters "English muffins"and everyone laughs.

When immersion secondary students and graduates are asked whether they are pleased to have been in immersion, they consistently state that they would do it again and would recommend French immersion to others. These comments reinforce many parents' concerns about the future of the programme.

Issues which *must* be addressed include:

But names





. . . will never hurt me

- identifying specific, measurable objectives for French immersion, as a basis for both research and decision-making;
- determining the optimal conditions for language learning, including teaching methods, the number and choice of subjects to be taught in French, and school setting (dual-track or all- immersion);
- developing a sufficient number of well-trained teachers;
- ensuring that both enrichment and remedial help are available;
- eliminating line-ups and registration lotteries, and other forms of enrolment limitation where immersion is not as freely available as it should be;
- providing an adequate variety of high school subjects in French;
- persuading universities to offer some courses in French;
- insisting that the federal and provincial governments make long-term commitments to the support of immersion; and
- offering our children, especially those in grades 6 to 12, more opportunities for interaction with Francophones through exchanges and other interesting and stimulating extracurricular activities.

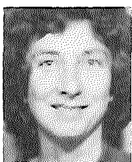
Today the threat to French immersion is its phenomenal success. The very real danger is that parents and educators are so impressed with what has been accomplished that we will lose both our vigilance and our zeal. We must insist that the quality and quantity of instruction in French be maintained and even enhanced, thus not allowing small compromises for the sake of expediency which would gradually undermine the programme. Groups such as Canadian Parents for French must continue their active support, warning of the very real dangers of complacency. If the high standards which we now expect of immersion continue, our grandchildren can also receive the gift of a second language.

What about my children? Erin, 12, wants to study Spanish and use all three languages as a flight attendant or tour guide. Garth, 9, plans to become a computer programmer, and thinks he might develop programmes for use in immersion classrooms. A more immediate goal for both is to save enough to take their parents to Quebec, where they will no doubt be excellent escorts— and interpreters.

Lawrence Park Collegiate prepared its immersion "package" with extra care; and while staffing remains an ongoing problem area, the growing pains are now history, and the programme is firmly established.

A "first" for a Toronto high school

CLAIRE MIAN



Born in Egypt of Italian parents, Claire Mian learned French, Italian and English as a child. A graduate of McGill and London universities, she taught French and history in Montreal before joining the staff of Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute in 1975. She has also been a lecturer in the French second-language programmes at the University of Toronto and at York.

At present there is only one secondary school in Toronto which has a French-immersion programme, Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute (henceforth referred to as "Lawrence Park") in the north end of the city. It is the follow-up to the early-immersion programme, started at the local elementary school in 1971 as a result of parents' pressure on the Toronto Board of Education. As a middle-class, predominantly "Anglo-Saxon" area, Lawrence Park might, at first glance, appear to be an unlikely theatre for the introduction of such a French programme; but, in fact, it is precisely this informed citizenry which saw the benefits of bilingualism. Further, it learned from the experience in Ottawa and Montreal schools that the process of acquiring the second language had to start early and intensively. The parents' motivation was a mixture of political and personal factors including an awareness that the future job market in Canada might soon require bilingualism. In addition, there was a strong feeling that becoming bilingual was a move towards preserving Canadian unity, and that it would lead to valuable personal enrichment. The programme that was established was open to all the children of the community without any screening process.

What was the elementary school background of our immersion students? In the first three years, the students' programme was conducted entirely in French; in grade 4, 40 minutes a day of English Language Arts were introduced, in grade 5, 60 minutes, and from grades 6 to 8, the proportion of English was gradually raised to 50 per cent of the school day. At the time of entering secondary school, the students could be said to have the following skills:

- strong oral ability enabling them to understand the language in a variety of subject areas;
- the ability to speak freely and without hesitation, although sometimes inaccurately;
- the ability to understand a quite complex written text relating to a wide variety of subjects and to read short stories and novels of a moderate degree of difficulty;
- the ability to write compositions, make notes and summaries (although with language errors);
- a knowledge of some cultural aspects of France and French Canada, and a sensitivity to Francophone people.

The students' motivation was extremely high making them wonderful material for teachers, though their energy and creativity could be exhausting in the classroom! As listening and speaking had been the skills most emphasized in elementary school, their most striking ability was in oral French. Our job at the secondary level was clearly to expand their reading and writing skills, and to push their total ability forward to full bilingualism by the time of their graduation.

Planning the programme

Lawrence Park prepared its immersion "package" quite carefully. Four criteria determined the subjects to be taught in French: the wishes of the students and their parents as expressed in surveys and open meetings; the results of research; the models observed in the Ottawa-Carleton school systems; and the staffing capabilities of the school. The students and parents of the first immersion group were quite insistent about having as much French as possible, and research backed their opinion completely. However, practical experience in the Ottawa area had

taught administrators that even though families initially wanted almost all subjects to be taught in French, eventually students were reluctant to take more than three or four subjects in French per year, and as few as two in senior grades. Staffing considerations were, and continue to be, most difficult to predict and control.

Although immersion was new to Lawrence Park, special French programmes were not. An extended French programme, which could be described as a late partial immersion, had been introduced four years earlier, thus establishing the precedent that areas of the school other than the Modern Languages Department were to be involved in the teaching of French. Ministry descriptions of extended French require that only one *other* subject be taught in French, while descriptions of immersion mention a 50/50 balance between the two languages. Clearly the need to offer four courses in French at each grade level would have a profound effect on the structure of an English secondary school.

Subjects taught and options offered

The immersion programme was set up as follows: in grade 9, students were to take Français (French), Histoire (History), Mathématiques (Mathematics), with Art as an option. Of the first group, 75 per cent did, in fact, take all four subjects. A fifth option, Éducation physique et Hygiène (Physical and Health Education) was added in 1982. In grade 10, students were to take Français, Histoire *or* Géographie (Geography), Mathématiques and, in 1983, the option of Éducation physique et Hygiène was added. In grade 11, the subjects were to be Français, Histoire *or* Politique (Politics), Mathématiques *or* Physique (Physics); in grade 12, Français, Histoire and Mathématiques *or* Chimie (Chemistry). In grade 13, Français and Histoire would be offered, but it was not felt that either could be made compulsory at this senior level. This "package" structure was new to the secondary level, and even though it conformed to expressed student desires and to the linguistic requirements of the programme, it had drawbacks which will be pointed out later. At the end of grade 12, the students were to receive a Certificate of Bilingualism issued by the Toronto Board of Education affirming that they had completed 12 credits in courses taught in French of the 27 required to earn the Ontario Secondary School Graduation Diploma. This idea of bestowing on the student a symbol of his/her achievement was again adopted from Ottawa.

The Français and Sciences sociales (Social Science) courses in the programme were designated "enriched" in recognition of the quantity and sophistication of the work expected of the students. In Mathématiques, the students qualified for an enriched class only if justified by their mathematical (rather than their linguistic) abilities. In Art and Éducation physique et Hygiène, it was not felt that the work done required a special designation. Another feature of the programme was that in the optional subjects and in the senior social sciences, immersion students were blended with extended-French students. Although this is not ideal from the language point of view, it does resolve the administrative problem of small classes, it mixes the two groups socially, and it has proved to have a generally beneficial effect on the achievement of extended-French students.

Course writing, funding and staffing were the main challenges in building and expanding the immersion programme. There were no Ministry guidelines for Français taught in immersion courses. Teachers at Lawrence Park did research in Ottawa, Montreal and at the École secondaire Étienne-Brûlé in North York; they spent much time observing their future students in grades 7 and 8, and talking to their teachers and to Toronto Board consultants. Finally, with the concession of additional free periods during the school day and with short-term summer writing contracts, they used the gathered input together with their own creativity to design suitable courses.

The Français course in an immersion programme is divided into several components: Language and Grammar, Literature, Culture, Audio-Visual and Independent Reading. About two-thirds of classroom time is devoted to the first three, while the other components often take place outside the classroom and in conjunction with other courses and activities. These include the formation of a French conversation and film club, excursions to French theatre and restaurants, participation in all forms of school-year and summer exchanges with Quebec, France and Switzerland, and the use of a *moniteur/monitrice* to provide students with additional small conversation classes. The distinctive feature of the Français course is that it employs essentially a first-language approach. English is never used, and the difficulty of the novels read and essays written is comparable to the English language and literature course of the equivalent grade. Students and teachers in the programme address each other in French regardless of where they meet, whether inside or outside the school.

For the development of Histoire and other social-science courses, Ministry guidelines did exist, but the challenge was to find written and audio-visual material which both respected the guidelines and suited the level of French of the students. The availability of Histoire textbooks written in French has increased dramatically in the past 2 or 3 years, and the need for teachers to write their own material has correspondingly decreased. But because of the extremely rapid rate of publication in the field of French materials and because of our increased experience, revisions are constantly necessary in all courses.

An expensive enterprise

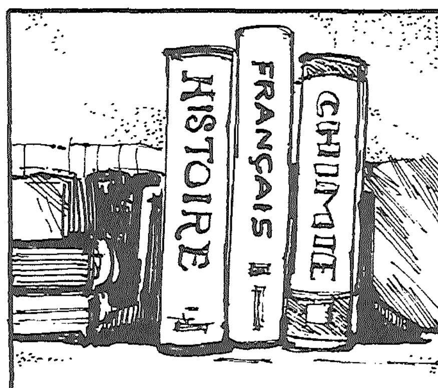
This need, added to the considerable start-up costs of the programme, make immersion an expensive enterprise. Four years of exerting pressure on the school board to fund the

extended French programme had yielded relatively generous funds, especially for starting new classes. But a long-term, flexible formula was only evolved this year as the first immersion class entered grade 12. The stumbling block had been the definition of a "class". To the Board, this was merely a group of about 30 students. To the school, it was this group of 30 students multiplied by the number of subjects they studied, each of which needed its supply of textual and audio-visual material. An equally crucial demand for funds came from the Library and Resource Centre which provided students with the material necessary for course research and for relaxation.

Staffing concerns

Staffing is an ongoing concern. Two of the basic questions that need to be addressed are whether the teachers need to be Francophone and whether they need to be specialists in their field. Ideally, the answer to both should be "Yes", but the situation in Ontario often does not allow for this. Our solution at Lawrence Park has been to decide that only the teachers of the Français courses must be Francophone; for teachers of other subjects, specialization accompanied by "native-like fluency" is the priority. In the first year of the programme, the teachers of Français, Histoire and Art were already at the school, the first two having been previously hired to teach in the extended-French programme, and the third having learned French independently and before joining the immersion programme. The Mathématiques teacher joined the staff through the internal-transfer procedures of the Toronto Board.

In the following two or three years, many more individuals joined the programme so that 12 teachers of a staff of 75 are now involved in immersion, though only two teach exclusively in French. These teachers were either already on staff or were hired when openings occurred due to transfers, retirements or promotions. The immersion staff is now a cosmopolitan group of individuals from Quebec, New Brunswick, Ontario, Egypt, France, Greece and Italy; 50 per cent are Francophone. There is no doubt that the establishment of the French-immersion programme, superimposed on the existing extended-French programme altered the nature of the school. The reaction of the staff not directly involved was one of guarded tolerance. The major reservations expressed were fear for jobs, and worry that small classes and one-class options in the immersion programme would crowd English options into fewer timetable slots and larger classes. Other frequent comments included the opinion that immersion is elitist, and that, in some cases, the learning of subject content would be sacrificed to the learning of French grammar. Job security was



Some of the subjects taught in French

certainly the most pressing concern. The school administration gave repeated assurances that expansion would occur as much as possible as job openings were created, but, as everyone knew, one could not count on normal movement occurring in the areas where it was needed by the programme. There is no easy solution to this problem, but careful and sensitive long-range planning, including retraining of staff with an interest in upgrading their French, has so far kept staffing disruptions to an absolute minimum.

Timetabling the total school programme was an equally valid concern. With about 150 subjects on the school calendar, manoeuvring room for the timetabler became scarce. The immersion student whose package required that he/she be slotted into three to five options (many of which were only taught once in the school day) lost flexibility in being programmed for his/her other subjects. This inflexibility naturally affected students in the regular English programme. The concession of .5 of a teacher above the Board's staffing formula helped to mitigate this problem, but hardly eliminated it. In addition to the intricate juggling of classes, there was a new vocabulary and set of rules concerning prerequisites to be learned by the Administration, Counselling Department and secretaries of the school. Partly to offset this problem, a coordinator of French programmes was appointed to facilitate all relations among the Administration, the various departments offering courses in French and the students.

The accusation of elitism is difficult to counter, and it is, for the time being, probably true. On the other hand, one can only point to the phenomenal growth of immersion programmes in all socioeconomic regions of the city and province so that this accusation will, in due course, be less and less justified. Finally, the fear that courses taught in French would not teach subject matter effectively was slight; and it was easily dispelled as courses were developed by specialists under the supervision of department heads and following prescribed guidelines. Moreover, common examinations for immersion and non-immersion students made it clear that in immersion classes, French was only the language of instruction, not the subject of every course in the programme.

The concerns of the staff involved in the programme were somewhat different. We worried about the relationship of formal grammar to literature and culture in the Français courses, and about the relationship between the Français course as a whole and the other subjects. Long, sometimes painful discussions took place regarding the choice of novels at each grade level: how to find texts with suitable language together with relevant and stimulating themes, how to balance French and French-Canadian literature, modern and

classical literature. Why did students dislike *Eugénie Grandet* in grade 9 but enjoy *Le Cid* in grade 11? In addition, the persistence of some errors, often quite elementary, is the object of continuing concern, especially in the students' written work. Articles from critics who claim that immersion programmes teach students to massacre the French language in the name of "functional" bilingualism seem to us to be exaggerated, but it would be foolish to claim that we have found the formula to produce both spontaneity and total correctness of expression. The most thorny problem, to which we have not yet found a satisfactory solution, is that of evaluation. For internal purposes, methods of evaluation are consistent with the aims, content and methods of the course, and marks are intelligible to students and their parents. But how can these marks be made intelligible for external purposes, that is, for example, for admission to universities? We are not happy with the suggestion that we arbitrarily raise the marks of immersion students by 10 or 15 per cent, yet we are assured that our anecdotal report on the nature of the immersion course is virtually ignored by university admission offices. Are students therefore being in a sense penalized for taking a more challenging course? Interestingly, Canadian Parents for French, devoted a recent Ontario conference to the subject of "Bilingual University Education for Anglo-Ontarians". Only when universities establish their own immersion programmes will the level of achievement of secondary immersion graduates be recognized.

Immersion staff also ask themselves whether there are enough courses taught in French and whether they are the right ones. For instance, is there enough language content in the Art and Physical Education courses? Observation indicates that we have so far managed to keep these courses enjoyable while injecting more formal language content than in their English equivalents. Should Mathematics and Science be taught in French when the international language of technical subjects is increasingly English? Again, so far, our observation indicates a high degree of transferability between English and French terminology, but students themselves show a reluctance to take these subjects in French in grades 11 and 12. These and other questions will require a review of the programme as the first class nears graduation.

Heavy workload for teachers

As professionals, immersion teachers found heavy workload to be a source of concern. The number of courses and exams to prepare is, on the whole, higher than that of the average teacher. Visitors come to the school frequently, and we receive many requests for course outlines and materials from other schools and Boards. Interest and, at times, pressure from parents is also great as their sons and daughters are in an experimental programme, and they understandably wish to be assured that progress is satisfactory.

But these are growing pains, and they are more than balanced by the sheer exhilaration of being involved in something which is good and which works. The students are able to speak French freely, if not completely correctly, and reactions of native speakers during trips to Quebec or reactions of visitors serve to confirm our own positive judgements of our students' French proficiency. Their eagerness to perfect their skills and to stand by a commitment made at the age of five is admirable. The drop-out rate between grades 9 and 10 is nil, and very small thereafter.

Student achievement in tests, exams, winning of prizes and awards is above average in both English and French subjects. In extracurricular sports and other activities, the participation of immersion students is spirited and successful. In every sense they are full members of the Lawrence Park community, but in certain areas of the school with certain teachers and friends, they live in a French atmosphere.

The benefits to the school resulting from the programme are beginning to be evident. In a time of declining enrolments, immersion students constitute valuable clientele of a high calibre. The federal and provincial grants to the school have allowed Lawrence Park to build an impressive collection of French language books and audio-visual material for the use not only of immersion students but of all language students. In fact, the French film collection at the Toronto Board has also increased as a direct result of the existence of the immersion programme. In addition, immersion teaching methods which emphasize the fact that every subject teacher is a teacher of language, whether it is English or French, can have a beneficial spill-over effect on all departments in the school.

As the pioneer group of immersion students prepares to receive the Certificate of Bilingualism in the spring of 1984, the beginning phase of the immersion programme at the high school level is coming to an end. The second phase, that of consolidation, is already beginning. It will include a thorough review of the programme involving students, teachers and parents in an effort to evaluate the successes and failures of the past four years. The university and career plans of our graduates will be watched with great curiosity as will the plans of the universities themselves, and these will be used as guidelines to modify and improve the nature of the programme. Numerical growth at the elementary level and the amount of interest that continues to follow these programmes both within and outside the world of education lead us to assume that immersion programmes are here to stay, and that our challenge is to enhance their effectiveness. For the time being, one can undoubtedly affirm that immersion programmes are achieving their main goal: young people from an exclusively Anglophone background are emerging from their secondary studies competent to speak both our official languages. One can hope that bilingualism will not only enrich their personal lives, but will allow them to make an important contribution to the sense of national unity which Canadians are pursuing.

With informed parents as their staunchest allies, Canada's immersion teachers are looking to our universities to set up courses that recognize immersion education as a specialisation in its own right.

The teachers, key to the success story

ANDRÉ OBADIA

André A. Obadia is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, in charge of core French and immersion teacher-training programmes. Author of many books and articles, his current field of research encompasses the analysis of speech patterns among immersion students and of sociolinguistic aspects of immersion in Canada.

The teaching profession is no sinecure. Anyone who has spent six or seven hours a day teaching a class of thirty schoolchildren, not to mention looking after their social and emotional needs, is left with no illusions that the task is simple. However, some teachers appear to meet the challenge better than others and never lose their drive and enthusiasm. They are known as "immersion teachers", a term that is becoming increasingly well known across Canada.

French immersion, a relatively new method for teaching French to Anglophone children, has been the subject of a great deal of discussion over the past twenty years. In light of the many studies of the remarkable results obtained through this method, it is time we examined in more detail the role played by the teachers themselves. These teachers usually remained on the sidelines of the socio-political and administrative upheavals that accompanied (and still accompany) the early years of the programme, and of the contagious euphoria of parents enthused with the positive results of this type of education.

Conscious of the responsibilities with which they were entrusted, teachers bent to the winds of change and stood quietly by while some of the most eminent Canadian researchers conducted their studies from coast to coast. Even today, little research is being done on the needs, concerns, problems, responsibilities and success of the teachers themselves.

However, since the early days of immersion, the success of the programme has rested mainly on the teacher. Even if the first generation of children who began kindergarten in French without knowing a single word of the language were perhaps confused, they were certainly not alone. Well aware of the challenges and risks posed by this completely new and perhaps unique approach to education, the teachers themselves felt even more "immersed".

Those same teachers soon became the focal point of emotional and worried Anglophone parents and of condescendent but somewhat incredulous administrators. They were put in front of classes without receiving any precise pedagogical directives or specialized training.

Since they were themselves usually bilingual, the teachers knew deep down that the objective being sought was achievable. Their main concern was the groups of children they had to teach. They knew the experiment could succeed because they felt it in their bones.

The search for the right approach

But how should they proceed? What tools would they use? Should they rely on the programmes and manuals of the French schools in Quebec, or on those of core French classes in which Anglophone children spent only between 15 and 30 minutes a day learning French? The first approach appeared too difficult, especially for the early part of the year; the second was too rigid and too monotonous to be used throughout the school year. There was only one solution, that was discovered by the veterans of this period and, perhaps to a lesser degree, by those teaching immersion today.[1] They had to sit down at their desks with a pot of coffee and spend many hours establishing goals and objectives, a programme for the year and the classes for the day. These unknown pioneers burned a great deal of midnight oil.

School boards equipped with a coordinator or counsellor moved heaven and earth to try to make the teachers' work a little easier. School boards in Montreal and Ottawa-Carleton in particular carried out a phenomenal amount of work, feverishly researching and writing to produce a complete curriculum outline. Thanks to additional funding from the Department of the Secretary of State, hastily assembled courses of study began to see the light of day. A great deal of progress has been made since those first years; instead of a few sheets of paper, the boards today proudly display volumes of 500 and 1500 pages supplemented with original teaching material.

After prudently waiting to see which way the wind was blowing, publishing houses began to show an interest in the growth of bilingualism, a typically Canadian phenomenon at least in primary and secondary schools. The professional journals began to advertise publications (books and textbooks) that could be used in immersion classes. Increasingly, the publications that focussed on immersion classes had to draw inspiration directly from the experience of this type of schooling instead of borrowing ideas from materials designed for Francophone students. It became increasingly apparent that the language needs and difficulties for Francophones and immersion classes were quite different.

Today, French immersion teachers are supported in their efforts by better informed and more organized parents, many of whom are members of an association known as Canadian Parents for French (CPF). (See Gibson article, this issue). Such parents are deeply involved in their children's education and give one another invaluable support. Similarly, the immersion teachers themselves founded the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (CAIT), which today has 1200 members. Provincial associations of the CAIT have been established and this will undoubtedly help improve communications between members. One need only attend the annual meetings of the CPF or the CAIT to be aware of the commitment, drive and optimism of participants. The first tentative years are now in the past and teachers are no longer on their own. The progress has been enormous over a mere twenty year period. This success story is largely due to the efforts of teachers who, in the early days, had no specialized training, no teaching materials, nothing. Imagine what could be done if everything were available!

Will teachers and parents lose some of their enthusiasm over the years and, if so, will this have an impact on students? An answer to this question is difficult to predict. What is certain, however, is that strong support is still being given to this method, for which there is an increasing number of active practitioners in small towns.

From a sociological standpoint, it is interesting to see the impact of immersion on families. Some parents begin to take French courses, visit areas in which French is spoken and grow closer to Francophones. These points were revealed by a study we conducted in Canada.[2]

Profile of the immersion teacher

Who are these key players, where do they come from and what training have they received? The majority of French immersion teachers are French-Canadians; some are Francophones from Europe, Africa or other

Programme at Simon Fraser University for teachers of French as a second language

	Immersion classes or classes for Francophones	Core French: Elementary	Core French: Secondary
401 Observation and preliminary teaching (2 months)	Most of the time spent in immersion or mother-tongue French classes	Most of the time spent in English classes, with observation of some French classes	Most of the time spent in French classes
402 Courses (2 months)	3 courses in French 1 course in English	1 course in French 2 courses in English	1 course in French 2 courses in English
405 Practice teaching (4 months)	All in French	Increased teaching of French classes	Most of the time spent in French classes
404 (4 months)	2 courses in French 2 courses in English	1 course in French 3 courses in English	1 course in French 3 courses in English

countries; and, increasingly, we find more Anglophones from Canada and other countries using this teaching method. Overall, these teachers are a reflection of Canada's mosaic.

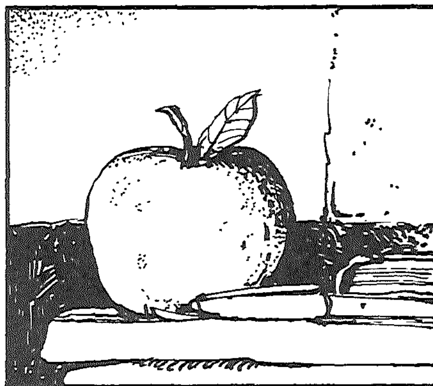
Our recent study[2] revealed the following breakdown of immersion teachers in Canada; 73 per cent Francophone, 20 per cent Anglophone, 5 per cent Allophone and 2 per cent claiming equal proficiency in both official languages. The greatest concentration of Anglophones is found in British Columbia (40 per cent) and Ontario (33 per cent); the smallest concentration is in Quebec (3 per cent) and Saskatchewan (5 per cent).

Drawing on data from 400 questionnaires, the study also revealed that 44 per cent of all immersion teachers have taken their education training in French, 28 per cent in English and 27 per cent in both languages.

Teaching positions, which are today few and far between, continue to attract bilingual candidates who, thanks to immersion programmes, will have better chances of finding a job.

The teachers surveyed in this study had an average of 1.9 university degrees or teaching certificates and 9.4 years of experience. This is surprising when compared to the national average which is 12.5 years (Statistics Canada 1981-1982). Given the fact that immersion is a recent phenomenon in Canada, we might have expected less experience; however, the programme appears to attract experienced teachers who have taught in other fields.

Compared with the average age of teachers in elementary and secondary schools, immersion teachers are younger. Fourteen per cent are 25 years of age or under, as compared to 4 per cent nationally for the same age group (Statistics Canada, 1981-1982). Sixty-four per cent are 35 years of age or under, as compared to 42 per cent for the teaching profession as a whole.



Immersion teachers like apples too

The majority (69 per cent) teach all day in French to pupils who began immersion either between kindergarten and grade 3 (81 per cent), or between grades 4 and 6 (10 per cent) or in grades 7 or 8 (8 per cent).

The methods used to train immersion teachers are still tentative. Clearly it is not enough simply to have mastered the French language. If we accept the definition that "immersion is a means of *educating* a child mainly in a language other than his mother tongue"[4], we see that these are not the usual "foreign-language" classes, but an approach to education that also gives attention to the child's physical, cognitive and emotional development. We therefore need a fully-rounded educator, a teacher who has received both general and specialized training and who is not simply a language teacher.

Core French and French immersion teachers

It is important to make a distinction between the role of the teachers of core French and the very different responsibilities of the immersion teachers.

In 15- to 30-minute daily periods, the former try to teach the rudiments of the language to seven or eight classes, in other words to approximately 300 pupils a day. Their purpose is to teach them to communicate orally and, to a lesser degree, to read and write the language. They try to create situations in which the pupil is asked to use a relatively limited number of structures and as functional a vocabulary as possible. The rhythm of the lesson and the motivation and attention of pupils have to be maintained at all times. Variety is a key element and teachers are constantly the focal point of such classes. They must be careful how they use language, and their vocabulary must remain within the scope of the pupils'. They need imagination, a sense of humour and a great deal of patience; and, of course, they must be realistic about the language objectives they can attain.

The situation of elementary immersion teachers is quite different. (See the Mian article in this issue for secondary school immersion.) First, they work with only about 30 pupils for the entire day. Their objective goes beyond teaching the French language and includes such subjects as science, mathematics, history, geography and so on. The second language becomes the natural vehicle of communication for the entire day and for all activities. Pupils very quickly realize they can manipulate another language without too much difficulty and that they are expanding and improving their knowledge from day to day in a real context.

The language enables them to learn algebraic equations, the history of Confederation, the principle of communicating vessels and the geography of Canada. It becomes a working tool based on subject content rather than on language. Both the student and the teacher make progress. The student learns to master the language while the teacher gradually forgets that he is speaking French to Anglophones. The linguistic results obtained in an immersion class are more tangible and therefore more satisfying and encouraging for the teacher and pupil than those obtained in a traditional core French class.

Training

Most immersion teachers are graduates of French or English faculties of education which train their students to teach in the child's mother tongue. Additional courses on second language teaching (French or English) are usually given during this traditional period of training.

A study (see note 4) on the training of immersion teachers has revealed that 36 per cent of faculties of education already offer one or more specialized courses for immersion teachers and that, particularly west of Ontario, 16 per cent intend to follow suit over the next five years. However, the time devoted to immersion as compared to traditional training courses varies from 9 per cent to 67 per cent, positive proof that much still needs to be done and that overall organization is lacking.

The time spent on practice teaching also varies, student teachers spending from one week to six months in immersion classes. These practice teaching periods may be part of the traditional classic training year or may be taken as additional periods. The number of student teachers planning to teach immersion in Canada rose from 428 in 1979 to 790 in 1982, an increase of 84.6 per cent. Fifty-six per cent of faculties of education forecast a rise in enrolment and 50 per cent are planning to increase the number of professors responsible for such training.

The length of the training period, the number and content of courses and the proliferation of student teachers all reflect a gap that is, paradoxically, the result of delays and perhaps surprise on the part of faculties and ministries of education responsible for teacher training and the granting of teaching certificates.

According to the study cited above (see note 2), immersion teachers found that courses dealing with methodology, techniques and practice teaching were "the most valuable and most useful". Immersion teaching and methodology were also the most popular choices for in-service programmes. More specifically, they would like to learn more about activity methods, remedial teaching, and the teaching of oral expression and reading skills. From a list of 33 subjects, computers rank 14th and linguistics only 29th!

Training French teachers: a unique approach at Simon Fraser

The training programme for teachers of French as a second language (immersion or core) at the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University is based on a model that is unique in Canada. The originality of the approach is as much in the structure of the staff, which goes back to the creation of the university in 1965, as in the way the twelve months of professional training are organized.

The staff is made up of:

- *university professors* whose role is similar to that of professors at any other university;
- *faculty associates*, seconded from their school board for one or two years. These teachers take on teaching tasks of a primarily practical and support nature related to the student teacher at the primary and secondary level. Each associate is responsible for about a dozen students;
- *school associates*, each of whom takes one or two trainees in his or her class.

The training of the student teacher, which is at the heart of this trio, takes place in a climate of continuous exchange between theory and practice, a dynamic cycle form which all four participants benefit.

The twelve months of training

The year is divided overall into six months of course work and six months of practice teaching (see the table on the previous page).

Course 401: In September, after a week of orientation at the Faculty of Education, student teachers are placed in a classroom situation for a period of about two months. This is a true "immersion" experience, a term which is in fact frequently used during this period.

These first two months spent in the classroom allow student teachers to determine if teaching is really their vocation, and, once they return to the university, enables them to relate their courses to a real situation they have recently experienced.

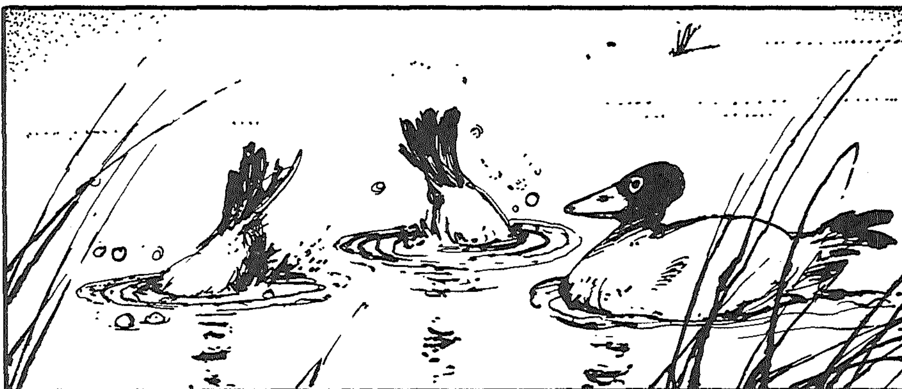
French immersion trainees also have the opportunity to spend about 25 per cent of their time in English classes.

Course 402: The students then take a series of five courses, two of which are in French and deal with the basic elements of general education, special education and psychology.

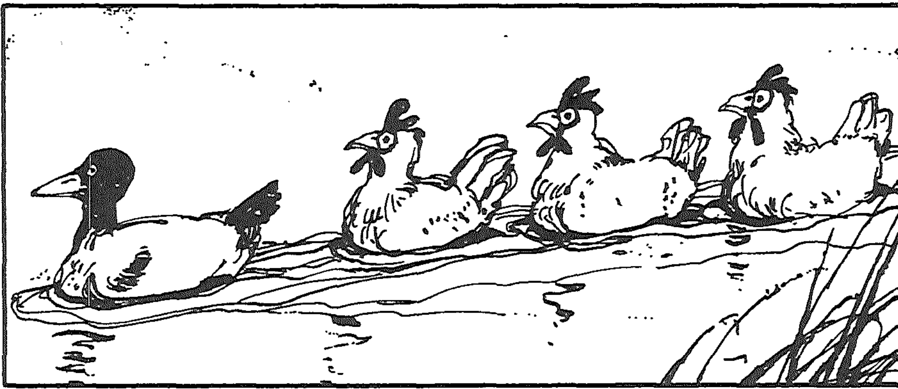
Course 405: Four months of practice teaching. Students, under the supervision of the faculty associate and the school associate, teach for four months in a French immersion class or, if they prefer, in a French class for Francophones (see table on page 16).

Course 404: Back to the university, this course consists of a further four-month period of academic study.

By the end of their year of training, student teachers have spent approximately 80 per cent of their time in French-language education courses dealing with immersion and in practice teaching in French immersion.



Be sure to quack twice before diving



You can't become a duck without immersing yourself

The rest of the time is spent on English-language education courses.

Language criteria: Any student wishing to enrol in immersion must take an oral test. Only those who demonstrate a very solid mastery of the French language, equivalent to that of a native speaker, and who pass a written test, are accepted into the programme. Candidates wishing to teach core French must also take an entrance test.

This type of training is somewhat different from that of most universities, where courses and practice teaching for immersion supplement the traditional training. At Simon Fraser University, such training is part and parcel of the student's year.

The need for coordination

Very soon, we shall have to coordinate all these efforts and adapt to this new concept of "immersion teacher" which some trainers of language teachers still have difficulty in understanding.

In light of existing research and experience, specialists are increasingly convinced that pedagogical preparation for immersion should be part of a formal training programme and not be conducted on a piecemeal, ad hoc basis. It should have its own structure, philosophy and pedagogy like any traditional training for English or French schools. French immersion, as we know it in Canada, is a very effective technique which has proven its worth and, in terms of teacher training, should now be given its letters of credential.

Although immersion is not, of course, the only method for making pupils bilingual, it does appear to correspond to the wishes of parents and the objectives of educators. It also satisfies the pupils themselves. Whether they begin in kindergarten or grade 7, they are clearly proud of their accomplishments and grateful to their parents for having provided them with an opportunity to master their mother tongue like any other Anglophone of their age and to handle with ease the other official language of Canada.

Like the sculptor who has rough-hewn his rock, refinements are now required. Although we have not yet seen the full impact of this programme, its early results suggest that it can help contribute to a more harmonious society in Canada.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Study programmes are gradually moving from the elementary to the secondary school level. At the latter level, the question becomes more complex because the type and content of subjects offered in French to immersion students tend to vary from one province to another. In addition to French, history and geography are the most commonly taught subjects. It is hoped that the imminent creation of a Canadian Language Information Network will help communications and provide a better sharing of information between the various school boards (See "Canadian Language Information Networks/ Réseau canadien d'information linguistique" in *Contact, Revue canadienne destinée aux professeurs de français*, 2-1, February 1983). See also Mian, this issue.

2. Obadia, André, Robert Roy, Brian Saunders, Rhoda Tafler, and Florence Wilton. *Étude nationale sur la formation et le perfectionnement du professeur d'immersion française.* Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers, November 1983.

3. This definition was proposed in my article entitled "Programme d'immersion: croissance phénoménale et pénible", published in *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 37-2, January 1981, pp. 269-282. This article also contains a discussion of the arguments commonly used to oppose the creation of immersion classes.

4. See one of the first studies on the training of immersion teachers in Canada: *A survey of teacher training in French immersion in Canada*, Diane Coulombe, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, 1983.

Born in 1947, Timothy Elliott is presently enjoying an extended childhood. He studied at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and at l'École des Beaux-Arts de Montréal and is currently living in Hudson, Québec attended by a wife, a cat, and a 900 lb. pony. He worries constantly about the arithmetical progression of family weights and avoids offers of elephants seeking good homes. Mr. Elliott has freelanced extensively, but recently has begun to seriously exhibit his personal work and expects to be able to support his family by the time death sets in.

As an increasing number of immersion students graduate from high school, Canadian universities are coming under pressure to respond to this educational phenomenon. Some are beginning to do so.

A promising experiment at Ottawa University

MARJORIE BINGHAM WESCHE

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French immersion is here to stay in Canadian education and there are at least three ways in which this major educational innovation relates to Canadian universities.

Most obviously, an increasing number of Anglophone students with considerable functional ability in French will be entering Canadian universities and most will wish to maintain and further develop their second-language skills. Some of these students will choose to attend French-language or bilingual institutions, opting for a goal of fluent bilingualism and, in some cases, integration into a Francophone milieu.[1] Most, however, will not have this option due to cost and distance, and they may prefer to continue their education in Anglophone institutions for reasons of subject-area specialization and cultural identity.

Thus the pressure from immersion as well as from core French students is increasing — as evidenced by recent surveys at Carleton University and by the Calgary branch of Canadian Parents for French[2] for English-language universities to offer more varied, more advanced and more "real-life" opportunities to learn French, including courses given in the French language in particular disciplines to supplement the traditional literature programmes. Universities are only at the very beginning stages of responding to these demands.[3]

The second influence on universities is focussed on faculties of education, and the training of French-language teachers for immersion-teaching situations. Institutions in many parts of the country are already feeling intense pressure to provide special training programmes from those already in the field as well as those enrolled in undergraduate programmes. Immersion teaching requires both a high level of French proficiency — preferably that of a native speaker, and preparation to teach the relevant subject matter to second-language speakers. Teachers with native or near-native proficiency in French are not available in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of some regions of the country, and even those who are need special training for the appropriate grade level and to teach effectively to less-than-proficient speakers of the classroom language. Traditional training programmes for second-language teachers are generally not equipped to meet these new demands. Some interesting new programmes are currently being developed, however.[4]

The third influence on universities is neither so immediate nor so apparent as the first two, but it may well prove to be the most important in the long run. It has to do with the implications of an immersion approach for second-language instruction in universities. Can the immersion model be applied to university language teaching? Can its success be replicated with older students? Can languages be learned through subject-matter teaching in the second language when the subject matter is complex and highly specialized? Will there be gains in language proficiency if only a limited part of a student's course work can be taken in the second language?

The remainder of this article will deal with this third issue, first examining the essential characteristics of an immersion approach, then describing some recent experiments which suggest that the principles underlying immersion instruction can indeed be usefully adopted by the universities in the context of their traditional academic programmes.

Why have the Canadian French-immersion programmes, one of the most thoroughly researched educational innovations in recent history, generally revealed successful second-language acquisition at no apparent long-term cost and perhaps even some advantage to the development of other abilities? What characteristics of immersion lead to successful acquisition of the second language?

A major rationale for the initial French-immersion experiments was the belief that second-language acquisition should begin at the earliest possible age, within the so-called "critical" period for language development. Intensive exposure to the language via interaction with a highly proficient (native) speaker over an extended period of time was also considered essential. The second language would ideally be the medium through which other activities would be carried out and other subject matter learned, rather than itself being the focus of instruction.

Thus the pioneer St. Lambert programme and those modelled after it have involved full-time schooling with French-speaking teachers beginning in kindergarten, with introduction of English as a school subject only after several years. While some explicit French "language teaching" is inevitable, the emphasis is on teaching the regular school curriculum, so that pupils learn French "incidentally" while concentrating on mathematics, art and other subjects.

Also characteristic of immersion is a necessary initial emphasis on listening skills and a sheltered environment in which all pupils share the burden of minimal proficiency in French, but are not expected to compete academically with Francophones. They also share English as a common language for social interaction and mutual emotional support. In communicating subject matter through French to these less-than-proficient speakers, the immersion teacher, to be understood, has to make a number of pedagogical and linguistic adjustments from what would be the norm for presentations to native-speaker pupils of the same age. Over time, as pupils improve their French skills, teacher presentations become more like those for native-speakers. In the initial stages, however, adjustments range from careful structuring of classroom routines to heavy use of gestures and reliance on the immediate context to communicate meaning, coupled with simplified and repetitive language use[5]. Thus the immersion-language teaching situation ideally provides what Krashen calls "comprehensible input" (understood messages delivered in the second language at a level slightly above the learner's current proficiency level) from a native-speaker model in a supportive, emotional environment). (See Krashen, this issue.)

A further aspect of successful immersion programmes has been that they have generally involved children whose primary language is that of the surrounding community, which ensures the ongoing development of this language as they continue to use it in their life outside the classroom.[6]

A wide variety of immersion formats have been tried and evaluated, including programmes for adolescents as well as for children at the kindergarten level, varying proportions of time devoted to the first and second language, different socioeconomic characteristics of communities from which pupils are drawn, and a variety of languages taught. The results have been highly consistent. Immersion students acquire second-language skills to a substantially higher level than in other school programmes, their first-language and subject-matter skills do not suffer measurably in the long term, and their attitudes toward the second language and culture are generally more positive than those of similar students in other kinds of second-language programmes.

Essential conditions for progress

Of all characteristics, which are the essential ones? Second-language acquisition theory suggests that, while an early start and both intensive and extensive exposure to the second language may help determine the ultimate level of proficiency, the *essential* conditions for progress in language acquisition are the following (see Krashen, this issue, for further discussion):

- exposure to and interaction in the second language with a native speaker in a situation in which the second language is the vehicle of communication rather than the object of study, and
- (initially) a sheltered situation in which the native speaker makes the necessary adjustments of speech and activity in order to get across the message to the non-proficient speakers. Emphasis for the learner is on receptive skills — somewhat paralleling the initial "listening period" of infants learning their mother tongue, where comprehension ability precedes recognizable speech production by some months.

The adjustments made by native speakers are thought to aid language acquisition in at least two ways. First, they establish positive affect as learners successfully understand what is said, decreasing anxiety and building self-confidence, and ensuring the learners' greater openness to input in the second language. By providing a model of the target language which is correct, but redundant, simplified, and limited in certain ways, they aid the learner to discover and internalize the basic patterns of sound, word-formation, grammar and discourse structure of the language, as well as the appropriate non-verbal gestures.

It is precisely this "sheltered" aspect of immersion which has recently been criticized as limiting second-language development to a "classroom" dialect for immersion students, including the "fossilization" of certain grammatical errors.[7] It is important to note that if exposure to the second language continues to be limited to a sheltered situation — as in later immersion years where students still may have only their teacher, written pedagogical materials and their less-than-fluent peers as

models— they may at some stage reach a plateau in the development of their production skills. To become fluent and native-like in a variety of uses of the target language, "submersion" into the relevant aspects of the second-language community will, at some point, be essential. Nevertheless, a substantial body of research also indicates that an environment which provides comprehensible input is a necessary condition of language acquisition, and that to be comprehensible at the early stages, linguistic input must be altered from native-speaker norms. Immersion programmes should be viewed as an initial stage, providing the supportive environment and comprehensible language needed by beginners and intermediates who, when they are more proficient and can no longer benefit in their linguistic development from the sheltered environment, can "graduate" to submersion situations and continue to progress.

Immersion at the university

The question for universities is whether a language teaching approach with the above elements can work with older students. While one can cite examples in which subject matter is taught via second languages to university students (the most obvious being advanced literature courses for second-language majors in universities and training programmes for language teachers), little research has been done on whether, and how much, these courses lead to gains in second-language proficiency. To date, only a handful of studies have documented proficiency gains coupled with mastery of subject matter by older learners. These include a five-month training course for Francophone English teachers in Quebec in which all instruction was in English[8] and a sheltered workshop programme for immigrants to Quebec in which job-related training and survival skills were taught in the French language.[9]

A related study with adolescent learners was done in the bilingual high school programme of the Ottawa Board of Education in which English-speaking students took half their regular subject-matter courses in French in grades 9-11. These students, like those in the two programmes cited earlier, made satisfactory progress in the subject matter while achieving measurable gains in French proficiency.[10] These three programmes, however, while dealing with students older than those in early and late immersion, still all involved relatively intensive exposure to the second language over an extended period.

University of Ottawa programme

An experimental programme in subject-matter language teaching, begun at the University of Ottawa in 1982,[11] differs from the other programmes discussed in that it involves less than 40 hours of instruction. Its purpose is to provide a format in which students at intermediate-proficiency levels, both in French or English as a second language, can make the transition from the second-language classroom to regular subject-matter courses offered to native speakers of their second language at this bilingual university. In this programme a group of Anglophone students and another group of Francophone students take the second semester of Introduction to Psychology/ Introduction à la psychologie in sheltered sections of the regular course in which enrolment is limited to second-language speakers. Taught by regular psychology professors for whom the language of instruction is the first language, these two groups cover the same material as the regular classes and take the same final exam (presented bilingually to all students enrolled in the course). Pedagogical adjustments made to accommodate students' limited second-language skills include more reliance on written outlines, emphasis on students' receptive language skills (listening and reading), and weekly short-answer quizzes on the psychology content instead of a research paper. Each psychology professor is aided by a French and an English language teacher who provide approximately 15 minutes of instruction in each 1½ hour (bi-weekly) class period. This language instruction part of the psychology classes includes no explicit grammar teaching but is rather geared toward helping students to read and take lecture notes more effectively, clarifying points made in the lectures, and allowing students an opportunity to express their ideas in a relaxed atmosphere.[12]

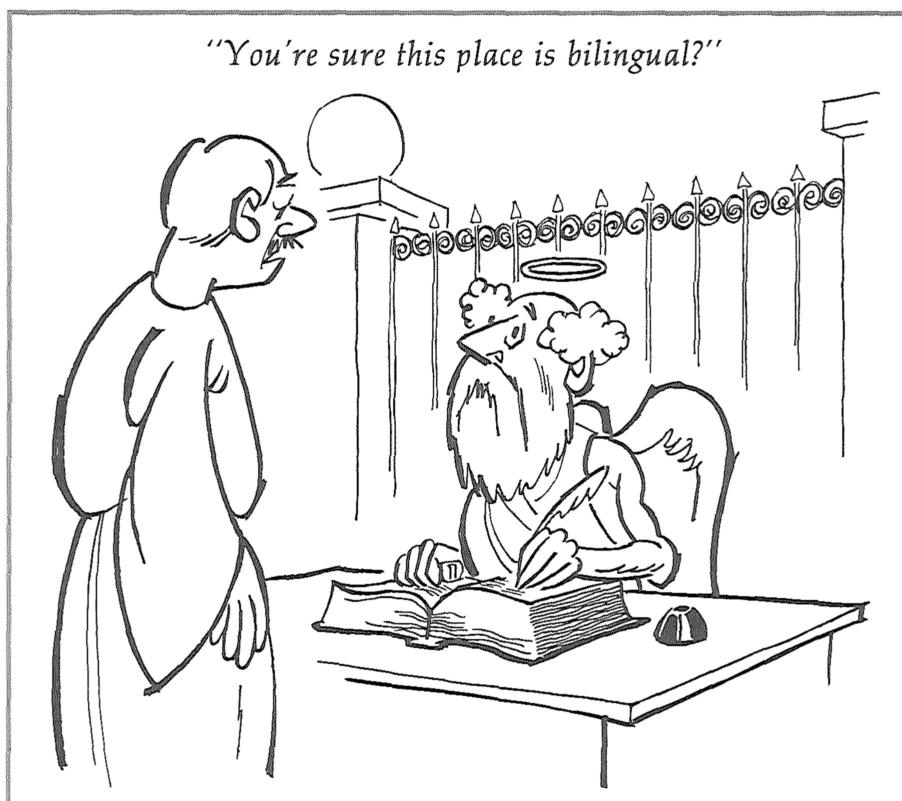
In addition, analysis of video-taped presentations by the same psychology professors to both the sheltered sections and to regular first-language sections reveals that many linguistic adjustments are unconsciously made by the professors in their presentations to the sheltered groups. For example, lecture discourse in these sections, while varying markedly between the Francophone and Anglophone psychology professors, is syntactically simpler and lexically more redundant, shows more explicit organization of ideas, and has many other features which distinguish it from their discourse to the native speakers.[13]

Subject-matter language teaching at the university level (and to a lesser extent at the high school level) appears to go beyond immersion with younger pupils in the *proportion* of exposure it gives to native-speaker models. This is due to the nature of academic discourse. Essentially, the professor lectures, sometimes supplementing his or her presentations with films or visiting speakers, and the students listen. Substantial reading assignments of material written for native speakers is an important feature of such a course. During instruction by the language teacher in the University of Ottawa format there is generally more classroom interaction, but the teacher still does most of the talking and thus remains the major source of input. While in this "university classroom register" students do not receive much practice in interactive language use, they do receive a large proportion of native-speaker input and are less likely to be influenced by the non-native speech of peers than in school immersion programmes.

Extensive testing of the 45 experimental students and appropriate comparison classes at the beginning and end of the winter 1983

semester dealt with three questions: did the students learn as much psychology subject matter as they had during the first semester, and as much as students in their first-language sections taught by the same professors? Did their French or English proficiency improve, and did it improve as much as that of similar students in regular language classes? Did they gain in self-confidence in using their second language, and were they more likely to use it out of the classroom as a result of the course?

Test results confirmed that the students in the sheltered sections did as well in the psychology final exam and course grade as they had the first semester and, on the whole, slightly better than students in the regular comparison groups. They gained significantly in second-language proficiency, again approximately as much as students of similar proficiency levels in well-taught, 45-hour courses in English and French as second languages. In addition, unlike the language students, who showed no change, they reported a significant improvement in their own perception of their second-language proficiency and a significant decrease in their anxiety about using the second language in real-life situations. Those findings reflected increased self-confidence in second-language use. Student comments at the end of the course also indicated that most gained considerable satisfaction from "doing something real" in their second language and that they used the language out of class more than before.[14] Thus the students in the sheltered classes essentially got "something for nothing". They mastered their regular subject matter, and at the same time they significantly improved their second-language proficiency and their self-confidence when using the language. This was achieved without formal grammar study and without extensive practice in language production. It appears then, that university courses can be so structured and presented as to expose students to their second language in a non-threatening context in which it is comprehensible, which requires them to concentrate on meaning rather than form, and which leads to substantial improvement in their second-language skills.



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As with immersion, further experimentation is needed with this format to determine the proficiency levels at which students can best benefit from such instruction, the academic subjects which lend themselves to it, how much language teaching should be included in the programme and for how long such "sheltering" is needed before students are able to compete in academic courses aimed at native speakers.[15]

It is also of interest to find out whether immersion and bilingual high school graduates will need transition courses of this kind or can go directly into programmes aimed at native speakers. Sheltered courses may in fact find their largest clientele among core-French graduates.

From an administrative point of view, such programmes obviously require goodwill and cooperation between university departments, as well as subject-matter professors fluent in the language of instruction who are willing to make the necessary adjustments in their teaching to accommodate second-language speakers. The positive results of this experiment are, however, sufficiently encouraging to suggest a format for other departments and universities wishing to teach second-language courses at advanced levels to students who are not language majors. In Canadian universities, these would include not only Canadians of the other official language, but also visa students who must normally carry on all their studies in a submersion situation in one of the official languages, often at a considerable linguistic disadvantage. A sheltered course at an early stage of their academic career might provide an important boost to the academic second-language skills of such students, as well as to their self-confidence in Canadian academia. It might also provide visa students with the opportunity to take a course— as in the humanities— which relies heavily on verbal skills. Such courses are often avoided by non-native speakers, who tend to

select subjects such as economics, the physical sciences and engineering —where charts and diagrams help them to understand verbal meaning and where content is more straightforward.[16]

For visa students, sheltered courses are clearly a transition to regular academic studies in the full target language milieu— an ideal sequence. Bilingual institutions which attract large numbers of Canadian students from both official-language groups can also offer second-language speakers the sequence of sheltered courses as a transition, followed by integration into regular courses for speakers of the other language. Most institutions, however, will have to rely on arrangements such as academic exchanges with universities of the other instructional language in order to provide Canadian students with a structured opportunity to advance from the sheltered second-language course into the "real world". Nevertheless, the sheltered course offers a substantive advance over the second-language learning opportunities currently available to non-language majors in most Canadian universities.

Other formats which provide the same elements as sheltered courses are of course possible. A second programme of this type is described below.

UCLA "adjunct" courses

At the University of California in Los Angeles, a programme of subject-matter related instruction in English as a second language (ESL) has proven useful for freshman students from second-language backgrounds.[17] It is part of a special summer programme for "high-risk" students. The programme provides immigrant students from a second-language background — who have carried out part or all their high school studies in English but still have academic language problems — with an opportunity to study a regular university subject together with a related course in English skills. Psychology, Political Science, History and Anthropology are offered along with "adjunct" English courses for ESL and "at risk" native speakers in which all the reading and writing assignments are related to the respective subject-matter courses. With some 90 hours of instruction overall, and the availability of tutors in their residences to help with both language and subject-matter problems after class hours, students can make important gains in their academic English skills. Continual coordination is required between the subject-matter instructors and the language instructors, as well as between students and their respective tutors. The format is thus probably best suited to an intensive programme where regular planning meetings may be scheduled. The 1983 programme will be the first to undergo extensive evaluation; however, anecdotal evidence from instructors and students is very positive. It indicates that academically oriented language instruction focussed on a particular subject-matter course is more effective than more general ESL courses for university students, and suggests that students gain in language proficiency from their subject-matter courses in this supportive environment.

Conclusion

Canadian English-language universities have no choice but to respond to the various effects of the immersion phenomenon. Surely they will increase the scope and range of their course offerings in French to undergraduates. Surely the education faculties will respond to the new needs presented by immersion teaching requirements. The degree to which English-language, French-language and bilingual universities will modify their current course offerings in all languages to benefit from what immersion tells us about effective second-language instruction remains to be seen. The innovative programmes described have provided a promising beginning.

I would like to thank the following persons for their help in the preparation of this article: Sally Andrews, Donna Brinton, Stephen Carey, Evelyn Hatch, Stephen Krashen, Katheryn Manzer, Doreen Ready, David Stern, Bernard Wilhelm and Janice Yalden.

NOTES

1. Bilingual Canadian universities with full undergraduate programmes in both languages include the University of Ottawa, Laurentian University at Sudbury and Glendon College of York University in Toronto, the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston (four-year engineering programme), as well as the University of Alberta which offers a full undergraduate programme in French at the Faculté St. Jean. The University of Regina's Bilingual Centre offers a bilingual B.A. and B.Ed. in which 60 per cent of the courses are given in English and 40 per cent in French. The B.Ed. includes a full year of study at a French-language university in Quebec. All of the above programmes serve both Francophone and Anglophone students.

2. See Yalden, Janice and Anne Donaldson. *French Studies in the Undergraduate Curriculum: A Needs Analysis.* Report submitted to the Language Programmes Branch of the Department of The Secretary of State. Ottawa: Centre for Applied Language Studies, Carleton University, 1983. This report presents results of a survey of French-language needs of Carleton undergraduates, as perceived by samples of students, faculty members and local business people. The Calgary Area Branch of the Canadian Parents for French (CPF) surveyed high school students and teachers of French and students at the University of Calgary on a number of issues with implications for French-language training and teacher training at the University of Calgary. The students surveyed in both studies were largely graduates of core French rather than immersion programmes because immersion graduates are only beginning to reach university age. A further organized effort to stimulate new programme development in French as a second language was the Ontario Canadian Parents for French-Glendon College conference on "Bilingual University Education for Anglo-Ontarians" held in September-October, 1983 at Glendon College, York University. See also, for additional information on current thoughts on languages and the university: Stern, H.H. "Language Teaching and the Universities in the 1980's", in *The Canadian Modern Language Review* 37(2), 1981, pp.212-225. Yalden, Janice. "Second Languages at the Universities: A Look into the Future", in *The Canadian Modern Language Review* 35(3), 1979, pp.431-442. Yalden, Max. "Bilingualism and the Universities: A Time for Action", in *Canadian Association of University Teachers Bulletin,* September, 1982, pp. 5, 8.

3. In addition to regular academic offerings in the French language in the bilingual programmes referred to in Note 1, other universities which have tried or which have concrete plans to offer subject-matter courses in French as a second language include the University of Toronto (philosophy, history, communications), the University of Calgary (history), St. Thomas More College of the University of Saskatchewan (sociology), Simon Fraser (linguistics, Canadian studies), the University of Prince Edward Island (Acadian studies), the University of New Brunswick (economics, history and sociology) and the University of Ottawa (psychology) (discussed in detail in this article). York University offers credit subject-matter courses for ESL students.

4. Teacher-training needs and offerings in the Western provinces are documented in the Calgary CPF needs survey, referred to in Note 2. The University of British Columbia has recently begun a new eight-month "French Immersion and Cadre" programme in its Faculty of

Education intended for prospective teachers of early, late and secondary French immersion, and French as a first language in a minority setting. In this programme all course work and at least part of the practica are carried out in the French language. For a study of progress on immersion-teacher training see also Obadia, this issue.

5. Research has identified a number of adjustments characteristic of native-speaker communication with foreigners including language students, such as slower and more clearly articulated speech, exaggerated intonation and gestures, less complex grammatical constructions, repetition of vocabulary and concepts, careful structuring of discourse, more dependence on reference to the immediate situational context, and doing more of the conversational "work" (e.g. asking yes/no questions instead of those requiring an open-ended answer.)

   Useful reviews of this literature may be found in: Hatch, Evelyn. *Psycholinguistics: A Second Language Perspective.* Rowley, Mass: Newbury House, 1983 (chapter 9); and Krashen, Stephen D. *Second-Language Acquisition and Second-Language Learning.* Oxford: Pergamon, 1981 (chapter 9).

6. While many individuals obviously do successfully acquire second languages in non-sheltered situations, very real questions remain about the efficiency of this approach at lower levels of language proficiency and its cost in terms of the emotional well-being of learners, as well as to cognitive and first language development in younger learners. On the latter point, see Cummins, James, "The Cognitive Development of Children in Immersion Programmes", in *The Canadian Modern Language Review,* 34(5), 1978, pp. 856-883.

7. See for example: Connors, K., N. Ménard and R. Singh. "Testing Linguistic and Functional Competence in Immersion Programmes", Fourth LACUS Forum, in M. Paradis (ed.) *Aspects of Bilingualism.* Hornbeam Press, 1978, pp. 65-75. Harley, B. and M. Swain. "An analysis of the verb system by young learners of French", in *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin,* 3, 1978, pp. 35-79. See also Harley, this issue.

8. Buch, Georgette and Ivan DeBagheera. "An Immersion Programme for the Professional Improvement of Non-Native Teachers of ESL", in *On TESOL 78,* Washington: TESOL, 1979, pp. 106-117.

9. D'Anglejan, A., C. Renaud, R.-H. Arsenault and A.M. Lortie. *"Difficultés d'apprentissage de la langue seconde chez l'immigrant adulte en situation scolaire.* Québec: Centre international pour la recherche sur le bilinguisme, 1981.

10. Morrison, F., M. Walsh, C. Pawley and R. Bonyun. *Core French Proficiency: French Working Paper No. 133.* Ottawa: Research Centre, Ottawa Board of Education, 1980.

11. This ongoing project has received funding from the Department of the Secretary of State and the Ontario Ministry of Education in their jointly administered Special Projects Programme for official languages in education, as well as from the Committee on Teaching Resources and the Arts and Social Sciences faculties of the University of Ottawa. Participating professors and teachers include S. Burger, M. Chrétien, Dr. R. Clément, Dr. H.P. Edwards, Dr. M. Gingras, Dr. P. Hauptman, Dr. S. Krashen, M. Migneron and Dr. M. Wesche.

12. For details, see Burger, S., M. Chrétien, M. Gingras, P.Hauptman, and M. Migneron. "Le rôle du professeur de langue dans un cours de matière académique en langue seconde". Unpublished manuscript, University of Ottawa, 1983.

13. This research is reported in Wesche, Marjorie Bingham and Doreen Ready. "Foreigner Talk Discourse in the University Classroom". Paper presented at the 10th University of Michigan Conference on Applied Linguistics, Ann Arbor, October, 1983. Forthcoming in Gass, S. and C. Madden (eds), title T.B.A., Issues in second language. Research series, Rowley Mass.: Newbury House.

14. A full report of this research is given in Edwards, H.P., M. Wesche, S. Krashen, R. Clément and B. Kruidenier. "Second Language Acquisition Through Subject-Matter Learning: A Study of Sheltered Psychology Classes at the University of Ottawa". Unpublished manuscript, University of Ottawa, 1983.

15. A full-year French section of *Introduction to Psychology* for second-language speakers is being offered at the University of Ottawa in 1983-84.

16. A full-year course in Canadian history which would offer sheltered tutorial sections for visa students in English as a second language in 1984-85 at the University of Ottawa is under consideration by the History Department and the Centre for Second Language Learning.

17. I am grateful to Donna Brinton and Evelyn Hatch for this information.

HOW FRENCH IMMERSION BEGAN

One of the most interesting aspects of the immersion movement has been how it came about. The impetus did not come from professional educators but from English-speaking parents' groups who had strong and positive feelings about bilingualism in Canada. Parents' groups have continued to play a major role in the advancement of French.

The immersion approach was first thought of and advocated by such a parents' group in St. Lambert in the Montreal area twenty years ago. They managed to persuade the Quebec Ministry of Education and a local school board to initiate an immersion – type experiment in one of the schools under its jurisdiction. In addition, this parents' group had the unusual good sense – setting a very rare example in educational experiments – to demand research and evaluation of these experimental classes. It was furthermore fortunate that they found a receptive response to their demand for research in the psychology department of McGill University, where Professor W. Lambert and his colleagues took up this challenge and agreed to study the development of this experiment in the St. Lambert elementary school.

The encouraging research reports which began to come out of the St. Lambert studies from about 1969 influenced the spread of immersion. In Ontario, particularly in Ottawa, as the national capital, parents' groups and some school board trustees pressed their school administrators to see to it that French be taught more effectively in the local schools and found in immersion the kind of solution they had been looking for. The school boards and the Ontario Ministry of Education, anxious to act responsibly and not to fall for another languages teaching bandwagon, invited or commissioned research studies from the Ottawa and Carleton universities and from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in Toronto. Similar developments took place in other provinces across Canada from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island. Thus the pattern was set for a period of experimentation, expansion and research on immersion in several localities across Canada.

Setting up an immersion programme can cause problems of nightmarish proportions, and this administrator says that school boards deserve some credit for the way they have responded to the demand.

School systems make it work

W. RUSSELL McGILLIVRAY

W. Russell McGillivray retired recently after 34 years as teacher, principal and superintendant in the Ontario school system. As a superintendant of the Carleton Board of Education, he was responsible for immersion programmes from the time of their inception in 1970. He holds degrees from the universities of Manitoba, Toronto and Alberta.

Educators are notoriously reluctant to change. Whether the change be one of programme (e.g. New Mathematics), of teaching strategies (as required in open schools), or of technology (e.g. the overhead projector), it seems to take years before it is generally accepted by teachers and common in most school systems, even though most educational innovations come from teachers themselves.

The extraordinarily rapid acceptance of immersion across Canada during the past fifteen years is an exception to the usual pattern. Its success is all the more amazing, given the problems that accompany it. Immersion requires a total revision of curricula, an almost total replacement or retraining of staff, major revisions in school attendance boundaries and, initially at least, fairly substantial additional expenditures. There are few guidelines for immersion prepared by ministries of education; teacher training programmes are inadequate, and there is little commercially produced material specifically for immersion. Moreover the pressure for this sweeping innovation came, not from educators, but from parents who were not prepared to give the educational establishment its usual period of grace to make changes, but demanded the programme at once, so that their children could benefit.

Clearly immersion has succeeded in spite of negative factors that should have assured its failure. That it has succeeded is very evident not only in its spread across Canada, but also in the consistently positive results of research that has been carried out by world-renowned linguists and psychologists. Faced with these persuasive results and the strong pressure of interested parents, few administrators and boards are able to resist for long the push for immersion. Perhaps they may be given some sympathy, however, for not being overly enthusiastic about adding its related problems to those that already beset them: declining enrolment, redundant staff, decreasing revenues, more special education, and the computer bandwagon.

The decision to begin immersion is thus not an easy one, but for most Canadian school boards it is probably an inevitable one because of the continuing demand for better French programmes that will give children the obvious advantages of being bilingual. No matter how bitterly some parents oppose the programme and resist having it in their school, they will likely register their children for immersion to require boards to implement it.

The immersion centre

The programme should logically be located in the school serving the area in which the greatest number of interested parents reside. However, this may not always be the best choice. If that school is small, the English programme will quickly be in jeopardy; if it is full, and immersion pupils from other areas are permitted to attend, it will soon be overcrowded. Both situations will anger parents and staff, and immersion will be blamed.

Experience has shown that wherever immersion is implemented, it tends to be more popular than the English-medium programme, and boards should anticipate this. Even a large school will have problems encompassing the two programmes. Class size is never what it should be, in either programme; split grades are inevitable and are very difficult in the primary grades of

immersion. Remedial, music and library specialists are not usually capable of serving in both languages, and one programme will be deprived of these services. Budgets must be stretched, because French books are more expensive. Supervision of programmes and staff in two languages becomes very difficult for some principals. In fact, the two programmes are not compatible, and they co-exist with difficulty, particularly in schools covering classes from kindergarten to grade 6. The solution is administratively simple and politically difficult — separate the two programmes and create an immersion centre, offering only the immersion programme. In such a school, the staff, the programme, and the budget are all devoted to immersion only. Normal class groupings and specialist teachers should be possible, the immersion can be more complete, and parents and staff are generally more positive about the learning environment.

Parents of the displaced English-programme children will, understandably, object to losing their community school to "those French kids", although clearly one programme had to be moved in order to maintain services and programmes for both. They will find it difficult to accept, however, that immersion is fast becoming a "regular" programme, and children in immersion deserve at least equal services and facilities. If a board can justify building a new school and can designate it from the beginning as an immersion centre, or if a dying school can be kept open by such a designation, opposition to the programme will be reduced.

Opposition will be diminished also if a board is able to provide normal transportation for those children, immersion or English programme, who are directed to a school outside their community. If both programmes are considered as "regular", boards should apply normal transportation policies to both.

Personnel problems

A recent survey across Canada of 96 boards with immersion carried out by the Canadian Education Association (CEA) showed that one of the greatest difficulties facing boards opening immersion programmes is finding qualified staff. The term "qualified" should perhaps read "capable" since there are few special qualifications required to teach immersion classes in most provinces, but obviously a native-like capability in French is a must. At present hardly any full-time teacher-training programmes for immersion are available in Canada in spite of the obvious market for such graduates. (See Obadia and Wesche, this issue.)

Most boards looking for immersion teachers must choose between teachers trained to teach a core French second-language programme but with no experience or training in teaching other subjects in French, and Francophone teachers qualified to teach subjects in French but with no experience and limited training in second-language teaching. The basic requirement, of course, is that the teacher be flexible, imaginative, dedicated and interested in immersion and in addition, since the teacher must be a linguistic model for the pupils, be perfectly fluent in French.

How far's the immersion centre?

Although teacher-training institutions have been slow to provide relevant training for immersion, many student teachers taking the French second-language option have achieved a high level of fluency through summer immersion bursary programmes or by spending a year studying in France or Quebec, and they are ready to try immersion. Francophone teachers in Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick, facing declining enrolments in the French systems, are willing to take the necessary summer courses to qualify them for immersion. These beginners will need the advice and assistance of experienced immersion teachers who can now be found in most parts of Canada. Many are available to present workshops, and some might be interested in serving as consultants for boards beginning a new immersion programme.

The other side of the personnel problem, and the more difficult one, concerns the incumbent staff who are not capable of teaching immersion and are therefore potentially redundant. Some with aptitude and motivation may be capable of teaching core French, or even immersion, if suitable training can be provided. Principals, vice-principals and department heads should be given suitable language skills so that they can supervise programmes in French. Those unwilling or unable to take such training should not be responsible for immersion programmes. While language training should be of interest to personnel who might otherwise face dismissal, boards should also assume some responsibility for the costs of providing it, in order to try to retain valued staff members. A systematic analysis of the linguistic requirements of various positions should be done and language courses found that meet the ascertained needs. Administrators and English staff in immersion

schools can, if they wish, practise their French regularly with the understanding and assistance of Francophone staff and of the delighted pupils.

In spite of language training possibilities, however, some unilingual staff will not be capable of teaching in immersion and may have to be dismissed. Teachers' federations have tried to forestall this through collective agreements, but boards have to take the hard line that the system is there to serve the children, not to maintain jobs for teachers. If parents wish an immersion programme for their children, boards must find the necessary staff capable of providing it.

Programme challenges

According to the CEA survey, programme development and programme acquisition were the second most serious challenge faced by boards introducing immersion. For the pioneer immersion boards this was certainly the case, but thanks to their work and to the increasing awareness of commercial publishers, the situation is somewhat improved now. Any board wishing assistance with immersion programmes can readily obtain it by asking appropriate superintendents or French consultants of any of the major boards known to have them. Most large boards are willing to sell their curriculum documents and to permit other boards to use or adapt them. They also will usually permit experienced teachers or consultants to present workshops or give short courses to help beginning boards get started.

This assistance, however, will not remove the requirement for continuing in-service and for some programme adaptation at the local level. Boards beginning immersion will require a French consultant or coordinator who can coordinate programme and other in-service activities and can advise principals and superintendents about programmes that may be totally new and perhaps incomprehensible to them. Boards have to develop their own objectives and standards in the absence of guidelines from provincial ministries of education, and their immersion teachers will be constantly developing and revising programmes.

Immersion programmes present unique challenges to curriculum writers. In the early grades, concepts and skills must be imparted to pupils who have very little knowledge of French structure and syntax and a limited vocabulary in which to express these concepts. Books and material prepared for Francophone pupils are too difficult, and straight translations of English programmes almost equally so. Resource material readily available in English is frequently not published in French, or if it is, must be simplified. By grades 4 or 5 some of the books and materials used in the French schools may be suitable, but immersion teachers are marvellous simplifiers, translators, and borrowers. The fact that immersion pupils are able to cover the same concepts in mathematics or environmental studies as English-programme pupils attests to their success.

Programme costs

Additional programme costs, in-service needs, French language-training requirements, higher prices of texts and library books, perhaps additional transportation costs — all of these may seem very good reasons for boards already experiencing financial difficulties not to embark on immersion. Some of these additional costs are one-time start-up costs incurred each year until the programme has been established in all grades. In most provinces, some additional grants for French programmes may help to offset these and boards might consider the wisdom of identifying these grants to help explain to taxpayers and staff that in fact the immersion programme is not totally a net extra cost.

Once an immersion programme has been established in all grades in an immersion centre and, assuming that numbers are sufficient to establish normal class sizes, it is perhaps the least expensive second-language programme. The major cost for any educational programme is the salaries of the teachers, and clearly this is the same for immersion as for English classes. A daily core-French programme using additional specialist teachers to replace classroom teachers for a period each day is more expensive and, obviously, far less effective from the standpoint of the level of French capability attained.

Nonetheless, immersion programmes do cost more, at least initially, and, what is more important, they are *believed* to cost more by reluctant trustees, disgruntled redundant teachers, and taxpayers who feel that education taxes are already too high. Hopefully the new federal-provincial three-year agreement on funding of minority-language programmes may help to remove the financial objections. This not only increases the amount of money available to the provinces for minority-language programmes, it also requires that the provinces provide the federal government with specific information showing how the federal payments are related to the additional costs incurred by the provinces for these programmes. Presumably boards will have to justify their need for the additional grants by isolating the actual additional costs of the programmes. If indeed there are net additional costs for immersion, at least trustees, staff and taxpayers will be able to decide whether or not the programmes are worth the extra taxes. Parents of children in immersion have obviously already made their decisions!

The success of immersion, in spite of the problems and the *ad hoc* way in which it has been implemented, is clear evidence of the power of parents when they wish something for their children, the ability of the school establishment to change quickly if it has to, and the validity of the principles underlying immersion. It is well known that more learning takes place in school when interesting and challenging material is presented to motivated students by good teachers backed by supportive parents. In this case the second language is acquired while learning

mathematics, environmental studies and other interesting and important things in a manner that the children soon realize is different and important to their parents. The teachers, too, sense the importance of what they are doing, not simply being part of an interesting educational experiment, but helping to create a new Canadian, one who accepts bilingualism as a natural part of his life.

Administrators and school boards have been accused of dragging their feet when asked to begin immersion programmes. Considering the seriousness of the problems that immersion inevitably brings with it, parents might perhaps be a bit more realistic in their expectations. Nevertheless, most boards that have implemented immersion have succeeded in creating programmes, finding capable teachers, reorganizing their schools, and raising the necessary funds. They have had the courage to make difficult political decisions in the face of bitter opposition, and their decisions have been justified by the results of the programme, results attested to by extensive research and by the enthusiasm of pupils, parents and staff.

Parents forced immersion on school boards, and they deserve credit because they were right in so doing. But boards and administrators and teachers made it work in spite of the formidable difficulties involved and deserve some of the credit for the success of this revolutionary, made-in-Canada approach to bilingualism.

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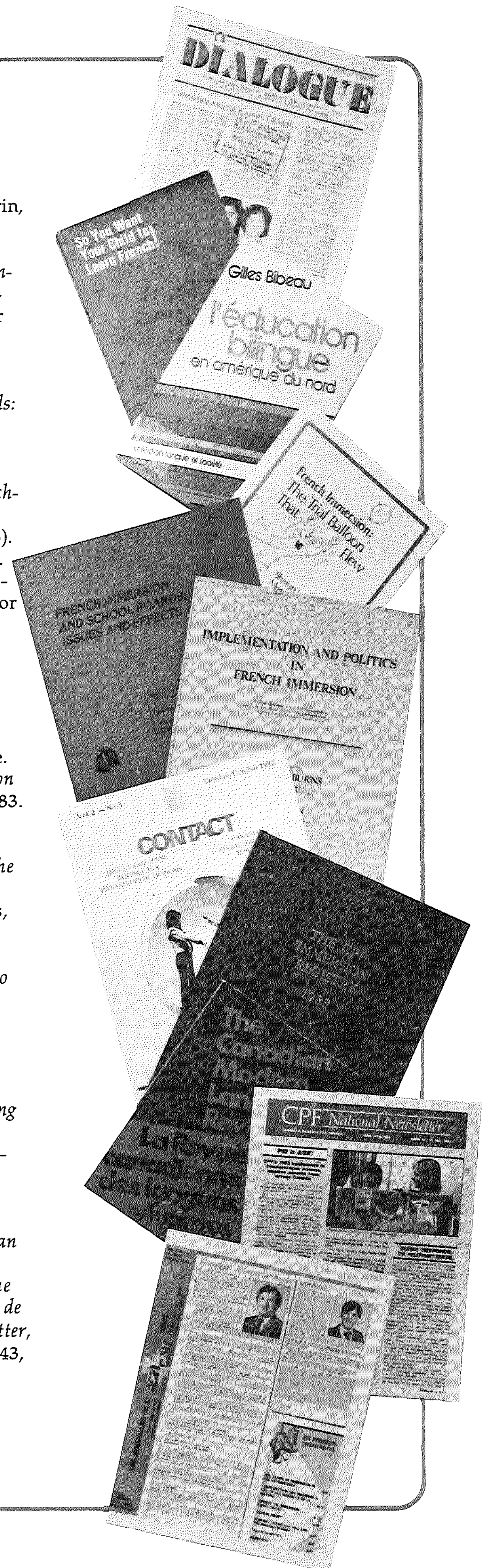

Reflecting the cultural heritage of pupils and the French fact in Quebec, Montreal's Jewish Day Schools offer double immersion classes. Youngsters are well able to cope, and their English-language skills are not suffering.

An example of double immersion

ELLEN ADIV

A research officer with the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, **Ellen Adiv** specializes in second-language acquisition about which she has published a number of articles. At the moment she is engaged in a research project relating to the Jewish Day Schools in Canada. A graduate of McGill University, Dr. Adiv has taught there and at Bar-Ilan University in Israel.

In Montreal, the use of two second languages (French and Hebrew) as major media of instruction has led to the development of two types of double immersion programmes within the framework of the Jewish Day School system, and their function is twofold. First, they provide a means to become linguistically competent in the nation's two official languages and, second, they transmit the Jewish heritage through the active use of the ancestral language. From a religio-cultural perspective, double immersion is similar to many ethnically integrated school programmes, except for the fact that the teaching of Hebrew is not aimed at mother-tongue maintenance since most of the students are native-English speakers.

The first double immersion programme (hereafter, Type I programme) was initiated in 1971. Prior to that date, the Jewish Day Schools in Montreal had a basically bilingual English/Hebrew (or a trilingual English/Hebrew/Yiddish) programme. French was taught for one period a day (30-45 minutes of instructional time). However, by the early seventies, there was growing awareness among Jewish parents and school administrators that the amount of French instruction provided was insufficient to ensure that the younger generation would be able to function in an environment where the use of French as the language of work and business was being increasingly emphasized. In consequence, it was decided to establish an elementary school curriculum along the lines of the early French-immersion programme, with one major difference: the Hebrew component of the Jewish Day School curriculum was to remain an integral part of the new programme.

The main features of this double immersion programme are: from kindergarten through grade 2, the curriculum is taught entirely in French and Hebrew, with slightly more instructional time in French than in Hebrew. Reading and writing in both languages are introduced simultaneously in grade 1. Instruction in mother tongue English is introduced in grade 3 and, in some cases, grade 4. From grade 4 onwards, approximately 7 weekly hours are devoted to English, 14 to French and 11 to Hebrew.

As noted above, the French curriculum is similar to the one used in the early French-immersion programme. All secular content subjects are taught in French in grades 1 and 2, and some, such as science, continue to be taught in that language through grade 6. French literacy skills are developed in regular language arts classes, but formal grammar instruction is not started until grade 3. The textbooks and related materials used to teach these subjects are mostly those used in the Francophone schools in Montreal.

The curriculum is devoted to the study of Hebrew as well as to religious and culturally related subjects, such as prayer, Bible and Jewish history, all of which are taught in Hebrew. Here the materials are either texts used by native-Hebrew speakers in Israel or materials specially prepared for the teaching of Hebrew as a second language. As in the case of French, there is little formal language instruction in the lower elementary grades but the use of the language as a means of communication is stressed.

The Type I programme was initially introduced in only one of the Jewish Day Schools. A few years later it was extended to a second and, at present, a third school is considering switching to this type of programme.

The second type of double immersion programme (hereafter, Type II programme) is an extension of a partial immersion programme. Instruction in the mother tongue is started in kindergarten simultaneously with French and Hebrew. The amount of instructional time in each of the three languages is proportionally the same as that of the Type I programme in grades 4, 5 and 6. Here, some of the secular-content subjects, in particular mathematics, are taught in English throughout. In contrast to Type I double immersion programme, the Type II was not initiated by a specific group of people and at a specific point in time. Instead, it developed gradually as a result of the Quebec Government's insistence that the Montreal Jewish Day Schools should increase the number of hours of French-language instruction. In consequence, the Type II programme encompasses a much larger number of schools than Type I and the content of its Hebrew curriculum tends to vary across the schools according to different Jewish philosophies and orientations.

Three can be learned as easily as two

Evaluation of findings

As in the case of the carefully monitored single-language immersion programme, Type I has been evaluated at different grade levels, and the students' linguistic and academic achievement has been compared to that of students enrolled in a Type II programme with a similar Hebrew curriculum. The results reveal few consistent differences between the two programmes in the level of French proficiency. Moreover, by grade 5, the students' linguistic competence in French seems equal to that of grade 5 students in the all-French immersion programme (Genesee and Lambert, 1983).

The level of proficiency in Hebrew tends to be higher in the Type I than in the Type II programme. However, in both, the development of communicative competence in Hebrew is slower in French. This may be due to a number of factors. First, there is more instructional time in French than in Hebrew; second, students living in Montreal have ample opportunity to use French outside the classroom, whereas exposure to Hebrew remains, in most cases, a classroom experience; finally, it is possible that the learning of French by native-English speakers is facilitated by the fact that the two languages share many structural and lexical features. While these factors may explain the comparatively more rapid development of certain French-language skills, it does not follow that the proficiency in Hebrew of students in the double immersion programmes suffers any setbacks in comparison to that of students in Jewish Day Schools elsewhere who receive little or no instruction in French. In fact, some recent research findings indicate that the level of proficiency in Hebrew of students in the Montreal double immersion programmes differs little from that of students in the Toronto Jewish Day Schools with similar Hebrew programmes who received no French instruction.

English-language skills are initially less developed in the Type I than in the Type II programme. This difference disappears, however, once instruction in English is started in the Type I programme (grade 3 or grade 4). Furthermore, in the upper elementary grades, the students in both double immersion programmes perform as well on English language tests as students at the same grade levels in regular English schools in Montreal. In a similar vein, testing in mathematics reveals no significant differences between students in the two double immersion programmes and students in either the all-French immersion programme or the regular English schools.

These findings suggest that the double immersion programmes are an effective means for native-English speakers to acquire functional proficiency in two second languages and that even greatly reduced amounts of instruction in the mother tongue do not adversely affect either proficiency in that language or academic achievement in other subjects.

The results of the evaluations of the double immersion programmes contrast sharply with the linguistic and scholastic achievement noted in certain American school programmes aimed at preserving an ethnic group's cultural and linguistic heritage. It has been argued that the reason for this difference lies in the fact that the children in the Canadian immersion programmes come mostly from middle and upper-middle socio-economic class homes and that their mother tongue is the language of the majority population. Hence these children feel socially and linguistically secure.

Research into the effect of immersion programmes on students' perceptions of linguistic and cultural identity reveals that the French-immersion experience seems to promote a certain degree of linguistic affiliation with the concepts "Francophone" and "French Canadian". On the other hand, the Hebrew curriculum of the Jewish Day Schools appears to instill a stronger feeling of identification with the religiocultural concept "Jew" than

with the purely linguistic concept "Hebrew-speaking person".

Parental attitudes

At a time when school enrolments are steadily declining in the public sector, the Montreal Jewish Day Schools have maintained and, in some cases, expanded their student body. Parents' motivation for sending their children are generally based on commitment to the Hebrew portion of the programme. Feelings about the secular component are mixed. While conscious of the research findings, there is nevertheless concern among most parents that their own children may not be able to deal with material in content subjects which are taught predominantly in a second and as yet insufficiently mastered language. Moreover, although the value of becoming proficient in French is generally recognized, many parents fear that English instruction in the Jewish Day Schools may be further reduced, a factor which could explain why the Type I programme is implemented in only a small number of schools.

Linguistic and educational issues

A central concern in the implementation of immersion programmes has been their suitability for all intellectual levels of the student population. In general, there is a tendency to transfer students who do not succeed in immersion programmes to regular English schools, because it is felt that learning in a second language handicaps children who have either learning difficulties or emotional problems. Although there is some indication from research that suggests that these fears are, in most cases, unfounded in the single-language immersion programmes, the question remains wide open in the case of the double immersion programmes.

Here the problem is twofold. First, there are two second languages involved. This means that there is not only an additional linguistic system to be learned, but that the learner must develop skills to keep the two competing systems from intruding upon each other. Second, there is the question of curriculum content. In order to cover both the secular and the Jewish studies curricula, students not only spend longer hours in the classroom than their peers in the single-language immersion programme, but also have to shoulder a much heavier load of homework.

How well do the schools cope with these problems? Apparently very well; there are practically no transfers to regular English schools and most students are accepted, without difficulty, by the high school of their choice. It can, of course, be argued that most of the students in the double immersion programmes are intellectually and socioeconomically advantaged children. Nevertheless, the doors of these schools are open to any child wishing to receive a Jewish education. In fact, one of the reasons for complying with the Quebec Government's demand to increase the number of hours of French instruction so drastically in the Type II programme was to ensure continuation of the grants the Jewish Day Schools have been receiving and which assure the availability of bursaries for children whose parents cannot afford the tuition fees. Although relatively few students fall into this category, there is no evidence that they are academically less successful than the other students in the double immersion programmes.

A second issue pertaining to the effectiveness of the double immersion programmes is the degree of second-language competence that immersion students develop in French and Hebrew. As noted earlier, the students' level of French proficiency seems to equal that of students at the same grade level in the all-French immersion programme, at least in the upper elementary grades. But exactly how proficient is that? Research findings in Quebec and Ontario suggest that immersion students reach native-like competence in comprehension skills (listening and reading) but not in production skills (speaking and writing). Detailed analysis of the verbal production of students in both the single and the double immersion programmes reveals numerous grammatical errors in French many of which can be traced to interference from English. These findings are equally true for Hebrew in the double immersion programmes, and the vexing problem is the persistence of these errors from grade to grade (Adiv, 1980). It should be noted that the deviant speech patterns do not prevent the students from communicating effectively. Nevertheless, it seems desirable to find means which would enable immersion students to develop adequate grammatical skills in the target language(s). (See Harley, this issue.)

On the other hand, since the problem of linguistic accuracy is common to the single as well as the double immersion programmes, it in no way diminishes the value of the latter as effective models of trilingual education. Although the implementation of these particular models may not be appropriate to all contexts where the maintenance of ethnic identity involves the learning of a third language, the double immersion programmes may provide useful guidelines for the development of other ethnically integrated school programmes in Canada.

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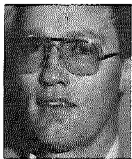
Edmonton offers a bilingual programme in five heritage languages in response to concern about the preservation of cultural origins. Students in these programmes perceive their ancestral tongue as important and valuable.

Multilingual approach reflects Canadian mosaic

JAMES JONES



A supervisor of second languages for the Edmonton Public Schools District since 1967, **James F. Jones** is responsible for curriculum development in French, German, Ukrainian, Latin, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese. He has a B. Ed. and a M. Ed. from the University of Alberta and has taught at the junior and senior high school levels.

While the Edmonton Public School District has a popular and expanding French immersion programme like many other Canadian school districts, what distinguishes Edmonton Public Schools are the partial immersion or bilingual programmes in other languages offered as alternative programmes to English-medium schooling. These programmes in Ukrainian, Hebrew, German, Chinese and Arabic are described here with a particular emphasis on the accompanying curriculum development. One of the ten largest school districts in Canada, Edmonton Public Schools have a student population of 69,500 in 183 schools.

The chart on the following page indicates the programmes in second languages other than French offered in 1983-84 by Edmonton Public Schools. Included are the five bilingual programmes, plus core second-language programmes in Ukrainian, German, Spanish and Latin. The grade levels offered are depicted graphically.

The bilingual programmes share a number of common characteristics. They are optional and can be selected by parents as an alternative to the regular all-English programme. They aim at functional fluency in the second language and, unlike most American bilingual programmes which teach non-English-speaking students English as quickly as possible, are planned to continue instruction via the second language for as long as possible. All tend to attract students of the ethnic origin related to the second language and include students with a variety of backgrounds in the language ranging from no-prior-experience to daily use in the home. They offer one hundred per cent instruction in the second language in kindergarten and offer or plan to offer 50 per cent in the second language from grades 1 to 6.

All programmes offer the approved Alberta curriculum albeit part of it via a second language. Subjects generally taught in the second language are language arts and reading, social studies, art, music and physical education. The bilingual programmes permit late entry in grade 1, and thereafter only in special circumstances unless the student can demonstrate proficiency in the second language equal to that of students already in the programme.

Ukrainian

The oldest of the bilingual programmes offered by Edmonton Public Schools, the Ukrainian Bilingual Programme began in private kindergartens in January 1974. Beginning in September 1974, the Edmonton Public School District and the Edmonton Catholic School Board each assumed responsibility for kindergarten and grade 1 thus becoming the first publicly funded school districts in North America to undertake such a programme.

The programme encompasses five elementary schools, one junior high school (grades 7 to 9) and one senior high school (grades 10 to 12) in the Edmonton Public School District. The leading class is in grade 10 in 1983-84. Enrolments from grade K to 10 for 1982-83 were 382.

In elementary school, reading and writing are introduced initially in English in grade 1, leaving instruction in Ukrainian reading and writing to begin in grade 2. Approximately 25 per cent of instruction in grades 7 to 9 is in Ukrainian, including Ukrainian language arts and

reading, social studies, and a cultural option. Because of a small enrolment, the grade 10 programme is limited to one course —Ukrainian language and literature.

According to the results of a survey conducted between 1974 and 1979, 48 per cent of the parents spoke English only in the home, 5 per cent spoke Ukrainian only and 43 per cent spoke both English and Ukrainian. A total of 57 per cent of the mothers and 61 per cent of the fathers reported that they could understand and speak Ukrainian "fairly well" or "fluently", while a total of 32 per cent of the mothers and 18 per cent of the fathers reported that they could read and write Ukrainian "fairly well" or "fluently".

Hebrew

The Hebrew Bilingual Programme is offered at one school, Talmud Torah, which has been administered by Edmonton Public Schools since September, 1975. It is one of only two Hebrew-language schools in Canada which operate as an integral part of a Public School district rather than as a private institution. Prior to 1975, Talmud Torah had operated for more than 50 years as a private school.

Unlike other bilingual programmes offered by Edmonton Public Schools, the Hebrew kindergarten is privately operated by parents. Enrolments in grades 1 to 6 for 1982-83 were 205. Reading and writing are taught in both English and Hebrew beginning in grade 1 which introduces the additional difficulty of teaching students to read from right to left in Hebrew and from left to right in English. The Hebrew portion of the grades 1 to 6 programme includes Hebrew language arts and reading, social studies and Jewish history.

German

Begun at the kindergarten level in September 1978, the German Bilingual Programme was the first of its kind in Canada and the second in North America. The programme is currently offered in two elementary schools where the lead classes are in grade 5. Enrolments from K to 4 in 1982-83 were 178.

Reading and writing are introduced first in German in grade 1, leaving the English-language arts and reading programme to begin in February of the grade 1 year.

According to the results of a survey of the programme conducted between 1980 and 1983, 41 per cent of the parents spoke English only in the home, 12 per cent spoke German only and 43 per cent spoke both English and German. A high percentage of mothers and fathers reported that they could understand and speak German "fairly well" or "fluently", 83 per cent and 74 per cent respectively, while 78 per cent of the mothers and 68 per cent of the fathers reported that they could read and write German "fairly well" or "fluently".

Arabic

The Arabic Bilingual Programme began in 1982-83 as a private kindergarten operated by parents. Responsibility for kindergarten and grade 1 was assumed by Edmonton Public Schools effective September 1983 thus becoming the first programme of its kind in Canada. Approval was given by the Edmonton Public School Board to continue the programme through grade 6 subject to sufficient enrolment.

The programme is offered in one school and projected enrolment figures for 1983-84 as of June, 1983 were: kindergarten – 39, and grade 1 – 44.

Reading and writing are taught in both English and Arabic from the

Programmes in other languages in Edmonton public schools

Programme		Elementary	Junior High	Senior High
Ukrainian as a second language			7*, 8, 9 →	10*, 20, 30 → 20, 30
Bilingual English-Ukrainian	K*	1,2,3,4,5,6	7, 8, 9	10
German as a second language			7*, 8, 9 →	10*, 20, 30 → 20, 30
Bilingual English-German	K*	1,2,3,4,5		
Bilingual English-Hebrew		1,2,3,4,5,6		
Bilingual English-Chinese	K*	1		
Bilingual English-Arabic	K*	1		
Latin				10*, 20, 30
Spanish as a second language				10*, 20, 30

** Indicates entry points to the programme*

beginning of grade 1, with the same left to right and right to left challenge as in Hebrew.

Chinese

The Chinese Bilingual Programme also began in 1982-83 as a private kindergarten operated by parents. Responsibility for kindergarten and grade 1 was assumed by Edmonton Public Schools in September 1983, and extension of the programme through grade 6 was approved subject to sufficient enrolment. This programme also is the first of its kind in Canada.

Offered in two schools, projected enrolments for the 1983-84 school year as of June 1983 were: kindergarten – 58, and grade 1 -43.

Despite the fact that most of the parents speak Cantonese, a decision was made by the Chinese Parents' Kindergarten Association to teach Mandarin rather than Cantonese. It is significant that the written language is common to both dialects.

Reading and writing are taught in both English and Chinese from beginning of the grade 1 year. Students read Chinese from the top to the bottom of the page beginning on the right side.

In general, the Edmonton Public School Board has responded to requests from parents for these programmes. Although the motivation of parents may vary somewhat, they are usually concerned about preservation of the language which after-school and Saturday classes cannot achieve once the language is no longer spoken regularly in the home.

The bilingual programme provides adequate time for language acquisition, and it also provides a certain legitimacy for the language. That is, if the school offers the language, in the eyes of the student it must be something important and valuable. It is undeniable that the Canadian cultural mosaic encompasses a multitude of linguistic riches which will be lost unless they are valued and encouraged by educational institutions.

One of the objectives of the Edmonton Public School Board is to provide educational experiences which will enhance the feeling of self-esteem in students. The bilingual programmes certainly do this by teaching a sense of identity and pride in students' origins.

Parents recognize that bilingual programs are an additional type of educational experience because, in addition to the usual benefits of schooling in English, students can acquire fluency in a language other than English.

Getting started

Prior to 1971, the Alberta School Act did not permit instruction via a language other than English or French. Changes were made in 1971 as a result of negotiations by a group of interested members of the Ukrainian community led by Professor M. Lupul, currently director of the Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies at Univerity of Alberta, and P. Savaryn, lawyer and currently Chancellor of the University of Alberta. The School Act was amended to permit instruction in languages other than English or French for up to 50 per cent of the school day. A commitment was also made by the government to provide support for the preparation of curricular materials provided that there was a minimum of one hundred students enrolled per grade level in the particular language in the province.

Once the enabling legislation was in place, parents interested in a Ukrainian bilingual programme organized private kindergartens prior to asking the Edmonton Public and Catholic School Boards to assume responsibility. The approach of demonstrating sufficient numbers and determination to succeed was also used by Chinese and Arabic parents.

Accessibility

Within Edmonton Public Schools' administrative structure, responsibility for the accessibility of programmes, including location of bilingual programmes and transportation of students, lies with the Planning and Development Division.

In general, an attempt is made to locate the programmes in schools as close as possible to the residence of the largest number of programme students. In practice, this is frequently very difficult because these schools are already near capacity with all-English programme students. A further complication is the fact that the bilingual programme will attract students from outside the catchment area of a school, and that provisions must be made for growth as the programme advances through the grades.

All bilingual programmes, except Hebrew, are offered in dual-track or triple-track schools which include all-English programme classes, and in the case of triple-track schools, French-immersion classes as well. Parents tend to prefer the contact with all-English programme students and staff which such schools made possible. Furthermore, the School Board has a policy which requires that bilingual programmes be located in schools where the all-English programme is likely to be viable in the long term.

Since there are relatively few schools offering bilingual programmes in the Edmonton Public School District, transportation of students is a very important consideration. A committee called the Joint Transportation Committee, comprised of administrative personnel and representatives of the bilingual parent councils, works to provide the best possible bussing system for students not able to use public transportation. The current average cost to parents is $27 per month per child, and an attempt is made to keep the time spent on the bus by a student to a maximum of one hour each way. Special transportation grants which are available from Alberta Education are applied to keep the monthly charge as low as possible.

Expectations and involvement of parents

Parents expect that their children will achieve at an appropriate level in English and other academic subjects, such as mathematics. In addition, they look for progress towards

fluency in the second language and a knowledge and appreciation of the culture of that language group.

Parents also expect to be informed, and many wish to be involved in support of the programme. This may occur individually, as a committee member at the school level, or as a member of a parent council at the district level. Parents assist in providing additional experiences in the language, as well as in the area of transportation, curriculum development and recruitment of students.

The Ukrainian Bilingual Association, a district level parent council, has organized summer language camps, and with the assistance of a federal grant, has hired a full-time facilitator to recruit students. The German, Hebrew and Arabic parent councils have all contributed to local curriculum development by paying for the development of some of the materials or by contributing materials. All district councils participated in the organization and realization of a Bilingual Education Week in March 1983. Originally proposed by the Ukrainian Bilingual Association, the aims of the week were to increase public awareness of the advantages of bilingual education programmes in the Edmonton area. The councils plan to make this week an annual event.

Administrative and political support

Parents have had the benefit of the support of senior administration and trustees of the School Board whose leadership and farsightedness have resulted in the most extensive offering of second-language immersion programmes in Canada. The encouragement of the provincial government through enabling legislation and funding has demonstrated commitment and vision.

At the school level, the support of principals and assistant principals has been vital to the success of the programmes. In addition, acceptance and support by all-English programme teachers as well as paraprofessional staff, especially school secretaries, have been important. Because good teachers are vital to the success of any educational programme, a great deal of importance is attached to the recruitment and hiring of teachers for the bilingual programmes. Recruitment —sometimes on a national level— and initial screening are carried out by the Personnel Department. Candidates are sought who have all the attributes of good teachers plus proficiency in both English and the second language and who are eligible for certification as teachers in Alberta.

In order to determine second-language proficiency, candidates are interviewed by Second Languages Services consultants, or where the language skills are not possessed by the staff by a committee consisting of a teacher already on staff and one or two parent representatives. Criteria used to evaluate language efficiency include correctness, richness and fluency.

Principals then interview those candidates recommended by the Personnel Department and make their selections to suit the needs of their school.

Experience has shown that after two years the programme becomes known locally, and future teachers prepare themselves accordingly to teach in the programme. The Hebrew Bilingual Programme is an exception, and recruitment in Israel has continued to be necessary.

Curriculum materials

There is an obvious need for teaching and learning materials in the second language, including a guide for kindergarten teachers as well as materials for language arts and reading, social studies, art, music and physical education in grades 1 to 6.

Commercial materials are purchased where possible. For example, readers for the German, Chinese and Arabic programmes have been purchased from West Germany, California and Jordan respectively. For Ukrainian, the Edmonton Ukrainian Business and Professional Club obtained federal funding and worked jointly with Alberta Education to produce a series of readers. It is frequently difficult to use texts intended for native speakers because of the high level of oral language background which is assumed by the authors. In addition, in the case of Ukrainian and Chinese, special attention must be paid to ideological references in the materials which would be inappropriate for Canadian students.

In view of the difficulty in obtaining suitable commercial materials, much local development must occur. Because of the minimum enrolment of one hundred students required by Alberta Education, Ukrainian is the only bilingual programme for which the provincial government has contributed substantially to curriculum development. Both a Ukrainian consultant and a Ukrainian learning resources officer organize the preparation and review of materials.

Even where readers are available commercially, statements of outcomes, including scope and sequence for the language programme by grade level, must be developed. Furthermore, it is unusual to find a total language-arts programme which includes all four language skills, so appropriate materials must be produced.

Very few commercial materials are available for social studies, because the programme is specific to Alberta. Teacher materials are frequently left in English, while student materials are translated or adapted. Although longer and hence more expensive, adaptation is often preferable in order to suit the students' linguistic skills and to make better use of reference materials available in the second language.

Art, music and physical education receive lower priority initially in curriculum development for bilingual programmes, because less teaching time is accorded to them and because they tend to be activity-oriented subjects in which students may not use much language. Except in Ukrainian, where Alberta Education guides exist, teachers use English guides from Alberta Education and Edmonton Public Schools. Glossaries

of terms, which are provided to teachers as soon as time and resources permit, are important for Canadian-born teachers who have likely not had the opportunity to study other subjects in the second language at school or university, and also for those of non-Canadian origin whose experience as students themselves in these subjects may not have included the techniques or content of the Alberta curriculum. Personnel from both the Canadian Institute For Studies in Ukrainian at the University of Alberta and the German language section of Alberta Education have prepared glossaries of Ukrainian and German terms in physical education for Edmonton Public Schools.

In preparing to develop the materials, the need must be specified and a request made to the Curriculum Branch for inclusion in its budget. Subsequent to budget approval, the actual development can begin using part-time curriculum writers, most of whom write and teach during the school year, or project writers who work mainly during the holidays in July and August.

Supply teachers are provided to free programme teachers to prepare small units or to provide input to curriculum writers. In 1983-84, half-time curriculum writers are working in Ukrainian, German, Chinese and Arabic, while a Hebrew writer is working 30 per cent of the time. In addition, provision has been made for typists, illustrators and a calligrapher.

A number of administrators and resource people, including the Director Curriculum, Supervisor Curriculum Development, the Supervisor Second Languages, the Curriculum Editor, Second Language Consultants and appropriate subject area supervisors, are involved in the process. The curriculum writers meet monthly with the Supervisor Second Languages to plan and review progress. The work of project writers is frequently coordinated by the appropriate Second Language Consultant. The Supervisor Curriculum Development is responsible for budgeting, project outlines, payment of personnel, printing, warehousing and cataloguing for internal and external sales. The Curriculum Editor assists writers with proofreading, standardizing format, some illustrations and copyright observation. Once a unit has been typed and approved by the Curriculum Branch it is field tested, revised the following year and reprinted in its final form.

The development time line typically has 40-50 per cent of the materials necessary for the lead grade ready in September of the implementation year. The balance of the materials is developed during that year in addition to the initial 40-50 per cent required for the following year.

The absence of professional binding and colour are two weaknesses related to locally developed materials. With respect to commercial materials, there is a scarcity of appropriate supportive learning resources, including supplementary readers, films, tapes, charts, maps and kits.

Recruitment of students

Recruitment of students occurs at both the school and district levels and involves both parents and educators. By far the most effective recruitment occurs on a testimonial basis with parents talking to parents.

With the assistance of the Communications Branch, advertisements are placed in city newspapers in April, pamphlets are distributed to all students in kindergarten, and detailed brochures are supplied to all school counsellors in the district and to all programme schools.

District-level parent councils distribute an Edmonton Public Schools' second-language programmes poster, and frequently their own poster to many locations in the city, including businesses, libraries, health clinics, religious institutions and offices of professionals. In addition, a Bilingual Education Week includes media exposure, shopping mall displays and school open houses.

Although there is a need for co-curricular activities to support and complement the in-class programme, the relatively small number of students is a limiting factor. Nonetheless, a number of activities have been organized successfully for Ukrainian programme students including a Ukrainian Story Theatre presentation, visits to the school by St. Nicholas at Ukrainian Christmas, the summer day camp operated by the parents' council, and a parent-organized grade 6 graduation ceremony.

Professional development

A good deal of professional development is required of programme teachers because most have not had an opportunity to study second language teaching techniques during their teacher training. In addition, teachers in new programmes need to be able to meet regularly to discuss problems and successes and to learn about the materials they are using.

Even for experienced teachers, it is essential that the professional development programme stress the primacy and importance of the spoken language.

Professional development includes teacher intervisitation, in-service sessions during and after school hours, summer courses and professional conferences. The Supervisor Second Languages and his consultants are responsible for organizing a district-level in-service programme.

While it is clear that responsibility for programmes in Edmonton Public Schools rests with the school principals, there is a real need to coordinate curriculum development, professional and programme development, recruitment of teachers and students, and liaison with parents at the district level, as well as to provide advice and assistance to programme principals and teachers with respect to implementation of the programmes. This is accomplished by various people including the Supervisor Second Languages, a full-time Ukrainian consultant, a half-time German consultant, and representatives of the

Curriculum Branch, the Communications Branch, the Programme Development Branch and the Personnel Department.

Although the largest cost item of most educational programmes is the teacher, and although this cost is the same whether the teaching occurs in English or in a second language, it is evident that there are additional expenses related to bilingual programmes, particularly in the initial years. Local curriculum development, commercial learning resources including library books in the second language, resource personnel, recruitment of students and staff, and overhead for the operation of the bussing system are all additional cost items. Furthermore, in order to recognize the additional expenses related to such alternative programmes, including the administration of what amounts to two schools within a school, special professional and paraprofessional staffing requirements, additional parent communication needs, and noon lunch-room supervision, Edmonton Public Schools provide an additional multiple-programme grant to schools for the purpose.

Alberta Education has recognized the additional cost factor in such programmes and provides annual grants in support of them. Included are language-programme grants, reading material grants for elementary students, and transportation grants. In 1983, language-programme grants were $110 per pupil and reading material grants were $3.40 per pupil.

Formal evaluations have been conducted on the Ukrainian and German programmes, the former with 80 per cent Alberta Education funding from 1974 to 1979 and the latter with 50 per cent Alberta Education funding from 1980 to 1983. Both evaluations compared programme students with matched controls in the all-English programme in English reading and mathematics. Achievement in Ukrainian and German was measured, and the perceptions of parents, teachers and principals were obtained. In general, programme students achieved as well as their controls in English reading and mathematics. In addition they demonstrated an increasing proficiency in the second language. Parents and personnel reported a high level of satisfaction with the programmes.

Future plans

Decisions must be made with respect to a programme beyond grade 6 for all languages except Ukrainian, which is already at the grade 10 level. The Programme Development Branch will survey parents and identify suitable secondary schools if parental response is positive. A committee of parents is currently working with administrative personnel to explore the possibility of establishing a Hebrew programme in grades 10 to 12.

Formal evaluation of the Chinese, Arabic and Hebrew programmes should begin in 1984-85 and extend over a period of three years. Some consideration should be given to a follow-up evaluation of the Ukrainian and German programmes in secondary grades.

Despite some anxiety that the foundations for a modern-day Tower of Babel have been laid, no new language groups are on the horizon. Nevertheless, School Board policy with respect to the initiation of such programmes needs to be reviewed. Quite apart from the success of these programmes in English and second language achievement and the positive response of parents is the spirit of cooperation which prevails among the district-level parent councils as they work on projects of mutual interest. It is an example of the Canadian cultural mosaic at its best and bodes well for the future.

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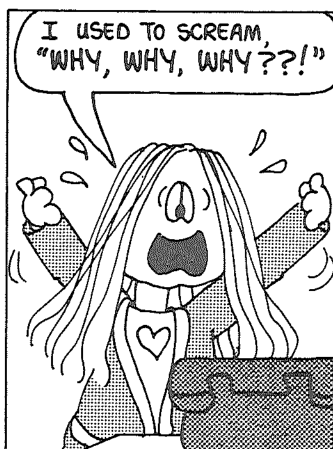
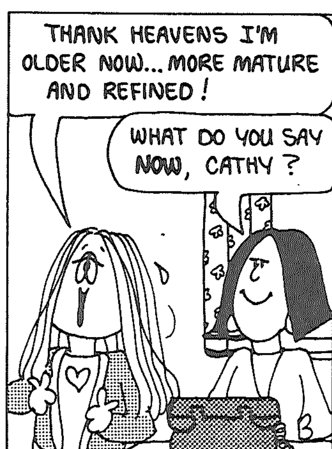
cathy by Cathy Guisewite





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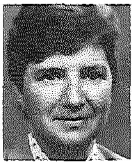
This case study of Canada's only officially bilingual province discusses social and political implications of French immersion. The author looks at the question both from an Anglophone and a Francophone perspective.

The quest for linguistic equality in New Brunswick

VIVIANE EDWARDS



Viviane Edwards has taught French as a second language at various levels in the New Brunswick school system as well as at the provincial Teachers' College in Fredericton. Since 1975, she has been Coordinator of Second Language Services for the Province. She joined the Department of Education in 1972 as a consultant in second languages.

On September 30, 1982, in the Court of Queen's Bench of New Brunswick, Judge Guy Richard heard the first testimony in a most unusual case. La Societé des Acadiens du Nouveau-Brunswick Inc. and L'Association des Conseillers Scolaires Francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick had accused the English Minority Language School Board No. 50 of Grand Falls, N.B., of acting contrary to and in violation of the Schools Act as well as of the Official Languages of New Brunswick Act. The Minority Board was charged with offering a French programme to Francophone students which in effect would draw students away from the French Majority Board, District No. 32. District 50, on the other hand, contested the charge arguing that the programme at issue was not a first-language French programme but a French-immersion programme designed for English-language students. They further argued that they had no way of determining reliably whether a student was Anglophone or Francophone and that they therefore had no basis upon which to refuse a student admittance to the school.

Grand Falls is a small community in northwestern New Brunswick. Its location, close to the United States border as well as to Quebec, has moulded its population into a French-English blend which is both vibrant and complex. Many of the families have one parent from each language group, and although one language usually dominates the household there are families in which both languages are considered to have equal status. At the trial, some experts who had been called as witnesses stated that this was not possible while others said it was.

The bilingual school district

Until the end of June 1981, the Grand Falls area had only one school district. This system was considered as bilingual: instruction was provided to Anglophones and Francophones either in their respective mother tongue or partly in one language and partly in the other. On June 18, 1981 the Schools Act was amended to provide for school districts to be organized on the basis of one or the other of the official languages of New Brunswick. It also provided for the establishment of minority school boards to look after the rights of small minorities within a larger linguistic community of the other official language. These amendments were seen as a means of guaranteeing the rights of both official-language groups, but for some families they were not enough.

The small group of bilinguals was caught in the middle of an identity crisis and was forced to decide whether their children were French or English.

The introduction of immersion classes

Before the establishment of District 50, many of the parents of English-speaking students had asked for French-immersion classes. Because of the size of the district and the availability of French instruction in the French schools of the then bilingual District 32, these parents had been permitted to enrol their children in the French schools. Then came the unilingual districts and the minority boards. Parents of English children formerly enrolled in the French schools suddenly wanted their children enrolled in the English schools with the same right to French immersion as other English school districts in the province. This did not present a problem to the Board of School District 50 as it had planned to offer a full slate of options in French, including immersion. This

opened the door not only to English-speaking students seeking an immersion experience but to bilinguals and Francophones who for various reasons wanted their children in the District 50 schools. For many Francophones, however, who had long seen the bilingual school as the instrument of assimilation, this was unacceptable.

The trial, which lasted twelve days, heard testimony from a long list of well-known experts as well as from parents. The judge's ruling, presented in a 73-page decision, stated quite clearly that each school board must determine whether a child seeking admission to its regular programme has a sufficient knowledge of the first language (of English in the case of District No. 50, or of French in the case of District No. 32). The court upheld the right of parents to choose either the English or French system of education for a child. In sum, if a child has sufficient capacity in English to follow the regular English programme, that child has a right to choose the English system. However, if that child already has a "practical knowledge" of French, the Board must refuse him or her admission to the French immersion programme. In the final analysis, the significance of the trial is that it provided the first official recognition of the concept that separate unilingual schools are essential for the linguistic survival of the Francophone minority in New Brunswick.

In a province where Finns, Fergusons and Youngs can be unilingual French, the Grand Falls decision will undoubtedly have some effect on other school districts. Within days after the decision was handed down, copies of the ruling were distributed by the New Brunswick Department of Education to all English School Districts in the province. It is possible that the same dynamics which produced the Grand Falls situation could develop in the other bilingual areas of the province where immersion is offered.

New Brunswick is officially a bilingual province. What this means is detailed in the Official Languages of New Brunswick Act. In education, it means equality of services for both language groups. Currently the Minister of Education is Francophone; there are two deputy ministers, each having a primary responsibility for one official language group. Educational services are offered equally to both language groups under the direction of two assistant deputy ministers; one Francophone, one Anglophone. Separate branches for each language group offer services in Programme Development and Implementation, Special Education, Pupil Personnel Service and Evaluation. School districts are organized along language lines with English and French school districts.

At the provincial level, French-immersion programmes fall under the direction of the English Educational Services Division since they are intended for Anglophone students. Immersion programmes are developed by staff assigned to the Programme Development and Implementation Branch (English) with the assistance of the usual curriculum committee made up of immersion teachers. The Branch develops programmes in all subject areas: Mathematics, Sciences, Social Studies, Health Education, etc., and parallels the curriculum for the English schools in all subjects other than Language Arts.

As in other Canadian provinces, French immersion is fairly new in New Brunswick having been introduced in the two largest English districts in the late nineteen sixties. Statistics for 1982-83 show the total number of students enrolled in immersion programmes as 8,759, approximately 10 per cent of the English-speaking student population. Immersion is available in 17 of the 26 English school districts and is offered from grade 1 to grade 12. (In September 1983, immersion became available in 20 of the 26 English school districts.) Riverview High School in District 15 graduated its first immersion students in June 1982, and Frederiction High School in District 26 will graduate its first in 1985.

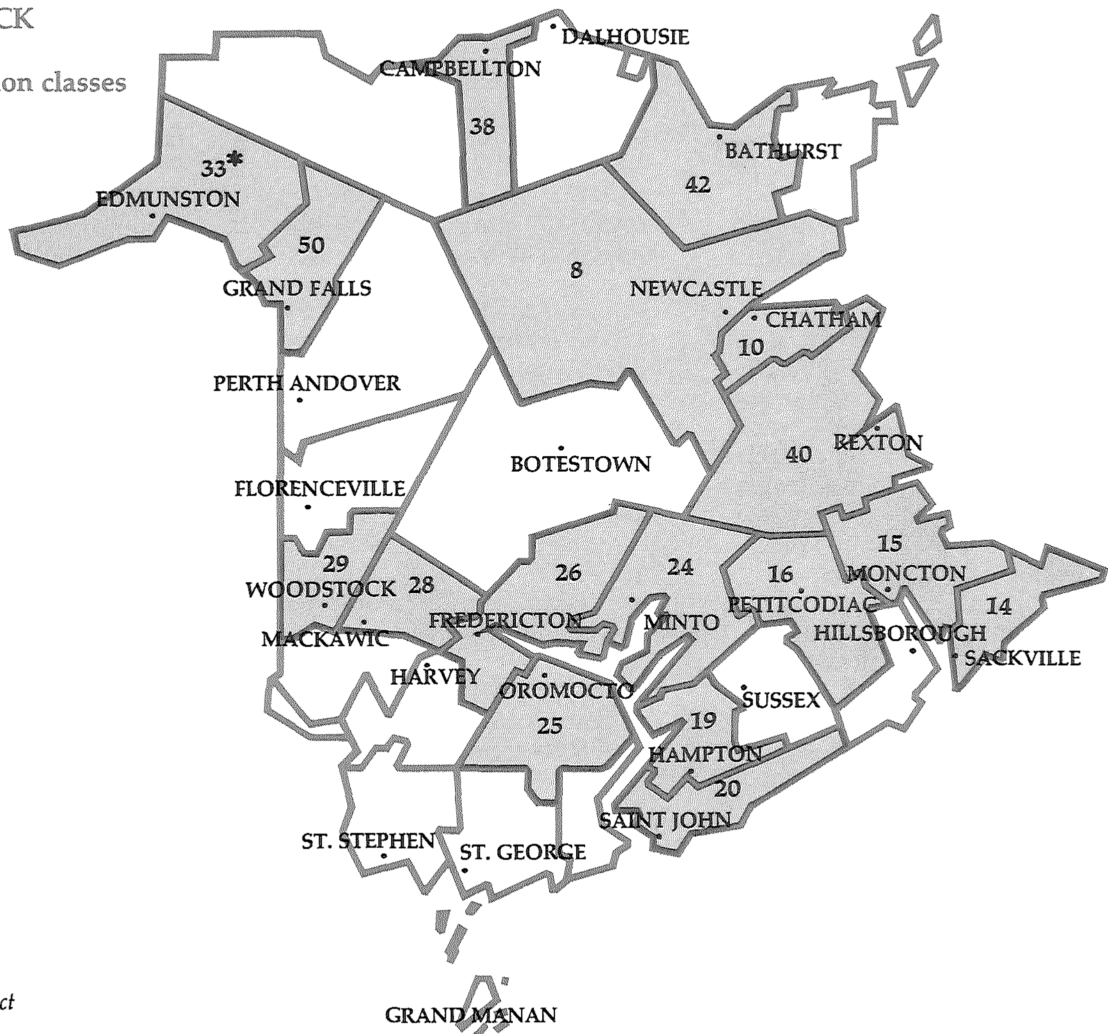
The statistics in the table opposite show that more than half of the province's French-immersion students are in Districts 15 and 26, the areas of greater Moncton and Fredericton respectively. Indeed the latest statistics indicate that in Moncton 31 per cent and in Fredericton 20 per cent of their respective student populations are enrolled in immersion. Several of the districts offering immersion have fewer than 4000 students with District 50 having the fewest with 517 students. Provincially, numbers in French immersion are increasing yearly. In the past three years the total number of students in French immersion has increased by 98.6 per cent.

Staffing is the major concern

For the larger districts as well as for the smallest, the issue of most concern is staffing. Jack MacKinnon, the Executive Director of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association, wrote, "It is not untrue to state that each early-immersion class means the loss of an English-speaking teaching position. In this school year there are 269.5 immersion teachers, of whom approximately 90 per cent are mother-tongue French. These are simple facts." He added, "Why are English-speaking teachers so concerned about French immersion? Would the concern be as great if we were not facing declining enrolment and restraints? Probably not!"

The concern over job security is not unique to New Brunswick but it is an identified problem associated with French immersion in school boards across Canada. The Canadian Education Association in the report of its research on immersion, *French Immersion and School Boards: Issues and Effects* came to a similar conclusion: "One effect of French immersion that has received a great deal of publicity is its effect on the positions of Anglophone teachers. The popularity of this programme is often such that French teachers are hired while the number of unilingual English teachers remains the same or decreases. From our survey com-

NEW-BRUNSWICK
Enrolment
in French immersion classes
1976-77 to 1982-83



French-language district

District	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83
08	–	26	26	26	52	74	150
10	51	60	34	58	90	66	141
14	93	129	147	176	217	276	357
15	1079	1415	1683	1946	2510	3101	3624
16	84	108	146	171	189	251	322
19	–	–	30	62	117	218	391
20	212	249	228	284	332	415	580
24	86	105	131	124	121	118	155
25	–	–	–	–	–	60	132
26	661	896	1059	1218	1392	1657	1907
28	–	–	–	–	–	–	41
29	–	–	–	–	33	75	126
33*	–	–	–	–	–	20	32
38	77	112	147	157	194	236	295
40	–	–	–	–	27	45	61
42	130	148	145	189	226	448	378
50	–	–	–	–	–	71	67
Total	**2473**	**3248**	**3776**	**4411**	**5500**	**7131**	**8759**

ments, a persistent current of teacher apprehension was evident. Obviously, the most frightening consequence of immersion for a regular programme teacher is the possibility of losing his or her job."

For parents and for those working closely with the French immersion programmes the problem is also related to staff selection. There is genuine concern that with the growth of immersion, the continuing problem of declining enrolment, and the prospect of further restraints placed on budgets, boards may relax their standards for French immersion teachers and gradually employ staff with limited competency in French rather than resort to lay-offs.

In New Brunswick, with a French population of over 30 per cent, difficulties in finding qualified staff are limited to a few of the smaller districts. Nonetheless, in an attempt to ease the strain on school boards, the Department of Education has implemented a three-year pilot programme designed to train English-speaking teachers to teach in the French language. This programme is now in its second year and the first nine teachers trained in the programme returned to their districts in September 1983.

Transition tensions

The changeover in a school's staff because of French immersion can cause tension and apprehension. One elementary school principal from the Moncton area indicated that for six years his school was in a state of tension and upheaval as the number of English classes decreased and the immersion programme gradually "took over" his school. Teachers who had been on staff for years were transferred during that period and replaced by young teachers often with only a few years' experience.

September was always the most difficult month bringing with it the responsibility of forming an educational team with teachers who felt threatened and depressed. The school is now stable with an established English as well as an immersion programme. There have been no staff changes in recent years and with that kind of security restored to his staff the principal has an exciting team with whom to work. Staff-room chatter is back to normal although much of it is in French. There is cooperation and pride in the school and its students.

Because of the Province's status as officially bilingual and the nature of its population, much importance is associated with becoming bilingual. This is true both at the policy-making level and among much of the general population and its many organizations and groups. The immersion policy, for instance, is an example of the Province's thinking and its support for individuals who wish to become bilingual.

Some years ago there were the inevitable conflicts in some districts when parents requested an immersion programme and school board members felt that for various reasons they could not offer such an option. Their reasons were usually related to the size of the district, the cost, and the disruption to certain schools.

These conflicts are still possible but the provincial policy is such that it leaves little room for discussion or argument. If there is a sufficient number of pupils requesting immersion to form a class, the Board must offer it. Class size is determined by average class size in that district at that level. The policy recognizes two entry points, grade 1 and grade 7. The key word, of course, is "must".

This change in the policy came into effect in July 1982. The Province had had a policy in effect since 1977 but the only impact had been its statement on funding. Since all funding for education in New Brunswick comes from the central agency through a formula-budgeting system, a weighing factor was added for districts offering French immersion. In the past few years an attempt has been made to identify the additional cost of immersion. It appears that for some, the factor covers the additional cost while for others it falls far short of reaching that goal. It seems to be a question of determining what cost is attributable to immersion. There has been little agreement on this question.

Political and social issues

The political and social issues related to immersion are varied, and affect not only the individuals directly involved but also others peripherally influenced by this programme. There is a general feeling that the regular school programme somehow suffers because of French immersion. "What effect does the siphoning off of so many students have on the existing English programme?"

This is the question asked by the New Brunswick Teachers' Association and by parents who fear that provincial funds diverted to the immersion programme could be better used if directed to the system as a whole. There is general concern that the brightest students select immersion and that the regular programme lacks the stimulation and motivation created by these "better" students.

Although results of provincial testing do not support this claim, teachers also express the same concern. It was one of the topics discussed at the annual meeting of the French Second Language Council in May 1983 where teachers suggested that educational objectives set a few years ago were now unrealistic since the students who would normally be the "leaders" of the class were following the immersion stream. That notion, coupled with the fact that most school boards have assigned their best second-language teachers to the immersion programme, would appear to paint a grim picture for the future of the children in the core programme in English schools.

In effect, immersion appears to have been the best thing to happen to French second-language instruction. In an attempt to provide a valid alternative, Government as well as school boards are trying to provide the best second-language programme possible. Students in New Brunswick are now guaranteed access to a minimum of 1200 hours of instruction in French during their public school

careers. Several projects make it possible for students to study French during the summer, and parents generally are beginning to see that immersion is not the only alternative available.

The immersion programme is open to all students in N.B.

The question of elitism is a favorite theme. Because of the immersion policy in New Brunswick, virtually everyone has access to the programme, but there is undoubtedly a self-selection process at work and the students opting for immersion are usually from the better-educated families in the higher economic bracket. The Commissioner of Official Languages, M.F. Yalden, in his 1981 Annual Report included an interesting comment pertaining to the question of elitism. "Some parents, teachers and specialists see a dangerous form of "elitism" in current immersion programmes, in part because of the access problems... One is tempted to observe that this word is increasingly used in contemporary circumstances to express disapproval when one cannot find anything else wrong... The issue is whether the future of a programme like immersion French should be put in doubt because some youngsters may be benefiting from it, but not the population at large."

One of the most disturbing issues related to bilingualism in New Brunswick in the 1980s is the increasing number of Francophone students graduating from high school with less than a basic competency in English. Although similar services are available to both language groups and the Province assigns a special budget to the programme for English as a second language (ESL), current results are not encouraging. The core-English programme is suffering the same growing pains as did the programme for French as a second language (FSL) before the advent of immersion. It is only in the bilingual areas of the province that students are becoming bilingual. A survey conducted in 1982 showed that approximately 56 per cent of Francophone students could be classified as unilingual French. What are the alternatives available to the Francophone students who wish to learn English as a second language? There is no question of adopting an English immersion programme in the Francophone schools, at least not in the sense of the French-immersion model in Anglophone schools because it arouses the fear of loss of French and English assimilation of Francophones. But educators are faced with a real dilemma and a solution must be found.

Is there a relationship between this dilemma in the Francophone community and the success of the immersion programme for Anglophone students? Speaking at an ESL symposium in February 1982, Gilbert Finn, the Francophone president of the Université de Moncton, said:

> Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the Anglophones of New Brunswick have discovered the value and importance of bilingualism, especially its economic impact. Believe me, they are very determined to have their children learn French. They realize their children must become bilingual to get key jobs and that bilingualism is an integral part of their future in this province.
>
> And what are we Acadians going to do in light of this new development? Will our children be unilingual French? Will they again be prevented from occupying the positions to which we have aspired for so long and which, until recently, we believed we were capable of occupying without too much difficulty? Is it possible that we, who by force of circumstances have always been bilingual, will become unilingual? Is it possible that the Anglophones, until now unilingual by choice, will be the bilingual Canadians of tomorrow and will thus continue to occupy the key positions where decisions are made that affect us individually and as a group? It is these positions we must fill if we want to make New Brunswick a province where there is truly equal oppurtunity for each and every citizen. *(Our translation)*

Conclusion

The implications of the immersion programme are many and varied. Will the product of the immersion programme, the leaders of tomorrow, have a broader view of their bilingual world? Will their concept of equality of opportunity for all be different from that of their parents? And what of New Brunswick's Francophones, does this represent perhaps one of their greatest challenges?

The past fifteen-year period has seen great strides taken on the road to a truly bilingual province. Unquestionably, immersion has been one of the success stories along this road, and the issues that it raises are both challenging and exciting. For the first time, a programme has been found which is making it possible for children to become bilingual. This accomplishment must never be jeopardized or overshadowed by the social or political issues. In the past, New Brunswick has reacted boldly and positively to the linguistic needs of the two language groups. It will no doubt continue to do so.

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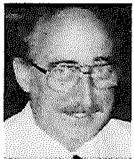
Are the claims made for the success of French immersion exaggerated? The author suggests we should be much more critical and look for the solution to the language-training problem in an intensive apprenticeship. In his view, immersion is passé.

No easy road to bilingualism

GILLES BIBEAU



A widely published specialist on linguistic subjects, Professor **Gilles Bibeau** was responsible for the major study done in the 1970s for the federal government on language training in the public service. He teaches at the Faculty of Education Sciences at the University of Montreal, where he had previously been a professor in the Linguistics Deparment.

Created from a desire to provide a better option to the traditional methods of teaching French as a second language, the immersion approach required, from its outset, a theoretical base and supporting justification. Beyond the socio-political justification afforded by Anglophone parents in Quebec who wished their children to learn French, the system had to be built on solid psychological, linguistic and educational foundations. There could be no question of exposing children to intellectual and general development problems, of weakening their mother tongue skills or of causing difficulties in other academic subjects, not to mention the problems in social relationships and attitudes vis-à-vis the second-language and mother tongue community so often ascribed to the early acquisition of bilingual skills (see Bastien, 1938, for Canada; UNESCO, 1953, Weinreich 1953, Bibeau, 1982).

No such justification for immersion did in fact exist. A great deal of research that exists on attitudes and motivation, and on the relative advantages of bilingual and unilingual Canadians in terms of intelligence; however, these studies did not apply specifically to matters of development and did not represent adequate foundations on which to adopt a bilingual education system. In other words, no one was able to reassure parents and educators about the possible effects of early second-language instruction. Thus, the immersion approach had to be researched and evaluated. Since firm evidence was lacking, various hypotheses were put forward instead: that immersion would not have negative effects on children's intellectual and general development, on the quality of their mother tongue skills or on their ability to learn other academic subjects; that immersion would not modify children's attitudes toward their own cultural community; and that immersion would improve attitudes toward the other language community. Still other hypotheses sparked research and evaluation: if it were true that the younger the child, the more quickly he learned in "natural" circumstances, then the same would be true at school, where at least an effort should be made to have an environment similar to "natural circumstances"; that after a certain age (9-12 years), it was no longer possible to learn perfect pronunciation, delivery and rhythm in a second language; that children learn without effort while adolescents and adults, more conscious of how they speak, must work harder at it; and that children can more easily be motivated by pedagogical techniques than adults.

After nearly twenty years of evaluation, what support is there for these hypotheses and what questions should still be asked about immersion and the factors involved?

Immersion and cognitive factors

It is widely held that the traditional view that early bilingualism has harmful effects on intellectual development has been completely refuted by the results of research and evaluation on modern bilingual education. This is not so, however. Although the formulation has been corrected and the older view has become more differentiated, it has not been substantially regulated. In fact, contemporary research clearly indicates that cognitive development is influenced and often hindered by early bilingualism, and that a number of affective problems arise from such early bilingualism. However,

such detrimental effects have been found mainly among minority and underprivileged language groups. In majority or privileged groups, early bilingualism does not appear to produce such effects, the reasons why this should be so are largely of a psychological and social nature.

Most immersion experiments have been conducted with children of privileged majority groups; the children and parents have been mostly volunteers living in almost exclusively Anglophone neighbourhoods. Consequently, the positive evaluation results apply to groups different from and much more numerous than those traditionally evaluated, and thus do not modify the traditional conclusions. All they add is the social difference, which is clearly important, and they demonstrate that there is no causal relationship between early bilingualism and intellectual problems.

Such problems are the result of the overall situation in which most minority or under-privileged groups live.

Immersion and affective factors

One hypothesis relating to immersion was that the children's feeling of belonging to their mother tongue group would not change and that they would always perceive themselves as full-fledged members of the Anglophone community. This has been largely confirmed: the system itself, which limits bilingual education to the strictly academic sector and keeps children from contact with Francophones, was designed for this purpose.

The hypothesis that attitudes vis-à-vis the French-language community would improve has been confirmed to only a very limited degree. Although a greater awareness of the French fact in Canada has been observed, there has been little motivation to establish closer relations with Francophones and pursue post-secondary studies in French-language institutions.

The first of these hypotheses has always appeared to me virtually to exclude the second because it separates language learning from learning about culture, thus providing immersion in the language but not in the culture. The language skills are acquired in an artificial environment. Such a limitation is inevitable when a foreign language is learned for purposes of occasional contacts with the target community, or purely for reading comprehension; however, in the case of French in Quebec, or Canada, one wonders if the emphasis placed on language is not in part neutralized by the lack of emphasis on culture in the anthropological sense of the term. How can knowledge of the second language be maintained if no contact is made with the other community and if there is little motivation to do so? Is immersion not subject to socio-cultural factors that limit much of its overall effectiveness?

Immersion and mastery of the second language

With legitimate but probably rather misplaced enthusiasm, the conclusion has often been drawn from evaluations that students of immersion have a mastery of French equal to that of Francophones. This is completely false. Just because young Anglophones in immersion have equivalent results in French tests as young Francophones, it does not follow that their overall language skills are equal. School tests measure skills learned in academic programmes but do not evaluate overall knowledge of the language. We need only examine a few independent studies conducted by linguists (Spilka, Connors) to realize that children in Canada's immersion schools have serious difficulties with French vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation (See Harley, this issue).

From these analyses, which are rather more searching than end-of-term examinations, we may conclude that the experimental groups understand French well enough to complete the school questionnaires to which they are accustomed and to communicate in what is called "functional" terms. However, when it comes to expressing themselves and demonstrating their knowledge in an active fashion, they hesitate, speak in incomplete sentences, produce stereotype utterances, avoid "difficult" structures by using overly complex sentences, have a strong foreign accent and make numerous errors in grammar and vocabulary. It may be claimed that their language skills are much more developed than those of students in traditional second-language classes, but that they cannot be said to have language skills similar, equivalent or comparable to the competence of Francophones of the same age.

Authentic pronunciation and delivery, the major linguistic goals of early bilingualism, are only partially satisfied through immersion. Although the best students do develop a certain facility with delivery, their ease with the language modeled on the teacher's own fluency, and usually falls far short of that of young Francophones. Immersion children have vast gaps in their knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation of modern Quebec French. In brief, is immersion not something of a test-tube experiment?

The deterioration of language skills at the age of eight or nine is a very important phenomenon that has been given too little attention in evaluations. Many children in early immersion are very successful in the first three years, but regress in the second language for reasons that seem related to their phase of social identification. This phase is widely recognized with respect to the mother tongue, but its effect on second-language learning and particularly on the linguistic setback that may result had not been anticipated. The problem has rarely been described or explained in evaluations of immersion and more precise information on this subject might be helpful for the planning of second-language programmes at the elementary school level.

The hypothesis that early immersion would have no effect on the quality of mother tongue skills appears to have been confirmed for majority and/or privileged groups enrolled in immersion. I repeat "appears to have been confirmed" because no exhaustive study has been conducted on this question; the partial studies conducted thus far have been based mainly on school examination results which, as already stated, are not appropriate for measuring overall language competence.

In my view, certain evaluation results are surprising and may suggest the existence of still unknown factors. In 1974, Swain stated that it appeared preferable for young Anglophones in immersion to be taught to read in French (their second language) rather than in English (their mother tongue). She had observed certain reading problems in both languages among children who had learned to read in English in similar circumstances. I find this a curious conclusion since children in immersion learn to read at the beginning of their bilingual education (in the first grade) and have not progressed enough to know the oral form of a number of words they have to read and use as reference points. Did these classes perhaps contain children whose mother tongue was not English, as is the case for a large number of children attending English schools? Does this perhaps confirm that, at this stage, classwork should be conducted in only one language and that working in both languages leads to confusion? Whatever the answer, this phenomenon deserves systematic study because of its importance and possible long-term effects.

Immersion and other academic subjects

Forecasts made with respect to other academic subjects have been confirmed: even if children have problems at the beginning of immersion, they usually catch up. Even so, this success rate is based on attainment tests and there is nothing to prove overall competence in these subjects because, once again, such conclusions are only applicable to majority or privileged children.

Most of the results relating to minority and/or underprivileged children in various countries of the world (the United States, England, Ireland, Mexico, the Philippines, etc.) are rather negative. So negative in fact that greater store is being laid by the "balance effect" that offsets the positive against the negative factors of bilingual education. In Canada, the recent expansion of immersion to more disparate groups is beginning to confirm this finding.

Immersion and education

The main objective of immersion — to provide an alternative to traditional language teaching — has been easily achieved, but at what a price. The whole school programme had to be turned upside down, teachers and teaching manuals have been replaced, teachers speaking another language have been imposed on the children and the length of exposure to the second language was increased from 450 to 4500 hours. Schools have been subjected to a battery of studies and investigations by specialists, and immersion children have become "celebrities" in their neighbourhood as saviours of Canada's linguistic duality. It is time we asked ourselves if we could not have achieved the same linguistic objectives at a lower cost to the education systems.

Unfortunately, research on immersion does not provide the answer because immersion programmes did not contain hypotheses about educational factors as such (except perhaps with respect to comparing early and late immersion programmes). We have no significant data on teaching methods or materials, teachers and their relationships with children, the influence of immersion classes on other classes at the same school, what happens in the classroom, and so on. Moreover, we know little about alternative systems.

Immersion has clearly evolved over the years and has changed from its "pure" form (where the language itself was not taught), to a mixed state (in which teaching the language alternates with teaching other subjects in that language). It has undergone these changes without experimental or descriptive justification and without a change in name. Outside the immersion approach, work on intensive language teaching, work with reception classes for young immigrants (which focus exclusively on second-language instruction), new developments in conventional teaching (ie., the communicative approach), have taken place outside the immersion framework. These experimental approaches have in no way matched the systematic and complex evaluations of immersion programmes. Among the educational leaders in Canada, immersion has been the most constant concern of second-language education and has received the most generous research funds. However, two conclusions are now possible. They appear somewhat paradoxical when compared to the results of immersion evaluations: (1) the results of intensive teaching compare favourably with those of immersion; (2) in an academic environment different from a "natural" environment, adults learn better and more quickly than adolescents and adolescents learn better and more quickly than younger children (except perhaps in pronunciation, but this exception cannot be applied to immersion since pronunciation is one of its major problems).

The general teaching methods used in immersion classes run counter to the most characteristic trends of modern pedagogy. Today's classroom methods are aimed at spontaneous expression, great individual freedom and satisfaction of children's needs; by contrast, immersion classes require children to express themselves in a language they do not know in order to meet the needs formulated by parents and educators. There is also the question of fair treatment for children, since those in immersion

become the prototypes of socio-cultural success as compared to children not in immersion, i.e. the majority. Just as today there is an Association of Immersion Teachers independent from other professional associations, perhaps one day there will be an Association or Club of Immersion Graduates — a new social class destined to occupy bilingual positions in the Public Service of Canada.

Conclusion

The findings of twenty years of studies on bilingual education and second-language teaching suggest that "pure" immersion is dépassé. Although it once held much promise and has produced good results, it has not enabled children to become as bilingual as was hoped. Today, we can achieve similar results by using simpler methods. We must try to improve the traditional approach by using a mixed approach in which a variety of techniques would be used that are more easily adaptable to change and applicable to a wider range of people (perhaps to all Anglophone school-age children). In such an approach, pedagogical matters would take top priority, and linguistic issues would be of secondary importance.

I believe that two conditions would produce excellent results: (1) roughly 1500 hours of active exposure to the second language, and (2) a period of intensive language teaching/learning for roughly one-third of the total time spent in the classrooms (500 hours). Moreover, in order to retain the acquired skills, such teaching/learning should be performed mainly at the secondary school level, as near as possible to the end of a child's schooling and his eventual use of the language. This would represent a revised and improved version of conventional forms of language teaching.

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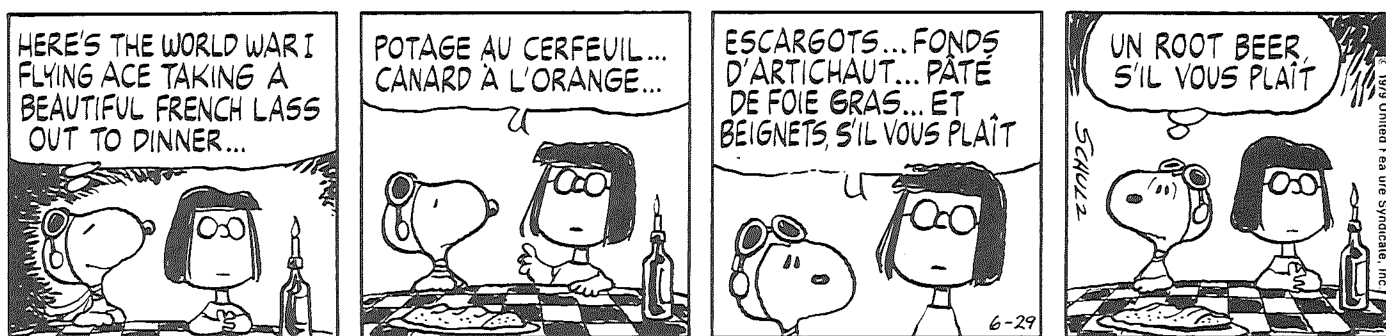

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Five major questions preoccupied immersion researchers throughout the '70s, so the authors went right to the source — the students — and confirmed their findings. They also describe current and future research directions.

Research update

SHARON LAPKIN and MERRILL SWAIN

Most of Sharon Lapkin's research has dealt with the evaluation of bilingual education programmes, the development of proficiency tests and scoring procedures. An assistant professor with the Modern Language Centre of OISE, Dr Lapkin has served as a consultant to provincial departments of education and to the California Department of Education.

Professor Merrill Swain's research into bilingual education, development of bilingual proficiency, and communicative aspects of language teaching and learning has been widely published. She is head of the Modern Language Centre of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

In the 1982-83 school year, enrolments in French immersion programmes numbered some 115,000 across Canada's ten provinces and two territories. This figure represents a dramatic increase since the first prototype programme was established less than twenty years ago when one experimental early immersion class was implemented in a Montreal-area school board. This "St. Lambert experiment" in bilingual education was well documented (e.g. Lambert and Tucker 1972), and the evaluation results suggested that immersion education offered a viable bilingual alternative to established unilingual school programmes. In the 70s, several different French immersion programmes were widely implemented throughout Canada.

During that decade, research on immersion education focussed mainly on educational outcomes because of the need to demonstrate that this was indeed a viable alternative programme. There was little research emphasis placed on social outcomes, administrative concerns or even instructional dimensions. In this article we review the main research questions and findings of the 70s, outline several current lines of inquiry, and explore the implications of past and current research for future studies of immersion.

In the figure on page 50, three representative immersion-programme variants are illustrated. Early immersion programmes generally devote all instructional time in the first three years to teaching in the second language, French. In kindergarten, students are permitted to interact among themselves and with their teacher in their home language, English. The teacher speaks only French to the students, using mime and body language to get the message across as required. Building from the existing language, interests and skills of the students, the teacher introduces French vocabulary items and simple phrases initially for comprehension. The focus is on conveying content and responding to the substance of what the students are saying. Gradually, some time in the grade 1 year, French becomes the working language of the class. The formal study of English is deferred usually until grade 3, and by about grade 5, half the curriculum is taught in French, and half in English.

Although the instructional approach differs somewhat in programmes with a later starting grade (grades 5 and 7 in the examples provided in the figure), it is based on the same principles: tolerance and appreciation of the home language, using the student's experience as a starting point for instruction, engaging in meaningful activities (e.g. field trips) in French, and focussing on comprehension skills in the initial stages of the programme.

In view of the radical nature of this approach to second-language education, parents and educators shared several concerns which gave rise to the formulation of five major research questions:

- Are students' first language (English) skills affected by

participating in a programme using the second language (French) as a medium of instruction?

- How proficient do students become in French?
- Do immersion students studying subjects such as science or mathematics in French perform as well as would be expected if they were taught these subjects in English?
- Is there a relationship between cognitive development (as measured by standardized IQ tests) and academic success in the French-immersion programme?
- What are the social-psychological implications of immersion education?

Design of immersion studies

The evaluation usually involved the comparison of the performance of all, or a sample of all, the immersion students in a programme with that of Anglophone students in a regular English programme, and sometimes with that of Francophone students in a Francophone school. In these studies, the first group of students entering the programme was tested on an annual basis near the end of the school year over a number of years. Typically, a follow-up group of students entering the programme in a subsequent year was also tested on an annual basis. In this way, progress of students in the immersion programme could be assessed longitudinally, while at the same time, the stability of the findings could be monitored through a comparison of different groups of students at the same grade level.

Because immersion programmes are optional for parents and students, there could not be random assignment of students to immersion and comparison groups, except in the case where the school administration limited the enrolment into the programme. In this case, the English comparison group could be drawn from those who wanted to be in the programme but could not be (Lambert and Tucker 1972). For the most part, however, the comparison groups were drawn from the same school where the immersion programme was housed, or from a nearby school where the socioeconomic status and community characteristics were similar to those of the immersion group being tested. This leaves open the possibility that the students in the immersion programme may have characteristics that differentiate them from their comparison groups, such as generally having a greater motivation to learn French. Under these conditions the only reasonable approach to evaluating programmes is to recognize that students possessing these characteristics constitute part of the very nature of the programme itself, and that the question which the evaluation can answer is "How do students in the immersion programme perform relative to students receiving the usual educational programme?"

Data analysis. Most of the studies have statistically compared the performance of immersion groups with that of their comparison groups using analysis of variance or covariance, with IQ being used as the covariant. Thus differences in IQ which might have existed between the groups were controlled statistically. This procedure has been used to compensate for the non-random assignment of students to their educational programmes noted above.

Generalizability. The results from any one study can be fairly confidently generalized to the programme as a whole in the particular school board. Programmatic factors internal to the school system such as the amount of time devoted to instruction in the second language, and community factors external to the school system such as the degree to which French is used in the community, would suggest that the results should not be generalized beyond the particular programme. However, at least in the case of early total immersion, the pattern of results has been so consistent across programmes from the different Canadian provinces that the limited generalizability of each individual study is outweighed by the consistency of the collective evidence.

The results

Writing in 1983 about the immersion research of the 70s enables us to view the results retrospectively[1], in the way a strictly factual account of the chronology of the research would not. We now have access to the views of the "guinea pigs" of the immersion experiment who have graduated or have had the experience of several years in a programme. These views correspond to a remarkable extent to the substance of the research findings and are used here to introduce the results for each of the questions listed earlier.[2]

First language (English) development

"Based on my own experience, the French immersion programme has had no adverse effects on my English; in fact, I can now recognize and compare similarities in the two languages. In both English and French I am getting very high marks."
Trevor Holmes, age 13, grade 8 early immersion, Ontario

"I think that my knowledge of French has a good influence on my English. In fact, I do not see the need to spend so much time on English grammar when one learns the grammar of a foreign language. I think my English would improve still more if I was given the opportunity to learn another foreign language also, such as German or Spanish or Latin."
Suzie Clark, age 13, grade 8 late immersion, Newfoundland

Because the immersion programmes place so much emphasis on curricular instruction in French, there was naturally a concern that the development of first-language skills might be negatively affected. This was thought to be potentially most serious at the primary level when literacy skills in the first language would normally be introduced.

To what extent were these fears well-founded? The research evidence on this issue suggests that for these children, such fears have no basis in fact. In part, this is because these children are members of the dominant

linguistic and cultural majority of Canada and as a consequence, English pervades all of their out-of-school life.

The English achievement results for students in the early total-immersion programme indicate that, although initially behind students in uniligual English programmes in literacy skills, within a year of the introduction of an English Language Arts component into the curriculum, the immersion students perform equivalently on standardized tests of English achievement to students in the English-only programme. This is the case even if English is not introduced until grade 3 or grade 4. Furthermore, in some instances, after grade 4, the immersion students outperform their English-only programme peers in some aspects of measured English-language skills.

It seems clear that once literacy skills are well established in one language, they transfer readily and rapidly to the other language. That this is so is supported by the results of middle- or late-immersion programmes where only in rare cases do immersion students perform below comparison students enrolled in the regular English programme. Where this occurs, it is short-lived, never persisting beyond the first year of immersion experience.

Second-language (French) development

"I think my French is good enough to read a French book, carry on a conversation with French-speaking people, write a simple short story, follow a movie in French, listen to the radio in French and make a speech in French."
Elaine Hounsell, age 14, grade 9 early immersion, New Brunswick

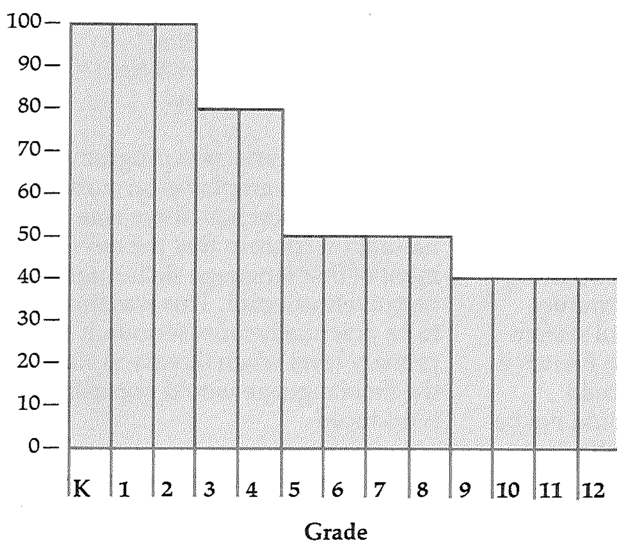
"At the present time I would be able to talk with a French-speaking person with difficulty, as long as the person spoke clearly and slowly and in proper French, not slang."
Bob Brown, age 14, grade 8 late immersion, Newfoundland

These self-assessments represent the two extremes found among the students we surveyed.[2] The fact that the more conservative self-assessment comes from a student in late immersion reflects the perceptions of students from those two programme groups: early-immersion students tend to assess their skills more positively than do late-immersion students (Swain and Lapkin 1982:51). These two quotes are fully representative, and also reflect the French test results themselves, as we shall see.

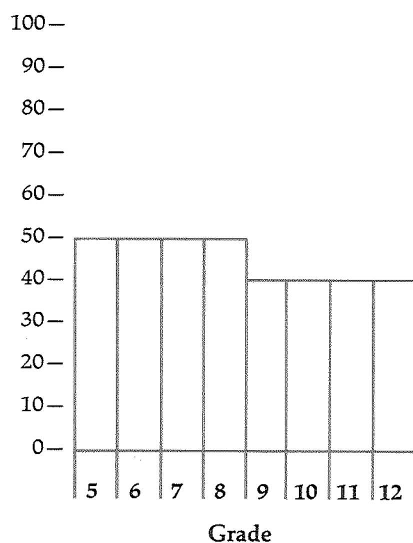
In the initial year of the evaluations of early-immersion programmes, the French skills of immersion students were most often assessed in relation to those of students in core-French programmes, that is, programmes in which French as a second-language

IMMERSION PROGRAMME VARIANTS
Percentage of instructional time in French: three examples

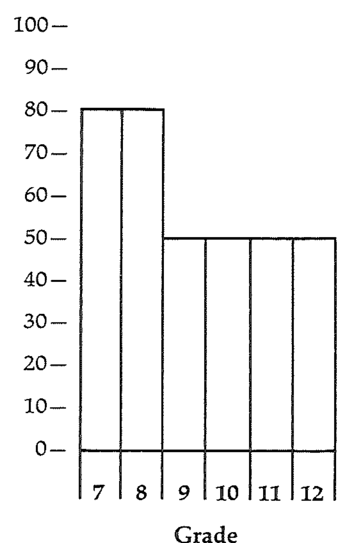
1. Early total french immersion



2. 'Middle' immersion*



3. Late immersion*



**Prior to entering these programmes, students have had from one to several years of instruction in French as a second language in daily 20- to 40-minute classes.*

instruction is provided in daily 20- to 40-minute periods. Since the development of listening skills is stressed in the early years, listening-comprehension tests were administered from kindergarten up to the end of grade 3. It was soon apparent that the tests were too difficult for core-French students, whereas immersion students were obtaining near-perfect scores by grade 3. The French scores of the immersion students would be more usefully interpreted, it was felt, if they were considered in relation to the French language skills of native-French speaking students of the same age and grade level. This belief was reinforced by the results of administering standardized tests designed for Francophone students in Quebec: even by grade 1 or 2, the immersion students were scoring as well as about one-third of native-French speaking students in Montreal, and by grade 6, as well as one-half of the Montreal comparison group.

It is instructive to examine the second-language test results in terms of the "receptive" skills of listening and reading, and the "productive" skills of speaking and writing. For early-immersion students, the receptive skills are clearly native-like by the end of elementary school. These skills can be affected by administrative arrangements for immersion programmes. In one study (Lapkin et al 1981) we compared two alternative school settings: immersion centres, where only the immersion programme is housed in a particular school, and dual-track schools in which the immersion and regular English programmes co-exist. We found that the receptive skills of the students were enhanced by studying in immersion centres where a greater amount of French is used in the wider school environment beyond the classroom.

Although no similar study has been undertaken with respect to productive language skills, it may be that immersion-centre students enjoy certain advantages over dual-track immersion students in speaking and writing in French. Regardless of school setting, however, it is clear that the productive second-language skills of early-immersion students do not reach native-like levels. Immersion students have little difficulty in conveying meaning, but the way they express themselves is clearly different from the performance of native French-speaking peers. Immersion students make a favourable impression on native-speaker judges, however: their spoken French is assessed favourably by Francophone adults and children alike (Lepicq 1980).

Results from testing late-immersion students are less consistent. For example, in Ontario, late-immersion students continue to lag behind early-immersion students in all or most skill areas as late as grade 11 (i.e. after 5 or 6 years in the programme), while in Montreal there are no such differences noted at this level (Morrison 1982; Adiv 1980). This discrepancy can be explained by differences in the design of the Ontario and Quebec immersion programmes. In the case of the Ontario programmes, the early- immersion programme maintained a French to English ratio of 80:20 in grades 3 to 5 and 50:50 in grades 6 to 8, whereas the corresponding figures for the Montreal programme were 60:40 in grade 3 and 40:60 in grades 4 to 8. This means that the Ontario early-immersion students had considerably more in-school contact time in French than did the Montreal students, which could account for their superior second-language performance relative to late-immersion students. The results argue for the maximal allotment of time to the second language in the school curriculum in order to maintain and further develop immersion students' second-language skills. This is a need recognized by programme participants also. In commenting on the perceived *disadvantages* of immersion programmes, Trevor Holmes, a grade 8 student (quoted earlier) suggests that:

In my area not enough courses are being offered in French. I feel this is necessary to maintain a good command of the language. Another disadvantage is that students do not get much chance to use their language skills outside the classroom.

Both early- and late-immersion programmes are clearly leading to functional bilingualism by offering students the opportunity to acquire more advanced skills than can be accomplished in a core-French programme. One important advantage of the early-immersion alternative is that it serves a more heterogeneous student population by accommodating a wider range of personality types and cognitive styles (Swain in press). Further descriptive information on the second-language skills of students in both programmes is provided by Birgit Harley in this issue.

Academic achievement in other subjects

"I don't believe that immersion has any effect on subjects taken in French, except for a mildly adverse effect on your spelling in English (some words are similar in English and French and occasionally you spell a word the French way instead of the English way). I might add, however, that this problem is very easily overcome."

Rachel Baker, age 14, grade 9 early immersion, Alberta

As this comment suggests, immersion students are able to keep up in academic achievement with students taught in their first language. Over the years, the initial concern that the same academic content would prove too demanding for students taught through the medium of a second language has been allayed as a result of the research evidence.

Immersion students have been tested using standardized tests of mathematics (at all grade levels) and science (from about grade 5 on), and their performance has been compared to that of students in English-only programmes. As mentioned above, the tests were typically administered in English even though students were taught the subjects in French. The reason for this was straightforward: although parents wanted their children to learn French, they wanted to be assured that their children would be able to deal with mathematical and scientific concepts in English, the dominant language in North American society. Testing the

students in English seemed the best way to gauge their ability to do so.

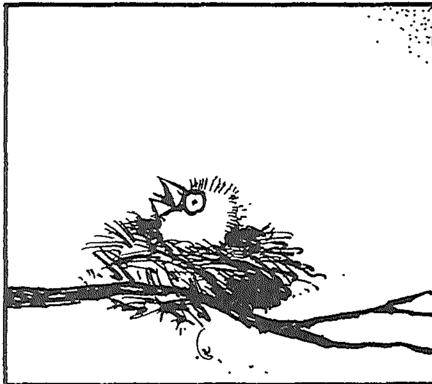
The results associated with early total-immersion programmes consistently show that, whether in science or mathematics, the immersion students perform as well as their English-instructed comparison groups. For late-immersion students, some lags have been noted in the initial year or two of the programme. It may be that the second-language skills of these immersion students are not well developed enough to allow them to deal with relatively complex subjects taught to them in French. Once again, the design of the programme seems to have an effect on testing in this area: where late-immersion students have had some core-French instruction from kindergarten on, their achievement in subject areas such as science does not suffer, even temporarily.

IQ and academic success in immersion

"I don't think that studying in French has caused any mental confusion. Sometimes I get mixed up when I'm talking and my friends say it's because of my French, but I don't think it is. I just talk fast anyway!"
Pam Ayer, age 15, grade 9 early immersion, New Brunswick

"I believe that it helps (me) think more clearly as lately I have been doing very well in thinking out and explaining things (especially math and language arts)."
Warren Nishimura, age 11, grade 6 "middle" immersion, Alberta

There is a common misperception that immersion education is only for children of above-average intelligence. In fact, the studies that address the relationship of IQ to academic success in immersion suggest the opposite: any child can benefit from an immersion programme. For example, Genesee (1976) tested above- and below-average students in early- and late-immersion programmes. On "academic" tests of literacy-related skills, the expected pattern of performance emerged; that is, the above-average students scored better than the less able students. However, there was no similar stratification by IQ in the students' ability to communicate in French in interpersonal situations. The below-average students understood spoken French as well as the above-average students, and scored as well on oral production tests. Such studies suggest that IQ does not play a more significant role in the immersion programme than in the regular English programme as far as success in school is concerned. The below-average students are not any more at a disadvantage in an immersion programme than they would be in a regular English programme. Moreover, they enjoy the benefit of learning to understand and communicate in French.


Immersion at kindergarten

Social and psychological effects

"... the early immersion experience seems to have reduced the social distance perceived between self and French-Canadians, especially French-Canadians who are bilingual."
Cziko, Lambert and Gutter (1979:26)

"During a Christmas holiday in his grade 2 year we visited a hotel north of Montreal. Seeing the first real snow of the winter he began pelting snowballs. A taxi driver outside the hotel gave him a verbal tongue-lashing in his best Québécois, and Daniel said, "Wow, he was speaking REAL French!"
Patricia Holland, parent of a grade 4 early immersion student, Nova Scotia

While the first comment, from researchers who conducted attitudinal surveys of French-immersion and regular English- programme students, suggests that the social gap between English- and French-Canadians is being reduced, the second quote suggests that the French-Canadian reality remains remote for many immersion students. It is possible that the educational experience of the immersion students leads to a more sophisticated understanding of the social and cultural aspects of Canadian life. To investigate this question, grade 5 and 6 immersion students were asked to write a composition on the topic of "Why I like (or do not like) being Canadian" (Swain 1980). Each composition was subjected to a content analysis and the substantive comments that had been written were identified and tabulated. Several interesting findings emerged. First, the immersion students' commentary spanned a much broader perspective in that they gave, on average, two to three times as many reasons than did the English comparison groups. Secondly, three times as many immersion students as English programme students commented specifically on the rich and varied cultural and/or linguistic composition of Canada. Thirdly, over 20 per cent of the immersion children, but none of the English-educated children, commented on the possibility in Canada of being able to speak more than one language. In general, most of the compositions written by non-immersion students focused on the natural beauty of Canada as opposed to the beauty of linguistic and cultural diversity which was as likely to be mentioned in the composition of the immersion students.

The growth of immersion programmes has not yet been without its social tensions. As immersion programmes grow in size and number, certain sectors of the community feel threatened (Burns and Olson 1981). One sector is the English-speaking parents who want their children to attend, or continue to attend, the regular English programme in their neighbourhood school. They see the space in their neighbourhood school being swallowed up by increasing numbers of immersion students, and have formed "concerned parents" organizations to argue against the growth of immersion programmes. The ten-

sions created by the pro-immersion and anti-immersion parents have surfaced in communities across Canada, and have recently received nationwide press coverage.

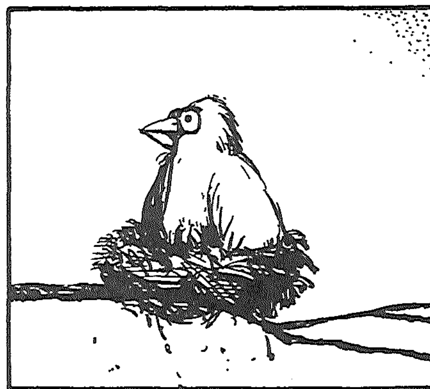
The impact of immersion on the community has received relatively little research attention to date. As Canada's largest-scale educational innovation of this century, it is unrealistic to expect that its implementation would be unaccompanied by some social repercussions. What is perhaps more surprising is the overwhelmingly positive reaction of immersion students and their parents to this programme alternative.

Current and future research directions

Aside from social issues of the sort described above, there remain important administrative and instructional questions to be investigated. These centre on how best to design programmes so that their positive effects are maximized, what instructional techniques lead to the most desirable outcomes, and what are the educational possibilities for encouraging increased contact between Canada's two official-language groups.

A prior question relates to establishing realistic expectations and goals for immersion education. Ideally, immersion students should graduate from secondary school with native-like skills. Only recently has research attention been directed at the *quality* of the French spoken and written by immersion students. The reason is that such descriptive research is time-consuming and labour-intensive, and the first priority of the research of the 70s was to establish, through mainly quantitative means (group tests), the viability of the immersion alternative. Current research projects involve developing tests of the productive skills which are truly communicative in nature, based on a theoretical view of what constitutes proficiency in a second language. The Government of Saskatchewan has provided the Modern Language Centre of the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (O.I.S.E.) contract funds to develop such measures for grades 3, 6 and 9. These communicative language tests are being used on a wide scale, not only in Saskatchewan, but also in New Brunswick, and will provide detailed descriptions of the French speaking and writing skills of immersion students in relation to those of native speakers. These descriptive accounts, combined with systematic observation in the classroom, will allow us to identify areas of weakness and explore modifications in the curriculum and instructional approach to improve performance in these areas.

The social questions raised earlier suggest that increased contact between immersion students and Francophone peers is desirable. But the effects on educational outcomes are unknown. For example, many Francophone parents and educators fear that increased contact would hasten the assimilation of Francophone students, who already use English in the wider society. Two ongoing research projects will shed some light on this question. In one case, in Ontario, a "middle" immersion programme (beginning in grade 5) housed in a French-language school is being examined. Second, some immersion classes involved in the New Brunswick province-wide evaluation contain different proportions of native-French speaking students. Using the test data, along with background information on the students, we will examine the influence of different concentrations of native speakers on French test results. We also hope to assess whether the French of the native speakers in these classes has been negatively affected by the presence of Anglophone immersion students.


. . . in grade five

In conclusion, the research and evaluation studies associated with French-immersion programmes have demonstrated that students from a majority-language group can be taught in a second language with no long-term negative effects on first-language development or on content learning, while at the same time becoming highly proficient in the target language. The challenge of the future lies now in identifying teaching strategies which combine to make both language learning and content learning effective, and to ensure that the bilingualism achieved helps to close the gap between Canada's two solitudes.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The research reported here is described in greater detail in Swain and Lapkin, 1982. A complete bibliography is also included in the book.
2. The quotations from students are taken from questionnaires distributed to representative students, and in some cases, parents from across Canada. The questionnaires were used as a means of eliciting views about immersion programmes from the participants in the context of preparing a booklet for immersion students aged 11-15 (see Lapkin, Swain and Argue, 1983).

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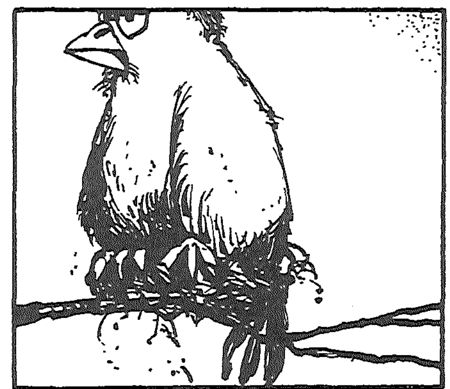
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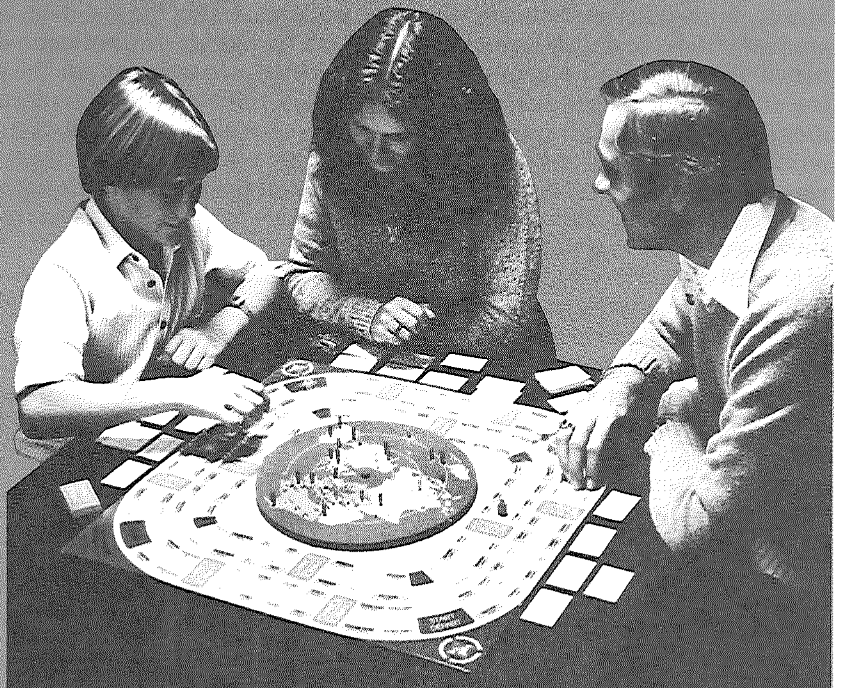
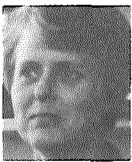


The quality of French spoken by immersion children has been eulogized by some and criticized by others. This article undertakes a scrupulous diagnosis.

How good is their French?

BIRGIT HARLEY



Birgit Harley is currently coordinating a large-scale research project, established to investigate the development of bilingual proficiency in a variety of social contexts, and funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Dr. Harley is a researcher in applied linguistics with the Modern Language Centre of OISE.

How proficient in French do immersion children actually become? The answer to this deceptively simple question depends, of course, on how we define what it means to be proficient in a language.

In a number of current studies involving immersion programmes, researchers at the Modern Language Centre of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education have been working with a theoretical framework in which several components of language proficiency are distinguished. One of these components is called "grammatical competence". It includes knowledge of the rules of word and sentence formation in a language. A second component, termed "discourse competence", involves the ability to organize (i.e., produce and interpret) logically coherent discourse, or text. A third component, "sociolinguistic competence", refers to the ability to vary one's use of language in a socially appropriate manner depending, for example, on the topic being dealt with and the relative formality of a situation. Vocabulary knowledge is seen as entering into all three kinds of language competence. In addition to these three, there is a fourth, "strategic competence", which concerns the ability to cope, and avoid communication breakdown, when there are gaps in one's knowledge of a language with respect to the other components.

The identification of these various components of proficiency means that we may arrive at a rather different estimate of how much French an immersion student has learned, depending on which component we are looking at. And even within components, our estimate of proficiency may vary according to the kinds of tasks we ask students to perform. For some kinds of language tasks, learners can rely at least partly on the context to interpret or express a message. For other tasks, where there is little or no contextual support available in the immediate situation, they must rely more heavily on their internalized knowledge of the language for successful performance. Typically, the academic paper-and-pencil tests of language that children receive at school tend to be "context-reduced" in this sense, while face-to-face conversations about the here-and-now are more likely to be "context-embedded".

The amount of contextual support available is only one of the important considerations to be taken into account in assessing immersion students' performance in French. We do not expect young children to perform as well as adolescents on reading and writing activities or complex problem-solving tasks, for example; and it is often observed that, even in a mother tongue, the receptive language skills of listening and reading tend to surpass the corresponding productive ones of speaking and writing.

Of course, in many real-life situations, such as conversation or answering a letter, receptive and productive skills are both involved. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the receptive/productive dichotomy is yet another dimension of language proficiency that is relevant to an assessment of how much French the immersion children learn.

In what follows, their French proficiency is described in relation to each of the four components of proficiency outlined above, while other dimensions of language proficiency are considered as they apply.

How does the French of immersion students stack up against the French of Francophones?

Here are some of the findings of a research study of the French of immersion students. This study also compared immersion French with the French of Francophones of the same age and similar background. For details, see Dr. Harley's article.

1. In grammatical usage grade 6 immersion students have difficulties that set them apart from native speakers of the same grade. In this example, 96 per cent of Francophones chose the right answer *depuis* (c), while 44 per cent of immersion students chose the wrong *pour* (b), a common error for English native speakers. On the other hand, 48 per cent of the immersion students did make the right choice.

Ils sont au Canada ______________ déjà trois mois.
a) durant
b) pour
c) depuis

2. In the following item over 90 per cent of the grade 6 immersion as well as native speaker students chose the correct answer *ont manqué* (a).

Puisqu'ils étaient malades, ils ______________ l'école.
a) ont manqué
b) manquent
c) manqueraient

3. An item which shows that both native speakers and immersion students sometimes have trouble over the same point of grammar in its written form. Only 45 per cent of immersion students and 44 per cent of native speakers chose the correct answer *éviter* (b).

Il faut ______________ ce genre d'erreur.
a) évitez
b) éviter
c) évité

4. Can immersion students recognize what style of French is appropriate in a given situation? In the following instance, about two thirds (66 per cent) of the immersion students chose item (c) which was considered most appropriate by the Francophones of the same age (87 per cent).

Dans une note écrite par un mari à sa femme

(a) Veuillez prendre note du rendez-vous avec M. Roy le mardi 27 juin.
(b) Ceci est pour confirmer ton rendez-vous avec M. Roy mardi 27 juin au matin.
(c) N'oublie pas que tu es supposé rencontrer M. Roy mardi matin.

5. The following difficult item indicates the ability to understand a coherent text and to make the right choice of a sentence which makes sense of the passage. Immersion students in this example (as in the particular reading test overall) performed at the same level as native speakers of the same age. In this instance 61 per cent of immersion students and 57 per cent of native speakers chose the correct answer (a).

Le diamantaire taille le diamant pour qu'il reflète la lumière. À son état naturel, le diamant n'est pas attrayant.
a) Sa beauté ne sera mise en évidence qu'après un long et minutieux travail.
b) Ses éclats et ses scintillements attirent l'oeil.
c) Les bons diamantaires ne sont pas rares.

______________. C'est pour cette raison que l'on respecte un bon diamantaire.

6. Imaginary letter written in 15 minutes and without help by a grade 6 early-immersion student following the French instructions written above the letter which the student must be able to read and interpret correctly. This student, who is fairly typical for his age, is able to do this. He makes more grammatical errors than a Francophone student of the same age would; but Dr. Harley's study shows that native speakers at this age do not write a grammatically faultless letter either. Note that the immersion student uses the familiar *tu* instead of the more appropriate *vous* form in this letter to a relative stranger. In spite of these defects, we must recognize that this 11-year old Anglophone child has learnt enough French to undertake this task in the second language and to convey his meaning in writing; he presents his argument quite comprehensibly, coherently and persuasively.

Imagine-toi que ta famille loue une maison à la campagne pendant le mois d'août. Dans le garage, qui est barré, tu vois une belle bicyclette dix-vitesses.

Écris une lettre au propriétaire de la maison pour le convaincre de te donner la permission d'utiliser la bicyclette.

Sers-toi de l'espace ci-dessous :

Cher monsieur,
Je m'appelle Justin Cammy, un des enfants qui vivent dans ton maison pour le mois d'aout. Aujourd'hui, j'ai rentré dans ton garage puis j'ai vu une belle bicyclette. Moi, je suis une personne très responsable et je voulais savoir si je pourais utilisé ton bicyclette juste pour ce mois. Mon père à acheté d'insurence pour tout les choses dans ta grande maisons. Je sais que ce n'est pas honête d'utilisé une chose sans permission alors je t'écrit ce lettre. Merci pour ton coopération.

Justin Cammy

Immersion students' competence in French grammar has been a major focus of most evaluations of their second-language proficiency. In part, this reflects the availability of language tests which, traditionally, have concentrated heavily on grammatical accuracy; as well, it reflects the long-standing view that some degree of grammatical competence is central to language proficiency. It is hard to imagine a high level of discourse competence without any grammatical competence, for example. Nor would we expect learners to become proficient in recognizing or producing socially appropriate language in a variety of situations without some basic knowledge of the grammatical resources of the language concerned. From the tests of various kinds that have been administered at different age levels, the following picture emerges.

Grade 1. As early as grade 1 of an early total-immersion programme beginning in kindergarten, children in an oral interview setting are clearly able to *understand* some major grammatical distinctions in French. For example, they can distinguish between present, past and future in the verbs that they hear. This is evident not only in what they say in response to the questions they are asked (where they may be relying on other clues to meaning for comprehension), but also from their ability to give English translation equivalents for decontextualized sentences such as: *Tu vas manger une pomme; Tu l'as mangée; Chez moi on aime beaucoup les pommes.* At least some grade 1 immersion children can also on occasion *produce* such basic tense distinctions when speaking to an interviewer, although they are unlikely to use them with any consistency. The children also show that they can understand and produce singular and plural noun phrases (*le garçon* versus *les garçons*) in the interview setting, but they rarely seem to notice gender distinctions (masculine versus feminine), nor are they likely to produce plural forms of verbs or any other more 'advanced' verb forms. Word order in French sentences is generally similar to English, and it is only where dif-

ferences occur that the grade 1 children tend to make errors of this kind. For example: *Il toujours va* 'He always goes' instead of *Il va toujours.*

Grades 5/6. Jumping to the grade 5/6 level, we find that early-immersion students have made great strides in grammatical competence although they still make a number of grammatical errors in speaking French which distinguish them from native speakers of their own age. To give some indication: when assessed on a conversational interview for their use of syntax (rules of sentence formation), prepositions and verbs (use of future forms, the *imparfait,* conditional, and *passé composé*), the average score for about 70 grade 6 immersion students was 81.3 per cent correct for syntax, 80.5 per cent correct for prepositions, and 57 per cent correct for the above-mentioned verb forms. In comparison, a small group of grade 6 native-French speakers who were also interviewed scored between 96 and 100 per cent in these three areas of grammatical competence. Clearly, verbs are a problematic area of French grammar for the immersion students. This does not come as any great surprise since, as pointed out by linguists, verbs are apt to be the most difficult part of the grammar of any language.

The same grade 6 immersion students were also assessed for grammatical competence on two other kinds of tests: written compositions and a multiple-choice grammar test. On the composition tasks, which involved telling stories and writing letters, the students were again scored for syntax, prepositions and verbs, and once again obtained scores lower than those of the native speakers. Although the oral and written tests were not directly comparable, the immersion students appeared, relative to native speakers, to be doing much better on verbs than in the interview at 85 per cent correct, not counting spelling errors such as *aller* for *allé.* Part of the reason for their better performance is doubtless that the use of the present tense was also included in the assessment of their compositions. When verb-spelling errors were counted, it was found that the immersion students were no more likely to make such errors than were the native speakers.

On the multiple choice test, where the task was to select the correct grammatical form to fill the gap in a number of short decontextualized sentences, the immersion students (with an average of 60 per cent correct) were once again back below the native speakers, who themselves did not get perfect scores on this context-reduced test (on average, about 80 per cent correct).

In addition to verbs, gender is an area of French grammar where English-speaking learners characteristically have problems, and the immersion students appear to be no exception to this trend. In grade 5, interviews with a small group of immersion students showed them to be still making a number of errors of this kind, typically tending to overuse the masculine at the expense of feminine gender: for example, saying *mon maison* and *le glace* instead of *ma maison* and *la glace.*

Overall, our assessment of the grammatical competence of immersion students in grades 5 and 6 leads us to conclude that although they are able to produce and recognize many forms which are grammatically correct in French, they still make quite a number of errors which clearly distinguish them from native speakers of their own age. A striking characteristic of the errors made in speaking and writing is that they are often in relatively redundant areas of French grammar, such as making the verb agree with the subject and distinguishing the gender of inanimate nouns, where use of the correct form may not be essential to get the meaning across. Indeed, there is evidence that native speakers of French consider such grammatical errors to be relatively unimportant when judging the acceptability of grade 6 immersion speech. At the same time, the very redundancy of these forms may also mean that the immersion children can readily interpret the French that they hear and read without fully mastering such grammatical distinctions.

Grades 9/10. Such observations still apply to immersion students who have reached the high school level. In Ottawa, for example, "post-immersion" students in grade 10 were assessed for grammatical accuracy on an oral interview and on a letter-writing task. The one hundred or so students that were tested came from two kinds of immersion programme: early total immersion beginning in kindergarten and late immersion beginning in grade 6 or 7.

In the interview, a substantial proportion of the students in both programmes were still making a variety of errors in verbs as well as in other areas of grammar, although overall, the early-immersion students did somewhat better on this oral test than the late-immersion students. While the form *lisent* (3rd person plural of the present tense of the verb *lire* "to read"), for example, was used correctly by only about half the students in each group, the conditional form of the verb *laver, je laverais* "I would wash", was expressed correctly by 83 per cent of the early-immersion students compared with only 14 per cent of the late-immersion students. In letter-writing, verbs again appeared to be a problem for the immersion students, representing the largest category of all writing errors made by both early- and late-immersion students.

Based on other oral interviews and writing tasks carried out by early-immersion students at the high school level, we can say impressionistically that their grammatical competence, especially in the written form, appears to have improved since the grade 6 level, but that the gains in some areas of spoken French do not seem to have been substantial. These impressions, of course, need to be confirmed by further detailed comparisons of what they can do at different age levels.

Discourse competence

One reason why there may have been a tapering off of grammatical development in the spoken French of immersion students is that they develop a high degree of discourse

competence which is quite satisfactory for their classroom needs.

Even at the grade 1 level, we find immersion children able to interpret conversational-interview questions and to respond in a manner that is usually coherent in the context, if lacking in grammatical accuracy. The context-embedded nature of the interview setting is an important consideration here. The children can when necessary make use of non-verbal communication strategies such as gesture or mime to get their meaning across, and the interviewer can assist by rephrasing questions and supplying needed items of vocabulary.

At higher grade levels we know that early-immersion children have developed sufficient discourse competence in French to learn subjects such as mathematics and science through the medium of their second language, and to do this sufficiently well that their performance on subject matter tests is no different from that of children in a regular English programme.

By the time they reach grade 6, immersion students have been observed to perform at native and near-native levels on communicative tests of French listening and reading comprehension respectively. These 'receptive' tests involve authentic samples of French-language use such as taped radio broadcasts, reproductions of newspaper articles, advertisements, etc.

More direct assessments of discourse competence have been made at the grade 6 level for about 70 immersion students. These assessments also reveal a level of discourse competence that is close or identical to that of native-French speakers, depending on the nature of the task being performed. On a multiple-choice test involving the selection of the correct sentence to fill the gap in a French paragraph, about 70 immersion students scored on a par with a small group of native-French speakers of the same age. When they were rated on their ability to retell the story of a movie coherently, and put forward logical arguments in spoken French, the immersion students scored almost, but not quite, as high as the native speakers. And in writing stories and letters of persuasion, the immersion students' ability to produce coherent discourse was once again judged, on the basis of detailed subscores, to be just as high as that of the native speaker group. The subscores were given, for example, for the ability to identify and refer to characters, objects and locations clearly, and for the ability to avoid breakdowns of coherence in the temporal or logical sequence of events or arguments. On such features, both native speakers and immersion students received an average rating of approximately 1.5 out of a maximum score of 2.

Investigation of the French discourse competence of older early and late immersion students is currently being directed to some communicative oral and written tasks. Once available, the results of this research will provide us with an assessment of the eventual discourse competence of immersion students at the high school level.

Sociolinguistic competence

The ability of immersion students to vary their language in accordance with the social demands of a situation does not appear to be well-developed by grade 6. When the same immersion students who were assessed for grammatical and discourse competence were given oral and written production tests of sociolinguistic competence in French, they were found to be performing at a much lower level than native-French speakers. For example, the immersion students often failed to distinguish between formal *vous* and informal *tu* depending on the social status of the person they were addressing, using the familiar form, *tu*, for the most part even when writing a formal request letter to a stranger. While the native speakers often used conditional verb forms to express politeness in a formal situation (e.g. *J'aimerais avoir des photos* "I would like some photos"), the immersion students rarely did so, preferring the more direct present tense instead. Clearly, these sociolinguistic inadequacies can be related to some of the grammatical problems the students have, as well as to the fact that immersion children's social interaction with native-French speakers is in general extremely limited. However, the grade 6 immersion students scored higher on a receptive multiple-choice test, in which they were required to select, from three options, the appropriate sentence to match a given social situation. The results on this test suggest that they are better able to recognize, than to produce, socially appropriate language in French.

Preliminary investigation of the sociolinguistic competence of some early-immersion students at the high school level indicates that they still tend to have problems in oral production with the *tu/vous* distinction among others. In short, it seems that the sociolinguistic competence of early-immersion students remains non-native-like into their high school years. It remains to be seen how they compare with late-immersion students in this regard.

Strategic competence

In the communicative context of their programme, immersion students quickly develop strategies that enable them to compensate for gaps in their knowledge of French. If grade 1 children do not know an item of vocabulary such as the verb *plonger* "to dive", for example, they are apt to try and circumvent the problem rather than stop talking. For instance, they may use gestures, try the English word (perhaps with a French pronunciation), or use a more general related term such as *sauter* "to jump" or a circumlocution such as *aller dans l'eau* "go in the water". Indeed, one way of looking at some of the grammatical errors the immersion students make is to view them as the result of communication strategies. In grade 5, for example, we find immersion students using a variety of verb forms instead of the conditional: for example, using the present tense together with the adverb *peut-être* "perhaps", or using the more familiar

future construction *aller* + infinitive. These ways of expressing a hypothetical situation (such as what the children would do if they won the lottery) are obviously quite effective in getting the essential meaning across without having mastered conditional verb forms. Similarly, in the sociolinguistic domain, we find students overusing *s'il-vous-plaît* "please" in requests instead of the conditional forms used by native speakers.

The spontaneity with which young immersion children, despite their limited grammatical resources, endeavour to express themselves in French stands in obvious and refreshing contrast to the inhibited efforts of students from traditional formal classrooms whose main concern was to avoid errors at all costs. Their very success at using such strategies to communicate in a comprehensible way with their teacher and classmates may, however, in the long run become less of an asset to the French-immersion students in the further development of their grammatical competence.

Some educational implications

From an analysis of immersion students' competence in various components of language proficiency, we can see that they have some outstanding strengths but also some weaknesses. Their remarkable ability to comprehend spoken and written discourse in French is a strength which no doubt reflects the emphasis of their schooling, where listening to the teacher and reading texts tend to be the major activities in learning subject matter. Indeed an increasing school emphasis on receptive activities at upper grade levels may help to explain why immersion students' grammatical competence is, in general, not closer to that of native speakers.

One obvious way of helping to enhance their grammatical and sociolinguistic competence would be to create more opportunities for immersion students to interact with native speakers of French outside the classroom. This is not always possible, however, and if the aims of immersion programmes are to produce students who can not only learn other subjects and communicate in French but do so in a fully grammatical and sociolinguistically acceptable manner, then we need to consider what else can be done in the classroom context to increase their competence in French.

One suggestion is that the students could benefit from more intensive oral practice in using the grammatical and sociolinguistic distinctions that they often overlook. For this purpose teachers need more diagnostic information for an in-depth view of the problems which appear to be persistent. Carefully designed materials, which provide communicative ways of practising such distinctions, would no doubt be helpful.

In short, while immersion programmes appear to be doing an excellent job of producing students who can communicate in French, there may still be ways both within the classroom context and outside to enhance grammatical and sociolinguistic aspects of their French proficiency.

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Immersion contributes important solutions to problems in language teaching, according to the foremost American authority in language acquisition who has studied the situation in Canada.

Immersion: why it works and what it has taught us

STEPHEN D. KRASHEN

Since receiving his Ph. D. in linguistics from UCLA in 1972, **Stephen D. Krashen** has been actively involved in research in neurolinguistics and second-language acquisition. Now a professor of linguistics at the University of Southern California, Dr. Krashen is author of many articles and books, including *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*, for which he won the Modern Language Association's Kenneth Mildenberger Award in 1982.

Canadian immersion is not simply another successful language teaching programme — it may be the most successful programme ever recorded in the professional language-teaching literature. No programme has been as thoroughly studied and documented, and no programme, to my knowledge, has done as well. It is the purpose of this article to consider why immersion has succeeded and to discuss what the language-teaching profession has learned from the experience. In my view, it has increased our understanding of the process of language acquisition and has contributed to the solution of some very serious problems in language teaching.

Immersion programmes of all sorts and in many different locations have been studied in great detail. Research consistently reports these three findings:

- Immersion students do as well in English language skills as students educated entirely in English.[1]
- Immersion students do as well in subject matter as students who are educated entirely in English.[2]
- Immersion students acquire a great deal of the second language. Canadian immersion students easily outperform students enrolled in traditional French classes (core French), and, after several years of immersion, approach native speakers of French on some measures. Immersion students do not typically achieve full native competence in French while they are in the programme; they have an "accent" and make some grammatical errors when they speak. They are, nevertheless, quite competent in their second language, competent enough that: "There is no question that given opportunities to use French in diverse social situations, the (immersion) children . . . could become indistinguishable from native speakers of French in their oral expression, and at the same time they would profit fully from instruction presented in either of their languages." (Lambert and Gardner, 1972, p. 152; see also Harley, this issue.)

Why immersion works

Second-language acquisition theory provides a very clear explanation as to why immersion works. According to current theory, we acquire language in only one way: when we understand messages in that language, when we receive comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). Memorizing vocabulary words, studying grammar, and doing drills make a very small contribution to language competence in the adult and even less in the child — the only true cause of second-language acquisition is comprehensible input.

Speaking, actual production, does nothing to directly cause second-language acquisition, since it is only *input* that counts. Speaking is a *result* of acquisition; the ability to speak a second language "emerges" or develops on its own only after the acquirer has built up enough competence by listening and reading. This hypothesis explains why children often go through a silent period of several months before they begin to speak a new language. This silent period is a time during which they are building competence in the second language — when they begin to speak, it is not the beginning of their acquisition, just the beginning of showing off their competence. This idea also helps to explain the feeling of

uneasiness many people have in language classes when they are asked to speak the second language right away.

The comprehensible input idea clarifies why certain language teaching methods in use today succeed better than others. The better methods, which emerge as superior in comparisons of student achievement, are those that provide the student with more comprehensible input, more messages the students can understand. The successful methods differ from one another on the surface, but in reality vary only in how they provide comprehensible input. One method, for example, consists entirely of teacher commands (sit down, go to the window ...) which are made comprehensible by the teacher's modelling of the action (Asher's Total Physical Response Method). In Terrell's Natural Approach, input to the beginning student is made comprehensible in a variety of ways, such as pictures, discussion of familiar topics, and total-physical-response activities.

In all successful methods, the focus is on the message and not the form, on *what* is being said rather than *how* it is said. Also, student speech is allowed to develop on its own — there is little emphasis on error correction and grammatical accuracy.[3]

Immersion programmes succeed in teaching the second language because, like other good methods, they provide students with a great deal of comprehensible input. Input in immersion programmes is made comprehensible in several ways. The exclusion of native speakers of the second language places all students in the same linguistic boat and helps ensure that teachers will speak at a language level that is comprehensible to them. In addition, texts and materials are supplemented and modified, adapted to the non-native speaker's level. Also, students are often allowed to respond in their first language. Early total-immersion students do not have to respond in French until the middle of grade 1 — a 1.5-year silent period is provided in which the child may use his first language for communication until he acquires enough French to respond in French. As several scholars have pointed out, this increases communication and thereby the child's chances of getting comprehensible input (see Swain and Lapkin, 1982, chapter two; Lambert and Tucker, 1972, pp. 237-238).

What we have learned from immersion

What immersion has taught us is that comprehensible subject-matter teaching *is* language teaching. Students don't simply learn the rule in the language class and have it "reinforced" in the subject-matter class. The subject-matter class is a language class if it is made comprehensible to the language student. In fact, the subject-matter class may even be better than the language class for language acquisition. In language-teaching classes operating according to the principle of comprehensible input, teachers always face the problem of what to talk about. In immersion, the topic is automatically provided — it is the subject matter. Moreover, since students are tested on the subject matter, not the language, a constant focus on the message and not form is guaranteed.

Second language acquisition theory thus implies that immersion works for the same reason other successful methods work: it is the comprehensible-input factor that is crucial, not simply the greater amount of time devoted to the second language. A project we recently completed at the University of Ottawa confirms this (for details, see Wesche, this issue). In place of intermediate French and English as second language courses, university students took their second semester of a one-year psychology course in special "sheltered" sections taught in their second language. Native speakers of the second language were excluded and all class presentations were in the second language, as were the readings. Pre- and post-tests in the second language were given, but for our purposes only; grades were based on subject matter performance only. The entire experience consisted of less than 40 hours exposure to the target language in class. Our sheltered students did quite well in learning psychology, matching the immersion students' success in learning subject matter. Students in the sheltered psychology course also gained in second-language proficiency, doing as well as students in well-taught regular classes in English and French that provided large quantities of comprehensible input.

This result, along with other evidence supporting the comprehensible input hypothesis, suggests that it is the approach and not only the greater amount of exposure that is responsible for immersion students' gains in language. Reports in the research literature on other programmes confirm that language students can gain in second-language competence via comprehensible subject-matter teaching (see especially Stern et. al., 1976; Buch and de Bagheera, 1978).

Implications: the transition problem

The insights gained from immersion are being applied to many other language-teaching situations. In general, the idea that comprehensible subject-matter teaching is language teaching may provide at least part of the solution for what can be called the "transition problem", the fact that students may do quite well in elementary language classes but may not be able to utilize the second language in the "real world".

In my view, the goal of the language class is to bring the student to the point where he or she can use the language outside the second-language classroom in understanding and communicating with native speakers. If the student reaches this level of competence, he or she can continue to improve from the comprehensible input received "on the outside". The language class thus need not produce students who speak the second language at native levels, but need only produce "intermediates", students who can use the language for real communication with its speakers. Students need not acquire the entire language in the language class; when they finish the course, they will still make mistakes.

Their acquisition will continue as they interact with and receive comprehensible input from native speakers.

But even this modest goal is rarely achieved. Students complete even excellent elementary-level classes, classes filled with comprehensible input, but are not ready to use the language on the outside in any truly demanding situation. An adult foreign-language student, for example, who completes a year of Natural Approach Spanish at the university will be able to converse comfortably with a native speaker (who adjusts his speaking a bit to the level of the student) on a variety of everyday topics. This is great success when compared with the results of the usual second-language class. But our student will have limitations; he will not be able to use the telephone easily, read the classics with comfort, and will certainly not be in a position to study at the University of Mexico. And it is not clear that more language teaching, even if it is enlightened, will help the situation. Similarly, the limited English-proficient child, even after extensive and excellent ESL, is not necessarily ready to function well in a social studies class along with native speakers of English.

Immersion programmes, however, have produced genuine intermediates. Despite their "flaws", their occasional errors in the second language, immersion students are clearly capable of using the second language on the outside. They can use French comfortably in social situations (see Bruck, Lambert and Tucker, 1974) and can follow complex subject-matter instruction in French.

The sheltered class

The sheltered class is a subject-matter class made comprehensible for the second-language student; native speakers of the language of instruction are excluded. A crucial characteristic of the sheltered class is that it is a real subject-matter class — not "ESL math" or selections from subject-matter classes introduced as part of the language class. The focus *and the test* are on the subject matter. This is done to ensure that the students' attention is on the message, not the medium, a practice that will ensure, according to the theory, optimal language acquisition.

Sheltered classes emphasize comprehension, both aural and reading. Our goal *is* to produce students who can read and write well. The comprehensible-input hypothesis maintains, however, that the way to achieve this is not to force speaking and writing but to provide massive amounts of comprehensible input. The ability to produce will be a result of this input.[4]

Although input provided in the sheltered class is "simplified" and made comprehensible for the language acquirer, the beginning language student will not be able to participate, since his language level will not be high enough to enable him to follow instruction — a period of general language teaching (comprehensible input on familiar and concrete topics) needs to precede the sheltered class. In addition, the level of language required will vary with the subject. Social studies, for example, requires a higher level of language than math.

Examples of sheltered-language teaching

The University of Ottawa project, described earlier in this article and by Wesche in this issue, is an example of the sheltered class serving as a bridge to the mainstream. Our hope is that students who successfully complete the sheltered course will be better able to cope with the same or related subject matter in the regular mainstream class. Sheltered classes might be made available in several areas in the North American university for international students who show that they need to improve their academic English.

We have been utilizing the sheltered-class idea in programmes for limited English-proficient children in the United States. The following plan was worked out originally in the ABC Unified School District in Los Angeles County classrooms as well as using the first language in such a way so to aid the acquisition of English. The table below represents our "idealized" programme, designed for an elementary school in which a substantial number of students enter with little or no English.

The beginning non-English speaking child is deliberately mixed with children who speak English as a native language for art, music and physical education. A good amount of comprehensible input will be provided here, thanks to the pictures in art and the movement (total

Programme for limited-English speaking students

Level	Mainstream	Sheltered	First language
beginning	art, music, physical education	english as a second language	all core subjects
intermediate	art, music, physical education	english as a second language, mathematics	social studies
advanced	art, music, physical education, mathematics	english as a second language, social studies	enrichment
mainstream	all subjects	–	enrichment

physical response) of physical education. The beginning programme also includes ESL, based on comprehensible input methodology. All "core" subjects are taught in the child's first language. The child's level of English is too low at this stage to understand subject-matter instruction in English. In addition, education in the first language has clear advantages: it causes the development of general academic-cognitive skills and provides specific subject-matter information. This general academic training helps enormously by providing background information that makes English input comprehensible; this explains why well-designed bilingual programmes teach English as well as and often better than, all-day English programmes (Cummins, 1981; Krashen, 1981).

The intermediate child, in this system, is defined as the child whose English is now good enough to begin immersion-style sheltered subject-matter classes. We begin with math, since, as mentioned earlier, math in general does not require as high a level of language as social studies. Subjects such as social studies remain in the first language. The "advanced" child is ready to begin partial mainstreaming. His language level may be high enough by now to do math with native speakers of English, but will probably not be high enough for social studies, which now can be done as a sheltered class. Finally, the child is fully mainstreamed for academic subjects.[5] The time spent at each level will vary according to the amount of English available outside the school.

Such a programme attempts to combine the best of immersion and bilingual education, and illustrates how they can work together. In fact, immersion and bilingual education succeed for the same reason — they both provide comprehensible input. Immersion does this directly, via comprehensible subject matter teaching, and properly done bilingual education provides the background information that makes English input more comprehensible.
A final example comes from d'Anglejan (1978), who proposes that immigrants be placed in "carefully chosen occupational slots" where they can receive comprehensible input related to their profession. This experience would serve as a stepping-stone to survival in ordinary work situations.

The three steps

Three steps are involved in all of these examples. The first consists of *general language teaching*, designed to increase competence to the point where the student can participate in *sheltered language teaching*, at stage two. Stage three is the *mainstream*.

The stages may overlap; as we saw earlier, the limited English-proficient child receives sheltered social studies while doing mainstream math. In addition, the mainstreaming process does not occur all at once — the acquirer gradually increases his ability to participate in different mainstream contexts and situations.

What I have tried to show in this article is that immersion programmes have made two major contributions. They have been, of course, of direct benefit to many students in Canada and the United States. Perhaps even more important, they have shed light on the nature of the language-acquisition process and have pointed the way to important improvements in language education.

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1. Students in early total-immersion programmes (all in French with language arts introduced around grade 3) may show a temporary lag on tests of spelling, punctuation and vocabulary in English. They typically catch up by grade 4 and often surpass those educated entirely in English in later grades. (See e.g. Swain and Lapkin, 1982, chapter four; see also Lapkin and Swain, this issue).

2. Students in early total-immersion programmes match comparison subjects in math, science and social studies (see Swain and Lapkin, 1982, chapter five). Partial-immersion students (some subjects taught in French, some in English) usually show similar patterns but a few comparisons show a lag in some subject-matter learning. This may be due to their lower attainment in French. Late-immersion students starting at grade 6 generally do as well as comparison students in learning subject matter if their immersion experience is preceded by sufficient core French (Swain and Lapkin, p. 68; see also Lapkin and Swain, this issue).

3. This is not to say that the study of grammar is useless. While comprehensible input leads to subconscious knowledge of a language, termed "acquisition", grammar study and error correction lead to conscious knowledge, termed "learning". We utilize conscious learning in language performance as an editor, or monitor, making limited corrections before (or after) we actually produce an utterance. The monitor is quite limited, however. Only small changes are possible for most people and its use is difficult, requiring simultaneous attention paid to both form and meaning.

4. This does not mean that output practice should be avoided. Some practice in producing language may help the student gain confidence and, in the case of writing, may help the student develop an efficient writing process. Moreover, engaging in conversation and in two-way interaction in class helps guarantee comprehensible input and facilitates comprehension checking by the teacher (see Long, 1983).

5. We encourage, at the advanced level, continued study in the first language, e.g., literature and social studies taught in the first language, because of the benefits of full bilingualism, including job-related advantages, a healthy sense of biculturalism (lack of shame of the first culture), and the possibility of superior cognitive development (Cummins, 1981). This enrichment programme can simply take the place of elective foreign-language study.

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In the traditionnal shuffle between centralization and regionalism in Canada is immersion a symptom of a growing ideological change among Canadians towards greater open-mindedness, or does the new bilingualism give rise to new tensions?

Towards the larger community

DOMINIQUE CLIFT

As a journalist and author, the fluently bilingual **Dominique Clift** regularly comments on matters pertaining to language. An astute observer of the sociopolitical and economic scene in Canada, he has written extensively for major English and French-language publications including *The Globe & Mail, The Toronto Star, La Presse* and *Le Soleil*.

After a little more than a decade, French immersion has already taken on the character of a major innovation in Canadian education. Its success as well as the political support it is now able to muster are the most visible signs of a dramatic shift in the attitudes of English-speaking Canadians, one that affects their perceptions of culture, language and society. It represents a move away from the old idea of uniformity towards a broader acceptance of pluralism and diversity.

French immersion originated in Quebec in a period of change. It was a response to a noticeable trend to make French the principal language of work and communication within the province. Everyone concerned was well aware that the traditional approach to second-language instruction was hopelessly inadequate to meet a challenge of this order. Moreover, the English community in Montreal was sadly deficient in language skills as a result of its aloofness and lack of contact with the French majority. The problem was to ensure the community's survival and continued prosperity in unfavourable circumstances. Total immersion turned out to be the most immediate and practical response for meeting the needs of young people. Early successes boosted the community's confidence in coming to terms with French nationalism.

This new approach to education found quick favour in the rest of Canada. However, very different motives operated with English-speaking people in the other provinces. Intentions here were closely related to the country's newly attained level of socio-economic development with its broader horizons, more sophisticated career opportunities, and more diversified avenues of self-fulfillment.

Parental concern over the future of their children and their capacity to remain adaptable can sometimes be one of the most sensitive barometers of social transformations. The insistence with which Canadian parents have demanded French immersion suggests that they have acquired a new perception of the role and nature of language. Unilingualism, even in the case of English, is seen increasingly as a liability in a world that is not only competitive but multicultural as well. The ability to step out of one's self, as it were, by means of a second language, enhances the ability to assess one's self in a more realistic and effective way. Similarly, it becomes much easier to discover the unconscious and crippling assumptions that are often the product of cultural blinkers. This is an extremely valuable asset in a world where technology is relentlessly undermining old ways of thinking.

The current trend is to see language and culture in relative terms rather than as absolutes, as did educational authorities who once sought to enforce the territorial monopoly of English and who encouraged conformity in all cultural and political matters. But this type of exclusiveness could not withstand the impact of massive postwar immigration on eating habits, lifestyles, literary and artistic tastes, and ultimately on the way people related to language itself. Pluralism had to come, as it already had in the United States.

The present recourse to English as an international language of business, of science, and even of diplomacy, might have been expected to encourage a certain linguistic smugness in Canada and to perpetuate a spirit of parochialism. Indeed, Quebec voters are often reminded

of the relatively inferior position of their language on the international scene; this kind of approach is designed to wean them away from the defensive and isolationist policies of the Parti Québécois government on the question of language, but it has proved to be embarrassingly counterproductive. Nevertheless, English Canada seems to have become more open-minded on such an issue than at any time previously. Repeated contacts with countless foreigners able to express complex ideas in a language other than their own have helped modify Canadian attitudes about their own language and their traditional resistance to learning a second one. A growing number now see unilingualism as a severe limitation, and they are eager to find ways of overcoming it. French immersion provides one solution for their children anyway.

Another factor which helps explain the growing popularity of French immersion is the appeal it makes to the elitism which has long been characteristic of Canadian society. In other words, immersion has many of the attributes of private schools. But it is all at public expense since federal and provincial funding, offered in the interest of national unity, makes the whole system viable.

If acceptance of bilingualism reflects the profound transformations that are now under way in Canadian society, it is to be expected that it will produce contrary tensions which will inevitably overflow into politics. Such tensions will pinpoint the areas where anxiety and perhaps hostility are surfacing. Apprehension and resistance will indicate what it is that some are so eager to preserve, thus providing valuable clues about the nature of the changes that are now in progress.

The workplace is one area of conflict. Bilingual persons will naturally seek the broadest possible recognition for what they consider an indispensable asset. However, the unilingual majority will seek to minimize the importance of a second language so that job specifications and remunerations remain unchanged. Their view is that bilingualism is a specialized skill with limited applications. Hence they do not believe that it should be rewarded with special premiums or with preferential advancement. In other words, they reject the idea that knowledge of the two official languages should be taken as an indication of superior qualifications and that it should offer better career opportunities.

The federal public service has long been the main theatre for this kind of debate which has significant ideological implications. As a general rule, the proponents of bilingualism insist on the representativeness of public institutions, particularly when sizeable minorities are present. Their idealism coincides with their self-interest. Presenting the state as a prime mover in social and economic progress maximizes their personal linguistic skills. On the other hand, the critics of official bilingualism will tend to see only a limited role for government, which is to offer a relatively narrow range of services and exercise a limited responsibility for the state of the economy. Thus bilingualism and representativeness are much more compelling for those committed to thoroughgoing reform than they are for conservatives. In fact, these two ideas have provided some of the justifications for the expansion of government bureaucracy.

Opinion tends to divide along similar lines in private enterprise, depending on how broadly or narrowly corporate responsibilities are defined. Tensions can be just as great, if not greater, than they are in the public service. This has been the experience of two English-language newspapers in Montreal, *The Gazette* and *The Star* (now defunct). Both have had to face alternating rebelliousness and demoralization in their newsrooms.

The source of the problem is that bilingual reporters who are assigned to cover social and political issues will develop a vision of Quebec and of Montreal which is at odds with the one held by unilingual editors and management. Reporters tend to demand greater corporate involvement with the two language communities in the province and the city. They will also be far more aggressive in developing stories and features, in interpreting social change, than they are allowed to be. The management of both papers was usually committed to a summary and simplified presentation of political issues, one that would not detract from a policy of consumerism established on the basis of sustained market research. Readers should not be antagonized by persistent representations of conflict and tension.

Similar situations have developed in advertising, insurance, and many other industries that rely on a close scrutiny of public needs and attitudes. Bilinguals and unilinguals are frequently proposing divergent social interpretations and corporate policies. The ideological differences, resulting from particular skills and visions, heighten the competition for jobs and advancement between the two groups. They are indicative of a long drawn-out struggle for power, the purpose of which is to control the direction of social change to one's advantage.

The most serious and damaging source of tension is among those who resent the greater prominence given to the French language and who attribute it solely to the growing influence of Quebec on national policy. They often look at current trends in the light of a conspiracy designed to modify the English character of the country. They do not contemplate the possibility that the transformations they are noticing and complaining about may originate partly with the changing attitudes of English Canada itself. A more open attitude on language and culture has allowed a greater degree of French participation in the administration of the country.

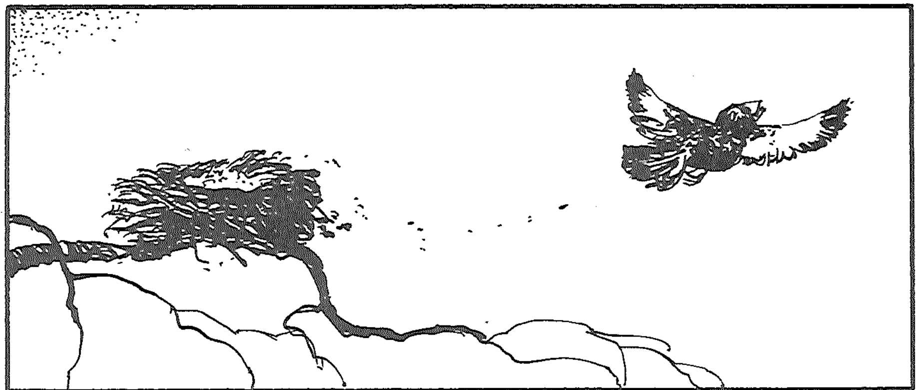
A number of books have been sounding the alarm and compiling the evidence of a French plot. One of them is by a retired Canadian Air Force commander, J.V. Andrew, and is entitled *Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow*. The cover carries the subtitle *Trudeau's Master Plan And How It Can Be Stopped*. Addressing an

international audience, the author warns that Canada may be drifting towards civil war, and he asserts that "It is in the interests of the United States to see that as much of Canada remains an English-speaking country."[1] The ultimate risk is one of a French takeover of American assets in Canada.

A similar book, beyond the pale of reasonable argument, is *French Power: The Francization of Canada* by Sam Allison, a history teacher living in Montreal. His thesis is that French is the language of bureaucracy and big government, and that it is destroying the English character of the country. The cover makes this quite plain: a ham-fisted arm with a rubber stamp has punched a hole from behind a map of Canada, just where Ottawa would be, and it is putting a *fleur-de-lis* on every major Canadian city. The illustration has it poised ready to strike Toronto with the plague. "English Canadians are accepting injustices and hardships imposed by French-dominated big government as a sort of atonement for the supposed sins of the past," the author maintains.[2]

The most stubborn resistance to the idea of cultural and linguistic pluralism comes from the Quebec Government which in this matter has undeniably been acting with strong public support. The official view is that early second-language training compromises the quality of the mother tongue, just as later bilingualism will weaken attachment to the traditional culture. In the overwhelmingly English context of North America, the feeling is that only energetic state intervention will ensure the preservation of the French language.

Historically, the French experience with bilingualism has not been in the field of education but in the workplace which until rather recently had been under the authority of English-speaking managers and foremen. This form of immersion was linked to the industrialization of the province. Because workers and clerical employees lacked the vocabulary to describe the tasks they were performing and



Off to face the world

the equipment they were using, they resorted to the English words used by their employers. The whole process was accompanied by increasingly negative feelings about the French language, particularly its apparent inadequacy for business and industrial purposes. Such self-critical views, accompanied by feelings of inferiority, contributed in weakening collective resistance to the demographic trends favouring assimilation into the English-speaking majority.

The introduction of mass education in the early 1960s along with subsequent legislation in the 1970s imposing French as the main language of work have helped to calm anxieties about cultural survival. But the siege mentality still holds sway when it comes to language, with the result that French attitudes on this question are not synchronized with those slowly coming to the surface in English Canada. Having had a long and bitter experience with bilingualism, it may be another generation before Quebec becomes aware of the limitations of unilingualism and is willing to accept the risks of pluralism.

For the time being, Quebec is moving in a direction opposite to that of English Canada by attempting to minimize the diversity which had been allowed to subsist until now within its borders. Provincial authorities, supported by nationalist sentiment, are seeking to create a homogeneous society where minority groups are not encouraged to develop any cultural differences from the French mainstream, except for inconsequential folkloric traits. This type of policy was also the norm in English Canada where concessions to minority groups were felt to detract from the task of nation-building as well as from national unity. However, English Canada has now reached a stage in its development where a growing number of people are rejecting the notion that unity should be perceived in terms of linguistic and cultural conformity. Slowly, the political climate is being transformed.

Yet, on this thorny question of language, Canadians exhibit a split political personality. For example, Quebec voters have traditionally elected provincial parties committed to the expansion of provincial autonomy while, at the same time, supporting federal parties which definitely favoured a greater degree of centralization. Recently, they have identified with the nationalist and isolationist policies of the Parti Québécois while endorsing the integrative ones of the federal Liberal party. It is as if they believed that intergovernmental relations were essentially adversarial and that politics is basically an unresolved conflict between the centre and the periphery.

In English Canada, these contradictory attitudes do not show themselves in such a stark manner, but they are present nevertheless. Regional sentiment and community loyalties are still very strong, and they frequently come into conflict with the requirements of national unity. Language is one topic where

this occurs. Thus most people will concur with bilingualism at the national level, and they will support the entrenchment of language rights in the constitution; they will concede the necessity of providing a certain range of French services provincially, but they are deeply divided on the entrenchment of official bilingualism. However, it is with local and municipal bodies that attitudes are most unyielding. The broad national community is seen as having a very different set of requirements from those of the immediate social environment. Some compromises and adjustments are seen as necessary nationally but not so provincially and locally. Here again, therefore, regional sentiment remains lively enough to reproduce the tensions between the centre and the periphery.

This, in fact, conforms to the historical pattern of Canadian development where geography, climate, and economics, worked in such a way as to produce insoluble tensions between political authority and the outlying areas under its control. Authority in Canada has often been exploitive, as were the Family Compact in Upper Canada and the Chateau Clique in Lower Canada during the 19th century. But this way of exercising power was possibly the only way, at that time, of mobilizing the resources necessary for development. Central government has always antagonized regional sentiment by diverting scarce resources for national purposes, leaving local communities with very limited means with which to meet their own requirements. These communities and outlying areas were made resentful because of their dependence and powerlessness, and they therefore took refuge in various forms of political revolt.

Western alienation and French nationalism in Quebec are two contemporary examples of the frustrations that result from the opposing demands of national unity and regional identity. However, it is not only in politics that such tensions have shown themselves. In Protestant areas, the rise of powerful religious institutions with their weighty ecclesiastical structures increased the costs of religion to the point where the poorer elements flocked to evangelical sects offering other worldly and less expensive forms of spiritual support. In another domain entirely, the consolidation of the Canadian banking system at the turn of the century drained the Maritime provinces of business initiative and financial resources for the benefit of national development; the result was that the local economy stagnated and a substantial part of the population was forced to emigrate to other parts of the country. The continued expansion of the bureaucracy nationally may lay the groundwork for future tensions between local communities and the centres of political authority as increasing resources are being diverted to support it.

Language has now become symptomatic of the troubled relations that persist between centralized authority and the periphery. It presents a somewhat paradoxical situation, just as if Canadians had accommodated themselves to distinct and unrelated levels of political reality, each with its own set of rights and principles. Thus language rights are divisible in the sense that they may exist nationally but remain inapplicable provincially or locally. So strong are the forces of dissociation, the centrifugal forces, in Canada that there is no consensus on the fundamental question of human rights. While these are theoretically supposed to transcend circumstances and expediency, in Canada they remain subject to political bargaining, provincial opting-out and local tampering. The result is that there is no such thing as a Canadian legal personality uniformly accepted from one end of the country to the other. This situation goes beyond language; it also concerns other rights such as those of native Indians and women. And it means that centralized authority — in the various guises of government, industrial conglomerates or banking institutions — has not yet been able to fuse the diverse components of Canadian society into a unified whole.

Although regionalism survives as a protest against an oppressive centralization of power and resources, it offers rather limited social and economic horizons. Individuals who want to be part of a broader community have no alternative but to identify with the large institutions that dominate the life of the country, particularly the federal government with its cultural objectives. In a sense it is an ideological choice: achievement and power versus self-determination. It is the excitement of the large city versus the comfortable kinships of the small town.

French immersion, in this context, is a choice made on behalf of one's children in favour of the larger community. It is the beginning of a voyage into a country that is largely unknown.

NOTES

1. J.V. Andrew. *Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow.* Richmond Hill, Ontario: BMG Publishing Ltd., 1977, p. 5.
2. Sam Allison, *French Power: The Francization of Canada.* Richmond Hill, Ontario: BMG Publishing Ltd., 1978, p. 6.

Glossary

English-French glossary of terms used by French-immersion specialists

A **alternative programme:** programme/enseignement optionnel

B **bilingual schooling:** éducation/enseignement bilingue

C **co-curricular activities:** activités parallèles au programme

communicative language test: épreuve de compétence communicative

content learning: apprentissage des contenus

conventional French instruction: enseignement traditionnel du français

core French programme: cours de base de français; cours de base; programme cadre de français

D **dual-track school:** école à deux régimes pédagogiques/d'enseignement

E **exposure:** contact avec le milieu langagier; bain de langue seconde; l'ambiance langagière; exposition aux rayonnements de la langue seconde; expérience du français

extended French: cours de français enrichi (de base)

F **fluent bilingualism:** aisance dans les deux langues

French native speaker: locuteur français d'origine; Francophone d'origine

functional ability: compétence/habileté/capacité

functional bilingualism: bilinguisme fonctionnel

functional fluency: maîtrise/compétence fonctionnelle

H **home language:** langue du foyer; langue parlée à la maison

I **immersion approach:** méthode immersive

immersion centre: centre d'immersion

immersion class: classe immersive; classe d'immersion; cours immersif

immersion, early: immersion longue (M-12)

immersion education: enseignement immersif

immersion, French: programme de cours immersifs en français; immersion en français

immersion, full: immersion totale

immersion high school teacher: titulaire de classe immersive au secondaire

immersion, late: immersion courte (7-12)

immersion, middle: immersion de durée moyenne (5-12)

immersion, partial: immersion partielle

immersion pattern: régime/type d'enseignement immersif

immersion route: immersion

immersion student: élève des classes immersives

immersion teacher: titulaire d'un cours immersif

interactive language use: emploi interactif de la langue

L **language arts, English:** apprentissage/enseignement de l'anglais en tant que langue maternelle

language efficiency: compétence linguistique; compétence langagière; bon rendement langagier

language instructor: professeur de langue

learner: enseigné; apprenant

M **materials, curricular:** matériels pédagogiques; matériels didactiques; aides didactiques

materials, learning: matériels pédagogiques de l'élève

materials, teaching: matériels pédagogiques du maître

N **native language:** langue d'origine

native speaker: locuteur d'origine/originel

native-like speaker of French: compétence en français presque égale à celle des locuteurs d'origine

P **patterns of discourse structure, basic:** modèles de structures de base (fondamentales) du discours

patterns of grammar, basic: modèles grammaticaux de base

patterns of sound, basic: formes phonologiques de base; structures phoniques de base

patterns of word-formation, basic: modèle de base de la formation de mots

performance, second language: performance dans la langue seconde

proficiency, French: compétence en français

proficiency, language: compétence linguistique/langagière

proficiency, minimal: compétence minimale

proficiency, native: compétence de locuteur d'origine; compétence originelle

proficiency, near-native: compétence quasi originelle

R **regular English-based school programme:** enseignement ordinaire en anglais

regular English-medium schools: écoles de langue anglaise; classes anglophones

S **sheltered classes:** classes protégées

sheltered workshop programme: programme de cours en atelier protégé

skills, first language: compétence/aptitudes/habileté en langue maternelle

skills, language: capacités/aptitudes langagières

skills, listening: aptitudes à écouter; capacités auditives

skills, literacy: capacités de lecture et d'écriture

skills, production: capacités productives/expressives; aptitudes à s'exprimer/à l'expression

skills, reception: capacités réceptives; aptitudes à comprendre

skills, verbal: aptitudes verbales

speaker, non-proficient: locuteur non compétent

speaker, second language: usager de la langue seconde

submersion: submersion

T **test of the production skills:** test des capacités productives; test des capacités expressives; test des capacités d'expression

V **voluntary:** libre

Second-language enrolment, by province

Number and percentage of the total school population[a] studying French as a second language in each of the nine provinces where English is the majority language and English as a second language in Quebec, and percentage of time devoted to second-language instruction, 1970-71, 1981-82 and 1982-83.

	ELEMENTARY LEVEL				SECONDARY LEVEL			
	Total enrolment	Second-language enrolment Number	%	Instruction time devoted to second language %	Total enrolment	Second-language enrolment Number	%	Instruction time devoted to second language %
NEWFOUNDLAND								
1970-71	101,877	21,835	21.4	5.0	58,853	37,895	64.4	10.0
1981-82	84,437	37,458	44.4	6.4	60,070	34,291	57.1	11.1
1982-83	82,407	37,518	45.5	6.7	59,245	34,457	58.2	11.0
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND								
1970-71	16,818	3,561	21.2	8.0	13,008	10,794	83.0	10.0
1981-82	11,471	6,905	60.2	6.3	12,719	7,358	57.9	10.7
1982-83[c]	11,520	6,800	59.0	6.0	12,630	7,200	57.0	10.5
NOVA SCOTIA								
1970-71	121,894	12,642	10.4	7.0	85,615	59,955	70.0	13.0
1981-82	93,396	46,114	49.4	7.2	82,189	50,790	61.8	12.1
1982-83	91,476	44,588	48.7	7.2	82,159	50,591	61.6	12.1
NEW BRUNSWICK								
1970-71	61,923	37,305	60.2	8.0	53,310	42,708	80.1	12.0
1981-82	44,103	30,168	68.4	9.0	49,310	31,994	64.9	14.3
1982-83	42,242	31,328	74.2	9.6	47,280	30,579	64.7	14.6
QUEBEC								
1970-71	824,026	339,484	41.2	9.0	515,907	515,846	100.0	14.0
1981-82	557,960	235,631	42.2	10.0	393,228	385,363	98.0	16.0
1982-83[c]	571,400	240,000	42.0	10.0	382,700	375,000	98.0	16.0
ONTARIO								
1970-71	1,356,705	514,173	37.9	7.0	549,827	269,079	48.9	13.0
1981-82	1,114,665	676,409	60.7	11.6	574,913	191,916	33.4	14.4
1982-83[c]	1,081,000	670,000	62.0	12.0	558,000	184,000	33.0	14.0

	ELEMENTARY LEVEL				SECONDARY LEVEL			
	Total enrolment	Second-language enrolment Number	%	Instruction time devoted to second language %	Total enrolment	Second-language enrolment Number	%	Instruction time devoted to second language %
MANITOBA								
1970-71	134,465	39,739	29.6	5.0	102,076	55,640	54.5	10.0
1981-82	101,023	44,989	44.5	6.7	87,415	33,621	38.5	11.3
1982-83[c]	100,700	45,300	45.0	7.0	84,600	33,000	39.0	11.5
SASKATCHEWAN								
1970-71	133,514	6,950	5.2	8.0	113,053	77,928	68.9	10.0
1981-82	106,883	6,668	6.2	7.1	91,633	39,508	43.1	9.7
1982-83[c]	104,600	6,800	6.5	7.0	88,370	38,000	43.0	10.0
ALBERTA								
1970-71	230,433	58,235	25.3	6.0	195,554	80,607	41.2	10.0
1981-82	226,543	52,405	23.1	7.4	202,831	55,809	27.5	11.1
1982-83[c]	217,400	50,000	23.0	7.5	200,000	56,000	28.0	11.0
BRITISH COLUMBIA								
1970-71	333,340	18,558	5.6	5.0	193,651	127,293	65.7	10.0
1981-82	299,162	84,374	28.2	5.5	197,765	90,699	45.9	11.3
1982-83[b]	292,885	81,836	27.9	5.5	198,415	87,852	44.3	11.0
TOTAL								
1970-71	3,314,995	1,052,482	31.8		1,880,854	1,277,745	67.9	
1981-82	2,639,643	1,221,121	46.3		1,752,073	921,349	52.6	
1982-83	2,595,630	1,214,170	46.8		1,713,399	896,679	52.3	

a *Does not include students for whom the regular language of instruction is English in Quebec and French in the other provinces.*

b *Preliminary figures provided by the Department of Education.*

c *Statistics Canada estimate. (In the case of Alberta, applies to the elementary level figures only.)*

Source: Statistics Canada, Elementary and Secondary Education Section. (As published in Commissioner of Official Languages *1982 Annual Report.*)