

TRANSFERRING FROM FRENCH IMMERSION:
A CASE STUDY OF STUDENTS
WHO LEAVE THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM
UPON COMPLETION OF GRADE SIX

BY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons why children in one school division in the city of Winnipeg, Canada were transferring from the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six and to examine the dynamics involved in the process of making the decision. Case study methodology was employed. Transferring students and their parents completed a questionnaire and a follow-up interview. The students' teachers and principals were interviewed to determine their perspectives. Data was obtained on all 22 students in the division who transferred.

In general, parents were happy with the quality of education in the French Immersion program. The transferring children revealed a positive attitude toward learning French. All children agreed it was important for Canadians to learn French, although 57% indicated they were unsure if they would study French if the choice was left up to them. Eleven of the 22 children transferred to attend a private school, eight due to difficulties with the program and seven because parents were concerned with the quality of education at the local French Immersion junior high school. Parents believed their child needed more English instruction. Only in cases where the child was experiencing difficulty with the program did parents consult teachers; in all other cases, the decision was made in the home. Most children felt comfortable with the decision and felt they had

some input into the decision.

Parents had multiple reasons for transferring their children. Although content with the quality of French Immersion education at the elementary level, many were concerned that there is an inadequate amount of English instruction at the continuing junior and senior high immersion levels. Parents carefully chose among the available schools and programs for their child in grade seven. The decision to transfer the child was not a rejection of French Immersion, but a choice made of a program which was perceived to better meet the needs of the child.

The analysis of the questionnaires and interviews resulted in twelve findings and subsequent recommendations for future curricular considerations for French Immersion.

RESUME

Le but de cette étude est de déterminer les raisons qui mènent les enfants, d'une division scolaire de la ville de Winnipeg, Canada à transférer du programme d'immersion française après avoir complété la sixième année. Aussi, le but est-il de regarder comment la décision de transférer l'enfant est prise. La méthodologie de l'étude de cas est utilisée. Les élèves qui transféraient et leurs parents ont complété un questionnaire et ont passé une entrevue. Le professeur de chaque élève et le directeur de l'école ont passé des entrevues. L'information était obtenue de tous les 22 enfants qui transféraient.

En général, les parents sont contents de la qualité de l'éducation en immersion française. Les enfants qui transfèrent ont une attitude très positive à l'apprentissage de la langue française. Tous les enfants pensent que c'est important pour les Canadiens d'apprendre l'anglais et le français; bien que 57% indiquent qu'ils ne sont pas certains s'ils étudieraient le français s'ils en avaient le choix. Onze des 22 enfants ont transféré pour fréquenter une école privée. Onze des 22 enfants ont transféré pour fréquenter une école privée. Huit ont transféré à cause de difficultés avec le programme, et 7 ont transféré parce que les parents s'inquiétaient de la qualité de l'éducation à l'école pré-secondaire d'immersion du quartier. La plupart des parents croient que les enfants ont besoin de plus d'enseignement en anglais. Les parents consultaient les professeurs

seulement dans les cas d'enfants qui ont des difficultés. Presque tous les enfants se sentent confortables avec la décision et disent qu'ils ont joué un rôle dans la décision.

Les parents ont plusieurs raisons pour transférer leur enfant. Ils sont contents de la qualité de l'éducateur en immersion à l'école élémentaire mais ils s'inquiètent car ils croient qu'il n'y a pas assez d'instructions en anglais au niveau pré-secondaire et secondaire. La décision de transférer un enfant n'est pas un rejet de l'immersion, mais un choix de programme que les parents pensent servir mieux les besoins de chaque enfant. Une analyse des questionnaires et des entrevues a mené aux douze recommandations. Ces recommandations peuvent être considérées pour les futures recherches.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

1.1 Setting the stage

The literature evaluating French Immersion programs in Canada has been generally positive. Major publications in the field of French Immersion, such as Genesee's Learning Through Two Languages (1987), Lambert and Tucker's The Bilingual Education of Children (1972), and Swain and Lapkin's Evaluating Bilingual Education: A Canadian Case Study (1982), have, while indicating the need for future research, relayed the successful nature of the French Immersion program. In fact, Stephen Krashen, one of the foremost contemporary authorities on second language learning, suggests that "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" 1984, (p. 61). The French Immersion program in Manitoba has been so successful, in fact, that the last twelve years have seen an 800% increase in enrollment, as reported in the Winnipeg Free Press (Houston, January 7, 1991, p.1).

But not all researchers agree that French Immersion is as successful as it has been promoted. Gilles Bibeau, linguist and education professor from the University of Montreal, has described immersion somewhat differently than Krashen. He has written:

The general teaching methods used in immersion classes run counter to the most characteristic trends of modern pedagogy...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. 1984, (p.46)

There have been few published reports critical of the French Immersion movement. Hector Hammerly, linguistics professor at Simon Fraser University, has authored the critical evaluation French Immersion: Myths and Reality (1989). He attempts to explain "why French Immersion does not and cannot work" (p.20). Moreover, Hammerly has stated that it is very difficult to find criticism of the French Immersion program. He has written that "the pro-immersion research bias is so pervasive that it affects even the processing of information by research organizations" (1989, p.782). He notes that G. Richard Tucker, co-author of the previously mentioned The Bilingual Education of Children (1972), and advocate of French Immersion, is Director of the Centre for Applied Linguistics in Washington D. C. Hammerly's ERIC search revealed little research critical of French Immersion, indeed implying the selectivity of information to be included in ERIC.

The bias that Hammerly reveals is a serious obstacle to attempts at conducting research on the French Immersion program. It becomes difficult for

the researcher to study problems dispassionately in French Immersion when traditional means of inquiry may be biased. This may be the case in the Canadian context; therefore, it becomes important to listen to practitioners in the field, the French Immersion teachers and administrators, as well as to the children enrolled in the French Immersion program, and their parents, to gain a greater picture of French Immersion.

Hayden (1988) questions the "efficacy of immersion as a viable educational experience for all children" (p.223). Should one even expect French Immersion to be a viable educational experience for all children? Cummins (1984) states: "There is no more reason to expect immersion programs to be the best possible educational programs for all children than there is to expect regular English programs to be" (p.82). Both Trites (1986) and Lyster (1987) suggest that the immersion program is not successful for all children.

School divisions in the province of Manitoba (Canada) generally offer French Immersion programs to children enrolling in kindergarten. All parents who wish to enroll their child in French Immersion may do so - there are no prerequisites for registration in the program. Beyond "the generally accepted educational objectives of the provinces" (Gibson, 1987, p. 33), the goals of the Manitoba Education and Training for the French Immersion program are to develop functional bilingualism and the "development of a positive attitude

towards the French culture" (Gibson, 1987, p. 33). Manitoba Education and Training, like most other provinces, defines the functional bilingual as "one who has developed a mastery of a first language as well as linguistic competencies in a second language which will allow the speaker to communicate with ease in the second language on a personal as well as a professional basis" (Gibson, 1987, pp. 32-33). Many students in English instructional programs have difficulty attaining the "generally accepted educational objectives of the province." French Immersion students, beyond being expected to attain these goals, must also achieve functional bilingualism and a positive attitude to the French culture.

Carey (1984), reflecting upon the importance of attaining the goals of the French Immersion program, has stated "whether or not the bilingual ability is gained at a reasonable cost to other areas of mastery depends in large measure on what value this bilinguality has in the sociocultural and familial milieu of the child" (p.257). He indicates that there are some "content costs" (p.258) for children enrolled in French Immersion, but that this is acceptable as long as the home and society support the added benefit of the immersion program - a bilingual child.

Hammerly (1989) rejects the notion that students completing twelve or thirteen years of immersion schooling are even bilingual. He considers this "especially regrettable when one considers the great sacrifices that many highly

motivated parents and children have made for the sake of a bilingualism that they are not getting" (p.20). Evaluations by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (O.I.S.E.) of the French Immersion programs recognize that "the productive second language skills of French Immersion students remain behind those of Francophone peers", but that "a good measure of functional bilingualism has been attained" (Allen, Cummins, Harley, Lapkin and Swain, 1989, p.771).

It is difficult to define exactly what level is a "good measure" of functional bilingualism. Hammerly argues that one is either bilingual or not, and the error-rich speech of French Immersion students indicates that the French Immersion program is not attaining its goals.

In the end, it is the parents and children who must evaluate the success of the child's participation in the immersion program. The viability of French Immersion as an educational experience must be decided upon in the home. While parents must be exposed to the goals and objectives of the program, it is difficult for them to interpret and understand the intended processes and outcomes when researchers themselves cannot adequately articulate and evaluate them. Possible research bias in favour of French Immersion, coupled with goals and objectives that are open to misinterpretation, leave the program open to many misunderstandings and misinterpretations. It is within this context that this study on why graduating grade six students are withdrawing from the French Immersion

program in one school division in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada has become a worthy source for examination.

1.2 Introduction to the Problem

" Well, what do you think? Should my child transfer out of the French Immersion program?"

Rare indeed is the elementary French Immersion teacher who has not been asked this question several times throughout the school year. Each year, there continue to be a number of children, who, for one reason or another, do not meet with success in the program (Cummins, 1984; Trites, 1986). Academic difficulties, immaturity, and discipline and/or behavior problems have been cited by these authors as some of the primary reasons why children do not succeed in French Immersion.

The option of transferring to an English Instruction program is always available to children in French Immersion. This option is, therefore, often considered when children are encountering difficulties with the program. The personal experience of the researcher has indicated that parents question the appropriateness of the French Immersion program when their child experiences considerable academic difficulty with the program. Personal experience has also revealed that some parents question the French Immersion program, even when their child may not be experiencing any particular academic or social difficulty.

Statistics for one school division in the city of Winnipeg indicate 114 children registered for Grade one French Immersion in 1983. Of those 114 children, 68 still remained in the program in grade nine in 1990. This is a loss of 46 children, or over 40%. Such could be an example of a potential future trend.

Children are transferring out of the French Immersion program. Why are they doing so? Are they voluntarily leaving the program, or are they being counselled to do so? If so, why? Is the Canadian political climate influencing decisions? How is the decision made to transfer a child from French Immersion to English Instruction?

Many hypotheses can be raised as to why children leave the French Immersion program. Beyond the academic and social reasons already stated, some students may transfer out of the program because it is felt that they have no knack for learning a second language. Parental priorities for the child's education may have changed. Perhaps it is felt that the children have achieved an adequate degree of bilingualism for the time being, and they drop out to be prepared for an English language-oriented university education. As concepts become more abstract at higher grade levels, anglophone parents become less able to help their children at home, and therefore may choose to transfer the child. Children in upper grades have less access to school bussing and may choose to transfer to a neighborhood English school. The stress and changes involved in moving to a

middle years school or junior high may cause some students to switch to an English program upon completion of grade six. As older children begin to be able to make decisions for their own education, some may choose to transfer out of the program. Peer pressure may play some role in the decision. Perhaps the failure of Canadian constitutional negotiations such as Meech Lake, and its political repercussions have caused some parents to reconsider why they placed their child in French Immersion.

Bruck (1789, 1985), Trites (1976, 1978, 1978-79, 1986), and Trites and Price (1978-79) have studied children who transferred out of French Immersion due to learning difficulties in the early grades. Parkin, Morrison and Watkin (1987) indicate that "there is little information about the characteristics of students who transfer at the upper elementary or secondary levels" (p.74). Hayden (1988), in research conducted through the University of Alberta, investigated "the reasons as perceived by parents, teachers, and children for the withdrawal of the latter from immersion programs in elementary grades" (p.224). Children who transferred mid-way through the school year were studied. Grade six students who left the program over the summer, before beginning junior high, were not included in the research.

Children in Manitoba, as in other Canadian provinces, are dropping out of the French Immersion program. Studies carried out in other provinces are

helpful in determining some of the reasons why children leave the French Immersion program. There is a need to study children who have left the French Immersion program in Manitoba to record their reasons and to analyze if these reasons might be similar to those of children in the program in other provinces. Perhaps there are also reasons particular to Manitoba as to why children leave the French Immersion program.

There is little information as to why grade six students leave the French Immersion program immediately after completing grade six. The experience of the researcher has indicated that a greater number of children leave the French Immersion program after grade six compared to those who leave the program at other elementary grades. This study will, therefore, look at reasons why children in grade six transfer out of the French Immersion program. It will also look at how, and by whom, the decision is made to transfer a child.

1.3 The Problem

Statistics for one school division in the city of Winnipeg indicate that in 1988, eight out of 101 students left the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six; in 1989, 14 out of 112 students who left the program at this time; and in 1990, ten out of 128 transferred out of the program.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the reasons why children in grade six French Immersion are transferring out of the program at the completion

of grade six. More specifically, this study looks at the factors involved in making the decision to transfer a child from a French Immersion program to a regular English program, from the point of view of all parties concerned: the parents, the child, and the teacher. Case study methodology has been employed to investigate the decision making process. Grade six students from one city school division who transferred out of French Immersion upon completion of the 1990-1991 school year have been studied. Questionnaires were completed by the children and the parents. Interviews with the children, parent(s), and school personnel involved in making the decision have also been completed.

Interviews took place once the decision to transfer the child had been made. They occurred before the child began grade seven in an English program. Genesee (1987) calls for "prospective research designs in the study of factors affecting educational decision making" (p.93). He found that parents of transferred children were "less supportive of second language learning in general after their children's transfer; and they felt that the importance of second language learning had been over-emphasized to the detriment of their children's development" (p.93). Improvements in the children's ability and attitude that may occur after a transfer, may encourage parents to reflect negatively on the former program. Interviewing all participants involved in the decision-making process before the child actually transfers may discourage comparisons between French

Immersion and English programs.

Children with academic problems, learning disabilities, and behavioral problems have been the prime area of focus for research on children who transfer out of French Immersion programs. (Bruck, 1978; Genesee, 1987; Jones, 1984; Trites, 1978; Wiss, 1987, 1989). Little research has been completed on other reasons why children transfer from French Immersion programs. Halsall's (1991) report for the Canadian Parents for French was published as this particular study was near completion. Studying the attrition of students in French Immersion, especially at the secondary level, Halsall cites "six major sources of information regarding secondary level attrition/retention" (p. 6). Hayden (1988) studied reasons why elementary children transferred from the French Immersion program.

This study will, therefore, attempt to clarify the following questions:

1. Why are children in one urban school division, in Winnipeg, Manitoba transferring from the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six?
2. Who is involved in making the decision to transfer a child from French Immersion, and what role does each member play?

3. What are the dynamics involved in the process of making the decision to transfer a child out of French Immersion?

The data collected in this study may be used to determine ways in which the French Immersion program can be improved so that more children's needs can be met. The in-depth study of parents and children gives French Immersion educators and researchers an alternative perspective of the French Immersion program.

This study does not presume to definitively answer any of these questions. Rather, its purpose is to provide greater information about why and how a small segment of the French Immersion population leave the program.

1.4 The Importance of the Problem

Children are transferring out of the French Immersion program. Enrollment statistics for one school division in the city of Winnipeg reveal the following information:

In 1983, 114 children were registered in grade one French Immersion. Thirteen children transferred out of the program during elementary school, eight more transferred after graduation from grade six before beginning junior high and a total of 56 had transferred by grade nine.

Of the 115 children enrolled in grade one French Immersion in 1984, only

three had transferred during elementary school, but 14 more transferred after grade six but before beginning junior high.

In 1985, of the 147 enrolled in grade one French Immersion, 19 children had transferred during elementary school, and another ten children left upon completion of grade six.

For whatever reasons, the immersion program is obviously not meeting the needs of a number of students. Perhaps the French Immersion program is not meeting the needs or fulfilling the requirements of the parents of the children who transfer. Or, possibly, certain teachers feel that some children's needs cannot be met if they remain in the program.

Should the French Immersion program even be expected to meet the needs of all children enrolled in the program? Before this question can be answered, it must be determined why children are leaving the program. Perhaps, with certain modifications to the French Immersion program, more children would remain in the program. Perhaps it is not the French Immersion program which is being rejected, but other educational experiences which are being chosen.

Obviously it is impossible to meet the needs of all people all the time, but it remains a challenge to educators to improve the French Immersion program to meet the needs of the greatest number of children. Hart, Lapkin and Swain (1989), in an attrition study of early and middle French Immersion programs,

conclude that "the challenge to educators and researchers is to provide reliable and valid methods and materials so that all children who desire biliteracy skills have access to them" (p. 528).

Hayden (1988) has studied reasons why children leave French Immersion programs in Alberta. There has been no published study completed as to why children are leaving elementary French Immersion programs in Manitoba, specifically in the city of Winnipeg.

Although it is impossible to draw conclusive results for the general population, the case study approach to this problem allows for an initial formulation of identifiers as to why children transfer. Questionnaires provide basic data pertinent to the research problem under investigation. Interviews with transferring children, their parents, and teachers provide further insight as to why some Winnipeg children transfer out of French Immersion. Follow-up studies using reasons determined through the case study interviews could be undertaken to determine reasons why the general population transfer out of French Immersion programs at the elementary level.

Once these reasons are identified, educators may have more valid information to assist them in modifying the French Immersion program to meet the needs of more students. Parents also will benefit in understanding why other children switch from the program, and will be able to determine if their own

child's situation is similar. Results may also help parents decide if French Immersion is the appropriate program for their child, before placing the child in French Immersion Kindergarten or grade one. This particular study, therefore, is relevant to many of the participants in curriculum and schooling: educators, parents, and students.

1.5 Delimitations

A considerable number of children leave the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six. This study only looks at children from one urban school division who transfer out of French Immersion upon completion of grade six.

1.6 Limitations

Information obtained as to why grade six French Immersion children transfer to English programs is limited to the actual cases studied. Although conclusions cannot be drawn for the general population, an in-depth study of several children will contribute to the general literature on the subject.

The individuality of each case limits the generalizability of information. Because of the nature of the research, there are "no handy quantitative measures of generalizability" (Spirer, 1980, p. 16). The prepared interview for each subject must be open-ended to allow for individual expression. An overly prepared interview directs the subject towards the viewpoint of the researcher.

Some direction is inevitable due to the subject and the selection of the case.

Although the generalizability of this study is limited, findings concur with many of the findings of both Hayden (1988) and Halsall (1991) which lends further credibility to this study.

1.7 French Immersion - A definition and point of reference.

French Immersion. There are a number of French Immersion programs across the country (Hammerly, 1989, p. 7). Each province has its own particular definition and a number of varieties.

Immersion education, in general, "refers to the use of a language other than the child's home language as a medium of instruction" (Cummins, no date, p. 1).

In terms of curriculum, French Immersion has a variety of images or characterizations (Schubert, 1986) depending upon the objectives of the province, the school community, the parents and the child. The images of the French Immersion curriculum can vary from teacher to teacher within a school.

Immersion education began with a "curriculum as an agenda for social reconstruction" (p. 32). French Immersion was seen as an excellent means of achieving a bilingual Canada, uniting both English and French speaking Canadians. This desired social and political unity would also be achieved by viewing curriculum as *currere*, "whereby individuals come to greater

understanding of themselves, others, and the world through mutual reconception" (p. 33). French Immersion could offer a new direction for Canada. With a major goal of French Immersion education being the appreciation of the French culture, English Canadians were attempting to unite the "two solitudes" of our Canadian society.

Although the socio-political goals of French Immersion lead to certain curriculum images, on a daily basis, elementary French Immersion has often been viewed as "curriculum as experience" (p. 30). Developing concurrently with the whole language movement (Hammerly, 1989, p. 118), immersion teachers focussed on students needs and interests as they attempted to make learning more immediate and meaningful. The concrete experiences necessary for students to acquire a second language lead to this view of curriculum. Beyond learning a second language, immersion students are also expected to attain the same general educational goals as their English educated peers. The "content" or "subject matter" (p. 26), comparable to that of English instruction, become important means in achieving this goal.

Because the goals of French Immersion programs are both socio-political and traditional, radical and yet in many ways conservative, French Immersion is open to many interpretations and definitions. Because of the variety of opinions held by researches across the country, no one view of immersion is conclusive.

Research and critique of the French Immersion program must be aware of the multitude of perceptions of the program.

French Immersion programs in Manitoba are of two main types, early and late entry immersion. Early immersion begins in kindergarten or grade one. Late entry immersion begins in grade seven. The Bureau de l'Éducation Française (B.E.F.), the component of Manitoba Education and Training which is responsible for French language education, recommends that instruction for all types of immersion programs be in French 75% of the time. They do note that "en raison de certaines contraintes administratives et démographiques, la majorité des élèves au secondaire ne se voient offrir que 50% de leurs cours en français" (Boland-Willms *et al.*, 1988, p. 39).

In Manitoba, it is recommended that formal instruction in reading at the primary level begin in English before that in French, and that "le programme de français proposé par le B.E.F. pour le primaire en immersion s'appuie sur le principe que le développement de la communication orale est un prérequis au développement de la lecture" (p. 41). The introduction of English language arts in other provinces often occurs in grades two or three, but by grades five or six, approximately 50% of instruction is in English. The early French Immersion program in Manitoba must be understood in its own social and cultural context. It is, thus, difficult to compare research findings in other provinces, when the

French Immersion program itself varies so much.

Children are transferring out of the French Immersion program. This study investigates the reasons why children leave the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six. Case study methodology has been chosen to investigate how the decision to transfer a child out of French Immersion has been made, from the child, parent, and teacher's point-of-view. A review of the literature will focus upon the French Immersion program and reasons cited in the literature as to why children leave the program.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Immersion is a relatively recent educational phenomenon in the Canadian context. Research has primarily focused on the acquisition of first and second language skills in the learner. Stern looked at the feasibility of French Immersion: "The research studies have been fairly unanimous in their findings and have given immersion a clean bill of health...and the children's educational development does not suffer" (in Moeller, 1986, p. 4). French Immersion has strong social and political goals. Even Stern only uses the words "fairly unanimous" in approving the French Immersion program. French Immersion must be considered critically, because it is not working for all children as evidenced by the number of children transferring out of the program.

2.2 Organization of the Review of the Literature

The review of the literature is organized into six main sections. The first section establishes the need for a critical paradigm to evaluate the French Immersion program. The second section considers immersion from a historical perspective - from its birth to its subsequent development across Canada. The third section looks at the goals and objectives of the French Immersion program and some issues concerning the program. The suitability of French Immersion for

all children is considered in the fourth section. Motivation and attitude as significant contributors to an individual's success in a second language program are discussed at in fifth section. The final section considers the appropriateness of the case study as means of research for this problem.

Due to the nature of the problem, and number of possible variables which are considered in the decision to transfer a child from the French Immersion program, an exhaustive review of literature is necessary.

2.3 French Immersion As Viewed Through A Critical Paradigm

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue for the need for a "new paradigm [which] is concerned with understanding...[which] is probabilistic and speculative" (p. 30). They argue for the holistic study of "multiple realities" (p. 37), for "inquiry into these multiple realities will inevitably diverge (each inquiry raises more questions than it answers) so that prediction and control are unlikely outcomes although some level of understanding...can be achieved" (p. 37).

Kemmis (1987) writes that:

Part of the task of the emancipatory action researcher in education is to reflect on her or his practice in this way - to locate it in terms of the values, virtues and excellence it expresses, against traditions of educational thought and action, and in terms of the ideas of the good for human kind which it realizes (In Wideen & Andrews, 1987, p. 78).

Although the vast majority of literature considers French Immersion to be a success (Genesee, 1983; 1987; Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Swain and Lapkin, 1982), it is still a relatively new educational phenomenon beset with certain problems. Lyster (1987) has questioned many aspects of the French Immersion program. Trites (1986) has studied "children who experience difficulty in immersion programs" (p. 1). Hammerly (1989) writes that French Immersion "is fundamentally flawed in its theory of classroom S. L. [Second Language] learning" (p. 577). He argues that immersion is a "mistake and should be replaced by a better approach more suited to classroom conditions" (p. 576).

Both the positive and negative aspects of the French Immersion program must be presented. Locating the program in terms of its values, virtues and excellences, as suggested by Kemmis, and then evaluating it against traditional methods of education is essential to the process of critical reflection of the program. The "new paradigm" suggested by Lincoln and Guba can be similarly used to reflect the "multiple realities" of the French Immersion program. If, as Hammerly (1989) suggests, there is a difficulty in obtaining critical studies of the French Immersion program through traditional means of retrieval (p. 782), it becomes even more essential to reflect on both positive and negative aspects of the program.

Schubert (1986) uses the term "critical praxis" (p. 314) as a paradigm of

curriculum inquiry which "offers a broad perspective on the meaning of educational endeavors within the context of economic and ideological life" (p. 314). He writes that it is a "...form of study that integrates political action with intellectual inquiry in search of understanding and justice" (p. 314). The creation of a large population of bilingual Anglophones through French Immersion education would have serious implications on the economic and ideological life in the province of Quebec. French Immersion education could possibly break down the "two solitudes" of Quebec society. Inequities due to the language spoken would be reduced. Most importantly, as Anglophones began to understand better the French language and culture, they would begin to understand their Francophone peers. French Immersion education could therefore have a tremendous effect on "human growth and development" not only within the province of Quebec but throughout Canada. French Immersion education could therefore be viewed as one way of fostering greater understanding among Canadians.

Clift (1984) writes that French Immersion developed out of the need of the Anglophone community in Montreal to ensure its "survival and continued prosperity in unfavorable circumstances" (p.65) Outside of Quebec, parental motives for enrolling their children in immersion programs "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" (p. 65). Enrollment in immersion becomes "an ideological choice" made in "favor of the larger community" (p. 68), that of a unified Canada. French Immersion grew out of both economic and ideological concerns. It is therefore appropriate to reflect on the program through a paradigm of critical praxis.

2.4 Immersion - A Historical Perspective

The study of the past may not unlock the closed doors of the future, but an acquaintance with what has preceded certainly provides a key to the understanding of the way things are and why they are as they are (Chastain, 1976, p. 7).

The immersion principle is actually one of the oldest forms of foreign language education, which may date back as far as 3000 B. C. (Genesee, 1987, p. 1). In Classical times during the Middle Ages, Latin and Greek were formally studied, but other languages were learned "more or less spontaneously by living in loco among the speakers of a language" (Danesi & Mollica, 1988, p. 433). The language of the school often differed from the language of the home or community (Genesee, 1986, p. 1). But the grammar-translation method which applied to the study of Latin and Greek became the traditional manner in which a second language was taught. Relying heavily on the written, particularly

literary forms of language (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983, p. 4) the grammar-translation method came under attack at the end of the nineteenth century. Danesi and Mollica note that this was the first time that attempts were made "to reconcile theory and instructional practices" (p. 433). The field of second language pedagogy began to rely on scientific enquiry which was occurring in the field of linguistics. A major shift from the grammar-translation approach occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century with the Direct Method - "the first authentic language teaching method" (p. 434). This method emphasized the development of oral comprehension and speaking over reading and writing. A new paradigm in language teaching was developing, "...based on a particular psychological interpretation of the learning process (namely that second language learning was analogous to first language acquisition); it devised techniques derived from this view, and it outlined a standardized set of teaching and practice routines" (p. 434). The Direct Method immersed the student in the second language and encouraged language usage as opposed to analysis. Unfortunately language usage did not look at student needs and interests as "all the statements used were related to the classroom... Any connection with real life was expected to come late and was not the business of the school" (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, p. 6). This method views language teaching through a Tylerian or traditional paradigm, which focusses not on what should be taught, but "...instead it centers on what

considerations should be made when analyzing or developing curriculum" (Schubert, 1986, p. 170).

Because the Direct Method failed to adequately develop desired skills in the second language, pragmatists focussed on the objectives of the second language program and felt that in a non-immersion setting, "...the only realistically obtainable goal...was reading comprehension" (Danesi & Mollica, 1988 p. 435). The Reading Method was thought to be a practical approach to second language instruction. It focussed on the "teachers, learners, subject matter, and milieu" (Schubert, 1986, p. 288) to solve the problems inherent in the Direct Method.

World War II caused a re-evaluation of second language teaching objectives. There was a need for people to speak the second language as well as to read it. At the same time the ideas of linguists Bloomfield and Fries, and psychologist Skinner "began to be used as a way of explaining what happens when we teach and learn languages" (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983, p. 6). Empiricism became the paradigm for inquiry in second language teaching. Habit formation, over-learning, and interference between languages, were areas that researchers investigated. This approach to instruction led to the audio-lingual method, most popular between 1950 and 1965. (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, p. 7, Danesi and Mollica, p. 436). The fields of linguistics and psychology greatly influenced and

shaped the development of the audio-lingual method. Second language pedagogy had not yet become its own field; it was influenced by outside forces.

Chomsky's cognitive approach to linguistics, in Syntactic Structures (1957) and Cartesian Linguistics (1966) led to another shift in paradigms in second language pedagogy focussing on the intrinsic, innate abilities of the language learner. Chomsky's theories led researchers to attack the notion of there being any specific 'method' of language teaching (Danesi and Mollica, 1988, p. 438).

By the 1970s, the "sociolinguistic perspective came to dominate linguistic theory" (p. 438). Hymes' (1972) proposal of "communicative competence" (in Brown, 1980, p. 191) distinguishes itself from linguistic competence. Communication came to be viewed as the primary objective of second language instruction. The Functional-Notional Approach, proposed by Wilkins in 1976, focuses "on the ability to use real, appropriate language to communicate and interact with others" (Finocchiaro, 1983, p. 10).

Most recent developments in second language pedagogy focus "on the learner as individual" (Danesi and Mollica, 1988, p. 438). Asher's Total Physical Response and Krashen and Farrell's Natural Approach, among others, look at the affective needs of the learner. These approaches hypothesize that "a learner who feels comfortable and involved in the learning process will tend to acquire skills more easily" (p. 439). As there has been a move away from the notion of

"method", second language pedagogy has focussed more on the learner. There is a greater interrelationship between "language learning and teaching" (p. 440). The current state of second language pedagogy has developed from the traditional paradigm focussing on the content of the grammar-translation method, from the empirical paradigm evident in the audio-visual method, and from the practical paradigm centering on communicative competency which sees "curriculum as evolving from the educational setting" (Schubert, 1986, p. 314). Szymanski (in James, 1983, pp. 79-80) views immersion programs as the logical progression in second language pedagogy. These programs have "an extensive range of goals and methodologies that incorporate current educational priorities such as humanistic education, affective value clarifications and interpersonal communication" (p. 79). But she calls for the need for "a complete investigation of second-language acquisition as it relates to participation in an immersion environment" (p. 79). What is "fad" must be separated from that which is "genuine progress" (p. 85). Research must begin to focus on principles of language acquisition as they apply to an immersion setting. Szymanski quotes Zais (1980) who says "we need a pair of goggles 'to give us perspective, to tell us what is important, what is peripheral, what is irrelevant, and indeed, what is sheer nonsense!'" (p. 85).

The paradigm of critical reflection is essential to immersion research.

Greene's (1978) "wide awakeness" (Schubert, 1986, p. 319) must be fostered among those in the field of immersion so that the "education values" which underpin immersion programs "be recovered and critically examined in their contemporary, social and historical contexts" (Kemmis, in Wideen and Andrews, 1987, p. 73). Critical praxis, according to Schubert, "must probe deeply and broadly into the culture in which [those] classrooms and schools have come into being" (p. 315). As Max Yalden (1984), the Commissioner of Official Language has noted "...the linguistic climate in Canada has been profoundly altered by the immersion revolution" (p. 1). The 'culture' in which immersion programs have come into being must be thoroughly examined. Second language pedagogy plays an intrinsic but not isolated role in immersion instruction. French Immersion must also be viewed through the paradigm of critical praxis to understand its political and social significance.

2.5 Critical Praxis and The Growth of French Immersion in Canada

Canada has a commitment to two official languages, English and French. This commitment began with the founding of our country and was reaffirmed in 1969 when the Official Languages Act, supported by all parties, became national policy. For anglophones, the answer to the question "Why bilingualism?" must be first, that we recognize the

French Fact as an integral part of Canada, and want for our children and ourselves a clear understanding of it, and a definite relationship with it; second, that the ability to function in two languages gives an extra dimension to our perception of life and is a continuing source of enrichment to us. For many of us these answers have regional variations, but they nonetheless reflect a strong faith in the future of our country. (Carrothers, in Macak & Isabelle, 1979, p. 4).

French Immersion is a program rooted in political equality for all Canadians, and as such it affects cultural, social and economic institutions. The entire concept of second language education has been 'reconceptualized' and has had and will continue to have grave impact on Canadian society. In explaining his theory of social justice, Apple sees the need for "a restructuring of institutions and a fundamental reshaping of the social contract that has supposedly bound us together" (in Giroux, Penna & Pinar, 1981, p. 120). French immersion is a program which attempts to unite our country linguistically and culturally, with the ultimate hope of uniting our country both politically and economically: "It represents a move away from the old idea of uniformity towards a broader acceptance of pluralism and diversity" (Clift, 1984, p. 65). Schubert (1986) writes that critical praxis:

seeks vigorously to point out inequities of educational access,

opportunity and quality, experienced on the bases of race, gender, socioeconomic class, and other differences. Not only does inquiry in this paradigm point out constraints and inequities, it strives to overcome them. In other words, praxis is a form of study that integrates political action with intellectual inquiry in search of understanding and justice.

(p. 314)

These are the conditions out of which grew the French Immersion program.

Although beginning as an experiment in the private, parent-run Toronto French School in 1962, the French immersion program was first offered in the public schools by the South Shore Protestant Regional School Board in St. Lambert, Montreal, in 1965. It developed in "response to a noticeable trend to make French the principal language of work and communication within the province" (Clift, 1984 p. 65). Bill 101, "which defined and ensured in law the linguistic rights of the French-speaking citizens of Quebec " (Genesee, 1986, p. 9) and the 1978 Quebec referendum, caused the Anglophone community of Quebec, as well as the rest of Canada to reevaluate the importance of the French language. A group of concerned Anglophone parents in Montreal, wanting to ensure their community's "survival and continued prosperity in favorable circumstances " (Clift, 1984, p. 65), initiated, in conjunction with professors W. E. Lambert and G. R. Tucker from McGill University, a program to develop

"full-fledged bilingualism in the Quebec social setting" (Lambert and Tucker, 1972, p. 2). These professors realized the hegemonic nature of the task which lay before them. Apple (1981), on analyzing hegemony, wrote that schools "...seem to act as powerful agents in the economic and cultural reproduction of class relations in a stratified society like our own" (p. 116). The creation of French Immersion schooling had the potential to alter the class relations of the Anglophone and Francophone populations within Quebec, and once the program expanded across the country, between English and French speaking Canadians. The creation and development of French Immersion was a "political act" (p. 110) criticized by many, yet supported by the Federal government. Of the criticism and attitudes of opponents of the new program, Lambert and Tucker write: "these views, we believe, are manifestations of a philosophy of fear that jeopardized the opportunities available in Canada to develop a new Canadian way of life by drawing on the best of the many traditions already in North America or still coming from abroad" (p. 6). But, due to the pressure and agitation by parents and to the support of the Federal Government, the immersion program was established and met with early success. The program was implemented with the notion that language skills could be developed incidentally to "educational content". In other words, the children were enticed into the mastery of the new language in a natural manner in their daily interaction with teachers who were

native speakers" (p. 7). This was a new and radical approach to language learning.

The program very quickly developed throughout the rest of Canada and is continuing to grow at a phenomenal rate. In 1977, 45,482 students were enrolled in the program across the country. In 1986, 202,066 students were enrolled (Statistics Canada, 1986). In Manitoba, statistics for the 1991-1992 school year indicate 19,713 students were enrolled in French Immersion up from 2,476 in 1978-79.

The motives of parents living outside the province of Quebec, for registering their children in immersion programs are quite different than those of the original St. Lambert group. Clift (1984) writes that, "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" (p. 65). From self-preservation to self-fulfillment and career opportunities - the goals of the immersion program changed very quickly depending on the educational community. As Swain and Lapkin (1982) wrote: "For members of the majority group, learning a second language is not likely to pose a threat to a sense of personal or cultural identity, nor to the maintenance of the first language" (p. 2). Olson and Burns (1983) refer to elitism in immersion education and write that: "middle class parents tend

to place more emphasis on education as an integral career strategy for their children's economic future both because they are generally disposed to change and because they see the direct economic consequences of education" (p. 7). Although founded in hegemonic principles, immersion became a form of elitist education in the public school system. A 1984 poll commissioned by the C.P.F. determined that "two out of three Canadian parents want their children to learn French to improve their career options and earning potential" (Nicolson, in Today's Parent, Feb/March 1989, p. 31). As Clift (1984) notes, it is interesting how the "idealism" of the proponents of bilingualism "coincides with their self-interest" (p. 66). He views immersion as another element in "the long drawn-out struggle for power" (p. 66) between major linguistic/cultural groups in Canada. With the federal civil service becoming the primary employer of Canada's new breed of bilinguals, he sees the purpose of enrolling one's child in immersion "to control the direction of social change to one's advantage" (p. 66). This is not necessarily a negative factor in that attitudes towards the French Canadian language and culture are changing among English Canadians. The broader, national community's needs have, for many people, begun to supersede the needs of the local community. There remains the dichotomy between national unity and regional identity, but enrollment in 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" (Clift, 1984, p. 69). Therefore as one studies French Immersion in the Canadian context, one must not lose sight of its socio-political nature, nor of the role parental choices and pressures play in the developing of immersion programs across the country. Canada may become a more unified country due to French Immersion, but before this is to happen there needs to be a greater awareness of the socio-political nature of the program.

2.6 The Goals of French Immersion

Genesee's (1987) historical review of bilingual education notes a number of models or typographies which have been used to describe bilingual education. Of interest is Mackey's 1972 classification of programs and the classification of Ferguson, Houghton and Wells in 1977.

Mackey considers "1) the home, 2) the curriculum and 3) the community and nation in which the school is located as well as in terms of 4) the status of the languages themselves" (p. 3). Houghton and Wells have identified several goals for a bilingual program which have direct implications upon Canadian immersion programs:

1. to assimilate individuals or groups into the mainstream of society;
2. to unify a multilingual society;

3. to gain an economic advantage for individuals or groups;
4. to reconcile different political or socially separate communities;
5. to embellish or strengthen the education of elites;
6. to give status to languages of unequal prominence in society (p. 4)

Due to the vastness of our country, the variety of French Immersion programs throughout the country, and the multiplicity of reasons parents place their children in these programs, French Immersion can be described by a number of goals. Although the French Immersion goals of a particular school division may be explicitly stated in educational and cultural terms, political, social and economic objectives often remain unstated. The unwritten socio-political goals of parents may be different than those of school divisions. It is therefore essential to consider reasons why parents place their children in French Immersion, especially if one is studying reasons why parents remove their children from the program.

Bienvenue's (1983) study of 531 parents in the city of Winnipeg had, as a purpose "to identify the social and social psychological factors which influence the placement of children in French Immersion programs" (p. 3). Through

surveying both parents of French Immersion and English Instruction programs, Bienvenue concluded that "For most parents, decisions are rooted in a set of values and practical concerns regarding elementary education" (p. 27). Neighborhood schools and bussing concerns affect many parents' decisions as to placement of their child in either program. Attitudes toward bilingualism were not a major determinant in deciding which program parents decided upon. Parents who chose French Immersion did "see the value of French as an asset for travelling, employment and culture" (p. 26). The majority of parents who chose French Immersion for their child "were willing to accept new educational approaches" (p. 27), while many who chose an English program "have less confidence in the quality of the Immersion program" (p. 26). Parents values must be probed more deeply, especially when there is the question of transferring a child out of French Immersion.

Swain and Lapkin (1982) indicate that "little attention has been paid to the social and psychological aspects of immersion" (p. 70). Research in these areas is essential to gain a global view of the program. Genesee (1979) writes that "the paucity of research in this domain also reflects the rather poorly defined social goals of most immersion programs" (p. 35). Tardif and Weber (1987) refer to the scant attention paid "to the social psychological aspects of French immersion schooling" (p. 69). Although immersion students look at their schooling

experience in a positive light (Cziko, in Swain & Lapkin, 1982 p. 72) and although the experience "seems to have reduced the social distance between self and French-Canadians," (Cziko, Lambert & Gutter, 1979, in Swain & Lapkin, p. 74) immersion students continue to "maintain a basic identity with an English ethnolinguistic reference group" (Swain and Lapkin, p. 75). This may be due to the fact that immersion students have little opportunity to relate to members of the target language. Geography certainly plays a role in limiting contact between French and English Canadians, especially between the Quebecois and Anglophone Manitobans. The role of the school is limited in establishing ties between the two cultures. Even if there is little direct interaction between French Immersion students and their Francophone peers, the French Immersion program itself may have made Anglophone students "realize fundamental similarities between the two ethnolinguistic groups that might otherwise be masked by more superficial language differences" (Genesee, 1980, p. 18). Genesee believes that this may lead to a greater understanding between the two cultures. The social goals of the French Immersion program need to be more fully explored to understand the effects of the program in the Canadian context.

Britain's Plowden Report on education states that "the best preparation for being a happy and useful man or woman is to live fully as a child" (In Nicolson, 1989, p. 34). Rivers (1972) writes that foreign language teachers must:

...forget utilitarian purposes and concentrate on developing people: interesting people who have read and experienced beyond the limitations of their own language and their own culture, flexible people able to react with equanimity to new ideas and ideals and to see them in perspective because of their wider experiences in another culture and in another age. (p. 121)

The French Immersion program was designed for the Anglophone child. The social, political, economic and cultural implications of the immersion philosophy tend to over-ride the significance of the needs of the child in the immersion program. As Rivers wrote, the developing of the individual is of key importance in any educational program. Teachers who hope to develop interesting, happy and useful adults must not lose sight of the child in the French Immersion program. Developing second language skills in the child must be considered in relation to developing the whole child. Nicolson writes that: "Learning a second language is just one facet of education. A child's personality, aptitude, and interests should all be taken into account when parents ask themselves, 'What's the best French programme for my child?'" (p. 34). Research needs to consider immersion from the child's perspective - not just from society's. Perhaps French Immersion is not the best or most suitable program for all children.

Many school divisions throughout the country have based their goals for French Immersion on the Ontario Ministry of Education's "Gillian Report" (1974). This report states the following about a successful immersion student:

1. S/he could take further education with French as the language of instruction at the college or university level...;
2. S/he could accept employment using French as the working language or live in a French community after a short orientation period;
3. S/he can participate easily in conversation;
4. S/he understands and appreciates the emotional attitudes and commonly held values of members of a French speaking community. (in Gibson, 1987, p. 33).

The report reinforces the belief that language acquisition occurs through content instruction and communication in the second language. It views the need for students to use their language beyond the classroom and "to interact with French speaking peers" (p. 33). Manitoba Education and Training goals are similar, reinforcing the notion of communicative competency. Instruction in the immersion program should allow "the speaker to communicate with ease in the second language on a personal as well as professional basis" (p. 33). Other goals are "the development of a positive attitude towards the French culture" (p. 33).

The Winnipeg School Division No. 1 philosophy states that language programs should also "assist students in cultural maintenance and provide for cross-cultural awareness and understanding" (p. 33).

Although all divisions' goals refer to the values and attitudes of the French community, this socio-political objective is open to great interpretation. Goals also make reference to employment opportunities for immersion students, reinforcing economic objectives. Second language acquisition is but one objective of the immersion program. Unfortunately many people feel that this alone leads to a social and political understanding of the French culture. This is not necessarily true. Tardif and Weber (1987) point out that:

Studies in immersion education have generally not paid attention to how language is "interactively embedded in the larger socio-political context," to the socio-cultural knowledge that the participants bring to and acquire in the classroom context, nor to the process of second language learning and how it relates to meaning and communication. (p. 71).

Bibeau (1984) questions "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?" (p. 45). Immersion teachers are continually

encouraging their students to speak French amongst each other, in unstructured learning situations and in the school hallways. Few children are intrinsically motivated to speak French in this "artificial environment" (p. 45). It is up to the teacher to extrinsically motivate the students. Besides with some of the school personnel, the student may never actually converse with a native French speaker. Children can learn about other cultures, but can they "appreciate the emotional attitudes and commonly held values" of French speakers, referred to in the Gillian Report, if they never have personal contact with a Francophone? Does meaningful communication occur when an Anglophone child is struggling to speak French to a teacher who understands English? The socio-political nature of language learning, must, as Tardif and Weber have noted, be further researched to understand the relationship of second language learning and communication.

French Immersion is a unique form of language instruction and must be evaluated on its own terms. More than any other method of second language instruction, French Immersion combines social, political, economic and linguistic objectives. These elements are inter-related in a variety of ways, in the minds of parents and educators. Yet, they must all be considered when studying the French Immersion phenomenon.

2.6.1 French Immersion - Linguistic Goals

The linguistic aspect of the program is what differentiates immersion from

all other second language programs. As has already been stated, immersion programs can be seen to be a natural progression in second language pedagogy. Rivers (1968), similar to Tardif and Weber, sees the interdependence of objectives in a second language program, yet she reinforces the belief that linguistics, or the "nature of language" is the cornerstone of the program:

Understanding the nature of language is basic to a methodology which develops effective communication skills; effective communication is impossible without some understanding of the culture of the speakers of the language, fluency in reading with direct comprehension derives from the ability to think in the language, which is established by prior training in the active communication skills of listening and speaking...(p. 11)

Stern (in Rivers, 1972) writes that: "Every language teacher must somehow have an answer to two questions: What is the nature of language? And, what is the nature of the learning process?" (p. vii). In an immersion setting the second language is said to be acquired naturally, in much the same way as children acquire their first language (Lambert and Tucker, 1972, p. 7; Swain and Lapkin, 1982, p. 5). The students are provided with "comprehensible input in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear" (Krashen, 1982, p. 7). The program is learner based: "the teacher accepts and

starts from the existing language, interests and skills of the children" (Swain and Lapkin, 1982, p. 5). Content is conveyed in a meaningful way, with the initial focus being on "developing French language comprehension skills rather than production skills" (p. 6). The program focusses on "language acquisition" as opposed to "language learning" (Krashen, 1982, p. 10). According to Krashen, "language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware that they are using language for communication" (p. 10). Language learning, on the other hand, refers "to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules" (p. 10). Krashen views only one function to language learning, that as a "monitor, or editor" (p. 15) which enables self-correction of the language. Early immersion programs tend to incorporate "little explicit instruction about second language" (Swain and Lapkin, 1982, p. 7) with explicit references to grammar and structure coming at later grades (p. 8). A silent period is posited which gives students time to develop listening and understanding before speaking (Krashen, 1982, p. 27). According to Krashen, learning is maximized when it takes place in a "low anxiety situation" (p. 32) where the learner's "affective filter" is "conducive to second language acquisition" (p. 30). It is important to remember that although Krashen is considered "the foremost American authority in language acquisition" (Stern in introduction to Krashen, 1984, p. 61), he has based his

hypothesis on his observations of the immersion program. The immersion program did not begin by implementing Krashen's theories. Krashen has identified major linguistic components of the immersion program, has hypothesized how these components promote second language acquisition and has given immersion researchers a starting point to begin looking at ways in which to improve the program. Comprehensible input, acquisition versus learning, the monitor and the affective filter, all key ingredients in Krashen's hypothesis have given researchers a language with which they can analyze the immersion program.

2.6.2 Issues in Immersion Education

As the immersion program developed throughout the country, a small group of researchers, primarily from McGill University and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education began to look at ways to evaluate the program. The major issues upon which the original evaluations were based looked at the following questions:

1. What happens to the development of students' first language (English) skills?
2. Do the immersion students learn more French than students in a core French program? How does their French compare to that of native speakers of French?

3. Are immersion students able to keep up with their English-educated peers in subject content taught to them in French?
4. Does participation in the immersion program hinder general intellectual or cognitive growth?
5. How do children with below average I.Q. fare in any immersion program?
6. How do children with learning disabilities fare in an immersion program?
7. What are the social and psychological consequences of participation in immersion programs. (Swain and Lapkin, 1982, pp. 16-23).

The majority of research has considered the first four questions. Swain and Lapkin summarized the results of several studies and found that although there may be a temporary lag in first language skills "the long-term trend is for immersion groups to perform as well as, or better than, comparison groups" (p. 41). Genesee (1978) found that "immersion students had acquired 'native-like' or near native-like proficiency in decoding French; they had acquired very good, although not native-like functional oral communication skills in French" (p. 23). In research conducted in the same year (1978) Harley and Swain (as cited in Swain and Lapkin, 1982) question Genesee's use of the term "very good oral

skills":

Immersion students are able to convey the essential message but may use an inappropriate form to do so... there may be little need for the immersion student to acquire a completely native-like command of French: "Once the children have reached a point in their language development where they can make themselves understood to their teacher and classmates (as they clearly have), there is no strong social incentive to develop further towards native speaker norms." (p. 50)

Immersion students can certainly convey their meaning in the second language, but, although demonstrating "communicative competence," their level of expression is certainly non-native like.

Research by Genesee (1976) reveals that acquisition of communication skills in a second language is not related to I.Q., although the acquisition of reading and writing skills is: "Below average students in total early immersion acquire functional competence in speaking and understanding French to the same extent as average and above average students in the program" (p. 23). Bruck (1979) also concludes that success in immersion programs is not any more dependent upon cognitive skills than is success in an English program.

Swain and Lapkin (1982) conclude that immersion students "are able to maintain standards of achievement consistent with those of their English-educated

peers" (p. 68). Learning in content subjects is mastered to the same extent it would be in a regular English instruction program.

The evaluation of academic outcomes has been the primary focus of immersion research. There has been a need to establish the validity of immersion programming. Parents are not willing to put their children into "new" programs if they feel the children will not learn as much as compared to regular programs. Research in immersion has been "product oriented - not process oriented" (Tardif & Weber, 1987, p. 69). There needs to be a shift in paradigms to look at some of the social, psychological and affective aspects of immersion education. Tardif and Weber write that: "Consistent with a research orientation that emphasizes outcomes and product, the predominant methodological approach used in immersion research has been in the empirical-analytical paradigm" (p. 69). They call for the need for qualitative research: "Research and perspectives are needed which permit the researcher to describe and understand the complexities of classroom life" (p. 70). They believe that it is necessary to "pinpoint the characteristics of immersion teaching and its particular context" (p. 68). The needs of immersion teachers and students must be recognized. They feel that studies must relate directly to "second language acquisition in the context of French Immersion schooling" (p. 71). General theories of second language pedagogy cannot always be applied to the immersion program. Empiricism has

a role in French Immersion research but it must be balanced by practical enquiry and critical praxis.

The inability of immersion students to produce native-like speech has become a major issue in immersion education. Empirical research has borne this out, but has not given teachers the means to improve the situation. In an address given at the University of Manitoba in 1986, Lambert recognizes the need to "amass, polish and refine the building blocks" of immersion education. He says the challenge to immersion educators is to improve the "active skills" of immersion children. He suggests that it may be impossible for the school to do this - there needs to be a greater reciprocity between French and English students. Lyster (1987), in the article "Speaking Immersion," criticizes Krashen's theories in relation to French Immersion. Students learn to speak 'immersion' - neither French nor English but a combination of languages difficult to understand by anyone outside of the immersion milieu. He views the influence of Krashen as having a negative effect on the improvement of immersion programs. Krashen favors language acquisition as the primary means to learn a second language, but his emphasis on message rather than form encourages the development of an immersion interlanguage which is "artificial" (p. 702), "faulty" (p. 703) and "riddled with anglicisms and persistent errors" (p. 703). As Lyster explains, the majority of French Immersion materials are designed for French, not immersion

students. "Comprehensible input" is therefore, often questionable. It is the teacher who must continually simplify material and language so that the message becomes comprehensible to the student. Lyster calls immersion a misnomer because "students are not *immersed* amongst native speakers in a French-speaking culture and environment; they are instead *integrated* in an anglophone context and exposed to language within an academic context" (p. 704). This is why Bibeau (1984) calls immersion "passé" (p. 44) and feels that immersion teaching methods "run counter to the most characteristic trends of modern pedagogy" (p. 46). He criticizes the lack of spontaneous expression in immersion classrooms where children are required "to express themselves in a language they do not know in order to meet the needs formulated by parents and educators" (p. 46). Even O.I.S.E.'s Lapkin has questioned whether early immersion is the best choice for most children: "I used to say so with more confidence than I do now" (in Nicolson, 1989, p. 34).

Parents and educators alike are impressed with the great strides young children make in learning French in the first few years of school. As children progress through elementary school and enter junior and senior high schools it seems as if their level of oral French does not consistently improve. Bibeau (1984) writes: "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" (p. 45). Genesee *et al.* (1985) suggest that "there may be an upper limit to second-language proficiency that is achievable in a school context" (abstract). Perhaps the children lack the motivation to continue learning French once they are able to communicate a message. Harley and Swain (1978) suppose that "Once the children have reached a point in their language development where they can make themselves understood to their teacher and classmates (as they clearly have), there is no strong social incentive to develop further towards native speaker norms" (p. 38). Swain (1976) repeats this supposition and suggests that "sustained contact with francophone peers may be essential, if the attainment of native-like speaking abilities is to be a program goal" (p. 22). Swain (1985) suggests that students do not achieve native-like speaker competence because "comprehensible output is limited" (p. 249). She wrote that "there appears to be little social or cognitive pressure to produce language that reflects more appropriately or precisely their [immersion students] intended meaning" (p. 249). Because students are able to make themselves understood in the second language, they have little incentive to improve the grammatical construction of their message.

Cummins (1976) refers to "a threshold level of linguistic competence which a bilingual child must attain in order to avoid cognitive deficits and allow the potentially beneficial aspects of becoming bilingual influence his creative

functionings" (p. 1). He refers to two threshold levels, one "which would be sufficient to avoid cognitive retardation" (p. 24), the second which would "lead to accelerated cognitive growth" (p. 24). These thresholds, according to Cummins, may vary according to the child.

From approximately ages two to seven, children, according to Piaget (1959) are at a pre-operational period of language development, in which "the development of a symbolic and preconceptual thought" (p. 123) occurs. The child is able to use language to represent concrete reality. Cummins refers to this concrete level when hypothesizing the first threshold level. But, "as formal thought is perfected" (p. 123) according to Piaget, between the ages of seven to twelve, a second threshold level must be attained in which "language is likely to increase in importance as an instrument with which the child can operate on his environment" (Cummins, pp. 24, 25). Perhaps some children are not able to adapt to the greater demands of language competency which are placed upon them during this period. Cummins concludes that the threshold hypothesis "may have a positive influence on the cognitive functioning of children who attain a high level of L2 [Second Language] skills but a negative influence on the development of children who fail to attain adequate L2 skills" (p. 37). Frustrations and feelings of incompetence among children having difficulty attaining the second threshold may constitute one reason why some children consider leaving the

French Immersion program.

2.7 The Suitability of French Immersion for All Children

Questions as to the suitability of French Immersion program for all children began to arise in the 1970's, although research primarily focussed on children who exhibited some form of learning difficulty. Wightman (1976) writes that "There has been limited consideration of immersion children with learning disabilities" (p. 25). Edwards (1976) also sees the need for more information about children who have difficulties in French Immersion, "such as children with language or perceptual difficulties" (p. 142). Genesee (1976), describing children who experience difficulties at school, writes: "It is often said of these types of children that they have enough difficulty with the curriculum in English without being burdened by the added task of learning a second language concurrently" (p. 495). Thus, these children often transfer out of the French Immersion program. He discusses the controversy in describing and evaluating intelligence. Using the "I.Q." as a measure, such as it is, he found that "below average students were able to benefit from French immersion as much as the average and above average students in terms of acquiring interpersonal communication skills" (p. 500). Even children who encounter serious difficulty with the French Immersion program do manage to learn the French language to some degree. Does this acquisition of communication skills come at the expense of other learning. Genesee also noted

the lack of information about students who have learning disabilities in French Immersion: "There are no studies that I am aware of which have looked at the performance of children with learning disabilities in an immersion program" (p. 504). He suggests that educators take "a survey of students who 'drop out' of French immersion because of learning or language problems to see if their particular problems are redressed in the English program" (p. 506).

Beginning in the mid 1970s, Margaret Bruck from McGill's Children's Learning Centre and clinical psychologist Ronald Trites from the Royal Ottawa Hospital, each studied children who encountered considerable difficulty in French Immersion programs. They criticized each other's research and conclusions as each held different beliefs on the suitability of French Immersion for all children.

Bruck and Swain (1976), describing children identified as having learning difficulties in French Immersion Kindergarten and who continued to have difficulty in French Immersion grade three, wrote: "We did not expect French immersion to solve those problems. What the results do show is that children are no worse off than they would have been in an English class" (p. 70). These conclusions must be questioned as it is impossible to determine if children would be "worse off" if they switched programs.

Bruck (1978) began research to determine "the best academic course for children with learning problems who are in French Immersion programs. The

primary question was whether these children should be left in the French Immersion program or be transferred to an all English program" (p. 885).

Children with language learning disabilities have been the focus of Bruck's research. These children, Bruck describes, as having normal intelligence, but acquire "language with painful slowness" (p. 885). She concludes that the difficulties language disabled children encounter "are no more serious than those of the children with similar difficulties in English classes" (p. 886).

Bruck (1978a, 1978b) did not believe that these children needed to transfer out of the French Immersion program, but that more help be provided for them. The educational community must be committed to making French Immersion a viable learning experience for all children. She writes that "unless we decide that French immersion programs should be made available only to average English Canadian children with no cultural, emotional, language or learning problems, then we must begin to change the program so that it is more suitable for a wider range of children" (p. 887).

Bruck (1978-79) completed a case study of nine children with academic difficulties who transferred out of the French Immersion program. She found that "there appear to be a few unqualified successes" (p. 92) and that the problems experienced in French Immersion continued in English instruction. Bruck's interpretation of "unqualified successes" is open to interpretation. She described

three cases in detail, which she indicated are indicative of all nine cases. In two of the three cases she notes that both parents and teachers view the transfer as beneficial to the children, although the children continued to encounter academic problems (pp. 90-91). She notes that one child "was doing extremely well" (p. 92) after switching but yet she gives no further information about this child. Bruck admitted that "possible effects in terms of emotional and cognitive consequences were not tapped by our measures" (p. 90). How can an evaluation as to the effectiveness of switching a child out of French Immersion be determined when emotional and cognitive consequences of the transfer are not considered? Bruck also did not indicate ever having directly spoken with the child, and how the child felt about the transfer. Achievement in French and other academic areas cannot be the sole determinant as to the effectiveness of transferring a child out of French Immersion or retaining them in the program.

Although Bruck has written that children who encounter difficulties in French Immersion should remain in the program provided that they receive some extra support, Trites (1978 a) has suggested the opposite. He believed that children who encounter difficulties in French Immersion should leave the program. His studies at the Neuropsychology Laboratory of the Royal Ottawa Hospital

have indicted rather clearly that there are certain children who have a

specific maturational lag affecting their ability to progress satisfactorily in a primary French Immersion program... These children, when taken out of the French Immersion program in which they are failing, and enrolled in a regular English language program excellerate in the development of their language arts skills (p. 888).

When making this claim, Trites admitted that it was difficult to identify children in French Immersion at an early stage who were having difficulty. Do all children who are having difficulty have "a maturational lag"?

Trites and Price (1978-79) completed two studies of children who transferred out of French Immersion. In the first study Trites and Price selected 32 children who were experiencing difficulties in French Immersion or who had already dropped out of the program. They compared these children to seven comparison groups of 32 children. In their second study, Trites and Price compared 16 students who dropped out of primary French Immersion to 16 students who remained in the program. In both studies they found that:

children who encounter difficulty in primary French Immersion programs have a specific learning disability characterized by a unique pattern of deficits on neuropsychological tests which is suggestive of a maturational lag in the temporal regions of the brain (p. 80).

Trites and Price have suggested that such children should not enter a French

Immersion program before the age of nine or ten (p. 80).

Cummins (1984) finds Bruck's research more valid than that of Trites:

Bruck's position is considerably more convincing than Trites: a)

because her empirical studies are more methodologically well-

conceived, whereas there are serious design problems with Trites'

studies; b) because the findings that emerge from Bruck's studies are

consistent with a large body of theory and research relating to

bilingualism and second language acquisition whereas Trites' findings

are not (p. 165).

Trites' studies are criticized because they do not support research, yet his references are based on much the same material as that of Bruck. His methodology is open to criticism, yet so are many of Bruck's conclusions. Upon reviewing both Trites' and Bruck's research, Cummins concludes that "when children encounter difficulties in an immersion program, each case must be judged on its own merits" (p. 176). He suggests that children who are unhappy in French Immersion and who want to leave the program should do so. Cummins, like Bruck, sees an essential need for the French Immersion program to be able to accept children from all academic levels. Trites and Price (1978-79), Bruck (1978-79) and Cummins all do agree that it is important to look at each child as an individual case before making a decision as to which program would be more

beneficial for a child encountering difficulties in French Immersion.

Jones (1984) underlines the need for the Bruck/Trites disagreement to be resolved, especially for teachers who must help parents to make decisions about the best program for the child: "There is a real need for resolution of the Trites/Bruck disagreement on the suitability of immersion for learning disabled students...At the same time there is need for further information on the success of low ability learners in immersion" (p. 264).

Trites and Bruck have continued their disagreement. Trites (1986) has continued to develop "screening assessments so that children at risk because of learning difficulties can be identified prior to program entry" (p. 1). He has continued to believe that "It is important to recognize that children who drop out of French Immersion because of learning difficulties do well when they are enrolled in an English language program" (p. 4).

Bruck (1985) has also continued the study of children who transfer out of French Immersion, finding that these students have poorer attitudes, behavior and motivation than students who remain in the program.

Wiss (1987) has continued where Bruck and Trites have left off. She writes of a lack of theory on the evaluation of students who experience difficulties in French Immersion:

When a valid and reliable theoretical framework exists for the

differential diagnosis of learning problems in French Immersion children, the mechanisms for setting remedial instructional objectives will be easier to implement and more children will achieve their potential in the immersion experience. (p. 32)

Wiss (1989) notes that "attrition rates in immersion programs suggest that French immersion is not for everyone" (p. 517) and that parents and educators are concerned about the "negative emotional impact on children who might perceive a switch out of French immersion as a failure on their part" (p. 517). She realizes the difficulty of separating children who have difficulty with the French Immersion program from those who have particular learning disabilities. She would like to see "valid and reliable methods to identify children who might not benefit from an early immersion program so that such experiences of failure can be avoided" (p. 517). Her desire has been "to develop methods and materials that can differentially predict success or failure in immersion as compared with the regular English program" (p. 517). These methods and materials could be used as a screening process which could then be used to exclude certain children from enrolling in French Immersion. She has suggested that the early French Immersion program may not be appropriate for "developmentally immature children" (p. 528), while the late immersion program may not be ideal for "children with specific learning disabilities" (p. 528). She believed that children

should not be counselled out of French Immersion but that educators and researchers should "provide reliable and valid methods and materials so that all children who desire biliteracy skills have access to them" (p. 528). At the same time, she believes children who would not benefit from an immersion experience should "be identified early and given alternatives for bilingual education" (p. 528).

Bruck and Wiss have used case studies to research children who have difficulty with the French Immersion program. Adiv (1979), Lewis and Shapson (1989) and Hayden (1990) have used larger populations to study students who have left the French Immersion program.

Adiv's (1979) study of the Protestant School Board of Montreal found that "a number of students are dropping out of the post-immersion program and switching over to French as a second language (FSL) classes at various grade levels" (p. 2). She determined that 20% of students left the immersion and post-immersion programs, and that 48% of those students left the program at the beginning of grade nine (p. 3). Students left the program due to low marks and due to the demand the courses had made (p. 10). It must be remembered that in 1979 the French Immersion program was not as well developed at the high school level as it is today.

Lewis and Shapson's (1989) observations on students who leave the French

Immersion program at the secondary level are interesting because their study is recent and because their data closely resembles that of Adiv. Students from nine schools from four school districts in British Columbia were studied. A total of 334 out of 996 students in French Immersion, over 35%, "left the immersion program sometime during or after grade nine" (p. 542). Eighty-four transferring students from the secondary immersion program were identified. The main reasons given by these students for transferring "were dissatisfaction with the quality of instruction, a feeling that better grades would be obtained in English and a dissatisfaction with the content of courses in French" (p. 542). One student noted: "The main reasons I dropped the course was because of the workload which was affecting my other marks, which I considered more important to my future job plans" (p. 542).

Halsall (1991) cites four other additional sources of information which consider secondary level attrition from French Immersion: Morrison, Pawley and Bonyun's 1979 study of immersion programs in the Ottawa/Carleton area; Halsall's 1989 study of the Carleton Board of Education; the Calgary Board of Education's 1991 study; and Hart and Lapkin's 1991 study of the Nipissing Board of Education. Because all school boards do not collect data in similar ways, and because attrition from French Immersion programs is difficult to define, Halsall cites the difficulty of determining the number of students who transfer from the

program (p. 8). She found percentages of transferring students ranging from 20 to 82 percent.

A number of reasons for students transferring from the French Immersion program at the secondary level were, nevertheless, determined. Morrison, Pawley, and Bonyun (1979) and Lewis (1986) found that students were not happy with the content or the selection of available French courses. Students chose alternate programs to French Immersion, such as the International Baccalaureate Program. Most secondary studies found that students felt they could improve their achievement if they were enrolled in English instruction courses. The studies cited that students were discouraged with the lack of opportunity to speak French outside of school, they were dissatisfied with the immersion program; and were dissatisfied with the quality of the instruction and the teachers. The inaccessibility of French Immersion schools was also cited as a contributor to attrition.

Hayden (1988) studied children in Alberta who transferred out of elementary French Immersion. Thirty-four out of 2310 children had transferred out of French Immersion during the course of one year. Twenty-eight children participated in her study. Parents, teachers, and children were interviewed to determine individual perceptions as to why the children transferred. The main reason (90%) why parents transferred their children "focussed on the children's

academic difficulty in school with particular emphasis on their lack of success with language arts" (p. 226). Other main reasons cited by parents for transferring their child were the inability to help at home (80%), frustration and emotional stress of the child (70%), teacher recommendation (approximately 68%), and test results (60%) (pp. 226/227).

Teachers, like parents, viewed the child's difficulty with French language arts as the main reason why children transferred (90%). Approximately 70% of teachers saw parent recommendation, test results and the shift to more abstract work as other main reasons for a child's transferring from the program (p. 228).

Children also believed that their difficulty reading and writing was the main reason for their transfer (72%). Approximately 50% of children saw poor test results, and parents who wanted to transfer them from the program as other reasons for their transfer (p. 231). At the upper elementary level, Hayden notes, poor test results became a major reason as to why children transferred.

Hayden concludes, that although no single factor leads to transfer, "it would appear that the child who is experiencing difficulty with language arts is primarily the one who is switched out" (p. 233). She emphasizes that the decision to place a child in French Immersion not be made lightly by parents. Evidence shows not all children will do well in French Immersion, just as not all do well in English programs. The child's success in the French Immersion program

though, "is measured by the yardstick of other children's successes and of curriculum demands, rather than by the child's own developmental growth" (p. 233). Hayden reinforces River's belief that it is the development of the individual that is of key importance in any educational program.

Lapkin, Swain and Shapson (1990) call for the need for more information about students transferring out of French Immersion:

The research on access of students with special characteristics (learning disabled, gifted, etc.) to immersion has been scant, and although there have been recent attempts to study students transferring out of immersion....this is an area where much remains to be learned. (p. 651)

This study attempts to provide more of this information.

2.8 Motivation And Attitude

Gardner and Lambert (1972) wrote that motivation and attitude are important factors in the acquisition of a second language. Genesee (1976 a) writes that Gardner and Lambert's study suggests that "students other than the intellectually gifted ones can master a second language by virtue of their attitude and motivations and, thus, should be able to cope in a French immersion situation" (p. 498).

Gardner and Smythe (1975) developed a series of tests used to study the motivation and attitude of students toward learning a second language. They see

these attitude and motivation tests as "a major step forward in the prediction of individual differences in second language achievement" (p. 12) and that "such tests could be used for prognosis and diagnosis" (p. 12). They found that there were "significant attitudinal differences between foreign language course drop outs and students who continued their foreign language instruction, with the stay-ins revealing more positive attitudes for language than did the drop outs." (pp. 69-70) Their tests can be used to indicate which students are motivated and have a good attitude towards learning French. Conversely, their tests can be used to determine if students have negative attitudes towards learning French. If attitude is a factor in academic achievement then positive or negative attitudes are likely to effect achievement.

Gardner and Smythe developed their study to determine the attitude of students in Grades seven, ten and eleven Basic French programs. They found that students who remained in the French program were internally motivated, and that "the best single predictor of subsequent drop out behavior at all three grade levels...was the Attitude Toward Learning French Scale" (p. 70). Motivation, they concluded, is an important factor in successfully learning a second language.

Randhawa and Korpan (1973) found similar results with their test "Prediction of Achievement in French." They concluded that researching affective variables "such as attitude, motivation and orientation are very important

for the effective learning of French as a second language" (p. 32).

Genesee (1987) writes:

it is difficult to know whether the negative attitude and low levels of motivation for second language learning reported for children who transfer out of immersion and for their parents are indeed precursors of transfer or whether, in fact, they are a consequence of transfer. (p. 83)

Bruck (1985a, 1985b) compared two groups of students who encountered difficulty with French Immersion. One group transferred out of the program, the other remained in French Immersion. She concluded that students who remained in the program, although continuing to encounter difficulties, had a more positive attitude and were more highly motivated to learn French than those students who transferred out of the program.

Motivation and attitude may be important factors in determining whether or not a child remains in the French Immersion program.

2.9 Case Studies

2.9.1 A Rationale for Case Studies

Although used extensively in the fields of law, medicine, and the social sciences (Spirer, 1980; Pura, 1978), the case study is being used more frequently to study educational problems. Not only can reasons be identified to a research question, but more in-depth insightful explanations can be articulated and

discussed. Because the case study attempts to look at a problem holistically, so that all of its complexities are revealed, Stake, in Spierer (1980), notes that "a case study that portrays an educational problem in all its personal and social complexities is a precious discovery" (p. 13). Due to the complexity of most decision making processes involving educational practices, it is difficult to have a clear view of the problem. The naturalistic paradigm for enquiry lends itself to the study of complex situations more readily than does the more traditional quantitative approach. Bowles (1984) writes that : "The humanities are realizing that their subject matter is so thick with personal and interpersonal experience, with moral and evaluative judgements, that the "impersonal" and "value-free" methodological strategies of the Sciences are at best irrelevant, and at worst, a distortion of the subject matter itself" (p. 186). To determine why children transfer out of French Immersion programs is a complex question, one which lends itself to the case study means of inquiry.

2.9.2 Definition

Scholars agree that there are a variety of definitions of the case study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Spierer, 1980). Anderson, Ball, Murphy and Associates', (in Spierer, 1980) definition of the case study is the most relevant to this particular study. The authors define the case study as "an intensive detailed analysis and description of a single organism; institution, or phenomenon in the context of its

environment" (p. 14). In this case study, the phenomenon in question is the transferring of children out of the French Immersion program. The phenomenon is studied through detailed interviews in the context of the environment - the French Immersion program, or, more specifically grade six French Immersion.

Other definitions of the case study also relate to the particular problem of this study. English and English (1958) define a case study as a "collection of all evidence-social, psychological, biographical, environmental, vocational - that promise to help explain a single individual or a single social unit" (p. 75). The information collected in this study explains reasons why an individual child is transferred from the French Immersion program.

Long (1986) refers to Yin's definition of a case study as "an empirical inquiry that 1) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when 2) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which 3) multiple sources of evidence are used" (p. 226). The advantage of the case study approach is that the problem can be studied in its natural environment. It also enables some distinction to be made between the actual phenomenon and its context. Are children transferring out of French Immersion because of the program itself, or because of other individual reasons?

2.9.3 The Process

A number of authors do not define a case study in their own words but

refer to the process (Spirer, 1980; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Franklin and Osborne (1971) write that "case study is not a specific technique. Rather it is a method of organizing data for the purpose of analyzing the life of a social unit" (p. 184). Lincoln and Guba (1985) write that the "content of a case study report depends on its purpose" (p. 361). Briefly summarized, they write that a case study should include an explanation of the problem, a thorough description of the context, the transactions and processes observed relevant to the problem, a discussion of the important element and of the outcomes (p. 362). They emphasize the importance of the description of the context.

As Yin referred to the difficulty of separating the phenomenon (the transfer of the child), from its context (the French Immersion program), the French Immersion program must be thoroughly described. The review of the literature establishes a view of French Immersion which facilitates an understanding of the particular phenomenon in question. To fully understand the complexity of the process, the complexity of the French Immersion program must be understood.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue for the need for a paradigm "concerned with understanding" (p. 30), which allows the holistic study of the "multiple realities" (p. 37). The inquiry, they indicate, may raise more questions than it answers, but its goal is to achieve greater understanding. A paradigm which enables an exploration of the "multiple realities" of the French Immersion

program also permits a greater understanding of the problem - why children transfer out of the French Immersion program. Understanding the problem in terms of its context is essential. This paradigm has been elaborated upon in the discussion of the history and development of the French Immersion program in Canada.

Explaining the procedures for a case study, McAshen, (1963) states that:

A case study develops with a particular or entire life cycle process of an individual or group unit. A case study may result from:

- 1) a lack of information about a matter,
- 2) conflicting information, or
- 3) misinformation about some individual or group, or it may occur just as an attempt to gain new insight into factors that result in a given behavior or complex situation. (p. 21)

In order to "capture the totality of the phenomenon", Spierer (1980) discusses the need to "portray the interplay of factors that are brought to bear on the program" and "to present the views of the different groups involved" (p. 13).

The case study is suited to the exploration of a complex situation. Its purpose, whether being used "to define concepts, generate hypotheses", or "ground new theory" (Spierer, 1980, p. 15) is ultimately "to improve the reader's level of understanding" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 359).

Spirer refers to the three main techniques used for collecting information for a case study: observing, interviewing, and gathering data unobtrusively (p. 21). Observing, she states, "is based upon three activities: looking, listening, and asking" (p. 21). Skilled observation allows for further questioning. Interviewing can be either formally planned in advance, or unstructured and informal depending upon the context and relationship between the respondent and the interviewer. Records and statistical information can be collected without direct contact with the individual studied.

In summary, the case study can be used to describe a particular phenomenon in relation to its environment. Its purpose is to provide a greater understanding of a phenomenon, and in doing so, often generates more questions than it answers. It has a number of advantages. It enables a problem to be studied in its own environment. It accepts the possibility of a multitude of realities. Finally, it accepts the notion that a phenomenon is often directly linked to its context and that it is often difficult to separate the two.

Three basic techniques, either used individually or in combination, are used for collecting information for a case study, with interviewing being of prime importance. The case study is an appropriate means to study an educational phenomenon.

2.9.4 Case Studies and Second Language Acquisition

There is very little literature available on case studies and second language learning (Long, 1986, p. 225), and even less available about issues in French Immersion education. Research in second language learning has tended to be empirical and quantitative (James, 1983, p. 3; Long, p. 225). Researchers argue for the need for more qualitative, naturalistic enquiry in second language education. James, reflecting upon research in foreign language teaching writes: "There is a need for research data from the "front-line" to help the profession as a whole determine the kinds of problems and questions to be tackled" (p. 5). Research must focus on the learner and how learning can be improved. Problems and questions must focus on the students and how they use their language skills, for, as James writes: "What our students ultimately do with the language skills they learn from us or acquire on their own will determine the appropriateness of the questions we ask and the answers our research generates" (p. 6). Lett, in James (1983) sees the case study as "a first step in gathering information about the nature of the variables under study" (p. 18). Similarly, Long (1986) writes that case studies in second language learning "can help us identify potential variables, contexts and problems for future experimental research, as well as investigating the second language/teaching process in natural classroom environments" (p. 228).

Szymanski, in James (1983) refers to the difficulty of a rigorous "scientific

analysis of curriculum" (p. 67) in second language education due to the complexity of the variables. She refers to a number of unresolved questions in French Immersion education, including:

...a continued evaluation of how immersion affects the child's overall cognitive and affective development, and analysis of learning strategies related to success or failure in an immersion experience, an effective evaluation of approaches and techniques which determine successful immersion programs, and finally a complete investigation of second-language acquisition as it relates to participation in an immersion environment. (p. 79)

Case studies in second language acquisition have tended to focus on students with learning difficulties. Ganschow and Sparks (1986) used the case study to examine four college students who were experiencing severe difficulties with their foreign language studies. They used interviews, observations and test results to investigate the reasons why students were encountering difficulties. Although the small samples limited generalizability, they concluded that "difficulties with listening comprehension may affect foreign-language learning" (p. 317). They suggest certain remedial techniques in reading and instructional adaptations might be helpful for the student encountering severe difficulties learning another language.

In Canada, Bruck (1979) and Wiss, (1987) (1989) have used the case study to investigate children in French Immersion programs who were encountering severe difficulties with the program.

Bruck's (1979) case study looked at nine children who left French Immersion. Her study attempted to determine if the students benefitted from the transfer. She considered the effects of switching programs on academic achievement, emotional and social well-being, the optimal time to switch a child, a short and long-term effects of switching (p. 88). She concluded that "the consequences of switching are very difficult and complex to evaluate" (p. 92) but that "there appear to be few unqualified successes" (p. 92). Each case, she emphasized, must be studied on its own. In order for parents and educators to make better decisions for their children, she sees the need for more study on parental attitudes to French Immersion and the remediation received by the students in French Immersion (p. 93). She also concluded that, although there were more positive changes in the students' attitude and achievement in the first few months after a transfer, these did not last for a long time.

Wiss (1987, 1989) has used the case study of individual children to determine if the early French Immersion program is suitable for all children. The case study is useful, "both practically and theoretically" "until empirical data are available" (1989, p. 519) to determine which children will have difficulty with the

French Immersion program. She has desired a means which can "predict success or failure in immersion compared with the regular English program (1989, p. 517). Wiss used a clinical framework of psychological, intelligence and reading tests to investigate children's learning difficulties.

Wiss concluded that: "the challenge to educators and researchers is to provide reliable and valid methods and materials so that all children who desire biliteracy skills have access to them" (1989, p. 528). Because there are no standardized tests with which French Immersion students can be evaluated, she has called for "the need for a theoretical framework specific to the assessment of French Immersion students " (1987, p. 312). Although she cites that her conclusions cannot be generalized to the entire French Immersion population (1987, p. 312), she sees the need for greater remedial programs to be developed in French Immersion so that "all children who desire biliteracy skills have access to them" (1989, p. 528).

Other case studies in French Immersion education have also been completed by Swain and Lapkin (1982) and Genesee (1987). Both studies, however, use the French Immersion program as the "case" to be studied; the individual child is not their focus.

Genesee's "Three Case Studies in Immersion" (p. 52) examine three versions of the immersion program: double immersion, in which two non-native

languages in addition to the first language are used as a medium of instruction; French-medium schooling, in which the use of English in the curriculum is limited and postponed so that there is a greater emphasis on the use of French; and activity-centered immersion, in which "a communicatively rich classroom environment" (p. 52) encourages second language learning. All of the immersion programs studied were in the province of Quebec. Genesee concludes, upon studying each variation of the French Immersion program, that the delaying of the introduction of English Language Arts has "no apparent detrimental effects on the students' English language development" (p. 75). He also emphasizes the importance for immersion programs to "include a substantial opportunity for peer interaction in the target language" (p. 77). Unless children in the French Immersion program are able to interact with native French speaking peers, Genesee states that "there are real limits to the level of second language proficiency that can be achieved in school settings" (p. 77). Genesee's conclusions and suggestions are based on his observations of programs in the province of Quebec. These settings are not typical of French Immersion programs offered in Manitoba.

The scope of Swain and Lapkin's (1982) case study is even greater than that of Genesee's. Their book, Evaluating Bilingual Education: A Canadian Case Study, provides "a non-technical synthesis of a decade of research concerning

immersion education" (p. 2). Although referred to as a Canadian case study, the immersion programs studied by the authors were all found in Ontario, notably the Carleton, Ottawa, Toronto, Elgin and Peel Boards of Education. Three versions of the French Immersion program were studied, early total French Immersion, early partial French Immersion, and late partial French Immersion. The authors indicate that these are the three versions which "are representative of immersion programs found across Ontario and other Canadian provinces" (p. 3). They did not undertake any research in Manitoba, and therefore their synthesis and evaluation should be based upon the population of their study.

The authors conclude that "all three immersion programs have proven successful in promoting advanced French language skills, and that immersion constitutes a viable alternative form of education " (p. 84). They acknowledge the "small number of studies" (p.81) which have assessed the French Immersion program, and that there are still a number of unanswered questions about French Immersion. They see a need for the identification and description of "effective teaching strategies in F.I. classrooms" (p. 81). They call for continued research of the French Immersion program.

2.10 Conclusion

In summary, case studies in second language learning have focussed most often on students with learning difficulties (Ganshow and 1986: Bruck, 1979;

Wiss, 1987, 1989). Research has aimed at assessing student difficulties, and then helping them overcome these difficulties.

The immersion program itself has been used as the case for a case study by Swain and Lapkin (1982) and Genesee (1987). Their research, although contributing to our knowledge of French Immersion education, has been based on programs in Ontario and Quebec. All researchers acknowledge the success of the French Immersion program, but also that there are still many unanswered questions.

However, children continue to transfer from the French Immersion program. Although Hayden (1988) has studied children leaving the French Immersion program in elementary school, and Halsall (1991) has studied children leaving at the secondary level, no study has looked at the children transferring upon completion of grade six. Hayden and Halsall, among others, have determined a number of reasons why children leave the French Immersion program, with the main reason identified as being difficulty with the program/low marks, especially in Language Arts. Most students felt they could improve their achievement if enrolled in an English program. Halsall also found that students also chose alternate programs to the French Immersion program, and many were unhappy with the selection of courses in French at the high school level. Hayden also determined that parents were concerned that they were unable to help their

children at home, children were frustrated with the program, and teachers recommended the child transfer.

In summary, based on a review of the literature and personal experience there are a number of possible reasons as to why children transfer from the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six:

- 1) Children may transfer due to difficulties with the program, especially Language Arts.
- 2) Children may transfer because they are frustrated with the program, or are not motivated to learn a second language.
- 3) As work becomes more difficult, parents are not able to help their children with homework.
- 4) Both parents and children may feel that achievement would improve if transferred to an English program.
- 5) Children leaving grade six, in many cases, must change schools. This can be seen as a good time to leave French Immersion to choose an alternate program. In some cases the French Immersion junior high school is not conveniently located to the children's home. The actual change of schools then, may be a factor as to why children leave the program.

- 6) Parents and children may be dissatisfied with the French Immersion program.
- 7) Other reasons, depending on the individual case.

This study, then, will attempt to determine the reasons why children transfer from the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Children are transferring from French Immersion programs at all grade levels. In order to investigate reasons why children in grade six French Immersion transfer from the program, and to determine how the decision is made, the case study approach has been used. Defined by Anderson *et al.* (in Spierer, 1980), "A Case Study is an intensive, detailed analysis and description of a single organism; institution or phenomenon in the context of its environment" (p. 14). In this particular case study, the phenomenon in question is the transferring from French Immersion by grade six students. The environment is the French Immersion program as identified in one school division in the city of Winnipeg.

In order to produce the descriptive data which typifies qualitative research, (Bogdan and Taylor 1975, p. 4), the interview technique has been used. The interviews consist of a combination of unstructured, or elite and structured questioning. Spierer (1980) identifies these two types of questions as being well suited to case study research. She refers to Kester's definition of the intent of the unstructured, or elite interview as being "to elicit from the person being interviewed a highly personal and detailed account of particular events or sentiments related to the program" (p. 47). This type of interviewing contains no

prestructured questions. A structured interview, she writes, "contains a set of pre-determined questions, like a questionnaire, that are verbally asked of a person" (p. 47). Although relying more on the structured interview, this study uses a combination of both techniques to elicit the greatest amount of information possible.

This chapter consists of three sections: describing respectively the participants - the children and parents, teachers and administrators; the instruments used to collect the data - parent and child questionnaires and interviews, teacher and administrator interviews; and the procedure and analysis of the questionnaires and interviews.

3.2 The Participants

3.2.1 The Schools

Within the selected school division, there are three schools which house grade six French Immersion classes. Two schools, housing a total of three grade six classes, are dual-track schools, containing both French Immersion and English instruction classes, from Kindergarten to Grade 6.

The remaining school, housing two grade six classes, is a French Immersion or milieu school. This school consists of classes from Kindergarten to grade six, and has no English instruction classes. There are two dual track junior high schools in the division. Children attend the junior high located in their catchment area.

One junior high is quite large, consisting of three classes of grade seven French Immersion; the other is relatively small with only one grade seven French Immersion class.

3.2.2 Parents and Children

Selection:

Cases of children transferring out of French Immersion upon completion of grade six were selected in one of two ways.

- A. The researcher identified himself and the study to the grade six French Immersion teachers in May/June (Vide Appendix A). The letter asks the teacher to identify any students whose parents indicated their child would definitely not be continuing in the French Immersion program the following year. The letter also requests the teacher's consent to be interviewed. Once the names of the transferring children were collected, parents of these children were contacted by a letter from the researcher (Vide Appendix B). The letter introduces the researcher, informs parents of the purpose of the study, briefly outlines the study, describes the ethical treatment of subjects, and requests parental permission, to participate in the study. It also requests their permission for their child's participation in the study. Upon receipt of parental permission, a similar letter was sent to the child requesting their

signature as permission to participate in the study. (Vide Appendix C).

B. This selection procedure only determined the number of children who had decided in advance that they would be transferring.

A follow-up was necessary to insure that all students who transferred were contacted. Each Junior High School was surveyed in September to ascertain that no other students had transferred out of the French Immersion program.

3.2.3 Teachers and School Administrators

Once the children who were willing to participate were identified, an interview was requested with the classroom teacher and school administrator (Vide Appendix D). The purpose of these interviews was to investigate their perceptions of the decision to transfer the child from grade six French Immersion. Although the teacher and administrator may not have been directly involved in the decision-making process, greater face validity and reliability are gained by cross-referencing their replies to those of parents and children.

The treatment of all participants was in accordance with the ethical standards of the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. Permission for the study was also granted by the Superintendent of the school division (Vide Appendix E) and the principals of the participating schools (Vide Appendix F).

3.3 The Instruments

The following instruments were used to collect information about each child:

1. a questionnaire completed by each participating student (Vide Appendix G),
2. an interview completed with each student (Vide Appendix H)
3. a questionnaire completed by each participating parent (Vide Appendix I),
4. an interview completed with each parent (Vide Appendix J)
5. an interview with the classroom teacher (Vide Appendix K)
6. an interview with the school administrator (Vide Appendix L)

The interviews with the parents and children, although prepared in advance, were open-ended and subject to change. The questions asked to them were based, in part, on opinions expressed in the questionnaire, and not all of the prepared questions applied to each case. The prepared questions of the interviews attempt to cover as many considerations as possible. The questions at each interview were asked to gain the most valid information from each participant.

3.3.1 Development of the Questionnaires

A review of the literature identified a number of reasons why children transfer out of French Immersion (Bruck 1985; Genesee 1983; Hayden, 1988;

Swain, Lapkin & Shapson, 1990). Gardner and Smythe (1975) determined that motivation and attitude played a significant role in a student's decision to remain in a foreign language course. To determine reasons why children in grade six French Immersion leave the program, questionnaires and interviews have been developed based on the criteria identified in the literature and on personal experience.

Bruck (1985) and Wiss (1988, 1989) determined that learning difficulties were a major reason for children to withdraw from the French Immersion program. This is reinforced through Hayden's (1988) research which indicates that the main reason children in elementary school withdraw from French Immersion is due to a difficulty with Language Arts. Related to this issue, poor test results, a lack of special help at school, a shift to abstract work, and an inability of parents to help their children with schoolwork were also identified by Hayden as reasons for a child's withdrawal from the program.

Bruck (1985) and Genesee (1983) determined that students with discipline problems were often those who transferred out of the French Immersion program. Although the type of discipline problem is not defined, Hayden determined several reasons that children transferred from French Immersion which could be related to discipline problems. Frustration and emotional stress, as well as immaturity of the child, were cited as reasons for transfer.

Hayden also has determined other reasons as to why children leave the program. Teacher and parent recommendations, a lack of aptitude for learning French, teacher qualifications, the child's dislike of the teacher, and no French background were cited as other possible reasons.

Gardner and Smythe (1975) determined that drop-outs from foreign language courses often had little motivation and a poor attitude towards learning a second language compared to those who remained in the program. Hayden does not explore these areas although she does note that some parents withdraw their children because they (the parents) have a negative attitude towards French Immersion.

Adiv (1979) determined that a number of students transfer out of the French Immersion program before entering a new school (that is junior or senior high school).

However, review of the literature does not reveal other possible reasons why children transfer from the French Immersion program. The personal experience of the researcher has led him to consider other possibilities as to why grade six students transfer from the program. Some parents feel that their child has received an adequate level of bilingualism. Others choose to enroll their child in a private school where no immersion program is offered. Peer pressure affects the decision of some children to transfer from the program. Parents begin to plan

their child's university education, and this consideration enter into decisions for children who transfer. The difficulty of bussing and lack of a neighborhood school influence some decisions. Finally, the unstable political atmosphere of our country due to the failure of constitutional negotiations (such as the Meech Lake Accord) and the possible separation of Canada's Francophone province, Québec, may cause some parents to reconsider the necessity of a bilingual education for their child.

Table I indicates the reasons why children leave the French Immersion program, and the corresponding literature which discusses the reasons.

Table 1

Reasons Why Children Transfer out of French Immersion

Reasons for transfer	Research
1. Learning difficulty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · difficulty with L.A. · poor test results · lack of special help at school · shift to abstract work · inability of parents to help 	Bruck (1985,) Wiss (1988, 1989), Hayden (1988) Hayden Hayden Hayden Hayden
2. Discipline problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · frustration/emotional stress · immaturity 	Bruck, Genesee (1983) Hayden Hayden
3. No aptitude for learning French	Hayden
4. Teacher recommendation	Hayden
5. Parent recommendation	Hayden
6. Dislike of teacher	Hayden
7. Teacher qualifications	Hayden
8. No French background	Hayden
9. Motivation	Gardner & Smythe (1975)
10. Attitude	Gardner & Smythe
11. Change of schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · enrollment in private school 	Adiv (1979) personal experience
12. University considerations	personal experience
13. Bussing/neighborhood schools	personal experience
14. Adequate degree of bilingualism	personal experience
15. Peer pressure	personal experience
16. Political reasons	personal experience

The questionnaire and interviews are therefore constructed around these issues. Responses will enable the researcher to clarify why children in one urban school division transfer from French Immersion upon completion of grade six. The interview will also clarify the dynamics of the decision-making process. It is hoped that this procedure will provide a critical view of French Immersion so that some ways to improve the program can be identified and more children's needs can be met.

Each questionnaire and interview will now be described in more detail.

3.3.2 Student Questionnaire and Interview

Stern and Carrol (in Stern, 1969) developed an interview to determine a child's perception of second language learning and how the child thinks he will succeed in the second language. Hayden (1988) developed "open-ended interviews, generated by leading questions which allowed for elaboration" (p. 225) to determine why children transferred out of French Immersion programs. Gardner and Smythe (1975) developed a questionnaire which measured the attitude and motivation of learners of French as a second language.

The student questionnaire and interview have been developed considering the work of these researchers and others cited in previous chapters, as well as personal experience.

A. The Student Questionnaire - (Vide Appendix F)

The questionnaire consists of three parts. Part A consists of 16 measures, based on the work of Gardner and Smythe. Opinions are measured on a six-point scale, between strongly disagree and strongly agree. The measures primarily consider the attitudes and motivation of the child. Anxiety towards learning French and parental encouragement are also considered.

The measures are grouped as follows:

Measures 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 consider the child's attitude. A positive response to questions 1, 3, 13, 14, 15 indicate a positive attitude towards learning French. Positive responses to measures 6, 9, 10, 11, 16 indicate a negative attitude toward learning French.

Motivation - Measures 2, 5 and 7 consider the child's motivation towards learning French. A positive response indicates positive motivation.

Parental Encouragement - Parental encouragement is considered in measures 4, 8 and 12. Positive responses indicate support and encouragement.

Part B

Part B consists of nine multiple choice questions which further probe the child's attitudes toward learning French. These questions are also based on Gardner and Smythe's work.

Part C

Part C consists of two questions. The first is a multiple choice questions which asks children to choose from a number of possibilities as to why they are leaving the French Immersion Program. The second question asks children to choose the main reason as well as secondary reasons for transfer. This question is based on a synthesis of the findings in the literature and the researcher's raised possibilities.

B. The Student Interview (Vide Appendix G)

This interview consists of questions which consider the child's perceptions of elementary school, junior high, language learning, French Immersion, and performance in the program, as they relate to choosing to transfer from the program. It investigates how the child viewed the decision to transfer, how and why the decision was made, and by whom it was made. It also considers the child's future objectives in education and his or her desire to continue learning French. This interview was tape-recorded when permission to do so was granted.

The interview follows up on matters from the questionnaire and probes these matters to a greater depth. While the questionnaire provides specific data which in itself is essential to the study's findings, this basic information will be utilized to explore the breadth and depth of the study's questions through the interview. Therefore, it is the data from the interview which will provide the

substantial findings and observations.

The interview questions have been organized as follows:

Questions 1 - 5 are intended to set the child at ease and provide some background information.

Questions 6 - 13, 16, 17, and 41 consider the attitude of the child towards French Immersion from his/her beginning in the program to the present.

Questions which consider any difficulties the child may have encountered learning in French Immersion are 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 30, 31, 33, 34, and 36.

The child's effort put in to schoolwork and motivation are questioned in 18, 19, 32, 36, 42, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51.

Parental encouragement is questioned in 21 and 26.

The child's attitude toward the French Immersion teacher is questioned in 33, 34, and 35.

Peer relations are questioned in 28, 29.

The dynamics of the decision-making process to switch the child are questioned in 37 - 40.

Questions 41 - 51 consider the child's future plans and desire to continue learning French.

Based on the reasons already established as to why children transfer out of

French Immersion, the student's questionnaire and interview are organized as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2

Organization of the Student's Questionnaire and Interview

Reason for Transfer	Questionnaire	Interview
1. Learning difficulty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · difficulty with L.A. · poor test results · lack of special help · shift to abstract work · inability of parents to help 	C-1, C-3 C-3 C-3 A-8, 12	10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 36 16, 17, 22, 23, 24 30, 31 27 24 21, 26
2. Discipline problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · frustration/emotional stress · immaturity 	A-11	
3. No aptitude or ability for learning French.	C-3	22, 23, 24
4. Teacher recommendation.	C-3	40
5. Parent recommendaton.	C-3	40
6. Dislike of teacher.	C-2, C-3	33, 34, 35
7. Teacher qualifications.	C-2	33, 34, 35
8. No French background.		3, 4, 5
9. Motivation.	A-2, 5, 7	18, 19, 32, 36, 46-51
10. Attitude.	A1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 14, 16, B 1-9, C 1-2	6-13, 16, 17, 41
11. Change of schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · enrollment in private school 	 C-3	41
12. University considerations.	C-3	46, 47
13. Bussing/Neighborhood school.	C-3	41
14. Adequate degree of bilingualism.	A-10, C-3	48, 49
15. Peer pressure	C-3	42, 49
16. Political reasons	C-3	28, 29

3.3.3 Parent Questionnaire and Interview

Parents participating in the study were asked to complete a questionnaire followed by an interview.

A. The Parent Questionnaire (Vide Appendix H)

This questionnaire consists of two sections. Part A consists of six measures which reveal the motivation of the parents for placing their child in French Immersion. Part B consists of 11 questions which ask why parents placed their child in French Immersion, their opinions about French Immersion education, the difficulties, if any the child has encountered at school, and reasons why the child has transferred.

B. The Parent Interview (Vide Appendix I)

The researcher intended to interview all parents in person, although some who were not willing to be interviewed in person were interviewed over the phone.

The interview, occurred several days after receiving the written questionnaire. The interview probes many of the answers given on the questionnaire. This interview was open ended as not all questions were applicable to each case. The interview further questions the reasons why parents placed their child in French Immersion, concerns the parents had about their child's education in French Immersion, how the decision was made to transfer the child, and the child's general abilities at school and outside interests. Based on the reasons already established as to why children transfer out of French Immersion, the parent's questionnaire and interview are organized as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3

The Organization of the Parent's Questionnaire and Interview

Reason for transfer	Questionnaire	Interview
1. Learning difficulty · difficulty with L.A. · poor test results · lack of special help · shift to abstract work · inability of parents to help	B-3, 4, 9	3, 6 5, 6 6 8, 10, 11 5 4
2. Discipline problems · frustration/emotional stress · immaturity	B-6, B-9 B-6 B-9	26 5, 26 2, 3, 26
3. No aptitude for learning French.	B-4, B-9	6
4. Teacher recommendation.	B-9	12, 10
5. Parent recommendation.	B-9	12
6. Dislike of teacher.	B-9	9, 7
7. Teacher qualifications.	B-2, B-3, B-9	7, 8, 9, 10
8. No French background.	B-9	4, 27
9. Motivation.	B-4, 6, 9	6, 7
10. Attitude.	B-4, 6, 9	6, 7
11. Change of schools · enrollment in private school	B-10, 9 B-10, 9	
12. University considerations.	B-11, 9	21
13. Bussing/neighborhood schools.	B-11, 9	29
14. Adequate degree of bilingualism.	B-11, 9	20, 22
15. Peer pressure.	B-11, 9	26
16. Political reasons.	B-11, 9	1, 8, 9, 19, 20

3.3.4 The Teacher Interview (Vide Appendix J)

The interview, which was tape-recorded if permission was granted, questions the teachers perceptions as to why the child transferred out of French Immersion, how the child performed in French Immersion, and how the child related to other children in the class. The interview also questions the teacher's beliefs about French Immersion, and the teacher's role in the decision to transfer the child. Although 33 questions were prepared, the interview was open-ended to enable the researcher to acquire the most valid information. Not all questions needed to be asked, depending upon each individual case. The interview allowed for some cross-referencing to see if parents, children and teachers viewed the decision in a similar way. The interview, besides investigating these factors, questioned the personal opinions of the teachers concerning the positive and negative effects of the transfer, as well as their feelings of the appropriateness of the parent's decision. The teachers were also questioned as to their personal opinions about the issue of children transferring out of French Immersion. Table 4 itemizes the questions based on the reasons for transfer identified in the literature.

Table 4

Organization of the Teacher Interview

Reason for transfer	Questions
1. Learning difficulty · difficulty with L.A. · poor test results · lack of special help at school · shift to abstract work · inability of parents to help	6,9,10,13,14,15,16,17,20,23,24,25 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16 9, 10, 14, 22, 23 19 10, 12, 14, 23, 24 21
2. Discipline problems · frustration/emotional stress · immaturity	1, 6, 11 12, 26 11
3. No aptitude for learning a second language.	6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 25
4. Teacher recommendation.	3, 6
5. Parent recommendation.	3, 6
6. Dislike of teacher.	1, 6
7. Teacher qualifications	Introduction
8. No French background.	6, 21
9. Motivation.	6, 13, 17, 18, 20
10. Attitude.	1, 6, 11, 17, 18
11. Change of schools · enrollment in private school	6, 27
12. University considerations.	6, 27
13. Bussing/neighborhood schools.	6, 27
14. Adequate degree of bilingualism.	6, 27
15. Peer pressure.	6, 12, 26, 27
16. Political reasons.	6, 27

3.3.5 The School Administrator Interview (Vide Appendix K)

A short interview was also completed with the school administrator to determine his/her involvement in the decision-making process. Their opinions of the decision to transfer the child were investigated, as were their opinions about the general issue of children transferring out of French Immersion.

3.4 The Procedure

Upon identification of students transferring from French Immersion (Vide Appendix A), questionnaires followed by interviews were conducted first with the children and then with their parents. Interviews were also completed with the classroom teacher and school administrator. All interviews all completed during the months of June and July.

Interviews with the parents and children (Vide Appendices G and I) were completed a few days after receiving the questionnaires so that respondents would not be overwhelmed with questions, and so that they would have some time to reflect on the issues. It also enabled the researcher to build on issues expressed on the questionnaire, and to identify specific topics to explore in the interviews. The questionnaires for both parents and children (Vide Appendices F and H) were mailed together. Arrangements by telephone were made to interview parents in their home, or if they were not willing to be interviewed in person, then they were asked to complete the interview over the phone. Students were given the

choice of being interviewed at school or at home. Interviews with the teacher (Vide Appendix J) and the school administrator (Vide Appendix K) were completed after receiving the written questionnaires.

Permission to be interviewed was requested of all respondents. The school division in question also approved the study. Results of the study were offered to those respondents who so desired them. A pilot study was completed with two children who had left the French Immersion program upon completion of grade 6. The children and their parent(s) completed the questionnaires and the interviews so that the researcher would be able to practice the interviews, as well as so that any difficulties or errors with the questions could be clarified before beginning the actual research.

3.4.1 Analysis of the Questionnaire and Interviews

Both child and parent questionnaires were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Results were tabulated and percentages were indicated for the measures and multiple choice questions. When measures were grouped together to determine general patterns, as in the Student Questionnaire Part A - child's attitude to learning, reversed values for negatively worded items were considered to make all scales comparable. Child and parent opinions were then matched to the corresponding questions on the interview so that relevant issues could be probed to a greater depth. The long answers to Parent Questionnaire Part B were

analyzed qualitatively and were used to determine key issues to be discussed during the interviews. Once all questionnaires had been completed, the results were tabulated and percentages were recorded for each question.

Once all the information had been obtained, and the interviews were completed, each case was synthesized into a descriptive report. The following information was gathered for each child:

1. motivation and attitude of the child and parents toward learning in general, and French Immersion in particular.
2. the child's difficulties (if any) at school, considering both academic and socio-emotional difficulties.
3. the child's performance in school.
4. the reasons for withdrawal from the program, considering the procedure for making the decision for transferring out of the program.
5. the child's perceptions of elementary school.
6. the child's future ambitions.
7. extra help the child may have received to assist in learning.
8. the parents, teacher and school administrator's perceptions of the transfer.
9. other relevant information.

The researcher analyzed and synthesized these individual profiles. A summative synthesis was then written for this thesis, which was based on common issues among the individuals. The criteria used for this summative synthesis were:

1. the principal and secondary reasons for transfer from the French Immersion program.
2. elements in each child's history which may have resulted in the transfer.
3. common attitudes toward learning in general or in particular toward learning French, which may have resulted in the transfer.
4. the immediate and future ambitions of the students.
5. the role of the teachers and administrators towards children who transfer from French Immersion
6. the role of parents in deciding to transfer their child from French Immersion
7. any political factors which were involved in the decision.
8. any other relevant information.

Data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Information was acquired not only through the written questionnaires and interviews, but through personal observations at the time of the interview. Parents and childrens'

attitudes, intonation and body language when answering questions added a valuable element to each interview. "How" questions were answered gave the researcher insights which could not be gleaned solely from the words used to answer questions. The purpose of the study was not to answer all questions about French Immersion, but to gain a greater understanding of the problem and inevitably to raise more questions.

Conclusions were particular to only this study, although certain generalizations may be made. The use of the case study for this particular problem enabled the identification of factors involved in the decision to switch a child out of French Immersion. It also facilitated in the identification of the role of teachers and administrators to this phenomenon. Finally it provides educators with some recommendations for modifications to French Immersion so that the program can retain more children.

CHAPTER IV

AN ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEWS

4.1 The Participants

In order to investigate the reasons why children in grade six French Immersion transfer from the program, the children and their parents were asked to complete a questionnaire and a follow-up interview. The classroom teacher and school administrator were also interviewed to determine how the decision to transfer the child was made, as well as to cross-check the validity of the child's and parents' opinions.

The five French Immersion classroom teachers from the three schools housing a grade six French Immersion program in the school division being studied informed the researcher of the names of the children who would be transferring from the program upon completion of grade six. This information was obtained in June, 1991. It was indicated that 25 children out of a total possible population of 125 would be leaving the program. One of these children had left the program at the beginning of June and had moved to the United States where no French Immersion program existed, so was therefore unable to continue in the program. One child informed his teacher that he was not continuing on in grade seven French Immersion and permission forms to complete the study were mailed to the student's home. A conflict between parents then ensued, in which

the child's mother agreed with the child's wishes to transfer, while the father insisted the child remain in the program. In the end, after discussion with the classroom teacher, the child continued in the French Immersion program. Another child, who originally indicated he would be transferring from the program, changed his mind over the summer vacation and entered grade seven French Immersion. The total population of this study is therefore twenty-two children. Information was obtained on all children, although not all chose to participate in the study.

Fourteen children agreed to complete the questionnaire and 12 of those children agreed to be interviewed. Sixteen parents agreed to complete the questionnaire and 12 of those parents agreed to be interviewed. All five classroom teachers and three school principals were interviewed.

Table 5 illustrates the participation of the children, parents and teachers in the study.

Table 5

Participation in the study

Child	Completion of questionnaire	Completion of Interview	Parental Completion of questionnaire	Parental Completion of Interview	Completion of information by teacher
1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
9	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
10	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
12	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
13	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
14	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
15	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
16	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
17	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
18	No	No	No	No	Yes
19	No	No	No	No	Yes
20	No	No	No	No	Yes
21	No	No	No	No	Yes
22	No	No	No	No	Yes

4.2 Organization

Chapter four first considers the data obtained from the parent and child questionnaires. In analyzing the interviews, the researcher has grouped the responses according to the reasons cited for transferring from the French Immersion program. The three other sections of this chapter consider the principals' and teachers' opinions about students transferring from French Immersion and how the decision to transfer the child was made.

4.3 Parent Questionnaire (Vide Appendix I)

Part A

Part A of the questionnaire consists of six measures which reveal the motivation of the parents for placing their child in French Immersion.

Tabulated results are indicated in Table 6.

Parental Questionnaire

n = 16

Tabulated results figures indicate the number of total responses. Approximated percentages are indicated in parentheses.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. French Immersion was important for my child because s/he would need it for a future career.			4 (25)	8 (50)	4 (25)
2. French Immersion was important for my child as it would make her/him a more knowledgeable person.		2 (12.5)	2 (12.5)	5 (31)	7 (44)
3. French Immersion was important for my child as a knowledge of French would enable her/him to get a better job.			3 (19)	8 (50)	5 (31)
4. French Immersion was important for my child because it would allow her/him to meet and talk to more people.		1 (6)	4 (25)	8 (50)	3 (19)
5. French Immersion was important for my child because it would allow her/him to better understand the French Canadian culture.	1 (6)	2 (12.5)	6 (37.5)	5 (31)	2 (12.5)
6. French Immersion was important for my child as a knowledge of French is a means of uniting our country.	1 (6)	3 (19)	9 (56)	3 (19)	

Items 1 and 3 reveal the degree to which parents placed their child in French Immersion for extrinsic reasons, so that their child would have better job opportunities in the future.

Items 2, 4, and 5 looked at intrinsic reasons as to why parents placed their child in French Immersion - so that the child would be more knowledgeable, meet more people, and understand the French culture better.

Item 1: French Immersion was important for my child because s/he would need it for a future career.

Item 1: Seventy-five percent (12/16) of parents agreed to some degree that they placed their child in French Immersion because s/he would need it for a future career - 50% (8/16) agreed, 25% (4/16) strongly agreed, while 25% (4/16) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Item 2: French Immersion was important for my child as it would make her/him a more knowledgeable person.

Item 2: Seventy-five percent of parents agreed to some degree that they placed their child in French Immersion to make her/him a more knowledgeable person - 31% (5/16) agreed, 44% (7/16) strongly agreed, 12.5% (2/16) disagreed, while 12.5% (2/16) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Item 3: French Immersion was important for my child as a knowledge of French would enable him/her to get a better job.

Item 3: Eight-one percent (13/16) parents agreed to some degree that a knowledge of French would enable their child to get a better job - 50% (8/16) agreed, 31% (5/16) strongly agreed, while 19% (3/16) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Item 4: French Immersion was important for my child because it would allow her/him to meet and talk to more people.

Item 4: Sixty-nine percent of parents agreed to some degree that French Immersion would enable their child to meet and talk to more people - 50% (8/16) agreed, 19% (3/16) strongly agreed, 6% (1/16) disagreed while 25% (4/16) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Item 5: French Immersion was important for my child because it would allow her/him to better understand the French Canadian culture.

Item 5: Forty-four percent of parents agreed to some degree that French Immersion would enable their child to better understand the French Canadian culture while 19% disagreed to some degree, 31% (5/16) agreed, 12.5% (2/16) strongly agreed, 12.5% (2/16) disagreed, 6% (1/16) strongly agreed, while 38% (6/16) neither agreed nor disagreed.

The last measure looks at parents political motivation for placing their child in French Immersion.

Item 6: French Immersion was important for my child as a knowledge of French is a means of uniting our country.

Item 6: Nineteen percent (3/16) of parents agreed that a knowledge of French is a means of uniting our country, 25% (4/16) of parents disagreed to some degree with the statement - 19% (3/16) disagreed, 6% (1/16) strongly disagreed, while 56% (9/16) neither agreed nor disagreed.

4.3.1 Discussion of Data

Parents, in general, indicate high degrees of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation toward the French Immersion program. Eight-one percent of parents agreed that a knowledge of French would help their child get a better job, and 75% agreed that French Immersion was important to their child's future career. These percentages confirm the Canadian Parents for French 1984 poll which determined that "two out of three Canadian parents want their child to learn French to improve their career and earning potential" (Nicolson, 1989, p. 31). This study, in fact, shows that more than three out of four parents are extrinsically motivated. Yet, at the same time, 75% of parents in this study agreed that they placed their child in French Immersion so that s/he would be a more knowledgeable person. The greatest proportion of any of the measures, 7/16 or 44% strongly agreed with this statement. This indicates that although parents are extrinsically motivated and are concerned about their

child's future job opportunities, they are also intrinsically motivated, choosing the French Immersion program so that their child becomes a more knowledgeable person. It is interesting to note that no parents disagreed with the extrinsic reason for studying in French Immersion, while a small percentage (between 6-12.5%) disagreed with each of the intrinsic measures. The percentage of parents who chose French Immersion for their child to meet and talk to more people is still relatively high (69%), although parents who chose French Immersion so that their child would have a better understanding of French Canadian culture is much lower (43%). The largest percentage of undecided parents (56%) was found in the question which measured the parents' political motivation. Parents were relatively split as to whether they agreed (19%) or disagreed (25%) that French Immersion and a knowledge of French were a means of uniting our country.

Parents are both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated toward the French Immersion program. It is clear that they are enrolling their child in French Immersion with consideration given to their child's future, but yet they also believe that the French Immersion program will make their child a more knowledgeable person. That their child meet more people and learn the French Canadian culture is of less importance to most parents. Politically, parents' opinions are split as to the value of the French Immersion program to unite our

country. In the interviewed based on the questionnaire, one parent indicated that she had not thought of French Immersion as a means of uniting the country until the actual interview itself. As she recounted how her son met, spoke with and befriended a young boy from Quebec while on vacation in Florida, she began to see the possibility of French Immersion bridging the gap between the French and English cultures. Parents do not seem to be politically motivated when placing their child in French Immersion.

Part B

Part B of the questionnaire consists of 11 long answer questions which reveal the parents' attitude to the quality of education in the French Immersion program, the difficulties the child encountered at school, how the decision to transfer was made, the child's attitude to school and the program the child will be registering in in the fall. Although the major benefit of this data lies in its relationship to each individual case, certain generalities were observed. The generalities of each question will be discussed.

Question 1: Why did you place your child in French Immersion?

Responses reinforced that parents enrolled their child in French Immersion for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons, as was remarked in Part A. Only 3/16 parents indicated that the sole reason they placed their child in French Immersion was for better career opportunities. Five others indicated

that this was but one of the reasons for placement; "personal development", "personal enjoyment", "a challenge in learning", and "broadening my child's knowledge base" were also cited as primary reasons for placement in French Immersion. Four out of five parents listed these reasons before better career opportunities. Eight parents did not consider better career opportunities as a primary reason for placement in French Immersion. Their reasons ranged from viewing French Immersion as "a greater educational challenge" "which could" enhance [my child's] education; (4 parents) to local school was a French Immersion school (2 parents), "because his father was French Canadian" (1 parent); and "as an opportunity to become bilingual" (1 parent). Although better career opportunities remains a significant factor in placing a child in French Immersion, the majority of parents chose the French Immersion program for more intrinsic reasons such a broadening the child's personal development.

Question 2: Please describe your opinions about the quality of education your child has received in French Immersion?

Nine out of sixteen parents felt the quality of education in French Immersion was good to excellent. Two of those parents felt the quality was superior to that of the English program. One of those parents, although happy with the quality of education, would like to see more English studies. Three

parents indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of education in French Immersion. One parent indicated that the quality of French Immersion education was poor. Two parents indicated that some of the "basics" such as written work had suffered in French Immersion. One parent was worried that not enough English was being taught in the early grades.

Seventy-five of the parents were at least satisfied with the quality of education in French Immersion. This is significant in that it reveals that the majority of parents are not transferring their children out of French Immersion because they are unhappy with the quality of education.

Question 3: Please describe your opinions about the quality of teaching your child has had in French Immersion.

Ten out of 16 parents indicated that they were generally happy with the quality of teaching in French Immersion, with the quality ranging from good to excellent. One parent felt that although the quality of teaching was good there was some lack of experience. Two parents wrote of individual cases of teachers who were not adequate, but they did not criticize the general quality of teaching. One parent felt the quality of teaching was poor, another felt the pupil/teacher ratio was too high and that their child received little individual attention, and another parent felt that English language skills did not receive adequate attention. One parent did not answer.

Similarly to question 2, the majority of parents who are transferring their child out of French Immersion do not seem to be doing so due to poor quality teaching.

Question 4: Has your child encountered any particular difficulty with school?

Eight out of 16 parents indicated that their child encountered no particular difficulty with school. Seven parents indicated their child had some difficulty at school: two indicated a difficulty in understanding Mathematics in French; three indicated difficulties with French and English especially in the area of spelling; one indicated a dislike of school in general, and one indicated the child withdrew from participation if not encouraged. One parent indicated the child's difficulties stemmed from adjusting to a new school.

Interestingly, 50% of the children who are leaving grade six French Immersion are not encountering any particular difficulties with school. Hayden's (1988) study of elementary children found that 90% of parents transferred their children due to academic difficulties (p. 226). Perhaps the children who have encountered difficulties have already left the French Immersion program before beginning grade 6. In any case, it is significant that the primary reason why children in this study are transferring is not due to academic difficulties.

Question 5: If your child has experienced difficulty, to what degree do you feel this was due to learning a second language?

Seven parents responded to this question - five believed that academic difficulties were caused by learning a second language. One parent felt that this was only the case in the first couple of grades, and one parent indicated that problems were encountered due to translating French. Only 5/16 respondents believed that learning a second language caused their child to experience difficulty with school.

Question 6: How does your child feel about school?

Only one parent indicated their child was uninterested in school, and had always felt that way. One child, the parent stated, was more interested in the school social life. One child was keen to begin a new school in English. All other parents (13/16) indicated their child enjoyed school. Hayden (1988) indicated that 70% of parents withdrew their children from elementary French Immersion due to the child's frustration and emotional stress (pp. 226/227). The results of the questionnaire do not concur with Hayden's findings that the transferring children find school particularly stressful.

Question 7: When did you first consider transferring your child out of French Immersion?

Five parents indicated they first considered the transfer in grade five.

Eight parents indicated they first considered the transfer in grade six, with responses evenly split between beginning, middle and end of year. One parent indicated the consideration began in grade four. One parent indicated she had always considered transferring her child. One parent indicated consideration began when a new school was build in the neighborhood.

Fifty percent of parents only began considering a transfer in grade six, with one parent not even considering a transfer until the last month of school.

Question 8: How does your child feel about the decision?

Eleven out of 16 parents indicated their child was anywhere from "relieved" to "very happy" to transfer out of French Immersion, although two children were unhappy about missing their friends.

Three parents indicated their child was initially unsure about the decision, but with time had become more comfortable with it.

One parent indicated the child was disappointed and wanted to continue in French Immersion, and one parent indicated the child was unhappy because she would be losing her friends.

Although parents for the most part are happy with the quality of education and teaching in French Immersion, and 50% of the children are not having any particular difficulties with school, it is notable that 14/16 children (87.5%) are happy to leave the program.

Question 9: What were your major reasons for transferring your child out of French Immersion?

Worries about junior high school were a major concern for parents who withdrew their children from grade 6 French Immersion. Four out of 16 parents were specific in stating they did not have a good opinion about the French Immersion junior high their child would attend. All four children would normally attend the same junior high for grade seven. Parents noted that they did not like the junior high "teaching philosophy," explaining that "the desire to learn is extinguished" at the junior high; it has a "terrible reputation for French Immersion", it is crowded, teachers are not qualified, and help was not easily obtainable.

Three out of 16 parents indicated their child was withdrawing from the program because of the inaccessibility of the junior high and the lack of adequate transportation to the school. These parents all chose their neighborhood junior high school (a different school in each case), which was within walking distance from their homes. Of these three parents, one also indicated her daughter had few friends that lived in their neighborhood because most attend an English school. Another parent cited her daughter's low marks in grade six as an additional reason for transfer. The third set of parents wanted to be able to assist their child in his future studies and felt he would

understand his work better if it was in English.

Four out of 16 parents indicated that their child's difficulties with French Immersion encouraged them to transfer their child. The demands of junior high, especially with additional homework, the difficulty with both languages and its interference with other subjects, the child's inability to spell in English or French, and the desire for "a solid English academic education being worth for more than a failed French one" were all cited to clarify the decision.

Two out of 16 parents felt their child already had a good grasp of French and both parents wanted to prepare for their child's university education by increasing the amount of English studied at school. One parent indicated that especially Science and Math at the high school should be taught in English.

Questions 10 and 11: What school will your child be enrolled in next year, and why did you choose that program?

Six out of 16 students will be attending a private school for grade seven. Reasons cited for attending private schools include - better quality programs and teachers, smaller classes, strong academic base, high expectations for discipline and a christian environment.

Five out of 16 students will be attending their neighborhood junior high

school instead of having to take public transportation to one of the two French Immersion junior high schools in the school division. Parents cited convenience as the main reason for transferring.

Five out of 16 students will be transferring into the English program at either of the two junior highs which also house the French Immersion program. Parents cited that this was their neighborhood school in any case. Four out of 5 students were ones who were having considerable difficulty with the French Immersion program.

4.3.2 Discussion of Parental Questionnaire

In general parents are happy with the quality of education and teaching in the French Immersion program. Many parents are choosing to enroll their children in private schools beginning in grade seven because they believe the quality of education in private schools to be superior to the public school system.

Parents worried about the quality of education in one of the French Immersion junior highs in the division. This worry was encountered even more often in the interviews.

A neighborhood school was important to five of the 15 parents who completed the questionnaire. Accessible transit was not always available to all students to attend French Immersion junior high schools. Parents looked at

the convenience factor in having their child walk to school.

For children who were encountering difficulty with French Immersion, the English program was deemed to be easier by the parents. One parent wrote: "I feel that without an interest in school, a French education is worthless if he doesn't graduate. A solid English academic education is worth far more than a failed French one." Another parent wrote: "We want our child to be competent in at least one language." This parent also indicated that as their child was changing schools anyway it was a good time to transfer.

The last three parents had individual reasons for transferring their child. One wrote that her child wished it. Another indicated that "the genuine care and love a child needs is lost in the shuffle in the public school system." The third parent felt that the poor quality of teaching which resulted in his daughter's inability to write adequately in French was the reason for transfer. He felt that French Immersion teachers were not as qualified as "French-French" teachers in a school division within the city with a Français program. He did not want his child to suffer with poor grades later in her education due to remaining in the French Immersion program.

Many parents listed several reasons why their child was transferring. Listed below is a summary of the reasons for transfer, with the percentage of responses given. As some parents gave more than one response, the total of

the percentages is greater than 100%.

1. Unhappy with local junior high	25%	4/16
2. Attending neighborhood school	31%	5/16
3. Transfer due to difficulties	38%	6/16
4. Child already had adequate French skills	12.5%	2/16
5. Dislike of public school system	12.5%	2/16
6. Poor quality of French Immersion teaching	6%	1/16
7. Few friends in neighborhood	6%	1/16
8. Child wished transfer	6%	1/16
9. Changing schools anyway	6%	1/16
10. Preparation for university needs more	19%	3/16

English courses.

In the interviews with the teachers, parents, administrators and children it is important to note that other reasons were also cited, and parents discussed more reasons than those they indicated on the questionnaire. These reasons results will be discussed during the analysis of the interviews. Also, teachers and administrators supplied the researcher with the reasons for the other students who transferred from the program, who did not participate in the study. Parents also wanted their children to improve their English abilities by devoting more time to studying in English.

Generally the children who were transferring from the program liked school. Most parents had only considered transferring their child from French Immersion in grades five or six. Because they are, for the most part, content with the French Immersion program, the parents do not seem to be transferring the children due to a fault of French Immersion, but due to the availability of other choices - especially private and neighborhood schools.

4.4 The Child's Questionnaire (Vide Appendix G)

The child's questionnaire consists of three parts. Part A, based on the work of Gardner and Smythe (1975) consists of 15 measures which measure opinions on a six-point scale between strongly disagree and strongly agree. The measures consider attitude, motivation, anxiety toward learning French and parental encouragement. Part B, also based on Gardner and Smythe's work consists of 9 multiple choice questions which further probe the child's attitude toward learning French. Part C, based on a synthesis of the findings in the literature and especially that of Hayden (1988) asks children to choose from a number of possibilities as to why they are leaving the French Immersion program and then to select the main reason for leaving. Fourteen of a possible 22 children completed the questionnaire. The tabulated results to individual questions are found in Table 7.

Tabulated Results of the Child's Questionnaire
 Figures indicate the total numbers of responses
 Percentages are indicated in parentheses

n = 14 except where indicated	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
1. French is an important part of my education.			1 (7)	1 (7)	9 (64)	3 (21)
2. It is important for Canadians to learn French and English.				5 (36)	7 (50)	2 (14)
3. I enjoy speaking French in class.	1 (7)	1 (7)	1 (7)	4 (28.5)	6 (43)	1 (7)
4. My parents wanted me to learn French.	1 (7)			1 (7)	7 (50)	5 (36)
5. Studying French is important because it will enable me to meet and speak to French people.			1 (7)	3 (21)	5 (36)	5 (36)
6. French is boring.	3 (21)	6 (43)	1 (7)	4 (28.5)		
7. Studying French is important because I'll need it for my future career.		1 (7)	1 (7)	3 (21)	4 (28.5)	4 (28.5)
8. My parents are interested in my French Immersion work.		2 (4)	1 (7)	1 (7)	6 (43)	4 (28.5)

n = 14 except where indicated	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
9. Learning French is a waste of time. n = 13	9 (69)	1 (8)	3 (23)			
10. I can read and speak French as well as I need to.		2 (14)	4 (28.5)	4 (28.5)	4 (28.5)	
11. I feel nervous speaking in class in French and in English.	5 (36.9)	5 (36)		3 (21)	1 (7)	
12. My parents try to help me with my homework.			2 (14)	2 (14)	7 (50)	3 (21)
13. I enjoy hard work. n = 13	1 (8)	5 (38)	1 (8)	4 (31)	2 (15)	
14. I enjoy my English language arts course.				1 (7)	7 (50)	6 (43)
15. I enjoy my French language arts course.		2 (14)		2 (14)	9 (64)	1 (7)
16. I usually only do enough work to get by, not more than necessary. n = 13	2 (15)	1 (8)	3 (23)	1 (8)	6 (46)	

PART B

n = 14 unless otherwise indicated. Where percentages are greater than 100%, a child selected more than one answer.

1. If it were up to me whether or not to take French, I:
 - a) don't know whether I would take it or not. 8 (57)
 - b) would definitely take it. 4 (28.5)
 - c) would drop it. 2 (14)

2. If I had the opportunity to speak French outside school, I would: n = 13
 - a) never speak it. 2 (15)
 - b) speak it occasionally, using English whenever possible. 11 (85)
 - c) speak French most of the time, using English only if really necessary. 0

3. If I had a choice, I would like to:
 - a) attend a school where French is not taught. 0
 - b) go to a school where French is taught as a subject, half an hour to an hour a day. 10 (71)
 - c) go to a French Immersion school. 5 (36)

4. I believe French should be taught to students:
 - a) beginning in Grade 1 or Kindergarten. 13 (93)
 - b) beginning in junior high 1 (7)
 - c) beginning in high school 1 (7)
 - d) not at all 0
 - e) some other grade 2 (14)

5. During French class, I would like:
 - a) to have only French spoken. 6 (43)
 - b) to have a combination of French and English spoken. 7 (50)
 - c) to have as much English as possible spoken. 1 (7)

6. I believe French should: $n = 13$

- a) be taught to all students. 3 (23)
- b) be taught only to those students who wish to study it. 10 (77)
- c) not be taught to anyone. 0

7. I find studying French:

- a) very interesting. 4 (28.5)
- b) no more interesting than most subjects. 9 (64)
- c) not interesting at all. 2 (14)

8. If I had the opportunity to change the way French Immersion is taught in our school, I would: $n = 11$

- a) increase the amount of time each student spends studying French in school. 1 (9)
- b) keep the amount of French as it is. 9 (82)
- c) have less amount of time spent studying French each day. 1 (9)

9. In French class I: $n = 13$

- a) have a tendency to day dream about other things. 3 (23)
- b) become completely bored. 1 (8)
- c) become totally involved with the subject matter. 2 (15)
- d) none of the above. 8 (61.5)

PART C

n = 14 Figures indicate the total number of responses. The total number of first choice reasons are indicated in parentheses.

1. I am transferring out of French Immersion because:
 - a) the work is too difficult. 4 (2)
 - b) I do not understand many of my assignments. 3 (1)
 - c) I just cannot learn French very well. 3 (1)
 - d) My teacher thinks I should transfer. 1 (1)
 - e) My parents think I should transfer. 4 (2)
 - f) I do not like my teacher. 0
 - g) It is a good time to switch because
I am changing schools anyway. 8 (2)
 - h) I plan to go to university and need more English courses. 5 (3)
 - i) It is too far to go to a French Immersion junior high school. 5 (1)
 - j) I am not interested in learning French any more. 1 (0)
 - k) Of another reason. Please specify. 5 (2)

The findings from each part of the questionnaire will now be considered.

4.4.1 Discussion of Data

Part A

Measures 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16 consider the child's attitude to learning. A positive response to questions 1, 3, 13, 14 and 15 indicate a positive attitude, while positive responses to measures 6, 9, 10, 11 and 16 indicate a negative attitude to learning.

The measures which specifically reveal the child's attitude toward learning French, items 1, 3 and 15, all overwhelmingly indicate the children's positive attitude. Ninety-three percent agree that French is an important part of their education, and only 1 child, or 7% disagreed slightly. Eight-six percent of these children either "agreed" or "agreed strongly" with the statement.

Seventy-nine percent of children enjoyed speaking French in class to some degree. This was the only item in Part A which had at least one response for every measure.

Eighty-six percent of children indicated they enjoyed their French Language Arts course, while only two students disagreed.

One hundred percent of the children indicated they enjoyed their English Language Arts course. This item had the greatest number (43%) of children who strongly agreed with the statement.

Only 46% of the children agreed they enjoyed hard work. The 54% of children who disagreed with the statement were more adamant in their beliefs than those who rated the measure positively. This item does not refer only to French work, and, although results are significant, it cannot be concluded that this only applies to French work. The negative measures which reveal the child's attitude to learning French - items 6, 9, 10 and 11, also reveal in general, the children's positive attitudes.

Seventy-one percent disagreed that French was boring, 100% disagreed that learning French was a waste of time, and 71% were not nervous speaking out in class in either French or English. The largest percentage for any single measure, of Part A, 69%, strongly disagreed that learning French was a waste of time. 57% of the children believed that they could read and speak French as well as they needed to. Responses to this measure were more clustered in the neutral range.

Fifty-four percent of the children agreed that they only did enough work to get by. This is interesting as it is the same percentage which indicated a dislike of hard work.

The results indicate that children who transfer from French Immersion continue to have a positive attitude toward learning French and to the program itself. They see learning French, not as a waste of time, but as an important

part of their education. Although all students enjoyed English Language Arts and most preferred it to French Language Arts, 86% still indicated an enjoyment of the French Language Arts program. The lowest percentages were found in items which measured the children's enjoyment of work in general. Interestingly, both measures indicated the same results - 54% of the children do not enjoy hard work, and only do enough work to get by. It is impossible to state if more than half of the children leave the French Immersion program for these reasons, or if all children at this grade level would indicate similar opinions.

The three measures which reveal the child's motivation toward learning French, items 2, 5 and 7 are all very positive: 100% of the children agreed it was important for Canadians to learn French and English; 93% agreed studying French was important as it would enable them to meet and speak to French people; 86% agreed studying French was important as they would need it for their future career.

Children, more so than their parents, see the political relevance of the French Immersion program. All the children believed it was important for Canadians to learn both official languages, whereas most parents either had no opinion or disagreed that a knowledge of French was a means of uniting Canada. (Parental Questionnaire, Part A, Item #6). Children had more

intrinsic motivation to learn French than their parents had for placing them in the program. Only 69% of parents placed their child in French Immersion so the child could meet and talk to more people, yet 93% of children agreed studying French was important as it would enable them to meet and speak to French people. 75% of parents placed their child in French Immersion as it would be needed for a future career, while 86% of children were also extrinsically motivated and saw the necessity of French for their future career. If anything, the children are happier with the program than their parents. This conclusion is again reached in Part C of the Child's Questionnaire, as three children (21%) indicated that it was their parents' choice that they were leaving the French Immersion program. The results of these items reveal that the children are motivated to learn French and the majority are not dropping out due to a dislike of learning French.

The final three items of Part A, numbers 4, 8 and 12 indicate the degree to which the parents encourage and support their child's education: 93% of children indicated their parents wanted them to learn French; 78% of children indicated their parents were interested in their French Immersion work; 15% of children felt that their parents were not interested in their French Immersion work; 86% of children indicated that their parents tried to help them with their homework.

Although the children indicate their parents are quite supportive of their education, it is interesting that 15% of parents are not interested in their child's French Immersion work and yet wanted them to be in French Immersion.

Part B

The 9 multiple choice statements of Part B further probe the children's attitude toward learning French.

1. If it were up to me whether or not to take French...

Although Part A indicated the children were motivated to learn French and enjoyed learning and speaking the language, 57% indicated they were not sure if they would take French if the choice was left up to them. Fourteen percent would drop French if the choice was left up to them and 29% would definitely take it. Although all the children are leaving the program only 14% (two children) are definite that they do not want to continue studying French.

2. If I had the opportunity to speak French outside school...

Most children, 79%, would speak French occasionally outside of school, using English whenever possible. Eleven percent would not speak French if they had the opportunity to do so outside of school. No children would try to speak French most of the time if they had the opportunity to do so outside of school. One child did not respond to this item. Most children are willing to speak French should the opportunity arise, but are still not either

comfortable or fluent enough to rely more on French than on English.

3. If I had a choice, I would...

Seventy-one percent of children indicated that they would like to attend a school where French is taught only as a subject, while 35% still wished to attend a French Immersion school. One child didn't mind either type of school. No children wanted to attend a school where French was not taught.

4. I believe French should be taught to students...

Ninety-three percent of children believed French should be taught in Grade one or Kindergarten, perhaps because this is when all students began their French Immersion studies. Seven percent believed French instruction should begin in junior high, 7% believed it should begin in high school and 14% chose some other grade. No children chose that French should not be taught. Percentages are higher than 100% as some children selected more than one answer.

5. During French class, I would like...

Forty-three percent of children believed only French should be spoken during French class, 50% believed both French and English should be used, while 7% believed as much English as possible should be spoken. This indicated that children would like more English spoken in their French Immersion classes, as only French is spoken during French instruction.

6. I believe French should...

Seventy-one percent of children believed French should only be taught to those who wish to study it. Twenty-one percent believed all children should study French. One child did not respond and no children believed that French should not be taught.

7. I find studying French...

Sixty-four percent of children found French no more interesting than other subjects, 29% found French very interesting and 14% found studying French not interesting at all. One child answered twice, giving a percentage greater than 100%. One child, 7%, indicated that studying French was "different".

8. If I had the opportunity to change the way French is taught...

Most children did not feel it was necessary to change the way French Immersion is taught. Seventy-one percent believed the amount of French should be kept as is, 7% believed the amount of French time should be increased and 7% believed less time should be spent studying French. Three children did not respond.

9. In French class, I...

Only 7% of the children indicated they were bored during French class. Fourteen percent indicated they became totally involved during French class,

21% indicated they daydreamed and 57% indicated "none of the above". One child answered twice, and one child did not respond.

Although the results to Part A indicate the children who were transferring from French Immersion enjoyed French, the findings in Part B are somewhat contradictory. Most children are unsure if they would take French if it was left totally up to them. Most children, although willing to speak French if necessary outside of school, would still use English wherever possible. The majority of children would sooner learn French as a subject half an hour to an hour a day than all day long as they did in French Immersion. In French class, children would like more English spoken. Most find French no more interesting than any other subject.

More positive attitudes are revealed by the "nil" answers. No children believe French should not be taught, and none wish to attend a school where French is not taught. Yet, no children are willing to speak French most of the time outside of school should the opportunity arise.

Children seem to regard French as they do any other subject. They believe it should be taught, and the amount of French in French Immersion should remain as it is, yet few are willing to take the opportunities to use French and few become very involved during class.

The results of Part B seem to indicate that children are no more

motivated to study French than they are to studying anything else.

Part C

Part C asks the children why they are leaving French Immersion. They chose from a number of possibilities, based on the findings of Hayden (1988) and on the personal experience of the researcher. Children were permitted to choose more than one answer, but were asked to indicate their main reason for transferring. Thirteen of the 14 students listed more than one reason for transferring and all but two indicated a "main" reason. One child indicated two main reasons for transferring.

Fifty-seven percent of the children (8/14) chose "It was a good time to switch because I am changing schools anyway." This response was chosen more often than any other, although only 7% (1 child) indicated that this was the main reason for transferring.

Thirty-six percent (4/14) of the children indicated they were transferring because they planned to go to university and needed more English courses.

Twenty-one percent (3/14) selected this as the main reason for transfer.

Thirty-six percent (5/14) of the children indicated they were transferring because the French Immersion junior high was too far away, although none chose this as their main reason for transferring.

Twenty-nine percent (4/14) of the children believed that the work was

too difficult with 14% (2/14) choosing this as the main reason.

Twenty-one percent (3/13) of the children indicated they did not understand their assignments, and the same number indicated they just couldn't learn French well. Seven percent (1/14) chose each of these reasons as the main reason for transferring.

Twenty-nine percent (4/14) of the children, therefore, indicated that difficulties with the French program were the main reason for transfer.

The twenty-one percent (3/13) of the children who indicated their parents wanted them to transfer also all indicated that this was the main reason for their transfer.

Only seven percent (1/14) of the children indicated they were not interested in learning French any more.

Thirty-six percent (5/14) of the children listed other reasons for transferring, these being: attending a private school, parents worried about junior high, I've learned enough French, no children in the area were going into French, and I can speak as well as I need to. Going to a private school, and speaking French as well as I need to were both chosen as main reasons for transfer.

4.4.2 Discussion of the Child's Questionnaire

The largest number of children, 29% (4/14) indicated that their main reason for transferring out of French Immersion at the end of grade six was due to some difficulty either with the work or learning French.

Although not chosen as a main reason, but as a contributing factor, 57% (8/14) were transferring because they had to switch schools anyway.

No children were transferring because they did not like their teacher or because their teacher encouraged the transfer. This is significant in that it indicates the decision to transfer a child, in each of these cases, was made by the parents and/or the child, not by the school.

The results of Part C indicate that there are many reasons why children transfer from French Immersion upon completion of grade six. There was no conclusive reason as to why the children transfer.

4.5 Analysis of the Interviews

The children in grade six who were transferring from the French Immersion program, their parents, teachers and school principals were interviewed, upon completion of the questionnaire to explore the reasons for transfer in greater depth. Data obtained from the interviews provided much more substantial, in-depth findings than that from the questionnaires. Trends were more recognizable and the multiplicity of reasons for transferring was

studied in greater depth.

Twelve parents out of a possible 22 agreed to be interviewed for the study, as did 12 children, although the 12 children did not in all cases belong to the 12 parents. The researcher and all four other grade six teachers provided information on all the students who transferred from the program. The three school principals were also interviewed. In most cases the teacher's knowledge and opinions as to why a child was transferring correlated closely to the information supplied directly by the parents and child. For this reason all twenty-two subjects are considered in this section.

The section is organized according to the reasons why the children transferred out of the program. Many of the parents decided to transfer their children to private schools. Many were concerned about the distance their child would have to travel to attend a French Immersion junior high and chose to enroll their child in a neighborhood school. Children transferred due to difficulties with the French Immersion program. Concern about the learning environment at the French Immersion junior high caused parents to withdraw their child from the program. A number of children felt they needed more English for university. A small group did not show an interest in learning French. These then, are the major reasons gleaned from the interviews as to why these children transferred out of French Immersion.

4.5.1 Transfer to Private Schools

Eleven of the 22 parents decided to enroll their child in private schools in Winnipeg. Only two of the eleven children were boys. This could be due to the number of boys who leave the program after grade eight to attend a private secular school located within the school division area. Seven of these ten students are very strong academically and have encountered no difficulties with the French program. Parents were happy that two of the private schools had enriched French programs for French Immersion students so that their daughters could continue studying French at the appropriate level. Only one of the ten children was particularly weak academically, encountering difficulties with both French and English. The parents of this child chose a small private school where they believed their child would get more attention than in the public school system. Only three parents indicated that part of their reason for placing their child in a private school was for a religious education. The strong academic reputation and discipline of the private schools was often cited as desirable by the parents. It was indicated, either by the teacher or the parents, that eight of the 22 sets of parents were not happy with the quality of education at the local French Immersion junior high. Hearing of the school's "poor reputation", "over-crowding", and environment which "extinguishes learning" a number of parents, especially of girls, chose not to enroll their

child at the junior high. The principal of one school indicated that a group of parents attempted unsuccessfully, to establish a grade seven class at the elementary school. Three of the parents would not have enrolled their child in the private school had a grade seven French Immersion class been established at the elementary school. Therefore, the choice of a private school was made in many cases, not due to the fault of the French Immersion program, but due to the parents' perceptions of the quality of education and teaching at the local French Immersion junior high.

4.5.2 Transfer to Neighborhood School/Distance Factor

The school division being in which the study took place, has two dual track French Immersion junior high schools. One school, housing three grade seven classes in French and five in English is located on a major bus route. The other school has only one immersion class at each of grades seven, eight and nine. Although serviced by public transit it is not on a major route and is much more inaccessible.

In the interviews, it was indicated that the distance to the junior high was a factor in the decision to transfer in nine cases. Three of those nine children transferred to private schools, while the other six transferred to their neighborhood junior high school. In each case the neighborhood junior high is a K to 9 school with a very small junior high population. Four different K-9

schools were chose by these six children. Six of the 9 children live a considerable distance from the French Immersion junior high school. A 30-40 minute bus ride, twice daily, from the residential area where all six live to the French Immersion junior high was seen an excessive by the parents. Although the neighborhood school these children are now attending is dual track, there are no French Immersion junior high classes. If a French Immersion junior high was to be established in the area, there would be fewer children transferring out of the program.

Parents indicated that their children had few friends in the neighborhood as the children were already being bussed to the elementary school. They felt it was important that their child began to make friends with the neighborhood children. One parent indicated that she did not want to be her child's chauffeur through junior high. She did not want her daughter taking city transit in the evening, upon completion of an extra curricular activity. The distance factor and ensuing transportation problems would therefore limit her child's participation in after school activities. Even the choice of which band instrument the child chose to play would have to be limited to one which was light and easily transportable. When it became a question of whether the child should walk 5 - 10 minutes to a neighborhood school or take city transit for a minimum of 50 minutes daily, the neighborhood school was chosen by a

number of parents. All of these children were bussed to the elementary school they attended, but due to the added distance to the junior high and due to the necessity to take city transit instead of school busses, parents decided to withdraw their child from the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six.

All nine children whose parents viewed the distance between home and school as a contributing factor in their decision to withdraw their child from French Immersion attended the same elementary school. This elementary school is located far from the junior highs. The two other French Immersion elementary schools in the study are located close to the two French Immersion junior highs, therefore distance is not seen as a determinant in the decision to withdraw a child from the immersion program in these schools.

4.5.3 Transfer Due to Academic Difficulties

The most common reason cited in the review of the literature for children to transfer from French Immersion is due to academic difficulties. Eight children of the twenty-two who transferred encountered significant difficulties with the French Immersion program. Language learning, reading and especially writing were very difficult for these children. Difficulties in most cases, were encountered in both English and French Language Arts. In most cases the children achieved somewhat better in mathematics than in

language arts.

In each case, although there were certain commonalities, as discussed above, there were also exceptionalities. For this reason, each individual case will be described. All but two of the students participated in the study, and information will be provided on them based on their teacher's opinions. Each description begins with the teacher's perceptions, followed by information gleaned from the parental questionnaire, the interview with the parents, then the children's questionnaire and interview. A short discussion follows each description, underlining the main considerations in each case.

Student A

The teacher described this boy as having serious difficulties reading and writing in French. The child was working at a primary level in French. He encountered difficulties reading and writing English as well, but not as seriously as in French. His oral ability in both languages was better than his written work. The child was not motivated and often did not complete homework, although he was not a discipline problem. His work was not well-organized. Achievement in mathematics was average for grade level. The child's mother, who remarried several times, was aware of her son's problems. She was very supportive of the school and at the beginning of the school year had indicated that she would be switching her child to English for grade seven.

The mother indicated the main reason she placed her son in French Immersion was so that he would learn the culture of his natural father, who was French Canadian. She believed that a knowledge of French would lead to improved job opportunities for her son and did not place him in French Immersion to improve his personal knowledge. She felt her son received an excellent education in French Immersion as classes were small and he received more individual attention. She was very supportive of the "caring staff" as they immediately identified her child's difficulties. Reading problems first surfaced in grade three or four, but the mother had difficulty assessing the actual problem because she could not speak French. Wanting her child to pursue post-secondary education, she believed her son needed to improve his reading and math skills, and it would be easier for him to do so by transferring into an English school. She believed that learning languages is easier for some people than others. Growing up in Quebec, she had a difficult time learning French, and cannot speak it today, yet her sisters learned it very easily. She would register another child in French Immersion, and wants her child to continue studying French.

The child, on the questionnaire, indicated he did not see French as an important part of his education, although he agreed that it would be important for his career. His parents strongly wanted him in French Immersion,

although he finds it boring. He indicated the main reason he was transferring was that he needed more English courses in preparation for university. He found his school work was difficult and that he couldn't learn French. During the interview, the child stated he rarely spoke French outside of school, and he only saw his French father every two or three years. He stated that his favorite subject was art because through art he could express what he wanted to say. He also enjoyed mathematics because he found it easy. He found French difficult to read and speak, but especially to write - "because (he) didn't really know what (he was) saying." He found the work difficult since grade three, but had received resource help only in grade six. He did not like receiving the extra help even if it would improve his marks because it made him feel different than the other children. Although he found his teachers helpful when encountering difficulties, he stated "I will only ask questions when I feel it is necessary. Sometimes it's not worth asking a question if I know I won't understand the answer." Although the mother indicated she made the decision to transfer her child, he believes he made the decision. He feels good about leaving although he would like to stay in French Immersion if it was easier. He said he would miss his friends and teachers. He realized grade seven would be an adjustment and he thought "it would be very hard to know some of the things in English." He wants to continue learning French and even

learn German, as his new dad speaks German.

Discussion of Student A

Both parent and child had positive attitudes toward the school and learning French. The belief that the child "just could not learn French very well" was evident from both the mother and child's point of view. Significantly, the child enjoyed art because he could express himself, but did not enjoy language arts. The child was quite aware of his limitations, even knowing when it was worthwhile or not to ask a question. Obviously, both parent and child had discussed the decision to transfer, as both felt they had made the decision. Even the teacher believed that the appropriate decision had been made, and that the parent and child were prepared for the transfer to English instruction.

Student B

The teacher described this boy as being a weak student in both French and English. He tries hard but learning languages doesn't come naturally to him. He tried his best but "he can take 4 hours to do 4 math problems that others do in 15 minutes." He had received resource help in both English and French up to grade six. The parents are supportive of the school and are education oriented. The teacher indicated that the parents concentrated their attention on a younger brother who has having considerable difficulty in

school, and who had transferred out of French Immersion in grade 3.

The parents, on the questionnaire indicated they primarily chose French Immersion to make their son a more knowledgeable person. They thought that French Immersion would challenge their son and increase his knowledge base. The mother believed that English skills did not receive adequate attention in French Immersion. She believed that English was not a priority for the teacher and that there was a "laissez-faire" attitude toward teaching spelling. She stated that her son could not spell in either language - that he had fused the two together, and that this was a direct result of being in French Immersion. During the interview, she did state that her son had a "terrific vocabulary. He has a more sophisticated and emphatic language because he has been in French Immersion." Yet she was transferring her child because she wanted him to be "competent in at least one language."

The parents had first considered transferring their son in grade four, but stated that "The teacher always said he was doing well so I'd hesitate each year to change schools. They convinced me not to switch. They encouraged me to keep him in. They hear what I'm saying but don't feel it's a valid concern. A big flaw in the program is the very laissez-faire attitude to phonics..." The mother believed that her son didn't have a command of either language. She believes there needs to be more of an emphasis on written skills, and a

stronger emphasis on English as "university exams are in English and English is our mother tongue." She would not register another child in French Immersion and would recommend that others "go in with their eyes open." She believed that her son had a "secret guilt that he's the lesser for having to switch - because he couldn't meet the challenge." She stated her son was proud that he had stayed in French Immersion until grade six.

The child did not wish to complete the interview, but on the questionnaire he stated that it was very important for Canadians to learn to speak French, and that he felt French Immersion enabled him to speak to French people. He believes French is an important part of education and that it would be needed for a future career, although it is a bit boring. He believes French should be taught to everyone. He feels nervous speaking both languages. He doesn't like hard work. He enjoys both English and French to the same degree. The main reason he chose for switching was because the work was too difficult, but that it was also a good time to switch because he'd be changing schools anyway.

Discussion of Student B

Although both parent and child have a positive attitude toward the French language, the mother, in particular, is very critical of the French Immersion methodology, as she understands it. She continually criticized the

lack of formal spelling taught in French Immersion although this would be particular to her child's situation. She reinforced the need for greater phonics to be taught in French Immersion. In preparation for university, she felt the need for more English work. To a large degree the mother blames her son's difficulty on the French Immersion program, although she does see some benefits of it (improved vocabulary).

Student C

The teacher described this boy as being academically weak in both English and French Language Arts. His math ability was quite good although he encountered some difficulty with problem solving due to poor reading comprehension. Oral skills in both languages are average for grade level. The student is aggressive and not well liked by many of his classmates. His aggression and hostilities most likely result from a poor self concept. In class he is a minor discipline problem - most of his aggressive behavior takes place on the playground. The student was seen regularly by the division psychologist in order to help him deal with his aggression. He had made remarkable improvement with his behavior over the year. Due to difficulties with written work, the child appeared uninterested in school work and was not a motivated learner.

The parents indicated their primary reason for placing their son in

French Immersion was to improve his career opportunities, although during the interview the mother said that she could see how learning French could be seen as a "patriotic activity." The child's father's first language was French, although he is no longer able to speak it, and he encouraged his wife to enroll both their children in French Immersion. She was anxious that not enough English was taught at the primary level and indicated her son first encountered difficulties with reading in grade one. She believes her son has never been interested with school - he views it as a disruption of sports or T.V. "In hindsight," she said "I think he was frustrated and gave up when forced to do something." The mother related how both she and her husband were shocked to hear that their son was having academic difficulties with school when informed by the classroom teacher early in the year. The teachers suggested that they might wish to consider switching their child into an English instruction program, because he was so unmotivated learning French. The parents had focused for so long upon the aggressive behavior of their son, it seems they had lost sight of his academic problems. Upon hearing that a transfer could be considered, the mother said: "We were surprised that our son was not doing his work in Grade 6. I was horrified that he was failing, that his life was in jeopardy and that he would wind up on welfare. Later I realized it (transferring) was best for his education." The mother indicated that

they needed time for the conversation with the teacher to sink in. She said it took most of the year for them to decide what to do, and that she was grateful she had the time to make the decision. She stated that had she been informed of her son's difficulties "in April, it would have been more than we could handle." The mother indicated it was hard for her to evaluate her child's progress in French Immersion, but she knew he could have done better. She was happy with the quality of education in French Immersion, although she stated that a number of teachers were quite young and inexperienced but that this was not the teacher's fault. The mother suggested that parents need more education about French Immersion so that they can help their children with the program.

It took the parents until the last week of school to definitely decide in which program to enroll their son. The mother wanted him in English, the father wanted him to remain in French Immersion for the future job opportunities, and was disappointed his son was switching. When the child eventually decided that he wanted to switch into English the mother felt more comfortable making the decision. Although the mother gave her son "the push" to transfer programs, and it was hard for him to decide, he felt good about the decision in the end. One evening late in June, the mother related, her son asked her "What would you think if I went into English?" She said

"Let's look at the big picture of you at age 18 having finished school - having failed in French Immersion or having graduated from English and having opportunities to go on." The mother wrote that she believed that "without an interest in school a French education is worthless if you don't graduate. A solid academic education is worth more than a failed French one." This encouraged her son to feel more comfortable transferring into the English program. Both parents and child also believed that it was a good time for a transfer to be made, upon completion of elementary school.

On the questionnaire, the child indicated that his parents strongly wanted him to go into French Immersion. They were very interested in his work and would help him with his homework. He does not like speaking French and is nervous doing so and believes that he cannot speak or write French very well. He stated that he would only do enough work to get by. He enjoyed English Language Arts very much, but dislikes French Language Arts as he finds it boring. In French class he is bored and would daydream as he does not find French interesting at all. The main reason he gave for transferring was he could not learn French very well. He also found the work difficult and did not understand his assignments.

During the interview, the child indicated he liked learning a new language in the primary grades but that he didn't like always having to speak

French. He no longer enjoyed learning the French language. He did not discuss his school difficulties with his parents. He enjoyed receiving resource help as it made the work easier for him. He stated that his teachers and his parents would always try to help him understand his work, but that he wouldn't ask questions when he didn't understand. It was difficult for him to consider transferring out of French Immersion because he didn't want to leave his friends behind, but when he realized he had friends in the English classes he felt more comfortable with the decision. He thought that he might take French again in the future as it would be necessary to get a better job, but that he didn't want to study French at school. He believed he would "feel more comfortable in an all English school."

Discussion of Student C

The teacher was quite surprised that the parents were unaware of their child's academic weakness. It seems that they focused so intently on their son's behavior, that they did not consider his academic difficulties. The mother reinforced several times how her son would miss certain career opportunities due to a transfer. Their parents' main reason for placing their child in French Immersion was for improved job opportunities. Once the mother began to focus on the present and not the future, she seemed to put the situation more into perspective. She wanted to do what was right for her

child, not what would be right for him in the future. It was very difficult for the parents and child to make the decision to transfer. The parents were grateful they had enough time to deliberate, and that they could freely converse with the classroom teacher. This case underlines the necessity for some parents to have enough time to make a difficult decision. Open communication between school and home is essential in order to provide the parents with enough background data to make their decision. The child, himself, was more motivated to transfer into an English school, and this hopefully, will enable him to improve his achievement.

Student D

The teacher described this girl as being academically weak to average yet capable of doing better work if she applied herself. Her classwork usually shows minimal effort. Her spelling and grammar were poor in both languages, although in English she was working at grade level. She would ask many questions when she did not understand, but often her questions did not make sense to the teacher or other students and this would frustrate her. She was well-liked by her peers, was polite and was not a discipline problem. She found reading in French quite frustrating and did not seem to understand all directions. She was very weak in mathematics.

The child's difficulties and future options were discussed with the

mother at both parent teacher conferences - in the fall and spring. The mother initially seemed surprised that her daughter was having difficulties, but when she thought more about it she could understand. The child received some resource help with the objective of trying to help her develop logical, sequential thinking. The teacher believed that the student was not incapable of learning French, but that she was not motivated and due to her many difficulties would be better off in English.

The parents' main reason for placing their child in French Immersion was so that she would be a more knowledgeable person. The neighborhood school was also French Immersion and because the mother's friend was enrolling her child at the school, the mother selected French Immersion for her daughter. The mother believes that the basics of education have suffered in French Immersion, reading, writing and arithmetic, although the teachers have been supportive. The mother related how she was more involved in her two older children's education and never really helped her daughter with her homework because she didn't understand French. She said she "couldn't be bothered" looking over her daughter's French papers because she didn't understand them, whereas had they been in English she would sit down and help her child. She believes her daughter would have done better in English.

The main reason her daughter is transferring is so that she can remain

at the neighborhood junior high school instead of having to take the bus to the French Immersion junior high. Also, she is transferring because of her poor marks in grade six. The mother believed her daughter "might do better in English. I think it's time to try." The mother also stated that she had always thought of transferring her daughter out of French because she "could not understand how kids think in French Immersion." The mother believes that the neighborhood school idea is important, but she is not happy that the local junior high is so small. She would prefer her daughter attend the French Immersion junior high because it is larger and has many extra curricular activities. Should her daughter continue in French Immersion she would have transferred her into English at the senior high level. The mother said "I see the benefit of carrying on in junior high, if the junior high was closer. But what is the purpose of completing Grade 12 in French Immersion? Is that the only way you're considered bilingual?" She would like her daughter to attend university in the future and believes she will later need French skills.

On the questionnaire, the student indicated she does not like speaking French and she does not want to use French in a future career. She indicated she does not like hard work and only does enough work to get by. She believes she can use her French skills as well as she needs to. Reinforcing what her mother said, the student indicated her parents are not interested in her

French work. The student listed four reasons for transferring out of the program: it is a good time to switch schools; more English is needed for university, the French Immersion junior high is too far away; and, she is not interested in French any more.

During the interview, the child indicated she enjoyed French Immersion when she began it. She wanted to go into the program as that is what her friends were doing. Although she stated she enjoyed learning a new language, she also said that she didn't like speaking French. Her favorite subject was English Language Arts, because it was easy and because she liked reading and writing stories. Math was her least favourite because she found it very hard. She found French boring and difficult and repeated many times how she did not understand French verbs. She began to find French Immersion difficult, she stated, in grade four, although she could not state why. Although most of her friends were continuing on in French Immersion, she made the decision to leave the program, and was supported by her parents. Although she didn't want to study French Immersion again she did indicate she would take French courses again in the future, so that she would get a better job.

Discussion of Student D

The child, although disliking French and lacking motivation, seemed to perceive herself much like her parent and teacher did. In this case the child

made the decision to leave the French Immersion program, and was supported by her mother, although the mother would have preferred she attend the larger French Immersion junior high.

The mother would have wanted her daughter to leave the French Immersion program upon completion of junior high had the child not decided to transfer after grade six. The mother would have preferred her daughter continue on in French Immersion, because the French Immersion school was larger than the neighborhood junior high and had many more extra-curricular activities. Unlike many parents interviewed who did not like the larger junior high, this parent saw certain advantages to a larger school. She was not choosing the French Immersion junior high because she believed in French Immersion education, but because she wanted her daughter to be involved in the extra-curricular activities. In this case the child took an active role in deciding what she wanted in the way of education, and was supported by her parents.

Student E

This student did not agree to participate in the study, so the only source of information is from the classroom teacher and school principal.

The student was described as being immature and defensive. He was unable to laugh at himself and was often teased by others which caused him to

be a loner. The student was described as having average abilities in French and English but written work and reading were quite weak. Abstract thinking was difficult for him. The student had had "a rough history" and therefore had a poor self-concept. His parents were divorced and his father, with whom he lived, was unable to provide him with the organization he needed at home to help him improve his work. The child had made considerable progress during the year.

The father did not consult the teacher about transferring but phoned the principal. He wanted information about the local junior high. He indicated that he wanted his son to go the neighborhood junior high because he had no friends at school or in his own community. He had not involved his son in any of his decisions. At the end of the conversation with the principal he stated that he would give his son another chance and allow him to stay in French Immersion. The principal found the entire conversation very strange and could not follow the father's train of thought. The principal felt that the father used the threat of transfer as a discipline technique. If his son did well at school, he could remain in French Immersion, if not he would have to transfer. The principal indicated that it seemed to be a yearly occurrence whereby the father would threaten his son with the idea of transferring him out of French Immersion. There was no further discussion with the school, but the

father finally made the decision to transfer his son to the neighborhood junior high school.

Discussion of Student E

The child informed the researcher that he was withdrawing from French Immersion, and wanted to be a part of the study. In the end, he seemed too embarrassed to participate, perhaps after reading the questionnaire. Although stating his belief in the idea of the neighborhood school, the parent threatened to transfer the child out of the French Immersion program because of his academic weaknesses. It is not difficult to understand why the child chose not to participate in the study.

Student F

This student also did not choose to participate in the study, so the following information is based on the classroom teacher's opinions. The student was described as being very weak in both English and French Language Arts, especially in his written work. He did usually complete his homework. The teacher felt he could do much better but that he had an attitude problem and a poor self-image. To some degree he was a discipline problem in class. Because of his younger brother's handicap, the child's parents focused most of their attention on their younger son. The student, therefore, tried to get attention by being bad. The father was a very strict

disciplinarian and the son was afraid of him. When the father was out of town on business, the teacher stated that the child worked much better.

Discussion of Student F

Similar to student E, this student also encounters family problems. It is likely in both families that the students were threatened with transfer because of their academic weaknesses. In both cases, the parents chose to transfer their child without consulting the school. Perhaps the home problems led to the academic weaknesses and for this reason the parents were not willing to discuss their decision.

Student G

The teacher described this student as being very disorganized, having poor study habits, and rarely completing her homework. The student showed the potential to do work adequate to the grade level, but due to a lack of motivation she rarely achieved as well as she could. She had difficulty with abstract thinking, especially in mathematics. The student enjoyed reading in English and had a good level of reading comprehension. She could express herself in French and understand the language adequately for grade level, but her grammar, vocabulary and written work were very weak. She had few friends in the class. The child's parents were divorced and she lived with her mother and younger sister. Several nights a week the mother would not be at

home due to her job in another town. The child received little home supervision and was responsible for looking after herself and her younger sister. The teacher believed the child was not working to her potential, yet also realized she had many responsibilities at home which other children did not.

The mother, on the questionnaire, indicated she enrolled her daughter in French Immersion to improve her career opportunities. She believed that French may be important for her daughter's future. She stated that her daughter's difficulties were due primarily to her laziness and not to a difficulty learning a second language. During the interview, the mother indicated she was sceptical about enrolling her daughter in French Immersion. She attended many meetings, fearing that the program was too political. She was concerned about her role when the children needed help with homework and she did not understand French. The availability of bussing in Grade 1 encouraged her to enroll her daughter in French Immersion. She first considered pulling her daughter out of French Immersion in grade two. Her daughter did not enjoy school, was continually upset and not feeling well. She did not participate in class and had difficulties reading. She believed her daughter was discouraged and needed more encouragement from her teacher. Transferring to a new school seemed to help her daughter in grade three. By grade five, after again

transferring schools, the mother noticed her daughter was losing interest in school and was becoming lazy. The mother at this time began to work out of town, was not home much, and didn't do much at home. She realizes that her daughter's difficulties at this point were not so much faults of the program but due to her absence. The mother left the decision to transfer up to her daughter, because she finds it hard to evaluate her daughter's French skills. She wants her daughter to continue studying French. She would still recommend the program to other parents as her younger daughter is doing well in French Immersion. The mother was going to reduce her studies to part time so that she could spend more time with her daughter. She hoped she would return to a French Immersion program.

On the questionnaire the child indicated she saw French as a very important part of her education, but that she preferred studying English Language Arts to French. She stated she did not enjoy hard work and usually only did enough work to get by. On the questionnaire she wrote: "Even if kids don't want it (French), they should have 1/2 hour to an hour of it." She listed three reasons as to why she was transferring from French Immersion: the main reason being the work was too difficult; she didn't understand some assignments; and that she couldn't learn French very well. She added that "the language was o.k. - the subject was hard."

During the interview, the student stated she began French Immersion in grade one, after completing kindergarten in English. She wanted to enroll in French Immersion and she thought it was "neat" to learn a second language. She said she always liked French Immersion, and that it was "neat" speaking French, but that she didn't like speaking out loud in either French or English because she was shy. She did not want to leave French Immersion, but felt she had to because the work was becoming too difficult. She said her mother was not often at home and therefore she couldn't get any help at home, and that although she studied, she didn't really know how to study. She felt junior high would be easier because she wouldn't be confused by French words. She stated she would like to try French Immersion again and that French would be necessary in the future for her work in a pet shop. She made the decision to transfer from French Immersion, but said: "If you're in it (French Immersion) and want to quit, I don't think you should quit. You should still keep learning French."

Discussion of Student G

The child has already changed schools four times. She began French Immersion in grade one and began encountering serious problems in grade two. Her shyness seems to impede her involvement in class activities and discussions, yet she seems to enjoy the French language despite her difficulties.

Coming from a single parent family in which the mother could not provide her with enough attention has also caused the child to encounter difficulties with school. The child seems overtaxed with adult responsibilities and therefore cannot concentrate on her school work. She is leaving the program with a positive attitude and hopes to return to it in the future. Perhaps if the child received more attention at home she would feel more motivated to complete her school work.

Student H

This child was described by the teacher as being a very weak student in both English and French, although she was somewhat more capable in math. The teacher believed that the child considered herself to be "not bright", almost like she was playing a role. The teacher believed the child could do better work, but that she'd probably heard from other teachers so many times that "you can't do it" that she believed she couldn't. The mother, according to the teacher, knew her daughter could do better. The teacher believed the girl had given up on herself. The teacher supported the parent's suggestion that the child transfer from French Immersion, although she reinforced the idea that transferring would not solve all academic problems.

On the questionnaire, the parents indicated both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for placing their child in French Immersion, although their main

reason was to improve her career choices. They believe their child's difficulties were not due to the second language, but because their child was just not academically inclined. They wrote that the quality of French Immersion was fine, but that more support help was necessary in higher elementary grades when parents are no longer able to help their child with homework. They were not happy with the large French Immersion junior high because not enough support help was available. They chose to enroll their daughter in a small, private school where she would receive more individual attention. They first considered transferring their daughter in grade six, and felt that she was happy about the decision to transfer.

During the interview, the mother said that although her daughter has a good imagination, and always tries very hard, she has never been very academically interested. She has always struggled through school. In grade one the possibility of retention was suggested by the teacher. The parents believed that because their daughter was born in late December and was younger than her peers she was more immature than the other children when she started school. The parents had always been concerned about how to help their child, yet they had been told by the school that there was no need for parents to help their children with their French work. The mother indicated dissatisfaction with the report cards because parents are not able to evaluate

their children's progress in French. In hindsight, the mother feels perhaps it would have been better had her daughter been retained when it was first suggested, or transferred into English instruction at that time. The mother was very concerned that with her own limited French she was unable to help her daughter.

The student's brother who had just completed grade eight was also transferring out of the French Immersion program to attend a private religious school. The parents selected private schools for their children, not for the religious education, but because, as the mother said "there's something special there." She believes that private schools care more about the individual student and a greater camaraderie develops between peers. Because her son had attended the French Immersion junior high, she felt she was justified in being critical of the school and its program.

The mother was not unhappy with the French Immersion program. She was glad she placed her children in French Immersion and believed her daughter had a good basis in French. She believed the program was considerably better than the French education she had when she was at school (French for 1/2 hour every day). She would prefer a 50-50 French Immersion program to the present French Immersion program, so that English skills could be developed to a greater degree. She would recommend French Immersion to

others, yet she acknowledged that French Immersion was not for everyone.

The mother stated that the classroom teacher had suggested that her daughter transfer into English instruction, and that she was grateful she had as it made the decision easier for her. The mother wanted her daughter to be prepared for university and did not want "the extra burden of French" to hinder her.

On the questionnaire, the child indicated that she strongly agreed that it was important for Canadians to learn French, and that through learning French she would get to meet French people. She also strongly agreed that French would be advantageous for a future career. She indicated she did not enjoy hard work and only did enough work to get by. Her main reason for transferring was that she did not understand many of her assignments. She also felt it was a good time to leave the French Immersion program.

During the interview, the student continued to express interest and enjoyment in the French Immersion program. She wanted to enroll in the program because her family travels a lot and she could use her French to talk to French people. Although she does not like being forced to speak French all the time at school she did enjoy "learning how the language was put together." She finds reading in French very difficult and boring. She did not enjoy being told to use a dictionary to find the words she did not understand as "a

dictionary doesn't say diddly." She prefers English Language Arts as she can be more creative and express herself better, especially in writing. She hates learning French grammar, especially learning verbs. She enjoys mathematics, because, although she doesn't understand everything, it is something she will use all her life. She had received resource help in the past, but did not enjoy it because she was made to complete all the work she had missed in class when she was out of the room receiving assistance. She said she was leaving the program because she had trouble with school and because she wanted to go to a private school. She wanted to leave French Immersion, but she still liked it. She said that "it can be boring but it can help you get a better job." She thought she might take another French Immersion course in the future, if her parents wanted her to.

Discussion of Student H

The parents were very concerned that they could not help their daughter with her school work, due to their limited knowledge of French. Because of the great difficulties she was encountering, they felt their daughter would benefit more by concentrating on English and attending a smaller private school. The parents were very concerned that their daughter do well at school. Their expectations did not seem to be unrealistic, but they knew that if their daughter continued in French Immersion her difficulties would continue

because they would not be able to help her. Had the parents been able to provide extra help at home with French work, their daughter may have continued in the French Immersion program.

General Discussion of Students who Transferred Due to Academic Difficulties

Of the eight students who encountered difficulties in French Immersion, all had difficulties learning the French language. Many students mentioned how they hated learning French grammar and French verbs. French reading was not enjoyable for these students because there were so many words they did not understand. All eight also had great difficulty writing in French. In every case, the students were able to express themselves orally in French, although many of the students did not enjoy speaking the language. The eight students preferred English Language Arts to French, as they felt more confident with their first language. In most cases the children performed better in mathematics than in Language Arts. The decision to transfer out of the program was made by the parents in most cases and was supported by the children. The children expressed feelings of relief and happiness to be leaving French Immersion but most of them wanted to continue studying French in the future. In two cases the children made the decision to transfer, and they were supported by their parents. Very few of the students were discipline problems. In three cases, the teachers felt the students could remain in French Immersion

if they were prepared to put forth greater effort. These children lacked motivation to learn French but were thought to be capable enough students. Most of these children had difficulty throughout school. A number of the children received resource help at school. Although a few agreed that extra assistance helped them better understand their French work, students criticized being removed from the classroom to receive extra help, and being singled out to receive extra help. Although difficult to judge, four of the eight children with difficulties came from families "that" either were or had been unstable. Few parents blamed the French Immersion program for their child's difficulties, although most parents suggested there be more English time allotted in French Immersion. Many parents wanted to help their child at home but felt unable to do so due to a lack of French knowledge on their part. This inability to help, or even to really evaluate the children's progress in French, was a significant factor in the decision to transfer these children into an English program. As most of these parents agreed to participate in the study, it can be seen that the parents, for the most part, are interested in their child's education, but they feel their hands are tied when it comes to helping them in French. Most of the parents discussed the option of transferring from French Immersion with their child's teacher, whereas for the other students who transferred, the decision was made by the parents and rarely discussed at

school. Most of the parents remained supportive of the French Immersion program and felt the teachers were really trying to help their child. Most would recommend this program to others, although many stated they believed French Immersion "was not for everyone."

The teachers supported the parents' decision to transfer their child. In three cases the teacher initiated the discussion with the parents. For many parents it was a difficult decision, and took a considerable length of time to decide. Most parents had considered withdrawing their child at some time before grade six. Children were involved in the decision, and of all the cases in which the children participated, they were happy with the decision to transfer. The children knew junior high was not going to be easy but felt relieved that they would not be hindered by studying French. Most students wanted to continue studying French in the future.

4.5.4 Transfer Due to a Dislike of Junior High

As was already mentioned several parents were unhappy with the quality of education, teaching, and over-crowding at the larger of the two French Immersion junior highs. Seven of twenty-two parents were very concerned about sending their child to the one particular junior high that they either sent their child to a private school or to the neighborhood junior high. Parents from two of the French Immersion elementary schools were concerned

about the junior high, indicating concerns throughout the community, not solely from one group within a single school.

The principal of one of the elementary schools explained during the interview how one parent caused many others to question the junior high. The principal held meetings with small groups of parents to get to know them and to explain the school's philosophy. At one of these meetings, a parent began criticizing the junior high school. The discussion grew out of control as parents started recounting the "horror stories", they had hear about the junior high. A group of 4 girls from one class, all top academic students, withdrew from French Immersion so they would not have to attend the junior high school. The parents of these girls indicated they "did not feel good about the junior high", and that "they learned of children being interested in school and learning and having this extinguished " at the junior high. One parent on the questionnaire, wrote "when we heard from other parents - their concerns about junior high teaching philosophy and practices around peer learning, we decided not to subject our child to a strong possibility for a negative learning environment." Another parent, during the interview, said that "the school atmosphere and instructional concerns at junior high worried me" and that the decision to withdraw the child was "based on information from other parents who have had children who have been through the junior high." The parent

continued "We don't know how well-founded our decision is. Other people have influenced us - and not too many others. We usually don't make decisions this way. We like to research them more. It's difficult to research a school. We feel badly to have to pull her out." The parent who first voiced concerns at the school meeting, and to whom all the other parents referred is one who holds an influential educational position in the city of Winnipeg. Perhaps the supposed "expertise" of this parent encouraged other parents to make a decision which may or may not have been "well-founded." Three of the students went on to attend the same private school, while one is attending the neighborhood school.

Two parents from another elementary school, one of a boy, and one of a girl, both voiced their dislike of the junior high. One parent said that "the local (junior high) school has a terrible reputation in French Immersion. It's overcrowded, has a lack of qualified teachers. We did not want him attending that school." Both of these parents chose to send their children to a private school where they felt classes were smaller and their children would receive more individual attention.

It is not surprising that the majority of parents who were concerned about the junior high all had children attending the smallest French Immersion elementary school. The school is noted for its homey, caring atmosphere.

The principal of the school, when discussing the number of children from her school who were afraid to go to the junior high said "here, children are nurtured. They (parents) don't want their child to be 1 of 700. At (the two other elementary schools) kids are not frightened to go the junior high because it's the neighborhood school and because they (the elementary schools) are so large. The principal mentioned that the parents felt their children were "not safe" at the junior high and that they believed it to be "out of control." She reminded parents not to believe everything that they heard about the junior high, but several parents still chose to withdraw their children from the French Immersion program.

4.5.5 Parents Suggested a Transfer

On the questionnaire, four children indicated that it was their parents who suggested they transfer from French Immersion. Four other children, during the interviews, indicated their parents suggested they transfer from the program. One child indicated on the questionnaire that the main reason he was withdrawing from French Immersion was because his parents wanted him to, yet during the interview the same child said that he suggested to his parents that he transfer. In most instances the parents suggested the child transfer and the child agreed, therefore the child did not feel as if he/she had no choice in the matter. In all but one case the children had a positive attitude toward

learning French and toward French Immersion, and all eight wanted to continue learning French in the future. In two cases parents suggested the transfer because the work was too difficult, in seven cases the parents wanted their child's English skills improved. One parent admitted the child was not happy about the decision to transfer. Two other children during the interviews did not seem happy to be withdrawing from the program. The children who did not choose to withdraw were all top academic students. Had there been a neighborhood French Immersion school it is most likely that these children would have continued in French Immersion for junior high.

In most cases, the results indicate that although parents may initiate discussions about transferring from French Immersion, the children understand their parents viewpoint. The main reason most parents have for suggesting their child transfer is to improve their English skills. Although not critical of the French Immersion program, these parents believe that English skills need to be improved, especially for university education.

4.5.6 Transfer for More English

Of the 16 parents who provided information about their child, 13 indicated they believed their child needed more English instruction. The following are comments made by parents:

- English skills did not receive adequate attention. We want our child to be

competent in at least one language.

- I feel strongly that Math and Science at the high school level should be taught in English. This is not a failure of the program (French Immersion) as much as it is a choice in favor of (my child's) needs as opposed to the program.
- I definitely do not want my child to later have poor grades as she uses French and she is not equally educated compared to English classes.
- My child has a good grasp of French. If she goes to university, English will be important. The main reason for transferring our daughter was that we wanted her to be completely proficient in English. Science courses should be in English - technical words should be in English especially at the higher grades. There's not enough time for English Language Arts.
- We are willing to take a chance that French will not be so important in the future. A lack of English holds children back. We want our child to be prepared for university.
- You have to look at the future now. I feel that without an interest in school a French education is worthless if he doesn't graduate. A solid academic (English) education is worth more than a failed French one.
- We want our child to get to University. I don't want the extra burden of French to hinder her.
- Students are unable to discuss advanced theories in French - political

science, the causes of wars - without adequate vocabulary at the high school level.

Many parents indicated they were concerned because, as concepts became more advanced, they were increasingly more unable to help their child with school work. Difficulties encountered in mathematics and especially in science and research projects were mentioned many times as factors which encouraged parents to consider transferring their child. In many cases, parents are concerned even when their child is a top academic student. Most parents are looking to the future and are preparing their child for an English university education and fear that their child's English skills will not be adequate. All parents want their child to continue studying French, but not at the expense of time devoted to English studies.

One principal discussed the many parental concerns he had encountered as parents believed their child would not receive the same science education in French Immersion as in English. He said that parents feared the science instruction at upper levels is weak, whereas in elementary school parents are more confident in teachers' abilities. Parents saw students as being "woefully behind their English peers" and that they were hindered by vocabulary. Although he pointed out that research tells us that students are not behind at the high school level, this did not seem to effect parents' decisions.

Parents suggested they would like to see a 50-50 program at junior high, or just more English instruction, especially in science and mathematics. As parents begin to consider their child's education after grade 12, many feel the need for there to be more English offered at the junior and senior high levels.

4.5.7 No Interest in French Immersion

Although research indicates a high number of students with poor attitudes or who have no interest in learning a second language are those who drop out of the program (Gardner and Smythe, 1975) few of the children in this study expressed a significant dislike of learning French or of French Immersion. Perhaps these children have already transferred from the French Immersion program at an earlier grade and therefore are not a part of the sample in this study. On the questionnaire, only one child indicated that she was not interested in learning French any more. Although this student indicated that she still liked French Immersion "a bit now" during the interview, she also stated that she didn't like speaking French, and that she found reading French boring. The teacher described the child as "unmotivated", "showing minimal effort" and "lazy." The child encountered difficulties in all subject areas, which the teacher believed was due primarily to a lack of motivation on the students' part. The child did perform better in

English and enjoyed English reading. The teacher felt the child would be better off in an English class for these reasons.

During the interviews another child stated he no longer liked learning French, because it was harder in grades five and six. The parents indicated that the child was very unmotivated and had never liked school. The teacher found the child also to be lacking in motivation which caused him to be somewhat of a discipline problem in class. The child, quite realistically, was able to evaluate himself. He found reading and speaking in French hard and did not always complete his homework. He preferred English Language Arts because it was easier. The child stated that he would not ask questions when he did not understand something, and that he would feel more comfortable in an English school. The teacher supported the decision to transfer the child due to the child's dislike of French, and due to the difficulties he encountered learning the French language.

On the questionnaire, one parent indicated that the child did not enjoy working in French Immersion. The teacher described the child as being lazy and lacking in motivation, needing to improve his attitude. The child demanded a lot of attention and was at times a discipline problem. The child had average abilities in French but the teacher felt that if he were to remain in French Immersion he'd need to improve his attitude.

In each of these cases the teacher's opinions coincided with that of the parents and the child's. In only one other case in which the parents did not agree to participate in the study, did a teacher suggest that a child who was transferring had an "attitude problem." This child was described as having a poor self image, and being academically weak in both languages. Again the teacher felt the child could achieve better if he chose to do so.

Although the teachers believed children who had attitude problems and who lacked the motivation to learn French should transfer from French Immersion, two principals had conflicting opinions. One principal believed that parents must be convinced of the validity of the French Immersion program: "At times all kids can be unmotivated. Parents give in too easily and transfer a child when sometimes as a parent you need to live out the unmotivated stage." Another principal believed that "a child who hates French and hates where he is and is backed by his parents" should transfer from the program. Both principals do believe it is important that parents be committed to French Immersion. If parents are unsure as to whether or not to register a child, it is better that they not do so. This is not due to a fault of the French Immersion program but due to parents ambivalent feelings.

4.6 School Principals' Opinions

All three principals from the three French Immersion schools which

housed grade six classes were interviewed. The principals were rarely involved in the decision to transfer any of the grade six students. One principal did not even know, when first questioned, that any grade six students were transferring out of the program. All the principals stated that they were more often involved in the decision to transfer a student at the primary level. They all indicated that by grade six most parents had made a decision and did not feel the need to involve them. Two principals indicated they were aware of students who were leaving the French Immersion program because they saw the student's transfer forms or junior high registration. Some significant opinions of the principals are summarized:

One administrator said that parents would often discuss whether or not their children should continue in French Immersion after grade six at school meetings. The administrator said that academic difficulties were never mentioned as a reason for transfer in these discussions. Parents were considering transferring their child for social reasons, due to the distance of the junior high from their home and when selecting a private school as opposed to the public school system. The administrators were often approached by parents when they were considering transferring their child at other levels than grade six. During kindergarten, one administrator stated, parents worry if their child is adjusting to school. The administrator believed that the most common time

for transfers to take place was in grades two and three. Parents at this level worry if their child is reading. By grades four and five, the parents wonder if their child can handle all the French they are learning. The other two administrators agreed that they were more involved in the decision making process for children in kindergarten to grade three. They felt that if a child had not transferred out of the program by grade three, he/she probably would be inclined to stay in the French Immersion program until after completing grade six. One principal said that "Parents are most concerned when their child can't read and write and is not at the appropriate level in English - no one has ever expressed a concern about their French abilities." Another administrator said that some parents fear instruction in French Immersion because they are not able to understand their child's work, or help at home. Parents became more fearful and apprehensive as the child advanced through school. Many are especially concerned about science instruction in French at the high school level.

One administrator felt if parents were undecided about the French Immersion program it would be better for them not to register the child in French Immersion. If a problem ever arose the parents inevitably blame the program.

All the administrators believed that the French Immersion program

should be open to all students although they all felt that a child with severe hearing difficulties would have difficulty with the program. They all believed that the French Immersion program could be adapted to meet the needs of all learners. One administrator felt that children who were not risk takers often became "stressed out" and would eventually transfer out of the program. Because the French Immersion program raises the level of anxiety and stress when a child must speak another language, the program can be very difficult for non-risk takers. The administrator felt that if non-risk takers did register in French Immersion they should be closely monitored in the early years to ensure that their stress level did not become unbearable.

In most cases the principals believed students encountering problems in French Immersion should not transfer out of the program. They believed that problems rarely had anything to do with learning a second language, and academic achievement rarely improved once a transfer took place.

One principal indicated that it was not unusual for a parent to phone during the school year and ask to have their child transferred out of the program. The principal believed that these "crisis calls" often happened when a child was encountering some difficulties at school. Instead of looking for solutions, the parents immediately want to withdraw their child from the program. When a call like this occurs, the principal indicated she asks the

parents to give her some time to check out all the information. She found that when she got back to the parents the next day, after having given the parents some time to think, that the "crisis" was no longer as serious and parents were willing to listen to solutions other than withdrawal.

One principal felt children who hated French and who were unmotivated to learn the language should transfer from the program, especially if these views were supported by the parents. Another principal felt that children are often unmotivated to learn and this need not be blamed on learning a second language. These children should be encouraged to remain in the program as their attitude often changes.

Two principals felt that if parents were very worried about their child's achievement it would be better for the child to transfer from the program. As the parents' stress was relieved so often was the child's.

All principals believed that each child should be looked at individually before any decision is made. When involved in a decision to transfer a child from the French Immersion program, the principals liked to consult with the classroom teacher, guidance counsellor and resource teacher if necessary. Parents are told of the observations of the school personnel, how the child is working, and what the personnel see the child's abilities to be. One administrator encouraged parents to visit the child's class. Information is

presented in an unbiased way so that parents are able to make the decision on their own. The administrators recommended that parents consult them when they were considering transferring their child, as they were able to give the parent a balanced perspective. The principals all believed that the parents try to make the best decision for their child, and they all support the parents decision whatever it may be.

4.7 Teachers' Opinions

The researcher and the four other French Immersion grade six teachers provided information on all the students who transferred out of French Immersion. The opinions of the four teachers about children transferring out of French Immersion and about French Immersion in general are presented below. The researcher only provided opinions on the children transferring from the program. One teacher was in her first year, another had never taught French Immersion but had taught French at the high school level for five years. One teacher had fifteen years of experience teaching French Immersion, another had three years experience.

Teacher A (First Year Teacher)

This teacher believes children transfer from French Immersion for four main reasons:

- 1) the distance of the French Immersion school from the child's home

- 2) greater variety and opportunity of courses in English
- 3) politics - if Quebec separates, parents believe their children will not need French in the future.
- 4) lack of motivation

The teacher believes that French Immersion is not for all children.

Children who have a hard time learning English, or immigrant children who do not speak English at home may achieve better in an English class. The teacher believes children should not be forced to learn French. She feels that a late immersion program beginning in grade seven would interest motivated children who would want to learn the language. These children, because they would be motivated to learn would catch up by grade ten to those who enrolled in early immersion. The teacher believes that children should transfer from French Immersion as soon as difficulties are encountered so that their English skills can be improved. She believes that French Immersion is a more difficult program than English instruction because two structures must be known for the same concept and therefore children must be prepared to do more work. She cites the lack of resources available in French for children to do research projects as a weak area of the program, especially at upper levels. She believes the politics of French Immersion needs to be stressed to a lesser degree. It should be seen as a benefit to learn a second language, whether or

not we live in a bilingual country.

Teacher B

This was the first year this teacher taught French Immersion, but she had previously taught Basic French at the high school level for five years. She did not enjoy her year teaching French Immersion, found it to be very stressful, and did not complete the school year due to health reasons. She believes that children transfer from French Immersion for three main reasons:

- 1) because they have no interest in continuing. By grade six parents begin to let children make choices concerning their education, and some children choose to leave the program.
- 2) parents perceive the child is not doing well
- 3) the children have a good base in French after completing six or seven years of French Immersion, and will be able to continue their French studies in the English stream.

This teacher believes that transferring a child from French Immersion is not the answer when the child is encountering difficulties. She believes there are not enough teacher assistants and resource help in French. Children need help throughout their school years beyond that which can be provided by the classroom teacher, but these resources are not as available as they need be in French Immersion. She believes that children do not transfer from French

Immersion because of the French Language, and that transferring doesn't remedy the situation. She believes that children should stay in French Immersion as long as they are motivated to learn French. The program should be able to adapt to the needs of all learners, but when there is an option to transfer available, some children will inevitably transfer.

Teacher C

This teacher had three years experience teaching grade six French Immersion. She believes that French Immersion is not for all children, although all children should be given the opportunity to enroll in the program. Children need to be very motivated to learn a second language, and not all children are easily motivated. She believes the French Immersion program is excellent for those who want to learn, but that it is a waste of time and energy for those who are not motivated. French Immersion could be a traumatic experience for children with major learning difficulties and they do not need the added pressure of being in French Immersion. Grade seven is too late for children to leave the French Immersion program as they are undergoing physical and emotional changes, therefore grade six is a better time for them to leave the program.

Teacher D

This teacher has had fifteen years experience teaching grades five and

six French Immersion. She strongly believes that children in French Immersion are not getting a "French" education, but they are getting an "immersion" education. She believes that it is only natural that children prefer speaking English, that only a very motivated few actually choose to speak French of their own accord, and that French should not be rammed down children's throats. She believes that there are many problems in French Immersion which cause children to feel like failures because they haven't learned certain aspects of the language. These problems stem from the whole language philosophy and a lack of systematic grammatical instruction. There are not stringent enough guidelines as to what should be taught in French Immersion and too much is left up to the individual teacher's interpretation.

She views the end of grade six as a good time to transfer as children are not seen as failures if they transfer then. It is merely seen as a good time to transfer programs. She criticizes the high school French Immersion programs which offer a French Immersion certificate. High schools are not able to offer many options to French Immersion students, and students are not being adequately prepared for university. It is important that students can speak French, use it in the workplace and receive a quality education more so than that they receive a French Immersion certificate. She would prefer to see late immersion classes beginning in grade four. At this age children are

motivated to learn but yet have some say in what they are learning. She believes a better basic education would be achieved if only literature, grammar and social studies were taught in French.

Most children in French Immersion cannot be helped with their French work by their parents, and many learn how to use the system to do nothing well. The system, or French Immersion program is often blamed for these children who do nothing. In reality it is not only the program but also the parents and child who must accept part of the blame.

This teacher believes that children with serious emotional or learning problems should not be in French Immersion and that they should concentrate on one language. For those who do decide to transfer from the program, grade three at the end of the primary block, and grade six, before beginning junior high are seen as preferable times to transfer. She does not recommend children transfer at grades four or five as social success is very important for children at this time, and a transfer could be damaging to their self concept.

Teacher E

This teacher, the researcher, did not provide opinions on the issue of children transferring from French Immersion in an attempt to lessen any bias in the results of the study.

4.8 How the Decision to Transfer was Made

Although parents had many varied reasons for transferring their child, some generalities emerged as to how the decision was made. In almost all cases it was a decision that was made at home with little school input and involvement. In four of the eight cases, when children were experiencing difficulties, the parents discussed the possibility of transfer with the child's teacher, and asked the teacher's opinions. The teachers supported the parents decision in all cases, although they informed the parents that it would be unlikely that learning difficulties would be immediately rectified once a transfer would take place. In two cases the parents were grateful the "teacher" had suggested the child transfer, for it made their decision easier.

Of the fifteen cases studied intensively, five children felt it was entirely their parents' decision to transfer them from the program. Four of these were top academic students. Parents indicated that the children felt either disappointed, confused, or unsure of the decision but once the children had time to reflect, looked forward to the change. In at least one case the interviewer felt the child did not at all want to transfer into an English program. One parent, who decided her child should transfer due to the difficulties he was encountering, believed her child had a "secret guilt that he's the lesser", because he could not meet the challenge of the French Immersion

program.

In seven of the fifteen cases the children indicated they made the decision to transfer, although in all cases the parents wanted the child to transfer. Many of the parents had considered transferring their child for a number of years. Although the children felt in control of the decision, this was most likely a decision that would have been made, or at least suggested by the parents had not the child suggested it. In several cases both the parents and the child believed that they alone had made the decision to transfer. Perhaps these children had been prepared for a transfer over a period of time, and that is why they felt they made the decision. Although most of these children indicated it would be difficult leaving friends behind, they were looking forward to attending an English school for grade seven. Some indicated it would be somewhat difficult at first to improve their English skills. All were looking at the move in a positive way.

Three cases were joint decisions made by the parents and children together. The parents suggested that the child transfer and the child agreed. In one case it took the child several months to decide to transfer, and the parents were glad to have had time to prepare their child for the transfer. In this case the teacher had suggested the parents consider transferring their child out of the program. Two of the three children looked forward to being in an

English program for grade seven. One child felt "bothered a bit" at having to transfer and thought it would be difficult not to speak to her grade seven teachers in French.

Although the reasons for transferring are varied and have already been discussed, most parents indicated that their inability to help their children at home in French was a factor in transferring to an English program. Several parents could even see leaving their children in French Immersion for junior high, but indicated they would definitely transfer them for senior high. These parents still wanted their children to continue studying French, but wanted them to have science and math courses in English as well as the greater choice of options available to English instruction students.

Many of the parents had considered transferring their child before grade six, but waited for the natural change of schools to occur before actually transferring them.

One parent indicated she had wanted to transfer her son in grade four, but had been talked out of it by the child's teacher. Another parent indicated that no teacher, until grade six had suggested her daughter should transfer and that she was glad that the teacher had recommended it because it confirmed what she thought.

In almost all cases, the parents and children had obviously discussed the

rationale for transferring out of French Immersion. Because the children had some input into the discussions and decision making, they generally felt comfortable about leaving the French Immersion program.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is organized into three sections. The first is a summary of the study. The second consists of the researcher's conclusions based on the data, and the final section discusses the research findings and the recommendations based on the findings of the data.

5.1 Summary

Although the French Immersion program has met with considerable success in Canada, and its enrollment has increased 800% in the last twelve years (Houston, 1991, p. 1) a number of children are transferring from the program. Few studies have looked at the reasons why children have transferred from the French Immersion program. Adiv (1979) studied the reasons why junior high students leave the French Immersion program. She found that 48% of the students who transferred did so upon completion of grade eight, when it was necessary for them to change schools (p. 3). Hayden (1988) studied elementary French Immersion children who transferred mid-way through the school year. She concluded "the child who is experiencing difficulty with language arts is primarily the one who is switched out." (p. 233). She did not study students who transferred from the program upon completion of grade six. A number of studies have looked at children who

have transferred from French Immersion due to learning difficulties in the early grades, among them Bruck (1985) and Trites (1986). Parkin, Morrison and Watkin (1987) indicate that "There is little information about the characteristics of students who transfer at the upper elementary or secondary levels." (p. 74) Halsall's (1991) study, published while this research was being completed, indicated a number of reasons students transfer out of secondary French Immersion programs, many of which had been postulated by this researcher.

The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons why children in one urban school division in Winnipeg, Manitoba transfer from the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six, and to look at the dynamics involved in the process of making the decision to transfer a child from French Immersion.

A review of the literature identified a number of reasons why children transfer from French Immersion (Bruck, 1985; Genesee, 1983; Hayden, 1988; Swain, Lapkin and Shapson, 1990; Halsall, 1991). Among the reasons cited that children transfer from the program are: learning difficulties, especially difficulties with Language Arts, poor test results, a lack of special help at school, a shift to abstract work, discipline problems, immaturity, emotional stress; an inability of parents to help their child with homework, a lack of

aptitude for learning French, and teacher qualifications. Gardner and Smythe (1975) determined that motivation and attitude play a significant role in whether or not a student remains in a foreign language course. The researcher's personal experience has led him to consider other possibilities as to why grade six students transfer from the French Immersion program: to enroll in a private school; because parents believe the child has received an adequate degree of bilingualism; because of peer pressure; due to the need to prepare for university in English; due to a lack of adequate transportation to school; and due to the unstable political nature of our country. Halsall (1991) also confirmed that secondary French Immersion students transfer from the program because they feel that they have an adequate knowledge of French, because they are preparing for English university, due to a lack of adequate transportation, and in order to choose from a wider range of optional programs. This study has indicated that all of the above factors are reasons given as to why children transfer from the French Immersion program.

To find out why this specific population was transferring from French Immersion, questionnaires and interviews for the parents and children, and interviews for the classroom teacher and school principal were developed. They were constructed around the aforementioned issues. The questionnaires were developed, focusing particularly on motivation and attitude toward

learning French, to provide the researcher with some understanding of the individuals and their perceptions before conducting an extensive personal interview. Case-study methodology was primarily used as a means of inquiry as it lends itself to the study of the complexities of the issues. Rarely do parents or children make a major decision based on one factor. Case study methodology allowed the researcher to study the "multiple realities" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 37) of a child's transfer from grade six French Immersion. Teachers and school principals were also interviewed to provide other perspectives as to why the children transferred, as well as to provide information on children and parents who did not wish to participate in the study.

In all, twenty-two children from a total population of 125 transferred from the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six. All classroom teachers and school principals agreed to participate in the study. Sixteen parents and fourteen children also agreed to complete at least some part of the study. A total of thirty-one interviews were completed. A wealth of data, both quantitative and qualitative, was collected.

Seventy-five percent of parents revealed they were happy with the quality of education and teaching in the French Immersion program. Only one of the sixteen parents who completed the questionnaire was very critical of

both the program and competency of the teachers. The questionnaire revealed parents were both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated when enrolling their child in French Immersion. Although the Canadian Parents for French study indicated that two-thirds of parents enrolled their child in French Immersion to improve their child's future job opportunities, (Nicolson, 1990, p. 31), demonstrating an extrinsic motivation, this study shows that parents were also intrinsically motivated. Seventy-five percent hoped that French Immersion would make their child a more knowledgeable person. It is important to note that parents did not have only one reason for enrolling their child in French Immersion, but that a combination of reasons led to their decision. Similarly on the questionnaire, parents listed more than one reason as to why their children were transferring from French Immersion. Vide page 125, for a summary of the reasons parents gave for transferring their child from French Immersion.

Thirty-eight percent of students transferred due to academic difficulties. Hayden (1988) determined that up to 90% of children left the immersion program due to academic difficulties. Perhaps many of the students who encounter academic difficulties leave the program before grade six. A considerable number of parents (25%) were unhappy with the local French Immersion junior high, and preferred to send their child to a neighborhood

school (31%).

The child's questionnaire revealed a highly positive attitude toward learning French. Ninety-three percent of the children felt that French was an important part of their education, 86% indicated they enjoyed French Language Arts, 79% enjoyed speaking French in class, and 100% disagreed that learning French was a waste of time. The results indicate that children who transfer from French Immersion continue to have a positive attitude toward learning French and to the program itself.

All the children agreed that it was important for Canadians to learn French and English; 93% agreed that studying French was important as it would enable them to meet and speak to French people, and 86% agreed studying French was important as they would need it for their future career. Although most parents had no opinion or disagreed that a knowledge of French was a means of uniting Canada, all the children believed it is important for Canadians to learn both official languages.

The children appeared more intrinsically motivated to learn French than their parents were for placing them in the program. The children could see the personal benefits of studying the French language.

Although the questionnaire indicated the children were positively motivated to learn French, 57% indicated they were not sure if they would

take French or not if it was left up to them. Seventy-one percent indicated they would like to attend a school where French was taught only as a subject, while 35% still wished to attend a French Immersion school. No children wanted to attend a school where French was not taught.

The results of the questionnaire revealed that children are motivated to learn French and the majority are not dropping out due to a dislike of learning French.

Among reasons given for transferring from the French Immersion program, the greatest number of children (57%) indicated they were doing so because they were changing schools anyway. Thirty-six percent of the children were transferring because they planned to go to university and needed more English courses, and the same percentage were transferring because their parents wanted them to. No children were transferring because they were encouraged to do so by their teacher. This is significant in that it indicates the decision to transfer was made in the home, either by the child or parent.

A variety of other reasons were listed as to why the children were transferring from French Immersion and, therefore, no conclusive reason can be determined.

The interviews provided the researcher with a fuller picture as to why the children were transferring. Eleven of the 22 children were enrolled in a

private school for grade seven. The strong academic reputation and discipline of the private schools were often cited as positive attractors by parents. Many parents were unhappy with the quality of education and over-crowding at the local French Immersion junior high, and therefore chose to enroll their child in another school, whether it be a private or neighborhood school. Six parents chose to send their child to their neighborhood school which in all cases is a K-9 school with a small junior high population. Distance to the school and the lack of community friends were other reasons which encouraged parents to transfer their child. Halsall (1991) also found that children leave the immersion program at the secondary level in order to attend a local school and remain with friends (p. 21).

Eight of the twenty-two children transferred due to the difficulties they encountered with the French Immersion program. This proportion is considerably lower than Hayden's (1988) findings of up to 90% of children who leave the program due to difficulties. Language learning, reading and writing were difficult for the eight children in this study. Difficulties were encountered in most cases in both English and French Language Arts. Most children achieved somewhat better in mathematics than in language arts. All children had difficulties with French Language Arts. Many mentioned how they hated learning French grammar. Although most wanted to continue

studying French in the future, the eight children expressed feelings of relief and happiness to be leaving French Immersion. Only one child of the eight who encountered difficulties was a minor discipline problem.

In three cases, the teachers felt the children could remain in French Immersion if they put forth greater effort. Most of the children had received resource help in French, but did not enjoy being singled out to receive extra help. Only a few parents blamed the French Immersion program for their child's difficulties, and remained supportive of the program. Most parents would continue to recommend the French Immersion program to others, although many stated that French Immersion "was not for everyone." Parents felt particularly handicapped because they could not help their child with French homework. When their child was having difficulties and needed extra help, this was a significant factor in the decision to transfer from French Immersion. For many parents it was a difficult decision. Four parents consulted the classroom teacher, and discussed the decision at length with their child. Many parents took a considerable length of time to decide definitely whether or not to transfer their child. This was the only situation in which parents consulted the classroom teacher. In each of these cases considerable thought had been given to the decision to transfer, and both parents and children felt comfortable once the decision was finally made.

The following synopsis of an interview typifies many of the feelings and attitudes of parents in the study whose children are encountering difficulty with the French Immersion program:

"We were surprised that our son was not doing his work in grade six. I was horrified that he was failing, that his life was in jeopardy and that he would wind up on welfare. Later I realized it (transferring) was best for his education..."

In discussing with this child, the mother said: "Let's look at the big picture of you at age 18 having finished school - having failed in French Immersion or having graduated from English and having opportunities to go on. Without an interest in school, a French education is worthless if you don't graduate. A solid academic education is worth more than a failed French one."

The parents see the value of a French education, but feel that it should not come at the expense of their child's overall education. These parents have a choice in whether or not to transfer their child, and hope that, in choosing to transfer, their child's achievement may improve.

Seven children transferred because parents were concerned about the quality of education at the local French Immersion junior high. Overcrowding, lack of discipline, and poor teaching techniques were cited among

their concerns. Many parents based their opinions on information from parents who had other children attending the school. One strongly vocal and influential parent encouraged others to consider transferring their children out of the school. These parents would have considered leaving their children in the French Immersion program, had they been happy with the quality of education at the junior high level. Halsall (1991) confirms that parents and students are concerned with instructional quality and that children transfer from the immersion program due to perceived "poor teaching" (p. 10).

Thirteen of the sixteen parents studied indicated they believed their child needed more English instruction and that this was a factor in the decision to transfer their child. Many parents desired more English at the junior and senior high school level, especially in the area of the sciences. Difficulties doing adequate research was also cited as a problem in French Immersion. One parent believed that students were unable to discuss advanced theories in French at the high school level without an adequate vocabulary. Many parents wanted their child to be prepared for an English university education and feared that their child's English skills would not be adequate. All the parents wanted their child to continue studying French, but not at the expense of time devoted to English studies. Many would have liked to see a 50-50 French Immersion program begin at the junior high level. Halsall (1991) determined

"that there was a perception that students in preparing for postsecondary education had to emphasize English language skills in order to attain higher marks" (p. 20). The amount of English instruction in French Immersion is of concern to many parents and children.

Although Gardner and Smythe's (1975) research indicates that students with poor attitudes and little motivation are those likely to drop out of second language programs, few of the children in this study expressed a significant dislike of learning French. Perhaps the children with poor attitudes/low motivation have already transferred from the French Immersion program at an earlier grade. Only three children indicated a dislike of learning French, basically because it was harder for them to learn than English. Each child was described as being unmotivated by the classroom teacher. The teachers supported the parent's decision that the children transfer from the program.

Principal's Opinions

The principals of the three French Immersion schools in the study were interviewed to determine their degree of involvement in the decision to transfer a student from grade six French Immersion. Parents rarely consulted them when considering transferring their child from grade six French Immersion, although the principals were usually involved when there was the question of transfer at the primary level. By grade six parents seem to feel more

comfortable making a decision on their own or in conjunction with their child and/or classroom teacher than with the principal.

Although they supported the decision of the parents, all the principals felt that the French Immersion program could be adapted to meet the needs of all learners.

Teachers' Opinions

The four teachers interviewed had a variety of opinions as to why children transfer from the program, but all believed grade six was a good time for children to leave the program if they so desired. Teachers recommended greater support services needed in French Immersion - more resource help for students encountering difficulties, more teacher assistants, and more print material at the students' level. The teachers agreed that motivation plays a key role in learning a second language, and that unmotivated children were likely to drop out of the French Immersion program. Most teachers believed the French Immersion program should be able to adapt to the needs of all children, although not all children should enroll in the program. Children with serious emotional and learning problems, those who do not have a good grounding in English at home or who have difficulty speaking English, those who are not risk takers and those who are not motivated were suggested not to enroll in French Immersion. Children with serious hearing difficulties were also

advised by both principals and teachers not to enroll in French Immersion.

Two teachers recommended the late immersion program, beginning in grade four or seven as a good option to the early immersion programs.

Teachers also recommended greater English instruction in French Immersion and the need for more stringent guidelines as to what should be taught in the Français program.

How the Decision to Transfer Was Made

Although few generalizations can be made, in almost all cases the decision to transfer a child from French Immersion was made at home and not at school. In only four of the twenty-two cases studied, did parents consult with the classroom teacher. Most children felt comfortable with the decision and felt they had some input into the decision. Five children of the 15 cases studied intensively felt it was entirely their parents' decision that they transfer. The children remarked on feeling unsure or disappointed with the decision at first, but upon reflection, looked forward to the change. Most were top academic students and were transferring to attend private schools.

In several cases both parents and child from the same family felt that they alone made the decision. In many cases the children felt they made the decision to transfer, although in each case this was also the desire of the parents. It is important to note that in most cases, the children felt as if they

had some control and input into the decision, that this was not solely the decision of their parents. In most families there was considerable discussion about transferring and the parents listened to their child's opinions. In most cases the children felt comfortable with the decision, perhaps because they had been well prepared for the transfer. In no case studied did it appear that the decision to transfer from the French Immersion program was traumatic for the child. There seemed to be open communication between parents and children.

Although the children indicated they were looking forward to their new school for grade seven, many mentioned that it would be difficult to leave behind their friends. They also felt that the first few months of school would be somewhat difficult as they would need to adjust to everything being taught in English.

Many of the parents had considered transferring their child before grade six, some even after grades one and two, but had decided to wait for a natural change of schools to occur before actually transferring. One parent explained how she had been talked out of transferring her child at grade four by the child's classroom teacher, and wished she had transferred him at that time. Several parents were relieved that the teachers had also suggested their child transfer, as this confirmed their thoughts and made their decision easier. They appreciated the teachers' openness and honesty.

Many parents reinforced their concerns about junior and senior high French Immersion programs. Although some were still hesitant about transferring their child for grade seven, most definitely did not want their child to enroll in French Immersion for grade ten. Although all the parents wanted their children to continue studying French, they did not want them to suffer from a lack of optional courses in French Immersion at the high school level. Many parents also would prefer the instruction of mathematics and science to be in English. Criticism of the high school graduation "French Immersion Certificate" and its restrictiveness was often given by parents. Parents also were becoming increasingly unable to understand and help their child with homework, and reinforced this as a consideration in their decision to transfer their child. One parent, not wanting to criticize the French Immersion program stated: "I feel strongly that Math and Science at the high school level should be taught in English. This is not a failure of the (French Immersion) program as much as it is a choice in favor of (my child's) needs as opposed to the program." This is significant of the attitude of many parents. They are choosing another program for their child which they feel meets their child's needs better than does the French Immersion program. They are not faulting the French Immersion program as it cannot meet the needs of all learners when optional programs and schools exist.

5.2 Conclusion

When beginning the study, the researcher, having noted the number of children transferring from grade six French Immersion, believed that parents were discontent with the French Immersion program as it exists at the elementary level and did not want their child to pursue an education in French Immersion. This did not prove to be the situation in the vast majority of cases studied. Seventy-five percent of parents were quite happy with the French Immersion program and the quality of teaching at the elementary level. All but one parent was satisfied with the quality of French Immersion education, and this parent was not aware of the goals of the program. Thirteen of 22 parents were concerned that English instruction did not receive a greater priority at the junior and senior high level. They were concerned that Science and Mathematics be taught at advanced levels in English. They were beginning to plan their child's university education and wanted their child to be fully competent in English. All parents wanted their child to continue studying French, and many wished their child to continue in a partial French Immersion program, taking some courses such as "Français" in French. The lack of optional courses and qualified instructors at senior levels was also of concern. Many parents made sure that their child would be enrolled in an advanced and challenging French program in grade seven. It can be seen that parents are not

rejecting the teaching of French but are wanting more English instruction. They are carefully choosing from among the schools and programs available to their child for grade seven. They are not so much rejecting French Immersion, but are choosing a program which they feel better meets the needs of their child.

The number of children transferring from French Immersion upon completion of grade six surprised the researcher. The twenty-two students who transferred were more than double the number who transferred the year before. The number of children transferring at all levels needs to be studied to see if there is, in fact, a large increase in the percentage of dropouts.

The researcher expected that most of the children leaving the program would be those encountering difficulties. This amounted to only 36% of all the children. Again, the choice of alternate programs for junior high was a more significant factor in the number of children transferring. Parents of the children encountering difficulties were more likely to consult with the classroom teacher, whereas the other parents made their decision without any school involvement. Parents remained supportive of the elementary French Immersion program. Even parents whose child encountered difficulty did not blame the program. Many felt the program was not for all children and that the needs of each learner needed to be taken into account, but that they would

recommend the program to others. Almost all parents did not regret enrolling their child in French Immersion.

The ability of the children interviewed to analyze themselves also surprised the researcher. The children were becoming very aware of themselves as learners. A significant comment was made by one child encountering difficulties: "I will only ask questions when I feel it is necessary. Sometimes it's not worth asking a question if I know I won't understand the answer." As children are becoming more aware of their strengths and weaknesses as learners, they have greater input into decisions concerning their education.

It was obvious that parents did consult with their children in most cases, and listened to their child's opinions. The open communication between parent and child made the decision less traumatic for the children. They seemed well-prepared for a new program in grade seven.

Perhaps the most important conclusion reached by the researcher was the multiplicity of reasons parents cited for transferring their child. Parents did not have a single reason for deciding on a transfer, but many reasons combined to make their decision. Few parents discussed concerns about bilingualism and Canadian politics. The Quebec political situation did not seem to effect the decision of the parents withdrawing their child from French Immersion. The

main reasons parents had for transferring their children are as follows:

- 1) need for more English instruction,
- 2) move to a private school,
- 3) distance too far to junior high,
- 4) academic difficulties,
- 5) dislike of local junior high,
- 6) move to neighborhood school.

More than any other reason for transferring, parents commented on the need for more English instruction, especially as the children were preparing for university. Although this was a consideration of most parents it was not necessarily the major reason for transfer.

Few students transferred due to a poor attitude or lack of motivation to study French. Perhaps these students had already transferred out of the program at earlier grades. Because these children had only encountered instruction in French Immersion, perhaps their attitude toward learning French is more positive than those students in Basic French programs, and therefore this is not a significant factor. It is important to note that the vast majority of children wanted to continue studying French. Although all children preferred their English Language Arts course to their French Language Arts course, their attitude to French was still very positive.

In conclusion, the most significant results of this study need be highlighted:

- 1) Parents continue to support the French Immersion program and view it favorably even though their children are transferring from the program.
- 2) Children maintain a positive attitude to learning French and wish to continue studying French in the future.
- 3) No single reason initiated the majority of parents to decide upon transferring their child. Many factors were involved in the decision.
- 4) Most parents were concerned that more English instruction be introduced in the French Immersion program at the junior and senior high levels.

When a variety of schools and instructional programs exist at the junior high level, it is unlikely that any one program will meet the needs of all learners. For most of the students leaving the French Immersion program upon completion of grade six, they are doing so, not in rejection of French Immersion, but in pursuit of another program which they perceive better suits their needs as learners.

5.3 Findings and Recommendations

The study leads the researcher to make several recommendations about

the French Immersion program and its structuring so that the program suits the needs of a greater student population. Research in these areas would be beneficial in future curricular endeavors in French Immersion.

Finding 1:

Thirteen of 22 parents wanted their children to receive more English instruction. Many believed mathematics and science instruction should be in English at the secondary level. Parents wanted their children to be prepared for university and wanted to be sure that their English skills were adequate. Halsall (1991) confirms that there is a perception among students that in preparing for post-secondary education, English skills must be emphasized (p. 20). Hayden (1988) determined that 50% of children transferred from elementary French Immersion because parents wanted more English instruction (p. 231). Parents are concerned about the amount of English instruction at junior and senior high levels.

Recommendation:

Students should be allowed to select a number of English instruction courses, yet still remain in the French Immersion program. Junior and senior high schools need to give students a free selection of courses based on the students' needs and interests. Streaming students into either a French Immersion or English instruction program discourages a number of students

from continuing on in French Immersion. Students who wish to take a science or mathematics course in English should be able to do so, and yet continue to take a Français course. Students need greater empowerment in their selection of courses!

Finding 2:

Seven out of 22 parents were dissatisfied with the quality of instruction at the junior high level. Lewis and Shapson (1989) noted that secondary immersion teachers must consider current research on teacher effectiveness. Halsall (1991) wrote that "teacher and instructional quality were other frequently cited factors accounting for transfer" (p. 10).

Recommendation:

Junior high teachers need to consider the needs of the students in French Immersion. Improved public relations between school and community may encourage more students to remain in the immersion program.

Finding 3:

Although only four out of 22 parents consulted the classroom teacher when deciding whether or not to transfer their child from French Immersion, these parents were grateful for the teachers' opinions and input.

Recommendation:

Teachers need to be honest and open in their discussions with

parents when the question of transfer arises. Teachers should encourage parents to determine which program is the best for their child. It should not be considered a status symbol to keep all children in French Immersion when alternate programs do exist. Teachers need also encourage parents and children to discuss openly the child's future educational options. A teacher should not be afraid to make recommendations based on their personal knowledge of the situation, yet remind parents that the decision rests with them and their child.

Finding 4:

Teachers interviewed mentioned the need for greater resources and support help to meet the needs of all students in the program. Parents commented on the difficulties students encounter when adequate reference material is not available in French at the students' level. Hayden (1988) notes that the provision of appropriate materials and resources for teachers will help them broaden the scope of their curriculum (p. 233). Lyster (1987) has commented on the "inappropriateness of current pedagogical materials" (p. 712) in French Immersion.

Recommendation:

Teachers must continue to search for material appropriate to the students' level. Support services for needy students must be available in

French within each school. More materials must be developed and published appropriate for immersion students.

Finding 5:

For 40% of the parents, the distance to the French Immersion junior high school was a factor in their decision to withdraw their child from the immersion program. Halsall (1991) notes that "the location of secondary immersion programs has long been known to be a factor in attrition of students from immersion programs" (p. 11).

Recommendation:

Many parents and students prefer a neighborhood school to a large centralized immersion center. The creation of large, centralized junior and senior high schools does not meet the needs of a number of learners. The time spent on lengthy bus rides to and from school could be spent more productively on extra-curricular activities or study. Neighborhood French Immersion junior high and high schools need to be considered to retain students in the program.

Finding 6:

Seventy-five percent of parents surveyed were happy with the quality of instruction in French Immersion. Only one parent was critical of the program. Although children are transferring from the program, they are not doing so due

to poor quality instruction at the elementary level.

Recommendation:

Elementary French Immersion teachers should be aware that parents are content with the quality of their instruction. Teachers must continue to provide a variety of educational experiences for young children and to support the individual learner.

5.3.1 Recommendations for Future Research

The following findings suggest the need for future research.

Finding 7:

Adiv (1979) and Halsall (1991) cite children who transfer from the immersion program when they must change schools. Eight of the 14 children who completed the questionnaires in this study indicated they were transferring because it was a good time to switch upon completion of grade six.

Recommendation:

Although the three schools studied were K to 6, the introduction of middle years schools would likely have a considerable impact on the student enrollment in French Immersion. Currently a number of children are transferring from the program at the grades six and nine level when a school change also occurs. The impact of middle years and the structure of the French Immersion program needs to be considered.

Finding 8:

Teachers and principals were rarely consulted by parents when they were deciding to transfer their child from the immersion program. This study considered the teacher's role in the decision to transfer a child from French Immersion.

Recommendation:

The parents of students who do not transfer from the program need to be surveyed to see if teachers are recommending to parents that children remain in the French Immersion program.

Finding 9:

Twenty-two out of a population of 125 students transferred upon completion of grade six. The community studied is quite affluent and parents consider post-secondary education as a priority for their children.

Recommendation:

The study needs to be undertaken on a large scale, perhaps surveying the entire grade six French Immersion population in the province. Results also need to be compared to a population of children from a less affluent community.

Finding 10:

All the children in the study believed French should be taught, 86%

enjoyed French Language Arts, and 79% enjoyed speaking French. Although the children had a very positive attitude to learning French, they all preferred English Language Arts to French and 57% were not sure if they would take French if the choice was left up to them. Hayden (1988) noted that 70% of children who transferred from elementary French Immersion were unhappy with school. These findings are contradictory.

Recommendation:

This finding leads to a twofold recommendation. Firstly, the students who remain in French Immersion need to be surveyed to find if they also prefer English Language Arts to French. Secondly, a greater population needs to be studied to determine if students transferring from grade six French Immersion do indeed enjoy the program as was indicated in this study.

Finding 11:

Twenty-two students left the program upon completion of grade six. There continues to be a heavy drop out rate at the secondary level (Adiv, 1979; Halsall, 1991).

Recommendation:

Grades seven, eight, nine and ten students need to be surveyed to determine the reasons why students continue to leave the program.

Finding 12:

Parents are basing their decision to transfer their child on personal opinions and observations. There is no research to indicate if students do, in fact, need more English skills to be prepared for post-secondary education. Hayden (1988) recommends that "parents need to be advised of the realities of what is involved within the immersion curriculum" (p. 234).

Recommendation:

Future research must consider the amount of English and French instruction needed at the secondary level. The goals and objectives of the French Immersion program must be clearly articulated to both parents and those who receive the students in their post-secondary education.

The results of this study are based on a very small population within one school division in the city of Winnipeg. Conclusions can only be based on the information provided by those who completed the questionnaire and the interview, although there is corroboration with recent publications.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study lead to twelve recommendations which could impact on the enrollment in French Immersion beyond the population studied.

CHAPITRE VI

LES ENFANTS QUI QUITTENT LE PROGRAMME D'IMMERSION
FRANCAISE EN 6E ANNEE6.1 L'Etude

Comme professeur de la sixième année, j'entends souvent la question posée par les parents: "Qu'est-ce que vous pensez? Est-ce que mon enfant devrait rester en immersion l'année prochaine, ou devrait-il transférer au programme d'anglais?"

Bien que le programme d'immersion française connaît un succès considérable au Canada, chaque année il y a des enfants qui quittent le programme. Peu de recherche traite des raisons qui conduisent les enfants à quitter le programme d'immersion. Adiv (1979) a étudié les raisons qui mènent les élèves de l'école pré-secondaire à quitter l'immersion. Elle a trouvé que 48% des élèves quittent le programme lorsqu'il faut changer d'école. Hayden (1988) a étudié les raisons qui poussent les enfants de l'école élémentaire à quitter le programme mi-chemin, durant l'année scolaire. Elle a conclut: "the child who is experiencing difficulty with language arts is primarily the one who is switched out" (p. 233). Bruck (1985) et Trites (1986) ont étudié les enfants qui ont transférés de l'immersion à cause de difficultés d'apprentissage en primaire, mais Parkin, Morrison et Watkin

(1987) ont indiqué que: "There is little information about the characteristics of students who transfer at the upper elementary or secondary levels" (p. 74).

Halsall (1991) a trouvé plusieurs raisons qui entraînent les élèves à quitter l'immersion quand ils arrivent au niveau secondaire.

Le but de cette étude est de déterminer les raisons qui ont décidé des enfants d'une division scolaire de Winnipeg, Canada, à transférer du programme d'immersion après avoir complété la sixième année. Aussi, le but est-il d'étudier comment la décision de transférer un enfant au programme d'anglais est prise.

La littérature indique plusieurs raisons qui poussent les enfants à transférer du programme d'immersion (Bruck, 1985; Genesee, 1983; Hayden, 1988; Swain, Lapkin et Shapson, 1990; Halsall, 1991). Les raisons les plus communes sont:

des difficultés d'apprentissage;

des mauvais résultats sur les tests;

un manque de support et d'aide individuel à l'école;

des difficultés lorsque les concepts enseignés deviennent trop abstraits;

des problèmes de discipline;

l'immaturation;

du stress émotionnel;
l'incapacité des parents d'aider leurs enfants avec les devoirs en français à la maison;
un manque d'aptitude pour apprendre le français;
les qualifications des professeurs.

Gardner et Smythe (1975) ont déterminé que la motivation et l'attitude sont des indicateurs significatifs si les élèves restent dans un programme de langue seconde. L'expérience personnelle m'a mené à considérer d'autres possibilités à savoir pourquoi les enfants quittent le programme après avoir complété la sixième année:

l'inscription aux écoles privées;
les parents croient que les élèves ont atteint un niveau adéquat de bilinguisme;
l'influence de pairs; (peer pressure)
les préparatifs pour l'université en anglais;
un manque de transport adéquat à l'école;
l'instabilité politique de notre pays.

Pour trouver les raisons qui mènent les enfants de la sixième année à quitter le programme d'immersion les élèves et leurs parents ont complété des questionnaires et passé des entrevues. Le professeur de l'élève et le directeur

de l'école ont aussi complété une entrevue. Les questionnaires considèrent en particulier la motivation et l'attitude envers l'apprentissage de français. Ils ont été utilisés comme base de référence pour les entrevues. L'approche de l'étude de cas a été utilisée comme méthode pour mieux étudier toutes les complexités de la question.

En 1991, dans une division scolaire de Winnipeg, 22 élèves d'une population de 125 ont quitté le programme d'immersion après avoir complété la sixième année.

Seize parents et quatorze enfants ont complété au moins une partie de l'étude. Les quatre professeurs et les trois directeurs ont aussi complété les entrevues. L'information a été ramassée de tous les enfants même des enfants qui n'ont pas choisi de participer à l'étude (l'information dans ces cas venait du professeur).

6.2 Les Résultats

Résultats des questionnaires.

Soixante-quinze pourcent des parents sont contents de la qualité de l'éducation en immersion. Il n'y a qu'un seul parent qui a très critiqué le contenu du programme et les compétences des professeurs. Les résultats du questionnaire indiquent que les parents ont de la motivation intrinsèque et extrinsèque lorsqu'ils ont inscrit leurs enfants en immersion. Bien que l'étude

des Canadian Parents for French aient montré que 2/3 des parents mettent leur enfant en immersion pour améliorer les opportunités de travail futur; les résultats de cette étude indiquent que les parents ont plusieurs raisons pour avoir placé leur enfant en immersion, et la plupart espère que l'éducation en immersion permettra de donner plus de connaissances à leur enfant. Quelques statistiques intéressantes de l'étude sont incluses:

38% d'enfants ont transféré à cause de difficultés d'apprentissage;

25% des parents ne sont pas contents avec l'école pré-seconaire d'immersion du quartier;

31% des parents ont décidé d'envoyer l'enfant à une école du quartier;

57% des enfants ont indiqué qu'ils transféraient de l'immersion parce qu'ils changeaient d'école après la sixième année;

36% des enfants ont transféré parce qu'ils voulaient aller à l'université et ils auraient besoin de plus de cours en anglais;

36% des enfants ont dit qu'ils transféraient à cause de la décision de leurs parents;

0% des enfants ont dit qu'ils transféraient parce qu'ils étaient encourager par le professeur.

Les enfants avaient une attitude très positive à la langue française:

93% croient que le français est une partie importante de leur éducation

100% croient que c'est important pour les Canadiens d'apprendre les deux langues officielles.

Les enfants, plus que leurs parents, peuvent voir l'importance de l'apprentissage du français pour ces raisons personnelles et politiques. Bien que tous les enfants aiment la langue française, 57% indiquent qu'ils ne sont pas sûr s'ils étudieraient le français si la décision était totalement à eux. Le questionnaire a montré que les élèves qui quittent l'immersion, le font avec une attitude positive vers le français.

Résultats des entrevues

Les parents et les élèves peuvent élaborer leurs réponses pendant les entrevues, donc une idée plus détaillée du pourquoi l'enfant a transféré peut être établie.

Cinquante pourcent des enfants sont inscrits à une école privée pour la septième année. Les parents aiment la réputation d'excellence académique et la discipline des écoles privées. Ils n'aiment pas la qualité de l'éducation et le surpeuplement à l'école pré-secondaire d'immersion du quartier.

Trente pourcent des parents ont décidé d'envoyer leur enfant à l'école pré-secondaire anglaise de leur quartier pour éviter la grande école pré-secondaire d'immersion. Ces parents parlaient aussi de la distance à l'école pré-secondaire d'immersion et le manque d'amis dans la communauté de leur

enfant.

Trente-cinq pourcent des parents auraient laissé leur enfant en immersion s'ils seraient contents de la qualité d'enseignement à l'école pré-secondaire.

Quarante pourcent des enfants ont transféré à cause de difficultés avec le programme d'immersion. Dans la plupart des cas, les enfants ont eu des difficultés avec l'anglais et le français, mais pas avec les mathématiques. Bien que les élèves voulaient étudier le français dans le futur, chacun était soulagé de quitter l'immersion. Peu d'élèves ont eu des problèmes de discipline. Les parents de ces élèves se sentaient handicapés parce qu'ils ne pouvaient pas aider les enfants à la maison avec le travail en français. Les parents n'ont pas blâmé le programme d'immersion lorsque les enfants ont eu des difficultés. Ils ont continué à supporter le programme bien que plusieurs disent que l'immersion n'est pas pour tout le monde. Les parents de ces enfants sont les seuls qui ont consulté le professeur de l'enfant pour discuter de la décision de transférer. La plupart des parents y songeaient sérieusement avant de prendre la décision de transférer leur enfant. Dans chaque cas, il est évident que la décision était bien discutée et que l'enfant se sentait confortable lorsque la décision était prise. Presque tous les parents soutiennent que leurs enfants ont besoin de plus d'anglais surtout dans les matières de sciences et de

mathématiques au niveau pré-secondaire et secondaire. Les parents pensent que c'est difficile pour les enfants de faire de la recherche en français. Ils veulent que leur enfant soit préparé pour l'université et ils ont peur que les compétences en anglais ne soient pas adéquates. Tous les parents veulent que les enfants continuent leurs études en français, mais pas aux dépens de l'anglais. Plusieurs préféreraient un programme de 50-50 en immersion à l'école pré-secondaire.

Les opinions des directeurs

Les directeurs d'école d'immersion admettent d'être rarement consultés quand il s'agit d'un cas d'élève qui quitte le programme après la sixième année. Ils sont le plus souvent consultés lorsque les parents envisageaient de transférer leur enfant au niveau primaire. Bien qu'ils supportent la décision des parents, ils pensent que le programme d'immersion pourraient être adapté aux besoins de tous les enfants.

Les opinions des professeurs

Bien que les professeurs ont des opinions différentes, chacun croit que la fin de la sixième année est un bon temps pour quitter le programme, pour les enfants qui veulent le quitter.

Les professeurs ont recommandé plus de support pour les enfants qui ont des difficultés et plus de matériel écrit au niveau de l'enfant. Les

professeurs croient que l'immersion doit accommoder les besoins de tous les enfants, mais que le programme n'est pas pour tout le monde. Ils ont suggéré que le programme serait difficile pour les enfants avec des problèmes émotionnels ou des problèmes d'apprentissage sérieux, pour ceux qui ne parlent pas l'anglais à la maison ou qui ont de sérieuses difficultés avec l'anglais, pour ceux qui ne sont pas motivés à apprendre une langue seconde; et pour ceux qui ont des problèmes sérieux de l'ouïe. Quelques professeurs recommandent le programme d'immersion tardive. Aussi ont-ils recommandé plus d'instructions en anglais au niveau pré-secondaire.

Comment la décision de transférer l'élève est-elle prise?

Les enfants se sont tous sentis confortables avec la décision de transférer de l'immersion. Un tiers des enfants ont raconté que la décision était prise par leurs parents, qu'ils se sentaient désappointés au début, mais après un bout de temps ils étaient plus à l'aise. Ces enfants étaient très intelligents et ont transféré pour fréquenter les écoles privées.

Les enfants, en général, disent qu'ils ont pris la décision avec leur parents. Il y avait beaucoup de discussions dans la plupart des familles. La décision de transférer était acceptée par tous les enfants. Dans aucun cas la décision n'a-t-elle été traumatique à l'enfant. Il y avait de la communication ouverte entre les parents et les enfants.

Les enfants ont mentionné que le début de la septième année seraient difficile parce qu'il faudrait s'ajuster au fait que tout serait en anglais.

Plusieurs parents désiraient transférer leur enfant avant la sixième année, mais ils ont décidé d'attendre le changement naturel de l'école. Quelques parents étaient même soulagés lorsque le professeur a suggéré la possibilité de transféré parce que c'était une confirmation de leurs pensées. Les parents ont beaucoup appréciés l'honnêteté et la disponibilité des professeurs.

6.3 Conclusions et Observations

Les parents qui décident de transférer leurs enfants après la sixième année d'immersion prennent leur décision, pas en rejetant l'immersion, mais en choisissant d'autres programmes qui servent mieux les besoins de leurs enfants. Les parents ne regrettent pas la décision d'avoir placé leur enfant en immersion mais ils concluent que l'immersion n'est pas pour tous les enfants. Les enfants aussi avaient une attitude très positive à la langue française.

L'étude démontre que la combinaison des raisons suivantes influencent fortement les parents dans leur prise de décision de transférer leur enfant du programme d'immersion quand ils arrivent au niveau pré-secondaire ou secondaire:

- 1) le besoin pour plus d'instructions en anglais,

- 2) le changement à une école privée,
- 3) la distance à l'école pré-secondaire,
- 4) les difficultés académiques,
- 5) ils n'aiment pas l'école pré-secondaire
- 6) un changement pour l'école du quartier.

La raison citée le plus souvent pour le transfert est que les parents veulent plus d'instructions en anglais pour que les enfants puissent être adéquatement préparés pour l'université.

Lorsque plusieurs programmes existent au niveau pré-secondaire, aucun programme peut accommoder les besoins de tous les apprenants. Les enfants quittent le programme d'immersion pour un programme qui peut mieux accommoder leurs besoins.

Afin de diminuer le nombre des élèves qui quittent le programme d'immersion à la fin de la sixième année, cette recherche me mène à quelques observations:

- 1) Treize des 22 parents voulaient plus d'anglais enseigné au niveau pré-secondaire et secondaire. Le programme d'immersion au niveau pré-secondaire et secondaire doit être plus flexible pour donner plus de choix aux enfants. Les enfants ne devraient pas être piégés dans un programme d'immersion ou d'anglais. Ils doivent avoir le pouvoir de

- choisir les cours qui les intéressent.
- 2) Sept des 22 parents n'aimaient pas la qualité d'instruction à l'école pré-secondaire. Les professeurs à ce niveau doivent considérer les intérêts et les besoins de leurs élèves.
 - 3) Il n'y avait que quatre parents qui ont consultés les professeurs concernant la décision de transférer leur enfant, mais ils étaient contents que les professeurs étaient francs et honnêtes en donnant leurs opinions. Les professeurs doivent être honnête en discutant si un enfant doit quitter le programme. Les professeurs doivent encourager les parents à considérer les besoins et leur enfant et à choisir un programme ou pré-secondaire qui les rencontrent le plus.
 - 4) Les professeurs ont besoin de plus de support en immersion pour aider les enfants sur-doués et ceux qui ont des difficultés. Les orthopédagogues français et les assistants français sont nécessaires.
 - 5) La distance à une grande école pré-secondaire et secondaire d'immersion décourage quelques enfants qui aimeraient fréquenter une école dans leur quartier. Une grande école d'immersion ne répond pas aux besoins de tous les apprenants.
 - 6) Soixante-quinze pourcent des parents étaient contents de la qualité de l'instruction en immersion au niveau élémentaire. Les professeurs

d'immersion à l'élémentaire doivent continuer à supporter l'individu et à offrir une variété d'expériences aux jeunes.

Les observations suivantes suggèrent le besoin pour la future recherche:

- 7) Plusieurs enfants quittent le programme en sixième et en neuvième année. Si les écoles sont restructurées pour incorporer la philosophie de "middle years" il y aurait possiblement un effet sur le nombre d'enfants qui quittent le programme après la quatrième année. Cet effet doit être étudié.
- 8) Une étude devrait être envisagée pour y connaître les raisons qui poussent les parents à laisser leurs enfants en immersion. Il faudrait aussi vérifier si le personnel enseignant ne les aurait pas conseillé dans leur choix.
- 9) La population de cette étude est assez riche et les parents planifient l'éducation post-secondaire de leurs enfants. L'étude devait être complétée sur une population plus large. Les résultats doivent être comparés à un groupe d'enfants d'une communauté moins fortunée.
- 10) Les enfants de cette étude avaient une attitude positive à la langue française, mais 67% n'étaient pas certains s'ils étudieraient le français si le choix était à eux. Tous les enfants préféraient l'anglais au français. Il faut agrandir la population de l'étude. Il faut étudier les

enfants qui restent en immersion et ceux qui transfèrent puis comparer leurs attitudes.

- 11) Les enfants continuent à quitter le programme en 7^e, 8^e et 9^e années. Les raisons pour ces transferts doivent être étudiés.
- 12) La décision de transférer un enfant est faite par les parents sur une base strictement personnelle. Ils pensent que leurs enfants ont besoin de plus d'instructions en anglais pour être prêt à l'université. Les futures recherches doivent considérer le montant d'anglais et de français enseigné au niveau secondaire. Les objectifs du programme d'immersion doivent être expliqués clairement aux parents et à ceux qui reçoivent les élèves pour leur éducation post-secondaire.

Bien que ces résultats et observations soient basés sur une petite population les résultats sont semblables aux données de Hayden (1988) et de Halsall (1991). Les recommandations et observations peuvent influencer la future inscription en immersion et le succès final du programme.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Selection of Students/Teacher's Permission

Date

Teacher's Name
School address

Dear _____,

I am completing my master's thesis in Education at the University of Manitoba. I am studying the reasons why grade six French Immersion students transfer out of the program into an English instruction program. I would appreciate your help in identifying these students in your classroom. Would you please indicate the name, address and phone number of all students who have indicated that they will be transferring into an English instruction program next year, and return it to me by _____. I will use your list to contact each parent and child to see if they would be willing to participate in the study. Permission for the study has been granted by your principal and the school division.

I would also like to meet with you and briefly discuss the reasons why you believe each child identified in your room transferred out of the program, as well as some of your opinions about children transferring out of French Immersion. This should take no more than a half an hour of your time.

I realize that this is a very busy time of the year, but would appreciate your valuable opinions. All information will remain confidential. If you would like, I would be willing to share my conclusions with you, once my thesis is completed. Should you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at school ().

..../2

Appendix B

Parental Permission

Date

Parent's name
Address

Dear _____,

I am a grade six French Immersion teacher at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx. I am currently completing my master's thesis in Education at the University of Manitoba. I am studying the reasons why grade six French Immersion students transfer out of the program.

I would appreciate your support in studying this issue. It would be helpful if you would complete a brief written questionnaire which asks why your child transferred from the French Immersion program and your attitudes toward the French Immersion program. This should take approximately 15-20 minutes. I would then like to meet with you for a short personal interview of about one half hour on the same topic. I hope to interview you before the end of June. I would also like to follow a similar procedure with your child. All personal information which is obtained from you and your child will be held in the strictest confidence. This information is absolutely confidential and names will never be used in the study or shared with anyone.

I realize that this is a very busy time of year, but would appreciate your valuable opinions. If you would like, I would be willing to share my conclusions with you once my thesis is completed. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at school, phone (), or at home, ().

.../2

Kindly complete and return the permission form below in the enclosed self-addressed envelope and I will send you the questionnaire. If at any time you or your child decide you no longer wish to participate in the study, you are free to withdraw.

Thank you for your support.

Yours truly,

Gordon Campbell

GC:dt

Please check the following, whichever apply:

I will complete a questionnaire.

I give permission to be interviewed knowing that all personal information will be kept strictly confidential.

I give permission for my child to participate in the study.
(If permission is granted, a letter will be sent to your child explaining the procedure and asking her/his permission).

Name (Please Print)

Parental Signature

Appendix C

Student's Permission

Date

Student's name

Address

Dear _____,

I am a grade six French Immersion teacher at XXXXXXXXXXXXX. I am studying students who will be transferring out of the French Immersion program in grade six. My research, through the University of Manitoba, will identify many of the reasons why children leave the French Immersion program.

Because you have chosen to leave the program, you have many valuable opinions about French Immersion which I am interested in. Should you be willing, I would like you to complete a short written questionnaire asking you your attitudes toward French Immersion and school in general, and an oral interview asking you reasons why you left the program. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The interview will take about 30 minutes. All personal information you share with me will be kept strictly confidential - it will not be shared with anyone else. Should you at any time change your mind and not want to participate in the study, you should feel free to do so.

.../2

If you would like to complete the questionnaire and be interviewed, please sign this sheet and return it in the self-addressed envelope. Should you have any further questions about the study, please don't hesitate to contact me at (). When I have completed my study, I would be happy to share my overall findings with you, if you would like.

Thank you for your help.

Yours truly,

Gordon Campbell

GC:dt

Yes, I will complete a questionnaire.

Yes, I give my permission to be interviewed, knowing that all personal information will be kept strictly confidential.

Signature

Appendix D

Permission of the Superintendent of Schools

Date

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Superintendent
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXX,

I am currently completing my master's thesis in Education at the University of Manitoba. I am studying the reasons why grade six French Immersion students transfer out of the program.

I request your permission to undertake this study on students, parents, teachers and administrators in this division. Parents and children will each complete a brief questionnaire which will be followed by a personal interview. Brief interviews will also be conducted with the classroom teachers and the school principals. All information will be kept strictly confidential, and all participants have been made aware that they may withdraw from the study at any time.

I would like to complete the majority of interviews before the end of June, with some follow-up interviews with children and parents occurring in Sept./Oct. next year. Written questionnaires should take the respondents no more than 15 minutes to complete, while the oral interviews should take approximately half an hour. I have included copies of all permission letters to be sent to parents, children and division personnel, as well as copies of the interviews themselves. All subjects are informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time if they so desire.

I would appreciate your informing me as soon as possible if I may undertake the study so that I can begin work.

Thank you,

Yours truly,

Gordon Campbell

GC:dt

Appendix E

Principal's permission

Date

Principal's name

School address

Dear _____,

I am currently completing my master's thesis in Education at the University of Manitoba. I am studying the reasons why Grade six French Immersion students transfer out of the program.

I have received the approval of the superintendent to undertake the study and would request your support in studying this issue as well. I would like to interview the parents of children in grade six who will be transferring out of French Immersion this year, as well as the children, the grade six teachers and yourself. The parents and children complete both questionnaires and interviews whereas the teachers and yourself would be interviewed orally. The interview should take no more than one half hour. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

If you approve of the study, please complete the bottom of this letter and return it to me. I will arrange an interview time with you at a later date to discuss the children who have transferred and your opinions about this issue. If you would like, I would be willing to share my results with you once my thesis is completed.

.../2

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.
Thank you for your support.

Yours truly,

Gordon Campbell

GC:dt

I give permission for the study to be undertaken and be interviewed, knowing that all responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Signature

Appendix F

The Student Questionnaire

You are being asked to complete this questionnaire as a part of a project being conducted about students who have transferred out of French Immersion or are about to do so. Your answers to all questions will be treated confidentially.

Be as accurate and as honest as possible. If you do not wish to answer a particular question you do not need to. If you have any difficulties with any question, or if you do not understand a question, please telephone me after school at ().

Thank you,

Gordon Campbell

Appendix H

PART A

Following are a number of statements with which some people agree and others disagree. There are no right or wrong answers since many people have different opinions. Please give me your opinion about each statement by circling one of the words to the right after each statement. If you do not wish to answer a question, you do not have to do so.

- | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|-------|----------------|
| 1. French is an important part of my education. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Disagree a bit | Agree a bit | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 2. It is important for Canadians to learn French and English. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Disagree a bit | Agree a bit | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 3. I enjoy speaking French in class. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Disagree a bit | Agree a bit | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 4. My parents wanted me to learn French. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Disagree a bit | Agree a bit | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 5. Studying French is important because it will enable me to meet and speak to French people. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Disagree a bit | Agree a bit | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 6. French is boring. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Disagree a bit | Agree a bit | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 7. Studying French is important because I'll need it for my future career. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Disagree a bit | Agree a bit | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 8. My parents are interested in my French Immersion work. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Disagree a bit | Agree a bit | Agree | Strongly agree |

9. Learning French is a waste of time.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
10. I can read and speak French as well as I need to.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
11. I feel nervous speaking in class in French and in English.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
12. My parents try to help me with my homework.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
13. I enjoy hard work.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
14. I enjoy my English language arts course.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
15. I enjoy my French language arts course.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree
16. I usually only do enough work to get by, not more than necessary.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree a bit	Agree a bit	Agree	Strongly agree

PART B

Please complete the following questions by circling the idea which best completes each statement:

1. If it were up to me whether or not to take French, I:
 - a) don't know whether I would take it or not.
 - b) would definitely take it.
 - c) would drop it.

2. If I had the opportunity to speak French outside school, I would
 - a) never speak it.
 - b) speak it occasionally, using English whenever possible.
 - c) speak French most of the time, using English only if really necessary.

3. If I had a choice, I would like to:
 - a) attend a school where French is not taught.
 - b) go to a school where French is taught as a subject, half an hour to an hour a day.
 - c) go to a French Immersion school.

4. I believe French should be taught to students:
 - a) beginning in Grade 1 or Kindergarten.
 - b) beginning in junior high
 - c) beginning in high school
 - d) not at all
 - e) some other grade

5. During French class, I would like:

- a) to have only French spoken.
- b) to have a combination of French and English spoken.
- c) to have as much English as possible spoken.

6. I believe French should:

- a) be taught to all students.
- b) be taught only to those students who wish to study it.
- c) not be taught to anyone.

7. I find studying French:

- a) very interesting.
- b) no more interesting than most subjects.
- c) not interesting at all.

8. If I had the opportunity to change the way French Immersion is taught in our school, I would:

- a) increase the amount of time each student spends studying French in school.
- b) keep the amount of French as it is.
- c) have less amount of time spent studying French each day.

9. In French class I:

- a) have a tendency to day dream about other things.
- b) become completely bored.
- c) become totally involved with the subject matter.
- d) none of the above.

PART C

Please answer the following question. Circle as many answers as you want to. If you choose more than one answer, put a star * in front of the main reason you are transferring:

1. I am transferring out of French Immersion because:
 - a) the work is too difficult.
 - b) I do not understand many of my assignments.
 - c) I just cannot learn French very well.
 - d) My teacher thinks I should transfer.
 - e) My parents think I should transfer.
 - f) I do not like my teacher.
 - g) It is a good time to switch because I am changing schools anyway.
 - h) I plan to go to university and need more English courses.
 - i) It is too far to go to a French Immersion junior high school.
 - j) I am not interested in learning French any more.
 - k) Another reason. Please specify.

Appendix G

The Student Interview

Now I would like to ask you a few questions about yourself, your opinions about school, about French Immersion, and about why you are transferring out of the program. You do not need to answer any question you don't wish to. All your answers will be kept confidential.

1. When were you born? _____ year _____ month _____ day
2. Where were you born?
3. Have you lived in any other places?
4. What was the first language you learned to speak?
5. Do you have a chance to talk to French people? If yes, where?
6. Did you want to go into a French Immersion program? Why?
7. When did you begin French Immersion?
8. What were your feelings about French Immersion when you began?
9. Have you changed the way you feel about French Immersion now?
10. What are some of the things you really enjoyed about French Immersion?
Why?
11. What are some of the things you really haven't liked about being in French Immersion? Why?
12. What are your favorite subjects? Why?
13. What are your least favorite subjects? Why?
14. Which is your easiest subject? Why?
15. Which is your most difficult subject? Why?

16. Which do you prefer English or French Language Arts? Why?
17. What do you like most about Language Arts? Least?
18. Do you have very much homework? Explain.
19. Do you usually complete all your homework?
20. What subject do you have the most homework in?
21. Do you get any help at home with your homework?
22. Choose an answer from this card to answer the following questions:

[card: not at all, a little, fairly well, very well]

- a) How well can you say what you want to in French?
- b) How well can you understand French when your teacher speaks French to you?
- c) How well can you understand French if you watch a movie, T.V. show, or see a French play?
- d) How well can you read in French?
- e) How well can you write what you want to write in French?
- f) How well can you read in English?
- g) How well can you write what you want to write in English?

23. Complete each of the following sentences:

- a) Reading in French is _____ because
_____.
- b) Reading in English is _____ because
_____.

c) Writing a story in French is _____ because _____.

d) Writing a story in English is _____ because _____.

e) My teacher _____.

24. Do you find being in French Immersion difficult? How?

25. When did you first begin to find it difficult?

26. Do you discuss these difficulties with your parents? How did they try to help you?

27. Did you ever get any help at school, beyond that from your classroom teacher? Please explain.

a) Who helped you?

b) What sort of help did you receive?

c) What language was the help in?

d) How did you feel about receiving extra help?

e) Did the work become easier after receiving extra help?

28. Do you have many friends in your class?

29. What school and program are your friends registering in for the fall?

30. Do you have many tests in French Immersion?

31. Which tests do you do best on? Which are the most difficult?

32. Do you study a lot for your tests? About how much?

33. Has your teacher this year helped you understand problems which you had difficulty with? Has your teacher this year tried to help you when you have had difficulties?

34. Have your other teachers helped you understand a problem that you have had difficulty with most of the time? What have they done?

35. What do you think about your French Immersion teachers in general?
36. Do you ask questions when you don't understand something?
37. Why are you leaving the French Immersion program?
38. How do you feel about transferring out of the program.?
39. Do you want to leave the program?
40. Who made the decision to transfer you out of French Immersion?
41. Where will you be going to school next year?
42. Would you like to try a French Immersion program again in the future?
For example, if you could study French in the summer, or at a French University, would you want to?
43. Do you think French Immersion is easier or harder than English instruction?
44. What will be the hardest thing for you next year at school?
45. Complete this sentence: Junior High is going to be _____ because _____.
46. What do you want to do when you finish high school?
47. Do you think French will be necessary for you when you finish high school?
48. Do you think you'll be able to use the French you know now when you finish high school.
49. Do you think you'll study French in the future? How?
50. Why do you want to/not want to continue studying French?
51. Would you like to learn another language besides French? Why or why not?

52. Is there anything else you'd like to mention about French Immersion, transferring out of the program, or just about school in general?

Thank you for helping me with my research.

Appendix H

The Parent Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out some of your opinions of French Immersion and some of the reasons why your child is transferring out of the program.

If you do not want to answer a question you do not need to. All answers will be treated confidentially. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at school () or at home ().

A. Opinions of French Immersion Education

Please rate the following statements as to your beliefs on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning you strongly disagree and 5 meaning you strongly agree. Circle the number which corresponds with your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. French Immersion was important for my child because s/he would need it for a future career.	1	2	3	4	5
2. French Immersion was important for my child as it would make her/him a more knowledgeable person.	1	2	3	4	5
3. French Immersion was important for my child as a knowledge of French would enable her/him to get a better job.	1	2	3	4	5

4. French Immersion was important for my child because it would allow her/him to meet and talk to more people. 1 2 3 4 5

5. French Immersion was important for my child because it would allow her/him to better understand the French Canadian culture. 1 2 3 4 5

6. French Immersion was important for my child as a knowledge of French is a means of uniting our country. 1 2 3 4 5

B. Please answer each question as fully as you can. Use additional paper if needed.

1. Why did you place your child in French Immersion?

2. Please describe your opinions about the quality of education your child has received in French Immersion.

3. Please describe your opinions about the quality of the teaching your child has had in French Immersion. Please do not use teachers' names.

4. Has your child encountered any particular difficulty with school? If yes please explain.
5. If your child has experienced difficulty, to what degree do you feel this was due to learning a second language?
6. How does your child feel about school? Has s/he always felt this way?
7. When did you first consider transferring your child out of French Immersion?
8. How does your child feel about the decision?
9. What were your major reasons for transferring your child out of French Immersion?
10. What school and program will your child be enrolled in next year?
11. Why did you choose that particular school and program?

Thank you for completing this interview. Please return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Yours truly,

Gordon Campbell

Appendix I

The Parent Interview

I would like to find out a bit more about some of the answers you gave me on the questionnaire you completed. Should you not wish to answer a question you need not do so. All your answers will be treated confidentially.

1. You said that you placed your child in French Immersion because _____.

What were your feelings about the French Immersion program, in general before _____ began the program?

2. Did you have any worries or concerns about placing _____ in French Immersion. If yes, please explain.
3. Did you feel that _____ would have any particular difficulties with school before s/he started?
4. How much and in what way do you help your child with homework?
5. What does your child find the easiest at school? The most difficult?
6. How well do you think _____ has achieved in French Immersion?
7. Do you see _____'s progress differently than the teachers?
8. On the questionnaire, you indicated that _____ (quality of French Immersion). Why do you say that?
9. You mentioned that _____ (quality of teaching). Why do you say that?
10. Have the teachers and school staff been helpful and supportive when you've had questions about your child's progress, or about the French Immersion program in general?

11. Do you feel there are ways in which the teachers and school staff could have been more supportive? How?
12. Who began the discussions about transferring _____ out of French Immersion?
13. What was your reaction to this discussion?
14. Do you feel you had enough information to make the decision?
15. Was there other information or support you would have liked to help you make the decision?
16. Do you feel you received support from your child's teacher and from the school administrator?
17. How do you feel about the decision?
18. How do you think _____ feels about the decision?
19. Would you register another child in the French Immersion program?
20. Would you like your child to continue studying French? Why?
21. What would you like to see your child do upon completing high school?
22. Do you feel your child has adequate French skills now?
23. What are some of the most important things you feel _____ should learn at school.
24. Which extra curricular activities does _____ participate in? How long has _____ participate in?
25. Does _____ have any hobbies? Which ones? For how long?
26. How well does _____ relate to his classmates, friends, and siblings?

27. Have you or any other members of your family learned a second language? If yes, which ones?
28. How was this language learned?
29. Is there some way you would like to see the French Immersion program changed so that your child would not transfer out of the program?
30. Is there anything you would like to add that I have not asked you about your child or the French Immersion program?
31. Would you be interested in receiving a copy of my results when I have completed my thesis?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix J

The Teacher Interview

As you know, _____ will be transferring out of the French Immersion program after this year. I would like to ask you some questions about _____ and about your opinions of French Immersion. You need not answer any question you don't want to, and all responses will be kept confidential.

Teacher's name _____

Number of years experience teaching _____

1. How do you think _____ enjoyed being in your classroom this year?
2. When were you first aware that _____ was considering transferring out of the French Immersion program?
3. Who first initiated discussions about the transfer?
4. What role did you play at this time? Did you support/encourage the decision or advise against it?
5. Who all was involved in the decision to transfer _____?
6. What reasons do you feel _____ will be transferring from the program?
7. Would you say that you and the parents see the situation in a similar way?
8. Do you feel that the right decision has been made for _____ to leave the French Immersion program. Explain.
9. How would you describe _____'s ability in French?

10. How would you describe his/her general ability in other subjects?

Maths
Social Studies
Science
English Language Arts
Art

11. Did you have any particular discipline problems with _____?

12. How would you say _____ saw himself compared to the other students in your room?

13. Please use this scale to rate _____'s French achievement in each of the following areas.

[scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7]
poor fair good excellent

For example, if you feel the student's ability in a specific area is between fair and good, you would indicate #4.

Fluency of speech in French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Use of full sentences rather than one word or short phrase.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Use of vocabulary when speaking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
French pronunciation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Appropriate grammatical construction in French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Willingness to participate in French discussions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Basic understanding of spoken French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ability to make himself/herself understood when speaking French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ability to read with understanding in French appropriate to the grade level. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ability to write French appropriate to the grade level. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ability to spell correctly in French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Effort communicating in French instead of relying on English. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. Overall, what would say are _____'s strongest and weakest areas in French?

15. How does this compare to _____'s abilities in English Language Arts.

16. Please use the same scale to rate _____'s achievement in English Language Arts.

Willingness to participate in English discussions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Adequate vocabulary when speaking. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Speaks fluently. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Expresses ideas in a logical manner, orally. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Understands oral directions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ability to read with understanding material appropriate to the grade level.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ability to write compositions appropriate to the grade level.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ability to spell correctly.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. Which subject/s does _____ seem to prefer? Why?
18. In which subject does _____ participate most often.
19. Did _____ receive any outside resource help this year? What form did this help take?
20. Does _____ usually complete assigned homework?
21. Do you feel _____'s parents were able to provide help at home when _____ was encountering difficulties? To what extent?
22. Do you give many tests in your programs? If so, what kinds?
23. Would you briefly describe _____'s achievement on test.
24. Has _____ encountered any particular difficulties as concepts become less concrete and more abstract?
25. Would you say that _____ is any more or less able to learn a second language, in this case French, compared to most of the other students? Why would you say that?
26. Would you say that _____ was under any particular stress this year, or any other year? In what particular way?
27. Do you think any of the other things we have talked about have led to the decision to have _____ transferred out of the program?
28. Why do you feel, in general, children leave the French Immersion program?

29. Do you feel the French Immersion program should be modified or changed so that fewer children decide to transfer? If so, how?
30. Are there any students who you feel should not register in French Immersion programs?
Why?
31. If a child is to transfer from the French Immersion program due to difficulties learning the language, or poor achievement, do you think there is a preferred time that the transfer take place?
32. Do you feel that it will be particularly difficult for _____ to leave the program and begin an English Instruction program? In what ways?
33. Is there anything else you would like to mention about _____'s transferring out of the French Immersion program, or about the French Immersion program in general?

Appendix K

School Administrator Interview

I would like to ask you some questions about _____. You need not answer any question you don't want to, and all responses will be kept strictly confidential.

1. _____ will be transferring out of the French Immersion program after this year. Were you aware of this decision?
2. Were you involved in any way with the decision to transfer _____? Please explain.
3. Did you feel you had enough information about _____ to advise the parents?
4. Is there any information or support you would have liked to have had that you did not have at the time? Explain.
5. Do you feel that the right decision has been made to transfer _____ from the program? Why?
6. Are you often consulted when parents are considering withdrawing their child from the French Immersion program?
7. Can you tell me some of their general concerns about the French Immersion program and why they want to transfer their child?
8. In general, do you feel students who have difficulties with French Immersion should be transferred from the program?
9. Are there any students you believe should not register in a French Immersion program?
10. Do you support a parents' decision to transfer a child?

Thank you.