

Perceptions of and Attitudes toward
French L2 Learning Opportunities On- and Off-campus
Among Students not Specializing in French at Glendon

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Abstract

Being one of the first student-initiated research projects about learning French as a second language at Glendon College, the present paper aims to examine Glendon students' perceptions of and attitudes towards French L2 learning opportunities on- and off-campus. Students voluntarily participated in surveys through random selection about how they felt regarding learning French as a second language at Glendon and whether they used language learning resources inside and outside of the school environment. Key Glendon faculty members were interviewed about the FRSL program and other learning opportunities. The data collected was analyzed and used to make connections about how effectively students used language learning spaces available to them in order to become successful French language learners. Suggestions intended to aid successful French language learning were derived from the correlations made based on both quantitative and qualitative results. In general, students surveyed had false perceptions which led to negative attitudes towards learning French as a second language which influenced successful language learning.

Keywords: L2 learning opportunities, French, Glendon students, attitudes, perceptions

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As French is one of the official languages of Canada, the benefits of knowing French are countless for Canadians, especially in regards to employment. Though many colleges and universities in Canada offer courses for students to learn French as a second language, Glendon College is the only liberal arts college that provides students with a bilingual campus and with courses in both English and French and which requires all students to take courses in both languages as a prerequisite to graduation. For years, this has attracted students to Glendon, motivating non-Francophone students to learn or continue their path of learning French as a second language.

FRSL Learning at Glendon

Glendon College's official mandate is "to create, approve and deliver bilingual university programs on behalf of York University" (*About Glendon*). Accepting students with varying levels of French and English language proficiency, ranging from absolute beginner to immersion graduate, Glendon is dedicated to realising this mandate and is intent on creating a bilingual environment to maximize language learning. Bilingualism has two broad dimensions: institutional and personal. Glendon as a bilingual institution has taken seriously the need to provide a range of services, including educational services, public events, hiring policies, publications, signage etc. in both of the federal official languages of Canada. Thus, all hired staff and a substantial portion of faculty at Glendon are bilingual. Personal bilingualism as it has been defined in the context of the GL LIN 3606 3.0 course as being able to use a L1 and a L2. This can be achieved by non-francophone students through completing a required level of FRSL

courses, which differ according to the student's major and career goals. Non-specialist students – those who are not majoring or minoring in French (i.e. the majority) – can satisfy this requirement by taking 6.0 FRSL credits at the second-year level (in particular, the course FRSL 2515 6.0) or by taking at least one 6.0 credit discipline course taught in French. This minimal requirement intends to bring them to a level of French, termed “Level I” in the Glendon promotional literature, and described as “a solid intermediate level of French” (*Glendon handbook, 2010*).

Students who graduate from Glendon may choose to have their bilingual proficiency attested to at higher levels than the “solid, intermediate level I” described above. If they are successful in completing three full-year courses taught in French or a combination of FRSL and discipline courses, they will be awarded a Certificate of Bilingualism, which is the College's “level 2”. The highest level of bilingual proficiency – “level 3” – results from students who have successfully (i.e. with a minimum grade of B) completed two discipline courses in their second language, and who are successful in passing the voluntary Glendon Bilingual Excellence Examination, which is taken in the student's graduating year and involves both a written examination and an oral interview. These levels are presented in the Glendon Handbook 2010 as three points on a very high mountain (see Appendix E).

Along with institutional and personal bilingualism, is the overall sociolinguistic ecology of Glendon. The attraction of obtaining a French-language post-secondary liberal arts education in Toronto has drawn many francophone students, both international and Quebecois/French Canadians, to Glendon. This has fostered a rather unique environment for a university in Toronto. An estimated portion of students at Glendon – approximately 500 out of a total student population of 2700 or 18% are fluent French speakers. This gives substantial opportunity to students learning French or English as a L2 to interact with one another on campus and be

exposed to both languages in their day to day interactions. Thus, in brief, Glendon, as an institution, has excellent potential to initiate and support successful second language learning in students.

Successful L2 Learning

Successful L2 learning can be defined in many ways. At Glendon, successful L2 learning in French can be defined on a continuum, ranging from the completion of minimal requirements to success in Glendon's Bilingual Excellence Examination – a test taken in students' final year. "Bilingual Excellence" suggests that this test evaluates a very high academic level of success in L2 learning. In the Glendon handbook, as mentioned above, this test is described with the image of the peak of a mountain, which suggests that it evaluates the most advanced level of bilingualism that a student could achieve by learning an L2 at Glendon (*Glendon Handbook*, 2010). With this test, bilingualism is not evaluated based on nativelikeness but rather, a high level of bilingual proficiency. Nativelikeness is defined as "whether or not L2 learners either behave in a qualitatively similar manner to native speakers, or possess qualitatively similar underlying mental representations of language" (VanPatten & Benati, 2010, p. 112). There are three positions with regards to nativelikeness in the literature: 1) it is not possible to acquire native likeness, 2) it is possible to acquire native likeness in L2, and 3) it is possible in some but not all domains.

Having considered the matter, our research team is of the view that nativelikeness is not a linguistically feasible goal for students, nor a reasonable requirement for French L2 teachers. However, it may be that there are views (favouring nativelikeness) which are present in the belief system of Glendon's language managers and L2 program goals. Since the students taking the test, and indeed Glendon students generally, are not exclusively drawn from French or English

mother-tongue populations (a notion which would be absurd in multicultural, multilingual Toronto), the standards of the test are based on high levels of functional, academic, language proficiency, not nativelikeness (I. Martin, personal communication).

Purpose of Study

This project was to be submitted as the final paper for Professor Ian Martin's *Learning English as a Second Language* course (GL/LIN/EN 3606 3.0), which took place at Glendon in the fall semester of 2010. Studying how second languages are learned sparked our interest in how French was being learned at Glendon. This course required a lot of personal reflection, which led us to believe that there were some attitudes and perceptions within the Glendon community that needed to be addressed. All of the group members had different experiences with and opinions of our learning of French as a second language at Glendon; not feeling confident about our acquired language skills, we were interested in exploring the perceptions and attitudes of other students.

The purpose of our study was to research the student perceptions of and attitudes towards successful second language learning opportunities available to Glendon students on- and off-campus. Perception is defined as a preconceived understanding, interpretation or impression; and attitudes as a resulting opinion or way of thinking (Fitzgerald, 2006). With the guidance of Professor Ian Martin, we decided to do this in the context of different learning environments (social spaces) available to students, both on- and off-campus.

On-campus spaces included: the classroom (FRSL and French-medium discipline courses), the Salon Francophone, residence and other areas in which students interact socially. Off-campus spaces included: French-language spaces and events in Toronto, culture within the larger

community, and summer immersion experiences. The following questions and ideas were explored:

1. How are each of the spaces being used by both students and faculty and are they being used in a way that facilitates successful language learning?
2. Are definitions of successful L2 learning cohesive across the Glendon community? What are these definitions?
3. What are the different motivations students have for studying French? Did students select Glendon because of its unique mandate?

Once we had completed our analysis of the data, we wanted to make suggestions in order to strengthen L2 learning of French in the Glendon community. This was addressed in our research by asking students and faculty for their ideas on this topic and brainstorming some of our ideas based on what students thought needed to be done at Glendon.

Methods

Participants

91 questionnaires (see Appendix A) were completed by Glendon students and returned with informed consent forms. We decided to exclude 16 questionnaires from the report because the students were French Studies specialists (majoring or minoring in French Studies). Based on information gathered in interviews with faculty and from our own experiences, we recognized that the motivation of these students is different from students taking FRSL courses for non-specialists. The French-specialist students tend to have different career aspirations, such as becoming French teachers, that require a higher level of French proficiency. We do not think that they reflect the majority of Glendon students, and to include them would have affected our external validity. We also excluded translation specialists for the same reason, unless they

specifically indicated that their translation program was the English/Spanish Certificate. We included one student who had been a French Studies specialist in the past, but who had recently changed her major. Four more surveys were excluded because the students did not indicate that they had studied FRSL at Glendon. One more survey was excluded because the answers were inapplicable to the questions.

Once these surveys were excluded, our total N = 70 students. We included students in various years of study; 19% of students surveyed are in first year, 17% in second year, 37% in third year, and 27% in fourth year. These students had various levels of French prior to studying at Glendon. These categories included: no previous knowledge of French (11% of students surveyed), Grade 9 (3%), Core French (33%), Immersion (16%), Extended Core French (1%), Other (27%), and N/A (9%). Self-assessments were included in the category of “Other” because some students indicated answers such as “some French knowledge” and others indicated “fluent” due to the openness of the question. 6 students did not indicate an answer for this question. The survey asked students to indicate highest level of French completed to eliminate L1 French speakers. The number of students based on these levels were as follows: FRSL 0400: 10% of students surveyed, FRSL 1500: 17% of students, FRSL 1510: 23% of students, FRSL 2512: 19% of students, FRSL 2515: 23% of students, and Other FRSL levels: 8% of students. Students were asked their major to eliminate French specialists in the results.

We also interviewed four of Glendon’s faculty members who were involved with teaching French as a second language at Glendon to get a well-rounded view of the situation and to avoid any biases we may have had entering this project. We received some very valuable information from faculty members. We also believe that this study should be reduplicated to include more

faculty members, considering the small number – who voluntarily participated – we had included in this study.

Procedure

We surveyed students at Glendon by approaching them in various spaces on campus and asking if they would like to voluntarily complete a survey. This was to ensure that a random sample of students was selected. Originally, we had hoped to use social media (Facebook) to recruit participants but we found this to be ineffective. Consequently, all of the surveys were distributed by hand. An informed consent form was included which required the student's signature; this consent form outlined the purpose of our project and directed them to Professor Ian Martin if they had any questions. No deception was used and no risks were foreseen. We separated the consent forms from the surveys to ensure there was no researcher bias in analysing the data and that the information remained anonymous. Some of the questions on the surveys were open-ended, while others required the participant to circle or check an answer. The questionnaires and ethical procedures (of voluntary participation and anonymity) were approved by the English Department's Research Ethics Committee, which followed the guidelines set out by the College Procedures for course-related undergraduate student research.

The four Glendon faculty members were presented with a set of focussed, open-ended questions. The faculty members were recruited on a voluntary basis; an informed consent form was signed, and they were assured the interviews would remain confidential. These interviews focused on the perceptions and attitudes as well as learning opportunities on- and off-campus. A minimum of two researchers were present at each of the interviews to control for researcher bias. Notes were taken at each of the interviews by researchers present and then compared to ensure accuracy. In analysing the answers, researchers calculated percentages for the quantitative data.

For open-ended questions, researchers performed a Key Terms search using Grounded Theory. Since there were a small number of faculty interviews, their answers were treated separately.

Results

The quantitative data collected from the student surveys were tabulated by the research team. Members then calculated percentages and made some correlations to help clarify certain points. These data results are collected from 70 student surveys. The qualitative data gathered from the open-ended questions were analyzed by two research members. Results are reported in a collection of notes and/or keywords that were gathered by inductive reasoning. These results were collected from the same 70 student surveys.

The quantitative results are as follows: 44% of students surveyed had taken a French-medium discipline course, (i.e. a history course in French) while 56% had not. 83% of students surveyed reported that French attracted them in coming to Glendon, while 16% said French was not a deciding factor and 1% was indifferent. Of the 83% for whom French was a deciding factor, 64% said that their experiences with the Glendon French as a second language program did not fulfill their expectations, while 26% were satisfied and 10% did not answer. A majority of students (83%) surveyed knew about the Explore program while 17% did not. 96% of students surveyed did not know of any other French immersion programs that are offered during the summer. However, while many of them knew of the Explore program, only 20% had completed Explore or another summer immersion program.

When asked about engaging in French language learning opportunities on-campus, 90% of students surveyed claimed they knew about the Salon Francophone, but very few actually utilized their services. Many students (69%) reported that they immerse themselves in French off-campus, i.e. watching French movies, or listening to French music, although it was not

specified how often. 77% of students agreed that it would be beneficial for students to receive participation marks for engaging in French outside of the classroom and 86% of total students surveyed claimed that they would be more inclined to search for resources and FRSL learning opportunities on- and off-campus.

Few participate in French events and/or activities on-campus. Only 11% of students surveyed report that they had participated in French events on-campus, while 89% have not. 19% of students surveyed live in residence at Glendon and 70% of these students communicate with other students on residence in French, although, again, it was not specified how often. 86% of participants claimed to have French-speaking friends and 79% of them claim that they communicate with these friends in French at some point. When asked about whether they would participate in social events where they would be able to meet other French speakers in an informal setting, 70% of students surveyed said yes, while 20% said no, and 10% did not answer.

The qualitative results are as follows: we found that 44% of the students surveyed had taken a French-medium discipline course, and most found it to be a positive, yet challenging experience. Though a majority of the students in our sample stated that they were initially attracted to Glendon because of the French language, 64% felt that their expectations were not fulfilled. There were various reasons for this opinion. Many students wrote that they felt that professors did not tailor their teaching to their students' needs and interests, and that the FRSL professors were inconsistent from year to year in their varying teaching expectations.

Whether or not these students' expectations were false, many stated that the FRSL courses were harder than they had originally anticipated. In addition, many stated that they found the classes discouraging and boring; many students who categorize themselves at a higher level say

that they do not feel any improvements in their language abilities. On the whole, students do not find that they are immersed in a bilingual environment, even though they are at Glendon.

In regards to on-campus FRSL resources, such as the Salon Francophone, a majority of the students surveyed know about it but have never gone in for conversation or homework help. However, of the few who have gone, they found their homework help experiences to be positive. Some of these students found the monitors to be intimidating.

When asked if they thought it would be beneficial to receive participation marks for engaging in French outside the classroom, like using the Salon Francophone as a FRSL resource, some said that extra-curricular activities should be casual, and not marked. However, most students agreed that it would give them a chance to improve on areas that are not covered in class (i.e. a more practical use of oral and conversational skills) and also to improve on in-class performance. These students also felt that giving them an incentive would encourage them to practice their language skills more frequently.

When surveyed about their motivation to learn French, students in our sample tended to have either an integrative or an instrumental motivation (VanPatten & Benati, 2010); that is, they either had a personal interest and/or a love for languages to learn French, or they saw French as an asset for future study and/or work opportunities. The nature of the instrumental motivation among the students we surveyed is interesting; they seem to want French to become part of their “skill set” to ensure better job opportunities, but they do not appear to have a commitment to persist as enthusiastic learners when they are faced with challenges in the program. Few of the students surveyed reported a combination of both integrative and instrumental motivations. Students’ motivations were reflective of how they rated each language skill (reading, writing, speaking, and understanding). On a whole, the students rated speaking and understanding as

more important than reading and writing skills. Though they acknowledge the importance of the latter two skills, their opinions of successful language learning were based on whether they could hold a conversation with a French speaker, and whether they would be able to effectively communicate their thoughts.

In addition to the instrumental/integrative perspective, we looked at our results from a more recent theoretical perspective (Dörnyei, 2009), in which it is hypothesized that for a language learning program to be successful, at least two of three “sets of factors” need to be present. The factors are: (i) formal learning opportunities, (ii) strong goals, and (iii) peer, family and/or environmental support. Generally speaking, the group we surveyed perceive the level and quality of environmental support as unsatisfactory. As we will discuss in detail later, their goals are undefined, and their perception of the formal learning opportunities is coloured by misconceptions. Seen from this theoretical perspective, it would appear that there are significant weaknesses in all three sets of factors; if this is the case, the problems to overcome are quite daunting.

Students had mostly negative attitudes toward formal instructional settings for language learning. Students found that the material was inappropriate to their level: either too easy or too challenging. Some of them felt that they were placed fairly in the levels, but they reported a perception that there were huge gaps in learner levels within the class. Students also felt that there are gaps in what is expected of them from one level to the next.

As a result of all these views, many students gave suggestions that they believe would, if acted upon, help improve their French learning experience, both in and out of the formal instructional setting of the classroom. These suggestions mainly consisted of incorporating more

relevant material in classes, particularly material of real interest to students, and to increase opportunities for communicative practice.

The 4 faculty members that were interviewed will remain anonymous. Interview questions and notes that were taken by research members during the interview are included in Appendix F & G. To assure confidentiality, these will only be shared by the research team members and Professor Ian Martin. Information gathered that pertain to the present paper will be referenced according to FM # (Faculty Member #), numbered according to the order in which they were interviewed.

Discussion

Perceptions

Perception is one's sense, interpretation, or impression of something before he or she has actually had a chance to confirm or void that thought or assumption. For example, one perceives a wet road as slippery but cannot be sure until one has actually driven on it. This section of the research paper focuses on Glendon students' perceptions toward learning French as a Second Language.

Our research has indicated that Glendon students arrived at Glendon with the perception that the learning of French as a Second Language is easy, quick, and effortless. Students assume that they will need to look no further than their FRSL courses to completely learn French – at least the “solid, intermediate level of French” advertised in the recruitment brochures - by the end of their respective programs of study. Essentially, they carry three perceptions:

- 1) Learning French as a Second Language at Glendon will be easy.
- 2) The instructional context will suffice for the learning of French as a Second Language at Glendon.

3) Glendon, as a bilingual campus, with its francophone community, social activities, events, and services, will automatically (i.e. without much student effort) provide the perfect environment for learning French as a Second Language and francophone culture.

Unfortunately, each of these perceptions is voided as students progress in their FRSL studies at Glendon. As they progress through their studies, students begin to realize how difficult it is to learn French, or any language for that matter. We do not think that state of affairs is brought about because they are unable to become successful language learners, but rather because the message given by recruitment was unclear, as suggested by FM 2. When prospective and/or incoming students visit Glendon or participate in Glendon presentations, they are presented with information that suggests Glendon's FRSL Program will be easy and that they do not have to search for opportunities to practice because it will simply happen. FM 2 stated that Glendon's recruitment team is reminded yearly to make it clear to students that learning French at Glendon takes hard work, dedication, and extra hours, but it seems that the message becomes lost along the way. Thus, it is agreed among faculty members interviewed that recruitment messaging which downplays the hard work required for students to learn French is a major issue.

This makes us question if the 83% of students surveyed who stated that Glendon's FRSL program attracted them to come to Glendon, indeed came to learn French or simply chose to because it was presented as being simple (Table 4). Any language learner or teacher knows or should know that learning a language is not easy, even for the most exceptional learner, because language learning is a complex process. Of the same 70 students, only 26% feel that their expectations of FRSL at Glendon have been met (Table 4). Most of these students are in their first year of study, and their perceptions may change after a few years. Most of the students

whose expectations were not met (64% of surveyed students [10% did not answer]) were upper year students (Table 4). Thus it appears that there is a pattern - as students progress in their FRSL studies, they feel less and less that their expectations – influenced by their false perceptions – are being met.

From our own personal experiences in FRSL and from the research we have conducted, we find that Glendon's FRSL program requirements are entirely instructional. The program doesn't follow the principle of "maximizing learning opportunities" outside the classroom (Kumaravadivelu, 2004). Though there **are** out-of-class activities for students, they are not mandatory, nor are they effectively promoted by the FRSL program. These opportunities will be discussed in greater detail in the following sections. At the moment, it is only important to understand that these opportunities must be taken advantage of by students and faculty alike.

Glendon's bilingual community is promoted in recruitment brochures and elsewhere as being the perfect environment to learn FRSL and ESL. However, this is an inaccurate statement. Learning ESL at Glendon is highly successful to a significant degree because of the anglophone dominance and environment both on- and off-campus. Such is not the case for learning FRSL. In other words, Glendon, being located in English-language dominant Toronto, possesses optimal conditions for learning ESL formally and informally, but because of the minority situation of French in Toronto, we cannot expect the same success with FRSL. However, Glendon is promoted as such, which attracts so many students to come to Glendon. Again, this is a problem with the lack of realism in recruitment messaging.

Seeing as Glendon's proposed image is quite different from that which it truly is, some suggestions to address this issue would be:

- 1) That Glendon's recruitment team more accurately state the work involved in learning FRSL at

Glendon when promoting the university to prospective students. For example, instead of saying, “It’s easy and fun”, they could say, “It takes hard work but Glendon has the support and tools to help you”.

2) That Glendon’s recruitment team be clearer about the fact that the instructional setting of Glendon’s FRSL courses alone will not provide students the level of French expected of them.

3) That Glendon’s recruitment team explain the dynamics of Glendon as a bilingual environment that is not perfectly balanced. For example, instead of saying, “Glendon is bilingual so learning French can happen more easily”, they could say, “Glendon is bilingual but because it exists in a predominately anglophone community, you must be prepared to look for opportunities.”

This is not to suggest that Glendon’s recruitment team is solely responsible. Surely the maturity level of students plays a role as well. Students must be prepared to enter the realm of university studies with responsibility, confidence, self-reliance, and discipline. Perhaps a certain level of French be required to enter Glendon, as suggested by FM 3 and FM 4. However, our research from the surveyed students suggests that even this proposal will not solve the problem, because the students that felt that their expectations were not met came from all backgrounds of French (Grade 9 Core, Extended, Immersion, etc.).

Glendon’s incoming and prospective students are ill-informed about the reality of learning FRSL, causing them to have skewed perceptions of learning FRSL. It is important to consider, however, that the fact that students are entering university at a relatively naïve age puts them in a position to accept that which they are being told at face value. Recruitment would benefit by being more realistic in promoting FRSL studies at Glendon, but students must also be aware of the fact that university studies are very serious, and that language learning requires more than imaginable. Having these misconceptions affects students’ language learning experience in all

spaces and contexts at Glendon. It is important for students to enter the FRSL program knowing the amount of effort they will have to put in, in order to succeed – a conscious effort needs to be made in order to be a successful language learner.

Attitudes

Attitudes are a direct result of perceptions. For the purposes of this paper, when we mention attitudes, we are referring to the way the students act towards learning French as a result of misguided perceptions, as discussed above. In making the connection between perceptions and attitudes, students come in with the perception that learning French at Glendon will be easy, and their negative attitudes begin to form when classes are *not* easy and when they find that they are *not* immersed in a bilingual campus. For instance, students stated that “courses were harder than they had anticipated” (see Appendix B). As a result of this significant “perceptual mismatch” (Kumaravadivelu, 2004) between program delivery and student expectations, students are not committed to learning FRSL, which makes teaching more difficult for professors, leading to increasingly unmotivated, uninterested and discouraged teachers and students. Consequently, students are not learning as much as they should when they adopt an attitude whereby they only put forth the minimal effort to get by. Because of this, teachers are not willing to go out of their way to motivate students because they think it will not make a difference; this becomes a vicious cycle.

Attitude is the way one acts or feels towards something, demonstrated primarily through behaviour. We have decided to analyze Glendon students’ attitudes towards French because the way one perceives and act towards a language largely influences how successful a language learner will be. We have already discussed students’ perceptions of FRSL at Glendon prior to beginning their studies. We have determined that there are three major perceptions prospective

Glendon students have about learning French at Glendon; 1) students think it will be easy to learn French, 2) FRSL classes are as far as they need to go to learn French, and 3) that Glendon is the perfect environment to learn French. All these perceptions will help to mould a certain attitude to learning French at Glendon. These attitudes will then change over a student's four years at Glendon.

As was discussed above, there is significant mismatch in communication between recruitment and prospective students; many students believe that learning French at Glendon would be similar to naturalistic learning environments. They believe that Glendon offers a rare opportunity to learn French in an anglophone city because of its bilingual campus, and because of this, it is made to seem that learning French will be easy. When prospective students are given this image, they believe that French is an additional skill that they will acquire easily alongside whatever discipline courses they will be taking in English. This perception carries the unstated implication that time, effort, commitment and out-of-class dedication will not be necessary. This perception creates a very lax attitude towards learning the language, therefore, students begin to realize that their time spent in FRSL courses is nowhere close to the amount of time they need to be dedicating to language learning. As a result, they begin to become frustrated with the amount of work they are being given and do not seem to be satisfied with the professors or the program. They are not attitudinally prepared to be as dedicated as needed.

In addition, non-French specialists in our survey do not seem willing to put time into something that they do not find immediately satisfying. These students do not have the time to put into their French courses because they are focussing on the courses for their major subject. Therefore, they do not make French a priority since they perceived that learning French would not require the same attention as is needed for their major courses. This appears to be the case

especially for students who have a certain kind of “instrumental” goal to learning French just as an extra marketable skill. This category of student typically stated that they are learning French simply because it is an asset when looking for a job later on. If there is no immediate emotional attachment to, nor an immediate need for, the language, students have a tendency to put it on the back burner. Many students do not see the benefits of learning French, so once it becomes more work than they originally thought it would be, they quickly give up on it.

As we have stated, 64% of Glendon students surveyed expressed dissatisfaction towards the Glendon French program, although 83% of those students expressed that the French language learning was a major pull factor in their decision to come to Glendon (Table 4). This goes to show that the attitudes towards French began positively. Students came into Glendon willing and excited to learn a new language. Then, as their time at Glendon progressed they became less satisfied and began to develop more negative feels towards the language. This could be due to a number of factors such as; teachers, marks, genuine disinterest, out of school stress etc.. It is apparent that a large number of Glendon students are experiencing the similar language learning issues. It is important to recognize that this attitude, and its consequences, is not merely a feature of individual students. This is almost a group phenomenon, in which students reinforce each other’s negative attitudes towards the language and its process of being presented.

The FRSL classroom is not the only space that should be used for students’ language learning. In order to maximize learning opportunities – all the more important in the case of a language being learned in a minority setting – the program should provide students with the structure of language and foster language awareness so that they can develop their own abilities outside of class, utilizing spaces such as Salon Francophone, and summer immersion classes. Because students believe and have learned in the recruitment process that they should be

provided through formal instruction opportunities with everything needed to learn a language, they usually will not turn to other opportunities for French learning. They develop this idea that if they cannot learn everything in class, then it is a failure of the program or the professor for not engaging the students in learning. However, there is evidence in our study that Glendon students would respond positively if the FRSL program maximized out-of-class learning opportunities. Indeed, 86% of students surveyed claimed that they would participate in outside-of-class French activities if professors granted marks for their participation. From this, we know that there is an eagerness to go outside of the class if the students felt that there would be some sort of reward for their efforts. But since there is no reward for participating in French events or taking any French initiative outside of class, students are not participating in them. Thus, not developing their French outside of the classroom and therefore not feeling any improvement, results in further decrease in motivation and an increase in negative attitudes towards the program and the French language. Adding participation marks would be a great way to encourage students and develop the French community to maximize their learning opportunities.

In the context of promoting greater out-of-class learning, one interesting idea worth exploring, mentioned by one of our faculty interviews, inspired by the decades-long experience of the European Common Framework, and to develop a Glendon Language Passport, including a Language Portfolio. This would allow for students to locate themselves on a learning path leading from beginner to advanced, measured by “can do” functional statements in their Passport, which can be “stamped” periodically by the FRSL program. The Portfolio would include evidences of out-of-class French-language learning experiences – ticket stubs from plays or movies, written journal of trips to Quebec or France, proofs of online French-language use, attendance at French-language activities on campus: plays, talks, club memberships, etc.

Finally, there is the issue that different language medium classes separate most of the anglophone and francophone students. Thus, most students will often end up socializing with those in their class who speak their own language. It simply provides separate facilities and options to both language communities and in our experience, while it satisfies the basic formal requirements of an institutionally bilingual framework, it does little to bridge the two solitudes in the realm of personal bilingualism, at least for the students in our survey.

This finding is quite serious, since it affects students' attitudes towards their Glendon experience. When students begin at Glendon they have an idealized perception of Glendon that they will be constantly switching back and forth between French and English, participating in language events and studying in both languages. When students actually begin their studies and realize that Glendon is not the bilingual campus that they had imagined it to be, they experience disappointment. Students feel like they have been misled and are not receiving the experience that they signed up for. This simply increases the negative attitudes that have been developed from a lack of success. It has been brought to our attention that there is a tendency for students to transfer out of Glendon. We are aware of, but have not seen, an internal 2010 study prepared by the Student Advisory Office, suggesting that this is a problem. Perhaps they leave because they begin to view Glendon as this "faux" language-learning environment, and at this point cannot remember why they decided to come to Glendon any longer.

FRSL Learning Opportunities in Context

We realize that language learning can happen in many different contexts, with the main distinction being between the classroom and exposure to the target language through the environment. We are focusing on five spaces in which we feel learning opportunities can be found. A theme throughout our study is our strong belief that L2 learning is significantly

enhanced and improved in settings outside the classroom. While instructional learning provides structure, naturalistic learning provides depth. However, both settings are necessary for L2 learning, in our opinion. Thus, we have decided to address the various spaces in which FRSL learning takes place at Glendon. We have categorized these spaces as either on- or off-campus, pertaining to the Glendon student: 1) the FRSL classroom, 2) Le salon francophone, 3) residence and campus life, 4) life outside the campus, and 5) Explore and other summer immersion programs.

On-campus spaces.

The FRSL classroom.

Though there are many spaces on-campus that help to facilitate second language learning, the primary space is learning in the classroom. The language classroom is ideally, the perfect instructional setting where teachers aim to guide students along their language path. The language classroom is a place where both teachers and students must contribute to the learning process. “Teaching is aimed at creating optimal conditions for desired learning to take place in as short a time as possible” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 6).

This means that teachers should be guiding and motivating students to learn all aspects of the target language – reading, writing, speaking, and understanding. The perfect classroom, with the enthusiastic, professionally qualified, teachers and motivated students, should result in students who have reached the goal the class has first set out to accomplish. In this ideal classroom, teachers, recognizing and respecting their learners and their goals, deploy a variety of micro- and macro-strategies to maximize learning opportunities for, and with, students. Students, helped to activate their intuitive heuristics (Kumaravadivelu, 2004) and encouraged to

‘learn how to learn’, grasp each of these opportunities in order to maximize their potentials for language learning success.

The courses 0400, 1500, and 1510 are focused heavily on the grammatical aspects of the French language, 2512 and 2515 were recently re-designed around themes (FM 3 & FM 4). Pedagogically, this means that students are encouraged to explore meaningful intercultural content and by incorporating international cultural themes and texts into language learning, cultural aspects of the language are being presented to students. This is seen as a positive direction.

In order to come up with a set of solutions, we must understand the situation from both perspectives. In conducting our research, we found that faculty members feel frustrated about the lack of motivation of the students and their increasingly low levels of French. Although Glendon is well-known for its small class sizes, government budget cuts have forced the faculty to increase the cap of each language class to 30 students (FM 2). According to all faculty members interviewed, this yearly increase in the number of students in each class results in a significant pedagogical obstacle. Not only is the number of students per class increasing, the gap between these students in terms of learner levels widens even more. As with any class, the issue of varying learner levels between each student is difficult to address. With the time constraints placed on language classes, it is very difficult for professors to find a method to bridge this gap between the students and at the same time, to place emphasis on each language skill equally, let alone the positive practice of “integrating language skills.” (Kumaravadivelu, 2004).

Though some students surveyed felt that they were placed in the appropriate level, they still noted that there was indeed a huge gap between the weakest and the strongest student in their language classes (see Appendix B). Students surveyed who were among the strongest in the

class felt that they were not improving because teachers had to accommodate the lower level students. This gap within the class may be a strong contributing factor to the decrease of motivation found in the majority of students in FRSL classes at Glendon. This gap is also discouraging for lower level students placed in classes where the teacher is only focused on more advanced learners.

The inclusion of out-of-class learning in the program would foster students' experience of the social relevance of French while raising their cultural consciousness. Faculty members expressed difficulty with the logistics of doing so, but students surveyed reported that the incorporation of language learning opportunities outside the classroom would possibly increase their in-class performance (see Appendix B) and help encourage them to practice using the language.

These results correlate with students' wishes to incorporate more of an oral component in the class. FM 3 had said that beginner levels of FRSL classes must focus on grammar because students need to build a strong foundation before building upon it with the socio-cultural aspects of language. FM 4 expressed frustration with the fact that students always say that they want more of a practical and functional knowledge of French, yet fail to utilize the resources that are made available by professors or can be found in and around the campus. Nevertheless, we believe that it is in part, the responsibility of the faculty to provide students with a stimulating and motivating atmosphere within the classroom, and to minimize perceptual mismatches between student and faculty views of language learning, in order for the students to utilize the aforementioned resources.

Rather than teaching grammar aspects right out of the textbook, as is too often the practice, it is important for all professors to think about *how* to teach from textbooks (FM 1). It is true

that grammar creates a foundation for beginner level students, but it is also a responsibility for the professors, even in large multi-level classes, to facilitate this learning by understanding different learners' needs, and we also believe that it is the responsibility of the professors to make material interesting and socially and culturally relevant to the students. If it is the case that students in the class are highly unmotivated, professors with professional expertise in L2-teaching should be able to find a way to activate the students by trying out different teaching micro-strategies while attending to key macro-strategies, and while still covering all the material required by the curriculum. At the same time, it is the student's responsibility to understand that teachers have different teaching styles and methods that they prefer and try to adapt to each while doing their best to ensure their own language learning success. Essentially, the classroom environment can be compared to a two-way street. Obviously, efforts need to be put forth by both professors and students.

Students find courses effective when they were being exposed to interesting material, which encourages them to use French – despite their level – in order to learn and understand the content they were being presented with. This applies to the theme-based FRSL courses, but more importantly, will apply to discipline courses studied through French as an L2. It is also important to point out that the positive experiences of English-speaking students in French-medium discipline classes are positive experiences of bilingual education. Bilingual education can be defined as participation in discipline courses taken through the medium of more than one language; therefore, the FRSL and ENSL programs are not, in themselves, examples of bilingual education. They should lead students to become successful participants in bilingual education. Since Glendon has been recently declared to be a “Centre of Excellence in French-language and

Bilingual education”, the positive experience of bilingual education of the English-speaking students in our survey should be seen as an encouraging sign.

The positive evaluation of their bilingual education courses can be explained as follows: rather than having language acquisition (i.e. with a focus on grammatical form) as the end goal, bilingual education courses integrate language and content learning and language becomes part of the process for learning about other topics. This concept is similar to the 2000-level courses redesigned around themes, where the intention is for students to learn French by using it. It is not enough for students to receive input through teachers and textbooks – the importance of the role of student output, through oral presentations and writing tasks related to significant and interesting academic content, should also be recognized. Swain’s (as cited in VanPatten & Benati, 2010) Comprehensible Output Hypothesis claims that second language learning was too focused on “comprehensible input”, and that not enough focus is put on students’ active, engaged, and purposeful use of the language. It is important to note “that the current literature identifies [bilinguals] not necessarily as someone with high levels of proficiency in two or more languages but someone who functions in more than one language for purposes of communication” (Nunan & Choi, 2010, p. 2), as bilingualism takes on many definitions (see Appendix C). Given that non-specialized students’ goal for learning French is not to become French teachers or translators, it can be suggested that a more practical and functional use of French should be emphasized. While remembering that grammatical aspects of language make the foundation for non-French-specialist students of FRSL at Glendon, we need to realize that student output enhances language acquisition and language teaching.

If students are encouraged and motivated to speak in class, their confidence level will increase and they will gradually begin to be able to find comfort in identifying with the language.

Given the fact that Glendon is located in the heart of Toronto and not, for example in Chicoutimi or Paris, it is crucial to give students enough emphasis on the communicative functions of a language. The more they speak, the more they will notice and learn about the language – simply because they will be living in it. According to Swain (as cited in VanPatten & Benati, 2010), students will create hypotheses about what works and what does not, the more they speak the language and the more they notice. Positive feedback and input will allow students to find out that their hypotheses about what they have learned do not work, and in this way, students will be able to discover and internalize aspects of the language in their minds. Thus, they will be led on a path to language learning success and become more autonomous learners.

Another important aspect of language learning in the classroom is how errors, mistakes, and attempts of the students are addressed by the teachers. Error analysis (VanPatten & Benati, 2010) and corrective feedback (Lightbown & Spada, 2006) are important for teachers to address because incorrect usages of language can be analyzed and effectively turned into an awareness learning opportunity for their students. By doing this, teachers will be able to make note of what specific problems students are having, and thus, be able to provide students with the right scaffolding they need. If teacher feedback is positive and reinforcing, students can only benefit and further improve on their language learning path; “...elicitations and metalinguistic feedback not only result[s] in more uptake, [students are] also more likely to lead to a corrected form of the original utterance” (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 127).

According to Lightbown & Spada (2006), another method of addressing errors is negative evidence, which provides students with feedback about an error, mistake, or attempt that they have made and allows them to internalize it. There are three ways that teachers can help students internalize corrections: 1) a confirmation check, 2) a clarification request, and 3) recast.

Clarification requests are the most effective in allowing students to process and understand the linguistic element at hand. It is important for professors to realize that feedback is crucial to a student's learning path – it is their little successes and failures that help move them forward. A more positive attitude has to emerge on the topic of feedback; the different errors that students make only show that they *are* learning more about the language and making attempts.

We can see that success in language learning can be achieved by FRSL students at Glendon by incorporating both implicit and explicit learning. Both teachers and students play a part in the classroom. Although students possess individual differences and their learner needs may vary because of different cognitive, social, and environmental factors, posing feasible solutions that take into consideration both teachers and students, teachers *can* find that teaching FRSL *can* be fun and students *can* be motivated to become successful in French within an enhanced formal instructional setting.

Out-of-classroom, on-campus learning opportunities.

As Glendon's campus is not predominantly French speaking, nor does it have an environment where FRSL students feel confident in using their French outside of the classroom, FM 4 stated that students lack confidence in their abilities to learn and use French, which is deterring them from achieving their maximum potential. Evidently, fostering a more supportive French environment around campus is an important aspect to further FRSL learning. The following two sections will discuss creating this environment in two different areas on campus, the first being Salon Francophone and the latter being all other areas of the campus.

Le Salon Francophone.

Located in the B wing of YH beside the Breezeway, the Salon Francophone is a French resource center/lounge open to anyone in the Glendon community. Supervised by hired student

monitors, this lounge is a place where students can participate in cultural exchange, access French novels, music, and movies, receive help with French homework, and engage in conversation in French.

Le salon francophone is an excellent place for furthering language learning for many reasons. The first is that it is supposed to be a relaxing environment. While in the classroom students may be intimidated to speak in such a formal setting, Le salon francophone is intended to be a supportive environment in which students do not feel judged by monitors but are rather encouraged to use what they know with comfort and confidence. FM 1 noted that all monitors working in Le salon francophone must demonstrate that they are friendly, and that they support a bilingual campus. Besides being a comfortable niche where students can practice their French, Le salon francophone also aims to expose students to French culture as they believe culture plays an important role in language learning.

Many of the successful second language learners who tell their stories in Nunan & Choi's (2010) *Language and Culture – Reflective Narratives and the Emergence of Identity*, have attributed some of their success in second language learning to culture. Out of these stories, the common notion expressed is that culture connects learners with the language, motivates, and gives learners an incentive to go beyond the language learning classroom. If this is true and if we also agree with Gardner and Lambert's theory (VanPatten & Benati, 2010) which states an individual's motivation to learn a second language is partly controlled by his or her attitudes towards the other group, then culture must play an important role in learning FRSL at Glendon.

Through the interviews we conducted with key faculty members, we have learned that many teachers and even administration strongly believe that culture is an important aspect to language learning. As teachers have been making an effort to work around their frustrations and that of

the students, they have begun to implement cultural aspects into the classroom in hopes of making French more interesting for students. The idea is that cultural aspects will be complimentary and enhance the grammatical aspects of French that is already being taught in the classroom. FM 2 noted that the FRSL department is currently in the process of trying to integrate new ideas of how to include more culture into the language classroom. So far already implemented, FRSL 2512 and FRSL 2515 have been redesigned to be taught around themes. While these two courses are limited to students at a certain level, resources like Le salon francophone have been launched at Glendon to promote cultural exchange on campus and to support success in second language learning. Le salon francophone holds French movie nights, has many French magazines and books and also music and games in which students can all expand their interests in French.

While our research demonstrates that 90% of students surveyed know about Le salon francophone (Table 4), FM 1 speculated that Le salon francophone is not being used fully for its intended purposes and FM 3 said that while Le salon francophone has great potential, students only go in for homework help (see Appendix G). We hypothesize that students are not taking advantage of Le salon francophone in respects to culture because advertisements seem to emphasize Le salon francophone as a place for homework help rather than a place for cultural exchange. While it is great that students are going to monitors for homework help, we realise this is not an alternative to FRSL learning in the classroom. Monitors from Le salon francophone are not trained in FRSL teaching – however, we believe that this could be an excellent support resource to keep students interested and motivated on their French language learning path.

Though we strongly support the efforts of the salon, we further hypothesize that if Le salon

francophone is to spread out into the Glendon community rather than relying on students to go into Le salon francophone, its services would be better utilized. It will not only benefit individuals in terms of conversational practice and motivation, but it would also benefit Glendon as an institution in strengthening its image as a bilingual campus.

Glendon's Extended Learning Programme, the program that runs Le salon francophone, also takes on other initiatives to promote French on-campus. It is capable of designing and delivering workshops, courses and activities (throughout the year) which could stimulate French-language learning and French-language use on-campus, if better utilized. However, Extended Learning courses are not offered for academic credit and are required to be offered at a cost; two factors which make these classes, taught by French-language teachers who are well-grounded in theory and practice of second-language teaching and learning, unappealing and poorly attended by Glendon students.

Residence and campus life.

In residence at Glendon, francophone and anglophone students live amongst each other. All over Glendon, there are opportunities for French L2 learners to interact with French L1 speakers. Examples beyond residence that language opportunities exist on campus include the cafeteria, campus events, the gym, the book store and library, and other services available to students.

Students in our survey reported that they are communicating with others in French. When students were asked if they had French speaking friends, 86% said yes, and 79% of those who said yes also indicated that they communicate with their friends in French. 70% of students who indicated that they lived in residence also indicated that they communicate in French in residence. However, these numbers do not specify how often this occurs.

When faculty members were asked if they thought that students were taking advantage of

the resources available and practicing outside of the classroom, FM 3 said that “most students don’t make French a priority so they aren’t getting a functional knowledge”. FM 4 said that students do not seem to be taking advantage at all of learning opportunities at Glendon, and some students in FRSL 1500 do not even know words for simple things like “hand” or how to tell time – which might suggest that their French has not been used in realistic and everyday situations. However, 70% of students surveyed indicated that they would attend an informal social event to meet French speakers. This suggests that more social events with a stress on students being actively bilingual would encourage students to use French more frequently in everyday situations. This would maximize their learning opportunities and help reduce teacher frustration in the classroom.

The high percentages show that students view residence and other social spaces on-campus as opportunities to communicate in French. However, the faculty does not feel this is the case: they believe students are not using this learning opportunity. One constraint of the questions related to this space was that students were not asked to indicate how regularly they are communicating in French. It could be possible that students are socializing on campus in French, but not enough to be noticed by faculty members. Another possible reason is that students are more comfortable in the social spaces of the campus than they are in the classroom because they feel less anxious. Therefore, their claims of using French outside the classroom do not match with the faculty members’ observations. This would need to be explored by further research, as French may be used frequently in residence dormitories, but not in common spaces often frequented by commuter students.

Off-campus spaces.

Living in French.

Off-campus learning opportunities refer to anything that is not found on Glendon College's campus that can increase the learning of FSL for Glendon students. However, this excludes summer immersion programs such as Explore, which are a separate space and will be discussed and analyzed in the next section.

Glendon students are highly unaware of the many acquisition-rich opportunities off-campus that would positively impact their learning of FRSL. Glendon professors may have a great knowledge of these resources, and we feel that while many do recommend them to their students, perhaps they could promote these opportunities more effectively. In addition, we feel that there should be more promotion for these areas around campus, pushing students to venture off-campus while focusing on a Glendon cause. For those who are aware, many of them do not seize these opportunities to the maximum for various reasons (more important priorities, indifference, lack of will, etc.). These opportunities are geared more towards oral and comprehension language skills. Ironically enough, based on a whole, the students we surveyed believe that understanding/speaking is the most important language skill.

As it is known, instructional learning is important, but naturalistic learning is just as significant in the learning of a second language because it exposes L2 learners to aspects of the language in question that are not normally encountered in the classroom. In addition, naturalistic settings allow L2 learners to be surrounded by natural speakers of the language. (We use the term "natural speakers" because native-speakerism is exclusive and not entirely accurate while *natural* speakers are those who can speak the language with skill, precision, and ease, whether or not it is their L1).

There are two kinds of areas within the space of off-campus:

- 1) Areas a learner can access from home (such as the radio, television, and internet).

2) Areas a learner can access in the GTA (such as Alliance Française, Extended Learning, French restaurants, etc.).

Toronto is rich in French resources that will not only allow learners of FRSL to learn French, but to live and relax in it as well, through verbal communication. Interestingly enough, verbal communication was what an overwhelming amount of students requested when we asked for suggestions to improve the French program at Glendon. They asked for things such as a conversation course and more oral integration overall. Essentially, they requested the missing constructs that would make their community otherwise francophone - they know what they need but they do not go out and find it so they ask for it to be brought to them. Thus, our hypotheses are:

- a) Most Glendon students do not know of the off-campus opportunities available to them to facilitate their learning of FSL.
- b) Of those Glendon students that do know of these opportunities, they do not make use of them for a variety of reasons, some valid, some excuses.
- c) Both of these groups understand the need for naturalistic learning.

Students must understand the value of naturalistic learning. They must understand, due to the fact that they do not live in a francophone community, that they must take the initiative to go out and seize French language learning opportunities available in order to create an artificial environment for themselves. However, we cannot assume they do or that they will - this learning strategy must be transmitted to them. Thus, we feel that the FRSL program should be responsible for informing students in non-specialist FRSL classes of the opportunities available to them because often they are not conscious of how much is available to them. We understand that faculty have a great deal of work as it is, but we feel that if the issue is that students do not

know and that faculty do know, it only makes sense that the wiser individuals spread their knowledge.

Another suggestion, mentioned earlier, to tackle these requests would be to offer students taking FRSL courses participation marks for going out into the off-campus space of FRSL. This way, their oral communication needs would be addressed and their exposure to French culture would expand. As the acculturation model claims, “acculturation is directly linked to acquisition” (VanPatten & Benati, 2010, p. 59). Furthermore, this would allow them to increase their communicative competence in an acquisition environment in which they would learn language incidentally as opposed to meticulously studying its structural forms. As Vygotsky claimed in his Sociocultural Theory, “all learning or development takes place as people participate in culturally formed settings” (as cited in VanPatten & Benati, 2010, p. 151-152), thus, students would surely further their language skills in French if they were encouraged to use the language, not merely study its formal structure.

This was an actual suggestion that we proposed to the faculty interviewed, and their reaction was mostly positive. When we asked if they considered such a practice to be potentially beneficial, they made such comments as “it would help students improve on areas not covered in the classroom”, “it gives practice and incentive”, and “can improve in-class performance”, but also that “extracurricular should be casual, not marked” (see Appendix B). Nonetheless, we believe that to give credit for out-of-class learning is a feasible minor change that would definitely go far in the long run.

Our overall suggestions are:

- 1) That Glendon faculty and staff promote off-campus opportunities to students of FRSL in a positive, engaging, and convincing manner so as to get students out there.

2) That Glendon as an institution, make it known that there are such opportunities out there and provide detailed information about each of them.

3) That making use of these opportunities off-campus be counted towards participation or even bonus marks for students who provide proof of having done so (i.e. language passport).

Some students claim that they listen to music, watch movies, listen to the radio, etc. in French, but none of them indicated the frequency of these activities, thus it is difficult to know if these students are actually doing enough to increase language or even if they just simply wrote that they did so as to not feel ashamed of actually not doing so.

It seems that most students seek off-campus opportunities that they wish were available. Little do they know, they indeed are available and thriving. However, once they do become aware of them, it appears that other priorities come before taking advantage of them. Thus, they do not have the drive or motivation to take initiative or prioritize off-campus French learning opportunities. In any case, if Glendon's faculty and staff were to promote these opportunities and encourage students to make use of them by integrating them into curricula, FRSL would take a turn for the better.

Explore and other summer immersion programs.

Summer immersion programs are some of the most valued language learning opportunities for many language learners. At Glendon, students strongly support programs such as the Explore program. Explore began in 1971 after Canada adopted the official languages act, making French and English the official languages of Canada (Explore Website). This program was primarily a political initiative created by the government to widen relations between French Canada and English Canada and to promote bilingual language learning (FM 1). It is a 5-week program which is funded by the federal government. Participants normally must cross a provincial border

to qualify, and therefore, the prime location for Glendon students would be Quebec. According to our research, 83% of students surveyed have heard of or are familiar with the Explore program while only 4% are aware of other Summer French immersion programs, demonstrating the dominance that Explore has over other summer immersion programs (Table 4).

Explore has been such a success so far because it allows students to learn French as a second language in a fun and relaxing manner. Students are required to go to class Monday to Friday and attend their *ateliers* (workshops) everyday, where they are focused on one project. There are cultural events throughout the week and excursions that are optional. Students have the choice of either staying in residence or in a French-speaking home, depending on the school and location. In the residences, there are monitors who are constantly on the look out for students not speaking French. In the home, it is often that the family does not speak English, forcing even students at the lower level to use the language as often as possible. One of the reasons as to why Explore has been such a success and such a valued experience is because of its immersion environment. No matter what level you are thrown into, this environment forces you to use the language everyday. It truly is an ideal place to begin language learning because you are fully immersed in the language. Regardless of what level students are at, it is the perfect complement to language learning at Glendon because it offers more opportunities to speak the language that may sometimes be lacking in the classroom – something that students surveyed feel is the most important aspect of learning a language (Table 4).

As noted above, Gardner and Lambert's theory (VanPatten & Benati, 2010), states that the attitudes that language learners have towards the other group is an important aspect of language learning. Through Explore, students may be able to foster positive attitudes towards the French community by developing emotional connections between the student, the language, and the

culture. This, in turn, increases motivation and can lead to more successful language learning. Explore, thus, positively changes a student's whole motivational set. From our surveys, as has been mentioned, it was apparent that a large number of the students had instrumental motivation. For example, students wanted the benefit of having French to compete in the job market or solely to complete Glendon requirements to graduate, which is sometimes not enough of a motivation to succeed. Students need to have more of an integrative motivation to continuously succeed every year for a minimum of three years. Explore provides an introduction to what we like to call a friendship with the language. French is no longer this co-worker you are forced to tolerate 6 hours a week. French becomes a friend as well, someone you wake up and have breakfast with, someone you play games with and go out with at night. Explore allows students to apply French to their everyday life, putting students in a cultural context where they are able to create a French identity for themselves. For 5 weeks, they live in French and become part of that community.

Another aspect of Explore that makes it such a valuable learning experience is the fact that it actually allows students to use what they have been learning. In the classroom, it is so hard to grasp a language when you are only surrounded by it for 6 hours a week. In general, students who are only engaged in formal classroom environments are often unwilling to speak in fear of making mistakes that they believe they would be scrutinized and/or penalized for. Thus, students may not receive the appropriate error correction and teacher feedback that they need to improve. Risk-taking is a principal characteristic of any good language learner (Naiman, 1996), and therefore, an instructional atmosphere in which students do not feel free to make mistakes is an atmosphere which in effect trains students to become poor language learners – exactly the opposite of what should be the case. The unfortunate result is that students just memorize

aspects of language that they will be tested on without understanding how to apply this knowledge in all contexts.

Immersion programs like Explore provide a relaxed learning environment, where students are conversing with other students without being penalized for mistakes, building confidence and competence. Throughout the five weeks, many francophones, monitors, teachers, and other students are able to modify their language output to accommodate Explore students and to increase what Vygotsky called their Zone of Proximal Development (as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Students' ZPD allows them to experience small triumphs along their language learning path and encourages them to explore the language through use. Even though they may be making mistakes in their day-to-day interactions, they still have other students, monitors, and teachers in the classroom that can provide them with corrections and feedback. What is important is that students are acquiring fluency while developing and strengthening their metalinguistic knowledge.

The final aspect of Explore that makes it so successful is that students are exposed to more community-based dialects – the authentic speech of Quebec francophones. They are taught colloquial terms and are able to see how French functions in every aspect of life for French Canadian speakers. It really gives you an insider's look as to how the language is used by those who use it everyday, and that Parisian norms (often reinforced by monolingual French-speaking teachers), is not the only variety used in various domains outside of academic French. In this way, Explore has become a program that students highly value. It is the ideal complement to the current French program at Glendon, which allows students to utilize what they learn in class. It creates a positive learning atmosphere, where on a day-to-day basis students can see their improvement. It motivates students to be more personally attached to the

language and gives them the confidence to go out and speak to native and/or non-native speakers. Finally, it gives the students a chance to understand French Canadian culture – the culture whose Quiet Revolution in the 1960s produced Canada’s federal official languages policy to which Glendon is an educational response - and all that goes along with it and the language. We feel that all Glendon students will benefit from an experience like Explore. After three or four years of French classes, students need a setting where there is a more practical use of the language than that provided in the FRSL program.

FM 4 has experienced a similar program and said that it was a really effective language learning opportunity because it offered exposure to the practical uses of the language. FM 4 further suggested that practical uses of a language should be an important component to any language class, and is something that should be implemented into the FRSL classroom at Glendon.

It has been proposed that Glendon make the Explore program a requirement for FRSL learning. It has been expressed many times by the faculty members that this is not a possibility because Glendon cannot require its students to participate in such a summer program as students have other summer engagements such as work (FM 2). It has also been expressed that students are interested in being able to earn French credits after participating in Explore. This has not been approved because Glendon cannot insure that in the time that students spend at Explore that they will learn the required material Glendon teaches in any of their classes, which may cause a problem for the students in the next level when they have not properly learned the material. Through our surveys we found that more first year students were pleased with the French program than later students (Table 4). We feel that this may be the case because after first or second year, students hit a period of what seems to be fossilization (Lightbown & Spada, 2006) and feel that grammar and other material no longer interests them. What we propose is that

Glendon create a 2000 level FRSL course for non-French-specialist students that is purely for speaking and listening comprehension; a class that incorporates presentations, debates and basic conversation. Many Glendon students feel that there is a significant lack of an oral communication and interaction component in the classroom. A course like this will fulfill at least in a small way, some of the students' desire to learn how to speak more confidently. If Glendon chooses to implement this, then maybe this course and only this course could be replaced by participation in Explore, since it is providing the students with a similar speaking and listening experience.

Therefore, to summarize, we feel that every non-specialist student be strongly encouraged to participate in the Explore program, and that participation in this program count as the equivalent of a six-credit 2000-level FRSL course, not merely as an elective. For those students who cannot find the time to spend five weeks in Quebec, our proposed six FRSL credits at the 2000-level purely for oral communication be set up as the equivalent to the Explore program. This proposal should be underpinned by the institution of a Glendon-appropriate version of the European Language Passport and Language Portfolio, to ensure that what is learned in Explore harmonizes with other elements in the FRSL program. The Explore program cannot be expected to, nor does it, prepare students for the academic foundation skills needed to progress to subsequent successful participation in true bilingual education (French-medium discipline courses); however, we feel that it – or our proposed FRSL oral communication course – is a necessary component to a balanced program, which would combine fluency, correctness, and intercultural understanding and which would respond to students' expressed wishes for increased oral confidence in French – the cornerstone of all other language skills.

Limitations to our study

There were constraints that occurred in the process of data collection. We had originally wanted to include data on what professors of the FRSL program at Glendon thought about students' perceptions and attitudes towards FRSL learning opportunities. However, our invitation was rejected despite the best efforts of Professor Martin to invite the French Studies Department to participate in this study. Although we were not able to canvass FRSL faculty views, this problem was somewhat mitigated since we were able to gather some information from the four interviews with key faculty members, all familiar with the FRSL program.

In the beginning phase of our research project, we set up a Facebook group as a way to send out surveys online to Glendon students. However, we did not receive any response and it delayed us in moving forward with our project. Interviews with key faculty members were not recorded and thus, the notes that were taken by each research team member were written in our own words. However, we controlled for researcher bias by having both team members take notes. In the student surveys, some questions were not as specific as we had originally thought and therefore were subject to interpretation by the participants. We had some difficulty analyzing our results due to these ambiguous questions and variations in answers. Since we were working within a limited time frame, we could not get a wider range of participants including students, faculty, and others involved in the salon, and campus life. We would have liked to monitor the salon more closely to see how many students were using it and gather a more in depth conclusion to students' responses. If this study were to be conducted again, these points should be taken note of.

We did not include participants who were majoring in French Studies. We also did not take into consideration of whether students were commuters or whether they lived on residence,

which we believe may affect their involvement with the French community at Glendon.

However in the future, it would be interesting to compare all students to see whether these factors would influence their success of learning FRSL.

Future Directions

Suggestions

Our research demonstrates that there are many issues surrounding Glendon non-French-specialist students successfully learning FRSL at Glendon. Through our surveys, we have learned about student lack of motivation in terms of FRSL and through interviews with key faculty members we have been given further insight on not only student lack of motivation but how this affects professors in teaching and in other ways that constrain teachers in the classroom as well.

With this holistic view of what is going on at Glendon in terms of FRSL, in the following section we will provide a list of suggestions, with brief explanations where needed, that we believe could strengthen successful FRSL learning at Glendon. While we recognise that money and time have been two limitations in strengthening successful FRSL language learning opportunities available to Glendon students in the past, we would like readers to note how realistic our suggestions are, and to take advantage of the many students on campus who would volunteer to make these things happen, if the initiative was started (as many Glendon clubs, councils, and events are successfully run by student volunteers).

On-campus spaces.

The FRSL classroom.

We found that Kumaravadivelu's (2003) macrostrategies for language teaching in the classroom fit really well with the suggestions we are proposing. Some of the macrostrategies

that we will be looking at are: to minimize perceptual mismatches, to promote learner autonomy, to foster language awareness, to integrate language skills, to maximize learning opportunities.

We have also mentioned in passing the need for any program to attend to other macrostrategies put forward by Kumaravadivelu: to promote learner autonomy, to activate intuitive heuristics, to ensure social relevance, to contextualize linguistic input, and to raise cultural consciousness.

We will start by looking at minimizing perceptual mismatches. We know that professors teach many different classes and have countless students but we believe that goal setting should be done collaboratively to ensure the students know the steps to reach these goals. Teachers should also take a little bit of time to get to know their students and understand their learner needs in terms of learning styles and preferences in order to reach the goals of the curriculum effectively. Time should not be a constraint on this suggestion; through our experience in university of the first day of classes, most professors hand out a syllabus and then release the class early. This time could be used to ask students about their learning style, ask students to fill out learning style surveys (which can easily be found online), or teachers can simply explain their style of teaching and ask students how it relates to their learning style remembering that this is a two way street and both parties may need to make compromises. They can also facilitate negotiated interaction (i.e. having meaningful interaction amongst students and between students and professors such as icebreakers, etc.).

As we have mentioned in our report, some students come into university at an immature age. To make life easier for teachers and to make students more aware of what it will take to truly learn French, we suggest that professors inform students about the many opportunities available to them that will help them expand their knowledge of French but stress the fact that students

must do so willingly and sometimes independent of teacher guidance. This will promote learner autonomy.

To foster language awareness, we suggest ending the disconnect that we have noticed in our research between professor and students, and language and students. Making students aware of the importance of the French language in relation to other languages can play a big role in motivating students and this can be done by professors simply sharing stories of where French has taken them and their French colleagues, which will allow students to view professors as human but also allow them to see possible end goals of learning French, if they work hard.

To integrate language skills, we believe that the use of all four language skills needs to be implemented in a more balanced way in class. We realise that time constraints again play into this factor but if the whole class has been focused on writing we suggest stopping the class 10 minutes early to start up French conversation in class. Enforcing students to speak in French can prove to be difficult if you cannot watch over all the students. However, this can be overcome with simple and effective activities that do not require a lot of preparation. For example, a teacher can ask each student in your class to write a question (any question) on a piece of paper and their name on another. Then they can put all the questions in one hand and all the names in the other, have one student draw a name and a question, and then ask the question to the name of the student they drew. That student will have to answer the question, and teachers can encourage further discussion by asking another student what they think of student 2's answer. After the question is over, have the next student pick and ask a question to another – repeat until time is up. This is fun and allows students to practise speaking. The teacher is there to make necessary corrections and can even break into a small lesson based on a noticed error. Plenty of other activities like this can be found online and in books, such as Marsland's (1998) *Lessons from*

Nothing, for all areas of language learning, even for those FRSL instructors who have never been trained in second-language teaching, or who have received their training before the communicative language teaching approach.

Optimum results require an approach based on instructional cycles, such as Engage – Study – Practice or Presentation – Practice – Performance (Harmer 2009). Methodologies of this sort would allow for more enjoyable French classes that focus on students perfecting a few concepts and being able to apply these concepts through a variety of communicative tasks. Courses like this will appeal to students who are content with learning more functional French.

Themed courses taught in French could be made available for all levels. We suggest that courses like French history for beginners, world issues for intermediate etc. could be created to offer students an alternative to taking FRSL 0400, FRSL1500, FRSL 1510 etc. Creating these alternative classes, would be especially beneficial for those in-between students who are not quite ready for FRSL1500, but are not being challenged by 0400. We do not suggest neglecting grammar in these courses but rather teaching grammar through these themes.

Diary or journal entries have been an activity that personally helped members of this research team in learning French. Students can write diary entries on anything or teachers can assign topics. Students then submit these to their professors who correct them, and then students review in order to learn from their mistakes. Now, students often do not look at these corrections because they figure the assignments over but we know of a few professors who offer incentives to force students to look at them by proposing that if students correct the circled mistakes they can improve their mark by 2% or whatever mark they feel is appropriate. We believe that this will be a very effective method in allowing students to discover more about the language on their own. This incentive can also be used for tests in a similar way. Allowing students to gain marks

for correcting the errors on their tests gives them an opportunity to note errors and internalize the corrections. Through this, students would not feel punished for making mistakes but reinforced for their efforts.

Residence and life on campus.

More French events should be put on by the GCSU. Though Glendon has a fair share of francophones, most events are predominantly English. We suggest that the GCSU put on events like Carnaval de Quebec, with games in French and things like Bonhomme, and sugar shacks etc. to not only promote French but also French culture.

Frosh should also be made more bilingual. When students go to Explore, even if they do not know any French they are still able to participate in all French events and pick up some language too! Holding at least one activity focused on using French, with whatever French students know, would set a positive attitude towards French for first years and also give students a chance to recognise who is more fluent and any francophones that may be able to help them with their language learning throughout the year.

Bilingual buddies or pen pals at Glendon are simple ways of connecting Glendon students with French on another level. While sometimes it may be awkward to approach other students and just start speaking, it provides a way for students to meet people comfortably. These suggestions may sound silly but these are ways outside of the classroom that students can connect themselves with the French language and practise their writing skills, make French friends and even learn about French culture which is more flexible than a club, which would encourage more interaction even among commuters.

Le salon francophone.

Relying on students to go into the Salon is one of the reasons we believe the Salon in

underutilised. We think that a resource with such great potential should add an outreach component in which they set up a booth a few hours a week by the entrance of the breeze way where they engage students in fun trivia and activities in French with assisting English for those who need it. This idea was inspired by Wellness Wednesdays, which is an educational but fun, engaging and interactive booth put up every Wednesday by Health Education. Costs associated with this are minimal because it can run off of student volunteers, who are selected the way workers would be but receive recognition in the end for their hours but in the form of a reference letter or certificate rather than pay. We believe that Salon Francophone could easily do this, which would in turn spread French and French culture throughout the campus rather than limit it to a corner.

While the Salon places many advertisements for homework help in their front window, FM 3 suggested that they could create a bulletin board that advertises more, such as French artist of the week, French movie of the week, events going on outside of campus to promote French through culture and really get them to live French. We believe this is a good idea and that monitors could even post a date and time, encouraging students to meet and go out to events together. Further, we believe that this bulletin needs to be placed in an area where it will be visible to more students and also that this board needs to be bright and very visually appealing.

We believe that the Salon francophone could further support the FRSL classroom at Glendon by sending around “French motivators” to bring up the spirit of the class. Professors could specify when or how they would like motivators to participate in their classes it may be asking a motivator to tell a joke in French the first 5 minutes of each class and explain it to the class (a great way to learn even more vocabulary), it may be that the professors asks motivators to provide a cultural fact per class or maybe that theses motivators come in during the break or at

the end of class to stimulate an interesting or engaging discussion. Students feed off energy and if a frustrated professor cannot initiate this, maybe a classroom motivator is the perfect way to lighten up the mood for both parties. Again, this is cost efficient because motivators may consist of volunteers.

Off-campus spaces.

Through this report, we demonstrate the numerous opportunities available to Glendon students both on- and off- campus to support successful FRSL learning. In analysing these opportunities however, we believe that many of them are rarely and/or poorly promoted to Glendon students which plays a role in students taking advantage of these opportunities especially in regards to those that are off-campus. We believe that many professors know of French activities and events off campus which students could benefit from and we ask that professor make students aware of these opportunities and encourage their students to go.

FM 4 noted the positive effects of awarding students with marks, even as low as 1%, in getting students to do more to improve their FRSL beyond attending class. If students are given an incentive to go into French spaces off- campus we believe most will and possibly even grow to enjoy French through them. Though time may be a constraint for many students these will remain only options to improve your mark and may not be mandatory. The further domino effect is that by giving students an initial incentive to go, if students enjoy themselves once but don't have time to go again during the school year maybe they will go during the summer when they have more time thus continuing their learning outside of the classroom.

Most French textbooks have themed units in them, why not make these realities for students and allow them to practise what they have learned through field trips. While some may counter argue that it is hard to schedule or that there is no time, we did not say including our suggestions

would be easy but rather they would be possible, it does not have to happen all the time but once a year students can be taken on a field trip or at the very least, have a guest speaker to come in and engage them.

Explore and other summer immersion programs.

As we suggested above, a fellowship between Explore and Glendon should be created in order to have courses taken through explore count for FRSL credits at Glendon. We should not be afraid to borrow ideas from other faculties or even other universities! Western has created a fellowship between themselves and a school that is part of the Explore program, which proves it is not impossible to do (UWO student, personal communication, 12.13.2010). Glendon should institutionalize a solid, high-quality relationship with Explore, and include this in their recruitment material and in their planning.

Otherwise, six-credit courses can be created to be available to FRSL students, which would count towards the French requirement. These courses can have a strong focus on speaking while not neglecting the other language learning skills. If this is implemented, then these courses for each FRSL level can offer students the option of completing this course through Glendon or counting a term in Explore as a replacement. Students should be encouraged to go on Explore. In fact, there are summer work positions available to students of Explore, after they have completed the five-week program. These should be promoted so that students do not feel that they are missing summer job opportunities elsewhere.

Conclusion

Glendon needs to use students as resources. The students can help to make Glendon a more bilingual environment, more advanced level students can take bilingual leadership roles opening up more French learning opportunities. We believe that many students would volunteer

to be more actively involved in FRLS at Glendon. Students interested in careers in education and pursuing graduate studies would certainly be interested if this opportunity was presented to them. This could be accomplished through volunteer positions such as motivators discussed in our suggestions section. Overall, Glendon needs to build a stronger and more unified community based around its unique bilingual identity. If this were achieved, it would result in more attitudes of students, a stronger bilingual environment, and thus more successful language learning.

Finally, our study highlights the lack of motivation among FRLS students, but we feel that there are positive aspects to the themed courses and French L2-medium courses. They are a step in the right direction.

The main challenge, as it appears to us, is to strengthen the FRSL program through, among other things, connecting it to an enriched environment of out-of-class learning opportunities (in particular by promoting and accrediting the summer Explore program with FRSL, not elective course, credits). In this way, more non-French specialist students would have the confidence and the ability to participate in the many underutilized bilingual education opportunities for them in French-medium disciplinary courses at the College. If this challenge is met, our claim to being a Centre of Excellence in Bilingual Education would be more fully realized and more accessible to all.

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Table 1

Year of study of students surveyed

| Year of Study | Percentage (%) |
|---------------|----------------|
| First | 19 |
| Second | 17 |
| Third | 37 |
| Fourth | 27 |

Table 2

Level of French prior to coming to Glendon of students surveyed

| Level | Percentage (%) |
|-----------|----------------|
| Zero | 11 |
| Grade 9 | 3 |
| Core | 33 |
| Immersion | 16 |
| Extended | 1 |
| Other* | 27 |
| N/A** | 9 |

* Self-evaluated by participant ambiguously (i.e. fluent, some French knowledge, etc.)

** No answer

Table 3

Highest level of FRSL completed by surveyed students

| FRSL Course | Percentage (%) |
|-------------|----------------|
| 0400 | 10 |
| 1500 | 17 |
| 1510 | 23 |
| 2512 | 18 |
| 2515 | 23 |
| Other* | 9 |

* A FRSL course that is above the minimum requirement for non-specialized students

Table 4

Results for Yes/No Questions

| Yes/No Question | Answer in Percentage (%) | | |
|--|--------------------------|----|------|
| | Yes | No | N/A* |
| Have you ever taken a course through the French medium? | 44 | 56 | - |
| Did the French language attract you in coming to Glendon? | 83 | 16 | 1 |
| If yes, did your experiences with the Glendon French program fulfill your expectations? | 26 | 64 | 10 |
| Do you know about the Explore program? | 83 | 17 | - |
| Do you know of any other French immersion programs that happen during the summer? | 4 | 96 | - |
| Have you ever completed a French summer immersion program? | 20 | 79 | 1 |
| Le salon francophone is a centre that offers informal French conversation practice and help with French homework. | | | |
| Do you know about them? | 90 | 10 | - |
| Do you immerse yourself in French outside of the classroom? For example, do you watch television and movies in French, listen to French music, or listen to the radio in French? | 69 | 29 | 2 |

Table 4 cont'd

| | | | |
|--|----|----|----|
| If you received participation marks for engaging in French outside of the classroom, would you be more inclined to do so? | 86 | 13 | 1 |
| Do you think this would be beneficial? | 77 | 10 | 13 |
| Have you ever participated in a French event on campus? | 11 | 89 | - |
| Do you live in residence? | 19 | 81 | - |
| If yes, do you communicate with other students in French? | 70 | 30 | - |
| Do you have French-speaking friends? | 86 | 14 | - |
| If yes, do you ever communicate with them in French? | 79 | 20 | 1 |
| If there were social events where you would be able to meet other French speakers in an informal setting, would you participate? | 70 | 20 | 10 |

* No answer

Appendix A

Copy of Student Survey

**Glendon Student Perceptions of and Attitudes to French L2 Learning Opportunities
On- and Off-campus (STUDENT SURVEY)**

Name (Optional): _____ Date: _____

Year of Study (i.e. 2nd year) _____ Major: _____

What was your level of French prior to coming to Glendon? _____

Have you ever taken a course through the French medium? (i.e. a History class in French)

Yes No

If yes, which one? Have you found this to be a positive experience? _____

What is the highest level you have completed in FRLS? (Please circle):

0400 1500 1510 2512 2515

How would you rate your proficiency in French in the following areas? (Please circle):

A1-A2 (Low - High Beginner), B1 – B2 (Low – High Intermediate), C1 – C2 (Low – High Advanced)

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Reading | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | C1 | C2 |
| Writing | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | C1 | C2 |
| Comprehension | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | C1 | C2 |
| Speaking | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | C1 | C2 |
| Interacting (i.e. in conversation) | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | C1 | C2 |

Did the French language attract you in coming to Glendon? Yes No

If yes, did your experiences with the Glendon French program fulfill your expectations?

Explain. _____

Do you know about the Explore program? Yes No

Do you know of any other French immersion programs that happen during the summer?

Yes No

If yes, which ones? _____

Have you ever completed a French summer immersion program (Explore)? Yes No

If you have, how would you compare your learning in this programme to your learning of French at Glendon? _____

Le salon francophone is a centre that offers informal French conversation practice and help with French homework. Do you know about them? Yes No

If yes, have you ever utilized their services and how have they helped? Was it a positive experience? _____

Do you immerse yourself in French outside of the classroom? For example, do you watch television and movies in French, listen to French music, or listen to the radio in French?

If you received participation marks for engaging in French outside of the classroom, would you be more inclined to do so? Yes No

Do you think this would be beneficial? Why or why not? _____

Have you ever participated in a French event on campus? Yes No

Do you live in residence? Yes No

If yes, do you communicate with other students in French? Yes No

Do you have French-speaking friends? Yes No

If yes, do you ever communicate with them in French? Yes No

If there were social events where you would be able to meet other French speakers in an informal setting, would you participate? Yes No

What is your motivation to learn French? _____

When you make speech errors in the classroom, do you find teacher feedback useful?

Why or why not? _____

Rate these according to what you think is most important (Please circle):

| <u>Language Skill</u> | <u>Least Important ----- Most Important</u> | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Writing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Understanding | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Speaking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

In your opinion, what is successful second language learning? _____

Given your above opinion, is the formal instructional setting of the classroom generally effective in helping you learn successfully? Do you feel you are placed at the appropriate level?

?

Do you have any suggestions that would help improve your French learning experience, both in and out of the formal instructional setting of the classroom?



Thank you for voluntarily participating in this survey.
If necessary, please drop off the Informed Consent Form and Student Survey
in YH C221 by December 2, 2010 at the latest.

Appendix B

Qualitative Results

| Open-ended Questions | |
|---|---|
| Question | Notes/Keywords |
| If [you have taken a course through the French medium...], have you found this to be a positive experience? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positive experience - however, they were challenging - 2 students said these classes are better than taking FRSL classes in terms of language learning |
| [...] did your experiences with the Glendon French program fulfill your expectations? Explain. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - students feel professors don't tailor to their needs - professors are inconsistent from year to year and vary in expectations - expectations are not met - due to false expectations, courses were harder than they anticipated - classes are discouraging, boring - many say they are not improving - not immersed in bilingual environment - need more oral practice |
| [...] have you ever utilized [salon francophone's] services and how have they helped? Was it a positive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - majority of students know about it but have not gone into the Salon - of those who go, they go for homework help |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>experience?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - homework help experiences are positive - find monitors intimidating |
| <p>Do you think [participation marks for engaging in French outside of the classroom] would be beneficial? Why or why not?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - some say extra-curricular activities should be casual, not marked - gives chance to improve on areas that are not covered in class (i.e. practical oral skills/conversation/things outside of the textbook) - gives chance to improve in-class performance - gives incentive to students - encourages students to practice more orally |
| <p>What is your motivation to learn French?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - personal interest and/or love for languages (integrative motivation) - asset for future study/work (instrumental motivation) - for travel - to learn another language |
| <p>Rate [each language skill] according to what you think is most important...</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understanding and/or speaking skills were rated more importantly than reading and/or writing skills on the whole |
| <p>In your opinion, what is successful second language learning?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being able to hold a conversation (practical use) |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being able to communicate your thoughts effectively - reading and writing skills are also important |
| <p>Given your above opinion, is the formal instructional setting of the classroom generally effective in helping you learn successfully?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attitudes toward the classroom are mostly negative - material is either too easy or too challenging |
| <p>Do you feel you are placed at the appropriate level?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - some feel they are placed fairly - students see gaps in (learner levels) in the class - students see gaps in the content in between courses (i.e. they often don't feel prepared to move onto the next level) |
| <p>Do you have any suggestions that would help improve your French learning experience, both in and out of the formal instructional setting of the classroom?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make special class for those who already have knowledge or are stronger in their class (to help them move forward and improve) - be immersed / go on an immersion trip - make language appealing - incorporate culture into material taught - have activities outside of the classroom - French pal / pen pal / monitor - Have tutorials - Make class interactive to ease tension - Make material relevant to the learner |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have course focused on speaking French - Have more opportunities to practice - Consistency in teaching throughout all professors |
|--|--|

Appendix C

Typed copy of Gass and Selinker's (2008) definitions of bilingualism

Definitions of Bilingualism

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Achieved bilingual | same as <i>late bilingual</i> |
| Additive bilingual | someone whose two languages combine in a complementary and enriching fashion |
| Ambilingual | same as <i>balanced bilingual</i> |
| Ascendant bilingual | someone whose ability to function in a second language is developing due to increased use |
| Ascribed bilingual | same as <i>early bilingual</i> |
| Asymmetrical bilingual | see <i>receptive bilingual</i> |
| Balanced bilingual | someone whose mastery of two languages is roughly equivalent |
| Compound bilingual | someone whose two languages are learned at the same time, often in the same context |
| Consecutive bilingual | same as <i>successive bilingual</i> |
| Coordinate bilingual | someone whose two languages are learned in distinctively separate contexts |
| Convert bilingual | someone who conceals his or her knowledge of a given language due to an attitudinal disposition |
| Diagonal bilingual | someone who is bilingual in a nonstandard language or a dialect and an unrelated standard language |
| Dominant bilingual | someone with greater proficiency in one of his or her languages and uses it significantly more than the other language(s) |
| Dormant bilingual | someone who has emigrated to a foreign country for a considerable period of time and has little opportunity to keep the first language actively in use |
| Early bilingual | someone who has acquired two languages early in childhood |
| Equilingual | same as <i>balanced bilingual</i> |
| Functional bilingual | someone who can operate in two languages with or without full fluency for the task in hand |
| Horizontal bilingual | someone who is bilingual in two distinct languages which have a similar or equal status |
| Incipient bilingual | someone at the early stages of bilingualism where one language is not fully developed |
| Late bilingual | someone who has become a bilingual later than childhood |
| Maximal bilingual | someone with near-native control of two or more languages |
| Minimal bilingual | someone with only a few words and phrases in a second language |

Appendix C cont'd

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Natural bilingual | someone who has not undergone any specific training and who is often not in a position to translate or interpret with facility between two languages |
| Passive bilingual | same as <i>receptive bilingual</i> |
| Primary bilingual | same as <i>natural bilingual</i> |
| Productive bilingual | someone who not only understands but also speaks and possibly writes in two or more languages |
| Receptive bilingual | someone who understands a second language, in either its spoken or written form, or both, but does not necessarily speak or write it |
| Recessive bilingual | someone who begins to feel some difficulty in either understanding or expressing him or herself with ease, due to lack of use |
| Secondary bilingual | someone whose second language has been added to a first language via instruction |
| Semibilingual | same as <i>receptive bilingual</i> |
| Semilingual | someone with insufficient knowledge of either language |
| Simultaneous bilingual | someone whose two languages are present from the onset of speech |
| Subordinate bilingual | someone who exhibits interference in his or her language usage by reducing the patterns of the second language to those of the first |
| Subtractive bilingual | someone whose second language is acquired at the expense of the aptitudes already acquired in the first language |
| Successive bilingual | someone whose second language is added at some stage after the first has begun to develop |
| Symmetrical bilingual | same as <i>balanced bilingual</i> |
| Vertical bilingual | someone who is bilingual in a standard language and a distinct but related language or dialect |

Appendix D

Appendix D is a copy of a flyer promoting Le salon francophone that the research members picked up at the location.



Appendix E

LEVEL 1/NIVEAU 1
The Bilingual BA/Le BA bilingue
 Solid, intermediate level French—our basic, graduation requirement, achieved by taking French as a second language courses to the second-year level or by taking at least one discipline course taught in French.

Correspond à un niveau intermédiaire fort d'anglais et représente le niveau minimal exigé pour obtenir un diplôme de Glendon. Les étudiants suivent des cours d'anglais langue seconde jusqu'au niveau de la deuxième année ou au moins un cours d'une discipline enseigné en anglais.

LEVEL 2/NIVEAU 2
The Certificate of Bilingualism/Certificat de bilinguisme
 Achieved by completing three full-year courses taught in French—a combination of French as a second language courses and discipline courses taught in French at the appropriate levels.

Les étudiants doivent réussir trois cours d'une année complète enseignés en anglais. Les cours comprennent: des cours d'anglais langue seconde et des cours de discipline enseignés en anglais au niveau approprié.

LEVEL 3/NIVEAU 3
The Certificate of Bilingual Excellence/Le Certificat d'excellence bilingue
 The Certificate of Bilingual Excellence is awarded to students who earn an average of B or higher in three full-year courses in French. Students must also successfully complete an examination at the end of their degree.

Le Certificat d'excellence bilingue est décerné aux étudiants qui obtiennent une moyenne de B ou plus dans trois cours complets enseignés en anglais. Les étudiants doivent aussi réussir un examen à la fin de leurs études.

The Certificate of Trilingual Excellence/Le Certificat d'excellence trilingue
 The Certificate of Trilingual Excellence is awarded to students who earn an average of B or higher in three full-year courses in French and in three full-year courses in Spanish. Students must also successfully complete an examination at the end of their degree.

Le Certificat d'excellence trilingue est décerné aux étudiants qui obtiennent une moyenne de B ou plus dans trois cours complets enseignés en anglais et dans trois cours complets enseignés en espagnol. Les étudiants doivent aussi réussir un examen à la fin de leurs études.

www.glendon.yorku.ca/advantage
www.glendon.yorku.ca/advantage

LEVEL 1/NIVEAU 1

LEVEL 2/NIVEAU 2

LEVEL 3/NIVEAU 3

Appendix H

Kumaravadivelu's (2003) 10 Macrostrategies for Language Teaching, found in his book, *Beyond methods: macrostrategies for language teaching*.

1) Maximizing Learning Opportunities

Envisions teaching as a process of creating an utilizing learning opportunities. "Teachers need to constantly monitor how the lesson is unfolding and make suitable changes as necessary" (p. 45).

2) Minimizing Perceptual Mismatches

Emphasizes the recognition of potential perceptual mismatches between intentions and interpretations of the learner and the teacher. This macrostrategy aims to minimize the mismatches that exist between learner and teacher perceptions of what is available to learn.

3) Facilitating Negotiated Interaction

Refers to meaningful learner-learner, learner-teacher classroom interaction in which learners are entitled and encouraged to participate in conversations. By employing this macrostrategy, teachers take students beyond the limited action of "react and respond" (p. 39).

4) Promoting Learner Autonomy

Involves helping learners learn how to learn, equipping them with strategies necessary to self-direct and self-monitor their own learning. "A crucial task of the teacher wishing to promote learner autonomy is to help learners take responsibility for their learning, and to bring about necessary attitudinal changes in them" (p. 137).

5) Foster Language Awareness

Refers to any attempt to draw learner's attention to the formal and functional properties of their L2 in order to increase the degree of explicitness required to promote L2 learning. It is important for language teachers to "design activities that foster both general and critical language awareness in the classroom" (p. 168).

6) Activating Intuitive Heuristics

"Heuristics refers to the process of self discovery part of the learner" (p. 176). This macrostrategy stresses the importance of providing rich textual data so that learners can infer underlying rules governing grammatical usage and communicative use.

7) Contextualizing Linguistic Input

Highlights how language usage and use are shaped by "linguistic, extralinguistic, situational, and extrasituational contexts" (p. 39). For example, presenting linguistic input with thematic contexts reflects the natural use of the language.

Appendix H cont'd

- 8) Integrating Language Skills
Stresses the need to holistically integrate language skills traditionally separated and sequenced as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The separation of skills is inadequate for developing integrated functional skills because “language skills are essentially interrelated and mutually reinforcing” (p. 288).
- 9) Ensuring Social Relevance
Calls attention to the need for teachers to be sensitive to the societal, political, economic, and educational environment in which L2 learning and teaching take place.
- 10) Raising Cultural Consciousness
Emphasizes the need to treat learners as “cultural informants” (p. 39) so that they are encouraged to engage in a process of classroom participation that acknowledges their power and knowledge.

Taken from: <http://www.actfl.org/files/ACTFL06handouts/Session368.pdf>