

Rethinking Home-Reading:  
Supporting Early French Immersion Students and Parents with Meaningful Home Literacy  
Programs

by

Megan Pomper

Bachelor of Arts, University of Victoria, 2009  
Bachelor of Education, University of Victoria, 2011

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## ABSTRACT

Multimodal home literacy programs create meaningful literacy experiences for Early French Immersion students and their parents. Multimodal practices allow students to engage in a variety of literacy-based activities and facilitate the development of a range of literacy-based skills that extend beyond the oral recitation of texts. By incorporating these practices into home literacy programs, multimodal practices encourage increased participation and motivation from students, offer opportunities to develop fluency with new technologies, and foster meaningful relationships between school and home. In this project, I review the literature on French Immersion teaching practices, multimodality, and the importance of parental involvement for second language learners. From this review, I outline a multimodal home-literacy program I have created which incorporates a range of literacy-based practices that support students' French Immersion literacy development and allow parents to actively contribute to this process. A workshop for parents further outlines this program and offers detailed insight into how these multimodal practices can be used at home by parents.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

As an Early French Immersion (EFI) teacher, I am interested in uncovering pedagogical methods that increase opportunities for children to be successful in literacy practices in EFI classrooms. Literacy, which includes the skills and abilities necessary to properly decode and comprehend a given piece of text (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998), can be a particularly challenging area for EFI students since they must develop their French vocabulary and decoding skills simultaneously. Although I have initiated several successful interventions for many students in my classroom, there are always children who still require additional literacy support. As such, I want to examine the role that multimodal home literacy programs can play in strengthening home-school connections and in facilitating literacy development in EFI students.

For this project, I focus on the specific literacy benefits for EFI students that are fostered by meaningful and multimodal home-literacy programs. I draw from the work of Kress (1997, 2000), whose theory of multimodality explains that communication is composed of several different modes, which can include writing, gestures, and visual information. Early primary students are often limited in their freedom of communication in school settings because of a lack of fluency in written language, considered to be the dominant form of communication (Kress, 1997, 2000). This is highly applicable for EFI, where young students can be further restricted by a limited French vocabulary. My project is also supported by the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979), whose ecological systems theory stresses the influential impact of the interaction between structures within a child's microsystem. Meaningful connections between home and school, two systems within the microsystem, are considered to be particularly beneficial for French Immersion students and have shown to be a factor which contributes to academic success in French Immersion programs (Ewart & Straw, 2001; Fraser, 2011). Along with multimodality (1997, 2000) and the ecological systems theory (1979), I also draw on the linguistic interdependence theory (Cummins, 1979), which notes the positive transfer influence of mother tongue literacy skills on second language literacy.

In this project, I examine literature which outlines the ways that multimodal practices positively supported the literacy development of EFI students and I explore how these practices can be used effectively in creating a meaningful link between home and school. Additionally, I highlight the positive impact of multimodal literacy programs in enabling non-French speaking parents to support their child's literacy development in EFI.

## **History of French Immersion**

French Immersion education was established as a result of the French language boom, la Révolution tranquille, in Québec in the 1960s (Roy, 2008; Roy & Galiev, 2011). During this period, in an effort to resist the growing Anglophone dominance in the province, Québec provincial leaders took the French language from familial usage to primary language status in schools, businesses, and government (Roy, 2008). As such, the ability to speak French became a necessity to participate in the labour market. This motivated Anglophone families who stayed in the province to provide their children with the necessary tools to succeed in Québec as adults (Roy & Galiev, 2011).

The first French Immersion program was established in St. Lambert, Québec in the mid-1960s (Roy, 2008). The program was developed by a group of Anglophone parents, in consultation with McGill University professors (Roy, 2008). Prior to this program, Anglophone students studied French through 30 minute a day classes which relied heavily on repetitive and ineffective practices (Roy, 2008). French Immersion, conversely, immersed children in French education right from kindergarten and integrated in English Language Arts in later primary. The principles behind French Immersion programs were to develop students' proficiency and fluency in French, to maintain and develop students' mother tongue, and to increase Anglophone students' appreciation of French language and culture (Roy & Galiev, 2011)

French Immersion programs were well-received in Québec and, in 1969, following the Official Languages Act which recognized English and French as Canada's official languages, the program was established in school districts nation-wide (Roy, 2008). French Immersion programs were federally supported through the 1970 Official Languages in Education Program, which helped to further promote the spread of French Immersion education in Canada (Roy, 2008).

French Immersion student populations have grown steadily since its inception. The 1985-1986 school year had 180,345 students enrolled in French Immersion across Canada; in 2010, that number rose to 337,488 (Roy, 2008; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2014). Along with increasing numbers, Canadian French Immersion programs have also changed in student demographics. French Immersion programs were once considered as elitist programs that were largely composed of middle-class Anglophone children (Pellerin, 2013). However, current

demographics report a more varied spectrum of student SES standing, family backgrounds, and academic ability (Au-Yeung et al., 2015; Pellerin, 2013).

## **Rationale**

The topic of my graduate project is the convergence of two areas of focus that have persisted in my practice for varying periods of time. The first area involves the literacy development of EFI students. I have seen how this process can be complicated by the introduction of a second language with new phonological structure and vocabulary. In order to support students with their second language acquisition and reading proficiency, I have made an effort to extend my literacy practices in the classroom through a variety of professional development workshops, as well as collaborative pursuits with language support teachers at my school. Yet, I have witnessed many students who, despite in-class interventions, seem to plateau in their development and still require additional literacy support. This has motivated me, through my graduating project, to look closer at the factors specific to EFI which facilitate students' language acquisition and foster literacy skills.

The second area, which involves home and school connections, has become an area of increasing interest to me over the last few months. During this time, I was introduced to the importance of linking home and school in significant ways and the consequent benefits for children (Harvard Family Research Project [HFRP], 2006; Rimm-Kaufmann & Pianta, 2010). These ideas pushed me to reflect on the space that I made for parents in my own practice and I became increasingly aware of the lack of meaningful home-school connection in my classroom. In terms of communication, I have always informed parents of the logistical components of school (e.g., information regarding field trips, upcoming events). However, I rarely discussed the content or learning experiences explored in class. Parents have commented on how they appreciated my emails, but never voiced a concern that they felt disconnected from what their child was learning. As such, I did not recognize a need to alter my method of communication. It is likely that many parents, like me, saw Grade 2 as a transitional year, where students became more independent and took on more of the learning responsibility themselves, and where parents needed only to concern themselves with the managerial aspects of education. Regardless of the reason, we were simultaneously reinforcing each other's positions as separate and distinct. Given the benefit of developing a home-school connection (Brannon & Dauksas, 2012;

Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Evans & Shaw, 2008; Ewart & Straw, 2001; HFRP, 2006; Rimm-Kaufmann & Pianta, 2010), I realized that I have been doing my students a disservice by minimally including their parents in their education. Although I still believe that Grade 2 is a year of increased social and academic independence, I have started to rethink my beliefs on what it means to include parents in the classroom. Teaching in EFI, however, presents a complicated dilemma regarding parents in education since students must receive 100% of their day in French from Kindergarten to Grade 3 (BC Ministry of Education, French Immersion Program, 2016). As such, non-French parents cannot regularly participate within the classroom. Therefore, I have become motivated to uncover ways to include parents in their child's education in meaningful ways, while also adhering to the Ministry requirements of French Immersion. This interest in home-school connections, along with my goals for literacy instruction, have helped me narrow the focus of my graduating project on how I can involve parents in their child's EFI literacy development through multimodal home-literacy programs.

### **Introduction to Theories**

This project will be framed by the following theories: multimodality (Kress, 2000); ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979); and linguistic interdependence (Cummins, 1979).

Multimodality (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 1997, 2000) recognizes the various modes that can be used in communication and meaning-making. Kress (2000) argued that despite the dominance of written language, several other communication modes exist and are effective in conveying thoughts, meaning, and understanding. Given that young children lack a fluency in written language, they are often inhibited in terms of free communication within academic settings (Kress, 1997). The validation of different modes of communication within the classroom, however, would provide students with greater choice and different means to convey understanding and communicate ideas through modes in which they have greater proficiency (Kress, 1997). Additionally, the introduction of digital technologies into educational settings facilitates students' exposure to different modes of communication, while also promoting fluency in new communication and information technologies (Jewitt & Kress, 2003). This theory provides the basis for the extension of home-literacy programs beyond the oral recitation of

texts, in order to provide students with multiple means to interact with, explore, and use literacy and the French language in the classroom and beyond.

The Ecological Systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) argues that each person develops within a multi-layered ecosystem with varying levels of relation and influence to the person at the centre. The most immediate system is the microsystem which involves such entities as schools and the home. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that the mesosystem, which can have a powerful influence on a child's development, consists of the interactions between entities in the microsystem (1979). The relationship between school and home is one example of the interactions found within the mesosystem. This theory will provide the basis for home-school connections and the need for parents and teachers to share and support similar educational goals.

Linguistic interdependence theory (Cummins, 1979) examines the correlation between a child's mastery over literacy skills in their mother tongue and subsequent success in the literacy of their second language. This theory is significant for issues regarding French Immersion in that it highlights the idea that literacy skills in a child's mother tongue can transfer to and support literacy development in a second language. Cummins further clarified his theory by arguing that linguistic interdependence occurs as a result of a cross-lingual dimension (1980) which consists of a set of underlying skills which, once developed, can be applied equally from one language to another. This theory will frame the belief that literacy development at home, regardless of the language, could support literacy skill development in EFI.

## **Significance**

The mastery of language and literacy are foundational skills that children will require in order to successfully navigate the world as adults (Desrochers & Major, 2008). The home has shown to be an ideal and effective source of additional support (Brannon & Dauksas, 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Evans & Shaw, 2008; Ewart & Straw, 2001; HFRP, 2006; Rimm-Kaufmann & Pianta, 2010), which could be used to enhance literacy development in students. Yet, research has shown that shared reading alone, despite being the ubiquitous at-home reading activity, does not support literacy development in meaningful ways (Phillips, Norris, & Anderson, 2008; Evans & Shaw, 2008). This can be mediated by making explicit to parents the strategies used in school (Kim, 2016). In this way, parents and teachers could support each other

with a child's literacy development through a consistency of meaningful practice between school and home.

This graduating project will also include literature that addresses how parents can support their children enrolled in French Immersion programs. In French Immersion programs, students are largely supported by non-French speaking parents (Au-Yeung et al., 2015). This language barrier can make many parents feel ill-equipped in supporting their child's second language education (Hickey, 1999). However, the linguistic interdependence hypothesis (Cummins, 1979) argues that literacy development of the home language can have positive benefits in second language literacy development through the transfer of specific literacy-based skills. This suggests that French Immersion parents can still take an active role in their child's literacy, regardless of the language used at home.

Lastly, the topic of this graduating project is particularly important for EFI education because of the reality of contemporary immersion classrooms demographics. Despite a belief regarding the homogeneity of the student population, current demographics in EFI reflect a more varied spectrum of students with a diverse range of needs (Pellerin, 2013). In the early days of the program, challenges in literacy development were considered a significant factor in determining whether or not students continued in the program. However, contemporary research (Bruck, 1985; Genesee & Jared, 2008) has shown that such challenges are neither valid nor ethical grounds for children to withdraw from French Immersion. As such, multimodal practices need to be established which enable all EFI students to manage and overcome their language and literacy barriers. Examining multimodal literacy practices that foster meaningful literacy practice both within and outside of school may provide the additional support required for the growing needs in EFI classrooms.

## **Project Overview**

In this chapter, I discussed the topic of my graduating project, which focuses on how multimodal home-literacy programs can support parents with their child's literacy development in EFI. I provided a brief timeline of French Immersion in Canada, to situate current EFI programs within a historical and social context. I described my personal interest in this topic and how it developed out of the union of two areas of concern in my practice. One area involves uncovering the best literacy practices to help develop my students' literacy skills in EFI; the

other focuses on how to make meaningful connections between home and school in my classroom. The convergence of these two topics results in my project's focus, which look at how parents and teachers can create meaningful connections through multimodal home-literacy programs to support the literacy development of EFI students. The theories which frame this topic were also briefly introduced. These theories include multimodality, ecological systems theory, and linguistic interdependence. This chapter also explained the significance of this topic to the field of early childhood education. In particular, this topic has significant implications for literacy development (both at school and within the home), as well as in redefining how non-French parents can support French Immersion students. In Chapter Two, I expand on the theories which frame this graduating project as a means of outlining the perspective of my capstone project. In Chapter Three I apply the theories and literature outlined in Chapter Two to pedagogical practice in order to demonstrate how these concepts apply to literacy development in EFI. In Chapter Four I conclude my graduating project with a reflection of my learning, as well outline possible recommendations for EFI literacy instruction between home and school.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Multimodality (Kress, 1997, 2000), Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and Linguistic Interdependence (Cummins, 1979) provide the theoretical framework for this graduating project. From these perspectives, I examine contemporary literature on literacy development for Early French Immersion (EFI) students. I organize this examination into key themes that emerge from the literature. These themes include pedagogical approaches, multimodal practices, and the roles of parents in supporting literacy development for EFI learners.

### **Multimodality**

Multimodality (Kress, 1997, 2000) recognizes communication and meaning-making as the products of different culturally-produced and accepted modes. Although speech and writing are largely recognized as the principal modes of communication, Kress (1997, 2000) argued that several other modes, including images, drawings, sounds, and gestures, are effective in conveying thoughts, meaning, and understanding. Kress (1997, 2000) stressed that multiple modes are in use whenever communication or meaning-making occurs, each with their own potential and limitation for conveying meaning and ideas. While certain modes are dominant in a given situation, additional modes also have a significant role as they all work in conjunction to provide representations of thought and meaning (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress 1997).

Schools and educational institutions largely adhere to written language as the dominant form of communication and meaning-making (Kress, 1997, 2000). This can inhibit young children's expression by limiting meaning-making to modes that are relatively new to them. A young child's lack of fluency in written language can also restrict his or her free communication within academic settings (Kress, 1997). Moreover, a reliance on written text disadvantages children that enter school with different experiences of language and written communication (Kress, 1997). For example, a child who is read to at home is likely to adapt to written text at school differently than a child whose home literacy experiences relied more on speech than writing.

A multimodal approach to literacy education takes the emphasis off of speech and writing and appreciates the power of other, less socially recognized modes of meaning-making.

Multimodality recognizes that written language, itself, is not monomodal, but rather the product of many modes working together. As such, educational practices must recognize the innate multimodal nature of communication and meaning-making and increase the value of less dominant modes (Kress, 2000). Multimodal literacy within the classroom provides students with greater choice and different means to convey understanding and communicate ideas through modes in which they have greater proficiency (Kress, 1997). A multimodal approach to literacy learning enables students to recognize and develop the spectrum of modes that are used in communication and meaning-making (Jewitt & Kress, 2003). Additionally, this approach enables students to develop fluency in new forms of representation, including digital technology, which will grow in dominance as they age (Kress, 1997, 2000). Creating educational practices that enable students to explore these new modes of communication not only develop several modes of literacy concurrently, but also provide students with critical experiences in new cultural modes.

### **The Ecological Systems Theory**

The Ecological Systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) interprets human development from an ecological perspective and argues that development is the product of the interaction between an active, developing child and the many environments in which that child resides. Bronfenbrenner (1979) described these environments as a complex, multi-layered ecosystem, where each system influences and impacts human development in varying degrees.

The layers which make up a developmental ecosystem include: i) the microsystem; ii) the mesosystem; iii) the exosystem; iv) the macrosystem; and, v) the chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986). The microsystem includes the settings, people, and roles that directly impact a child's life, including family, friends, and school (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This layer is bi-directional, meaning the child at the centre can both influence and be influenced by the settings that surround him or her. Beyond the microsystem is the exosystem, which is comprised of the settings in which a child is not directly involved, but are nonetheless impactful on development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). A parent's workplace or group of friends are examples of settings in the exosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The macrosystem, which surrounds the exosystem, includes the cultural and societal beliefs that influence the other systems. Bronfenbrenner noted that these "systems blueprints" (1979, p. 26) can vary greatly among different subculture groups, including

a variety of socioeconomic or religious groups. The chronosystem is the outermost layer of a child's ecosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). This layer takes time into account and emphasizes the impact of sociohistorical events on a child's development.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) described the mesosystem not as a separate layer in a child's ecosystem, but rather as a system created by the interrelations and interactions between entities and settings in the microsystem. The mesosystem, in particular, highlights the influence of the relationships between two notable settings within children's microsystems: their school/teachers and their family/home. When interactions between settings in a microsystem are indirect or lacking, meaning the central figure is the only tie between the two, then the link is considered weak (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). However, when communication between the two settings is open and extensive, then the developmental potential of the interaction is positively increased. In terms of school and home, this highlights the positive benefit for students when teachers and parents share knowledge, information, opinions, and advice (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

### **Linguistic Interdependence**

Linguistic interdependence theory (Cummins, 1979) examines the impact of literacy skills in a first language (L1) on the development of literacy skills in a second language (L2). This theory suggests that literacy skills in L2 can be positively and directly supported by developed literacy skills in L1, which counters previous claims that suggested that education in L2 came at the expense of both a child's L1 and L2 (Cummins, 1979).

Cummins (1979) explained his linguistic interdependence theory according to two interconnected hypotheses. These hypotheses include: i) the threshold hypothesis; and, ii) the developmental interdependence hypothesis. The threshold hypothesis analyses the academic and cognitive impacts of different levels of linguistic and literacy skills on successful bilingualism. This hypothesis explained why some students successfully mastered a L2, at no cost to their L1, while other immersion learners appeared to have below-fluency levels in both their L1 and L2. Cummins (1979) suggested that there are two threshold levels, a lower and higher threshold, which measure linguistic competence in a language, and can determine the level of successful bilingualism in a student. These thresholds separate bilingualism into three sections: i) semilingualism; ii) dominant bilingualism; and iii) additive bilingualism. Below the lower threshold is semilingualism, where students have below-proficient levels in L1 and L2, which

has negative consequences for literacy development and proficiency in either language (Cummins, 1979). Dominant bilingualism, between the two thresholds, is when a student has proficiency in only one language, without negative impacts for either language. Additive bilingualism, which lies above the higher threshold level of bilingual competence, refers to high competency in L1 and L2, where literacy skills are proficient between languages and students experience positive cognitive growth (Cummins, 1979). Cummins (1979) viewed French Immersion as a program which promotes additive bilingualism.

The developmental interdependence hypothesis extends the ideas presented by the threshold hypothesis and examines the link between linguistic competence in L1 and similar linguistic success in L2. Cummins (1979) suggested that linguistic competence in L2 is related to and positively impacted by linguistic ability in L1. Cummins (1980) elaborated on his developmental interdependence hypothesis by suggesting that language skill transfer stemmed from a cross-lingual dimension, defined as the successful development of underlying, non-language specific, literacy skills. These skills refer to cognitive and academic language proficiencies, such as reading comprehension and understanding the purpose of reading, and not to language specific skills such as vocabulary and semantic awareness. Cummins (1980) argued that as long as interpersonal communicative skills, including word knowledge, accent, and semantic awareness, were developed in L1 and L2 in their respective environments, cognitive and academic language proficiency could translate across languages in equal success. EFI programs present this type of scenario where most students are fluent in the dominant language and are able to build specific language skills (including vocabulary and accent) within the environment of the classroom (Cummins, 1980). Cummins (1980) stressed that these understandings highlight that language educators must create literacy programs that enable students to build upon their literacy strengths in order to reap the benefits of linguistic interdependence and bilingual education.

Multimodality, the ecological systems theory, and linguistic interdependence emphasize the benefit of children exploring literacy in various ways, as well as the need for meaningful connections between home and school in order to capitalize on children's literacy experiences. I use this theoretical framework to explore literature on literacy development in EFI and examine how these theories impact multimodal home-literacy programs.

## **Review of the Literature**

### **Pedagogical Approaches in French Immersion**

Evaluations of French Immersion programs and literacy development have largely praised their effectiveness in aiding students to reach native-like literacy levels in French, while also maintaining proficient literacy levels in English (Cummins, 1998; Genesee & Jared, 2008). However, French expressive abilities of French Immersion students generally remain below proficient levels (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Cummins, 1998). This is thought to occur from a prevalent top-down transmission of information approach by EFI teachers, which minimizes student problem-solving and oral participation (Cummins, 1998). Exploring literacy through different contexts and in collaborative ways, however, supports oral language ability and language acquisition by enabling students to learn language as well as use language to learn (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012). Moreover, French Immersion teachers often privilege formal oral communication as a reflection of ability, which can undermine alternate ways of communicating and meaning-making (Dagenais, Day, & Toohey, 2006). Language teachers can mediate these biases by ensuring that all students are exposed to learning opportunities that recognize different forms of participation and expression in literacy-based experiences (Dagenais, Day, & Toohey, 2006). Additionally, an appreciation of students' first languages and the background knowledge embedded within them will also support second language literacy development by allowing students to build off of their various funds of knowledge (Cummins, 2007; Swain and Lapkin, 2005).

Ewart and Straw (2001) conducted two qualitative case studies to analyze the role of language of instruction and instructional methods in the literacy development of EFI students. Their study took place in Manitoba, where most immersion schools adhere to a policy which encourages reading instruction be introduced in a child's first language (Ewart & Straw, 2001). This policy, however, assumes that students' first language is English. Two EFI teachers, given the pseudonyms Jeanne and Marie, participated in the study. Jeanne taught literacy in French and exposed students to differentiated literacy practices in a variety of contexts through a scaffold approach. Marie taught literacy instruction in English as an exclusive subject. Her approach to literacy instruction had general objectives, the students were not given direct instruction, and they were encouraged, but not required, to participate. Data were collected through participant

observations, interviews, and audio/video recordings. Variables such as student socioeconomic standing (SES) background and home languages were controlled; however, class size (Jeanne had 13 students compared to Marie who had 24) was not. Despite instruction through a second language, Jeanne's students were observed as developing strong language abilities in French. Her students were seen using their second language to effectively read and write, as well as explore new concepts across different subjects. Moreover, Jeanne's students were observed as having the ability to express their thoughts fluently in French and use this skill as a means of generating new understandings. Marie's students, on the other hand, did have a level of oral French comprehension, but lacked the ability to express themselves independently in the language. Their oral French was limited to the repetition of short, simple phrases, and they were not observed as expressing original or new ideas through their second language. These findings suggest that method of instruction and integrated approaches to literacy, not simply language of instruction itself, have beneficial impacts on literacy development.

Bouffard and Sarkar (2008) examined how a metalinguistic approach to instruction could develop EFI students' abilities to recognize and correct errors in their second language. Forty-three Grade 3 students from Bouffard's class participated in the two year study. The students lived in Montréal, but came from largely English-speaking households. The metalinguistic approach was developed over three stages. Initially, classroom literacy-based interactions, which included student errors and teacher corrections, were videotaped on multiple occasions. The recordings were then edited, highlighting instances of errors, resulting in 287 episodes. These were viewed by students and discussed between teacher and students. These discussions were audio-taped and coded according to students' ability to notice the fault, determine the nature of the error, or conduct grammatical analysis on the error. Over the course of the pedagogical intervention, the students displayed increasing ability to analyse errors through their use of oral French, suggesting a greater level of language awareness that was attained through the use of the target language of the classroom and strengthened through collaborative group discussion.

Dagenais, Day, and Toohey (2006) used a multi-year ethnographic case study to explore the impact of multiliteracies and identity on classroom practice in French Immersion classrooms. The authors focused on one student, given the pseudonym Sarah, who was among 12 multilingual students observed during a longitudinal ethnography of children's language and literacy practices at home and school. Data included observational notes and video/audio

recordings of classroom literacy practices, as well as semi-structured interviews with Sarah and her teachers. Over the course of the study, Sarah's perceived language and literacy abilities were shown to hinge on the types of literacy practices in which she engaged, and the literacy beliefs of her teachers. Her Grade 5 French teacher described Sarah as a competent learner who was shy in large-group contexts, but would actively participate with her peers during small-group activities. These social literacy opportunities provided Sarah with different ways to express her thoughts while supported by peers. Additionally, these activities tended to be more open and personal in nature, which let Sarah use aspects of her Chinese background to support her learning experience. For example, in one small-group, newspaper-creating activity, Sarah wrote an article about Chinese New Year envelopes and incorporated Chinese characters into her assignment. Her Grade 5 teacher recognized these informal activities as evidence of Sarah's positive literacy progression. Her Grade 6 French teacher, on the other hand, viewed student/teacher interactions and formal oral participation as a reflection of language mastery. Since Sarah avoided these activities, her language abilities were not considered proficient.

Clark, Mady, and Vanthuyne (2014) investigated pre-service French language teachers' perception of code-switching (alternating between languages) and multilingualism. The authors employed a multimodal, reflexive, and sociolinguistic approach to their study in an attempt to demonstrate the importance of these ideas for the language teacher and the multi-lingual classroom. 55 teachers from three different teacher education programs (1 in France, 2 in Canada) took part in the study. Data were generated from small-group online discussion forums and semi-structured interviews. Forum questions asked whether teachers would allow code-switching in class, and how teachers could create inclusive practices through new technologies in the classroom. Forum posts were coded according to language background and nationality. The researchers found that initial posts reflected rigid beliefs of French and French language as distinct from children's other language understandings. However, as discussions developed and participants were forced to consider complex ideas while overcoming the different living contexts and language dialects of the other participants, the pre-service teachers showed a broader understanding of language and literacy learning in the classroom. Participants became aware of how thinking and language are intricately tied and that students may need to rely on their mother tongue, or other forms of expression, when initially developing complex understandings in their second language.

### **Multimodal Practices in French Immersion**

Multimodal practices can help EFI teachers recognize and value alternative forms of expression and meaning-making, and, therefore, legitimize different forms of literacy awareness and ability (Dagenais, Day, & Toohey, 2006; Vasudevan, Schultz, & Bateman, J, 2010). Moreover, the ability to use alternative modes fosters more student-created content, which can increase the authenticity of the learning experiences and strengthen second-language acquisition (Cummins, 1998).

Kim (2016) conducted a narrative longitudinal case study of the literacy practices of one culturally and linguistically-diverse student, given the pseudonym Julie, in her formal and informal learning contexts. Julie lived in Montreal and went to French primary school, as well as a Korean language school. Qualitative data were collected over two years through observations in both school settings and in Julie's home. The data collection methods included interviews, surveys, and the researcher's reflective journals. Data analysis examined how multimodal practices were supported or suppressed across formal and informal settings. The study highlighted that in Kindergarten and early Grade 1, Julie was given opportunities to engage with literacy in a variety of modes, through assignments that integrated reading, creative writing, phonetic spelling, drawings, and crafts. Julie excelled in her ability to use art as a means to support and demonstrate her understanding. Moreover, she was able to implement these activities into the multilingual literacy experiences she encountered at home and capitalize on her literacy development. However, in the second semester of Grade 1, Julie's teacher shifted her instruction from a conceptual to a skills-based focus. From then on Julie's journals were analyzed according to their grammatical accuracy instead of their content. Such a narrow focus made it difficult for Julie to expand on these school literacy experiences at home. Additionally, an emphasis on correct encoding and decoding did not highlight Julie's literacy strengths. Instead, her lack of grammatical mastery was interpreted negatively. It was not that Julie's abilities had changed or diminished, but rather that they were valued differently according to conventional notions of literacy ability.

Early and Yeung (2009) looked at the impact of a multimodal literacy project on the French language awareness, proficiency, and literacy skills of students in a Core French Grade 9 class. While Core French differs from EFI in terms of amount of instructional time in French,

both programs involve the acquisition of a second, and non-dominant, language. The exploratory study followed one Core French teacher (a co-author of the paper) from a Vancouver high school, and her 34-Grade 9 students. The students were identified as multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, and varying in academic ability. The literacy-based multimodal project had students individually create and illustrate children's stories, then work in small group to adapt one story into a script and dramatize the product. Qualitative data from teacher journal entries, student/teacher interviews, and post-project surveys, were analyzed according to a Likert scale. Analysis revealed that teacher and students noticed a marked improvement in French syntax, vocabulary, and grammar as a result of the project. The students also remarked on how the visual components helped them to increase the descriptive passages of their written texts. Additionally, students credited the ability to create their own content through multiple means as increasing their motivation and giving them authentic learning experiences. This was shown to increase students' confidence in their French reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities.

Pellerin (2012) conducted a year-long collaborative action research which analyzed the effectiveness of digital technologies in increasing differentiated instruction and fostering new forms of assessment in EFI classrooms. Participants for her study included 16 EFI teachers, Grades 1 to 4, from dual track French Immersion elementary schools in Calgary. The digital tools used in the study included iPods and iPads, though specific numbers of tools per classroom were not stated. Participating teachers took part in four collaborative professional development meetings during the year-long study. Transcripts of these meetings were included in the qualitative data, which also included digital documentation from teachers and students, and teacher and research observational notes. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with teachers were conducted at the end of the year. Analysis of the data showed that digital technology and documentation was effective for uncovering students' learning and thinking process, and increased the amount of formative assessment opportunities by allowing student and teacher to revisit digital artifacts. The students' mastery of the tools also enabled them to take an active role in their own assessment and develop a metacognitive awareness of their learning process.

In another collaborative action research study, Pellerin (2013) further explored digital technology and examined how digital tools can increase opportunities for multimodal practices in EFI classrooms. The research participants included 12 Grade 1 through 4 EFI teachers, and their respective students from two dual-track elementary schools in a rural suburb of Calgary.

Classrooms were given access to various digital technologies, including interactive whiteboards, iPods, and iPads. Participating teachers met four times per year, over 2 years, where they discussed new teaching practices made possible by the digital technologies, and then reworked and reimagined these practices based on reflections made during the discussions. Qualitative data were collected from classroom observations and digital documentation by teachers, as well as end-of-year interviews. Pellerin (2013) noted that the digital technologies created learning environments in which students were offered different ways to access and explore content in personalized ways. These increased academic options fostered more on-task behaviour and increased participation, in particular from more reluctant and less proficient students.

Gaudet (2013) also conducted a collaborative action research study which focused on digital technologies and their impact on language acquisition and assessment practices in French Immersion classrooms. Participants included 19 EFI teachers from a dual-track elementary school in Alberta. Students in each classroom were given open-access to 4-5 iPods and 1 iPad over a period of four months. Teachers met at the end of each month to discuss the challenges and benefits of the technological tools, as well as consider new implementation ideas. Qualitative data were collected from digital recordings of classrooms interactions, as well as from the teacher discussions. Analysis of the data showed that digital tools helped increase language acquisition by affording students more opportunities to produce output in the target language. This also fostered more student-created content, which was shown to increase on-task behaviour and participation. Beyond exposing students to multiple modes at once, digital technologies also enabled students to become more reflective of their learning process. Gaudet (2013) noted that the digital documentation from these tools increased the amount of immediate feedback students could receive, whether the feedback came from the teacher, peers, or the student themselves. As such, this documentation helped students better recognize their learning trajectory.

### **The Roles of Parents for Young Language Learners**

French Immersion is an educational choice that is selected for a variety of reasons. However, overwhelmingly, parents of immersion students cite the fluent acquisition of a second language as the main reason for placing their child in an immersion educational context (Hickey, 1999; Riches & Curdt-Christiansen, 2010; Wesely & Baig, 2012). This remains true even if the parent is not fluent in the target language of the school themselves (Hickey, 1999; Riches &

Curdt-Christiansen, 2010; Wesely & Baig, 2012). While this lack of fluency can give parents of immersion students feelings of uncertainty about how to support their child, strong home-school connections and supportive teacher/parent relationships can help alleviate some of these concerns and better prepare parents for their role in their child's literacy development (Hickey, 1999; Lukie, Skwarchuk, LeFevre, & Sowinski, 2014; Phillips, Norris, & Anderson, 2008).

Riches and Curdt-Christiansen (2010) conducted a comparative, interpretative inquiry to explore parents' perspectives on French Immersion education and identified characteristics that were beneficial for the French literacy development of students. The study looked at two different cultural groups of parents in Montréal - Chinese immigrant parents and Anglophone parents (10 and 13 families, respectively). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews within participants' homes (in their mother-tongue) and through observations in the school. The data were coded and categorized according to two major themes which emerged: i) parents' beliefs regarding the benefits of multilingual education; and, ii) parents' participation in their child's literacy education. Although the reasoning behind the beliefs differed, the study's findings generally displayed a consensus among both groups. Data revealed that parents placed high value on language learning, both for second-language acquisition and for first-language retention. These values, along with maintaining an active role in literacy development at home, were shown to be effective ways for parents to overcome language barriers and positively support their child's EFI literacy development. It is important to note, however that no data regarding specific academic outcomes was outlined.

Sénéchal and LeFevre (2014) also examined the impact of home literacy and EFI literacy development in their longitudinal study. They categorized home literacy in terms of formal and informal interactions. Formal activities include interactions where the focus is on print; informal activities, including shared reading, are those experiences where print is present, but not the focus. The study followed 110 students, and their English-speaking parents, from kindergarten to Grade 2 in Ottawa, where EFI students do not receive literacy education in English until Grade 2. Data were collected multiple times throughout the study from parent literacy surveys, student literacy assessments, and student reading assessments. This study demonstrated various impacts of informal and formal home literacy interactions. Informal interactions were shown to positively correlate to vocabulary growth in Kindergarten and Grade 1. Formal interactions were linked to English literacy development from Kindergarten to Grade 1 and English word reading from the

beginning to end of Grade 1. The study also noted a positive correlation between amount of time listening to a child read at the beginning of Grade 1 and reading proficiency at the end of Grade 1.

Hickey (1999) used the context of Irish-heritage language schools, or naionrai, to investigate the role of parents in supporting their child's education in a minority immersion context. Hickey compared this program to Canada's EFI programs, where the majority of parents are not fluent in the target language of the school. Hickey's large-scale case study used data from a parent survey that identified both the characteristics of naionrai parents and the tools these parents felt would be helpful for supporting their child's immersion education. Irish language proficiency test results from the 225 three-year-old naionrai students were also analyzed according to children's skill level, their specific naionra, and their parents' abilities. The parents' Irish abilities, regardless of education level or career, were the largest single-factor contributing to children's high language abilities. However, surveys showed that a majority of respondents reported low to no Irish ability at all, suggesting that most parents were unable to support their child in the most effective way. Survey responses revealed that parents felt that copies of the resources used in class, suggestions for selecting Irish books or encouraging Irish in the home, and an understanding of how to engage in structured literacy practices at home, were some of the ways that schools could help parents who were not fluent in the target language with their child's immersion development.

Brannon and Dauksas (2012) investigated a parent/child dialogic reading intervention and the impact on expressive vocabulary for second-language learners. The researchers investigated whether the benefits of dialogic reading on children's vocabularies and expressive abilities would translate across languages. Participants included 28 families (28 parents/caregivers, 30 students aged 3-5 years) whose home languages were different than the school language (Spanish and English, respectively). The majority of participating families were low-income and approximately half of the parents did not graduate from high school. A control group of families who did not receive the training was used as a comparison group. As part of the intervention, parents received training in dialogic reading three times per week bi-monthly, for a period of ten weeks. Training included focused lessons, observations, and practice sessions of dialogic reading in the classroom. All training and resources were provided in English and Spanish. Data were obtained through videotaped recordings of parents engaging in dialogic reading with their

children over the course of the training program. Conversations between the parent and child were analyzed according to the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory, which examines dialogic conversations in terms of various literacy behaviours. Results showed that parents in the training group demonstrated a stronger ability to engage their child in interaction and comprehension-based conversations, as well as in promoting literacy strategies. Additionally, children of parents in the training group strengthened their expression vocabulary to a greater extent than the control group, and used more varied words during discussions.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, I summarized the theories of multimodality, ecological systems, and linguistic interdependence, which provide the theoretical framework for my graduating project and guided my literature review. I also provided a review of the literature regarding literacy development in EFI classrooms. The themes that emerged from this review outlined the importance of using multimodal practices for French literacy development in EFI classrooms, and highlighted how these practices can be used to effectively link home and school through multimodal home literacy programs. In chapter three, I connect research findings to EFI classroom practices and develop specific strategies to support EFI students' literacy development through multimodal home literacy programs.

## CHAPTER THREE: CONNECTIONS TO PRACTICE

In this chapter, I draw on the literature reviewed in the previous chapter to provide recommendations for Early French Immersion (EFI) educators in regards to creating meaningful multimodal home literacy programs. I discuss the significance of multimodal literacy exploration for EFI literacy development for students and highlight the positive implications of multimodal home literacy programs for EFI teachers, students, and parents. Additionally, I provide an outline of a workshop presentation for parents regarding the potential of multimodal home literacy programs and the impact of these programs on literacy development at home and school. This workshop will outline sample practices from a multimodal home literacy package, which includes instructions, highlights benefits, and provides possible extensions for a variety of different multimodal activities.

As discussed in the previous chapter, multimodality enables students to use a variety of modes to express and interpret meaning (Kress, 1997, 2000). This is particularly relevant for most EFI students, who enter school with a limited ability to speak or write in French. I believe that multimodal home literacy programs can be used as a valuable resource to support students' EFI literacy development and can better connect parents to their child's immersion education, regardless of the language used at home. Many of my colleagues have expressed a difficulty in knowing how best to connect parents to their child's academic experience, given that the majority of parents we work with have limited to no French ability at all. However, I believe that with multimodal home literacy programs, students can practice a variety of literacy skills and in such a way that their parents can support them regardless of the home language. Such programs would expand the idea of home reading packages from ones that emphasis French decoding skills, to programs that support more comprehensive literacy development.

### **My Current Practice**

Over the course of my teaching career, I have expanded my perception of reading and literacy instruction in the primary classroom. Earlier in my career, I focused largely on decoding skills and saw a student's ability to orally read a written passage as a reflection of that child's reading proficiency. The reading strategies I taught focused largely on identifying words based on visual cues. Moreover, I taught writing as a separate subject and missed many opportunities to

combine reading and writing, among other modes, in an integrated literacy program. My home reading programs reflected these in-class practices and I relied on the repetitive readings of paper texts at home, which were not previewed in class and often contained new and unknown French vocabulary for students. The majority of parents were unable to support their children with any word errors or French phoneme pronunciation, which further complicated the ineffective practice.

As a result of many workshops, discussions with colleagues, and my master's coursework, I have redesigned how I approach literacy in the classroom. While I still include structured vocabulary and phonetic instruction, I now explore literacy through a wider lens and push comprehension and personal connection to the forefront of my instruction. While reading with students, I make sure to highlight structure and content in order to help students better understand the text, in addition to reading it correctly. Additionally, I have created more space and time for students to respond to reading in different ways and in various modes, including personal writing and visual images. Despite these positive in-class changes, my home reading program has not progressed and I still rely on the same rigid platform as a means to connect school and home through literacy practice. By developing a multimodal home literacy program, my hope is that this will enable me to further develop the scope of my literacy instruction and ensure that parents are able to support their children through effective literacy practice at home.

## **Multimodal Home Literacy Programs**

### **Expanded Views of Literacy and Personalized Literacy Experiences**

Home reading programs which focus on the oral reading of texts, including my current program, hinge on a student's ability to properly decode and read aloud. I believe these programs are not only ineffective for students who need support in this area, but they also reinforce a narrow view of literacy as the oral recitation of a written text. Students can be mislabelled as struggling with literacy if they do not excel in decoding and oral fluency. Additionally, students' successes in alternate ways of engaging with and responding to texts, such as through visual imagery, may be overlooked when viewed from such an inflexible perspective (Kim, 2016). Both of these situations could negatively impact how children view their own abilities and how they choose to engage with or participate in literacy activities.

Multimodal practices can help teachers avoid the trap of top-down transmission of information that dominates many EFI programs (Cummins, 1998). By broadening the definition of literacy, multimodality inherently creates space for more varied and acceptable literacy practices. This can help teachers best match students according to particular skills that need to develop or, more importantly, provide students with greater choice and flexibility while engaging in literacy-based activities. I plan on incorporating multimodal practices into my home literacy program as these practices acknowledge different literacy strengths and give all students a platform to experience and engage with literacy. For example, a more reserved student could practice oral text recitation independently with a recording device and have the opportunity to record their recitation multiple times until they are satisfied with their delivery (Pellerin, 2013). Another student who is unable to demonstrate comprehension through vocal explanations could be given the opportunity to use writing or visual images to respond to a text. These two practices, both of which I plan to include in my multimodal home literacy program, demonstrate how multimodal literacy-based practices expand the idea of what literacy instruction can be, as well as which abilities demonstrate strength and understanding in these areas. As such, these practices can help me expand my current home reading practice into a more meaningful and effective practice.

Multimodal practices which incorporate vocal and visual input from children open the scope of practices that can be done at home. In my multimodal home literacy program, I plan to create opportunities for children to explore literacy in much more personalized ways. One activity I will include in my program will offer children the chance to create and draw pictures which correspond to and represent the ideas in an imageless text. This activity, which appeals to artistic children, supports text comprehension as children will need to understand the meaning of the text before creating the pictures. In another activity that my multimodal home literacy program will offer, students will explore the images of a wordless text and develop their sense of story sequence and structure by writing or orally recording their interpretation of these images. Both of these activities demonstrate effective literacy practice, but from a perspective that encourages a broader acknowledgement of different literacy exercises. These practices also reinforce choice and personalized education at home by giving students open-ended choices for their literacy learning experience.

## **Incorporating New Technology**

New technology is changing the classroom environment and influencing curricular outcomes. The new BC curriculum includes technology-based objectives (BC's New Curriculum, Applied Design, Skills and Technologies: Introduction, 2016); these changes acknowledge the ubiquitous presence of technology in our lives, as well as the importance of children gaining a level of mastery with these tools. Beyond enabling children to develop technological fluency, digital tools can also help teachers implement and support more multimodal practices into the classroom. This, in turn, can influence home literacy through the inclusion of digital technology in multimodal home literacy programs. Including an iPad in my literacy program, for example, will allow me to orally record different texts which students could then refer to while reading independently, or with parents at home.

Digital tools enable students to take an active role in their home literacy. These tools create advanced ways for students to discover their own learning process and develop their skills. Recording features, for example, afford students the opportunity to create their own output in the target language, and to analyze this output multiple times through immediate feedback (Bouffard & Sarkar, 2008; Gaudet, 2013; Pellerin, 2012, 2013). This can help students identify aspects of their delivery that need more expression or are difficult to understand. I plan to use recording tools in my multimodal home literacy program by enabling students to orally record a text in class and then use this recording to support his or her reading outside of the classroom. In this case students are given the opportunity to use their own voices and abilities to guide their pronunciation and decoding at home or while working with their parents. I believe this will help students to develop their own ability to create feedback and support their literacy development.

Seamless continuity between school and home can be strengthened through the use of digital tools. Students could engage in literacy practice within the classroom with help from digital technology and then use the same technology to participate in similar practices at home. A sample activity included in my multimodal literacy program will present students with scanned images of a narrative text, which are placed in a non-logical order; students would work on comprehension and story structure skills by then placing the text's pages in the correct order. By letting my students use the same tablet and program at home, they could engage with the same activity for a variety of preloaded books and already understand how to participate in the task. This continuity helps to reinforce broad interactions with literary texts, while also strengthening

students' confidence to complete these tasks independently or as a means of demonstrating their knowledge to their parents.

The extensive opportunities of multimodal approaches are made all the more accessible by the broad range of features offered through digital technology. I plan to use technology, such as tablets, in my multimodal home literacy program as a means of extending the possibilities of literacy practices. In my program, students could use the video recording options on a tablet to act out a story at home and play it back to the class the following day. Additionally, photography tools could give my students the opportunity to add digital pictures to stories that only contain text and no images. In these examples students are engaging in literacy practice, namely in reflecting on text meaning through visual images, and in ways that are appealing and fun.

### **Developing Student Motivation**

While there are many academic benefits of EFI education, even successful students often trail behind native French speakers in written and verbal output (Cummins, 1998). This is thought to occur from a minimum of opportunity for students to create their own output in the target language (Cummins, 1998). In my classroom, I have also witnessed many students who avoid or struggle with formal written or oral activities. I have found that the main causes of this aversion are presentation anxiety and/or perceived lack of skills. However, by offering students different avenues to explore literacy and become active participants, then children are more likely to tap into activities and skills in which they feel comfortable, capable, and interested. Dagenais, Day, and Toohey, (2006) highlighted how the value teachers placed on certain forms of communication heavily influenced their perception of a student's language ability. In terms of the EFI classroom, providing students with greater opportunities and different ways to actively participate in literacy lets students express themselves in the target language in ways that they feel most confident. This could include informally with peers, through recorded audio clips, or more formal presentations of work. Regardless of the chosen mode, having multiple options helps create an environment where students are free to create more individual output, written and oral, which is critical to their success in French.

An exploration of literacy through various means reinforces the broadness of literacy itself. Some students may be drawn to creating stories, where others may like to respond to written text through art-based projects. Some students may enjoy acting out a story, while others

may be more inclined to regular text recitation. Each of these activities can be practiced alone or concurrently and lets students discover new and appealing ways to engage with literacy. These experiences, which help students' tap into their own interests and learning preferences, can be very motivating, in particular if they allow students to feel a sense of ownership over their work (Early & Yeung, 2009). Moreover, they can become platforms from which students extend their literacy practices. For example, one home activity included in my multimodal home literacy program would ask students to orally describe a narrative text to the parents, in their home language, through a picture walk. An extension of this activity would be audio-recording this picture walk in the home language, or in French to be shared with the class. From these teacher-created activities, a child could perhaps choose to create their own story with pictures and then orally explain their story in an audio-recording. In this case the student is extending the practices offered by my program in a personalized way. I believe this is a significant benefit of my multimodal home literacy program, where students are motivated and encouraged to explore literacy in ways they want, regardless of whether or not it was teacher-prescribed.

The addition of technology to multimodal home literacy practices can also be very impactful in garnering student participation. Gaudet (2013) and Pellerin (2012, 2013) both noted how the inclusion of digital tools garnered increased participation from students during instructional time. Many of my students' parents have remarked at how difficult it is to get their child to regularly read the home-reading texts, as per suggestion of the program. The implementation of digital tools, however, could provide that motivation for my students to explore literacy outside of the classroom. I believe that this could be facilitated through a tablet sign-out system which allows children to take home the digital tools they use in class to support their literacy development at home. I believe that teacher websites, cameras, and audio-recorders are additional tools that could be used at home by students to increase interest and participation in the home literacy activities.

### **Supporting Parents**

A strong link between school and home has shown to engender many benefits for the academic success of children (Harvard Family Research Project, 2006; Rimm-Kaufmann & Pianta, 2010). Open communication from both sides is crucial for this relationship. Parents can support teachers by revealing the interests and activities in which children engage at home. This

can help teachers incorporate children's interests into the classroom and, therefore, into home literacy practices. In this way, students can be offered choices for literacy exploration at home that reflect the activities in which they might already participate.

In terms of French Immersion, active parent participation has shown to be particularly beneficial for students learning a second language in children's literacy development (Riches & Curdt-Christianson, 2010), and thus is essential for meaningful home school connections. Yet, despite a willingness to participate, many parents feel unprepared for the challenges of supporting their child with literacy development in a second language (Hickey, 1999). My multimodal home literacy program will equip parents with the tools they need to overcome language barriers and stay engaged with their child's EFI literacy development. Such a program will assist parents by giving them insight into the activities and methods used in my classroom, which can help parents recreate the practices at home or use them as a starting point for creating new activities with their child. One of the ways that I plan to support my students' parents is with the addition of an English version of a given French text, which would enable an English-only parent to follow along with the content of the story and prompt their child with predictive or comprehension-based questions. French audio recordings of the program books, an additional component of my multimodal literacy program, are another way that non-French speaking parents could track their child's reading and help them with pronunciation and expression. These particular additions to literacy programs could easily be adapted for parents who speak a language other than English, as well.

An additional benefit of enabling parents to recreate classroom practices is the familiarity and confidence that students would have with these activities at home. Whenever I have sent a student home with a text they have already practiced with me in class, parents have mentioned an increased ability from their child to orally recite the text at home. With regards to multimodal home literacy programs, I believe that once students are exposed to the activities in class, they will have greater success with them at home and be able to demonstrate their abilities to their parents. Digital tools, especially those that can be shared between and school, would further facilitate this continuity between home and school literacy-based activities.

I believe that teachers can additionally prepare and support parents by offering workshops or parent literacy education that outline the purposes of literacy-based activities used in class and home-literacy programs. Although most parents engage in some form of literacy

practice at home, these practices are not necessarily used to their full potential (Phillips, Norris, & Anderson, 2008). Explicit education of effective practices could better help parents understand the purposes of certain activities and help them capitalize on literacy experiences (Brannon & Dauksas, 2012). I plan to support the parents of my students with a teacher-led workshop at the beginning of each school year, along with brief write-ups included in multimodal home literacy packages which highlight the purpose and details of the various activities. In this way my students' parents are given a new perspective on literacy at home, as well as a jumping off point for engaging in future literacy exploration with their child.

### **Parent Workshop**

#### **“Supporting Students through Multimodal Literacy Programs”**

In Chapter One, I explained that multimodal home literacy programs could create meaningful links between school and home by enabling parents to support their children in EFI with effective literacy practice. However, parents' role in these programs cannot be taken for granted, as many parents may feel unprepared to take on literacy support for their child in the target language of the school. As such, I have created a workshop aimed at supporting EFI parents with multimodal home literacy programs. This workshop outlines the benefits of a multimodal approach to literacy and presents various ways in which multimodal literacy activities can be done in the home. As a result of this workshop, parents would gain a greater understanding of the many facets of literacy that extend beyond text recitation. Additionally, the workshop would offer an explanation of different activities included in the multimodal home literacy package that would support parents when recreating these practices at home with their child.

A PowerPoint presentation version of this workshop is included in Appendix A of this project. I plan to conduct this workshop for parents on a yearly basis as an introduction to the home literacy programs that I will use in my class.

I will begin my workshop by asking parents to list some of the ways in which they engage in literacy practice at home. In doing so, I will highlight the amount of effective practice already being done as well as draw attention to meaningful practice that goes beyond oral reading. Next, I will define multimodality and relate this concept to literacy education. I will

provide examples which demonstrate how children can approach literacy through multimodal practices which develop and strengthen literacy skills beyond decoding text. I will then highlight research which demonstrates the benefits of multimodal literacy approaches for French Immersion students. This will allow me to stress the importance of these practices both inside and outside of the classroom. Following this, I will provide parents with examples of multimodal activities that are used within my classroom. I will next present my multimodal home literacy program and highlight how this program will help parents support their child's EFI literacy development, strengthen a variety of literacy-based skills, and better connect home and school. I will outline this program by providing a list of different activities of which it is comprised. These activities include: teacher audio recordings of texts; student audio recordings of texts; oral or audio-recorded picture walks; imageless texts; visual texts; English translations; sample questions for comprehension, connection, and inferencing; text and images out of order; and story re-creation through visual images. For each of these different activities, I will provide brief instructions of the task, identify the specific literacy skills being practiced, and offer ideas for possible extensions. Lastly, I will make connections between the literacy practices parents mentioned at the beginning of the workshop and how they can be supported through multimodal practices. These connections will highlight how multimodal practices can easily support and extend the meaningful exploration already being done at home.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, I connected the literature reviewed in the previous chapter to the implementation of multimodal home reading programs in EFI classrooms. In doing so, I also highlighted the positive implications of these programs for teachers, students, and parents. Lastly I presented the outline of a workshop aimed at parents of EFI students, which explains the multimodal home literacy program and outlines how parents can support their child's EFI literacy development outside of the classroom. This workshop is presented in Appendix A of this project. In Chapter Four, I reflect on my learning as a result of this graduating project and propose areas of further research related to my topic.

## CHAPTER FOUR: REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The literature on multimodal practices and meaningful home-school relationships highlights the benefits of multimodal home literacy programs for literacy development in Early French Immersion (EFI). By exposing EFI students to multimodal practices, students are able to develop a variety of literacy-based skills in different ways, which lets them also tap into their interests and self-motivation (Early & Young, 2009). Moreover, linking parents to school through effective practice has shown to engender many positive benefits to children's academic success (Brannon & Dauksas, 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Evans & Shaw, 2008; Ewart & Straw, 2001; Harvard Family Research Project, 2006; Rimm-Kaufmann & Pianta, 2010). The combination of these findings has helped me to develop a greater appreciation of the need for multimodal practices in home literacy programs for EFI.

In this final chapter, I revisit the focus of my graduating project, which was to examine literature on the benefits of multimodal practices for EFI development; to identify how multimodal literacy practices can strengthen the home-school relationship; and to uncover how multimodal practices can support non-French speaking parents with their child's French literacy development outside of the classroom. I reflect on these questions by examining the responsibility of teachers and schools in supporting multimodal home literacy programs. Additionally, I end my chapter by providing suggestions for areas of further research related to my topic.

### **The Responsibility of Teachers**

Throughout my master's experience and my review of the literature for this graduating project, I began to recognize the ineffectiveness of my current home reading program. I did not recognize its lack of effectiveness earlier in my career because I thought simply having a home literacy program at all meant I was satisfying that portion of a successful and comprehensive literacy program. As a result of this project, however, I recognize how my current home reading program is only successful for a small group of students, while being largely ineffectual for the many students that stand to benefit the most from increased practice.

Implementing multimodal home literacy programs involves an active role from the teacher to challenge potentially rigid teaching practices that are reflective of EFI instruction. I

believe that EFI educators must acknowledge their assumptions and beliefs regarding dominant forms of knowledge transmission, and also be reflexive in first acknowledging the space, or lack thereof, they have made in the classroom for multimodal forms of communication. Cummins (1998) noted the top-down transmission of knowledge, which is characteristic of EFI, is generally teacher-prescribed and inhibits the input of students. This approach can privilege formal writing and oral presentation and prevent students from creating their own input and output in the classroom setting. Dagenais, Day, and Toohey (2006) and Kim (2016) highlighted how the high value placed on formal reading and writing works to minimize alternate ways of communicating and expressing ideas, and overlooks children's abilities in these lesser valued areas. While there is no single approach to literacy instruction in the immersion classroom, current beliefs regarding immersion education call for a broader understanding of how literacy can be explored in the classroom (Cummins, 1998, 2007; Swain & Lapkin, 2005). I think it is crucial that EFI educators question the value, if any, they have placed on forms of communication and meaning-making that stray from the dominant modes. As a means of improving rigid approaches, I believe that multimodal practices, including multimodal home literacy programs, should be developed and implemented into EFI classrooms in order to respond to students' variety of skills and to enable each child to rely on different modes while learning a new language. Once established, these practices can then help weave parents into the classroom by providing them with the means to support their child's literacy development at home, regardless of the language spoken, through multimodal home literacy programs.

Another critical responsibility for EFI teachers is ensuring that teachers educate the parents of their students. Previously, when parents came to me asking how best to support their child's literacy, I told them that reading in any language is helpful. While that remains true, I did not extend that advice or outline specific practices that would help those parents capitalize on their literacy experiences with their children. Brannon and Dauksas (2012) highlighted how parents, though not always innately aware of the potential of literacy interactions with children, could foster literacy experiences that were beneficial for their child's literacy development, with help from specific and focused training. I believe that it takes the active outreach from teachers to educate parents and, therefore, facilitate meaningful learning experiences which parents can conduct outside of the classroom. The multimodal home literacy program I have outlined in this project deviates from common home reading programs which stress oral recitation. Home

literacy programs which include multimodal components, like the one I have created, encourage the development of alternate literacy skills through diverse practices. I believe that unless parents thoroughly understand these practices, the benefit of these programs will likely go unfulfilled. As such, it is important that EFI educators not make assumptions regarding parents' understanding and awareness of either literacy or literacy development through a second language. Parent workshops, like my workshop outlined in Appendix A, are one of the ways to keep parents informed on new practices and expand their beliefs regarding literacy. Detailed activity outlines included in home literacy packages are another way to make sure that parents understand the purpose of a given practice and feel comfortable with their role in their child's literacy development. While the method to keep parents informed and supported outside of the classroom may differ, educating parents is an essential responsibility that teachers must assume as part of their multimodal home literacy program.

### **The Responsibility of Schools**

Much of the work involved in implementing multimodal home literacy programs centres on the contribution of individual EFI teachers. Yet, French Immersion schools also have an important part in contributing to the success of such programs. Non-French speaking parents are a reality of French Immersion programs in Canada and, as such, I believe that French Immersion schools need to emphasize school-home relationships and support parents in meaningful ways. While individual teachers can create multimodal practices that can then be replicated at home through home literacy programs, French Immersion schools should create environments which encourage collaboration towards the creation of multimodal home literacy programs across the grades. This would encourage the establishment of multimodal practices that both students and parents would be exposed to multiple times throughout their child's primary education and, therefore, permit some fluency with the practices to develop.

Brannon and Dauksas (2012) demonstrated the beneficial impact of in-school training for parents and the long-term positive consequences these sessions had for students' literacy development and families' home literacy experiences. It is important to recognize, however, that the school's commitment to offering these reoccurring workshops was likely a significant component for the success of the program. I believe that French Immersion schools must develop school-wide initiatives that promote multimodal literacy practices in order to fully reach the

potential of multimodal home literacy programs. Individual teachers can contribute a lot to these programs; however, the support of schools would facilitate a better appreciation and understanding from parents. School-wide initiatives could include monthly literacy workshops which outline specific practices; another possibility could include monthly literacy mornings where parents are invited into classes to participate in literacy activities with their children. These initiatives would underscore the basis of multimodal home literacy programs and strengthen parents' understanding of the practices included within.

This year at my school, a decision was made to make audio-recorded versions of every text from the levelled reader program that the school employs. Teachers at my school will soon be able to provide these audio files for students and their parents to use at home, so that families can listen to and refer to these recordings to support their reading activities outside of the classroom. This decision has school-wide implications and takes an initial step towards helping teachers add a multimodal component to their home literacy programs. While each member of the staff could have recorded his or her own versions of these texts, having pre-recorded tracks for the whole school to use takes pressure off of individual teachers. By creating a resource that everyone can access, my school is reinforcing the belief that home-school relationships are important, that steps need to be made to support non-French speaking parents, and that creating effective practices are a collaborative effort.

### **Areas for Further Research**

Current research into home literacy programs for EFI students is lacking. The review of literature I did find for this project was pertinent, but no single piece specifically addressed multimodal home literacy programs for EFI students in detail. Based on the apparent benefits of these programs outlined in my graduating project from the applicable data I did find, this is a topic worthy of further consideration and more focused analysis. More in-depth studies into the benefits of multimodal home literacy programs could create a foundation on which French Immersion classrooms could structure their literacy programs and home-school relationships.

Although this project examined the benefits of multimodal home literacy program for EFI programs and literacy development, research into such programs for all students is worth investigating. While oral recitation-based programs are perhaps more successful for English students with English-speaking parents, the development of a variety of other literacy-based

skills could be developed and strengthened through the implementation of multimodal practices into home literacy programs. Moreover, multimodal home literacy programs could address and support the increased number English Language Learners that are currently enrolled in Canadian public schools and would benefit from these practices (Faez, 2012). As such, exploration into the impact of these programs for all students is a significant topic.

### **Final Summary**

As demonstrated through this graduating project, multimodal home literacy programs can positively support literacy development for EFI students. These programs incorporate multimodal practices into literacy exploration which helps expand students' choice during literacy-based activities. Students can tap into their interests during literacy exploration and feel a sense of ownership over their development by taking an active role in the process. The multimodal practices included in these literacy programs expand the definition of literacy beyond the oral recitation of texts, and create the space for the development of a variety of other literacy-based skills. These practices also generate increased opportunities for students to strengthen their fluency with new technology. Additionally, multimodal home literacy programs create meaningful links between school and home and give all parents a spectrum of tools to use while supporting their child's EFI literacy development.

EFI educators can support parents through the implementation of multimodal practices into their home literacy programs. These practices, especially when incorporated into everyday classroom practice, can translate easily from school to home and can help parents of any language support their child with activities that transcend a specific language. Increased acknowledgment and use of multimodal practices will help EFI educators avoid privileging formal reading and writing, and instead strengthen a host of students' literacy-based skills. It is my hope that multimodal home literacy programs will create meaningful learning opportunities for students both inside and outside of the classroom, and equip non-French speaking parents with the means to actively support their child's EFI literacy development.

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APPENDIX A  
PARENT WORKSHOP

## Multimodal Home Literacy Programs



- Welcome Parents.
- Brief introduction of workshop content
- Explain goal: to provide parents with a variety of tools they can use to promote literacy with their child, and to outline the literacy experiences that will be offered by my multimodal home literacy program

What are some  
of the ways  
that you explore  
literacy with  
your child at  
home?



Photo courtesy of <http://www.cypress.k12california.gov/parents-to-parents-act-net/>

To Parents:

- In what ways do you like to enjoy in literacy experiences with your child? (for example: parent-to-child reading; writing stories; listening to books on tape; drawing pictures and explaining the details, etc.)
- Highlight the variety of literacy experiences that can happen at home.



## MULTIMODALITY

- Kress (1997); Humans express understanding and communicate in a variety of modes
- Multimodal activities include writing, oral, aural, visual, and/or kinesthetic components

### Define Multimodality:

- Kress (1997); the belief that humans express understanding and communicate in a variety of ways, or modes
- Reading and writing are dominant modes; there are several others which can be used to express meaning and awareness, and are equally valid.
- In terms of literacy in the classroom, multimodality extends practices beyond oral reading, to broader experiences which build different skills.

### Examples of Multimodal literacy practices:

- Multimodal activities can include writing, visual, oral, aural, and/or kinesthetic components.  
Some potential activities: reading stories out loud helps develop oral fluency and expression; retelling a story to others and/or responding to text with predictions/connections helps develop comprehension; participating in picture walks develops sense of story sequence and structure; responding to text with images develops comprehension and enables children to non-verbally demonstrate understanding

## The benefits of multimodal practices:



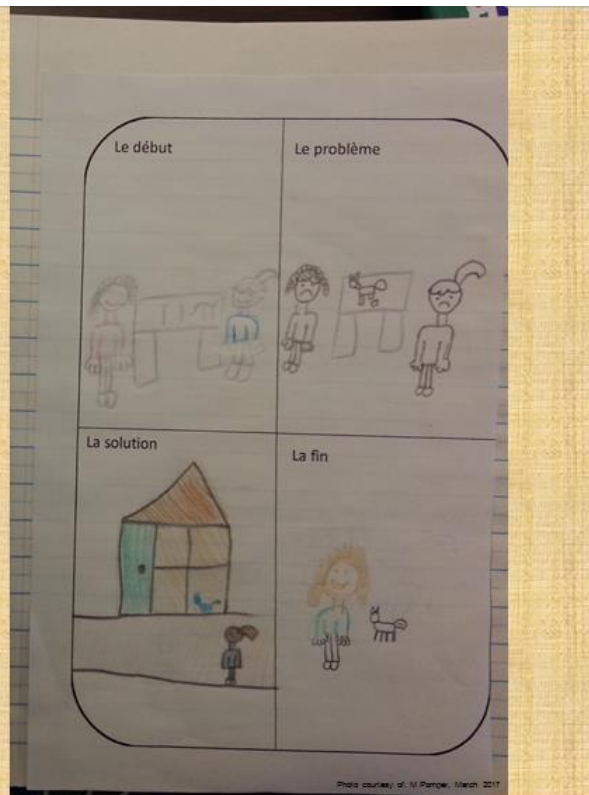
- Development of different forms of communication (Kim, 2016)
- Increased motivation to learn (Early & Yeung, 2009)
- More participation from students (Gaudet, 2013; Pellerin, 2012, 2013)
- Opportunities to use new technologies (Gaudet, 2013; Pellerin, 2012, 2013)
- Awareness of the learning process (Gaudet, 2013; Pellerin, 2012, 2013)

### The benefits of multimodality in the classroom:

- Increased value on alternate modes of communication which allows children to rely on different skills, in particular the abilities in which they feel most confident (Kim, 2016)
- Increased motivation to participate as students are able to work to their own abilities, and also support growth in different areas with skills in which they are already confident (Early & Yeung, 2009)
- Increased participation: By offering a wider variety of activities, students can tap into the practices that interest them and develop their skills while feeling comfortable and confident (Gaudet, 2013; Pellerin, 2012, 2013)
- Increased opportunities to use new technologies in the classroom, and, therefore, increased confidence with these tools; students can record, videotape, take pictures, etc. with digital tools to support their literacy exploration (Gaudet, 2013; Pellerin, 2012, 2013)
- Increased metacognition; by using digital tools, students can become more active participants in classroom activities, and can also use the digital recordings to reflect on their abilities (Gaudet, 2013; Pellerin, 2012, 2013)

## What could multimodality look like in the classroom?

- Predictive images
- Story in four pictures
- Story Theatre
- Story Prompts



In my classroom, I incorporate multimodal practices into literacy exploration in various ways. This exposes students to different components of literacy and, therefore, helps build a variety of skills.

Multimodal practices are broad and varied. Examples of just a few of the multimodal practices used in my classroom, which could easily be done at home, include:

- Predictive images: students draw pictures of what they believe will happen next
- Story in four pictures: students are given four pictures which they must order in a logical sequence
- Story Theatre: students write short stories which are then acted out by their classmates
- Story Prompts: students finish stories that are started with a written prompt or image

## Rethinking Home-Reading with Multimodal Home Literacy Programs



- Take an active role in your child's French literacy development
- Support the development of a variety of literacy-based skills
- Stay connected to the classroom

Explain my multimodal home-literacy program:

- Helps parents support their child's French literacy development, regardless if they speak French or not
- Develop many different literacy-based skills with broad literacy experiences
- Replicates many classroom activities; parents stay connected to the classroom

Brief outline of the practices in my multimodal home-literacy program and the remainder of the workshop:

- The practices included are: teacher-created audio recordings of texts; student-created audio recordings of texts; oral or audio-recorded picture walks; imageless texts; texts with no words; English translations; sample questions for comprehension, connection, and inferencing; text and images out of order; and story recreation through visual images
- Each practice is outlined in three ways: how to use; literacy skills being developed; and a sample extension
- The activities are at times related, but the list is not progressive

## Teacher Audio-Recordings

- How to use:
  - Listen to teacher audio-recordings while your child follows along
- Literacy skills being developed:
  - Fluency
  - Expression
  - Connection between voice inflection and meaning
  - Correct French pronunciation
- Sample extension:
  - Your child tries the text alone, using the recording as a reference



Photo courtesy of: <http://www.boulton.com.au/old-books-for-children.html>

### Teacher Audio-Recordings

#### How to use:

- Listen to teacher audio-recorded version (on iPad or other recording device); your child follows along
- Choral read with the recording

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

- Fluency and expression (modelled by teacher)
- Expressive abilities will strengthen understanding of how meaning is tied to different voice inflections
- Correct pronunciation of French words (modelled by teacher)

#### Sample Extension:

- Child could read the text without the recording (or use the recording as a reference); parents could point out when their child exhibited good flow, or demonstrated meaning with their voice (for example, “I could really tell the character was surprised by the way you raised your voice for that sentence.”)

## Student Audio-Recordings




Photo courtesy of: <https://www.edupix.org/blog/using-new-technology-to-recover-traditional-visual-learning-style-goodman>

- How to use:
  - Same as the teacher audio-recording, except your child is listening to their own voice!
- Literacy skills being developed:
  - Fluency
  - Expression
  - Connection between voice inflection and meaning
  - Correct French pronunciation
- Sample extension:
  - Your child can rerecord their version at home, to then show to students in the class

### Student Audio-Recordings

#### How to use:

- Similar to the teacher audio-recording
- Listen to student audio-recorded version (on iPad or other recording device); your child follows along
- Choral read with the recording

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

- Similar to the teacher audio-recording
- Fluency and expression (modelled by student)
- Expressive abilities will strengthen understanding of how meaning is tied to different voice inflections
- Correct pronunciation of French words (modelled by student)

#### Sample Extension:

- Child can edit recording and then show class; parents support by helping with the intonation of delivery (for example, by demonstrating voice intonation for asking a question)

## Picture Walks

- How to use:

- Before reading, walk-through the pictures with your child, while making predictions about the story

- Literacy skills being developed:

- Understanding of Story Structure and Sequence
- Word recognition
- Flow of oral delivery

- Sample extension:

- Audio-record the picture walk and revisit predictions after reading



Photo courtesy of <http://www.wiley.edugated-reading-22-hamilton.wa.au/>

### Picture Walks

#### How to use:

- Do a picture walk-through with your child before reading
- Highlight what you see on the cover; make predictions about what will happen
- Discuss what you see on each page/the development of the story
- Highlight, during walk-through when predictions were right, or when you have to alter your ideas

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

- Focusing on the pictures and the content within them will develop understanding of story sequence and structure and also text comprehension
- Prepares child for specific words they will read during their oral recitation
- Increased word recognition can support the flow of delivery

#### Sample Extension:

- Child can audio-record their thoughts (on iPad or other recording device) during the picture walk, then go back to this recording after reading and highlight areas where they were correct, or when their ideas were different than what happened in the story

## Imageless texts



- How to use:
  - Your child will create pictures which accompany each page of an imageless text
- Literacy skills being developed:
  - Visualization
- Sample extension:
  - Create original texts with your child and then match each page with a detailed picture

### Imageless Texts

#### How to use:

- Child reads text, describes story to parents
- Highlights the main ideas of each page/the story
- Child draws a picture or takes a photo to accompany each page

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

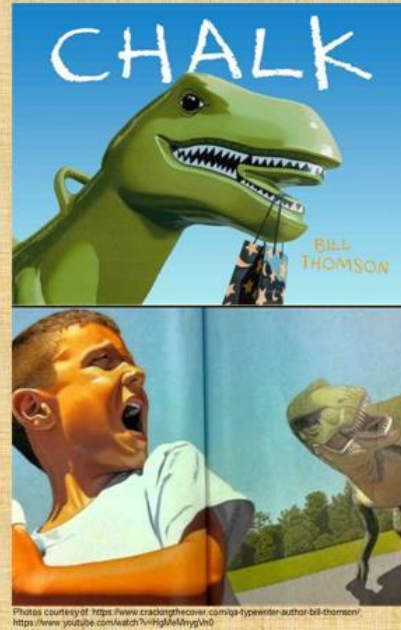
- Visualization; strengthens their understanding of how texts and stories can create pictures in their head

#### Sample Extension:

- Parent and child create additional texts without pictures which the child then illustrates
- Parent and child each create an original text, then exchange them and one person draws a picture to accompany the other's text.

## Visual Texts

- How to use:
  - Your child will create a story based on the visual images of the text
- Literacy skills being developed:
  - Awareness of Story Sequence and Structure
  - Inferencing
- Sample extension:
  - Your child can draw an original story for you to orally describe



Photos courtesy of <https://www.trackingthecover.com/ga-typewriter-author-bill-thomson/>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=figf6dhygk0>

### Visual Texts

#### How to use:

- Complete a picture walk with your child
- Ask your child to tell you the story
- Based on the picture walk, child will (orally or through writing) create a story

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

- Understanding of story sequence and structure: encourages them to create a cohesive story that relates to the images
- Inferencing skills: child will have to draw meaning from the visual images given

#### Sample Extension:

- Child draws a story and asks parent to tell them what is happening (shows child how well their images can convey a story to another person)

## English Translations



- How to use:
  - Follow along with the English text as your child reads the French text
- Literacy skills being developed:
  - Contextual word understanding
  - Comprehension
- Sample extension:
  - Create a sequel to the text in either language

### English Translations

#### How to use:

- Follow along with the English (or alternate language) version while child reads French text
- If child is stuck on unknown word, draw their attention to contextual clues that will help them determine the unknown word

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

- Contextual word understanding: children learn to rely on contextual clues in addition to visual clues
- Comprehension: more attention to context leads to deeper understanding of the story

#### Sample Extension:

- Parent and child can create a sequel for the story (which might address similar themes to the first text, but would include different events and original ideas)
- Parent could help child to write the story in the home language; child could then create images to accompany the text, or choose to act out the story
- Child could also create a French version of the sequel to share with classmates.

## Sample Questions

- How to use:
  - Support your child's comprehension by asking comprehension, inference, connection, or extension-based questions
- Literacy skills being developed:
  - Comprehension
- Sample extension
  - Use these questions for a variety of books and literacy activities



### Sample Questions

#### How to use:

- Accompanied with English translation, parents are given a list of sample questions to help their child respond to the text
- Questions could be: comprehension, inference, connection, or extension-based
- Comprehension-based questions check in with a child's understanding of specific events. An example is: "What food did the mouse want to eat?" (Sample answer: Cheese).
- Inferencing questions assess how well child can understand why the events of the story occurred. An example is: "Why did the mouse run back in his hole?" (Sample answer: Because he saw the cat and he didn't want to get caught)
- Connection questions ask your child to respond to an event in the story in a personal way. An example is: "Did you ever feel as scared as the mouse when he saw the cat?" (Sample answer: When I thought I hear a noise late at night)
- Extension questions ask your child to answer a hypothetical question based on what they've learned from the story. An example is: "What do you think the mouse could do to stay safe next time he's hungry?" (Sample answer: Wait until the cat is far away before leaving his hole).

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

- Comprehension: Questions extend reading beyond decoding; child connects to story in various ways and, therefore, better grasps the content

#### Sample Extension:

- Based on the samples provided, ask different questions that encourage your child to respond to the text (and other texts) in different ways

## Story Mix-Up



- How to use:
  - Your child will order story cards to make a logical story
- Literacy skills being developed:
  - Awareness of Story Sequence and Structure
  - Retelling
  - Comprehension
- Sample extension:
  - Record your child while they retell the story; this recording can be shared in class

### Story Mix-Up

#### How to use:

- Your child organizes story cards in the correct order, so they represent a cohesive story.
- Cards may be physical or digitally scanned on an iPad

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

- The ordering of a story, either with text or pictures, will strengthen awareness of story sequence and structure
- This practice will act as a resource for retelling the story
- Focus on main parts of the story (during ordering and retelling) will help develop comprehension skills

#### Sample Extension:

- Your child could record themselves (on iPad or other recording device) while retelling the story in the correct order; share this recording with the class
- An additional activity would be for your child to draw or photograph four or five pictures, which tell a story, and challenge family members to put them in order

## Story Re-creation with Images

- How to use:
  - Your child will re-create a text through a collection of original drawings
- Literacy skills being developed:
  - Connection of Images and Meaning
  - Awareness of Story Sequence and Structure
  - Retelling
  - Comprehension
- Sample extension:
  - Recreate the text, or other stories, with photographs, with puppets, or by acting it out



Photo courtesy of: <http://essurte.com/imagegallery/child-colouring>

### Story Re-creation with Images

#### How to use:

- After reading and understanding the text, child recreates the text through a collection of their own pictures
- Put the pictures together to recreate the story and then retell to someone in the family

#### The Development of Literacy Skills:

- Develops child's understanding of the relationship between images and meaning
- Strengthens understanding of story sequence and structure, as the pictures will reflect the story development of the text
- Pictures used as a resource for retelling the story; retelling the story supports overall comprehension

#### Sample Extension:

- Child takes photographs instead of drawing pictures (can create a slideshow with an audio component which retells the story)

## Multimodality and Your Home Literacy Experiences



Relist some of the literacy practices that parents identified at the beginning of the workshop; explain how they are already multimodal, or how they can be adapted to include multimodal components.

For example:

- Instead of only parents reading to children, the children can share the job by reading every other page
- While reading with your child, ask predictive questions throughout the text to get students reflect on their comprehension of the text
- Get your child to draw a picture which demonstrates a certain page you have read

### Final thoughts

Multimodality is not about complicating the home reading process; rather it broadens the practice to make it accessible and meaningful for students and parents.

Although many of the practices described here are teacher-prescribed, they should be used as a springboard from which you and your child can jump off into your own personalized literacy exploration.

#### Final thoughts:

- Multimodality is not about complicating the home reading process; rather, it broadens the practice to make it accessible and meaningful for students and parents.
- Although many of the practices described here are teacher-prescribed, they should be used as a springboard from which you and your child jump off into your own personalized literacy exploration.
- Leave time for additional questions
- Thank parents for attending

## References

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