

*Faute de mieux*: An exploration of Core French curriculum, teaching methods, and learner motivational factors in British Columbia

by

Erin O'Toole  
B.A., University of Victoria, 2021

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of the Requirements for the Degree of

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## Abstract

As French education rises in popularity across Canada, there is an increasing need to assess the impact of French curriculum and teaching methods on students. In 2023, the Canadian federal government updated the Action Plan for Official Languages, with up to \$242.8 million funding an increase in the national English-French bilingualism rate by 2036. Across Canada, efforts are being made to accomplish Action Plan goals, including the British Columbian mandate that requires students to take a second language course from Grades 5 through 8. Despite this, very few studies have focused on the motivational factors that affect Core French students' willingness to persevere in their French studies (Arnott, 2019; Carr, 2007; Trerice, 2015). Through both qualitative and quantitative methods including participant surveys, Likert scale rankings, and an interview, this study addresses this gap in the literature by investigating the factors that demotivate B.C. students from enrolling in Core French beyond Grade 8, and considers what can be done to mitigate these factors. This research focused on a group of Grade 8 students on Vancouver Island during their final mandatory Core French course, as well as two Core French instructors. Key findings of this study are that students are demotivated to continue studying French when they dislike the pedagogical materials used in class, experience feelings of anxiety or embarrassment during class time, and perceive their teachers' French knowledge or skills to be inadequate. Additionally, teacher challenges include a lack of perceived standardized learning outcomes, a lack of available Core French resources, and insufficient pre-service teacher training. Results of this study have generated actionable recommendations to improve Core French pedagogy based on student and teacher perspectives, with the goal of fostering classroom environments in which students feel supported and motivated to continue learning French.

**Keywords:** Core French pedagogy; curriculum design; learner motivation; teaching methods; second language acquisition; second language education

## Table of Contents

<b>Supervisory Committee.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Table of Contents.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Dedication.....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>1.1. Positionality.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>1.2. Inspiration for the Present Study.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>1.3. Research Objectives.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>Chapter 2: Literature Review.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>2.1. Key Definitions.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>2.2. Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Benefits of Second Language Acquisition.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>2.2.1. Cognitive Benefits.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>2.2.2. Social Benefits.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>2.2.3. Emotional Benefits.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>2.3. Approaches to Additional Language Instruction.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>2.4. Learner Motivation.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>2.5. Prior studies involving the Core French program.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>2.5.1. Carr (2007).....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>2.5.2. Arnott (2019).....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>2.5.3. Trerice (2015).....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>2.6. Research Questions.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<b>Chapter 3: Methods.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<i>3.1. Context.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>3.2. Participants.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>3.3. Data Collection.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>3.4. Data Collection Instruments.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>3.5. Data Collection Procedures.....</i>	<i>28</i>

<b>3.6. Data Analysis</b> .....	<b>29</b>
3.6.1. <i>Qualitative Data Analysis</i> .....	30
3.6.2. <i>Quantitative Data Analysis</i> .....	34
<b>Chapter 4: Results</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>4.1. Teacher Perspectives on Core French</b> .....	<b>36</b>
4.1.1. <i>Personal Attitudes Toward Core French</i> .....	36
4.1.2. <i>Perceived Student Interest in French Language and Culture</i> .....	38
4.1.3. <i>Perceived Student Learning Preferences</i> .....	41
4.1.4. <i>Perceived Student Interest in Pedagogical Materials, Topics, and                 Activities</i> .....	43
4.1.5. <i>Perceived Student Support and Encouragement in French Acquisition</i> .....	45
4.1.6. <i>Perceived Student Confidence in French</i> .....	47
<b>4.2. Summary of Teachers' Responses</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>4.3. Student Perspectives on Core French</b> .....	<b>51</b>
4.3.1. <i>Interest in Learning World Languages and Culture</i> .....	54
4.3.2. <i>Personal Attitudes Toward Learning French</i> .....	55
4.3.3. <i>Perceived Usefulness of French</i> .....	56
4.3.4. <i>Parent Support and Encouragement</i> .....	57
4.3.5. <i>Enjoyment of Pedagogical Materials, Topics, and Activities</i> .....	59
4.3.6. <i>Learning Preferences</i> .....	62
4.3.7. <i>Anxiety and Confidence Levels in French Skills</i> .....	63
<b>4.4. Summary of Students' Responses</b> .....	<b>65</b>
<b>Chapter 5. Discussion</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>5.1. Core French Teacher Perspectives</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>5.2. Core French Student Perspectives</b> .....	<b>77</b>
5.2.1 <i>Student Motivational Factors</i> .....	77
5.2.2. <i>Student Demotivational Factors</i> .....	79
<b>5.3. Recommendations for Improving Core French Pedagogy</b> .....	<b>82</b>
<b>5.4. Limitations and Future Research</b> .....	<b>95</b>
<b>Chapter 6. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>99</b>

## List of Tables

<b>Table 1</b>	<i>Summary of student background information.....</i>	26
<b>Table 2</b>	<i>Teachers' Likert rankings: attitudes toward language acquisition.....</i>	38
<b>Table 3</b>	<i>Teachers' Likert rankings: student interest in French language &amp; culture.....</i>	41
<b>Table 4</b>	<i>Teachers' Likert rankings: student learning preferences.....</i>	43
<b>Table 5</b>	<i>Teachers' Likert rankings: student interest in pedagogical materials, topics, and activities.....</i>	45
<b>Table 6</b>	<i>Teachers' Likert rankings: student support and encouragement.....</i>	46
<b>Table 7</b>	<i>Teachers' Likert rankings: student confidence in French.....</i>	48
<b>Table 8</b>	<i>Summary of teachers' survey responses.....</i>	49
<b>Table 9</b>	<i>Student Likert rankings.....</i>	51
<b>Table 10</b>	<i>Students' Likert rankings: interest in French language and culture.....</i>	55
<b>Table 11</b>	<i>Students' Likert rankings: attitudes toward learning French.....</i>	56
<b>Table 12</b>	<i>Students' Likert rankings: perceived usefulness of French.....</i>	57
<b>Table 13</b>	<i>Students' Likert rankings: parent support &amp; encouragement.....</i>	58
<b>Table 14</b>	<i>Students' Likert rankings: enjoyment of pedagogical materials, topics, and activities.....</i>	61
<b>Table 15</b>	<i>Students' rankings of Likert items pertaining to their learning preferences.....</i>	62
<b>Table 16</b>	<i>Students' Likert rankings: anxiety and confidence in French skills.....</i>	63
<b>Table 17</b>	<i>Summary of student responses.....</i>	65

**List of Figures**

<b>Figure 1</b>	<i>Sample of NVivo codebook.....</i>	31
<b>Figure 2</b>	<i>Sample list of themes.....</i>	33
<b>Figure 3</b>	<i>Likert scale ranking definitions.....</i>	35

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### **Dedication**

This research is dedicated to every child whose passion for learning leads them to a lifetime of advocacy and seeking improvement at every turn.

## Chapter 1. Introduction

In 2017, Statistics Canada predicted that the national English-French bilingualism rate would increase by only 1% between 2011 and 2036, from 17.5% to 18.5%, without intervention on behalf of Canadian federal or provincial governments (Government of Canada, 2018). Further, Statistics Canada predicted the national bilingualism rate excluding Quebec would increase by only 0.1%, from 6.6% to 6.7%, during the same 25-year period (Government of Canada, 2018). In response to these predictions, the Canadian federal government announced a revised Action Plan for Official Languages (APOL) in April of 2018, with \$98.92 million funding a prospective 2.2% increase in the national English-French bilingualism rate by 2036 (Government of Canada, 2018).

Today, several French-as-a-second-language (FSL) programs are offered in elementary, middle, and secondary schools across Canada; such FSL programs include but are not limited to the Francophone Program, French Immersion, Intensive French, and Core French (Government of Canada, 2020). Yet, despite the push for an increase in English-French bilingualism, the national rate of students enrolled in Core French programs has been steadily declining over the past several years, falling from 34.7% in 2017 to 34.4% in 2019, and falling even further to 33.4% in 2021 (CPF, 2022).

As with national Core French enrolment rates, British Columbian Core French enrolment rates are steadily declining each year. In accordance with the goals of Canada's APOL, students in British Columbia are required to take a second language course from Grades 5 through 8 (Government of British Columbia [B.C.], 2023). While individual B.C. school boards may choose to offer any of the aforementioned French programs, Core French is automatically

offered in the case that no alternative programs and/or languages of study are proposed (Government of B.C., 2023).

B.C. enrolment data for the 2018-19 school year shows 29, 278 Grade 8 students enrolled in Core French compared to 14,791 Grade 9 students (Canadian Parents for French [CPF], 2021); B.C. enrolment data for the 2021-22 school year shows 32, 817 Grade 8 students enrolled in Core French compared to 15,864 Grade 9 students (CPF, 2023). This immense disparity between populations of Grade 8 and Grade 9 students enrolled in Core French shows the severity of the attrition rate following the end of the provincial second-language mandate. Despite being the default FSL program offered in B.C. grade schools, provincial Core French enrolment rates have continued to decline with each passing year.

A popular argument against the allocation of various resources to Core French programs is that the declining Core French enrolment rates are caused by increasing French Immersion enrolment rates; however, current enrolment data do not reflect this idea whatsoever. In terms of program popularity, 2022 B.C. enrolment statistics show that 33.81% of B.C. students learning French in an Anglophone school environment are doing so in a Core French program, compared to 9.42% of B.C. students doing so in a French Immersion program (CPF, 2023). This data shows that the rate of B.C. students in Core French programs is more than triple the rate of students in French Immersion; despite this, Core French enrolment rates continue to decline.

These continuously declining provincial Core French enrolment trends imply the existence of underlying factors which are discouraging B.C. students from re-enrolling in Core French following the end of the provincial second-language mandate; however, very few studies have attempted to explain this phenomenon. Due to this continuous decline in both national and B.C.

provincial enrolment rates, there is an increasing need to assess how public school Core French programs are impacting both learners and teachers in terms of both motivation and satisfaction.

### ***1.1. Positionality***

My choice to design and conduct a research study concerning Core French student motivation and teacher satisfaction is driven by my own experiences in childhood, and a desire for better on behalf of future generations of Core French students and teachers. I grew up in B.C., studying French as a second language in a Core French environment for nine years. Reflecting upon this experience, I remember being so intrigued by the French language, and simultaneously so frustrated by the culture of abandonment and hopelessness expressed by both teachers and fellow students within the Core French program. Considering this experience, I was disappointed to learn of the aforementioned declining Core French enrolment trends which are continuing to this day on both a provincial and national level.

Today, as a prospective Core French teacher in B.C., these sharp declines in Core French enrolment year after year are increasingly disheartening. I believe that every student in British Columbia and beyond should have access to not only the opportunity to acquire an additional language, but also the opportunity to do so in an environment in which they feel supported, encouraged, and motivated to continue. As such, I have chosen to investigate the factors that contribute to B.C. students' discontinuation of Core French language studies beyond provincial requirements, and consider what can be done to mitigate these factors.

### ***1.2. Inspiration for the Present Study***

The state of the Core French program in B.C. was initially brought to my attention during my firsthand experience as a Core French student in childhood. Entering post-secondary studies and deciding to pursue a career in teaching FSL, I assured myself that the frustrations and

shortcomings I experienced as a Core French learner had surely been rectified over the years which have since passed. Upon investigation, I quickly learned that many of the challenges faced by teachers and students of the Core French program more than a decade ago have yet to be ameliorated.

To date, several researchers have studied various aspects of Core French student and/or teacher perspectives in an effort to improve various aspects of existing Core French programs across Canada; however, the limitations of each study leave questions unanswered regarding the particular demographic of the present study. With this research gap in mind, this study draws on the implications and limitations of relevant studies in order to generate new empirical information on the topic.

I am most inspired to expand the scope of Trerice's 2015 study in order to address the limitations as they pertain to the demographic of the present study. I am especially interested in building on existing research, closely examining the relationship between learner motivation and persistence in Core French studies, and advancing current understandings of this relationship as it pertains to B.C. students' continued Core French enrolment following the end of the provincial language mandate.

### ***1.3. Research Objectives***

The objectives of this study were (a) to gain a deeper understanding of student and teacher perspectives on the Core French program in B.C.; (b) to examine which factors are deterring students' Core French studies after Grade 8; and (c) to propose informed recommendations for Core French pedagogy, derived from both student and teacher responses.

## Chapter 2. Literature Review

This research study is informed by existing literature regarding the cognitive, social, and emotional benefits of acquiring additional languages; approaches to additional language instruction; the concept of learner motivation; as well as prior studies involving the Core French program both in and outside of British Columbia. While a number of relevant studies concerning various school-based, non-immersive French programs have been conducted within Canada, there remains a glaring lack of research factoring in both learner motivational variables as well as student and teacher perspectives on Core French. In order to address this literature gap, the present study has gathered both student and teacher perspectives on their experiences in B.C.'s Core French program.

### *2.1. Key Definitions*

“Core French” is defined by the Government of British Columbia as a school-based course in which “...students will develop effective communication skills in French and an openness to, and appreciation of, Francophone cultures” (2023b, n.p.). Core French is an FSL program in which students in Grades 5 to 8 receive “1 to 3 blocks [of French classroom instruction] per week” for the duration of the academic year (Government of B.C., 2023b, n.p.); here, “blocks” refers to the approximately one hour-long time slot allocated for classroom instruction each day. Embedded within current Core French curriculum are three core competencies identified within the provincial curriculum standards pertaining to mandatory grade-school subjects: “Thinking,” “Personal and Social,” and “Communication,” (Government of B.C., 2023c, n.p.). The provincial government has identified these three core competencies as “sets of intellectual, personal, social and emotional proficiencies that all students need in order to engage in deep, lifelong learning... Along with literacy and numeracy foundations, they are central to British Columbia’s K-12

curriculum and assessment system,” (Government of B.C., 2023c, n.p.).

For comparative purposes, other school-based French programs in B.C. include Early French Immersion, Late French Immersion, Intensive French, and the Francophone Program (Government of B.C., 2023b, n.p.). Early French Immersion begins in Kindergarten and finishes in Grade 12, at which point high school graduates will receive a Dogwood diploma as well as a *Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires en Colombie-Britannique*, signifying their completion of both English and French provincial graduation requirements (Government of B.C., 2023b, n.p.). Late French Immersion begins in Grade 6 and finishes in Grade 12; graduates of Late French Immersion may also receive a *Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires en Colombie-Britannique*. Intensive French begins in Grade 6 and finishes in Grade 7; students in this program receive French-only instruction for the first half of the academic year and English instruction for the latter half (Government of B.C., 2023b). It is important to note that Intensive French is only offered in four school districts across the entirety of B.C., severely limiting enrolment.

Lastly, the Francophone Program begins in Kindergarten and finishes in Grade 12, offering French-only instruction to students year-round; however, the Francophone Program is accessible only to students with one or more parents who qualify according to Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Government of B.C., 2023b). In order for students to qualify for enrolment in the Francophone Program, at least one parent must be a native French speaker, received primary schooling in Canada in French, and/or have a child who has or is currently receiving their primary schooling in Canada in French; these conditions also notably restrict enrolment (Government of B.C., 2023b). Of all FSL programs offered in B.C., Core French is the least intensive.

For the purposes of this study, “learner motivational variables” are herein defined as any social, emotional, cognitive, personal, or environmental factors which increase or enhance one’s desire and/or motivation to acquire a second language (L2). Conversely, “learner demotivational variables” are herein defined as any social, emotional, cognitive, personal, or environmental factors which decrease or hinder one’s desire and/or motivation to acquire an L2. These definitions are intentionally broad in order to encapsulate the vast range of factors which may affect students’ motivation to acquire French as an additional language.

Finally, within the context of this research, the term “perspectives” will encompass any combination of participants’ thoughts, opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and/or emotions provided during the data collection process. The term “perspective” is used as it is able to properly encompass the emphasis placed on personal contexts and individual experiences within this research.

## ***2.2. Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Benefits of Second Language Acquisition***

This research is informed by various publications regarding the cognitive, social, and emotional benefits of acquiring an additional language.

**2.2.1. Cognitive Benefits.** Bialystok (2011) finds that bilingual youth tend to outperform their monolingual peers in the completion of tasks involving working memory, quick and accurate verbal stimuli classification, and task-switching. During the study, which involved monitoring the brain activity of 32 monolingual and 31 bilingual eight-year-olds during their completion of various cognitive-physical tasks, bilingual children showed a faster reaction time and steadier accuracy compared to their monolingual peers when asked to perform quick decision-making activities.

The cognitive benefits of acquiring additional languages extend to the function of

executive control, which has been shown to decline naturally with age across one's lifetime (Bialystok, 2011; 2015). Bilingual children tend to display a more efficient performance on a variety of tasks involving the maintenance of effortful focus and attention than monolingual children; Bialystok finds that bilinguals' consistent use of two languages "...leads to changes in the configuration of the executive control network... [resulting] in a more efficient performance on executive control tasks, even those that are completely nonverbal" (2011a, p. 6). Executive function is responsible for one's ability to focus, maintain attention, remember instructions, and successfully multi-task; enhancing students' executive function through language learning is highly likely to benefit their academic success in additional subjects (Cumming et al., 2020).

In terms of potentially contradictory results regarding the cognitive benefits of bilingualism, Avila (2019) investigated the presence of a bilingual cognitive disadvantage specifically during the process of word-finding: the tip-of-the-tongue [TOT] phenomenon. The TOT phenomenon describes a state in which a multilingual individual is searching for a word in one of their native languages, but are temporarily unable to retrieve it despite being able to produce related words (Avila, 2019). By administering questionnaires, vocabulary tests, and experiments designed to prime word-finding difficulties to 29 Norwegian-English bilingual participants, Avila (2019) examined whether certain aspects of bilingual speakers' profiles are able to predict more frequent experiences of the TOT phenomenon. The findings of this study are largely inconclusive; the most stable data trend across participants is seen in Norwegian-English bilinguals having more frequent TOT phenomenon experiences in English when their profile reflects their dominant language is Norwegian, and vice-versa. Avila (2019) states that further research on the topic is needed in order to draw more definitive conclusions regarding bilingual

cognitive disadvantages. Overall, very few studies have been published which contradict the findings of Bialystok (2011, 2011a, 2015).

Another cognitive benefit of studying additional languages is that bilingualism has been shown to delay the onset of neurological diseases associated with cognitive decline, such as dementia (Anderson, Hawrylewicz, & Grundy, 2020; Bialystok, 2007, 2011, 2021; Bialystok et al., 2009; Gallo et al., 2022). While both the prevention and effective treatment of dementia are currently understood to be impossible, it has been shown that bilingual (or multilingual) individuals "...[are] able to withstand the effects of deteriorating brains without showing signs of dementia for several years longer than monolinguals" (Anderson, Hawrylewicz, & Grundy, 2020, p. 953). According to recent studies by Anderson, Hawrylewicz, & Grundy (2020) as well as Gallo et. al (2022), the onset of age-related dementia bilingual (or multilingual) individuals consistently appears between 4 to 7 years later than it does in monolingual individuals. This seems to be a benefit of additional language acquisition; however, a key factor in the process of youth acquiring additional languages is the existence of school-based programs which will introduce monolingual youth to (an) additional language(s) in the first place, thereby providing the opportunity for youth to continue advancing toward multilingualism.

**2.2.2. Social Benefits.** Multilingual individuals are also likely to experience additional social advantages compared to monolinguals; one such advantage is an increase in social flexibility, or the ability to produce, understand, and read social cues in multilingual settings (Ramírez-Esparza, García-Sierra, & Jiang, 2020). For instance, when communicating with others through a language barrier, multilinguals are better able to relay information in multiple ways, often leading to a more successful outcome compared to monolinguals (Ramírez-Esparza, García-Sierra, & Jiang, 2020).

It is important to note that multilinguals who speak minoritized languages do not always experience the same social benefits as multilinguals who speak nationally and/or societally-dominant languages, such as English-French bilinguals in Canada (Dovchin, 2020; Kayaalp, 2016; Luk, 2023). Instead, multilinguals who speak minoritized languages are more likely to experience forms of discrimination, including but not limited to racism, racial microaggressions, bullying, stereotyping, and harassment (Dovchin, 2020). Through interviewing 30 non-native English speakers completing their undergraduate studies in Australia, Dovchin (2020) found that frequent experiences with linguistic racism may cause English learners to develop "...linguistic inferiority complexes such as social withdrawal, sense of non-belonging, low self-esteem, fear, and social anxiety of speaking English" (p. 815).

De Costa (2020) reviews prior studies which sought to investigate the psychological and social effects of linguistic racism faced by non-native speakers in various countries, recommending the introduction of anti-racist pedagogy within schools which "...addresses the intertwined nature of race and language teaching [and] supports both students and teachers in recognizing and making visible the racialized nature of language" (p. 836). While the process of dismantling linguistic racism is complex and will require collective efforts from students, teachers, and administrators, De Costa (2020) emphasizes the need to take steps toward establishing a culture of care amongst native and non-native speakers alike in order to begin dismantling linguistic racism.

One such step which may contribute to the dismantling of linguistic racism is encouraging the acquisition of an additional language, particularly in youth. Cook (2001) believes that acquiring an additional language can bring benefit to all by providing exposure to other cultures and an expanded worldview as a result. Cook (2001) writes that, "Multilinguals, therefore, are

not restricted to a single worldview, but also have a better understanding that other outlooks are possible”. Results of a study by Göncz (2018) show a significant relationship between individuals’ degree of multilingualism (level of proficiency in two or more languages) and degree of ethnocentrism (outward openness toward members of other cultures). By polling 14 classes of high school students in Serbia, Göncz (2018) concluded that participants with higher levels of self-reported multilingualism scored 8.25% less on the Generalized Ethnocentrism Scale (a difference of approximately 5 of 75 possible points) than did participants with lower levels of self-reported multilingualism. Relatedly, a study by Abbasi, Umrani, and Aftab (2022) saw five bilingual Pakistani-Canadian high school students self-report statistically low levels of ethnocentric beliefs and statistically high levels of acceptance for their monolingual English classmates. The findings of these studies support the notion that, when individuals are encouraged to acquire additional languages, they are also likely to reduce cultural and linguistic barriers and experience greater opportunities to connect and build meaningful relationships with those around them.

**2.2.3. Emotional Benefits.** Multilingualism can also bring a number of emotional benefits. The ability to communicate in multiple languages allows individuals a greater array of sounds, words, and gestures with which they are able to express themselves (Elenbaas, 2021); this ability (and other aspects) can bring multilingual individuals certain emotional advantages compared to monolinguals.

One advantage of multilingualism is a greater ability to self-regulate not only cognitively, but emotionally: multilingual children as young as 6 years old have been shown to exhibit greater emotional self-regulation skills than their monolingual peers (Chamorro & Janke, 2022). Multilinguistic environments which multilingual individuals are naturally exposed to as children

encourage the development of a stronger social competence than do monolingual environments, as multilingual children are often required to acknowledge and integrate multiple social cues at one time in order to participate in conversations with family members (Chamorro & Janke, 2022; Yow & Markman, 2015).

The acquisition and use of multiple languages can also be a key factor in shaping one's identity. Identity itself is a broad concept which is difficult to define; the present study draws on two definitions in order to account for this. First, Hawkins' (2005) defines identity as, "...an ongoing negotiation between the individual and the social context or environment, with particular attention paid to operant cultural and power relations" (p. 61). Second, Huang and Benson (2013) contribute to the definition of identity assumed in the present study via the notion that, "...identity can be transformational and transformative; it is constructed, maintained, and negotiated to a significant extent through language and discourse..." (pp. 18-19).

Through the acquisition of (an) additional language(s), individuals navigate various emotions, motivations, and challenges, all of which play a role in the development of their personal identity (Forbes et al., 2021). Identity negotiation can be viewed as a dynamic and lifelong process, although certain aspects of identity can offer stability across one's lifetime (Motteram, 2016). For instance, linguistic knowledge and the experience of belonging to language community may offer individuals a sense of stability; additionally, belonging to multiple linguistic communities is a source of lifelong pride for many (Henry, 2017). Just as those who acquire multiple languages in childhood may experience a sense of belonging to a real-world community, those who acquire additional languages in settings such as a classroom may experience a sense of belonging to a classroom community, which Greene and Mitcham (2012) describe as "...an integral part of a safe and supportive learning environment for

students” (p. 13). With the ability to access multiple languages comes opportunities for a stronger sense of identity, belonging, and self.

Findings of the aforementioned studies affirm the potential cognitive, social, and emotional advantages to be gained from acquiring an additional language. In order to ensure that youth have the opportunity to reap these advantages, it is crucial that the second-language programs offered in schools are not only available, but effective.

### ***2.3. Approaches to Additional Language Instruction***

As with any subject, a wide variety of teaching approaches may be employed by instructors for the purpose of additional language instruction. This sub-section acknowledges some advantages and disadvantages of popular approaches to additional language teaching according to Dörnyei and Ryan (2015).

**a. The Communicative Language Teaching approach.** One approach to teaching additional languages is the *Communicative Language Teaching* (CLT) approach, in which learners will acquire the ability to communicate in an additional language without necessarily acquiring knowledge of the language itself (Dos Santos, 2020). When employing the CLT approach, real-world communication skills are placed at the forefront of classroom instruction; language teachers are able to choose certain topics and activities in order to build students’ language skills for pragmatic use (Dos Santos, 2020). An advantage to the CLT approach is that instructors are able to select and create pedagogical materials to suit the needs of their students; however, this aspect can be equally disadvantageous when teachers are unwilling or unable to employ the CLT approach due to various factors such as a lack of training, extreme diversity in the needs of learners, and/or students’ refusal to participate in CLT-based tasks (Rahman, Pandian, & Kaur, 2018).

**b. The Content-Based Instruction approach.** Another approach to additional language teaching is the *content-based instruction* (CBI) approach, which can be viewed as being under the umbrella of communicative language teaching approaches (Adhikary, 2020). The CBI approach to language teaching defines *content* as, "...demonstration, imitation, miming... the use of objects, pictures and audio-visual [presentations]... as aids to understand meaning in language teaching" (Adhikary, 2020, p. 511). The CBI approach presents content to language learners rather than explicit lessons on syntax, morphology, semantics, function, or other components of grammar; the goal of CBI is for learners to activate and develop language skills through gaining knowledge of content words and pragmatic language use (Adhikary, 2020). One major issue with the application of CBI in language teaching is that this approach is not unitary; in other words, CBI can be applied freely and arbitrarily to language classroom practices as the approach itself is not clearly defined (Cenoz, Genesee, & Gorter, 2014).

**c. The Learning Styles approach.** A popular yet problematic attempt to cater to individual learners' needs is seen in the perpetuation of *learning styles*: the misconception that each learner has a manner through which they prefer to receive information – audio, visual, or kinetic input – and that they will better acquire new knowledge when it is presented through their preferred manner of input (Lethaby & Harries, 2016). Although this approach appears to have originated from empirical evidence that different input is processed in different areas of the human brain, the idea that learning is improved when information is presented in a certain manner has been disproven several times over (Coffield et al., 2004; Gilmore et al., 2007; Huang, 2019; Husmann & O'Loughlin, 2019; Knoll et al., 2017; Pashler et al., 2008).

Learning style-based approaches to education have earned the title of "neuromyth," defined in 2002 by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development as "...a

misconception generated by a misunderstanding or misreading or a misquoting of facts scientifically established (by brain research) to make a case for the use of brain research in education or other contexts,” (p. 71). Despite this, many educators worldwide appear stagnant in their beliefs in the existence of learning styles (Lethaby & Harries, 2016). Results of a 2020 study by Nancekivell, Shah, and Gelman show that 59% of elementary school teachers and 32% of secondary school teachers believe that learning styles not only exist, but are an essential component of a successful school-based education. It is crucial that learning style-based approaches to education, namely additional language education, are halted by means including but not limited to teacher training, critical engagement with pedagogical literature, as well as improved communication between fields of neuroscience and education.

**d. The Trait Complex approach.** Having disproven the effectiveness of the learning style approach, the *trait complex* approach considers the cumulative interplay of learners’ various cognitive abilities which are thought to either enhance or hinder academic achievement (Ackerman, Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham, 2011). While considering individual learners’ abilities can be an important facet to their language learning, a key issue with this trait complex approach is the tendency to label certain students as being more capable of acquiring language (among other skills) than others, which can result in students being unfairly discouraged from pursuing language studies at all (Ackerman, Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham, 2011).

**e. The Individual Differences Paradigm approach.** Another approach to additional language instruction which aims to consider individual learners’ traits is the *individual differences paradigm* (IDP) approach, initially proposed in the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century during early research regarding successful second language acquisition (Rubin, 1975). The IDP approach aims to discover and consider individual learners’ traits and abilities, and tailor

classroom language instruction to said traits and abilities in order to maximize student success (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

Once recommended for language instructors by Dörnyei (2009), the IDP approach has more recently been criticized for the lens through which those who adopt this approach must begin to view language learners. Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) critique the IDP approach due to more recent discoveries that, "... individual learner characteristics are not stable but show [...] temporal and situational variation... neither are they distinct and monolithic... instead, [learner characteristics are] made up of different parts that interact with each other and the environment synchronically and diachronically" (p. 6). Due to the dynamic nature of individual learners' traits and abilities when it comes to additional language acquisition, the IDP approach has served as a foundation for additional approaches to language learner motivation to build on (see section 2.4 for discussion of language learner motivation).

**f. Addressing the shortcomings of additional language teaching approaches.** While the aforementioned approaches to language learning have garnered varying levels of empirical support, a commonality amongst these approaches is the tendency to primarily consider learners' negative, demotivating emotions or traits (such as anxiety or helplessness), ultimately viewing these emotions as obstacles to their language learning abilities (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). This failure to consider how learners' positive emotions and traits (such as excitement or sociability) can advantageously influence one's motivation to acquire additional languages is a disservice to learners worldwide.

Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) suggest that the omission of consideration for language learners' emotions is one of the largest flaws of many teaching approaches. In response, they call for the establishment of a language-teaching approach which considers, involves, and prioritizes

the social, emotional, and cognitive needs of all parties involved in the language learning process. The necessity of such an approach is supported by the findings of Swain (2013), who argues that "...the relationship between cognition and emotion is, minimally, interdependent; maximally, they are inseparable/integrated" (p. 196).

Such an approach to additional language teaching may be at least partially formulated through the use of periodic needs assessments, the purpose of which is to identify the needs of both learners and teachers in order to design and implement an effective target-language curriculum (Sönmez, 2019). Needs assessments may be conducted through various means, including but not limited to questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups with language learners and/or teachers. Sönmez (2019) describes critical components of a needs assessment as, "... determining goals; [...] determining the limits of the [assessment]; choosing the data collection tool[s]; collecting evidence; evaluating the data; and criticizing the [assessment] in terms of its effectiveness" (p. 9). Consistent needs assessments benefit both language learners and teachers by providing a periodic evaluation of current language instruction methods, as well as a means of gauging how language learning needs may have changed for learners or teachers over time (Sönmez, 2019). Further, Widodo (2018) describes how needs assessments may also be helpful in tailoring professional development sessions according to the needs of language teachers.

In response to the shortcomings of various approaches to additional language instruction as well as the established need to prioritize the needs of both learners and teachers, the approach to second language instruction which greatly informs this research follows the suggested (yet unnamed) approach to language teaching as proposed by Dörnyei and Ryan (2015). For ease of discussion, this approach is hereinafter referred to as an *integrative approach*: one which views the mind as a sum of its parts and attempts to simultaneously consider and engage the emotional,

cognitive, and motivational factors of learners. Recognizing that there are many existing perspectives on second language acquisition and learner motivation (e.g., Adhikary, 2020; Dörnyei, 2009, 2019; Dos Santos, 2020; Norton, 2019; Peirce, 1995), as well as that no single approach can act as a solution to the aforementioned issues, an integrative approach to language learning ultimately informs this study as it not only accounts for individual learners' full range of emotions and traits, but also acknowledges the potential for these emotions and traits to be positive facets of one's language learning experience.

#### ***2.4. Learner Motivation***

Drawing on the findings of Dörnyei (2009, 2019, 2020), all of which cite learner motivation as a key component of successful language acquisition, the present study assumes learner motivation as a large part of B.C. Core French enrolment trends. As aforementioned, motivational and demotivational variables are any social, emotional, cognitive, personal, or environmental factors which increase or decrease one's desire and/or motivation to acquire a second language; the present study collects and analyzes learners' (de)motivational variables in order to better understand overall learner motivation in the context of Core French in B.C.

With regard to learner (de)motivational variables, Dörnyei (2009) proposes the concept of an L2 Motivational Self-System. This self-system is comprised of three aspects: the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-To L2 Self, and the L2 Learning Experience. The latter aspect of an L2 learning experience is theorized to successfully motivate L2 learners through a "...[focus] on the learner's present experience, covering a range of situated, executive motives related to the immediate learning environment (e.g., the impact of the L2 teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, and the experience of success)" (p. 88).

Following this proposition, Dörnyei (2019) reviews empirical data from studies in which

participants' L2 learning experience was one of, if not the most powerful predictor of their enhanced motivation to acquire an L2. One such study is that of Islam, Lamb, and Chambers (2013), in which the survey responses of 975 undergraduate students in Pakistan show substantial support for the validity of an L2 learning experience and its predictive relationship with students' motivation to acquire an L2. A second study supporting the L2 learning experience as a predictor of student motivation is that of Papi and Teimouri (2012), in which the survey responses of three populations of English learners from multiple cities in Iran indicate a correlated relationship between the L2 learning experience and students' motivation to acquire English as an L2.

Overall, the compelling notion and empirical support for the L2 learning experience as a predictor of student motivation further emphasizes the importance of an integrative approach to second-language learning, one which involves and prioritizes the emotional, cognitive, and motivational needs of both students and teachers (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

### ***2.5. Prior studies involving the Core French program***

In addition to the benefits of acquiring additional languages, teaching approaches, and learner motivation, this research is informed by prior studies involving the Core French program and its participants. Given the large gap in the literature regarding the Core French program in B.C., studies reviewed here have taken place both in and outside of British Columbia.

**2.5.1. Carr (2007).** The present study is informed by the work of Carr (2007), who conducted a study investigating B.C. Core French teachers' perspectives on the Core French program and curricula. By surveying over 600 Core French teachers in B.C., Carr (2007) found that the most common teacher complaints included the lack of teacher training prior to implementing Core French curriculum, as well as the lack of class time allotted each week in

order to accomplish the curriculum's prescribed learning outcomes. Based on this data, Carr (2007) proposed several ways in which provincial teacher associations and school administrators might advocate for more effective teacher training and properly allocated instructional time for Core French curricula to be delivered. The methodology of this study provides a framework for this research by means of the surveying of Core French teachers' background information and perspectives. The work of Carr (2007) gathered and summarized the experiences of a large group of Core French teachers in B.C.; however, Core French student perspectives were not gathered nor included in the study. The present study aims to address this gap by gathering and incorporating both Core French teacher and student perspectives.

**2.5.2. Arnott (2019).** The present study is also informed by the work of Arnott (2019), who surveyed Ontarian high school students about their intentions to continue or discontinue their enrolment in the Core French program, which is mandatory in Ontario from Grades 4 to 9, but available as an elective course from Grades 10 to 12. A total of 63 students in Grade 9 were surveyed and interviewed on their plans to (dis)continue studying Core French in the following school year. Results of this study show that Grade 9 students were more likely to re-enrol in Core French if they had positive feelings toward their experiences in learning French, as well as confidence in their language-learning abilities (Arnott, 2019).

Though Arnott's 2019 study is similar to the present study in terms of investigative purpose, the limitations of Arnott's study ultimately distinguish the two. First, Arnott (2019) did not collect nor consider Core French teachers' perspectives in the discussion of results; a key component of the present study is the gathering and considering of both student and teacher perspectives in the process of generating recommendations for improving the Core French experience for all parties involved. Second, the variation between provincial language mandates

limits the application of results to B.C. students: students must study an L2 from Grades 4 to 9 in Ontario, compared to Grades 5 to 8 in B.C.; the present study gathers the perspectives of Core French students and teachers within the context of British Columbia's second-language mandate.

An additional limitation of Arnott's 2019 study is that few actionable recommendations are produced in the discussion of results. Arnott writes that, "...future efforts to motivate [Core French] students need to respond correctly to what demotivates students... Asking students what they want out of their [Core French] class would be an ideal place to start... Pedagogical strategies that encourage such inquiry could also help...", providing only a limited discussion of areas for future studies (p. 536). Contrastingly, the present study collects both student and teacher perspectives for the purpose of generating actionable recommendations to the Core French program based on the integration of these perspectives.

**2.5.3. Trerice (2015).** Another study which informs this research is that of Trerice (2015), who investigated aspects of the Core French program in B.C. which are similar to those of the present study. Trerice surveyed and facilitated focus groups with 75 male Core French students and six Core French teachers on Vancouver Island in order to gather and consider dual perspectives on B.C. Core French curriculum and pedagogy (2015). Surveys were administered on paper to individual participants; survey items for both students and teachers included background questions regarding participants' age, known languages, willingness to participate in post-course interviews, as well as a section for ranking their agreement with various statements (e.g., "It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my French class.") on a 7-point Likert scale (p. 128). Student focus group questions asked for suggestions as to what might be done to encourage their continued enrolment in Core French; teacher focus group questions prompted for perceptions of male students' interest and motivation in learning Core French, as well as

suggestions for how to continually engage male students in the Core French classroom.

The results of Trerice's study reflect that male Core French students feel demotivated to persist in studying French when they perceive the curriculum to be repetitive, uninteresting, and teacher-centred. Results also indicate that Core French teachers struggle to engage male learners when they themselves feel unprepared, and especially so when Core French is taught for only two days per week at the school in question.

The methodology of Trerice's study is an excellent source of inspiration for the present study, as the framework and investigative purposes are comparable; however, key differences lie in the limitations of Trerice's findings. Trerice (2015) views collected data through a sociological lens, examining the emotions, beliefs, and attitudes of exclusively male students toward their Core French experiences *as men*. This exclusive focus on male students naturally limits the generalizability of the findings; participants in the present study were neither selected nor disqualified on account of their sex or gender. In concluding remarks, Trerice discusses the implications of his research, stating that a future study involving a broader demographic and/or a different geographical region would serve to further validate the findings of this study. The present study responds to this call for further research on this topic, gathering and considering the perspectives of Core French teachers and students of all genders.

## ***2.6. Research Questions***

The present study is driven by the following research questions:

- 1) What perspectives are held by both teachers and students of Core French?
- 2) What factors are deterring students from re-enrolling in Core French beyond Grade 8?

### Chapter 3. Methods

The present study employed predominantly qualitative methods of data collection, with some quantitative components involving descriptive statistics. This is not a mixed-methods study as it involves only descriptive statistics, and the richness of my findings have come from an in-depth qualitative analysis. Abbuhl and Mackey (2008) define a qualitative study as:

... [one which] places primary importance on studying small samples of purposely chosen individuals; not attempting to control contextual factors, but rather, seeking, through a variety of methods, to understand things from the informants' points of view; and creating a rich, holistic, and in-depth picture of the phenomena under investigation. (p. 103).

In order to capture the nuanced L2 learning experiences of participants according to Dörnyei and Ryan's (2015) conceptual framework, primarily qualitative methods are the most suitable.

I chose to collect primarily qualitative data for two central reasons. First, I believe that the topic of student and teacher perspectives toward Core French curriculum and pedagogy can be best understood and analyzed through a primarily qualitative lens, allowing participants the freedom to describe their individual experiences of reality (Clarke, Braun, & Hayfield, 2015). Through reviewing existing literature as well as my exploration of both qualitative and quantitative methodology, I have come to understand that individual views are often best conveyed when participants are given the option to express themselves and their opinions freely (Huang, 2019). Second, I believe that participants may have found it difficult to accurately quantify their perspectives on Core French only on a Likert scale. The choice to allow participants to elaborate on their responses through the addition of open-ended questions enabled

the collection of more compelling data than purely quantitative data collection methods would have allowed.

### ***3.1. Context***

The present study focused on a population of Grade 8 students at two middle schools on Vancouver Island during their final mandatory Core French course, as well as two Core French teachers at one of the middle schools. This research study focused on this particular demographic of Grade 8 students as they are in a unique position of having to decide whether or not their future education will involve continued Core French instruction. I chose to include Core French teachers in this research in order to properly integrate Core French teachers' perspectives and create a more detailed picture of collected data.

Participating schools are hereinafter referred to as Middle School A and Middle School B for the purpose of anonymity. Middle School A is situated in an urban area of southern Vancouver Island with 40 teachers and 20 support staff serving approximately 570 students in Grades 6 to 8. Middle School B is also situated in an urban area of southern Vancouver Island, with a combined total of 35 teachers and support staff serving approximately 400 students in Grades 6 to 8.

### ***3.2. Participants***

The present study involved two groups of participants: teachers and students. In order to participate in this research study, teacher participants must have been the primary instructor of at least one Core French class at a participating middle school at the time of participation. As for students, in order to participate in this research study, student participants must have been enrolled in a Grade 8 Core French class at a participating middle school, and must have had plans to attend a high school at which Core French is offered as an elective course at the time of

participation. Participant selection was not dependent on age, race, sex, nor gender; rather, participants were excluded from the study only if they did not meet the aforementioned criteria required for selection.

A combined total of 26 students opened the survey link, 22 of whom completed the survey; additionally, two teachers opened the survey link as well as completed the survey. Based on participants' school, the survey was completed by thirteen Grade 8 Core French students from Middle School A, nine Grade 8 Core French students from Middle School B, and two Core French teachers from Middle School B. Following completion of surveys, one Core French teacher completed an interview. Of all participants, one student's survey data was excluded from the study post-submission, as the checkbox asking for parent/guardian consent for the student to complete and submit the survey was left unchecked; this left a total of 21 student participants.

Participant profiles are as follows:

**a. Teachers.** Andrea is a self-identified native speaker of English who holds both a Bachelor of Arts as well as a Bachelor of Education, earning a minor in French during her post-secondary studies. She has less than 5 years of teaching experience, including her time spent as a Core French teacher. She reports receiving specialized training for teaching FSL through Professional Development sessions. 20 to 39% of her current teaching assignment is Core French.

Brian is a self-identified native speaker of English who holds a Master of Education. He has 16 to 20 years of teaching experience, 11 to 15 of which have involved teaching Core French. He reports receiving specialized training for teaching FSL through a certificate program hosted at an accredited B.C. post-secondary institution; this training involved travelling to other regions of Canada with a cohort of French teacher candidates in order to further develop French

knowledge, fluency, and teaching practices. 20 to 39% of his current teaching assignment is Core French.

**b. Students.** A cumulative total of 21 students responded to the survey as part of this study. Background information was gathered as it is useful when contextualizing student survey responses. Table 1 provides a summary of relevant student background information, as self-reported by respondents.

**Table 1.**

*Summary of student background information.*

<b>Age</b>	11 years old ( $n=1$ ); 13 years old ( $n=15$ ); 14 years old ( $n=5$ )
<b>Birthplace</b>	Canada ( $n=15$ ); China ( $n=2$ ); Germany ( $n=1$ ); Japan ( $n=1$ ); the Netherlands ( $n=1$ ); the Philippines ( $n=1$ )
<b>Gender</b>	Female ( $n=13$ ); Male ( $n=8$ )
<b>Native language</b>	Simplified Chinese ( $n=1$ ); Dutch ( $n=2$ ); English ( $n=14$ ); French ( $n=1$ ); German ( $n=1$ ); Japanese ( $n=1$ ); Mandarin ( $n=1$ )
<b>History of French Immersion</b>	No prior enrolment ( $n=18$ ); prior enrolment for 2 to 4 years ( $n=1$ ); prior enrolment for 5 to 8 years ( $n=2$ )
<b>Plans to enrol in Core French 9</b>	Yes ( $n=6$ ); No ( $n=5$ ); Undecided ( $n=10$ )

### 3.3. Data Collection

Data collection occurred between January and March of 2023. To address the research questions of the present study, methods of data collection included (a) teacher and student surveys, completed and submitted independently; and (b) an audio-recorded, semi-structured interview with one individual teacher. Proposed methods of data collection included audio-

recorded, semi-structured interviews with both students and teachers; however, participant attrition affected these methods. While six students initially agreed to participate in a follow-up interview, none completed an interview. As for teachers, both teachers initially agreed to participate in a follow-up interview, though only one teacher completed an interview.

### ***3.4. Data Collection Instruments***

The instruments used for collecting data are as follows:

**a. Surveys.** Online surveys were administered through the institutionally-supported SurveyMonkey; surveys were disseminated via email to all Core French teachers and all Grade 8 Core French students by the principal of each participating middle school. One version of the survey was administered to students and another version was administered to teachers; the two versions differed slightly so that the questions collected relevant participant information only. See Appendix A for the survey and Letter of Information for teachers and Appendix B for the student survey and Letter of Information for students and guardians.

The survey questions asked participants both closed and open-ended questions, as well as provided several items to be ranked on a Likert scale. Drawing on the work of Terice (2015), survey questions were designed to elicit background information such as participants' age, known languages, experience teaching and/or learning Core French, and baseline attitudes toward Core French. The surveys allowed participants to remain anonymous; however, one question asked respondents to indicate if they were willing to be interviewed at a later point, which required respondents to provide their name and email address. The information gathered via surveys informed the development of questions for the semi-structured interviews.

**b. Semi-structured interviews.** Following the analysis of information gathered from the surveys, one-on-one, semi-structured interviews were scheduled with each participant who

provided their consent to participate. As with the surveys, the interview questions were designed to vary slightly between teachers and students. The purpose of these interviews was to collect information pertaining to participants' perspectives on Core French, including but not limited to their positive experiences, negative experiences, likes, dislikes, and criticisms of specific components and/or the Core French program as a whole. The semi-structured interview questions were designed to allow each participant to elaborate on answers provided in the survey, as well as to provide in-depth responses to prepared questions. The semi-structured nature of the interviews was intended to allow participants the opportunity to speak about any topics that arose during the interview. See Appendix C for a complete list of teacher interview questions; see Appendix D for a complete list of student interview questions.

### ***3.5. Data Collection Procedures***

See Appendix E for the Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) certificate of approval to conduct the present study. Upon receiving approval from the HREB, the procedures for data collection occurred in the following order:

**a. Obtain Informed Consent.** I initially contacted the superintendents of two school districts on southern Vancouver Island in order to obtain the appropriate permissions to conduct research within each district. Upon receiving permission from both school districts, I contacted the principal of all thirteen middle schools within both districts via email in order to introduce myself, explain my research, and obtain informed consent to contact teachers, students, and/or guardians. One principal from each school district responded, both of whom consented to have their staff and students participate in this research study. See Appendix F for the Letter of Information which was sent to principals as an attachment to the email inviting them to participate in the study.

**b. Distribute Survey.** Once each principal provided their consent for me to invite teachers and students to participate in this research study, I asked the principal of each school to (a) forward the Core French teacher survey to all Core French teachers currently employed at their respective schools, and (b) forward the Core French student survey to all Grade 8 Core French students currently enrolled at their respective schools. The principals' emails inviting potential participants to complete the survey indicated participants' ability to complete the survey online and outside of class time. The survey itself had a consent form embedded on the first page; parent or guardian consent was required in order for students to complete a survey and/or interview.

**c. Review Survey Results.** Following the completion of surveys, I reviewed the results in order to develop an understanding of teachers' and students' background information, as well as their baseline perspectives on Core French. A total of 21 Core French students and 2 Core French teachers completed the survey. Based on the collected survey responses, I formulated several open-ended questions for the semi-structured interviews.

**d. Conduct Interview.** The final step in the data collection process involved conducting an individual, semi-structured interview with the teacher participant who consented to attend. This interview which took place over Zoom, lasted approximately one hour, and was conducted outside of classroom instruction hours so as not to disrupt the participants' schedule. With the participants' ongoing consent, the interview was audio-recorded on Zoom as well as on my personal smartphone for the purposes of transcription and analysis.

### ***3.6. Data Analysis***

As both quantitative and qualitative data were collected during this research study, two processes for data analysis occurred according to data type.

### 3.6.1. Qualitative Data Analysis

*a. Preparation.* In preparation for analysis, all open-ended survey question responses and the teacher interview transcription were converted to PDF files.

*b. Transcription.* In order to analyze the audio-recorded interview data, I firstly transcribed the audio file to text. After verifying the transcription for accuracy twice more, the transcription was converted to a PDF file and uploaded to the NVivo 12 software application on my password-protected, personal computer.

*c. Coding.* Once survey responses and the interview transcription were uploaded to NVivo, two rounds of coding were performed so that I could become familiar with the data, as well as increase the reliability of the initial coding. Coding processes were performed using NVivo 12 software under the University of Victoria's license. NVivo uses theme nodes and node hierarchies as a means of classifying and organizing qualitative data; the NVivo 12 online user guide defines theme nodes as "a collection of references from your files about a specific theme, topic, concept, idea or experience... nodes can be descriptive or analytical" (2023, n.p.). Theme nodes can then be further organized into hierarchies, defined by the NVivo 12 user guide as "...hierarchies [of node] (parents and children) to organize your material and consolidate your thinking" (2023, n.p.).

I initially created theme nodes and node hierarchies based on the data instruments used, as well as any themes which I predicted would emerge during the coding process. I manually coded 100% of collected qualitative data via NVivo for the first round, adding new nodes and/or node hierarchies as themes emerged from the data; this process resulted in the creation of 90 nodes. I then manually coded 100% of qualitative data again for the second round. This process resulted in 92 nodes, six of which were removed due to no data being coded within them, leaving a total

of 86 nodes containing coded data (see Figure 1 for a sample list of nodes from the NVivo codebook which were used to code data in the present study).

### Figure 1

*A sample list of nodes from the NVivo codebook.*

Node	Description
Challenges	Challenges faced by Core French teachers and students in the context of a Core French environment.
Student Challenges	Challenges faced by students during their Core French classroom experience(s) to date
Accessibility	Students' challenges in accessing Core French curriculum, activities, or the French language as a whole (i.e., facing language barriers in English)
Activities	Students' challenges in completing or participating in Core French classroom activities.
Curriculum	Students' challenges in enjoying or finding interest in the Core French curriculum as presented to them in class.
Inadequate Teachers	Students' challenges and/or frustrations with their Core French teacher's perceived inadequacies, such as their level of French knowledge or teaching skills.
Lack of Resources	Students' challenges in finding available resources to aid and support in their acquisition of French as a second language.
Other	Students' challenges in areas which are not encapsulated by the other nodes in this list.

*d. Establishing Inter-Coder Reliability.* For the third round of coding, a fellow Applied Linguistics graduate student at the University of Victoria coded a randomly selected 30% of student survey responses, 30% of teacher survey responses, and 30% of the interview data in order to establish inter-coder reliability (Huang, 2019). Once 30% of each file had been coded by the second coder, a coding comparison query within NVivo software was run in order to compare the coding of the second coder with the first two rounds of coding which I had performed.

Results of the first coding comparison query yielded a kappa score of 0.45, indicating a moderate agreement between coders which is unlikely able to be attributed to chance (Belur et

al., 2021). To further strengthen the coding reliability, I met with the second coder to discuss the areas of coding for which we had initially disagreed in order to establish a stronger agreement and subsequent kappa score. Upon discussion, we recognized that the original kappa score was a result of inconsistencies such as references which had been missed by myself and/or the second coder, or data which had been wrongly assigned to certain nodes (likely in earlier rounds of coding). Following the review and discussion of coding choices with the second coder, a second comparison query yielded a kappa score of 0.64, which established satisfactory inter-coder reliability (Belur et al., 2021). My confidence in this kappa score was supplemented by the lowest per-node agreement rate being 93.16%. All coding processes resulted in a collective total of 1,028 references within 86 nodes.

*e. Creating Themes.* Having established a satisfactory level of inter-coder reliability, all data was then organized into categories by theme. This was done by comparing the codes that had emerged throughout the coding process and grouping them according to common themes; sub-categories were created during this process for more specific classification (Huang, 2019). A total of 12 theme categories and 75 sub-categories were created.

*f. Post-Coding Reorganization.* Having established emergent themes according to coded data, I re-organized the list of themes to follow a logical path in accordance with the research questions of this study (see Section 2.6 for research questions). Figure 2 shows a sample from the list of themes (See Appendix G for the complete list of themes with examples from the data.)

**Figure 2**

*A sample from the list of themes created for the present study.*

<b>Category 1: Student Background Information</b>
Subcategory 1: Age
Subcategory 2: Birthplace
Subcategory 3: Gender
Subcategory 4: History of French Immersion
Subcategory 5: Native Language(s)
Subcategory 6: Plans for Core French 9
<b>Category 2: Teacher Background Information</b>
Subcategory 1: Birthplace
Subcategory 2: Current Core French teaching assignment
Subcategory 3: Current French studies
Subcategory 4: Formal education
Subcategory 5: Gender
Subcategory 6: Native language(s)
Subcategory 7: Specialized Training for FSL Instruction
Subcategory 8: Teaching Experience
<i>Subcategory 8a: Core French Teaching Experience</i>
<i>Subcategory 8b: General Teaching Experience</i>
<b>Category 3: Student Perspectives on Core French</b>
Subcategory 1: Positive Perspectives
<i>Subcategory 1a: Student Likes</i>
Subcategory 2: Negative Perspectives
<i>Subcategory 2a: Student Dislikes</i>
<b>Category 4: Teacher Perspectives on Core French</b>
Subcategory 1: Positive Perspectives
<i>Subcategory 1a: Teacher Likes</i>
Subcategory 2: Negative Perspectives
<i>Subcategory 2a: Teacher Dislikes</i>
<b>Category 5: Described Activities in Core French</b>
Subcategory 1: Students' Described Activities
Subcategory 2: Teachers' Described Activities

The richness of this study's findings primarily emerges from the qualitative data collected. It is interesting to note that certain nodes created during the open coding process did not end up being relevant to collected data. For example, the parent node Student Motivational Factors originally included child nodes titled "Career Plans," "Travel Plans," and "Peers in Class." However, these nodes were removed following the completion of coding process as no data had

been coded into either. Equivalent child nodes under the parent node Student Demotivational Factors, “No Career Plans” and “No Travel Plans,” were also removed due to no data having been coded into either. Similarly, the original list of nodes created during open coding contained nodes titled “Neutral Perspectives” for both students and teachers; these nodes were erased following the completion of the coding process due to no data being coded into either one. By examining the finalized list of themes within NVivo, comparing individual nodes to others by number of references, and creating node hierarchy charts, prominent themes involving likes, dislikes, challenges, and suggestions for improvement quickly emerged.

### **3.6.2. Quantitative Data Analysis**

In preparation for analysis, all Likert data gathered from surveys were converted to PDF files and uploaded to NVivo 12 software application on my password-protected personal computer. From this, teachers’ Likert scale data were placed into a table created in Microsoft Word in order to compare participants’ rankings (see Table 1 for a full table of teachers’ Likert scale rankings). I then calculated a mean Likert ranking between the two participants by hand. Given the small sample size of teacher participants, calculating a median or mode was not deemed necessary for analysis.

Due to the larger sample size of student participants, I used Microsoft Excel software to create a total of three tables to compare students’ Likert scale rankings: one for all student rankings, a second for only students of Middle School A, and a third for only students of Middle School B. Creating tables for students’ Likert rankings grouped by middle school greatly aided in the process of comparing participants’ rankings during analysis. Labels were assigned to each possible Likert scale ranking as seen in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**

*Likert scale ranking definitions.*

S – No Response (participant skipped this item)
1 – Strongly Disagree
2 – Disagree
3 – Slightly Disagree
4 – Neutral
5 – Slightly Agree
6 – Agree
7 – Strongly Agree

Tallies for each Likert scale item's rankings were then counted. From this, I used Microsoft Excel spreadsheet software to calculate a mean student ranking as well as the mode student ranking for each Likert scale item. Calculating both the mean and mode of student Likert scale item rankings provided a means of noting any major consensuses or disparities arising from students' responses.

Collecting quantitative data during this research study proved useful as a complement to the qualitative data. Having access to participants' opinions in both a quantitative and qualitative manner, I could compare participants' Likert scale rankings with their responses to open-ended questions on similar topics. For example, a low Likert scale ranking on an item regarding enjoying French movies and video clips in class could be compared to the same students' response to the open-ended question asking them to describe the activities they disliked in French class. Additionally, in the case of the interview data, I was able to compare the teacher's responses to interview questions to their Likert scale rankings of similar items.

## Chapter 4. Results

The results of the present study have been divided into several sub-sections. Pertaining to teachers, section 4.1 and its sub-sections present data in regard to teacher participants' perspectives on the Core French program as well as various aspects of learner motivation (Research Question #1); section 4.2 presents a summary of teachers' survey responses in table format. Pertaining to students, section 4.3. and its sub-sections present data in regard to student participants' perspectives on the Core French program (Research Questions #1 & #2); section 4.4 presents a summary of students' survey responses in table format.

### ***4.1. Teacher Perspectives on Core French***

This section examines the responses obtained from teacher participants through surveys, including Likert-scale rankings and open-ended question responses, as well as an interview completed by one of the two teachers. While Likert scale items were presented in no particular order, statements have been grouped into similar themes in the forthcoming sub-sections for ease of analysis. See Appendix H for the raw data of both teachers' Likert scale rankings.

**4.1.1. Personal Attitudes Toward Additional Language Acquisition.** By examining the teacher survey Likert items (hereinafter referred to as #1, #2, etc.) and rankings in Table 2, it becomes clear that both teachers share the belief that studying a second language is beneficial to students (#1). When it comes to the belief that studying French is a waste of students' time, Andrea strongly disagrees, while Brian only slightly disagrees (#20). Item #8 shows that Brian rarely (if ever) tells his students that speaking French will be important to their future, while Andrea does this as much as possible. Lastly, Andrea strongly agrees that the knowledge students gain in her Core French class will be useful in the case that they need to communicate with a native French speaker, while Brian neither agrees nor disagrees (#26).

Teachers' beliefs regarding the value of the knowledge students gain in their Core French classes, as well as the acquisition of French as a whole, may be attributed to the quality of teacher training FSL teachers receive prior to entering the Core French classroom. In his interview, Brian described the training he received prior to beginning his career in teaching FSL, noting the difficulties he currently faces in trying to maintain the skills he acquired:

I remember that one of the hardest things about [the course] was the language of pedagogy. I remember having to learn that. Like, how do you say 'learning outcomes' in French? How do you say words like, 'proficiency'? I don't even remember that vocabulary anymore... So, when I do rubrics for Core French now, I use the English words in the rubrics. I don't do French rubrics for students because I don't know how to!

As for his first few years of teaching Core French as a teacher-on-call, Brian recalls struggling to apply what was learned in training to the situations he faced in classrooms:

...I would get a lot of French work, and I sort of fumbled my way through it because I had no teacher preparation in those areas. When I had students write stories or paragraphs or essays, I didn't have the confidence to correct them and deal with them properly.

These passages from Brian's interview are in accordance with his rankings of Likert items in Table 2, particularly #4 and #8.

Core French teachers who are struggling to acquire or maintain FSL teacher training may experience additional difficulties when FSL educators are choosing to pursue careers in French Immersion and other intensive FSL programs. This leaves the Core French program in the hands of teachers who may feel inadequately prepared to teach FSL, and may impede opportunities for mentorship amongst FSL teachers. During his interview, Brian commented on the palpable lack of educators within Core French programs at the middle school level:

...anybody who is polyglot and pro-cultural, pro-language diversity, they've already left and gone to French Immersion. Or, if they really preferred French, they went to a cultural job. So all the people that love language, they're not in the English-only stream schools.

**Table 2.**

*Teachers' rankings of Likert items pertaining to personal attitudes toward language acquisition.*

Likert Scale Item	Andrea	Brian	MEAN
1. I believe studying a second language is beneficial to students.	7	6	6.5
8. I tell my Grade 8 students that speaking French is important and/or applicable to their future.	7	1	4
20. I believe that studying French is a waste of my Grade 8 students' time.	1	3	2
26. I believe the knowledge gained in my Grade 8 Core French classes will be useful to students should they ever need to communicate in French with a native speaker.	7	4	5.5

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.1.2. Perceived Student Interest in French Language and Culture.** By examining the Likert rankings in Table 3, it is clear that both teachers agree that their Core French students do not appear interested in learning about French language and culture (#2), and that their students do not enjoy learning about grammar more than they enjoy learning about French history, customs, or culture (#27). Interestingly, neither teacher would choose to teach their students different topics (#5). During his interview, Brian clarified his Likert ranking of item #5 by explaining that Core French teachers already have the ability to choose course topics: "...what we do in our classroom is completely up to us in terms of topic and content." In terms of differences in perspectives, Andrea strongly agrees that her Core French students receive lessons about French history, customs, and culture (#9); she disagrees with the idea that her students are uninterested in learning French (#15) or are uninterested in the selected Core French topics

(#23). On the other hand, Brian neither agrees nor disagrees that his students receive lessons about French history, customs, or culture (#9). In terms of students' enjoyment of selected topics, Brian agrees that his students are uninterested in many (#23) and strongly agrees that his students appear to be uninterested in learning French at all (#15).

Brian continues to face an overwhelming number of students who are both disinterested by and disengaged from their acquisition of French. During his interview, Brian elaborated on his Likert ranking of item #15 regarding his Core French students' attitudes toward learning French, saying, "I feel that in English schools, very few kids like French... so we need to start by saying kids hate French class in middle school." Also during his interview, when asked about the strengths of the Core French program itself, Brian replied:

...the strength is that it's the only opportunity that students have, in public education, to be exposed to another language. And I would further say that because the delivery of French is irregular in elementary school, middle school is where the rubber hits the road. It's the one-- it's the main place where students are required to do French.

During his interview, when asked to elaborate on his ranking of Likert statement #27 ("My Grade 8 students enjoy learning about French grammar more than they enjoy learning about French history, customs, or culture."), Brian responded:

Oh, why they don't like grammar? Because they don't like grammar. They don't even like grammar in English. And the same [...] for conjugating verbs... At our school, there are some [teachers] who would like kids to leave [middle school] knowing how to completely conjugate *être* and *avoir*. But I don't demand that... I get kids familiar that those verbs exist, but I don't formally conjugate them.

Brian further described his students' expressions of frustration and confusion when it comes to learning about French grammar and sentence structure in Core French class, "...because [students are] not building the language with rules, it's just mysterious to them. It's like, they have to say things by trial and error, and then I correct them and go, well, actually, people say it this way." Brian also finds it difficult to explain French grammar concepts in French, "...so I teach [grammar] as it comes up, and I teach it to [students] in English."

Students may be showing a lack of interest in French language and culture due to having interest in acquiring languages other than French. In his interview, Brian commented on his own Core French students' apparent interest in studying languages other than French:

...if I look at my class of 27, I'd say maybe two-thirds are indifferent about languages... and then there's maybe one-third who get that learning a foreign language is the ticket to a blossoming of cultural experience elsewhere, but only some of those kids are interested in French.

During his interview, Brian gave an example of a student in his class who expresses frustration with this lack of choice in additional language studies available to her:

I've got a [student] who [is an] American immigrant to Canada, and she's got pretty good Spanish, so she doesn't want to speak French. She wants to speak Spanish. And she gets that, you know, we have a strong French culture here, so she's going to have to learn French... but she just wants to learn Spanish.

**Table 3.**

*Teachers' rankings of Likert items pertaining to perceived student interest in French language and culture.*

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>Andrea</b>	<b>Brian</b>	<b>MEAN</b>
2. Overall, my Grade 8 students appear to be interested in learning about French language and culture.	2	1	1.5
5. If it were up to me, I would choose different topics or concepts to teach my Grade 8 Core French students.	2	1	1.5
9. My Grade 8 Core French classes include lessons about French history, customs, and culture.	7	4	5.5
15. Overall, my Grade 8 students are uninterested in learning French.	1	7	4
23. My Grade 8 students are uninterested in many of the topics we cover in my Core French classes.	2	5	3.5
27. My Grade 8 students enjoy learning about French grammar more than they enjoy learning about French history, customs, or culture.	1	1	1

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.1.3. Perceived Student Learning Preferences.** Both Andrea and Brian report students learning best when given the opportunity to participate in class discussions, games, and conversations with their peers (#25), as opposed to repeating and memorizing vocabulary words (#24). The largest discrepancy in the dataset within Table 4 is seen in the rankings of #12, where Andrea strongly disagrees that her students rarely have opportunities to communicate with each other in French, while Brian neither agrees nor disagrees.

Core French teachers may also face challenges not only in delivering opportunities for students to learn and practice their French skills through various lessons and activities, but also in the delivery of Core French curriculum itself; this is due to the lack of prioritization given to Core French program compared to other core subjects. During his interview, Brian described in his interview how other core subjects such as language arts and math are taking priority over

Core French due to their increased necessity for students' development and well-roundedness, and how this prioritization is felt by many teachers:

My colleagues are far more interested in, 'Can kids write a paragraph in English? Can kids do certain literacy tasks? Are kids learning about Indigenous perspectives on land? Numeracy?' I mean, numeracy is more important than French language. And so numeracy, Indigenous education, and language arts: those are what we're doing in our [classrooms] these days.

An additional challenge Core French teachers may face is a perceived lack of standardization in terms of program content and prescribed student learning outcomes. During his interview, Brian commented on the current state of affairs in teaching Core French, noting the continued absence of district or school-based standardization of aspects such as curriculum content or learning outcomes:

I have my own standards. I have to... I mean, here I am in my classroom on a Sunday, right? ... I have to do what I have to do to make it so that I can look in the mirror and be pleased with myself. I have been doing my own thing for years, and it gets a little bit more eccentric every year, and nobody stops me. There are [still] no standards.

Brian described a noticeable shift in Core French curriculum when curriculum shifted from being content-based (focusing on learners' ability to memorize and reproduce specific content matter) to competency-based (focusing on learners' ability to demonstrate certain skills and competencies pertaining to a given subject). In his interview, Brian commented on the negative effects of this change, emphasizing that a competency-based curriculum seems to lend itself to less standardized learning outcomes:

In the last four years or so, content has gone out the window, and [curriculum is based] more in terms of what kids can do... since we've gone to a curriculum of competencies and proficiencies, there's even less standardization of what you can expect kids to know when they come to you.

**Table 4.**

*Teachers' rankings of Likert items pertaining to perceived student learning preferences.*

Likert Scale Item	Andrea	Brian	MEAN
12. Grade 8 students in my Core French classes rarely have opportunities to practice speaking French with their peers.	1	4	2.5
24. My Grade 8 students seem to learn French best through repeating and memorizing vocabulary words.	2	1	1.5
25. My Grade 8 students seem to learn French best when given the opportunity to participate in class discussions, games, and conversations with their peers.	6	6	6

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

#### **4.1.4. Perceived Student Interest in Pedagogical Materials, Topics, and Activities.**

For the Likert rankings in Table 5, both teachers only completely agree that the Core French curriculum/textbook does not focus on French grammar over history, customs, or culture (#14). As for differences in perspectives, Andrea feels very strongly that her students are interested in the pedagogical materials used in class (#7); and that they enjoy watching movies/videos (#17), listening to music (#18), and playing games during French class (#19). Andrea also reports that her students very often express their enjoyment of class activities (#10, #11). Conversely, Brian feels that his students are uninterested in pedagogical materials (#7); that they primarily enjoy playing games in French (#19) and strongly dislike watching movies/videos or listening to music in French (#17, #18); and reports both perceiving and hearing directly from students that they dislike and are bored by the activities in Core French class (#10, #11).

During his interview, Brian mentioned a few Core French activities with which he has had great success in getting his students engaged with the language. One activity his students tend to enjoy is a puppet show:

...even if they don't like French, or can't speak French, or have an attitude about French, they usually like making puppets. And then you've got them halfway there. Because once the puppet is on their hand, then you teach them a couple of sentences that they can say in French, and then they say it.

A challenge which Core French teachers reportedly face is an overall lack of available pedagogical resources for a Core French classroom. During his interview, Brian stated:

I don't have good videos on hand to show the students... I used to have some units that were supported by videos, but now the videos look really dated and out of touch. I mean, they were actually VHS tapes.

While technological advances may be partially to blame for a lack of Core French pedagogical resources, teachers who are technologically savvy may still struggle to compile resources and use them to effectively support their lessons. In his interview, Brian elaborated on the challenges he faces when searching for existing Core French pedagogical materials to supplement his lessons:

If I were to try and find current resources and trends, like, [by searching] on YouTube... I mean, I would probably be overwhelmed right away. I just think that there would be so much stuff... [and] I wouldn't know how to use it properly.

**Table 5.**

*Teachers' rankings of Likert items pertaining to perceived student interest in pedagogical materials, topics, and activities.*

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>Andrea</b>	<b>Brian</b>	<b>MEAN</b>
7. My Grade 8 Core French students are interested in the materials used in class (i.e. the textbook, worksheets, songs, and/or videos).	6	1	3.5
10. My Grade 8 students tell me they enjoy the activities we do in French class.	7	3	5
11. My Grade 8 students tell me they dislike or are bored by the activities we do in French class.	1	6	3.5
14. The Grade 8 Core French textbook and/or curriculum focuses mainly on French grammar instead of French history, customs, or culture.	1	1	1
17. Grade 8 students in my Core French classes enjoy watching videos and/or movies in French.	7	1	2
18. Grade 8 students in my Core French classes enjoy listening to music in French.	7	1	2
19. Grade 8 students in my Core French classes enjoy playing games in French.	7	5	6

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.1.5. Perceived Student Support and Encouragement in French Acquisition.** There are a few large discrepancies between Andrea and Brian's rankings of the Likert statements in Table 6 regarding the support and encouragement their Core French students receive from themselves as well as the students' respective guardians. In terms of encouraging and supporting students to speak French, Andrea reports strongly disagreeing with speaking primarily English during Core French class time (#3); agrees that she tries her best to speak only French during class time (#21); and strongly agrees that she encourages her students to speak French as much as possible during class time (#13). In terms of parental support, Andrea agrees that most of her Core French students receive support and encouragement from their parents/guardians in their acquisition of French (#16).

The closest comparative ranking between Andrea and Brian is that both teachers agree that their Core French students request help with assignments when they need it (#28). Otherwise, teachers' Likert rankings are at odds: Brian agrees that he speaks primarily English during Core French class time (#3); strongly disagrees with trying to speak only in French during class time (#21); and slightly disagrees with encouraging students to speak French as much as possible during class time (#13). As for parental support, Brian disagrees that most of his Core French students receive support and encouragement from their parents/guardians in their acquisition of French (#16).

In his interview, Brian spoke about his perceptions of parents' role in motivating, encouraging, and supporting students in their acquisition of French, stating, "It's a factor, but not a totally governing factor." In his interview, he elaborated further on parents' potential to influence student opinions regarding language acquisition:

Well, I think if parents are intolerant and prejudiced, then it's likely that the student will be intolerant and prejudiced. But sometimes, you get this miracle where you actually have a kid that is interested in thinking beyond their family context. So, I think it's completely on a case-by-case basis.

**Table 6.**

*Teachers' rankings of Likert items pertaining to the perceived support and encouragement students receive in their French acquisition.*

Likert Scale Item	Andrea	Brian	MEAN
3. I speak primarily English during Grade 8 Core French class time.	1	6	3.5
13. I encourage my Grade 8 students to speak French as much as possible during class time.	7	3	5
16. Most of my Grade 8 students receive support and encouragement from their parents/guardians in learning French.	6	2	4

21. I try my best to speak only in French during class time.	5	1	3
28. My Grade 8 students ask me for help with lessons and assignments when they need it.	7	6	6.5

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.1.6. Perceived Student Confidence in French.** Finally, key differences emerge between teachers' perceptions of their students' confidence in learning and speaking French. The largest discrepancies between rankings of the statements in Table 7 are seen where Andrea strongly agrees that her students gain confidence in their French-speaking skills by being in their Core French class, while Brian slightly disagrees (#6). Similarly, Andrea strongly agrees that her French students will be able to use the French skills they have learned in Core French should they ever need to communicate with a native French speaker, while Brian neither agrees nor disagrees (#26).

Interestingly, both teachers slightly disagree that their Core French students make an effort to speak only in French during class time (#22), yet, both teachers also disagree that their students speak primarily English during class time (#4). While this finding may be attributed primarily to students' lack of French knowledge and/or confidence in using the language, it may also be at least partially due to the fact that Core French classes often include students who are still learning English. If students have yet to attain a level of English proficiency which allows them to succeed in an English classroom setting, they are likely to find it especially challenging to succeed in an additional language classroom setting. Brian expressed, during the interview, frustration with the lack of additional language options granted to students who are still in the early stages of acquiring English:

I also have a Japanese kid in my class... a kid that's only been in Canada for a year and eight months now. [He] has a hard time writing and speaking in English, but he's learning

incredibly, incredibly quickly... and he really struggles in French, but he's still in French because that's the way it goes.

**Table 7.**

*Teachers' rankings of Likert items pertaining to perceived student confidence in French.*

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>Andrea</b>	<b>Brian</b>	<b>MEAN</b>
4. My Grade 8 students speak primarily English during Core French class time.	2	2	2
6. I believe my Grade 8 Core French students gain confidence in their French-speaking skills by being in my class.	7	3	5
22. My Grade 8 students try their best to speak only in French during class time.	3	3	3
26. I believe the knowledge gained in my Grade 8 Core French classes will be useful to students should they ever need to communicate in French with a native speaker.	7	4	5.5

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

## 4.2. Summary of Teachers' Responses

Table 8 below summarizes the key findings which emerged from both teachers' survey responses, categorized by theme.

**Table 8.**

*Key findings of teachers' responses, categorized by theme.*

	Disagreement		Agreement
	Andrea	Brian	Both Andrea and Brian
<b>Personal Attitudes toward French</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often tells students that French is important to their futures.</li> <li>• The knowledge gained in Core French will definitely be useful should students need to communicate with a native French speaker.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rarely (if ever) tells students that French is important to their futures.</li> <li>• The knowledge gained in Core French may or may not be useful should students need to communicate with a native French speaker.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning a second language is beneficial to students.</li> <li>• Learning French is not a waste of students' time.</li> </ul>
<b>Perceived Student Interest in French Language and Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students appear interested in acquiring French.</li> <li>• Students are interested in Core French class topics.</li> <li>• Classes include lessons about French history, customs, and culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students appear uninterested in acquiring French.</li> <li>• Students appear uninterested in Core French class topics.</li> <li>• Classes may or may not include lessons about French history, customs, and culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students do not appear interested in learning about French language or culture.</li> <li>• Students enjoy learning about French history, customs, and culture more than French grammar.</li> <li>• Would not choose to teach students different topics than those which are currently taught.</li> </ul>
<b>Perceived Student Learning Preferences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have plenty of opportunities to practice speaking French with their classmates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may or may not have opportunities to practice speaking French with their classmates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students learn French best by participating in class discussions, games, and conversations with peers.</li> <li>• Students do not learn best by memorizing vocabulary words.</li> </ul>
<b>Perceived Student Interest in Pedagogical Materials, Topics, and Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are interested in Core French pedagogical materials.</li> <li>• Students often express their enjoyment of class activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are uninterested in Core French pedagogical materials.</li> <li>• Students often express boredom and disinterest in class activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Core French curriculum/textbook does not focus on French grammar over history, customs, or culture.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students enjoy watching movies and videos in French.</li> <li>• Students enjoy listening to French music.</li> <li>• Students enjoy playing games in French.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students strongly dislike watching movies and videos in French,</li> <li>• Students strongly dislike listening to French music.</li> <li>• Students enjoy playing games in French.</li> </ul>	
<b>Perceived Student Support and Encouragement in Learning French</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believes in speaking primarily French during class time.</li> <li>• Tries their best to speak only French during class time.</li> <li>• Encourages students to speak French as much as possible during class time.</li> <li>• Believes most students receive support and encouragement from their parents in learning French.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believes in speaking primarily English during class time.</li> <li>• Does not try to speak only French during class time.</li> <li>• Slightly disagrees that they encourage students to speak French as much as possible during class time.</li> <li>• Believes most students do not receive support and encouragement from their parents in learning French.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students ask for help with lessons and assignments when they need it.</li> </ul>
<b>Perceived Student Confidence in French</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students definitely gain confidence in French-speaking skills by being in Core French.</li> <li>• Students will definitely be able to use the skills acquired in Core French should they ever need to communicate with a native French speaker.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slightly disagrees that students gain confidence in French-speaking skills by being in Core French.</li> <li>• Students may or may not be able to use the skills acquired in Core French should they ever need to communicate with a native French speaker.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slightly disagree that students make an effort to speak only French during class time.</li> <li>• Students do not speak primarily English during class time.</li> </ul>

### 4.3. Student Perspectives on Core French

This section examines the responses obtained from student participants through surveys, including Likert scale rankings and open-ended question responses, as well as the common themes which emerged from said responses. In support of the forthcoming analysis, Table 9 below shows the percentage of students across both middle schools who agree, disagree, or remain neutral in their rankings of each Likert item presented in the student version of the survey, as well as the mean Likert rankings for each item separated by middle school (see Appendix I for the raw data gathered from all students' Likert scale rankings). The Likert scale statements in the forthcoming sub-sections have been grouped into similar themes for ease of analysis. Where direct quotes are used, student participants have each been assigned a number as a pseudonym; for example, a quote from Student 1 would be followed by "S1". For additional data, see Appendix J for all students' mean Likert rankings; see Appendix K for the raw Likert data gathered from students of Middle School A; see Appendix L for the raw Likert data gathered from students of Middle School B.

**Table 9.**

*Data reflecting students' rankings of Likert statements.*

Likert Scale Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	MEAN: Middle School A	MEAN: Middle School B
1. I wish I could speak another language fluently.	5%	15%	80%	5.55	6.09
2. I am interested in learning about world languages and cultures.	22%	11%	67%	4.88	5.63
3. I have no interest in learning another language.	94%	6%	0%	1.71	1.73
4. I wish I could read books, watch movies or TV shows, or play games in another language.	29%	12%	59%	4.42	4.6

5. I think everyone should study another language at some point.	26%	26%	48%	5.22	3.9
6. I hate studying French.	53%	15%	32%	2.62	3.64
7. I want to learn as much French as possible.	53%	5%	42%	4.55	3.6
8. Learning another language is pointless.	95%	0%	5%	1.88	2
9. I love studying French.	59%	15%	26%	4.22	2.6
10. I wish I did not have to learn French at school.	62.5%	12.5%	25%	2.57	3.33
11. Understanding French will not benefit me or my future in any way.	75%	12.5%	12.5%	2.25	2.38
12. I often wish I was enrolled in French Immersion.	82%	0%	18%	2.75	1.55
13. Studying French is important to me because I will need it for my future career.	59%	18%	23%	4.12	2.22
14. Studying French is important to me because it will help me to meet and connect with others.	33%	28%	39%	4.44	3.88
15. Studying French is important to me because I plan to travel to Francophone countries in the future.	35%	20%	45%	4.67	3.64
16. Studying French is not important to me for any reason.	81.25%	6.25%	12.5%	2.57	2
17. My parents encourage me to learn French.	21%	11%	68%	5.22	4.4
18. My parents are able to help me with my French homework and projects.	50%	11%	39%	4.25	3.1
19. My parents are forcing me to learn French.	80%	15%	5%	2.22	1.91
20. My parents tell me that speaking French is important to my future.	30%	10%	60%	5.11	3.91

21. My parents do not care that I am learning French.	95%	0%	5%	1.5	1.64
22. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am struggling in French class.	21%	11%	68%	5	5.1
23. I enjoy the activities we do in French class.	44.4%	11.1%	44.4%	5.29	3.36
24. I am interested in the materials my teacher uses in French class (i.e. the textbook and worksheets).	59%	6%	35%	4.88	2.33
25. My French teacher encourages me to participate during class.	16%	5%	79%	5.77	5
26. I prefer to learn about French grammar instead of French culture or history.	47%	6%	47%	3.33	3.88
27. I think the topics we learn about in French class are boring or pointless.	65%	12%	23%	1.71	3.7
28. I learn French best when I can practice speaking French with my classmates.	56%	22%	22%	4.11	2.33
29. I learn French best by playing games in French.	42%	26%	32%	3.77	3.8
30. I learn French best by listening to French music.	88%	6%	6%	1.77	2.1
31. I learn French best by watching movies or videos in French.	79%	5%	16%	3	2.1
32. I learn French best when I am given a list of vocabulary words to memorize.	25%	20%	55%	4.44	4.64
33. I participate in French class as much as I possibly can.	11%	22%	67%	6	4.3
34. I feel anxious or embarrassed when I am asked to speak or answer a question in French.	60%	15%	25%	1.77	4.18
35. I try my best to speak only in French during class time.	56%	11%	33%	4.38	2.5

36. The activities we do in French class make me feel confident in reading, writing, and speaking French.	45%	30%	25%	4.55	2.54
37. Learning French is too hard for me, I do not think I will ever master it.	67%	5%	28%	1.86	3.54
38. I speak in English during French class to avoid feeling anxious or embarrassed.	67%	11%	22%	2.44	3.22

*Note.* Percentages within Table 9 reflects the collective Likert scale rankings of students from both Middle School A and Middle School B; mean rankings are separated by middle school.

**4.3.1. Interest in Learning World Languages and Culture.** The largest disparity in the rankings of statements within Table 10 is seen in item #5, in which students of Middle School A agreed that everyone should study an additional language at some point, while students of Middle School B slightly disagreed. While 48% of students agree that everyone should study an additional language, 52% of students disagree or remain neutral on the matter. The second largest discrepancy is seen in item #2, in which the mean ranking of students from Middle School B indicates that they are interested in learning about world languages and cultures, while students from Middle School A tend to remain neutral regarding their interest level. Regardless, over two-thirds of students polled indicate at least some interest in learning about world languages and culture. Mean rankings for this set of Likert statements are also very similar across both middle schools.

Although 80% of all participants indicated that they wish they could speak another language fluently as seen in item #1, responses for item #4 were quite widespread, causing the mean to appear as though students neither agree nor disagree. That said, by looking at individual rankings, it is clear that a small majority indicates a desire to read books, watch movies or TV shows, and play games in another language. All but one student disagreed that learning another

language is pointless (#8); similarly, all but one student indicated their interest in learning another language (#3). Despite these outliers, students of both middle schools indicated similar levels of personal interest in learning about world languages and culture.

**Table 10.**

*Percentage of students who agree, disagree, or remain neutral in their rankings of Likert statements pertaining to their interest in French language and culture.*

Likert Scale Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	MEAN: Middle School A	MEAN: Middle School B
1. I wish I could speak another language fluently.	5%	15%	80%	5.55	6.09
2. I am interested in learning about world languages and cultures.	22%	11%	67%	4.88	5.63
3. I have no interest in learning another language.	94%	6%	0%	1.71	1.73
4. I wish I could read books, watch movies or TV shows, or play games in another language.	29%	12%	59%	4.42	4.6
5. I think everyone should study another language at some point.	26%	26%	48%	5.22	3.9
8. Learning another language is pointless.	95%	0%	5%	1.88	2

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.3.2. Personal Attitudes Toward Learning French.** Students' enjoyment of French varied according to the set of Likert statements in Table 11. While 59% of students disagree that they love studying French (#9), interestingly, a near-equal 53% of participants disagree that they hate studying French (#6). Considering that 53% of participants disagree that they want to learn as much French as possible, this indicates an overall sense of student neutrality toward acquiring French (#7). In response to an open-ended survey question, Student 18 comments, "I look forward to the option to learn other languages besides French in high school as change to the

normal.” As for students’ desire to learn French at school, an overwhelming majority of students from both middle schools indicated no desire to be enrolled in a French Immersion program (#12). Additionally, 25% of students indicated that they wish they did not have to learn French at school altogether (#10).

**Table 11.**

*Percentage of students who agree, disagree, or remain neutral in their rankings of Likert statements pertaining to their attitudes toward learning French.*

Likert Scale Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	MEAN: Middle School A	MEAN: Middle School B
6. I hate studying French.	53%	15%	32%	2.62	3.64
7. I want to learn as much French as possible.	53%	5%	42%	4.55	3.6
9. I love studying French.	59%	15%	26%	1.88	2
10. I wish I did not have to learn French at school.	62.5%	12.5%	25%	2.57	3.33
12. I often wish I was enrolled in French Immersion.	82%	0%	18%	2.75	1.55

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.3.3. Perceived Usefulness of French.** According to the data within Table 12, 33% of students disagree that studying French will help them to meet and connect with others (#14); while 59% of students disagree that they will need French for their future careers (#13). The largest reason for students to see the benefit of studying French as an additional language is seen in item #15, in which 45% of students indicate their acquisition of French is important in order to travel to Francophone countries in future. While 81.25% of students indicate that studying French is not important to them for any reason (#16); in favour of studying French as an additional language, 75% of students disagree that understanding French will not benefit them or their futures in any way (#11). Based on these results, it is inferable that students of both middle

schools see the value in acquiring an additional language, although French may not be students' first choice of additional language to acquire.

**Table 12.**

*Percentage of students who agree, disagree, or remain neutral in their rankings of Likert statements pertaining to their perceptions of the usefulness of French.*

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>MEAN: Middle School A</b>	<b>MEAN: Middle School B</b>
11. Understanding French will not benefit me or my future in any way.	75%	12.5%	12.5%	2.25	2.38
13. Studying French is important to me because I will need it for my future career.	59%	18%	23%	4.12	2.22
14. Studying French is important to me because it will help me to meet and connect with others.	33%	28%	39%	4.44	3.88
15. Studying French is important to me because I plan to travel to Francophone countries in the future.	35%	20%	45%	4.67	3.64
16. Studying French is not important to me for any reason.	81.25%	6.25%	12.5%	2.57	2

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.3.4. Parent Support and Encouragement.** The Likert rankings for the statements within Table 13 show variance in the amount of support, encouragement, and assistance that students are receiving in their acquisition of French. 80% of students disagree that their parents are forcing them to learn French: students of Middle School A disagree, while students of Middle School B strongly disagree (#19). Item #20 shows 60% of students agreeing that their parents stress the importance of French knowledge for their futures; relatedly, item #17 shows 68% of

students indicating that their parents encourage their acquisition of French. As for the sentiment that their parents do not care that they are learning French, 95% of students from both middle schools strongly disagree with this statement, although less than half of students indicate that their parents are able to help them with their French homework and projects (#21). When it comes to parents urging students to seek help from their French teacher when they are struggling with class material, 68% of students agreed with this statement (#22). The results suggest that many parents are supportive of their child's French studies, though at the same time, it appears that parents are unable to offer any academic support or assistance.

**Table 13.**

*Percentage of students who agree, disagree, or remain neutral in their rankings of Likert statements pertaining to the amount of support and encouragement they receive from their parents in their acquisition of French.*

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>MEAN: Middle School A</b>	<b>MEAN: Middle School B</b>
17. My parents encourage me to learn French.	21%	11%	68%	5.22	4.4
18. My parents are able to help me with my French homework and projects.	50%	11%	39%	4.25	3.1
19. My parents are forcing me to learn French.	80%	15%	5%	2.22	1.91
20. My parents tell me that speaking French is important to my future.	30%	10%	60%	5.11	3.91
21. My parents do not care that I am learning French.	95%	0%	5%	1.5	1.64
22. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am struggling in French class.	21%	11%	68%	5	5.1

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.3.5. Enjoyment of Pedagogical Materials, Topics, and Activities.** Based on the Likert rankings of the statements in Table 14, a pattern emerges in that nearly two-thirds of students are disinterested in the pedagogical materials used (#24); 65% of students believe the in-class topics are boring or pointless (#27); and 45% agree that Core French classroom activities do not help build their confidence in any aspect of French language skills (#36).

Interestingly, students were equally divided in their enjoyment of classroom activities, with 44.4% of students indicating enjoyment and 44.4% indicating disinterest (#23). Students were also equally divided in their interest in French grammar instead of French culture or history, with 47% indicating both interest and disinterest (#26).

In response to an open-ended survey question asking which class activities they enjoy, Core French students expressed varying opinions. Some students expressed enjoyment of creating and performing in skits: “[I enjoy] readers’ theatre when I am talking,” (S10); “[I enjoy reading] stories and then [taking] a quiz, and [acting] in skits,” (S14); and “I enjoy skits, because I have done them since Kindergarten and they help me learn.”, (S17). Other students describe specific assignments they enjoy: “[I enjoy] independent or group projects where we can be creative and use what we know,” (S18); “[I enjoy] writing down questions in French and answering them in French.”, (S5); “We do lots of worksheets which I enjoy a lot,” (S8); and “[I enjoy] writing sentences, because it helps me with spelling,” (S9).

Several students also expressed enjoyment of classroom games and competitions: “[I like] playing a French game against the other side of the class, like Jeopardy...” (S1); “[I like playing] Bingo or Kahoot,” (S3); and “I enjoy the speaking out loud part of French the most, as well as when we get to play games, especially if they are competitive,” (S6). Additionally,

Student 2 reportedly enjoys watching movies and television shows in French, “I enjoy watching The Adventures of Tin-Tin because it is funny and joyous.”

Other students enjoy learning about French language and culture, including Student 19, who commented, “I like when we learn about French culture, because it’s interesting... I enjoy the writing and speaking portions of French, as well as the worksheets.” Student 8 also commented, “I love *-er* and *-ir* verbs! And anything, really, in French. It’s my favourite subject.” Several students expressed their enjoyment of other aspects of Core French, including:

“I like my French teacher!” (S10)

“I enjoy all activities!” (S1)

“We don’t do much I dislike...” (S16)

“Getting good grades.” (S15)

“There isn’t really anything I don’t like about learning French.” (S6)

As for aspects of Core French which students dislike, when responding to an open-ended survey question asking which class activities they do not enjoy, Core French students once again had varying opinions. Some students described specific activities they dislike: “[I don’t like] listening to French music or watching videos in French,” (S10); “[The] stories [we read in class] are boring,” (S14); and “I don’t really enjoy the large projects,” (S17). Other students express dislike for certain aspects of French, such as Student 19, who prefers to speak French rather than write: “I don’t like writing because [in class] we mostly write, and don’t talk in French.” Student 6 also commented, “I would like it if we learned a bit more about talking in real scenarios, and actually conversing with people in French.” Other student dislikes include the following:

“The [specific project], tests, and quizzes.” (S20)

“Presentations, because I am socially awkward and nervous.” (S2)

“Grammar.” (S9)

“I enjoy doing projects like [journals] and the alphabet book.” (S12)

“Writing assignments.” (S3)

“Any sort of game involving peers. The students in my class tend to be a distraction.” (S4)

Regardless of students’ enjoyment of activities (or lack thereof), 79% of students agree that their Core French teacher encourages their participation during class time, with similar mean Likert rankings for all students across both middle schools (#25).

**Table 14.**

*Percentage of students who agree, disagree, or remain neutral in their rankings of Likert statements pertaining to their enjoyment of pedagogical materials, topics, and activities.*

Likert Scale Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	MEAN: Middle School A	MEAN: Middle School B
23. I enjoy the activities we do in French class.	44.4%	11.1%	44.4%	5.29	3.36
24. I am interested in the materials my teacher uses in French class (i.e. the textbook and worksheets).	59%	6%	35%	4.88	2.33
25. My French teacher encourages me to participate during class.	16%	5%	79%	5.77	5
26. I prefer to learn about French grammar instead of French culture or history.	47%	6%	47%	3.33	3.88
27. I think the topics we learn about in French class are boring or pointless.	65%	12%	23%	1.71	3.7
36. The activities we do in French class make me feel confident in reading, writing, and speaking French.	45%	30%	25%	4.55	2.54

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.3.6. Learning Preferences.** The Likert rankings seen in Table 15 show students' preferences regarding in-class methods of French acquisition. The majority of students indicate that they do not learn French best by listening to music (#30) nor by watching movies or videos in French (#31). One discrepancy is seen in students' preference for learning French through conversing with classmates (#28), with which students of Middle School A neither agree nor disagree, but students of Middle School B disagree. As for how students learn French best, 55% of students indicate that memorizing vocabulary words is most helpful to their learning (#32). Student 4 wrote in a survey response, "I learn better when I am able to write it out, or just plain memorize the vocabulary over time."

Interestingly, although mean Likert rankings show otherwise, several students commented on their enjoyment of competitions and games during French class (see section 4.3.5. for direct quotes from students). This discrepancy between the mean Likert item ranking and individual student comments may have arisen because those who do not enjoy French games or competitions declined to comment further.

**Table 15.**

*Percentage of students who agree, disagree, or remain neutral in their rankings of Likert statements pertaining to their learning preferences.*

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>MEAN: Middle School A</b>	<b>MEAN: Middle School B</b>
28. I learn French best when I can practice speaking French with my classmates.	56%	22%	22%	4.11	2.33
29. I learn French best by playing games in French.	42%	26%	32%	3.77	3.8
30. I learn French best by listening to French music.	88%	6%	6%	1.77	2.1
31. I learn French best by watching movies or videos in French.	79%	5%	16%	3	2.1

32. I learn French best when I am given a list of vocabulary words to memorize.	25%	20%	55%	4.44	4.64
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*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

**4.3.7. Anxiety and Confidence Levels in French Skills.** In terms of confidence in French skills, while 67% of students disagree that French is too difficult for their eventual mastery (#37), only 25% of students agree that in-class activities help them to feel confident in reading, writing, and speaking French (#36). This gives rise to an interesting middle ground in which students believe they are capable of acquiring French as an additional language, although the in-class activities do not necessarily facilitate their acquisition nor confidence in doing so.

In terms of anxiety and embarrassment during class time, over two-thirds of students indicate that they participate in French class as much as possible (#33), and 60% of students indicate experiencing little to no feelings of anxiety or embarrassment when speaking or answering questions during French class (#34). That said, 56% of students report putting low effort into actually speaking French during class time (#35) and 22% report speaking English to avoid feelings of anxiety or embarrassment in the first place (#38), which may contribute to the lack of anxiety or embarrassment they reportedly experience.

**Table 16.**

*Percentage of students who agree, disagree, or remain neutral in their rankings of Likert statements pertaining to the levels of anxiety and confidence they experience when exercising their French skills.*

Likert Scale Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	MEAN: Middle School A	MEAN: Middle School B
33. I participate in French class as much as I possibly can.	11%	22%	67%	6	4.3
34. I feel anxious or embarrassed when I am asked to speak or answer a question in French.	60%	15%	25%	1.77	4.18

35. I try my best to speak only in French during class time.	56%	11%	33%	4.38	2.5
36. The activities we do in French class make me feel confident in reading, writing, and speaking French.	45%	30%	25%	4.55	2.54
37. Learning French is too hard for me, I do not think I will ever master it.	67%	5%	28%	1.86	3.54
38. I speak in English during French class to avoid feeling anxious or embarrassed.	67%	11%	22%	2.44	3.22

*Note.* Likert scale rankings are defined as follows. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

#### 4.4. Summary of Students' Responses

Table 17 below summarizes the key findings which emerged from students' responses, categorized by theme and demographic.

**Table 17.**

*Key findings of students' responses, categorized by theme.*

	Disagreement		Agreement
	Students of Middle School A	Students of Middle School B	Students of Middle Schools A and B
<b>Interest in Learning World Languages and Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe everyone should study an additional language at some point.</li> <li>• Interested in learning about world languages and cultures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slightly disagree that everyone should study an additional language at some point.</li> <li>• Neither interested nor disinterested in learning about world languages and cultures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicate a desire to speak another language fluently.</li> <li>• Indicate a slight desire to read books, watch movies/TV shows, and play games in another language.</li> <li>• Indicate interest in learning another language.</li> <li>• Do not believe learning another language is pointless.</li> </ul>
<b>Attitudes Toward Learning French</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain neutral regarding a love of French.</li> <li>• Do not hate learning French.</li> <li>• Remain neutral about a desire to learn as much French as possible.</li> <li>• No indication of wishing they did not have to learn French at school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not love learning French.</li> <li>• Slightly hate learning French.</li> <li>• Do not wish to learn as much French as possible.</li> <li>• Slightly wish they did not have to learn French at school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No desire to be enrolled in a French Immersion program.</li> </ul>
<b>Perceived Usefulness of French</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain neutral regarding French as a necessity for their future careers.</li> <li>• Believe that studying French is important for connecting with others.</li> <li>• Believe that studying French is important for travelling to Francophone countries in future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disagree that French is necessary for their future careers.</li> <li>• Slightly disagree that studying French is important for connecting with others.</li> <li>• Slightly disagree that studying French is important for travelling to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disagree that studying French will not benefit them or their futures in any way.</li> <li>• Disagree that studying French is not important for any reason.</li> </ul>

		Francophone countries in future.	
<b>Parent Support and Encouragement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain neutral on whether their parents can help with French assignments.</li> <li>• Parents encourage them to learn French.</li> <li>• Parents tell them that speaking French is important to their futures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disagree that their parents can help with French assignments.</li> <li>• Slightly disagree that their parents encourage them to learn French.</li> <li>• Remain neutral on whether their parents tell them that speaking French is important to their futures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disagree that their parents are forcing them to learn French.</li> <li>• Strongly disagree that their parents do not care if they are learning French.</li> <li>• Agree that their parents urge them to seek help from their teacher if they are struggling in French.</li> </ul>
<b>Enjoyment of Pedagogical Materials, Topics, and Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neither interested nor disinterested in Core French pedagogical materials.</li> <li>• Do not believe that class topics are boring and/or pointless.</li> <li>• Enjoy class activities.</li> <li>• Remain neutral on whether class activities instill confidence in their French skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinterested in Core French pedagogical materials.</li> <li>• Believe that class topics are boring and/or pointless.</li> <li>• Do not enjoy class activities.</li> <li>• Class activities do not instill confidence in their French skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prefer to learn about French culture and history over French grammar.</li> <li>• Believe that their French teacher encourages their participation in class.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning Preferences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neither agree nor disagree that they prefer to learn French through conversing with classmates.</li> <li>• Slightly disagree that they prefer to learn French by watching movies or videos in class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not prefer to learn French through conversing with classmates.</li> <li>• Do not prefer to learn French by watching movies or videos in class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prefer to learn French by memorizing vocabulary words.</li> <li>• Do not prefer to learn French by playing games in class.</li> <li>• Do not prefer to learn French by listening to music.</li> </ul>
<b>Anxiety and Confidence Levels in French</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in French class as much as they can.</li> <li>• Class activities neither increase nor decrease their confidence in their French skills.</li> <li>• Do not feel anxious or embarrassed when asked to speak French during class time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain neutral about participating in French class as much as they can.</li> <li>• Class activities do not increase their confidence in their French skills.</li> <li>• Remain neutral about feeling anxious or embarrassed when asked to speak French during class time.</li> </ul>	

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remain neutral about trying to speak only in French during class time.</li><li>• Do not speak English during class time to avoid feeling anxious or embarrassed.</li><li>• Do not believe that French is too difficult for their eventual mastery.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not try to speak only in French during class time.</li><li>• Slightly disagree with speaking English during class time to avoid feeling anxious or embarrassed.</li><li>• Slightly disagree that French is too difficult for their eventual mastery.</li></ul> |
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## Chapter 5. Discussion

This section discusses data patterns which have emerged from the results of the present study. Section 5.1 and its sub-sections discuss the perspectives of Core French teachers in the present study (Research Question #1). Section 5.2 and its sub-sections discuss the perspectives, as well as the motivational and demotivational factors faced by Core French students in the present study (Research Questions #1 & #2). Section 5.3. presents recommendations for improving Core French pedagogy based on teacher and student responses. Before concluding, limitations and areas for further research are considered in section 5.4.

### *5.1. Core French Teacher Perspectives (Research Question #1)*

This section discusses the perspectives of Core French teachers in the present study, particularly the challenges they face, based on teacher participants' survey and interview responses.

**a. Teaching French to students still learning English.** Core French teachers face the challenge of teaching French to students who are struggling to learn English. During his interview, Brian described the difficulty of teaching French to students who are not yet confident (or even literate) in English: "The students who struggle most are those that have language process delays or learning challenges in English. If they are barely literate in their native language, asking them to decipher a foreign language appears torturous." Considering the work of Bardel (2019), who states that "...when a multilingual individual encounters a new language, the L1 and all subsequently appropriated languages have the potential to influence the new language, and the most recently encountered language can also influence those acquired or learned earlier," it is especially challenging to acquire an L3 when an L2 is not yet solidified. While it is to be expected that students will encounter varying degrees of difficulty while

acquiring an additional language, if students' first language is not English, then learning French concurrently is likely to make things even more difficult for both students and teachers.

**b. Insufficient pre-service teacher training.** Teaching a second language in a non-immersion environment can leave several aspects of classroom management and additional language instruction strategies up to teachers' personal interpretation. While some teachers receive specialized pre-service training for second language instruction such as FSL, others are left to develop strategies of their own, often through trial and error.

According to Culligan et al. (2023), insufficient FSL teacher training is a contributing factor to the current FSL teacher shortage across Canada. In the present study, after several years of struggling to teach FSL in both immersive and non-immersive classroom environments following the completion of his post-degree FSL teacher training, Brian took it upon himself to seek out extra training, "I decided to specialize in middle school, and I [earned] Core French credentials in an evening-and-weekend course." Despite having successfully completed this supplementary teacher training, Brian ultimately concludes that the majority of his learning occurred once he was employed as a teacher, "You don't [earn credentials] for skills, you do it for the piece of paper... You learn [how to teach] on the job, you don't learn [how to teach] at university."

To evaluate the effectiveness of FSL teacher training programs in Ontario, Cooke and Faez (2018) polled 13 French Immersion teachers and 14 Core French teachers regarding their self-efficacy in teaching FSL. In doing so, researchers found that neither group felt especially confident in their roles following the completion of their respective FSL teacher training programs; however, the self-efficacy of the French Immersion teachers was nearly double that of the Core French teachers (Cooke & Faez, 2018). This difference is attributed to (a) French

Immersion teachers' higher level of self-reported French proficiency, and (b) French Immersion teachers' practical classroom experience as part of their teacher education programs (Cooke & Faez, 2018). Cooke and Faez (2018) found that classroom experience during teacher training was an important factor related to FSL teachers' increased sense of efficacy. As Core French teachers are not always required to complete a practical classroom experience component as part of their pre-service training due to differences in post-secondary institutions' teacher certification programs, it is possible that Core French teachers' self-efficacy may be lowered as a result.

**c. Lack of perceived standardization: Curriculum and learning outcomes.** During his interview, Brian described a lengthy history of teaching Core French without having a solid curriculum or set of prescribed student learning outcomes upon which he could base his topic choices, classroom activities, and lesson plans. Brian noticed a lack of standardization in Core French programs very early on in his teaching career:

...as I was subbing all across the province, my opinion was that there was no standard of education [for] Core French... some kids got it for two 45-minute [blocks] a week, and some kids just, some years, didn't get it [at all]. And I mean, nobody cared. There were no standards. And, you know, maybe if they did get it, they got *bonjour*, *au revoir*, and numbers 1 to 20 every year, year after year, until they went to middle school. (Brian, Interview)

The overall lack of standardization in terms of Core French course content and instruction as perceived by Core French teachers leads to middle school classrooms full of students with varying levels of French knowledge, despite each of them having just completed Core French 5. In response, Brian would survey his students in order to understand each students' level of French knowledge entering middle school:

Especially when I taught grade six, I would ask kids, ‘So, what have you learned in grade five?’. I would do a survey so I’d know who has done numbers, who has done colors, who has done food, who has done this and that... and there were kids who [would say], ‘Yeah, we never had French because our French teacher had to teach us in the computer lab, and we just were allowed to play games instead of doing French.’ So French was a throwaway. (Brian, Interview)

While this method of surveying students may certainly help Core French teachers to see where students rank their current French skills, it is unreasonable to expect all Core French teachers to be able to tailor course content in order to accommodate individual students with varying degrees of Core French instruction in prior years.

Since Grades 5 to 8 are the only mandated years of second-language study for students in British Columbia, it is reasonable for teachers to expect at least some Core French program or content standardization. As discussed during his interview, from Brian’s perspective, unfortunately, little has changed in terms of the establishment of educational standards or learning outcomes for Core French students. Tursunovich (2022) discusses ongoing issues in foreign language curriculum design, proposing the establishment of foreign language communicative competencies as a means to address inconsistencies within foreign language curricula. Further, Mason (2015) writes that of the all-too-common disparity between policy and practice, when it comes to foreign language education in grade schools, “On one hand, policies are drafted which promote and encourage the expansion of foreign language education in schools. On the other hand, they are often not supported by substantive implementation and assessment plans to ensure quality foreign language education...” (p. 62). Establishing and upholding clear learning outcomes for students of each grade level may help to mitigate the

challenge of delivering lessons to a classroom full of students with varying degrees of French competencies which Core French teachers so often face.

**d. Lack of available pedagogical materials and resources.** Accessing resources and pedagogical materials which both interest and engage students can be extremely challenging for Core French teachers. While both teachers indicate they are able to find French resources and pedagogical materials both online and through other teachers, issues arise when said resources are either too difficult for Core French learners (such as activities designed for French Immersion students), or age-inappropriate (such as activities designed for very young French learners). In his interview, Brian described his strategy of “dumbing down” French Immersion worksheets and assignments in order to make them appropriate for his Core French learners’ level. While this strategy may work for some teachers, the process of sourcing and modifying pedagogical materials can create extra work for teachers who may not have time to spare.

This challenge of finding Core French pedagogical materials and resources is also at least partially due to an inability to provide up-to-date resources due to aspects such as technological changes. In response to the challenges in finding and/or accessing Core French resources and pedagogical materials, teachers may attempt to create their own. Brian recalls dedicating much of his time to creating his own pedagogical materials and lessons as a new Core French teacher due to the lack of existing resources at the time. When asked if he finds a lack of Core French-specific resources that are readily available to him today, Brian replied, “I’d say I found that a decade ago, and now I don’t even bother looking. I just keep doing the same thing.” Brian describes repeating the same lessons each year, sticking only to what appears to best engage his Core French students year-to-year, “... because once a teacher comes up with a good idea... there’s no reason to change it.” Despite this method of repeating lessons, Brian remarked during

his interview that he still finds it challenging to find or create resources to support new lessons, “... Where do I go for this resource? I have no idea. And who would want to provide it? [...] So then I have to make the resource.”

Andrea concurs that accessing Core French resources can be challenging, especially concerning the difficulties of encountering paywalled pedagogical materials online. In a survey response, Andrea wrote, “I would love to find resources to support French culture that I don’t have to buy.” Out-of-pocket expenses are yet another issue which may stand in the way of Core French teachers accessing up-to-date, age-appropriate, and level-appropriate resources for students. By reviewing existing studies which investigated various causes of foreign language teacher attrition, Mason (2015) found that a lack of resources available to foreign language teachers in English-speaking countries was the fourth most common factor affecting teachers’ decision to move schools or change careers entirely. Given that both teacher participants of the present study have described a lack of available Core French resources, it is especially crucial that appropriate funds are allocated to Core French programs in order for teachers to access paywalled content and resources to supplement their lessons without being required to draw from their personal earnings.

**e. Lack of Core French prioritization.** It is not uncommon for Core French teachers to feel that Core French itself is not prioritized, especially in comparison to other “core” subjects such as math, science, and social studies. Brian stated during his interview, “Core French is not a priority. And nobody is asking us to make it a priority.” This sentiment can leave both teachers and students feeling frustrated and helpless when it comes to making positive steps to improve Core French pedagogy and overall experiences.

One potential factor contributing to the sentiment that Core French is less of a priority

than other core subjects is a belief that second-language studies are beneficial, but not necessarily crucial for students' personal or academic development. As globalization increases both in and out of classroom settings, additional language studies have become an excellent means by which students may be exposed to culture which differ from their own (Davitishvilli, 2017). Prioritizing additional language studies at the grade school level may help learners, "... overcome both cultural shock and intercultural communicative barriers easier, compare the target culture with their own, and find the similarities and differences between them, thus coping with cross-cultural communication problems successfully" (Davitishvilli, 2017). Considering additional language courses such as Core French to be as crucial to grade school curriculum as other core subjects such as science and math is likely to benefit students' personal and academic development.

Another factor which may be furthering the sentiment that Core French is a lower priority than other subjects is a lack of teachers who are willing to dedicate time, skills, and resources toward the Core French program. Brian comments on the lack of educators pursuing Core French in favour of contributing to French Immersion programs, "... because that part of the population that would make [Core French] a priority, they've already left and gone to French Immersion... They're not working [in non-immersion classrooms]." Mason (2015) reviewed factors which commonly influence foreign language teacher attrition, including the factors influencing teachers' voluntary decisions to leave one school in favour of another. In doing so, Mason (2015) found seven major themes which are likely to influence foreign language teachers' attrition, among which include a lack of pre-service teacher training; insufficient teacher knowledge and skills in various aspects of the foreign language classroom; a lack of experiences promoting their value and belonging as foreign language teachers; and a lack of supportive workplace

relationships with students, parents, administrators, and colleagues. The work of Mason (2015) aligns with many of the findings of the present study regarding the challenges faced by Core French teachers, emphasizing the importance of ensuring Core French teachers are having positive experiences with the aforementioned factors in order to reduce the likelihood of Core French teacher attrition.

**f. Students are interested in languages other than French.** Another challenge which Core French teachers may encounter is a situation in which students are interested in acquiring an additional language, but said language is decidedly not French. Motivating students can be challenging for Core French teachers, no matter the level of interest students show toward studying French. During his interview, Brian described the difficulties faced when asking middle school students (and early adolescents in general) to engage with course content, “Even when you ask [middle schoolers] to do the things they love doing, like playing guitar, they're like, I don't wanna practice...” Oga-Baldwin (2019) notes that foreign language teachers often conflate students’ observable engagement with students’ unobservable motivation to acquire an additional language. Oga-Baldwin (2019) describes a similar sentiment as did Brian in the previous quote, stating, “... Even though students may be highly motivated to learn a foreign language, they may not always complete learning tasks [...] Teachers thus seek and recognize engagement, but may have difficulty recognizing when students are motivated.” (p. 2).

When the students of a Core French class are uninterested in acquiring French to begin with, the classroom atmosphere can lead to unwelcome feelings of force for both teachers and students. During his interview, Brian said, “My [students] are telling me all the time, ‘Why can’t we learn Japanese instead? It would be so much more fun, because then I could understand anime, and all those videos, and maybe even go to Japan.’” Students who are interested in

languages besides French often put Core French teachers in the very difficult position of understanding B.C. students' frustration with the lack of choice in the languages they have opportunities to learn, while also having to teach them French anyway.

**g. Lack of parent support and encouragement.** Core French teachers are forced to take into consideration not only a potential lack of parent support or encouragement, but also the potential for parents to actively disparage French language programs in front of their children. This presents challenges which can be especially difficult for teachers to address, given that parent-child interactions typically happen outside of the classroom setting. Nonetheless, parents can play a major role in the attitudes and motivation expressed by students in an additional language classroom. Ng and Ng (2015) reviewed external influences which affect students' motivation to acquire additional languages, indicating how parents may discourage their child from acquiring an additional language without necessarily realizing it. This indication is based on the work of Gardner (2010), who proposes two ways by which parents can encourage their children to acquire additional languages: (1) by providing their children with direct encouragement and praise, which Gardner deems an *active* role; and/or (2) by openly expressing positivity toward the target language community, which Gardner deems a *passive* role. As a result, Gardner (2010) suggests that students may subconsciously absorb their parents' beliefs about additional language acquisition, regardless of whether or not their parents intended to convey said beliefs.

For example, when asked if he believes that a parent could negatively influence their child's interest in French language and culture, Brian replied, "I would think that [...] the lack of interest in French that I see in English public schools is probably a result of the lack of interest from their unilingual, Western Canada-dwelling parents." Indeed, parents and other influential

adults may have the ability to sway students' opinions of Core French and other subjects positively or negatively; however, in his interview, Brian stood firm in his belief that parents are not the sole responsible parties for broadening students' cultural and linguistic horizons: "I think our job as public school teachers is to compensate for people's biases, and prejudice, and narrowmindedness, by exposing students to a variety of ideas."

## **5.2. Core French Student Perspectives (Research Question #1)**

This section discusses the perspectives of Core French students in the present study, including the motivational and demotivational factors which affect their motivation to re-enrol in Core French following the end of the provincial language mandate, based on student participants' survey and interview responses.

**5.2.1. Student Motivational Factors.** This sub-section discusses the motivational factors are likely to encourage Core French students' continued French studies and continued enrolment in the Core French program. These motivational factors are based on my analysis and cross-referencing of data gathered from both Likert scale rankings as well as open-ended survey questions, and the patterns which emerged from this analysis. To determine motivational factors, close attention was paid to the overlap in responses and Likert rankings of students who definitively responded "Yes" to the survey question, "Do you plan to enrol in Core French 9 next year?". Motivational factors are presented in descending order in terms of the number of students who share each motivational factor.

In the present study, the most commonly reported aspect of Core French pedagogy which is likely to motivate students' enjoyment and continued enrolment in Core French is their enjoyment of pedagogical materials and classroom activities. This finding lines up with the work of Jin and Zhang (2018), who found that EAL students' motivation to acquire an additional

language are largely attributed to their enjoyment of (and subsequent engagement with) language classroom activities. Given that enjoyment of pedagogical materials and classroom activities is the top motivational factor for Core French students within the present study, the importance of ensuring student engagement within the additional language classroom cannot be overstated.

The second most commonly reported aspect of Core French pedagogy which is likely to motivate students' enjoyment and continued enrolment in Core French is their interest in learning about the French language and French culture. Further, the third most commonly reported aspect of Core French pedagogy which is likely to motivate students' enjoyment and continued enrolment in Core French is a positive attitude toward acquiring French. When taking these two factors into account, it is clear that students' interest in and attitude toward various aspects of French language and culture can greatly impact on their motivation to continue their FSL studies. MacIntyre and Mercer (2014) discuss the potential impact of introducing positive psychology tools (such as goal-setting or identifying oneself in an inventory list of strengths) to students acquiring a second language, proposing that positive psychology tools "...could be valuable in helping learners to become aware of their personal strengths and to develop strategies for building on and employing these strengths in new ways to assist their own language learning." MacIntyre and Mercer (2014) also propose that the benefits of positive psychology in the classroom may also extend to teachers, who "...may benefit from an increased focus on their own strengths as educators as well as on the positive dimensions of their educational settings" (p. 161). Overall, it appears that the maintenance of students' interest in and positive attitudes toward aspects of French is key to enhancing their motivation to continue their FSL studies.

The fourth most commonly reported aspect of Core French pedagogy which is likely to motivate students' enjoyment and continued enrolment in Core French is the presence of support

and encouragement from parents or guardians at home. This finding matches that of Atta and Jamil (2012), who found that high school students whose parents are actively involved in their acquisition of a foreign language through home-based discussions and/or activities are less likely to discontinue their foreign language studies and more likely to display high levels of motivation. Family members such as parents and guardians can play an important role in young learners' acquisition of additional languages: according to Atta and Jamil (2012), high school students whose parents actively participate in their foreign language studies are more likely to find academic success in their foreign language studies. The findings of Atta and Jamil (2012) in combination with the present study's finding that Core French students are motivated to learn French when they feel supported and encouraged by their parents in doing so function as strong support for the potential impact that parental involvement can have on Core French students' continued FSL studies.

**5.2.2. Student Demotivational Factors (Research Question #2).** This sub-section presents the demotivational factors which are likely to discourage Core French students' continued French studies and enrolment in the Core French program. These demotivational factors are based on my analysis and cross-referencing of data gathered from both Likert scale rankings as well as open-ended survey questions, and the patterns which emerged from this analysis. To determine demotivational factors, close attention was paid to the overlap in responses and Likert rankings of students who definitively responded "No" to the survey question, "Do you plan to enrol in Core French 9 next year?". Demotivational factors are presented in descending order in terms of the number of students who share each demotivational factor.

In the present study, the most commonly reported aspect of Core French pedagogy which

is likely to demotivate students' continued enrolment in Core French is their dislike of pedagogical materials and classroom activities. This finding is in alignment with the work of Jahedizadeh, Ghanizadeh, and Ghonsooly (2016), who found that one of the largest contributors to EAL students' language achievement burnout is a negative perception of classroom activities. Given that a dislike of pedagogical materials and classroom activities is the most commonly reported demotivational factor for students in the present study, it appears that the findings of Jahedizadeh, Ghanizadeh, and Ghonsooly (2016) may also be applicable to FSL students in the present study. As aforementioned, the most commonly reported motivational factor for students in the present study is their enjoyment of pedagogical materials and classroom activities; this finding highlights just how significantly these aspects of the L2 learning environment can impact students' motivation to continue studying an additional language.

The two second-most commonly reported aspects of Core French pedagogy which are likely to demotivate students' continued enrolment in Core French are (a) their negative attitude toward acquiring French, as well as (b) a lack of interest in learning about French language and culture. Influencing students' mindsets toward a given language and/or language studies altogether can seem like a daunting task, although Raharjanti (2019) suggests that teachers displaying positive sentiments toward the study of an additional language may be the ticket to improving students' attitudes. By polling 19 students in an additional-language classroom, Raharjanti (2019) saw 90% of students agree that their teacher's attitude during class time had the power to positively or negatively influence their outlook on additional language studies, and in turn, their motivation to continue said studies.

The third most commonly reported aspect of Core French pedagogy which is likely to demotivate students' continued enrolment in Core French is their feelings of anxiety or

embarrassment when they are required to speak or perform in French during class time. As previously discussed, the introduction of positive psychology tools to the additional language classroom may benefit both learners and teachers' language-learning skills, though it may also help lower students' foreign language anxiety (FLA) reduction. Jin, Dewaele, and MacIntyre (2021) had 43 EAL learners recall and record their language progress as well as the emotions they experienced immediately following each English language class for 30 days. Based on participants' responses on an anxiety scale before and after the 30-day period, those in the experimental group reported significantly lowered FLA levels surrounding their use of English during class time than did the control group who were asked only to fill out the anxiety scale before and after the 30-day period (Jin, Dewaele, & MacIntyre, 2021). These results show promise for teachers' potential abilities to reduce their Core French students' FLA with the goal of increasing student engagement during class time.

The fourth most commonly reported aspect of Core French pedagogy which is likely to demotivate students' continued enrolment in Core French is their perspective of having an inadequate Core French teacher. According to survey responses, students' perceptions of inadequacy are typically based in their teachers' chosen pedagogical methods and/or their teachers' French knowledge and skills. Student 18 commented, "I do not enjoy French activities where [our teacher] reads off a sheet, and we just listen and do nothing."; another student responded, "[I don't like when] we watch [our teacher] present in English about our French projects." (S17). In terms of students' perceptions of teachers' French knowledge and skills, one student commented, "Maybe if there were specific French teachers for French class, that would be helpful." (S17). Non-native FSL teachers who tend to use English more frequently than French in the Core French classroom may be explained by drawing on Norton and Tang (1997),

who found that non-native FSL teachers often report experiencing feelings of linguistic inadequacy compared to native FSL teachers. Relatedly, Salvatori (2007) found that feelings of inadequacy amongst non-native FSL teachers can negatively affect their own linguistic identities and motivation to continue their personal French studies, leading to an eventual loss of language knowledge and skills over time. A comment from Student 19 reveals their perspective that their Core French experience would be improved by teachers demonstrating adequate knowledge of the French language, “I think that French could be a really fun school subject when it’s taught properly.”

Importantly, a connection has emerged between the (de)motivational factors discussed within this section and the concept of Dörnyei’s L2 learning experience (2009). The L2 learning experience is comprised of many factors, each with the potential to play a role in learners’ motivation to acquire an additional language; these factors include but are not limited to curriculum, peers in the classroom, the L2 teacher, and the experience of success (Dörnyei, 2009). Findings of the present study align with the framework of Dörnyei’s L2 learning experience, as each of the top (de)motivational factors affecting students’ motivation to re-enrol in Core French beyond Grade 8 involve aspects of the L2 learning experience.

### ***5.3. Recommendations for Improving Core French Pedagogy***

This section compiles a list of major recommendations for improving Core French pedagogy and motivating students in various ways, based on teacher and student responses as well as students’ demotivational factors. Recommendations are hereinafter presented in the order in which challenges were identified in sections 5.1 and 5.2.

**a. Additional options for students learning English.** Students who have not yet acquired a level of English which is conducive to their education in an Anglophone school environment

(“English as an Additional Language”, hereinafter EAL) may face additional challenges when they are made to concurrently study French as an additional language, as per B.C. language mandate guidelines. With this in mind, it is recommended that EAL students (and/or their guardians) have the opportunity to decide what their second language studies will entail, and that all potential avenues satisfy B.C.’s second language mandate.

The B.C. language mandate states that students must study a second language between Grades 5 and 8, and EAL students in an Anglophone school environment are *already studying an additional language* during this period. For this reason, it is firstly recommended that EAL students have the choice to discontinue their Core French studies in favour of receiving additional English instruction instead. Although one’s status as an EAL learner should by no means imply an inability to acquire multiple languages at once, it is important that EAL students have the option to advocate for their own language education and are not made to face unnecessary stress during additional language studies.

Next, it is recommended that EAL students who are interested in acquiring French be permitted to remain enrolled in the Core French program should they feel that acquiring French will best suit their academic, personal, and/or social needs. In the case that teachers in an Anglophone school environment feel unsure about their ability to teach a foreign language to a classroom full of varying English abilities, an asset-based approach may benefit both instructors and students. An asset-based approach is one which views multilingual learners’ various linguistic knowledge, culture, and experiences not as obstacles, but rather, as valuable assets to their additional language acquisition (MacSwan, 2020). Warriner et al. (2019) state that “...a more nuanced view of who refugee-background learners are, their existing linguistic resources, and their uniquely challenging life experiences will help teachers recognize possible ways to

leverage resources” (p. 38). Adopting such an approach to additional language instruction can help to encourage students’ pride in their unique cultural knowledge and backgrounds.

In line with an asset-based approach, Wernicke (2019) suggests incorporating multiple language resources into the L2 classroom. For instance, in an FSL classroom, students may initially watch an unsubtitled film in an unfamiliar language (i.e., Arabic) before viewing it a second time in a familiar language (i.e., French). The incorporation of multiple language resources can allow students the opportunity to practice deriving meaning solely from visual cues, can help to scaffold students’ comprehension during subsequent exposures to the language, and can demonstrate the value of multilingualism to all students (Wernicke, 2019). The work of Wernicke (2019) supports the incorporation of multilingual pedagogical resources into the FSL classroom in order to benefit both FSL and EAL students.

A third recommendation is that heritage language programs also be considered as a means for EAL students to satisfy the B.C. language mandate. Mady (2007) supports EAL students having the option to study their heritage language in order to satisfy provincial language mandates, stating that “... the compulsory component of [additional] language study becomes a language maintenance program for [EAL] students who may choose to study their L1 rather than acquiring an additional language” (p. 737). It is important to recognize that EAL students in Core French programs are acquiring French as an L3, thereby making their acquisition processes markedly different than their peers who are acquiring French as an L2 (Bardel, 2019). The ability for EAL students to study their heritage language during school hours rather than participating in predetermined French studies can aid in students’ cognitive development and academic achievement (Park, 2013). Additionally, heritage language studies can foster students’ pride in

their ethnic identity and heritage language, which in turn promotes a positive sense of self (Park, 2013).

Overall, it is recommended that EAL students (as well as their guardians) be granted the opportunity to choose a second language study which best suits their academic, personal, and social needs. In order for these particular recommendations to be implemented in a manner which aims to support rather than exclude EAL students, it is crucial that EAL students and/or their guardians are encouraged to make this choice, rather than have it prescribed by school administrators or teachers. The purpose of offering EAL students the options to receive additional English language instruction in place of French, to maintain their Core French studies, or to study a heritage language in order to satisfy B.C.'s second language mandate is not to permit the prejudicial treatment nor exclusion of EAL students. Rather, the goal of offering additional options is to prevent feelings of force and unnecessary stress for both Core French students and teachers, as well as to support EAL students based on their perceived academic, personal, and social needs.

**b. Ongoing, specialized training for Core French teachers.** Teachers in the present study report either receiving no specialized FSL training before beginning teaching FSL, or receiving specialized training which did not properly equip them for Core French classroom experiences. Students in the present study are also demotivated to continue studying French when they perceive their teacher's French skills to be inadequate. While the amount and type of training that teachers receive prior to beginning their careers will vary due to their completion of different courses at different post-secondary institutions, teachers can continue to receive ongoing specialized training while they are actively teaching. The alignment of teacher and student perspectives on this topic within the present study further speaks to the importance of

having confident, knowledgeable, and well-equipped language teachers.

Ongoing training for Core French teachers may include regular professional development sessions specific to Core French pedagogy, though additional areas of development may include plurilingual approaches to additional language instruction (Cenoz & Gorter, 2013; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020); asset-based approaches to additional language instruction (MacSwan, 2020; Wernicke, 2019); topics in Indigenous priorities in education (Madden, 2015; Li et al., 2021); and topics in student diversity, linguistic or otherwise (Lauwo, Accurso, & Rajagopal, 2022; Miled, 2019). If schools or school districts are unable or unwilling to provide said training, administrators should consider reimbursing and/or allocating funds to teachers who seek specialized training elsewhere. Incentivizing ongoing French studies, FSL training, and/or the upgrading of French courses should be encouraged, though these processes can be quite costly (Borg, 2021). Despite costs, providing reimbursement and/or allocation of funds for teachers to put toward training will benefit Core French teachers by minimizing potential financial obstacles which otherwise may have prevented them from accessing course upgrades or specialized FSL training.

Borg (2021) supports the incentivization of ongoing language teacher education, stating that professional development sessions for teachers are likely to see a higher number of participants and create more lasting effects for students' improved quality of education when they are linked to incentives such as salary increase, stipend, or promotion. Cooke and Faez (2018) concur that ongoing FSL teacher training is a crucial aspect of improving not only the Core French program as a whole, but also FSL teachers' self-efficacy and confidence. Consequently, Cooke and Faez (2018) recommend that school boards provide continuous professional development opportunities for non-native FSL teachers to enhance their French

language skills, noting that teachers must also be willing to seek out professional development opportunities to improve their language proficiency.

Receiving ongoing specialized training has the potential to benefit Core French teachers in a number of ways. By ensuring that quality training is not gatekept from those who may not be able to afford or find time to attend, the Core French educational field can be levelled as teachers are better able to access classroom management strategies, pedagogical resources, second-language teaching skills, and more. Ongoing specialized training will also allow Core French teachers to keep said skills and strategies up to date with the findings of second language acquisition research. Additionally, ongoing training for Core French teachers will aid in the creation of a teaching standard across Core French classrooms, which will in turn help provide more consistent, quality instruction and shared learning outcomes for students.

**c. Improved standardization of curriculum and learning outcomes.** A large issue faced by Core French teachers is the perceived lack of standardization of curriculum and learning outcomes at the elementary and middle school levels, which lead to middle school classroom populations entering the classroom with drastically varying French skills and knowledge at the beginning of each school year. This creates extra work and stressful environments for Core French teachers as they attempt to accommodate each students' French knowledge (or lack thereof) while still teaching to the classroom as a whole.

In order to address these issues, it is recommended that school districts abide by the B.C. Core French curriculum and standardized set of learning outcomes, both of which are detailed on the public Government of British Columbia webpage (2023a, 2023c). It is crucial that Core French students across all grade levels are receiving a similar standard and quality of French education each year in order to prevent certain students from being denied the opportunity to

broaden their French skills and capabilities in later years due to a lack of French education in earlier grades.

The creation and upholding of standardized Core French learning outcomes may also make student evaluations easier for teachers. Prescribed learning outcomes allow teachers to note exactly where students are excelling, meeting, or not yet meeting the goals of the Core French program. This information is invaluable regarding decisions of whether to advance or keep students in a certain grade level of Core French. This information may also prove useful to Core French teachers as they gather and design pedagogical materials, as they will be able to reasonably expect that each student entering their classroom will have a certain set of skills in French to begin with. From this, it is recommended that teachers begin the year with a review of the previous grade level's content before moving onto the current grade level content. It is additionally recommended that, wherever possible, teachers end the year with an introduction to content which is slightly above students' grade level, but will be introduced in the coming academic year.

**d. Creation and sharing of pedagogical materials and resources.** Two concurrent issues faced by Core French teachers are (a) the lack of available, non-paywalled Core French pedagogical materials and resources; and (b) of the available Core French pedagogical materials and resources, very few are both age-appropriate *and* level-appropriate for Core French learners at the middle school level. In order to address these issues, it is recommended that French teachers (Core French, French Immersion, or otherwise) create and share pedagogical materials and resources with one another by means of a Community of Practice (CoP), as proposed by Tseng and Kuo (2014).

CoPs can be created in-person via regular meetings, or online by means of a database or

website with shared access. Tseng and Kuo (2014) suggest that online CoPs can be beneficial for teachers wishing to expand their linguistic and cultural knowledge; this is applicable for Core French teachers wishing to expand their knowledge and classroom practices. According to Tseng and Kuo (2014), online CoPs are typically forums or discussion boards designed to be used by community members who share a profession, including teachers. CoPs may also help alleviate barriers to existing Core French resources and pedagogical materials such as paywalls. Through the use of CoPs, be it online or in-person, teachers may be better able to access and share personal knowledge, teaching methods, resources, and pedagogical materials with other educators.

**e. Engaging students with enjoyable and relevant activities.** As seen in section 4.3 and its sub-sections, all students of both middle schools indicated at least a slight desire to read books, watch movies/TV shows, and play games in another language. Additionally, students are motivated to continue studying French when they enjoy pedagogical materials, and equally demotivated to continue studying French when they dislike pedagogical materials. This information can provide a foundation from which teachers can engage learners with in-class activities. In his interview, Brian suggested that Core French teachers take with an activity that students already like to do, and then add aspects of French: “I think games help kids access French.”

Another way in which Core French teachers may engage their students is through activities which bring focus to topics that students have indicated interest in. Results of the present study show that students are motivated to study French when they are interested in French language and culture, and on the other hand, students are demotivated when they are not interested in French language and culture. In order to engage students with varying attitudes

toward French language and culture, teachers may wish to consider regularly provide opportunities for student feedback and suggestions regarding classroom topics and activities throughout the school year. As aforementioned, employing regular needs assessments can aid in the process of implementing an effective additional language curriculum (Sönmez, 2019); in terms of professional development for teachers, consistent needs assessments help to ensure that sessions are having a meaningful impact on teacher learning, educational practices, as well as student learning (Widodo, 2018).

Providing students with the opportunity to provide feedback on aspects of their L2 learning environment at regular intervals can help students to feel heard and (at least partially) in control of their Core French experience, which in turn may also alleviate some of the pressure faced by teachers to imagine and select classroom topics that their students are interested in. Tomlinson (2023) argues in favour of a collaborative effort between students and teachers in selecting language classroom topics, "...reduced reliance on predetermined content and greater control over the teaching–learning process entails greater teacher and learner freedom, creativity and choice, thus contributing to the desirable educational goals of independence and autonomy for both." (p. 41)

Further, Brian agrees that making pedagogical connections to students' interests wherever possible is a key factor in motivating Core French students to engage with the French language. During his interview, Brian describes his method of creating activities for his Core French students based on the activities that his students enjoy doing in other classes, such as science. "...the topic of endangered animals is of interest to these kids. Environmental issues are of interest. They want to talk about global warming, they just don't have the capacity to talk about in French." This combination of students' interests and their lack of skills to discuss them

in French is challenging, though this does not mean the creation of activities based on these interests is impossible. Brian shares a successfully engaging activity he created for students who were showing interest in researching and discussing endangered animals, “I have kids make a diorama of animals that actually live on the seashore [on Vancouver Island], and label it in French. So it’ll be the endangered animals, but where it’ll be relevant.”

While it is impossible to tailor every in-class activity to the individual needs of every student, teachers may find it useful to experiment with assignment formats and potentially offer alternate delivery methods for students who experience performance anxiety or related feelings of embarrassment. Students in the present study were demotivated to continue enrolment in the Core French program when they experienced feelings of anxiety and embarrassment during class time. Of course, ensuring that students are able to speak in the target language is a core aspect of additional-language pedagogy; however, there are alternate ways in which students may be able to demonstrate their French-speaking skills. For example, a student who struggles with public speaking may be tasked with an alternate assignment format which still requires them to speak French, such as recording an audio clip of themselves. As long as students are able to meet the prescribed learning outcomes for a given activity or assignment, it is possible to meet students where they are (at least partially) comfortable and have them complete assignments in a way which does not create feelings of anxiety or embarrassment.

**f. Increase Core French prioritization.** As expressed by Brian during his interview, the sentiment that Core French is hardly a priority when compared to other core subjects taught in B.C. middle school is seemingly ubiquitous: “Core French, is peripheral-- not peripheral, but it's a little bit down in how the whole... priorities express themselves in action.” In order for the Core French program to see the significant pedagogical improvements, the program and the delivery

of its curriculum must be prioritized with equal importance as other core subjects at the middle school level, as well as in accordance with the second-language mandate in British Columbia.

In 2007, Carr recommended that B.C. schools offering Core French make a number of changes in order to improve the state of the program. Suggested changes include increasing weekly instructional time to a minimum of two hours; adopting Core French as “an integral part of the regular school curriculum” (p. 13); updating Core French resources with which teachers are to supplement their lessons; and aligning the goals of the Core French program with national and international proficiency guidelines (Carr, 2007). Regrettably, based on teacher and student responses gathered in the present study, it appears that none of these changes have been solidified so as to be mandated across B.C. schools. The lack of positive change to the Core French program since the work of Carr was published in 2007 speaks volumes as to how little focus is being allotted to the program.

Guida (2020) found that Core French teachers in Ontario experience similar feelings regarding the lack of Core French prioritization, recommending that “... principals [...] consider the [Core French] teacher as an important stakeholder in the school’s FSL program,” suggesting benefit to students “... if [school administrators] could increase school funding for field trips, guest speakers, and updated textbooks and literature, even at this beginner level of French” (p. 195). Guida (2020) also suggests that Core French programs be prioritized to the point of equality with other core subjects, “...school administration might want to consider offering the [Core French] program with equal [information and communications technology] access to that of other mandatory courses, such as the sciences” (p. 195). By increasing support (financial and otherwise) for Core French teachers as well as the Core French program itself, principals and

school administrators can help to alleviate teachers' sentiments of their time and skills in teaching Core French as being unimportant and undervalued.

**g. Respect students' attitudes toward French; shift focus to building language acquisition habits.** In the case that students are interested in learning additional languages but are not interested in French, it is crucial to remember that students may have different feelings about French for many reasons, including but not limited to personal connections to the history of French in Canada, the politicization of French as a minority language, and the imposed status of French as an official language.<sup>1</sup> Due to this, it is suggested that teachers reduce the emphasis placed on the importance of French to students' future, as this may not be true for all students. Instead, teachers may find it useful to frame Core French as an opportunity for students to learn valuable language acquisition skills which they may apply to their acquisition of additional languages other than French. This may be done by way of the World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, as published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL] (n.d.). The World Readiness Standards provide a framework for the evaluation of foreign language learners' success, stressing the importance of practical applications of the foreign language outside of the classroom setting (ACTFL, n.d.). There are five central goal areas in which foreign language learners may be assessed: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities (ACTFL, n.d.). By directing language learners as well as language teachers' attention to these five goal areas, the broader applications of additional language acquisition can become the focus (or partial focus) of one's language acquisition journey. In the case that students are disinterested in acquiring French but are

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<sup>1</sup> See Chiblow & Meighan (2022) for more information, including authors' personal perspectives and in-depth discussion of the importance of Indigenous languages amidst the disastrous effects of colonization in Canada.

enrolled in Core French under the provincial second language mandate, a focus on the practical skills and applications of language studies may help to minimize frustration and encourage exploration of potential language acquisition strategies and benefits.

**h. Increase parent support and encouragement.** Parents and guardians at home may have the ability to sway students' opinions regarding their acquisition of French as an additional language. Students in the present study were demotivated to continue studying French when their parents were not encouraging them to do so. While parents' reasons for disliking French or not wanting their child to learn French at school may vary, it is important that parents are supporting their children as much as possible through their language acquisition journey. As seen in the work of Atta and Jamil (2012), students acquiring a foreign language are more likely to be highly motivated, experience academic success, and persevere in their foreign language studies when their parents are actively involved and supportive of their language studies. If students are interested in learning additional languages but are not interested in French, parents may also find it useful to frame Core French as an opportunity for students to learn valuable language acquisition skills which they may apply to their acquisition of additional languages outside of French, as per the aforementioned World Readiness Standards (ACTFL, n.d.). What is seemingly most significant to a students' success in additional language acquisition is not the method by which their parents or guardians become involved, but rather, the fact that their parents are involved in the first place.

Through an in-depth analysis of both teacher and student responses, it becomes evident that there is an interdependent relationship between teacher and student classroom experiences. In other words, teachers and students will mutually influence each others' experiences within the L2 learning environment. There are clear connections between certain aspects of both datasets

(i.e., teachers reporting a lack of preservice training, while students report perceiving their teachers' French knowledge and skills as inadequate), which function as supporting evidence for the interdependent relationship between teachers and students and the importance of considering both parties' perspectives when looking to implement positive change to pedagogical practices.

#### ***5.4. Limitations and Future Research***

A limitation of the present study is the small population size of both students and teachers from which this study's data were collected. Results of this work which are presented here are based on the perspectives of two teachers and 21 students. Despite my best efforts to recruit students and teachers across 13 middle schools within two school districts, only two principals responded to the initial invitation and provided their consent to participate in the study. This severely limited the number of perspectives I was able to gather and analyze.

Another limitation of the present study is that only one participant completed their follow-up interview. While six students and two teachers initially agreed to complete a follow-up interview within their respective surveys, only one teacher attended their interview. Being able to gather the perspective of only one teacher through an interview severely limited the analysis I was able to perform.

The self-reported data which was gathered during this study may also impact the reliability of results, as it is highly possible that participants' biases, both conscious and unconscious, may have affected their responses. A common potential bias faced by respondents of surveys involving Likert scale items is *social desirability bias*, defined by Podsakoff et al. (2003) as, "...the tendency of some people to respond to items more as a result of their social acceptability than their true feelings" (p. 882). Although the surveys created for the present study also involved open-ended questions in order to cross-check findings from different sources, the

majority of survey responses were obtained via Likert item rankings so as not to exhaust participants and discourage completion of surveys. It is quite possible that participants' social desirability bias (as well as other biases) may have affected survey and interview responses. This is especially true considering 21 participants are between the ages of 11 and 14 years old, making them extra susceptible to such factors (Hall, Hume, & Tazzyman, 2016).

Further, the reliability of Likert scale results may be compromised as the Likert scale itself presents a forced-choice design; in other words, participants may have been forced to either select a predetermined response they did not completely agree with due to the lack of options, or they may have chosen to skip certain Likert items altogether for the same reason. Participants' Likert scale ranking choices may also be affected by individual understandings and applications of the rankings; factors affecting these understandings can include cultural influences and differing perceptions of specific words (Shulruf, 2008). While it is impossible to avoid such influences, it is important to acknowledge their potential role in the results of the present study.

It is also possible that the presence of a neutral Likert ranking option (4) created a central tendency bias, in which participants display a tendency to "...avoid the endpoints of a response scale and to prefer responses closer to the midpoint..." (Douven, 2018, p. 1203). In other words, it is known that participants may display a tendency to select the neutral option when experiencing conflicting opinions. I chose to gather both quantitative and qualitative data in order to produce a fuller picture of collected data and minimize potential biases which may affect participants' ability to share their honest perspectives; however, this decision presented a limitation of its own. The decision to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from participants may further limit the reliability of results in that the comparison of quantitative and qualitative data gathered during this study occasionally presented conflicting information.

Although not uncommon, as seen in section 4.3. and its sub-sections, some students' Likert rankings did not exactly line up with their responses to open-ended questions. While it may have been useful to be able to gather more in-depth participant responses and perform individual analyses, given the time frame within which this research was conducted, individual analyses for each participant were not possible. Additional methods of gathering data may have been useful; however, the COVID-19 pandemic and correlated public and institutional safety measures at the time of data collection limited my choice of methods (i.e., in-person interviews and classroom observations were not possible).

In terms of future research directions, the present study has gathered qualitative and quantitative data regarding both teacher and student perspectives on the Core French program as it stands in British Columbia, providing a strong basis for future research in several aspects. Future studies may repeat the methods of data collection and analysis as seen here on a larger scale, in another province, or perhaps Canada-wide. It would be interesting to note the inter-provincial differences in Core French pedagogy, potentially sparking the sharing of resources between French educators nationwide. This study provides a snapshot of the current state of the Core French program in B.C. and therefore reflects the policies in place as of 2023 as perceived by the participants; should future researchers wish to study Core French policies, different methods would be required. These methods may include prolonged observations, analysis of policy documents, or focus group interviews, which would enable researchers to look at the interplay of personal and social contexts as well as their impact on the motivational choices and constraints experienced by learners.

Further, it may be beneficial to repeat the present study including additional sources of data such as recorded classroom observations, focus groups rather than one-on-one interviews

for participants, or as a case study with individual participant analysis. Future studies may wish to focus this study in terms of which student demotivational factors are investigated, gaining additional insights on teacher and student perspectives for the purpose of bettering Core French pedagogy.

## Chapter 6. Conclusion

Concerning the goals of Canada's APOL, a 2.2% increase in the national bilingualism rate is largely dependent on the number of students who choose to continually enrol in school-based French programs, including Core French. Yet, consistently negative Core French enrolment trends over the past several years implies the existence of underlying problems which are affecting students' motivation to re-enrol in Core French. The present study has revealed several of these factors and proposed actionable recommendations by which they may be addressed for the benefit of both Core French pedagogy as well as teachers and students' experience. As a result, the recommendations have potential to increase the number of B.C. students who choose to continually enrol in Core French, supporting a national bilingualism rate increase in accordance with the goals of Canada's APOL.

By gathering and considering the perspectives of both Core French teachers and students in British Columbia, the present study, to my knowledge, is the first of its kind. This study was inspired by the work of Carr (2007) and Arnott (2019), and expanded the scope of Trerice (2015). The objectives of the present study were accomplished in that (a) a deeper understanding of current student and teacher perspectives on the Core French program in B.C. was made possible; (b) through gathering the perspectives of both learners and teachers as well as examining learners' motivational and demotivational factors, I was able to determine which factors are seemingly deterring students' Core French studies after Grade 8; and (c) following analysis of gathered data, informed recommendations for Core French pedagogy derived from both student and teacher responses are proposed.

Key findings of the present study pertaining to Core French teachers are that they struggle to teach French when the following factors are present: students are still learning English; they

feel their pre-service teacher training and/or their FSL-specific teacher training was insufficient; there is a perceived lack of standardization concerning Core French curriculum and/or student learning outcomes; there is a lack of Core French pedagogical materials available to them; students are interested in other languages besides French; and students do not receive support or encouragement from their parents in their acquisition of French.

As for Core French students, key findings of the present study are that students are motivated to continue studying French when they enjoy the pedagogical materials used in class; have a positive attitude toward acquiring French; have an interest in French language and culture; and receive support and encouragement from their parents in acquiring French. As for demotivational factors, students are demotivated to continue studying French when they dislike the pedagogical materials used in class; have a negative attitude toward acquiring French; have no interest in French language and culture; experience feelings of anxiety or embarrassment during class time; and perceive their teachers' French knowledge or skills to be inadequate.

As seen in Dörnyei (2009, 2019), learners experiencing positive feelings toward their L2 experiences – including their classroom environment, teacher, and curriculum – is an integral part of learner motivation to continue studying a second language. Considering the findings of the present study, Core French pedagogy is in need of amelioration in order to better engage students and reflect their interests, needs, and capabilities. Developed from the findings of the present study, recommendations to improve Core French pedagogy include additional language study options for EAL students; ongoing, specialized training for Core French teachers; improved standardization of curriculum and learning outcomes; the creation and sharing of pedagogical materials and resources amongst educators; engaging students with enjoyable and relevant activities; an increase in Core French prioritization; respect for students' attitudes

toward Core French and shifting the focus toward building positive language acquisition habits; and an increase in parent/guardian support and encouragement. I also anticipate that such changes will better support Core French teachers by reflecting their needs and capabilities as well.

I firmly believe that all youth deserve an equitable chance to uncover their language-learning potential and reap the benefits of additional language acquisition, as supported by the work of Bialystok (2011, 2011a, 2015, 2021) and others (e.g. Anderson, Hawrylewicz, & Grundy, 2020; Bialystok, 2007, 2011, 2021; Chamorro & Janke, 2022; Cook, 2021; Cummin et al., 2020; Forbes et al., 2021; Gallo et al., 2022; Göncz, 2018; Ramírez-Esparza, García-Sierra, & Jiang, 2020; Yow & Markman, 2015). The findings of this research present valuable, actionable recommendations to mitigate students' demotivation to acquire French as an additional language. These recommendations provide an excellent basis upon which Core French pedagogy may be improved, thereby fostering classroom environments in which students feel supported, interested, and motivated to continue learning French.

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## Appendix A: Letter of Information and Survey – Teachers

1



**University  
of Victoria**

### French Instructor Consent Form

University of Victoria  
Department of Linguistics

Erin O'Toole, B.A.

#### ***Faute de mieux: A critical examination of Core French curriculum, instructional methods, and learner motivation in British Columbia***

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled “*Faute de mieux: A critical examination of Core French curriculum, instructional methods, and learner motivation in British Columbia*”. This study is being conducted by researcher Erin O’Toole, under the supervision of Dr. Li-Shih Huang of the Department of Linguistics at the University of Victoria.

I (Erin O’Toole) am a graduate student in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Victoria. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics. I am hereby seeking your consent to participate in this study. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, you may contact me by email ([ecotoole@uvic.ca](mailto:ecotoole@uvic.ca)) or my thesis supervisor, Dr. Li-Shih Huang, by email ([lshuang@uvic.ca](mailto:lshuang@uvic.ca)). If you have any questions, concerns, or wish to verify the ethical approval of this study, you may contact the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics office at 250-472-4545, or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca).

#### **Context of Study**

In 2018, Canadian education ministries announced the Action Plan for Official Languages, which outlines several steps being taken toward a prospective 2.2% increase in the national English-French bilingualism rate. In accordance with this Action Plan, students in British Columbia are required to study a second language from Grades 5 through 8. Correspondingly, several second-language French programs are offered in grade schools across Canada, including the Core French (also called French as a Second Language/FSL) program currently offered at ██████ Middle School; however, there has been a steady decline in Core French enrolment rates over the past several years. Due to this continuous decline in enrolment rates, there is an increasing need to assess how Core French curriculum and teaching methods are impacting both learners and teachers.

#### **Purpose and Objectives of Study**

B.C. students’ Core French studies are mandated until Grade 8, meaning students may decide to (dis)continue their French studies beginning in Grade 9. The purpose of this study is to address the declining number of B.C. students enrolling in Core French following the end of the mandate in Grade 8. The objectives of this study are (a) to gain a deeper understanding of student and teacher perspectives on the Core French program in B.C.; (b) to examine which factors are deterring students’ Core French studies after Grade 8; and (c) to propose informed recommendations for Core French curriculum, derived from both student and teacher responses.

#### **Participant Selection**

All middle schools offering a Core French program within School District █████ are invited to participate in this study. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a Core French/FSL teacher currently employed within School District █████.

#### **Participant Involvement**

Participation will include completing an online survey with the option to complete a one-on-one interview with the researcher. Participation will require a maximum total of 90 minutes for completion of the survey and an interview, detailed below.

**a. Surveys**

For those who voluntarily consent to participate, online surveys will be administered via email by school personnel through institutionally-supported SurveyMonkey for completion. Surveys are expected to take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey will include both multiple choice and open-ended questions, as well as several items to be ranked on a seven-point Likert scale. Survey questions will be designed to elicit background information such as your age, known languages, experience teaching and/or learning Core French, and baseline attitudes toward Core French. You may decline to answer any survey question. The surveys will allow you to remain anonymous; however, one question will ask you to indicate if you are willing to be interviewed at a later point in the academic term, which will require you to provide your name and email address.

**b. Individual Interviews**

For those who voluntarily consent to participate, interviews will be conducted with individual participants. Interview questions will be designed to collect information pertaining to your individual perspectives on Core French, including but not limited to your positive experiences, negative experiences, likes, dislikes, and criticisms of specific components and/or the Core French program as a whole. You may decline to answer any interview question. Interviews are expected to last approximately 60 minutes. Interviews will be conducted via Zoom and scheduled via email; you will be able to choose an interview date and time which is most convenient for you. Interviews will be audio-recorded and a transcription will be made by the researcher.

**Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this research must be completely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time, without explanation. Should you wish to withdraw, you may email the researcher at [eotoole@uvic.ca](mailto:eotoole@uvic.ca) to do so.

**a. Withdrawal after completion of survey:**

Should you wish to withdraw from the study after submitting their survey responses, you may email the researcher to do so. In the case that you submitted an anonymous survey (i.e; you did not intend to complete an interview and thus did not provide contact information), it will be impossible for the researcher to identify and remove your responses from the database. Due to this, it is possible that your survey responses may still be included in the dissemination of results; however, all responses will be anonymous within the publication.

**b. Withdrawal after completion of interview:**

Should you wish to withdraw from the study after completing an interview, the researcher will remove all of your responses, and nothing you have shared will be included in the data nor the dissemination of results.

**Informed and Ongoing Consent**

**a. Survey Participation**

Participants will be required to provide their informed consent to participate prior to completing the survey. Students will also require their guardian's informed consent prior to completing the survey.

**b. Interview Participation**

Initial informed consent to participate in an interview will be obtained from all participants prior to completion of the survey. The researcher will obtain verbal ongoing consent prior to all interviews (to be included in audio recordings).

**Power Relationships**

As there is an inherent power-over relationship between teacher and student participants, at no point during the study will participants be required to collaborate or interact for the purposes of this study. All participant survey and interview responses will be treated as confidential. All participants will be made aware that their participation must be voluntary, and that there is no penalty for not participating or for withdrawing their participation at any point.

**Inconveniences**

Participation in this study may cause some inconveniences to participants, such as spending a portion of their free time to complete a survey and/or an interview; and/or experiencing uncomfortable emotions during or after sharing information regarding their Core French experiences.

**Risks**

There are no known or anticipated risks to those who participate in this study.

**Benefits**

The potential benefits for participants of this study include contributing to positive changes for their future education and/or the education of future students; contributing to the advancement of knowledge via sharing their perspectives and experiences; as well as an opportunity to reflect on their own Core French learning and/or teaching experiences.

**Compensation**

Compensation will be provided to participants in the form of a summary of results, as well as a link to the finalized Master's thesis.

**Anonymity**

Survey data will be analyzed at a group level; no individual analysis will take place. Additionally, pseudonyms will be assigned to each participant for coding and analysis; pseudonyms will be maintained wherever direct quotes or passages are used in the dissemination of results. Audio recordings of participant interviews will be published only in print as pseudonymized quotes. The name of ██████ Middle School, as well as the names of all participating schools, will be omitted from the dissemination of results.

**Confidentiality**

The researcher will safeguard the confidentiality of participant responses to the best of their ability; however, due to the context of this study; teacher participants may be identifiable based on their position as a Core French teacher on Vancouver Island. This limit is mitigated via the use of pseudonyms for all participants, as well as the names of all participating schools being omitted from the dissemination of results.

**Dissemination of Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared in the following ways. First, a summary of results will be made available to all participants. Second, the results of this study will be published in the form of a Master's thesis, which will be accessible online through the UVic Library database. This Master's thesis may also be published in academic journals, shared in conference presentations, or otherwise shared on the Internet. No identifying participant information will be included in any knowledge sharing with regard to this Master's thesis.

**Data Storage**

All data from this study will be stored within password-protected computer files, accessible only to the principal researcher and their supervisor.

**Data Disposal**

All data will be removed from computer files, as well as the University of Victoria's OneDrive cloud server, five years after the completion of the researcher's degree. Additionally, any paper-based data will be shredded five years after the completion of the researcher's degree.

**Consent**

By completing and submitting the survey online, YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED; doing so also indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study.

## Appendix B: Letter of Information and Survey – Students and Guardians

1



**University  
of Victoria**

### Core French Student / Guardian Consent Form

University of Victoria  
Department of Linguistics

Erin O'Toole, B.A.

### ***Faute de mieux: A critical examination of Core French curriculum, instructional methods, and learner motivation in British Columbia***

Your child is being invited to participate in a study entitled “*Faute de mieux: A critical examination of Core French curriculum, instructional methods, and learner motivation in British Columbia*”. This study is being conducted by researcher Erin O'Toole, under the supervision of Dr. Li-Shih Huang of the Department of Linguistics at the University of Victoria.

I (Erin O'Toole) am a graduate student in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Victoria. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics. I am hereby seeking your consent to allow your child to participate in this study. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, you may contact me by email ([eotoole@uvic.ca](mailto:eotoole@uvic.ca)) or my thesis supervisor, Dr. Li-Shih Huang, by email ([lshuang@uvic.ca](mailto:lshuang@uvic.ca)). If you have any questions, concerns, or wish to verify the ethical approval of this study, you may contact the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics office at 250-472-4545, or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca).

#### **Context of Study**

Students in British Columbia are required to study a second language from Grades 5 through 8. Correspondingly, several second-language French programs are offered in grade schools across Canada, including the Core French program (also called French as a Second Language/FSL) currently offered at [REDACTED] Middle School; however, there has been a steady decline in Core French enrolment rates over the past several years. Due to this continuous decline in enrolment rates, there is an increasing need to assess how Core French curriculum and teaching methods are impacting both learners and teachers.

#### **Purpose and Objectives of Study**

B.C. students' Core French studies are mandated until Grade 8, meaning students may decide to (dis)continue their Core French studies beginning in Grade 9. The purpose of this study is to address the declining number of B.C. students enrolling in Core French by choice, following the end of the mandate in Grade 8. The objectives of this study are (a) to gain a deeper understanding of student and teacher perspectives on the Core French program in B.C.; (b) to examine which factors are deterring students' Core French studies after Grade 8; and (c) to propose informed recommendations for Core French curriculum, derived from both student and teacher responses.

#### **Participant Selection**

All middle schools offering a Core French program within School District [REDACTED] are invited to participate in this study. With permission from K. Andrews, principal of [REDACTED] Middle School, your child is being invited to participate in this study because they are a Grade 8 Core French student within School District [REDACTED].

#### **Participant Involvement**

Participation will include completing an online survey, with the option to complete a one-on-one interview with the researcher. Participation will require a maximum total of 90 minutes for completion of the survey and an interview, detailed below.

**a. Surveys**

For those who voluntarily consent to participate, online surveys will be administered through institutionally-supported SurveyMonkey for completion. Surveys are expected to take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey will include both multiple choice and open-ended questions, as well as several items to be ranked on a seven-point Likert scale. Survey questions will be designed to elicit background information such as your child's age, known languages, experiences in learning Core French, and baseline attitudes toward Core French prior. Your child may decline to answer any survey question. The surveys will allow your child to remain anonymous; however, one question will ask if they are willing to be interviewed at a later point in the academic term, which will require your child to provide their name and email address.

**b. Individual Interviews**

For those who voluntarily consent to participate, interviews will be conducted with individual participants. Interview questions will be designed to collect information pertaining to your child's individual perspectives on Core French, including but not limited to their positive experiences, negative experiences, likes, dislikes, and criticisms of specific components and/or the Core French program as a whole. Your child may decline to answer any interview question. Interviews are expected to last approximately 60 minutes. Interviews will be conducted via Zoom and scheduled via email; your child will be able to choose an interview date and time which is most convenient for them. Interviews will be audio-recorded and a transcription will be made by the researcher.

**Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this research must be completely voluntary. Your child may withdraw at any time, without explanation. Your decision, as well as your child's decision, to participate, or not, in this study will have no effect on the relationship between the student and their Core French teacher, on your child's grades in their Core French class, nor on any other school or classroom activities. Should you or your child wish to withdraw from this study at any point, you or your child may email the researcher at [eotoole@uvic.ca](mailto:eotoole@uvic.ca) to do so.

**a. Withdrawal after completion of survey:**

Should you or your child wish to withdraw from the study after submitting their survey responses, you or your child may email the researcher to do so. In the case that your child submitted an anonymous survey (i.e; they did not intend to complete an interview and thus did not provide contact information), it will be impossible for the researcher to identify and remove their responses from the database. Due to this, it is possible that their survey responses may still be included in the dissemination of results; however, all responses will be anonymous within the publication.

**b. Withdrawal after completion of interview:**

Should you or your child wish to withdraw from the study after completing an interview, the researcher will remove all of their responses, and nothing they have shared will be included in the data nor the dissemination of results.

**Informed and Ongoing Consent****a. Survey Participation**

Participants will be required to provide their informed consent to participate prior to completing the survey. Student participants will also require their guardian's informed consent prior to completing the survey.

**b. Interview Participation**

Initial informed consent to participate in an interview will be obtained from all participants prior to completion of the survey. The researcher will obtain verbal ongoing consent prior to all interviews (to be included in audio recordings).

**Power Relationships**

As there is an inherent power-over relationship between student participants and their Core French teacher, at no point during the study will student participants be required to collaborate or interact with any teacher for the purposes of this study. All of your child's survey and interview responses will be treated as confidential. All participants will be made aware that their participation must be voluntary, and that there is no penalty for not participating or for withdrawing their participation at any point.

**Inconveniences**

Participation in this study may cause some inconveniences to participants, such as spending a portion of their free time to complete a survey and/or an interview; and/or experiencing uncomfortable emotions during or after sharing information regarding their Core French experience.

**Risks**

There are no known or anticipated risks to those who participate in this study.

**Benefits**

The potential benefits for participants of this study include contributing to positive changes for their future education and/or the education of future students; contributing to the advancement of knowledge via sharing their perspectives and experiences; as well as an opportunity to reflect on their own Core French learning and/or teaching experiences.

**Compensation**

Compensation will be provided to participants in the form of a summary of results, as well as a link to the finalized Master's thesis.

**Anonymity**

Survey data will be analyzed at a group level; no individual analysis will take place. Additionally, pseudonyms will be assigned to each participant for coding and analysis; pseudonyms will be maintained wherever direct quotes or passages are used in the dissemination of results. Audio recordings of participant interviews will be published only as pseudonymized quotes. The name of [REDACTED] Middle School, as well as the names of all participating schools, will not be included in the dissemination of results.

**Confidentiality**

The researcher will safeguard the confidentiality of participant responses to the best of their ability; only the researcher and their supervisor will be able to access collected data.

**Dissemination of Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared in the following ways. First, a summary of results will be made available to all participants. Second, the results of this study will be published in the form of a Master's thesis, which will be accessible online through the UVic Library database. This Master's thesis may also be published in academic journals, shared in conference presentations, or otherwise shared on the Internet. As aforementioned, no identifying participant information will be included in any knowledge sharing with regard to this Master's thesis.

**Data Storage**

All data from this study will be stored within password protected computer files, accessible only to the principal researcher and their supervisor.

**Data Disposal**

All data will be removed from computer files, as well as the University of Victoria's OneDrive cloud server, five years after the completion of the researcher's degree. Additionally, any paper-based data will be shredded five years after the completion of the researcher's degree.

**Consent**

By allowing your child to complete and submit this survey online, **YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED**; doing so also indicates that you understand the above conditions of your child's participation in this study.

## Appendix C: Interview Questions – Teachers

### Interview Questions – Instructor Version

- 1) Please tell me about your approach to teaching Grade 8 Core French/FSL.
  - a) What strategies do you use to motivate your Grade 8 Core French/FSL students to learn and participate in class?
- 2) Can you describe the topics or activities that your Grade 8 Core French/FSL students seem to enjoy?
- 3) Can you describe the topics or activities your Grade 8 Core French/FSL students seem to dislike?
- 4) Do you feel that the current Grade 8 Core French/FSL curriculum reflects the interests, needs, and abilities of your students? Why or why not?
- 5) Do you feel that the Grade 8 Core French/FSL curriculum reflects your abilities as a teacher? Why or why not?
- 6) What do you perceive as the strengths of the Core French/FSL program?
- 7) What do you perceive as the weaknesses of the Core French/FSL program?
- 8) Can you comment on the resources that are available to you as a Core French/FSL teacher (i.e. training, materials, administrative support...)?
- 9) Do you feel that the resources available to you as a Core French/FSL teacher impact the ways in which you teach? Why or why not?
  - a) What resources, if any, would improve the ways in which you teach? Why?
- 10) Do you have any other comments to add?

## Appendix D: Interview Questions – Students

### Interview Questions – Student Version

- 1) Please describe what a typical French lesson looks like.
- 2) Can you describe a lesson or topic in French class that you really enjoy?
- 3) Can you describe a lesson or topic in French class that you really dislike?
- 4) If you could change anything about your French class, what would it be and why?
- 5) Do you receive support and encouragement from anyone in learning French?
  - a) Do you receive support and encouragement from your parents/guardians?
  - b) Do you receive support and encouragement from your teachers?
- 6) Could your current French teacher do anything differently to better help you learn French?
- 7) Do you plan on enrolling in Core French/FSL 9 next year? Why or why not?
- 8) Do you have any other comments to add?

## Appendix E: Human Research Ethics Board - Certificate of Approval



Office of Research Services | Human Research Ethics Board  
 Michael Williams Building Rm B202 PO Box 1700 STN CSC Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 Canada  
 T 250-472-4545 | F 250-721-8960 | uvic.ca/research | ethics@uvic.ca

### Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: <b>Li-Shih Huang</b> (Supervisor)	<b>ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER</b> <b>22-0339</b> Expedited review - delegated
PRINCIPAL APPLICANT: <b>Erin O'Toole</b> <b>Master's student</b>	ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE: 26-Oct-2022
UVIC DEPARTMENT: <b>Linguistics LING</b>	APPROVED ON: 26-Oct-2022
	APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE: 25-Oct-2023

PROJECT TITLE: **Faute de mieux: A critical examination of Core French curriculum, instructional methods, and learner motivational factors in British Columbia**

RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS: **None**

DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING:

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), N/A

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:

tcps2\_core\_certificate.pdf - 27-Jun-2022  
 Appendix 1 - Principal Permission Email Script.pdf - 09-Aug-2022  
 Appendix 3 - Instructor Recruitment Email Script.pdf - 09-Aug-2022  
 Appendix 5 - Student Recruitment Email Script.pdf - 09-Aug-2022  
 Appendix 7 - Instructor Survey.pdf - 09-Aug-2022  
 Appendix 8 - Student Survey.pdf - 09-Aug-2022  
 Appendix 9 - Instructor Interview Questions.pdf - 09-Aug-2022  
 Appendix 10 - Student Interview Questions.pdf - 09-Aug-2022  
 Appendix 11 - Student Interview Setup Email Script.pdf - 23-Oct-2022  
 Appendix 12 - Teacher Interview Setup Email Script.pdf - 23-Oct-2022  
 Appendix 13 - District Permission Email Script.pdf - 23-Oct-2022  
 Appendix 2 - Letter of Info - Principal REVISED.pdf - 23-Oct-2022  
 Appendix 4 - Letter of Info - Instructors REVISED.pdf - 23-Oct-2022  
 Appendix 6 - Letter of Info - Students & Guardians REVISED.pdf - 23-Oct-2022

### Conditions of approval

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.

#### Amendments

To make changes to the approved research procedure in your study, please submit "Amendments" or "Annual renewal with amendments" form. You must receive research ethics approval before proceeding with your amended protocol.

#### Renewals

Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.

#### Project Closures

When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.

### Certification

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria's policies for research involving human participants.



**Dr. Sandra Gibbons**  
Chair, Human Research Ethics Board



**Dr. Matthew Murphy**  
Vice-chair, Human Research Ethics Board

## Appendix F: Letter of Information – School Principals

1



**University  
of Victoria**

### School Principal Letter of Information and Permission Request

*University of Victoria  
Department of Linguistics*

Erin O'Toole, B.A.

#### ***Faute de mieux: A critical examination of Core French curriculum, instructional methods, and learner motivation in British Columbia***

I (Erin O'Toole) am a graduate student in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Victoria. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics. I am hereby seeking your consent to recruit both Core French teachers and Grade 8 Core French students of [REDACTED] Middle School to participate in this study. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, you may contact me by email ([ecotoole@uvic.ca](mailto:ecotoole@uvic.ca)) or my thesis supervisor, Dr. Li-Shih Huang, by email ([lshuang@uvic.ca](mailto:lshuang@uvic.ca)). If you have any questions, concerns, or wish to verify the ethical approval of this study, you may contact the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics office at 250-472-4545, or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca).

#### **Context of Study**

In 2018, Canadian education ministries announced the Action Plan for Official Languages, which outlines several steps being taken toward a prospective 2.2% increase in the national English-French bilingualism rate. In accordance with this Action Plan, students in British Columbia are required to study a second language from Grades 5 through 8. Correspondingly, several second-language French programs are offered in grade schools across Canada, including the Core French program currently offered at [REDACTED] Middle School; however, there has been a steady decline in Core French student enrolment rates over the past several years. Due to this continuous decline in enrolment rates, there is an increasing need to assess how public school Core French curriculum and teaching methods are impacting both learners and teachers.

#### **Purpose and Objectives of Study**

As aforementioned, B.C. students' Core French studies are mandated until Grade 8, meaning students may decide to (dis)continue their Core French studies beginning in Grade 9. The purpose of this study is to address the declining number of B.C. students enrolling in Core French following the end of the mandate in Grade 8. The objectives of this study are (a) to gain a deeper understanding of student and teacher perspectives on the Core French program in B.C.; (b) to examine which factors are deterring students' Core French studies after Grade 8; and (c) to propose informed recommendations for Core French curriculum, derived from both student and teacher responses.

#### **Participant Selection**

All middle schools offering a Core French program within School District [REDACTED] are invited to participate in this study. I am seeking your consent to recruit teachers and students of [REDACTED] Middle School because a Core French program is offered to Grade 8 students at this school. I will be focusing on this particular demographic of Grade 8 students as they are in a unique position of having to decide whether their future education will involve continued French instruction. I have also chosen to include Core French teachers in this study in order to integrate both student and teacher perspectives in my research. Steps for participant recruitment are as follows:

##### **a. Teacher Recruitment**

With consent, I (the researcher) will ask that a member of the school administrative team email a link to the survey to Core French teachers on my behalf. Project information and implied informed consent are embedded on the first page of the survey.

**b. Student Recruitment**

With consent, I (the researcher) will ask that a member of the school administrative team email a link to the survey to Grade 8 Core French students on my behalf. Project information, as well as a section for obtaining guardians' informed consent, is embedded on the first page of the survey.

**Participant Involvement**

Should Core French teachers and Grade 8 Core French students consent to voluntarily participate in this research, their participation will include completing an online survey, with the option to complete a one-on-one follow-up interview with the researcher. Participation will require a maximum total of 90 minutes for completion of the survey and an interview, detailed below.

**a. Surveys**

For those who voluntarily consent to participate, online surveys will be administered through institutionally-supported SurveyMonkey for completion. Surveys are expected to take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey questions will ask participants both multiple choice and open-ended questions, as well as provide several items to be ranked on a seven-point Likert scale. Survey questions will be designed to elicit background information such as participants' age, known languages, experience teaching and/or learning Core French, and baseline attitudes toward studying French. Participants may decline to answer any survey question. The surveys will allow participants to remain anonymous; however, one question will ask respondents to indicate if they are willing to be interviewed at a later point in the academic term, which will require respondents to provide their name and email address.

**b. Individual Interviews**

For those who voluntarily consent to participate, interviews will be conducted with individual participants. As with surveys, interview questions will vary slightly between student and teacher participants. Interview questions will be designed to collect information pertaining to participants' perspectives on Core French, including but not limited to their positive experiences, negative experiences, likes, dislikes, and criticisms of specific components and/or the Core French program as a whole. Participants may decline to answer any interview question. Interviews are expected to last approximately 60 minutes. Interviews will be conducted via Zoom and scheduled with each participant via email; participants will be able to choose an interview date and time which is most convenient for them. Interviews will be audio-recorded and a transcription will be made by the researcher.

**Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this research must be completely voluntary. As the principal of ██████ Middle School, you may withdraw your consent at any time without explanation. Should you choose to withdraw consent, any information you have provided will be discarded. Additionally, participants may withdraw at any time, without explanation. Should a participant wish to withdraw their consent, they may email the researcher at [eotoole@uvic.ca](mailto:eotoole@uvic.ca) to do so.

**a. Withdrawal after completion of survey:**

Should a participant wish to withdraw from the study after submitting their survey responses, they may email the researcher to do so. In the case that the participant submitted an anonymous survey (i.e; they did not intend to complete an interview and thus did not provide contact information), it will be impossible for the researcher to identify and remove their responses from the database. Due to this, it is possible that their survey responses may still be included in the dissemination of results; however, all responses will be anonymous within the publication.

**b. Withdrawal after completion of interview:**

Should a participant withdraw from the study after completing an interview, the researcher will remove all of their responses, and nothing they have shared will be included in the data nor the dissemination of results.

**Informed and Ongoing Consent****a. Survey Participation**

Participants will be required to provide their informed consent to participate prior to completing the survey. Student participants will also require their guardian's informed consent prior to completing the survey.

**b. Interview Participation**

Initial informed consent to participate in an interview will be obtained from all participants prior to completion of the survey. The researcher will obtain verbal ongoing consent prior to all interviews (to be included in audio recordings).

**Power Relationships**

As there is an inherent power-over relationship between teacher and student participants, at no point during the study will participants be required to collaborate or interact for the purposes of this study. All participants will be made aware that their participation must be voluntary, and that there is no penalty for not participating or for withdrawing their participation at any point.

**Inconveniences**

Participation in this study may cause some inconveniences to participants, such as spending a portion of their free time to complete a survey and/or an interview; and/or experiencing uncomfortable emotions during or after sharing information regarding their Core French experience.

**Risks**

There are no known or anticipated risks to those who participate in this study.

**Benefits**

The potential benefits for participants of this study include contributing to positive changes for their future education and/or the education of future students; contributing to the advancement of knowledge via sharing their perspectives and experiences; as well as an opportunity to reflect on their own Core French learning and/or teaching experiences.

**Compensation**

Compensation will be provided to participants in the form of a summary of results, as well as a link to the finalized Master's thesis.

**Anonymity**

Survey data will be analyzed at a group level; no individual analysis will take place. Additionally, pseudonyms will be assigned to each participant for coding and analysis; pseudonyms will be maintained wherever direct quotes or passages are used in the dissemination of results. Audio recordings of participant interviews will be published only as pseudonymized quotes. The name of [REDACTED] School, as well as the names of all participating schools, will not be included in the dissemination of results.

**Confidentiality**

The researcher will safeguard the confidentiality of participant responses to the best of their ability; however, due to the context of this study; teacher participants may be identifiable based on their position as a Core French teacher on Vancouver Island. This limit is mitigated via the use of pseudonyms for all participants, as well as the name of all participating schools being omitted from the dissemination of results.

**Dissemination of Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared in the following ways. First, a summary of results will be made available to all participants. Second, the results of this study will be published in the form of a

Master's thesis, which will be accessible online through the UVic Library database. This Master's thesis may also be published in academic journals, shared in conference presentations, or otherwise shared on the Internet. As aforementioned, no identifying participant information will be included in any knowledge sharing with regard to this Master's thesis.

**Data Storage**

All data from this study will be stored within password protected computer files, accessible only to the principal researcher and their supervisor.

**Data Disposal**

All data will be removed from computer files, as well as the University of Victoria's OneDrive cloud server, five years after the completion of the researcher's degree. Additionally, any paper-based data will be shredded five years after the completion of the researcher's degree.

### Appendix G: Complete List of Themes

Category Name	Description	Example from Data
<b>Category 1: Student Background Information</b>	Information volunteered by student participants regarding their age, birthplace, gender, history of enrolment in French Immersion, native language(s), and/or plans to enrol (or not) in Core French 9 in the forthcoming academic year.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Age	Students' self-reported age at the time of participation.	N/A
Subcategory 2: Birthplace	The country in which students were born.	N/A
Subcategory 3: Gender	Students' self-reported gender.	N/A
Subcategory 4: History of French Immersion	Students' self-reported history of enrolment in a French Immersion program prior to participation.	N/A
Subcategory 5: Native Language(s)	Students' self-reported native language(s).	N/A
Subcategory 6: Plans for Core French 9	Students' self-reported plans to enrol or not enrol in Core French 9 during the forthcoming academic year. If uncertain, students selected an 'Undecided' option.	N/A
<b>Category 2: Teacher Background Information</b>	Information volunteered by teacher participants regarding their birthplace, current Core French teaching assignment, current French studies, formal education, gender, native language(s), specialized FSL training, and/or teaching experience.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Birthplace	The country in which teachers were born.	N/A
Subcategory 2: Current Core French teaching assignment	Teachers' self-reported current Core French teaching assignment in relation to other courses taught.	N/A
Subcategory 3: Current French studies	Teachers' self-reported current French studies, including but not limited to courses at a post-secondary institution, online courses or self-paced programs, language tutoring, or self-study.	N/A
Subcategory 4: Formal education	Teachers' self-reported formal education, including Bachelor's degrees, Master's degrees, Doctorate degrees, or other formal education which took place at a post-secondary institution.	N/A
Subcategory 5: Gender	Teachers' self-reported gender.	N/A

Subcategory 6: Native language(s)	Teachers' self-reported native language(s).	N/A
Subcategory 7: Specialized Training for FSL Instruction	Teachers' self-reported specialized training in topics including but not limited to French instruction, teaching additional languages, grade-based education training, or other education in specific topics.	N/A
Subcategory 8: Teaching Experience	Teachers' self-reported details and/or years of teaching experience.	N/A
<i>Subcategory 8a: Core French Teaching Experience</i>	Teachers' self-reported details and/or years of teaching Core French.	N/A
<i>Subcategory 8b: General Teaching Experience</i>	Teachers' self-reported details and/or years of teaching any number of subjects.	N/A
<b>Category 3: Student Perspectives on Core French</b>	Student perspectives on their personal Core French learning and/or teaching experiences, and/or the Core French program as a whole.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Positive Perspectives	Student perspectives which describe or reflect positive experiences while in the Core French program.	"I enjoy all activities!" (S1, Survey)
<i>Subcategory 1a: Student Likes</i>	Aspects of the Core French program or personal experiences which Core French students enjoy.	"I enjoy the speaking out loud part of French the most, as well as when we get to play games, especially if they are competitive." (S6, Survey)
Subcategory 2: Negative Perspectives	Student perspectives which describe or reflect negative experiences while in the Core French program.	"I don't really enjoy the large projects." (S17, Survey)
<i>Subcategory 2a: Student Dislikes</i>	Aspects of the Core French program or personal experiences which Core French students dislike.	"Stories are boring. Skits are nerve wracking because I don't know the language and have to perform." (S14, Survey)
<b>Category 4: Teacher Perspectives on Core French</b>	Teacher perspectives on their personal Core French learning and/or teaching experiences, and/or the Core French program as a whole.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Positive Perspectives	Teacher perspectives which describe or reflect positive experiences while in the Core French program.	"...the strength is that it's the only opportunity that students have, in public education, to be exposed to another language..." (Brian, Interview)
<i>Subcategory 1a: Teacher Likes</i>	Aspects of the Core French program or personal experiences which Core French teachers enjoy.	"I think the games help kids access French." (Brian, Interview)

Subcategory 2: Negative Perspectives	Teacher perspectives which describe or reflect negative experiences while in the Core French program.	“Core French is not a priority. And nobody is asking us to make it a priority, because that part of the population that would make it a priority, they've already left and gone to French Immersion.” (Brian, Interview)
<i>Subcategory 2a: Teacher Dislikes</i>	Aspects of the Core French program or personal experiences which Core French teachers dislike.	“[Students] have a blanket aversion to French class, and a negative attitude from the outset.” (Brian, Interview)
<b>Category 5: Described Activities in Core French</b>	Student and teacher descriptions of Core French classroom activities.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Students’ Described Activities	Student descriptions of Core French classroom activities.	“Memorization games, work sheets, tests, pop quizzes, games, writing vocabulary, speaking with peers, French projects such as drawing characters and making them speak, reading and writing dialogues.” (S4, Survey)
Subcategory 2: Teachers’ Described Activities	Teacher descriptions of Core French classroom activities.	“Manie Musicale, Guess Who (for the descriptions unit), question of the day for table talk, interviewing peers...” (Andrea, Survey)
<b>Category 6: Student Challenges in Core French</b>	Challenges faced by students during their Core French classroom experience(s) to date.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Accessibility	Passages expressing students’ challenges in accessing Core French curriculum, activities, or the French language as a whole (i.e., facing language barriers in English).	“The students who struggle the most are those who have language process delays or learning challenges in English.” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 2: Activities	Passages expressing students’ challenges in completing or participating in Core French classroom activities.	“...skits are nerve wracking because I don’t know the language and have to perform.” (S14, Survey)
Subcategory 3: Curriculum	Passages expressing students’ challenges in enjoying or finding interest in the Core French curriculum as presented to them in class.	“[I don’t like when] we watch [our teacher] present in English about our French projects.” (S17, Survey)
Subcategory 4: Inadequate Teachers	Passages expressing students’ challenges and/or frustrations with their Core French teacher’s perceived inadequacies, such as their level of French knowledge or teaching skills.	“I think that French could be a really fun school subject when it’s taught properly.” (S19, Survey)

Subcategory 5: Lack of Resources	Passages expressing students' challenges in finding available resources to aid and support in their acquisition of French as a second language.	"...[students] just have to memorize that it's, you know, 'la table' and 'le pupitre'. Why is it that way? 'Je ne sais pas.'" (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 6: Other	Passages expressing students' challenges in areas which are not encapsulated by the other subcategories in this list.	"...if I look at my class of 27, I would say that two-thirds are indifferent about languages." (Brian, Interview)
<b>Category 7: Teacher Challenges in Core French</b>	Challenges faced by teachers during their Core French teaching experience(s) to date.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Accessibility	Passages expressing teachers' challenges in accessing Core French curriculum or pedagogical materials due to language barriers (i.e. not having enough French knowledge to comprehend or create pedagogical materials) or other factors.	"... and when I had students write stories or paragraphs or essays, I didn't have the confidence to correct them and deal with them properly." (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 2: Curriculum	Passages expressing teachers' challenges in developing and/or delivering Core French curriculum to students.	"...because they're not building the language with rules, it's just mysterious to them. It's like, they have to say things by trial and error, and then I correct them and go, well, actually, people say it this way." (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 3: Insufficient Training	Passages expressing teachers' challenges in delivering Core French pedagogy which they attribute to insufficient (or lack of) teacher training prior to their acceptance of the current teaching position.	"...I would get a lot of French work, and I sort of fumbled my way through it because I had no teacher preparation in those areas." (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 4: Lack of Funding	Passages expressing teachers' challenges in sourcing or creating Core French pedagogical materials or other classroom materials which they attribute to a lack of program funding by the school and/or district; includes complaints regarding out-of-pocket pedagogical expenses.	"I would love to find resources to support French culture that I don't have to buy." (Andrea, Survey)
Subcategory 5: Perceived Lack of Standardization	Passages expressing teachers' challenges in delivering Core French pedagogy to students due to a perceived lack of standardized curriculum and/or learning outcomes across schools/districts.	"I have been doing my own thing for years, and it gets a little bit more eccentric every year, and nobody stops me. There are [still] no standards." (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 6: Lack of Resources	Passages expressing teachers' challenges in sourcing Core French-specific (i.e., age	"... Where do I go for this resource? I have no idea. And who would want to

	and language- level appropriate) pedagogical materials.	provide it? ... So then I have to make the resource.” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 7: Lack of Support	Passages expressing teachers’ challenges in delivering Core French pedagogy and/or motivating Core French students due to a lack of support internal or external to the classroom; i.e. a lack of educational assistants (in-class support), or a lack of parents supporting students (out-of-class support).	“We are totally on our own. There is no curriculum police. [...] What we do in our classroom is completely up to us in terms of topic and content.” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 8: Other	Passages expressing teachers’ challenges which are not encapsulated by the other subcategories in this list.	“...numeracy, Indigenous education, and language arts: those are what we’re doing in our Pro-Ds these days.” (Brian, Interview)
<b>Category 8: Student Motivational Factors</b>	Factors which increase or positively affect students’ desire to acquire French as an additional language and/or to enrol in Core French 9 for the coming academic year.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Aptitude for Language Learning	Passages expressing students’ natural inclination, enjoyment, and/or ability to acquire additional languages.	“I love <i>-er</i> and <i>-ir</i> verbs! And anything, really, in French. It’s my favourite subject.” (S8, Survey)
Subcategory 2: Desire to Communicate with Others	Passages expressing students’ desire to acquire an additional language for the purpose of communicating with friends, family members, or forming new relationships.	“I would like it if we learned a bit more about talking in real scenarios, and actually conversing with people in French.” (S6, Survey)
Subcategory 3: Enjoys Pedagogical Materials	Passages expressing students’ enjoyment of pedagogical materials in the Core French classroom such as worksheets, textbooks, videos, songs, or specific activities.	“I enjoy doing projects like [journals] and the alphabet book.” (S12, Survey)
Subcategory 4: Interest in French Culture	Passages expressing students’ interest in learning about French culture.	“I like when we learn about French culture because it’s interesting.” (S19, Survey)
Subcategory 5: Interest in French Language	Passages expressing students’ interest in acquiring the French language.	“I enjoy the writing and speaking portions of French, as well as the worksheets.” (S19, Survey)
Subcategory 6: Parent Support & Encouragement	Passages expressing the support and/or encouragement students receive from parents or guardians in their acquisition of French.	“Yeah, [parent support and encouragement] is a factor, but not a totally governing factor...” (Brian, Interview)

Subcategory 7: Positive Attitude toward French	Passages expressing students' enjoyment or positive attitudes toward acquiring French.	"There isn't really anything I dislike about learning French." (S6, Survey)
Subcategory 8: Teacher Support & Encouragement	Passages expressing the support and/or encouragement that students receive from their Core French teacher.	"I like my French teacher!" (S10, Survey)
Subcategory 9: Other	Factors that motivate students' continuation of Core French studies which are not encapsulated by the other nodes in this list.	"Getting good grades." (S15, Survey)
<b>Category 9: Student Demotivational Factors</b>	Factors which decrease or negatively affect students' desire to acquire French as an additional language and/or enrol in Core French 9.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Dislikes Pedagogical Materials	Passages expressing students' dislike of or negativity toward the pedagogical materials (such as worksheets, textbooks, activities, lessons, topics, or assignments) used in their Core French class.	"[I don't like] listening to French music and watching videos in French." (S10, Survey)
Subcategory 2: Feelings of Anxiety	Passages expressing students experiencing feelings of anxiety, embarrassment, shame, or uneasiness during Core French class.	"[I don't like] presentations, because I am socially awkward and nervous." (S2, Survey)
Subcategory 3: Interested in Other Languages	Passages expressing students' interest in acquiring languages which are not French, inside or outside of a classroom context.	"I look forward to the option to learn other languages besides French in high school as change to the normal." (S18, Survey)
Subcategory 4: Lack of Parent Support & Encouragement	Passages expressing parents or guardians' lack of support, interest, and/or encouragement regarding students' acquisition of French.	"I would think that [...] the lack of interest in French that I see in English public schools is probably a result of the lack of interest from their unilingual, Western Canada-dwelling parents." (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 5: Lack of Teacher Support & Encouragement	Passages expressing a lack of support and/or encouragement regarding students' acquisition of French.	"I do not enjoy French activities where [our teacher] reads off a sheet, and we just listen and do nothing." (S18, Survey)
Subcategory 6: Negative Attitude toward French	Passages expressing students' dislikes or negative attitudes toward acquiring French.	"[Students] have a blanket aversion to French class, and a negative attitude from the outset." (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 7: No Interest in French Culture	Passages expressing students' lack of interest in learning about French culture.	"There's just, there's just less tolerance of language diversity here. Like, that is within white culture." (Brian, Interview)

Subcategory 8: No Interest in French Language	Passages expressing students' lack of interest in learning about or acquiring the French language.	"Oh, it's British Colombian culture. I mean, British Columbia is the main-- the mainstream, the majority of the culture is pro-English. Western Canada's pro-English." (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 9: No Peers in Class	Students reporting having no peers in the Core French class, or disliking their Core French classmates.	"[I dislike] any sort of game involving peers. The students in my class tend to be a distraction." (S4, Survey)
Subcategory 10: Other	Passages expressing challenges Core French students face which are not encapsulated by the other nodes in this list.	"Even when you ask [middle schoolers] to do the things they love doing, like playing guitar, they're like, "I don't wanna practice..." (Brian, Interview)
<b>Category 10: Student Suggestions for Improvement of the Core French Program</b>	Student suggestions for improving Core French curriculum, teaching methods, pedagogy, or the program as a whole. May be derived from comments regarding likes or dislikes; may also include outright suggestions.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Specific Activities	Ways in which Core French classroom activities could be made more enjoyable or interesting for students.	"[I enjoy] riding sentences, because it helps me with spelling." (S9, Survey)
Subcategory 2: Topics of Interest/Curriculum	Ways in which Core French classroom curriculum (i.e. topics covered in class) could be made more enjoyable or interesting for students.	"I would like it if we learned a bit more about talking in real scenarios, and actually conversing with people in French." (S6, Survey)
Subcategory 3: Pedagogical Materials of Interest	Ways in which Core French pedagogical materials (such as worksheets, textbooks, videos, songs, or specific activities in class) could be made more enjoyable or interesting for students.	"I learn better when I am able to write [vocabulary words] out or just plain memorize the vocabulary over time." (S4, Survey)
Subcategory 4: Additional Resources	Ways in which French language resources could be made more useful or readily available to students.	"I think there should be additional work teachers can give out to people who are done early. Harder work." (S8, Survey)
Subcategory 5: Teachers	Ways by which students would feel more confident in their teachers' French knowledge and/or teaching abilities.	"Maybe if there were specific French teachers for French class, that would be helpful." (S17, Survey)
<b>Category 11: Teacher Suggestions for Improvement of the Core French Program</b>	Teacher suggestions for improving Core French curriculum, teaching methods, pedagogy, or the program as a whole. May be derived from comments regarding	N/A

	likes or dislikes; may also include outright suggestions.	
Subcategory 1: Accessibility	Ways in which accessing Core French pedagogical materials and/or curriculum could be made more accessible to teachers and/or students.	“[My Core French lessons are] very influenced by ESL education, where what you're trying to do is not build grammar rules, but put kids in situations and then give them some sentence stems or sentence forms and have them within a fairly controlled question-and-answer environment. Make a dialogue.” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 2: Specific Activities	Core French activities that teachers have had success with/their students have enjoyed; or ways by which existing activities can be modified to better motivate students to participate.	“[Start] with something that they already like to do, and then [add] on to it some new vocabulary.” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 3: Curriculum	Ways in which Core French classroom curriculum could be improved; may include ways in which Core French curriculum could be made more enjoyable or relevant for students.	“...my educational philosophy is that there is a wonderful blossoming of creativity and awareness that happens when you put kids in the outdoors with an authentic perspective...” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 4: Funding	Ways in which an increased or different allocation of funds could improve the Core French program.	“I would love to find resources to support French culture that I don't have to buy.” (Andrea, Survey)
Subcategory 5: Pedagogical Materials	Ways in which readily available, age-appropriate, French level-appropriate pedagogical materials could improve their Core French pedagogy and/or students' interest.	“I used to have some units that were supported by videos, but now the videos look really dated and out of touch. I mean, they were actually VHS tapes.” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 6: Standardization of Learning Outcomes	Ways in which provincial or district-based standardization of Core French learning outcomes by grade could improve the Core French program and pedagogy.	“And since we've gone to a curriculum of competencies and proficiencies, there's even less standardization of what you can expect kids to know when they come to you.” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 7: Additional Resources	Resources which would improve Core French pedagogy and/or the program as a whole.	“The first obstacle is to get some user-friendly activity that will make them want to participate. So obviously, French games, like, to take a game that is enjoyable in English and make it in French.” (Brian, Interview)

Subcategory 8: Support	Ways by which teachers would feel more supported in the creation, delivery, and evaluation of Core French pedagogy.	“I don’t have good videos on hand to show the students...” (Brian, Interview)
Subcategory 9: Teacher Training	Ways by which increased and/or specialized teacher training could increase their confidence and preparedness to create, deliver, and/or evaluate Core French pedagogy.	“I remember that one of the hardest things about [FSL teacher training] was the language of pedagogy... Like, how do you say "learning outcomes" in French? How do you say, you know, words like, "proficiency"? How do you say... I don't even remember that vocabulary anymore.” (Brian, Interview)
<b>Category 12: Memorable Quotes</b>	Quotes from open-ended survey responses and/or interview responses that are powerful or otherwise memorable.	N/A
Subcategory 1: Student Quotes	Quotes from students’ open-ended survey responses and/or interview responses that are powerful or otherwise memorable.	N/A
Subcategory 2: Teacher Quotes	Quotes from teachers’ open-ended survey responses and/or interview responses that are powerful or otherwise memorable.	N/A

**Appendix H: All Teacher Likert Rankings (Raw Data)**

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>Andrea</b>	<b>Brian</b>	<b>MEAN</b>
1. I believe studying a second language is beneficial to students.	7	6	6.5
2. Overall, my Grade 8 students appear to be interested in learning about French language and culture.	2	1	1.5
3. I speak primarily English during Grade 8 Core French class time.	1	6	3.5
4. My Grade 8 students speak primarily English during Core French class time.	2	2	2
5. If it were up to me, I would choose different topics or concepts to teach my Grade 8 Core French students.	2	1	1.5
6. I believe my Grade 8 Core French students gain confidence in their French-speaking skills by being in my class.	7	3	5
7. My Grade 8 Core French students are interested in the materials used in class (i.e. the textbook, worksheets, songs, and/or videos).	6	1	3.5
8. I tell my Grade 8 students that speaking French is important and/or applicable to their future.	7	1	4
9. My Grade 8 Core French classes include lessons about French history, customs, and culture.	7	4	5.5
10. My Grade 8 students tell me they enjoy the activities we do in French class.	7	3	5
11. My Grade 8 students tell me they dislike or are bored by the activities we do in French class.	1	6	3.5
12. Grade 8 students in my Core French classes rarely have opportunities to practice speaking French with their peers.	1	4	2.5
13. I encourage my Grade 8 students to speak French as much as possible during class time.	7	3	5
14. The Grade 8 Core French textbook and/or curriculum focuses mainly on French grammar instead of French history, customs, or culture.	1	1	1
15. Overall, my Grade 8 students are uninterested in learning French.	1	7	4

16. Most of my Grade 8 students receive support and encouragement from their parents/guardians in learning French.	6	2	4
17. Grade 8 students in my Core French classes enjoy watching videos and/or movies in French.	7	1	2
18. Grade 8 students in my Core French classes enjoy listening to music in French.	7	1	2
19. Grade 8 students in my Core French classes enjoy playing games in French.	7	5	6
20. I believe that studying French is a waste of my Grade 8 students' time.	1	3	2
21. I try my best to speak only in French during class time.	5	1	3
22. My Grade 8 students try their best to speak only in French during class time.	3	3	3
23. My Grade 8 students are uninterested in many of the topics we cover in my Core French classes.	2	5	3.5
24. My Grade 8 students seem to learn French best through repeating and memorizing vocabulary words.	2	1	1.5
25. My Grade 8 students seem to learn French best when given the opportunity to participate in class discussions, games, and conversations with their peers.	6	6	6
26. I believe the knowledge gained in my Grade 8 Core French classes will be useful to students should they ever need to communicate in French with a native speaker.	7	4	5.5
27. My Grade 8 students enjoy learning about French grammar more than they enjoy learning about French history, customs, or culture.	1	1	1
28. My Grade 8 students ask me for help with lessons and assignments when they need it.	7	6	6.5

**Appendix I: All Student Likert Rankings (Raw Data)**

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>
1. I wish I could speak another language fluently.	1	0	1	0	3	3	3	10	5.85	7
2. I am interested in learning about world languages and cultures.	3	1	2	1	2	4	3	5	4.94	7
3. I have no interest in learning another language.	3	10	4	3	1	0	0	0	1.72	1
4. I wish I could read books, watch movies or TV shows, or play games in another language.	4	3	1	1	2	3	3	4	4.52	7
5. I think everyone should study another language at some point.	2	1	3	1	5	2	3	4	3.84	4
6. I hate studying French.	2	6	2	2	3	4	1	1	3.21	1
7. I want to learn as much French as possible.	2	2	5	3	1	3	1	4	3.89	2
8. Learning another language is pointless.	1	14	4	1	0	0	1	0	1.55	1
9. I love studying French.	2	4	4	3	3	2	0	3	3.36	1, 2
10. I wish I did not have to learn French at school.	5	6	2	2	2	2	0	2	3	1
11. Understanding French will not benefit me or my future in any way.	5	8	4	0	2	0	1	1	2.31	1
12. I often wish I was enrolled in French Immersion.	4	9	4	1	0	2	1	0	2.12	1
13. Studying French is important to me because I will need it for my future career.	4	6	2	2	3	0	3	1	3.12	1
14. Studying French is important to me because it will help me to meet and connect with others.	3	2	2	2	5	2	2	3	4.16	4
15. Studying French is important to me because I plan to travel to Francophone countries in the future.	1	3	4	0	4	4	1	4	4.05	2, 4, 5, 7
16. Studying French is not important to me for any reason.	5	7	5	1	1	1	0	1	2.25	1

17. My parents encourage me to learn French.	2	1	2	1	2	6	4	3	4.79	5
18. My parents are able to help me with my French homework and projects.	3	5	2	2	2	2	3	2	3.61	1
19. My parents are forcing me to learn French.	1	9	6	1	3	1	0	0	2.05	1
20. My parents tell me that speaking French is important to my future.	1	1	3	2	2	7	2	3	4.45	5
21. My parents do not care that I am learning French.	2	9	8	1	0	1	0	0	1.74	1
22. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am struggling in French class.	2	0	2	2	2	6	1	6	5.05	5, 7
23. I enjoy the activities we do in French class.	3	1	1	6	2	5	1	2	4.11	3
24. I am interested in the materials my teacher uses in French class (i.e. the textbook and worksheets).	4	1	5	4	1	4	1	1	3.53	2
25. My French teacher encourages me to participate during class.	2	0	0	3	1	7	2	6	5.37	5
26. I prefer to learn about French grammar instead of French culture or history.	4	5	2	1	1	4	3	1	3.71	1
27. I think the topics we learn about in French class are boring or pointless.	4	4	6	1	2	2	2	0	2.88	2
28. I learn French best when I can practice speaking French with my classmates.	3	2	6	2	4	3	0	1	3.22	2
29. I learn French best by playing games in French.	2	1	5	2	5	3	1	2	3.79	2, 4
30. I learn French best by listening to French music.	3	7	7	2	1	0	0	1	2.11	1, 2
31. I learn French best by watching movies or videos in French.	2	6	5	4	1	2	1	0	2.53	1
32. I learn French best when I am given a list of vocabulary words to memorize.	1	1	4	0	4	4	3	4	4.55	2, 4, 5, 7

33. I participate in French class as much as I possibly can.	3	2	0	0	4	4	3	5	5.11	4, 5
34. I feel anxious or embarrassed when I am asked to speak or answer a question in French.	1	6	5	1	3	1	2	2	3.1	1
35. I try my best to speak only in French during class time.	3	5	3	2	2	3	1	2	3.33	1
36. The activities we do in French class make me feel confident in reading, writing, and speaking French.	1	4	2	3	6	3	1	1	3.45	4
37. Learning French is too hard for me, I do not think I will ever master it.	3	6	5	1	1	3	0	2	2.88	1
38. I speak in English during French class to avoid feeling anxious or embarrassed.	3	6	2	4	2	3	1	0	2.55	1

**Appendix J: Mean Student Likert Rankings by Middle School (Raw Data)**

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>MEAN: Middle School A</b>	<b>MEAN: Middle School B</b>	<b>MEAN: Both Middle Schools</b>
1. I wish I could speak another language fluently.	1	0	1	0	3	3	3	10	5.55	6.09	5.85
2. I am interested in learning about world languages and cultures.	3	1	2	1	2	4	3	5	4.88	5.63	4.94
3. I have no interest in learning another language.	3	10	4	3	1	0	0	0	1.71	1.73	1.72
4. I wish I could read books, watch movies or TV shows, or play games in another language.	4	3	1	1	2	3	3	4	4.42	4.6	4.52
5. I think everyone should study another language at some point.	2	1	3	1	5	2	3	4	5.22	3.9	3.84
6. I hate studying French.	2	6	2	2	3	4	1	1	2.62	3.64	3.21
7. I want to learn as much French as possible.	2	2	5	3	1	3	1	4	4.55	3.6	3.89
8. Learning another language is pointless.	1	14	4	1	0	0	1	0	1.88	2	1.55
9. I love studying French.	2	4	4	3	3	2	0	3	4.22	2.6	3.36
10. I wish I did not have to learn French at school.	5	6	2	2	2	2	0	2	2.57	3.33	3
11. Understanding French will not benefit me or my future in any way.	5	8	4	0	2	0	1	1	2.25	2.38	2.31
12. I often wish I was enrolled in French Immersion.	4	9	4	1	0	2	1	0	2.75	1.55	2.12

13. Studying French is important to me because I will need it for my future career.	4	6	2	2	3	0	3	1	4.12	2.22	3.12
14. Studying French is important to me because it will help me to meet and connect with others.	3	2	2	2	5	2	2	3	4.44	3.88	4.16
15. Studying French is important to me because I plan to travel to Francophone countries in the future.	1	3	4	0	4	4	1	4	4.67	3.64	4.05
16. Studying French is not important to me for any reason.	5	7	5	1	1	1	0	1	2.57	2	2.25
17. My parents encourage me to learn French.	2	1	2	1	2	6	4	3	5.22	4.4	4.79
18. My parents are able to help me with my French homework and projects.	3	5	2	2	2	2	3	2	4.25	3.1	3.61
19. My parents are forcing me to learn French.	1	9	6	1	3	1	0	0	2.22	1.91	2.05
20. My parents tell me that speaking French is important to my future.	1	1	3	2	2	7	2	3	5.11	3.91	4.45
21. My parents do not care that I am learning French.	2	9	8	1	0	1	0	0	1.5	1.64	1.74
22. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am struggling in French class.	2	0	2	2	2	6	1	6	5	5.1	5.05
23. I enjoy the activities we do in French class.	3	1	1	6	2	5	1	2	5.29	3.36	4.11
24. I am interested in the materials my teacher uses in French class	4	1	5	4	1	4	1	1	4.88	2.33	3.53

(i.e. the textbook and worksheets).												
25. My French teacher encourages me to participate during class.	2	0	0	3	1	7	2	6	5.77	5	5.37	
26. I prefer to learn about French grammar instead of French culture or history.	4	5	2	1	1	4	3	1	3.33	3.88	3.71	
27. I think the topics we learn about in French class are boring or pointless.	4	4	6	1	2	2	2	0	1.71	3.7	2.88	
28. I learn French best when I can practice speaking French with my classmates.	3	2	6	2	4	3	0	1	4.11	2.33	3.22	
29. I learn French best by playing games in French.	2	1	5	2	5	3	1	2	3.77	3.8	3.79	
30. I learn French best by listening to French music.	3	7	7	2	1	0	0	1	1.77	2.1	2.11	
31. I learn French best by watching movies or videos in French.	2	6	5	4	1	2	1	0	3	2.1	2.53	
32. I learn French best when I am given a list of vocabulary words to memorize.	1	1	4	0	4	4	3	4	4.44	4.64	4.55	
33. I participate in French class as much as I possibly can.	3	2	0	0	4	4	3	5	6	4.3	5.11	
34. I feel anxious or embarrassed when I am asked to speak or answer a question in French.	1	6	5	1	3	1	2	2	1.77	4.18	3.1	
35. I try my best to speak only in French during class time.	3	5	3	2	2	3	1	2	4.38	2.5	3.33	

36. The activities we do in French class make me feel confident in reading, writing, and speaking French.	1	4	2	3	6	3	1	1	4.55	2.54	3.45
37. Learning French is too hard for me, I do not think I will ever master it.	3	6	5	1	1	3	0	2	1.86	3.54	2.88
38. I speak in English during French class to avoid feeling anxious or embarrassed.	3	6	2	4	2	3	1	0	2.44	3.22	2.55

**Appendix K – Student Likert Rankings, Middle School A Only (Raw Data)**

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>
1. I wish I could speak another language fluently.	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	4	5.55	7
2. I am interested in learning about world languages and cultures.	0	1	1	0	1	1	3	2	4.88	6
3. I have no interest in learning another language.	2	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	1.71	1
4. I wish I could read books, watch movies or TV shows, or play games in another language.	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	3	4.42	7
5. I think everyone should study another language at some point.	0	0	1	0	3	0	2	3	5.22	4, 7
6. I hate studying French.	1	4	0	1	2	0	1	0	2.62	1
7. I want to learn as much French as possible.	0	1	2	1	1	1	0	3	4.55	7
8. Learning another language is pointless.	0	6	1	1	0	0	1	0	1.88	1
9. I love studying French.	0	0	3	2	0	1	0	3	4.22	1, 7
10. I wish I did not have to learn French at school.	2	3	1	2	0	0	0	1	2.57	1
11. Understanding French will not benefit me or my future in any way.	1	4	2	0	1	0	1	0	2.25	1
12. I often wish I was enrolled in French Immersion.	1	4	1	0	0	2	1	0	2.75	1
13. Studying French is important to me because I will need it for my future career.	1	1	1	1	2	0	2	1	4.12	4, 6
14. Studying French is important to me because it will help me to meet and connect with others.	0	1	0	2	2	1	1	2	4.44	3, 4, 7
15. Studying French is important to me because I plan to travel to Francophone countries in the future.	0	1	2	0	1	1	1	3	4.67	7
16. Studying French is not important to me for any reason.	2	3	2	0	1	0	0	1	2.57	1

17. My parents encourage me to learn French.	0	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	5.22	5
18. My parents are able to help me with my French homework and projects.	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	2	4.25	1, 5, 7
19. My parents are forcing me to learn French.	0	3	4	0	1	1	0	0	2.22	2
20. My parents tell me that speaking French is important to my future.	0	0	1	0	1	4	1	2	5.11	5
21. My parents do not care that I am learning French.	1	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	1.5	11
22. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am struggling in French class.	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	4	5	7
23. I enjoy the activities we do in French class.	2	0	0	1	1	2	1	2	5.29	5, 7
24. I am interested in the materials my teacher uses in French class (i.e. the textbook and worksheets).	1	0	1	0	1	4	1	1	4.88	5
25. My French teacher encourages me to participate during class.	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	4	5.77	7
26. I prefer to learn about French grammar instead of French culture or history.	0	3	1	1	0	2	2	0	3.33	1
27. I think the topics we learn about in French class are boring or pointless.	2	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	1.71	1, 2
28. I learn French best when I can practice speaking French with my classmates.	0	0	2	1	2	3	0	1	4.11	5
29. I learn French best by playing games in French.	0	0	3	1	2	2	0	1	3.77	2
30. I learn French best by listening to French music.	0	4	4	0	1	0	0	0	1.77	1, 2
31. I learn French best by watching movies or videos in French.	0	1	3	3	0	1	1	0	3	2, 3
32. I learn French best when I am given a list of vocabulary words to memorize.	0	0	2	0	2	3	1	1	4.44	5
33. I participate in French class as much as I possibly can.	1	0	0	0	0	3	2	3	6	5, 7

34. I feel anxious or embarrassed when I am asked to speak or answer a question in French.	0	4	4	0	1	0	0	0	1.77	1, 2
35. I try my best to speak only in French during class time.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	4.38	7
36. The activities we do in French class make me feel confident in reading, writing, and speaking French.	0	0	1	1	2	3	1	1	4.55	5
37. Learning French is too hard for me, I do not think I will ever master it.	2	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	1.86	1
38. I speak in English during French class to avoid feeling anxious or embarrassed.	0	4	0	3	1	1	0	0	2.44	1

**Appendix L – Student Likert Rankings, Middle School B Only (Raw Data)**

<b>Likert Scale Item</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>
1. I wish I could speak another language fluently.	1	0	0	0	2	1	2	6	6.09	7
2. I am interested in learning about world languages and cultures.	3	0	1	1	1	3	0	3	5.63	5, 7
3. I have no interest in learning another language.	1	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	1.73	1
4. I wish I could read books, watch movies or TV shows, or play games in another language.	2	2	0	0	1	3	3	1	4.6	5, 6
5. I think everyone should study another language at some point.	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	3.9	2, 4, 5
6. I hate studying French.	1	2	2	1	1	4	0	1	3.64	5
7. I want to learn as much French as possible.	2	1	3	2	0	2	1	1	3.6	2
8. Learning another language is pointless.	1	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
9. I love studying French.	2	4	1	1	3	1	0	0	2.6	1
10. I wish I did not have to learn French at school.	3	3	1	0	2	2	0	1	3.33	1
11. Understanding French will not benefit me or my future in any way.	4	4	2	0	1	0	0	1	2.38	1
12. I often wish I was enrolled in French Immersion.	3	5	3	1	0	0	0	0	1.55	1
13. Studying French is important to me because I will need it for my future career.	3	5	1	1	1	0	1	0	2.22	1
14. Studying French is important to me because it will help me to meet and connect with others.	3	1	2	0	3	1	1	1	3.88	4
15. Studying French is important to me because I plan to travel to Francophone countries in the future.	1	2	2	0	3	3	0	1	3.64	4, 5
16. Studying French is not important to me for any reason.	3	4	3	1	0	1	0	0	2	2

17. My parents encourage me to learn French.	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	4.4	5
18. My parents are able to help me with my French homework and projects.	2	3	1	2	2	0	2	0	3.1	1
19. My parents are forcing me to learn French.	1	6	2	1	2	0	0	0	1.91	1
20. My parents tell me that speaking French is important to my future.	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	3.91	5
21. My parents do not care that I am learning French.	1	4	6	0	0	1	0	0	1.64	2
22. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am struggling in French class.	2	0	0	2	0	5	1	2	5.1	5
23. I enjoy the activities we do in French class.	1	1	1	5	1	3	0	0	3.36	3
24. I am interested in the materials my teacher uses in French class (i.e. the textbook and worksheets).	3	1	4	4	0	0	0	0	2.33	2, 3
25. My French teacher encourages me to participate during class.	2	0	0	2	1	4	1	2	5	5
26. I prefer to learn about French grammar instead of French culture or history.	4	2	1	0	1	2	1	1	3.88	1, 5
27. I think the topics we learn about in French class are boring or pointless.	2	1	3	0	2	2	2	0	3.7	2
28. I learn French best when I can practice speaking French with my classmates.	3	2	4	1	2	0	0	0	2.33	2
29. I learn French best by playing games in French.	2	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	3.8	4
30. I learn French best by listening to French music.	2	4	5	0	0	0	0	1	2.1	2
31. I learn French best by watching movies or videos in French.	2	5	2	1	1	1	0	0	2.1	1
32. I learn French best when I am given a list of vocabulary words to memorize.	1	1	2	0	2	1	2	3	4.64	7

33. I participate in French class as much as I possibly can.	2	2	0	0	4	1	1	2	4.3	4
34. I feel anxious or embarrassed when I am asked to speak or answer a question in French.	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	4.18	1, 4, 6, 7
35. I try my best to speak only in French during class time.	2	4	2	1	1	2	0	0	2.5	1
36. The activities we do in French class make me feel confident in reading, writing, and speaking French.	1	4	1	2	4	0	0	0	2.54	1, 4
37. Learning French is too hard for me, I do not think I will ever master it.	1	2	4	0	0	3	0	2	3.54	2
38. I speak in English during French class to avoid feeling anxious or embarrassed.	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	0	3.22	1, 2, 5