

Running Head: NEED FOR A FRENCH IMMERSION DEPARTMENT HEAD

Why there is a need for a French Immersion Department Head in a dual track school?

by

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Abstract

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This paper studies the benefits of a French Immersion Department Head in a dual track setting. In examining various articles, the challenges and demands of a French Immersion program in a dual-track school are explored. Using qualitative and quantitative forms of literature, the paper will present the struggles related to French Immersion in a dual-track setting with a comparison between how objectives are being met in an Immersion Center versus a Dual track setting. Furthermore, the paper will present the idea of a department head/lead teacher role for the French Immersion program to assist the teachers, the administrators and the students in achieving fluency in French while learning in an English dominate school. The department head is mandated to ensure the effectiveness and the credibility of the pedagogical aspect of acquiring fluency in a dual-track setting.

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CHAPTER 1

Why there is a need for a French Immersion

Department Head in a Dual-track school

Background

Living in a bilingual country, Canadian parents see the benefits of French Immersion programming for their childrens' education as evidenced by the 34,885 students across Alberta enrolled in in French Immersion Program in 2009-2010. Additionally, the federal government, by offering funding support, clearly values the acquisition of both French and English communication abilities. According to the *Manitoba Education, Citizenship & Youth*, French Immersion Centers are the ideal environment for the French Immersion Program (2008). However, in some districts -- especially in the secondary level -- the demand for a French Immersion Centre does not warrant the cost and the proposed solution is a Dual-Track. These terms will be clarified further in the document.

As a French Immersion teacher, I not only attended French Immersions Centers and Francophone schools, but I also began teaching in an Immersion Centre School in a Catholic School District. This type of programming was familiar and therefore a natural fit. Moreover, I found this environment fostered the acquisition of a secondary language, French, in a cultural and comprehensible manner. Everyone on staff was bilingual or could understand the basics of French. The school objective was the same for all -- competency in a second language.

Upon acceptance to the Master's program, I discovered that my position at the Junior High level in a K-9 French Immersion Center was being moved to the secondary level. This program had been very successful not only academically but also in fostering a sense of

community for parents, students and staff. The major problem was over population given the size of the building and this led to the restructuring of the schools in the district.

Following the restructuring, the district's largest school population, the immersion school, was divided into three -- with K-4 school, 5-8 school, and 9-12 at the high school. In doing so, the immersion program went from being a very integrated, collaborative school community to one where resources, people, and print materials are divided into three. With this new structure, my position was moved to a non-immersion center -- a multi-track school where funding for the department head position fell short when it came to the French Immersion Department Head/Lead teacher. Also, the community goal was no longer a singular common French Immersion goal. This is where my journey commenced: the exploration into the need for a department head in a dual-track setting.

Personal and/or Professional Motivation and Relevance of the Project

My background experience both as a student and as a teacher played a large impetus for embarking on a project regarding the French Immersion Program. Growing up in many communities across Canada and attending and experiencing different provincial curriculums, the one constant I experienced was the educational language. In examining my cultural background as an *Afro-Franco-canadienne*, my mother's father (in Tanzania) spoke nine different languages and her mother, born in Marseille, spoke French and learnt English. Furthermore, my father, was born and raised in Saint-Hubert, Québec, where his parents were exclusively francophone. It was natural for my parents to desire their children acquired a bilingual status. My paternal grandfather said to me one day, "I lost my English twice in my life. Once as a boy, when we lived in an English community and moved to a Francophone one and once as an adult, I took night class to learn English." He was extremely proud of the fact that I was teaching children to

be bilingual. Finally, in a professional setting, the experience with the restructuring of my school district and the displacement of my position caused me to examine the environment of a dual-track setting. As an educator, I am highly motivated by a desire to do what is best for my students on a curriculum level as well as the cultural background that makes Canada a diverse place to live.

Statement of the Problem

Currently, I am in a dual-track French immersion school (i.e. English school with a French Immersion Program). Prior to this, my experience was in a French Immersion Centre (i.e. all French Immersion programming), where the administrator and the teachers worked together in obtaining resources for the school and the French Immersion Program. The administrator even had publishing companies from Québec travel to the school to assist the teachers in finding new and innovative instructional materials. In a large dual-track school who is charged with assisting the teachers to find materials in French, translating common exams in other departments such as science, math, social, health, and religion, and fostering the French culture in the school? Do these responsibilities fall upon the teachers?

There is still not enough research with regards to the French Immersion environment in comparing the French Immersion Center and the French Immersion Dual-track. Although the relationship has been shown that French Immersion Teachers often leave the profession in the first few years (Karsenti et al, 2008), it has yet to be shown that a dual-track school environment did not play a part in that. There appears to be a “*blind spot*” as to the process for the delivery of the French Immersion Program in a Dual-Track setting --the *blind spot* being the hiring of professional teachers for the French Immersion program that are not French. This can be difficult if the Anglophone administration is not aware of the level required for French

competency, the human resource officers may not be aware of the requirements for the program and both may not know how to assist new teachers in this program. In an Immersion Centre, the administration, typically, are former immersion teachers and the school tends to have human resources to assist new teachers and the entire staff helps one another in the common goal of achieving competency in a second language. I would propose the solution for the shortcomings of a Dual-Track program would be addressed by a department head.

Purpose of the Project

In this project, I am looking to examine difficulties with what is occurring in the French Immersion Programs in a dual-track setting and why the need for a department head to assist with administration.

The purpose is to determine why these problems may have evolved with an aim to adjust the environment for improvements. French Immersion is a popular program and should be delivered in the most appropriate and efficient way within the confines of the system. My ultimate question being how do we do it best in a dual-track setting?

Organization of the Thesis

In the following chapter, I will discuss how this phenomenon of French Immersion began, the history, the personal struggles of teachers, the research and the struggles related to the French Immersion Programs in a dual-track environment. This will involve examination of qualitative data on the importance of having an efficient teacher in French Immersion, an effective school culture, and the responsibilities for an administrator of a French Immersion program. Moreover, the expectations of parents, students and teachers are higher in an immersion program. Additionally, the administration's view of the program makes a world of difference to the integrity of the program. If the administration does not have a vested interest in

the success of the program, including the program as part of the school culture, this weighs on the success of the program, the sustainability of the veteran teacher and beginning teach. In accordance with the Alberta Education Handbook (2014), administrators have a duty to create and nurture a school culture that supports the goals of the Immersion Program.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Introduction

September 9th, 1969 marks the day that Canada adopted two Official languages: French and English. This chapter aims to address the question of “Why is there a need for a French Immersion Department Head in a Dual-Track School?” In identifying the root of the French Immersion program, I will address what the program looked like in the past and how it is today. With the growing numbers for the demands of French Immersion Education (Campbell, 2013), the educators, the administrators, and the learning environments all play a role in the success of the program. In discussing the challenges that the program, the teachers and the administrator face, I argue that there is a need for a department head and how this role will assist the administrator compared to the current situations in most dual-track immersion programs. Looking at the past, the present and the challenges of the French Immersion Program in a Dual-track school and how it differs from a French Immersion Center, I will conclude with the role of the instructional leader/department head for the French immersion program.

What is French Immersion?

French Immersion is an educational curriculum and pedagogy that fosters the development of linguistic competence in French and in English. The program, according to Alberta Learning, is the most effective way for students to become functionally fluent in French while achieving all Grade level curriculums. All subjects are taught in French with the exception of English Language Arts and Religion for students in the Catholic system. This program was designed for non-French speaking children to learn French. At the same time as acquiring the language skills, students learn about the French culture and traditions. (2014) The Canadian

Association of Immersion Teachers and the Calgary Board of Education have addressed many myths and misconceptions related to French Immersion. As outlined by the Calgary Board of Education, some of those relating to French Immersion include that the program is targeted at higher income families, or only for students with excellent academic rather than those with learning difficulties, and that a necessary requirement being a parent needs to know French (2010). In fact, the information claims that a French Immersion Program is a program that is greater than the traditional option course, French as a Second Language, where the student learns French for roughly between 140 -180 minutes per week. It is a program that allows the student to learn the language through multiple subject matters. Alberta Learning reiterates the importance of multiple subjects as the most efficient way to becoming functionally fluent in a second language (2014). The program was actually designed for students whose first language was not French. All course instructions are done in French, with the exception of English Language Arts, and the students learned about the French culture. Supported by Stern (1984),

“Il s'agit donc pas d'un cours de français proprement dit, mais d'un programme d'études où sont enseignées en cette langue diverses matières: mathématiques, histoire, arts et éducation physique, par exemple. L'objectif est d'assurer l'acquisition du français par le biais d'autres disciplines plutôt que par un cours de langue classique. (p.4)”

The Past: Explore the history of the French Immersion program

According to the Montreal Gazette (2006), individuals that weren't theorists, or experts or academics created this educational revolution, and they certainly weren't school board administrators. In 1965, these included Murielle Parkes, Olga Melikoff, and Valerie Neale from Québec, who were not experts in education nor completed a quantitative or qualitative research study, but they had a theory. These mothers wanted their children to speak fluent French with

confidence. They believed that if their children were educated in French for six hours, it would give their children a better future. After lobbying for the program in an English community in Québec, the school district of Saint-Lambert, allowed one kindergarten class of 26 students to begin. Within 5 minutes of registration the class was full with the demand greater than availability.

According to Hautin (2004), Évelyne Billey, a young teacher from France, was asked by a group of parents, Parkesm Melikoff and Neale to teach a group of English kindergarten students to become fluent in French. With no precedent Mme Billey embarked on a journey that would start the revolution of an alternative educational program for students and for future teachers. Hautin (2004) explains how Évelyne Billey was able to administer a successful program based on her pedagogical creativity, her good sense, and her remarkable and legendary professionalism.

« De par son approche pédagogique novatrice, grâce à son bon sens, sa créativité prodigieuse, ses dons artistiques et son professionnalisme remarquable et légendaire, elle a réussi à implanter un nouveau style d'éducation qui allait révolutionner l'enseignement du français langue seconde ». (p.10)

In a French Immersion program, the educator truly is Haste's (2009)'s notion of praxis-based instruction. Haste (2009) asserts that praxis-based instruction is 'bottom-up', which counters the 'top-down' knowledge-based instruction (the transmission of information). Haste (2009) defines praxis as a created understanding through the need to interact with materials, actions and other people. This understanding then has to be considered personally useful, effective and can be shared and understood. This is significant, as an immersion language arts teacher. If a student in French Language Arts does not find acquiring a second language as a

useful tool to communicate (verbal or written), then they will not take the time to co-construct meaning and understanding. Therefore, competence is not achieved. Évelyne Billey started the first French Immersion program in an English school. The praxis-based instruction, which counters the ‘top-down’ knowledge-based instruction (the transmission of information), is how the phenomenon of French Immersion began. Haste (2009) defines praxis as a created understanding through an ethical decision to distribute knowledge rather than keep to oneself. This understanding then has to be considered personally and morally useful, effective and therefore shared and understood. In a French Immersion setting, the understanding is to achieve competency in a second language. When one does not understand how to achieve this, one should seek assistance in how to achieve success. Haste (2009) summarizes that the individual transmitting information then becomes more than a participant or recipient but rather becomes the agent. Évelyne Billey became that agent to future teachers in Montreal.

Hautin (2004) informs that the demand for immersion programming grew rapidly in many districts in Montréal. Since Évelyne Billey was now considered the expert in immersion pedagogy, Hautin (2004) states that Billey would give conferences, workshops, talks and offered courses in the evening to help teachers who were embarking on this new educational journey. It was not the principals or the district leaders or university professor that were assisting teachers with the delivery of the program, it was a kindergarten teacher, “drawing on her innovative pedagogical approach, innate good sense, tremendous creativity, and outstanding and legendary professionalism” (Karsenti, Collins et al, 2008, p.8), that became the developer of the first curriculum in French Immersion.

The History of Alberta’s French Immersion Program

The demand for French Immersion was not just limited to Quebec. Holoiday (2014) discusses the upward trend in Alberta schools regarding the French Immersion enrollment, today. The executive director of Canadian Parents for French, Michael Tryon, and others believe that due to the trends, the increase in demand, that this should not be an optional program but a program for all students. --“for an alternative program, when you see the numbers going up, you know the demand is there and school districts are supporting it.” (2014, p. 1). Optional program meant that the government could in fact, due to budgetary necessities limit the funding, cut the program all together. The limited funding for the French Immersion Program is apparent, today, in the British Columbia School system where there is lottery system for entrance into French Immersion Schools. -- “Although lotteries and lineups have long existed for specialty programs like French Immersion or Montessori, they are uncommon for neighbourhood kindergartens.” (2014, p.1)

For Alberta, according to France Levasseur-Ouimet and François McMahon’s *French-language Education in Alberta*, prior to 1989 the program was the “French school” that Francophone or Anglophone students went to receive an education in French. “French Immersion” school meant that the student would be taught in French 80% of their daily learning. This includes, *les études sociales* (Social Studies), *le français* (*French Language Arts*), *les mathématiques*, *les sciences*, *l’éducation physique*, *le santé* (Health) and in elementary *l’art* and *la musique* en français. Prior to 1989, French Immersion Schools were the only solution for francophone families to ensure their children would receive an education in French, within a predominantly English speaking community (Levasseur-Ouimet & McMahon, 2007).

Even with the separation of the Anglophone and Francophone students, this program is growing and the need for teachers and administrators is growing. Holoiday (2014) reports

“French Immersion is offered in 47 Alberta communities, with 6.2 per cent of all Alberta students enrolled.” Would Mme Billey believe that what she help begin with 25 kindergarten students in the fall of 1965 has grown across Canada to include approximately 41,000 Alberta students in 2014.

“Le phénomène fait boule de neige avec succès à travers la province et bientôt on instaure des classes d’immersion française à travers le Canada.” ~Hautin (2004)

The Present : Different French Immersion Educational setting

Immersion Centers. According to the Manitoba Bureau de l’éducation française, French Immersion Centre is a school that operates and functions independently from an English program (Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth, 2008). The majority of the staff, administration, teachers, librarian and Educational Assistants, are fluent in French and English to support services available in French. The Manitoba Education, Citizenship & Youth claim that an Immersion Centre favours the creation of a French environment that makes it possible to achieve a high level of proficiency in French (Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth, 2008). In an Immersion Centre school, typically the administrator and all the staff communicate in French. The school culture, which fosters the French, can be viewed as one enters the school. In a Dual-Track setting, this may not be the case. Alberta Education outlines in the curriculum the *French cultural* aspects of learning a second language. Chapter 5 of the Alberta Education Handbook for French Immersion Administrators identifies that “school administrators have a responsibility to create and nurture a school culture that supports the goals of the French Immersion program” (2014, p.45).

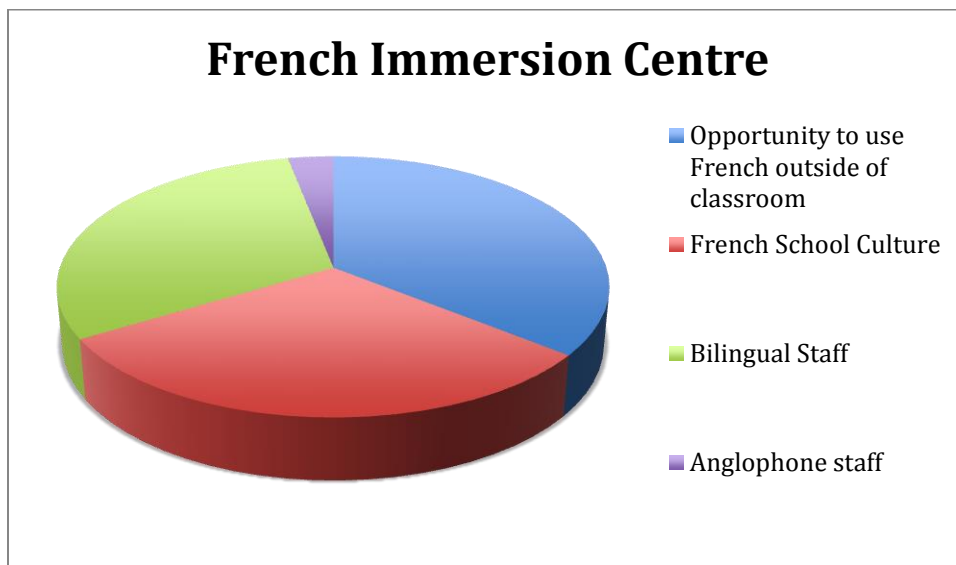


Figure 1. Immersion Centers

Figure 1 demonstrates how the French learning community functions in terms of exposure, which assists in the acquisition of the language functionality. Identifying the staff which will communicate in French either to colleagues or students.

In some social circles like Proulx (2012), opinions about French Immersion Centres stem from emotions rather than facts. “Stop putting the French immersion program on a pedestal. All it's doing is socially crippling certain students.” (p. 1) How could keeping an Immersion Centre school cripple the students? LaPerle (2012), a mother whose children attended a French Immersion Centre, responded to an opinion article written by Proulx, who criticizing a decision to keep a single track immersion program together from K-9. LaPerle (2012) states “Given the needs of an immersion program, a single track, K-9 program provides the most efficient use of resources, particularly French-speaking teachers.” (p. 1) LaPerle’s statement can be supported by the research finding of Doell (2011):

“... two of the four tests (listening comprehension as well as reading comprehension/vocabulary), immersion centre students outperformed dual-track students.” “... indicates that centre students were possibly using more French in out-of-classroom contexts than dual-track students and that they had more exposure to written and spoken French in the school environment than their dual-track counterparts.” (2011, p.1)

Guimont's (2003) interpretation of the quantitative data about Immersion Centres indicates that the students have more exposure to the French language outside of the classroom, the teachers had a common goal and therefore allocation of resources were directed to one program and because the commitment was apparent as a school culture, the parents were more committed as well. Doell's (2011) report indicates:

“... teachers in centers appeared better satisfied with resources available in their schools and with their overall teaching situation.” “ In interpreting the results, the researchers speculated that support for the French language was more pronounced in the centre setting where they found school corridor displays featuring more material in French, assemblies conducted in French, administration and other staff more likely to be bilingual and so on.” (p.1)

Therefore, in a French Immersion Centre, the implicit curriculum is to create and nurture a school culture that supports the French immersion program. This tends to be more challenging in a Dual-Track setting as the administration struggles with a uncertain demands of the program.

Dual Track Schools. In a French Immersion Centre, the school culture for acquiring the second language can be easily fostered as all staff personnel are functionally bilingual. The difficulty in a dual-track school is the acquisition becomes more difficult. In a dual-track school,

the immersion program comprises the students and the teachers of the program. The remainder, the majority of the school, staff and student population, are all part of the major stream, English programming. The implicit curriculum is to create and nurture a school culture that supports the French immersion program and this tends to be a challenge for the program is the minority.

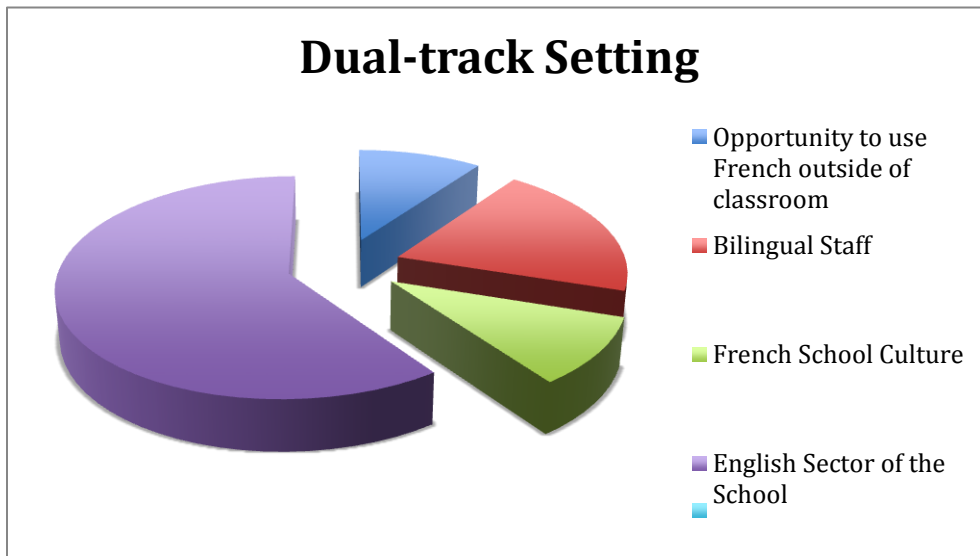


Figure 2. Dual-track settings

Figure 2 was created to demonstrate how the French learning community functions in terms of exposure, which assists in the acquisition of the language functionality. The Dual-Track setting has less exposure, less support and it is found to be the minority population.

Dual-track schools are the economical solution to offering the French Immersion program and meeting the educational needs of a community. A new school is erected in a growing community as the demand arises. Since French Immersion programming is an optional formation, the demands for this type of education may not be the choice of all. Hence, the financial expense of creating a new school must meet the need of the community. However, in a dual-track school cultural activities, which are part of the *immersion* aspect of acquiring the second language, tend to be organized by teachers if the administrators do not have a vested

interest in the program. To avoid a sense of segregation, isolation and disorganization, the language in a Dual-Track setting should be heard during the announcement, during the assemblies, and bilingual signs should be placed in the common areas of the school (*la caf  t  ria, la biblioth  que, les toilettes, le gymnase, les vestiaires, etc.*) As part of providing a school leadership, for the French Immersion program, a leader must be in charge of advocating for the needs of their program.

Doell's (2011) research presented a great amount of support for the immersion centres and outlines some difficulty with the school culture in the dual-track schools. Doell (2011) uses McGillivray (1984) research to reiterate the fact that two programs, the English programming and the French Immersion programming, co-exist with difficulty. The integrity and the effectiveness of having the concept of an immersion program which immerses a child in the secondary language to achieve competency, can be questionable if full immersion is not a feature of the learning environment. Furthermore, Safty's (1992) research in a socio-political analysis, questions the integrity and effectiveness of the dual-track school culture by stating that the effectiveness of acquiring French in an English dominant environment reduces the goal of French Immersion, and acquiring the same competency as an Immersion Centre impossible.

In a dual-track school, the instructional materials made available to immersion teachers are, unsurprisingly, in English; this means they cannot be used as French immersion materials in the classroom unless translated or alternate textbooks are found. Translation requires a great resource requirement of time and money to interpret the material and then the correct vocabulary to use to communicate the information in French. This places a great deal of unneeded pressure on the teachers. As shown in Figure 2, in a Dual-Track school the majority of the staff are not

bilingual, therefore outside the classroom setting, the use and exposure to French would be little to none.

Roles of Teachers and Administration in French Immersion

Cultural Aspect. The acquisition of a second language must be fostered and visibly present in a French Immersion Program. Seashore Louis and Wahlstrom's (2011) study presents findings that school culture matters and is a critical element of effective leadership. Their findings show that both in the public and private organizations, a strong culture is more adaptable, has greater motivation and commitment, is better at resolution with conflicts, and offers a greater chance for innovation occurs which results in higher achievement of goals. Lead by example; all personnel implicated in an Immersion Program should be able to understand and communicate in French. Beauchamp & Parsons (2012) support this in the analysis of their study that "effective leadership was specifically linked to successful student learning." (p.41) In a Dual-track setting, the teachers attempt to foster the culture to assist in the success of the acquisition of French.

In examining the role of a teacher as an instructional leader, it is important to know the definition of a teacher instructional leader. Ghamrawi (2010) "broadens teacher leadership to include classroom teachers who engage in school reform, providing commitment to improving their knowledge and exemplary instructional practices and those who actively engage in helping other teachers."(p.305) Barth (2001) confirms that teachers have leadership potential and their organizations can benefit from that momentum. In a dual-track setting, the French Immersion Teachers then must advocate, must organize the cultural activities, and more. But eventually, this will take a toll on the teacher if there is no support.

French Immersion Teachers. As a teacher in a regular English stream, there are

responsibilities placed on the teachers to assist in developing the culture of the school. However, in the English programming, the government does not require this school culture, but it is more of a positive learning environment for students. With a French Immersion teacher, this is part of their role. They must encourage a French culture in the school, even when the administrators are not competent to do so.

Guimont (2003) research shows the way to a successful dual-track elementary program is to have teachers who are competent and encourage the immersion culture in the school.

“... eight teachers involved in the French immersion program. Four of these were born and raised in Alberta and have Francophone roots. Out of the other four teachers, one was raised in Ottawa, one was from New Brunswick one was from Montreal, and the last one came from France. All of them were raised speaking French at home.” (2003, p.68)

Guimont’s (2003) continues to reiterate the fact that having French speaking teachers and teachers who know the French culture makes it a more Francophone environment for the students to acquire the language and culture:

“... 10 teachers involved in the French immersion program. Four of these teachers were born and raised in Alberta have Francophone roots. Four teachers were born and raised in Quebec. French is their first language. One teacher came from a Caribbean island and was raised by French speaking parents. One teacher is an Anglophone from Alberta and learned French as a second language.” (p.71)

The interpretation of Guimont’s (2003) research demonstrates that the strong French cultural background is the key to the success of the programs as the administration were predominantly English speaking individuals. The francophone cultural influence rested upon the responsibilities of the teacher. The teacher became the instructional leaders when the

administration was unable to fulfill that component. However, placing so much dependency on teachers can lead to teacher dropout. Karsenti et al. (2008) explores why French teachers leave the profession.

“Dropout teachers in French Immersion and French as a Second Language occur in the induction stage of teaching, the first five years with over 50% in the first two years.”

(p.58)

DropOut Teachers. Karsenti et al.’s (2008), “*Why are new French Immersion and French as a second language teachers leaving the profession?*” was conducted as a Canada-wide survey. The category for the data, which was a mixed method, was conducted with 34 former teachers and 167 key informants. The researchers had a difficult time finding former teachers, as they were no longer connected to the profession. With the two groups of participants, the distribution allowed the group of researchers to obtain results in identifying convergences and divergences in the “dropout” phenomenon. The term “drop-out” as defined by Karsenti et al. (2008), means that the novice teacher leaves before being able to fully develop in the career. This typically means within the first seven years. The results of their finding came to 5 dominant conclusions: (1) difficult work conditions; (2) lack of instructional materials; (3) challenges in the relational aspects of teaching; (4) problems of classroom management; (5) initial training and career choice of the drop-out teacher.

Firstly, Karsenti et al. (2008) identified that difficult work conditions are a major cause of French Immersion teachers leaving the profession. The demands of a teacher are so time consuming that it interferes with the personal interests of the individual. This causes unhealthy conditions and contributes to the departure. The beginning teachers are overwhelmed with the administrative duties that are required and instructing subject areas that they never studied. For

the beginning French immersion teachers, they will have to create, translate, and find resources if there are none available or if a culture of collaboration does not exist in the school. Doell's (2011) analysis does identify a difficulty in finding fully bilingual teachers. Therefore, once they are identified, the supports need to be in place in order to keep them.

Secondly, Karsenti et al. (2008) findings identify a lack of instructional materials in French as another reason some teachers leave the profession. This is particularly true for immersion, because the language of teaching does not always correspond to the language of the community. Finding resources to help instruct a subject matter in a secondary language is very time consuming when one lives in the Anglophone dominant society of the Canadian Prairies. If the school culture does not have a collaborative environment or if there is no other French immersion teacher in the grade level, then this could pose difficulties with beginning teachers. Sharing does not always come naturally. Karsenti et al. (2008) identify that "veteran teachers seem to have plenty of teaching materials (handouts, books, dictionaries, etc.), whereas new teachers must develop or buy them."(p.15).

In a collaborative environment or networking with colleagues, this will facilitate the induction of a new teacher into the educational team. Without collaboration a sense of alienation or isolation become evident and teacher will not stay. This sense of alienation or isolation can be seen at times in a dual-track Immersion Program, where there is only one teacher that teaches a certain subject and/or level.

Finally, Karsenti et al. (2008) identify classroom management or lack of interest in the profession as a cause of attrition of teachers. Classroom management is not found in a textbook but more so in the practical experience. Some universities, like the University of Alberta, have taken out the component of classroom management (anonymous, 2014). This is not going to

help the novice teachers. From large class sizes to large ratio of behavioral students, these are some of the realities that new teachers are faced with. More and more there are students with defiant behavior in classrooms, whether it be a shift in society or a child's home environment. In French immersion, teachers are now increasingly seeing the learning difficulty or behavioral students where this was typically an elite program. They also identify that there is a lack of initial interest in the profession or an idealized view of the teaching profession. In both cases, Karsenti et al. (2008) place the blame on the formation of the education -- in other words, the practical experiences are not reality.

Administrators in a Dual-track school. In Chapter 5 of the Alberta Education Handbook for French Immersion Administrators, it clearly mandates that "school administrators have a responsibility to create and nurture a school culture that supports the goals of the French Immersion program". (2014, p.45) In order for an administrator to assist the teachers, they must understand the demands, find adequate resources to assist in the learning, assist in the inclusion of the French Immersion in the school culture, find time for the teachers to collaborate with other French Immersion teachers, and more. Guimont (2003) concludes that administrators need to be given more opportunities to receive assistance in the daily challenges of leading a dual-track school. There is a need for understanding of the demands for the staff and the French immersion teachers, the feeling of inclusion into the school culture for all students where everyone is invested into the success of the program. This includes the French Immersion success where the French Immersion model is seen throughout the school, and with it an understand on how to achieve the best results for French language skills:

“The effective operation of a French immersion program in a dual-track school is much more difficult than in a single program school and provides a challenge to school administrators and to parents.” (Alberta Education, p.44)

Alberta Education outlines some aspects that school leaders need to implement in their Dual-Track French Immersion program: strong leadership, common and specific needs for students, that the understanding of needs or activities for one program will be different than another, resources available to each program is being put to good use, visibility of both programs as one enters the school and possible communication made in both French and English to provide an increase in comprehension skills in both languages.

Furthermore, an administrator or a lead teacher should find opportunities to include the French culture in their programming. Alberta Education outlines cultural events that are important to the Francophone communities. These include encouraging participation in theater and musical presentation, in Edmonton they are presentation by l’UniThéâtre and Campus Saint-Jean. As well, promotion of activities including attending or hosting à *Carnaval d’hiver*, going to a *cabane à sucre* or simply celebrating *la Sainte-Catherine* are advocated as these cultural events are part of the learning and appreciation of the French language learning.

An administrator must consider certain elements when hiring a French immersion teacher. Alberta Education outlines some teacher interviewing elements for prospective staff. This can be useful for English administrators seeking efficient teachers for the program. The aspect that may be challenging is Language skills. If the administrator is not bilingual then a secondary person who is proficient could assist in the aspect. In Edmonton Catholic and Edmonton Public, the human resource personnel are bilingual but what happens in smaller

districts? Is the hiring up to the administrator and the human resource personnel who themselves do not understand the language or the needs of the program?

Challenges of Immersion Program

Lack of Qualified French Immersion Teachers.

“There is a shortage of qualified French-immersion teachers in most provinces. In areas where demand for French-immersion services is growing, this shortage means that many districts are unable to provide spaces for all children who wish to enrol in French-immersion programs.” (CCL-CCA, 2007)

According to Michael Tryon, the executive director of the Alberta section of Canadian Parents for French, there is a growing support in all school district for the French Immersion Program. The demand is there. The student enrollment increases each year and so does the need for educators.

Table 1 below is from Statistic Canada, *French Immersion 30 years later*

Table 1

Students enrolled in French immersion in 2000

| | Enrolled in French immersion | Enrolled in Immersion and had started before grade 4 (early immersion) | Girls | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------|---------------|
| | | | Immersion | Non-Immersion |
| Percentage of students | | | | |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 7 | 57 | 64 | 50 |
| Prince Edward Island | 20 | 59 | 58 | 51 |
| Nova Scotia | 12 | 21 | 58 | 49 |
| New Brunswick | 32 | 39 | 61 | 46 |
| Quebec | 22 | 74 | 52 | 48 |
| Ontario | 6 | 57 | 64 | 51 |
| Manitoba | 6 | 90 | 60 | 48 |

| | | | | |
|------------------|---|----|----|----|
| Saskatchewan | 3 | 87 | 65 | 48 |
| Alberta | 4 | 80 | 59 | 47 |
| British Columbia | 2 | 55 | 61 | 49 |

In Alberta, as well as most of the Prairie Provinces, if you are bilingual you will have a greater chance of obtaining a job in a school district (Anonymous, 2014). In a conversation with Human Resource personnel, the district is not accepting applications for the substitution list unless you are French Immersion (Anonymous, 2014). According to the *Conseil canadien sur l'apprentissage*, the demand for French immersion teachers is so severe that some districts in British Columbia have established a form of lottery system for enrollment. The need at the secondary level is greater than elementary as the teacher must have a specialty and be able to teach the subject matter in French. One must ask why is there such need?

The CCL-CCA states that the opportunities to continue education in French are scarce in the Prairies. The 30-50 graduates from the Faculty of Education from Campus Saint-Jean, of the University of Alberta, are promptly hired upon graduation. However, Karsenti et al. (2008) found French Immersion and French as a Second Language teachers leave the profession within the first few years which suggests that these 30-50 graduates may leave the profession in the first few years of teaching.

Teacher attrition in French Immersion. At a secondary school in Alberta, in a semester program, three classes of students had three different teachers in one term, which not only affected the students learning but it affected the credibility of the program. This reiterates the finding of Karsenti et al. (2008) that *teacher drop-out* is not only financially costly but can be costly for the *quality* of teaching. Karsenti, et al. (2008) recommends nine elements to be put in place by the school systems and principals. Support from the provincial government, to arrange a lighter workload and receive the same pay, is needed. Also, support to create a social

networking for new French Immersion teachers at a provincial or national level. There must be support from the all school boards to create a shared network to provide French instructional materials to dual-track school teachers. The universities need to revise their programming to reflect the findings in the research so that students are fully aware of the demands of the job.

Guimont's (2003) research shows the way to a successful dual-track elementary program is to have teachers who are competent and encourage the immersion culture in the school. The encouragement stems from intrinsic motivation. Fullen (2011) states intrinsic motivation can occur when something becomes meaningful, increase in capacity, and exercising judgment. In achieving a common goal a collaborative teaching environment fostered by camaraderie can occur. This becomes apparent when there is a positive culture. In addition, by establishing a trust with the staff and creating a positive culture, the school administrator will see the results of intrinsic rewards occurring with the students and with the teachers.

As department head, part of the role would be a mentorship of new teachers in the French Immersion Program. As York-Barr and Duke (2004) convey, teacher leaders can engage in such things as professional development of colleagues, participation in school improvements, and community involvement. Some teachers can become mentors to beginning teachers and the learning community (teachers, trustees, parents, students, support staff, and administration) participated in the continuation of the school culture. If all parties are not invested in advocating or fostering the acquisition of French in a dual-track school, it can lead to a more aggressive competitive environment, similar to spectators during a Minor Hockey week game.

However, it is the school administrators that have the greatest demands. A suggestion action would be the implementation of a mentoring system that allows for time to collaborate between new teachers and department head. In addition, in the first years of teaching ensure the

tasks are inductive to the educational specialties of new teacher, and remind veteran teachers of the once difficulties they faced with being the new teacher to the profession. Typically, the beginning teachers are handed tasks that none of the other teachers want.

Furthermore, Handford and Leithwood (2013) observed that in order to be an effective leader you must have the trust of the teachers. In order for the teachers to carry out their instructional work effectively, administrators must have a collaborative culture already established prior to the arrival of a new teacher or they will be met with some resistance.

Administrators in a Dual-track school Guimont (2003) indicates that administrators need to be given more opportunities to receive assistance in the daily challenges of leading a dual-track school. There is a need for understanding the demands of the staff and the French immersion teachers -- the feeling of inclusion into the school culture for all.

“The effective operation of a French immersion program in a dual-track school is much more difficult than in a single program school and provides a challenge to school administrators and to parents.” (Alberta Education, p.44)

Alberta Education outlines some aspects that school leaders need to implement in their Dual-Track French Immersion program: strong leadership, common and specific needs for students, that the understanding of needs or activities for one program will be different than another, resources available to each program are being put to good use, visibility of both programs as one enters the school and possible communication made in both French and English to provide and increase in comprehension skills in both languages.

Furthermore, an administrator or a lead teacher should find opportunities to include the French culture in their programing: theater and musical presentation, attending or hosting à

Carnaval d'hiver, going to a *cabane à sucre* or simply celebrating *Saint-Jean Baptiste*. But the cultural events are part of the learning as the students use non-academic language in this setting.

An administrator must consider certain elements when hiring a French immersion teacher. If the administrator is not bilingual then a secondary person who is proficient could assist in the aspect of assessing French Language competency. In larger school districts there tends to have a bilingual human resource personnel. This is not the case in hamlet districts. Hiring for a program where none of the personnel speak French will be a challenge for the district's program success.

Despite all of the challenges in a Dual-Track setting, there is a potential solution with the implementation of an instructional leader, in the capacity of a department head.

The Need for a French Immersion Department Head in a Dual-Track Setting

In an Immersion Centre, the administrators, teachers, librarians and educational assistance all have the same goal. They work collaboratively in achieving a positive learning environment, fostering the acquisition of bilingual competency in the students. This intrinsic motivation becomes natural for the environment. In a dual-track school, the common goal is fostering a positive learning environment for all students. This does not include an emphasis on bilingual competency. A Department Head, could assist in fostering this sub-culture within the school's greater mandate.

Raelin (2006) discussed intrinsic motivation when mentioning collaboration. Building a strong culture of collaboration, the principal then can move forth with the concept of collaborative leadership. Raelin (2006) states that collaborative leadership is possible when vested interest is given to all participants as everyone has different levels of expertise. When an administrator does not know how to assist or what the demands are for the French Immersion

program, a Department Head, which is a teacher that has this vested interest in the success of the program, can be the level of expertise needed. Hallinger and Heck's (2010) findings support collaborative leadership and conclude that there is an indirect impact on positive growth in student learning resulting in a growth in academic capacity.

Doell's (2011) research presented a great amount of support for the immersion centres and outlines some difficulty with the school culture in the dual-track schools.

In order to define an instructional leader one must examine the two words: instructional and leader. According to Webster (2001), a leader is "a person who has commanding authority or influence." Webster (2001) also defines instructional as "the action or process of teaching: the act of instructing someone." Using this definition, I would say an instructional leader is someone who guides those who instruct the students. According to Hautin (2004), Évelyne Billey took the time after school to host workshops to help the next group of teachers who were embarking, or were chosen to take, on the role of the first French Immersion teacher in the school. By doing so Mme Billey possessed the qualities of an instructional leader by supporting the teachers who were embarking on new territory.

As Hoerr (2008) mentioned, "principals should be instructional leaders" (p. 85) therefore they are not managers. According to Hoerr (2008), the principal's role, as instructional leader, has changed from the former specialist in instruction to a facilitator to the teacher's role as an instructor. Hoerr (2008) states that even though the role of the principal has changed the assumption that the principal has more skill and knowledge than anyone in the building has remained. However, this assumption is not valid in a dual-track immersion program. Therefore, the implementation of a department head is not the role of a principal, but more of a facilitator to assist teachers.

To illuminate this inquiry, I looked at three secondary teachers from three different secondary school districts, who expressed their view on why there is a need: a French immersion teacher, a francophone teacher and an English Language Arts teacher. The French Immersion teacher stated that the department head was imperative for the acquisition of resources in French as well as for her program. Prior to having a Department Head she felt a sense of isolation, afterwards she found collaboration and the program flourished (Anonymous, 2014). The Francophone teacher encourages the Department Heads to work with the new teachers and acquires the resources needed for special needs students in Français. (Anonymous, 2014) The English Language Arts teacher said that when working in an immersion school without a department head, she felt a sense of disorganization and segregation. Being the minority program in the school, there was a sense of urgency to leave the school environment for she did not feel the validation for their department. (Anonymous, 2014)

In fact, Hallinger and Murphy (2013) conclude that having a principal as the sole instructional leader for school improvement must have comprehensive and practical solutions as to not leave the principal “running on empty.” This is why for the benefit of the principal, the beginning teachers and the credibility of the program in a dual-track French Immersion, that there be a department head that can assist the principal with the particular needs of the program. The French Immersion Department head can assist in the culture of the school by organizing cultural activities associated to enhance the learning of the students and assist in the mentorship of the new French Immersion teachers.

Hallinger and Murphy (2013) explore some strategies for school leaders to engage in the role of instructional leader both productively and sustainably; but with all the administrative work that a principal does they could use some assistance. Ghamrawi (2010) concluded after

examining several studies that principals are charged with sponsoring and promoting teacher leadership. In doing so, the principal is indirectly creating a school culture that fosters not only the growth of the teacher leader but also the growth of the students. Tan (2012) looks at leadership as supportive and not authoritative. Therefore, the Department Head would take the role of supporting teachers and assisting administrators.

Handford and Leithwood (2013) observed, that in order to be an effective leader you must have the trust of the teachers in order for the teachers to carry out their instructional work effectively. As with most dual-track school, the administrator does not have the background knowledge of the Immersion Program, the teachers will lack the trust in the administrator because their program seems devalued. Beauchamp and Parsons (2012) support this in the analysis of their study that “effective leadership was specifically linked to successful student learning.” (p.41)

Printy and Marks (2006) discussed this theory of shared leadership that will give opportunities to the teachers and help the principals with their already quite demanding role. Printy and Marks (2006) state that “leadership is a set of practices or tasks that can and should be carried out by people at all levels of an organization.” (p.126) Printy and Marks (2006) explain that by sharing leadership and creating social interaction the leaders and the followers then collaborate to create “relationships and webs of influence among individuals who have common interests and goals.” (p.126) In addition, most effective organizations work through collaboration and shared leadership. In order to have this collaboration or opportunity for teachers in a leadership role, there must be a positive environment to do so. York-Barr and Duke (2004) state the ideal conditions for a teacher leadership role to transpire are influenced by the school culture, roles, relationships and the overall structure. Also, collaboration and shared leadership must be

established as part of the culture. In addition, York-Barr and Duke (2004) explain that to be successful in a teacher leadership role the administration and the teacher leader need to work closely together and encourage feedback. The department head would work closely with the teachers to ensure that the needs of the program are being met and are being valued. Also, working with the administration to ensure that the administration is aware of how the program is evolving and building.

In summary, if one is to have a successful immersion program in a Dual-Track setting in Alberta or other provinces, not only must one prioritize ensuring the curriculum is being met, but trying to maintain the fluent competency and ensuring the cultural activities required by the provincial programming implies a need for further support. Therefore, in examining all the research there is a need to have a department head for the French Immersion program in a dual-track setting. Évelyne Billey became a lead instructor in the development of the French Immersion program in Québec, which moved towards the other parts of the country. She was the support needed by new teachers when embracing the journey of immersion. Moving forward, ensuring the integrity and the effectiveness of the immersion program that historically has been successful.

Chapter 3

Rational

The previous chapter presented information as to the past, the present and the challenges with regards to a French Immersion Program in a Dual-track setting, and how this differs from an Immersion Centre. A possible resolution to the challenges, such as cultural events, support for beginning and veteran teachers, including the French in the school culture, etc., is the implementation of a Department Head in the dual-track school. This chapter will give an outline of the Department Head for a French Immersion program in a dual-track school and how this role will assist in the development of an efficient and successful program. The position is significant for it will not only assist the teachers, in a dual-track program but it will help the administrators with the struggles and high expectations that are faced with the curricular demands of a French Immersion Program. I believe that the resolution to the difficulties with the dual-track setting can be diminished by the implementation of a Department Head *or a mandatory French Immersion Administrator*. However, according to a member of a university, very few number of French immersion teachers desire a position as administrator (Anonymous, 2015). The member of the university does not understand why this is. My thoughts are with the high demands that the program as well as the parents. Today parents are quite implicated in everything to do with their child. Also, in the first few years of teaching, there are a lot of demands placed on the French Immersion teachers to find resources or translation of resources. This is another reason why the Department Head would be a good position, as this would be someone who has a vested interest in the success of the program and can still remain teaching. A teacher, who actively participates in the daily routines of the program, would understand the

needs that not only a beginning teacher has, but also be able to retrieve the necessities that are part of the programming.

As cities expand and new communities develop so do new schools. The dual-track immersion programs are more prominent than an Immersion Centre for economic reasons. If a new community is built, the government will not fund a fully immersion school in the area, if the demands of the community are predominantly English programming. However, as explained in The Globe and Mail article, with the growing demand for French Immersion, “Since 2006, the demand for places in French Immersion programs has increased by 12 per cent.” (p.1) (Campbell, 2013), there is a need for more and more efficient programming. If the dual-track setting is the only option, and there are not enough bilingual administrators, then the solution is the Department Head of immersion programming.

Purpose for a Department Head

The Department Head in a Dual-Track system would be the lead teacher in the implementation of the French immersion programming to ensure the effectiveness and the success of the program in a dual-track school. The Department Head would have a series of responsibilities that would assist in the cultural, community and the administrative responsibilities. In this chapter, I will discuss further detailed and provide an explanation regarding the role and responsibilities related to a Department Head position.

In discussion with a former and a current immersion teacher, there were common needs for a French Immersion Department Head. The role of the Department Head may include (explanation and examples to follow):

1. Cultural Responsibilities: organizing cultural events perhaps with other schools

2. Community Building Responsibilities as a lead teacher for French Immersion: find resources related to subject matter in French, French Immersion Professional Development opportunities, liaison for collaboration with other teachers in other districts, bring consistency to the department practices for the Immersion program, common assessments and common practices, collaborative course outlines for different levels
3. Administrative responsibilities: be the neutral party in conflict resolutions (students, parents, etc.), oversee the provincial final exams (diplomas, PAT, etc.), foster the French Identity with the staff and students in a Dual track school, representative for the department of French Immersion in the school community, be the voice for French Immersion Program during budget meetings, etc.

Possible Responsibilities of the Department Head

Cultural Responsibilities. According the Alberta Government's Handbook for French Immersion Administrators (2014), "celebrating and promoting cultural events that are important to the francophone community." (p. 45) Cultural responsibility is part of the French immersion pedagogy. The Department Head would facilitate the organization of said cultural events to promote the acquisition of more than just a language. This would assist the administrators, who might not even be aware as well as the teachers so the responsibility is not left simply to the French immersion teachers.

In personal discussion (2015) with a colleague, who currently teaches in a dual-track school but was in a French Immersion Center before, she reiterates the struggles when there is no support. For English teachers there were plenty of opportunities for professional development and time to collaborate but none existed for the French Immersion teacher. For example, the assistance during Grade level reading was available for the English level assessments but there

was not assistance given to the Grade 6 FLA teacher. When the teacher was in a French Immersion Centre, the support was present for the staff worked together to build a school culture that exemplified the learning of the French language and culture. The teacher explained that in the Immersion Centre, there was a common goal, for example as you walk into the school you saw signs in French. In the dual-track school, this was not the case. According to the Alberta Government's Handbook for French Immersion Administrators (2014), "The visible presence of the two programs as you enter the school" (p. 44) is an aspect of a successful French immersion program. As an educational community, in an Immersion Centre, they celebrated and planned cultural events such as, *Le Carnaval d'hiver*, Religious celebrations both French and English, *le concours oratoire*, *l'épluchette de blé d'inde*, etc. This is one of the needs of a French immersion program as outlined in the Alberta Government's Handbook for French Immersion Administrators (2014), "Celebrate and promote cultural events that are important to the francophone community." (p. 45). This teacher goes on to state that with this year's new Vice Principal, who's teaching background comes from French immersion, she finally has the support needed to ensure the success of students and feels valued as a teacher. In this case, the lack of an invested and French Immersion based administrator, has led to a decrease in overall function in the dual-track system while not meeting the mandated requirements set out by Alberta Education.

Mandin, (1998)'s report, *French Immersion: How it works.*, outlines the importance of not only teaching the curriculum, but also that the district and the school administrators foster the learning of both the second language and the subject matter. In an Immersion Centre, the administrators with the assistance of the teachers organize cultural events or activities to place the students in authentic French environments. By placing the student in an authentic learning

situation such as a Quebec Trip, a cultural activity, this ensures a sense of security for the acquisition of French. There is a need to create the same school culture and opportunities, as in an Immersion Centre. There is a need to bridge the gap between the implicit curriculum and the explicit curriculum of Alberta Education. Implicit is to foster a desire to become functionally bilingual, outside and inside the classroom. The school needs to do more than ensure that the instruction in French equals or is greater than 80% of the subjects. Therefore, the Department Head can organize, with the teachers in the school or in collaborations with other schools, cultural activities (*Carnaval d'hiver*, a *cabane à sucre*, *l'épluchette de blé d'inde* or *la Sainte-Catherine*). The Department Head also can look for local theatre presentations, organizing field trips to the French Quarters or communities, planning a trip to a Francophone city in Canada or out-of-country. The cultural connection to the school is as important as the mandated percentage amount of curriculum taught in the French language, however this is the area which more often is left off the agenda when not supported by a sympathetic administrator in the dual track system.

For example, for a teacher in Edmonton, the Department Head could organize a field trip to a play at *La Cité Francophone* presented by the Francophone theatre group, *l'UniThéâtre*. They can contact the Campus Saint-Jean, the French Campus of the University of Alberta, and attend one of their theatrical productions. For the Catholic schools, they can attend a mass at l'église Saint-Thomas d'Acquin. The Department Head can plan a day with Les Bûcherons, attending a traditional *cabane à sucre*, with dancing and more.

In a secondary school, to continue in Immersion, in Edmonton, there is only one school that is an Immersion Centre. Most of the secondary opportunities tend to be in dual-track setting. At a secondary level, some students wish to participate in exchange opportunities. OSEF (*Organisme de Séjours Educatifs Francophones*), is a Belgian association, founded in 1994 by

Christine LENFANT, that promotes linguistic and cultural exchanges between France, Belgium Spain and Canada. This year, there were a few students that took the opportunity for the exchange and the administration were not certain on the steps needed to ensure the success of the Grade 11 students. This is another example of where a possible Department Head would have been beneficial, was the exchange program.

Also, at a secondary level, there are great opportunities for Immersion Canadian students to participate in bilingual programs at a federal level. They can become ambassadors with the non-profit organization called NAYF/FNJA (*Forum National des Jeunes Ambassadeurs*), although fun and leadership-oriented environment, it also engages students in cultural and linguistic exchanges with each other and learn about the different issues surrounding official bilingualism in Canada. Also, the federally funded program called Explore, which gives the students an opportunity to take a university level course by learning and living in a French community. Finally, the federally funded program, Odyssée, allows students to live and work in a French community over the summer. These are all opportunities, available to French Immersion student or students in French as a Second Language, which the Department Head can present to the high school students, as school administrators may not be aware of these opportunities.

The Department Head can also present options for those who are looking into post-secondary in French. By having representatives from French universities such as l'Université de Saint-Boniface, l'Université d'Ottawa, l'Université de Québec à Québec, l'Université de Québec à Montréal, etc. For the Edmonton area, the Department Head can organize a tour of the Campus Saint-Jean and the programs that are offered. In summary, the Department Head would be given extra time to take on the task of finding the cultural aspects of the French Immersion program.

Finding opportunities outside the classroom to foster the desire to be functionally bilingual outside of school.

Community Responsibilities. As discussed by Karsenti et al. (2008), in a dual-track setting, there is a possibility that the immersion teachers often do not feel supported or a sense of community which may lead to a depreciation in value for their career choice. A bilingual teacher then searches for a new avenue to feel a sense of inclusion and appreciation. If the teacher enjoys teaching, he/she will switch to an English program for it seems to have more benefits and if a teacher does not enjoy teaching, they will leave the profession altogether. According to the inquiry of ACPI/CAIT (Karenti et al., 2008) that demonstrates the reasons why French teachers are leaving the profession, the survey illuminated that the teachers left in the first five years of service (with 50% in the first two years), which appears to confirm the idea that there is a need for guidance. To assist in retention of French Immersion teachers, a Department Head can foster a sense of educational community by bringing a sense of inclusion and value to each teacher in the department.

With the struggles of the French Immersion Program and the high demands for registration, there is a lack of resources (human and educational), the misunderstanding or the neglect of the program by administration. The Department Head can help with this. The Alberta Government handbook (2014), outlines strategies to assist teachers coming into the immersion programs and sometimes administrators in larger schools have difficulties addressing these needs. These are some strategies that would have helped the “drop-out” teachers. The one that is first on the list and an issue that has resonated with Karsenti et al. (2008) is to create a welcoming and supportive environment. This is an essential element in the prevention of teacher attrition in Alberta schools. The majority of the student population is English and therefore to

find resources, translate, organize cultural activities, foster the acquisition of a second language one needs support. The administrator, the districts and the staff must cultivate this culture of support for the Immersion teachers, as they are the minority and at times their needs are forgotten or over looked. It is the idea, if I don't understand it then don't touch it.

The teachers can collaborate in department meetings. With all parties vested, the Department Head can develop a common assessment practice for the department, which will assist new teachers to the program. For example, establishing a common course outline for each level and the division of the grade book giving the value of the midterm, final, course work, etc. Determining certain resources to uses at certain levels, to avoid assessing the same piece at different levels. Example, in French Language Arts determining which novels, films, plays best relates to which outcome at which level. In addition, by having the same course outline, the rules of the department are presented to students and parents, which assist in disputes. Finally, by having the voice of all teachers, everyone in the department has a vested interest in the success of the program. Therefore, teachers can share/discuss some practices that have been successful for them or something new to try that has been introduced during a professional development session.

At an elementary level or a secondary level, the Department Head can assist in finding resources for the teachers and organize meeting with other teachers in other districts, if there is only one school in the district. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) define *practitioner learning communities* as a mechanism for enacting the theory of action to bring about educational and social change. During department meetings, the department head, with the immersion teachers, shed light on the needs of the students. With Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (2009) theory the teachers can present to the Department Head the needs related strictly for the French Immersion

Program. Working the dialectic by removing the idea of “rookie” to the school and “expert” to the school, each one of the immersion teachers can share what their curricular or professional needs are and how a Department Head for the immersion program can help.

Furthermore, at a secondary level, there are typically Department Heads for subject matter, such as English Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education, etc. Each department organizes their department midterms and finals, which are typically a department final, according to level. The departments typically find professional development opportunities for members of their department. The Department Head, for the French Immersion program, can find subject and language related professional development. Also, the Department Head would be responsible in finding the appropriate resources, in French, according to subject and level. Also, due to the common assessments, for midterms and finals in subject areas, the French Immersion Department Head can work with the Social Studies, Math and Science departments to ensure that the translation, of common exams, are done correctly. By doing so, the Department Head could be the one responsible to translate the exam with other Department Heads. In sum, the Department Head is the assistant to all the Immersion teachers in the school and may foster a collaborative community within the school. Please refer to the Appendix 1 for the job description of a French Immersion Department Head in a Dual-track school.

Administrative responsibilities. A personal discussion (2015) with a colleague, who currently teaches in a dual-track school but was in a French Immersion Center before, reiterates the struggles when there is not adequate support. They report that in his/her experience there was support for English Language Arts but there was no support for French Language Arts. The English teachers receive benefits that the French Immersion Teacher does not: time for

collaboration, having a separate meeting for the French Immersion Staff while the other staff has time to prepare, etc. When the teacher was in a French Immersion Centre, the support was present for the staff worked together to build a school culture that exemplified the learning of the French language and culture. Which according the Alberta Government's Handbook for French Immersion Administrators (2014), is part of the administrators responsibility,

“School administrators have a responsibility to create and nurture a school culture that supports the goals of French immersion program.” (p.44)

“While they may find it easier in a French Immersion Center, even when the program is housed in a dual-track setting, administrators can shape the school's culture to fully support the goals of the French immersion and at the same time embrace differences.” (p. 45)

By implementation of a Department Head, one of the responsibilities will be to foster a sense of belonging to the school culture. The French Identity with the staff and students in a Dual track school will now be one of the objectives that the Department Head will need to develop. If the current school culture does not include the French Immersion Program, the Department Head, with the aide of the administrator, will have to implement change. Changing a culture is a task that will take time. However, some step can be made with the support of the school staff. For example, the Department Head can start with installation of bilingual signs around the school: *les toilettes, la bibliothèque, le gymnase, le bureau, etc.* Also, the televised announcement can present some in both languages. The school newsletter, which goes home to parents, can present some cultural activities. At a high school level, the school paper, put together by the students, can have an article or two in French. The Department Head along with the support from the administrators, will be responsible to encourage all staff to foster the new culture.

Today as society changes, school administrators have greater demands than in the past. They are responsible for the nurturing of the school and the financial demands associated to the school. Administrators are not only responsible for the academic success of students, but are responsible for the success of teachers. The support is essential for all. A Department Head can assist in the success of the French Immersion program in the dual-track school.

A responsibility of a Department Head would be mentoring the new teachers. Karsenti et al. (2008) place recommendations to prevent “drop-out” teachers such as mentoring system, lighter workload, support plan, collaboration, a Canada-Wide support for French Immersion teachers, and working with the school board and administrators to assist in attaining the required materials for instruction. The Department Head would organize time for collaboration between new teachers and Department Head, new teachers and veteran teachers, and collaboration of teachers in common levels/subject areas. At times the teacher is alone in the school regarding the subject they teach. Collaboration would be organizing with other teachers in other Dual-Track schools. In addition, in the first years of teaching ensure the tasks are inductive to the educational specialties of new teacher, and remind veteran teachers of the once difficulties they faced with being the new teacher to the profession. Typically, the beginning teachers take on tasks that none of the other teachers want. So, the Department Head must support the new teacher in having an open door policy, which allows the new teacher the opportunity to ask for help, to share ideas and not feel overwhelmed so they leave the profession.

In a town in Alberta, would a Department Head for French Immersion have made a difference in the following situation? I ventured into a town where a fellow classmate was teaching at the junior high level in the French Immersion program. A few years ago, this was a program that was available from Kindergarten to Grade 9. Since my fellow classmate became a

“drop-out” teacher, the program has gone down to a Kindergarten to Grade 6. According to a parent, who was actively promoting the French Immersion Program in the town, there is a large need for teachers in French Immersion and an administrator that is going to promote the program. According to the “drop-out” teacher, my fellow classmate, the difficulty was the feeling of isolation and zero support. The administrators did not have a background in French Immersion, nor did they understand the demands of a teacher in the French Immersion Program. When asked for help, the teacher felt “hung out to dry”. This “drop-out” teacher had a dream to promote and foster growth for the French Immersion program in this town, but due to the lack of support on behalf of the administration for the program and as a beginning teacher, the dream turned into frustration and a departure from the profession. Soon after the teacher left the school and the town, the teacher changed careers, but to this day misses fostering the love of learning in students.

Part of the responsibilities for an administrator, is to attend the Parent Council meeting each month. The goal of this council is to support the school and the school programs when the provincial funding is not enough. An example, the parent council helped purchase of a computer and a new camera for the school year book. As French Immersion Department Head, he/she could attend and voice the needs of the program during the meetings.

In most dual-track schools, the administrators’ language of communication is English and they rarely have a background in French Immersion programming. According to the Alberta Government’s Handbook for French Immersion Administrators (2014), states that in a dual-track school that the planning must reflect the needs of the students and the program. In order for this to occur, there must be a true partnership between school council, principals and those who have invested interest in the success of the program. An emphasis is on the hiring practices of

teachers for the French immersion program. This becomes difficult, if some parties do not understand or know the need of the program. One of the responsibilities of a department head would be to assist in the process of hiring new French Immersion teachers.

In a dual-track secondary school, where the district human resource officer does not speak French, the principal and vice-principals do not speak French and they are to hire the French Immersion teachers. How do they know the level of French of the new hire? They don't. In a secondary level, the students' communication level should not exceed the level of the teacher. This environment makes it difficult for the teacher, the students and places an unneeded stress on the program itself. The Alberta Government's Handbook for French Immersion Administrators (2014) reinforced this by stating:

“Because French Immersion teachers serve as models for students, they should have an excellent command of French. The French oral language proficiency of candidates should be assessed. Not all teachers proficient in French have the teaching methods that will allow them to be effective in the French immersion classroom. The candidate's written language skills should also be assessed.” (p. 47)

If the administrators do not have a proficient command of the language, how can they assess the level of the candidate? This was apparent when a teacher was hired for French Immersion and their educational background consisted of French as a Second Language. Yet, this teacher was expected to teach French Language Arts. The new hire did not have the academic background required for the position at an upper secondary level. However, once the new teacher left unexpectedly, the knowledge of their proficiency was brought to light. This could have been avoided for the teacher, the students and the administration, if there was a level of proficiency establish during the interview process. A Department Head, could have assisted in assessing the

level, in assisting the teacher with the requirements that needed to be met for the Grade level, assisting in preparing the course plan, assisting in improving matters in the classroom, etc. A supportive environment was there, however, proficiency was not which lead to why this teacher “dropped out”, as it was an inappropriate teaching assignment (Karsenti et al., 2008).

In addition, with establishing a common course outline, the teacher now has the support of the Department Head during conflict resolutions. If there are ever any conflicts regarding the weighting of an exam, an assessment, etc., the department head can support the teacher during a parent conference. For example, the department head can assess an assignment, as a second reader, and support the teacher as a seconder regarding assessment. A department head, could attend a lesson of a new teacher, who could be having a difficulty with a student. Afterwards, could share observation of behaviour with classroom management.

Furthermore, the Department Head would be responsible to assist the administrators with provincial exams. Provincial exams, for the French Immersion program, are administered in French and if the administrators are English speaking this processes becomes more challenging. Therefore, a responsibility would be to present at all provincial exams, which the language of instruction would be in French.

Finally, the department head must collaborate and work with the administration. By doing, this ensures that the administrator is aware of what is happening with the program and can help the department head with the financial needs of the program. In a primary setting, the lead teacher/department head would meet with the administrators once a month and be present during budgetary meetings. This will ensure the voice of the Immersion program is heard. In a secondary setting, the department head would prepare an annual budgetary need for the program and would be present during department head meeting to be the voice for the program. During

the department head meetings, the FI department head could present new suggestions to assist in the creation of a school culture that includes the French Immersion program.

Working collaboratively with teachers, administrators, and the school district members, the position of department head/instructional leader must be perceived as necessary to all parties involved with the success of the program. The monetary value must be viewed as minimal for the success of the program. Therefore, the school district and administration must see the value in this position to a lot of funding for it.

Implementation of a Department Head

In order for this to evolve, having a department head in a dual-track school, one would need the support of the school board, the administrators in a dual-track setting, and the teachers. As a Department head, one can say that the teacher would now transition to a position of Instructional Leader. As an instructional leader, the teacher would help find resources that were needed, help with understanding the academic aspects of the different subjects being instructed in French, assist in the professional development of the beginning teachers, organize the cultural aspects needed for the program, and help the administration with the tools for the success of the program. In addition, ensure that there is a voice for the French Immersion Program, that the program is visibly noticeable in the school, will facilitate the hiring of French Immersion staff, the translation of common exams, the organization of cultural events and support for teachers new and veteran ones, embarking on new instructional assignments.

One could say the addition of a French Immersion Program to an English school with an English administrator is similar to giving a new piece of technology to someone not accustomed to using it (or without the instructions), there needs to be some level of assistance. This assistance can be found in a Department Head for the Immersion Program. Someone who has

years of experience in teaching in the French Immersion curriculum and has a passion for its continued success.

Conclusion

For a program that is valued across the country politically and economically, it is a program that has the “revolving door” syndrome for teachers, it is important that there be leadership for all stakeholders (students, staff, parents). To maintain the credibility of French Immersion in a dual-track setting, a Department Head can ensure the acquisition of efficient and effective teachers. In a dual-track setting, the department head is imperative in keeping the French Immersion department inclusive, organized and ensuring French Immersion is visibly part of the school culture. It also may help in the development of a sense of pride for the implicit curriculum, acquisition of the Francophone cultural. The inquiry gives possible solution with the demands of a program and the economic status of Alberta. In some aspects, one could say ideally having a district leader or a French Immersion administrator in a dual-track setting, would be the ideal situation. But in the current state of our economy, in conversation with superintendent, who expressed that funding was so rash that four personnel were laid off due to budget concerns. This inquiry brought insight for the need of a leader, coach and support for the French Immersion Program in a dual track school.

Chapter 4

Based upon encouragement from my former administrator, I applied for the graduate program at the University of Victoria in the Master in Education - Curriculum and Leadership in 2013. This was a stable point in my career, during which I was taking on leadership roles in the school where I taught. Working closely with the administration, we were planning on how the school would function and my role within the junior high. On March 13th, 2013, I received my letter of acceptance. I was nervous and excited at the same time. I was ready for the challenge and was comfortable in what I would be teaching the following year. However, while attending the school ski trip, I received a message to meet with the principal, upon return. On March 27th, 2013 at 8:15am, my professional life changed. I was told that due to the number of students going to the new school, my position had been transferred. I thought to myself why has God done this to me again? As soon as I am comfortable at a school, I am moved. When I received my new assignment, realizing I had only taught 1 of the 7 courses. I now became a “beginning teacher”. My professional and educational plates were suddenly full.

Change in Professional Thinking

After the first two classes of our first summer, I thought, “what was I thinking?” Through the process of acquiring my Masters in Education, my thoughts regarding the system to which I passed through and I currently work in, has changed. As a student/child, I attended various educational systems across Canada. Attending regular French Immersion schools and the military ones, the instruction was very much a “*top-down model*”, the transmission of information. This did not vary with the teacher nor the province. Through the courses and readings taken within this program, I finally understood it was how researchers at a University deemed the best practices. Now, these were often specialists that had never taught in an

elementary school in their lives. Since I did not know any better, I just knew that every school I attended, functioned in the same way. But they were the “specialist” for they took data and created a theory.

The idea of grounded theory, is to generate or discover a theory’ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In exploration for my research project, the theory of French Immersion is an adapted result of Grounded Theory. It was a theory that had no qualitative or quantitative data, but was actually determined by mothers. The theory transpired due to Murielle Parkes, Olga Melikoff, and Valerie Neale, from Québec, who were not experts in education, nor completed a quantitative or qualitative research study, but they had a theory. However, researchers followed the first group to determine the advantages or disadvantage of the program. The advantages definitely won the battle as this theory has grown across Canada in every province.

Entering into the professional aspects of education, I began in a school environment that was very much a “*top-down model*” in a French Immersion Center. This is how things were done and you were to do what you are told. As a new teacher, the fear of job loss was an element. There was no collaboration, except the ones foster by the teachers themselves. The same leadership style as seen by Stalin, however, we are fortunate enough to have a union. I soon assimilated into the role as a teacher who followed what I was told without question. The pressures of Provincial Achievement Tests, lack of support from administration and the high demands associated to preparing and marking, could have rendered me to quite the profession. I almost did.

Due to rapid growth of technology in society, provincial education is always evolving to seek new and better ways to administer to the demands of the workforce and society. But not all theories work for all educational needs. A new theory, which took our collaboration time and

turned it into weekly professional development, did not function for a French Immersion setting. I never questioned the “top-down model”, until this one theory was implemented. Reeves’ (2004) theory of “no zero” removed the responsibility off the student and placed a new task on the teacher. The practice was frustrating. Chasing after students for an entire semester or year was an added task on already overwhelmed teachers. Once again, a theory, that doesn’t meet the needs of all students, in all environments and in all cities. Because this theory was so successful, for student dropout reduction, in one school in one city, was a solution for the Alberta’s high school dropout percentage.

But this practice deteriorated the Alberta education system and frustrated the work force. Was the old practice wrong? The pedagogical practices of my learning as a student, when you were given a task, you completed it, you submitted it and the assessment was done. Is this not how society works? But why not listen to the teachers, why not listen to the person that will be affected by change. Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle's (2009) powerful theory of action that places the practitioner and practitioner’s knowledge at the center of the vision for education. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) define *practitioner-learning communities* as a mechanism for enacting the theory of action to bring about educational and social change. Before reading Cochran-Smith and Lytle, I felt I didn’t have a right to a voice in a large school where I was the newbie. In the process of my masters, I realized that teachers must voice when new theories are presented. By criticizing the theory and not the one who was sent to deliver the new theory that will be implemented in all schools. During discussion, all members that are involved with the business of education should partake in the dialectic for change by sharing a critical opinion of the theory, as they have a vested interest in the success of their students.

Furthermore, when I explored, Desirae E. Krell and Nancy Fichtman Dana's (2012) powerful theory of action research as professional development and the use of a facilitator. Krell and Dana (2012) define action research "as systematic, intentional study by teachers of their own practices" (p. 828). Throughout Krell and Dana's (2009) article, they discuss their concepts on inquiry by the use of action research as a professional development with the use of a research coach. This is significant to me in a theoretical stance for it transforms the idea of collaboration and improving educational practices by the means of voluntary inquiry. The relationship in collaboration and coaching are all in a didactic manner and not imposed on the teacher and the participants. With my new knowledge, I have the confidence to approach the administrations and work with the administration in the school, to identify what works for my students and how can it improve. Taking on a leadership role, I work with the new teacher in the program, so the teacher does not feel overwhelmed and has a desire to leave the profession.

Reinforcing Professional thinking

As a young child moving from one city to another, which meant one school to another. I remember my Grade 3 year, we moved to Ottawa to be near my grandmother, who was the most important person to me, the subjects I tended to succeed at were not those where the teacher yelled at me, but in fact the ones where the teacher took the time to know me. According to Loughran (2013), the teaching-learning relationship means that the teacher takes the curriculum outcomes and focuses instruction on the needs of the students. In doing so, the teacher is present and sensitive to the transmission of information and restructures the deployment of the material according to the reactions of the students. This concept of Loughran was what exactly my Math, English and Religion teacher did. She praised me in Math for my successes, for I was strong,

and encouraged me with English, as this was not my strength. But she knew when things were not going well with my grandmother.

As a teacher, I have learnt from my teachers on what is effective and what is not. The teaching-learning relationship is extremely important, as this is why I became a teacher. A teacher saw beyond the curriculum and found a way to engage my learning. To merely recite a curriculum and not notice the reception of the information means that a computerized program can replace me. For some students this way of receiving information works well but for others it is ineffective. As the computer does not take into consideration how the student identifies with the text. After reading the information regarding pedagogy, for example John Loughran, I knew that I was on the right track with my teaching. I do not separate my teaching from my learners. I learn about the students and it helps me differentiate the outcomes to appeal to the interests of the uniqueness of the group and individuals. Furthermore, I will continue to place importance throughout my career to problematize my practice in order to attend to this teaching-learning relationship.

In one of the course readings, I was introduced to John Loughran. Loughran's perception of *pedagogy*, reinforces particularly the teaching-learning relationship and that teaching should be problematic (2013). These ideas have redefined a traditional understanding of the term *pedagogy*. When I began my career, pedagogy simply meant "teaching", Loughran helped me uncover the complexity of pedagogy by seeing beyond the teaching.

To Loughran (2013), the teaching-learning relationship means that the teacher takes the curriculum outcomes and focuses instruction on the needs of the students. In doing so, the teacher is present and sensitive to the transmission of information and restructures the deployment of the material according to the reactions of the students. Loughran reinforces this

concept by referencing Mason's (2009) concept of *noticing* which offers teachers a device to improve their teaching practices. Loughran (2013) quotes Mason's definition of *noticing* as “an opportunity to act appropriately ... requires three things: being present and sensitive to the moment, having reason to act, and having a different act come to mind” (p. 121). This practice is significant to me, because I teach courses in French, a second language to my students. In order to successfully teach in a second language, I must find creative activities that speak to the different types of learners in my classroom (visual learner, auditory learner, and the kinaesthetic methods). Therefore, Loughran's teaching-learning relationship helps me to differentiate my instruction in these ways. In class, I ask my teens what challenges weigh them down. For a teen, a 1 year relationship is equivalent to 10 years of marriage for an adult. Everything is intensified and creating a positive teaching-learning relationship, can allow a trust to build with the teens. By doing so, in a non-academic fashion, the student can trust someone else in their lives or someone at all.

This journey of writing my capstone has opened my eyes to leadership qualities that are necessary for implementation of change. Focusing on the French Immersion programming, it made me realize that change needs to occur for the betterment of the growing demands. There are not enough teachers to fill the job demands. During the academic journey, I learnt how a courageous young teacher, Évelyne Billey, took on a great challenge and from there helped other teachers achieve the same success. This is the power of Cockran-Smith and Lytle (2009) key success of the practitioner inquiry communities; the relationship between the dynamics must be *dialectic*. Cockran-Smith and Lytle (2009) defines *dialectic* as the open communication between the researcher and the teacher to form the practitioner learning communities. In these communities, information is valued as equal; the value of experts and value of the novices are

regarded as equal. This thinking, I believe, was the foundations to the success of French Immersion programming for the equal value communication between researcher and teacher, leader and follower, theory and practice. By doing so, the teacher, Évelyne Billey became a practitioner researcher and assisted in the collection of data in the form of practice. In fact, all participants then matter. This is significant because, the inquiry was done by mothers, the teacher had a voice in the inquiry and the researchers were not the experts, for it was the teacher that then created the community and assisted in developing best practices as she progressed with the new theoretical program.

Influential in my career

I know my graduate experience will be influential in my future as an educator as I have already been utilizing elements of my readings. In my summer 2013 courses, I figured out why I instruct the way I do. The gift of noticing and the relationships between teacher-learners, makes me a teacher that cares. I knew I was doing something right but didn't know why. After the readings, I stopped making an excuse as to caring about the success of my students and just responded with, "check out John Loughran and Mason." Also, during parent-teacher interviews, a parent thanked me for noticing a change in her child and contacting her. There was a lot more going on with the child than her learning and noticing, assisted the student in acquiring the help they needed. The environment one grew up in will determine some aspects of how one teaches. According to my mother, I was a very observant child, noticing elements in any imitate environment.

During the process of inquiry, I decided that I could be like Évelyne Billey and help those who want to teach immersion. I have commenced assisting the beginning teacher with planning, teaching and more. This process of acquiring my master's has given me the insight,

that I too can be an Évelyne Billey and be the voice of change through collaboration and determination.

I have also inquired about pursuing a PhD in the field of education, concentration Immersion Education. Quite the change from 2006, after I completed a year and a half of teaching, I declined a full-time position in teaching to pursue other areas. I was offered a job working for *La Fédération française de rugby (FFR)* in France but my sister was expecting her third child and so I stayed. In choosing to stay in Edmonton, I switched school districts and God guided me into this direction. If I had not had the positive administrator, I would have fallen out of teaching and would have never found myself writing this paper. Therefore, I would like to one day, be the professor at the university to assist in implementation of change for the future teachers in Alberta, or whichever province I am in.

Influential in my school

In my school, I have taken on the role of administrator designate, when the administrators are away, which is at least one a month. Something I had never considered, until I read *Change Leader* by Michael Fullan and learnt more about the role of a leader and implementation of change. After the second summer session, of my Master's, I felt more prepared and more confident that I could be a positive leader in an Immersion school. Also, I had been listening to the staff, all last year and with similar frustrations, I found the confidence to pursue the administrator designate for the school in preparations for the future. Having established the confidence of my peers, during my times as the administrator designate, they communicated with me in times of difficulties with students. I hope to one day apply to be an administrator in a Dual-track or Immersion Centre. As immersion is a program that is growing and so is my passion for its success.

Though the discovery process of my research paper, I have found information about administration requirements in a Dual-track or Immersion Centre. I have already proposed the need for a French Immersion Department Head for the school with the superintendent of the board. In working with the administrations, I have been assisting them in identifying the needs of the French Immersion Program. By organizing the outing for the French Immersion Students as a cultural aspect, I am including the administrators as one of the chaperons. In order to see the need for change, one must see what change looks like. I am organizing for a group to attend a play produced by the Francophone theatre company.

Influential in my school district

I know my graduate experience will be influential in my future as an educator, but as a part of my school district it is limited. The way that the school district functions is very much a top-down model. There is some dialogue on certain matters, but the method of change is not done in Cockran-Smith and Lytle's (2009) *dialectic* format. The idea of open communication between the teachers, administrators and board members are essentially to form the practitioner learning communities. However, like my position was displaced, anyone's can be without prior discussion.

On the other hand, I took the initiative to communicate with the superintendent of our district to discuss the future of the immersion programs in the district. I am pleased to say that I was invited to a stakeholders meeting to discuss with the French Immersion administrators and the superintendent of the board.

In conclusion, during this process, I realized that I would like to further my research in French Immersion. I would like to examine the demographical areas of the school, the engagement of parents, (parent-teacher interviews, parent council (Div. 1, 2, 3, 4), are parents

former immersion students, parental careers, etc.) to understand the growth of the program across Canada focusing in Alberta. In addition, I would to complete a qualitative study, follow the thoughts and experiences of an future teachers in Immersion from 1st year University to 3rd year of teaching and how the impacts of a leader on beginning French Immersion teachers (examining the culture, the collaborative environment for success, how improvements are explained).

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The Department Head/Lead Teacher will be responsible for:

1. Provide assistance to school administrators and French Immersion staff in improving teacher instruction and student learning.
2. Assist the school administration with the educational needs of the French Immersion Program.
3. Work collaboratively with French Immersion teachers in providing support.
4. Work with other departments to create common assessments in other subject areas that are instructed in French (for French Immersion Students)
5. Assist the school administrators in mentoring beginning teachers in improving instructional practices.
6. Location Professional development opportunities, in French, for French Immersion staff.
7. During department meetings and in collaboration with teachers, collect, analyze and establish strategies for improvements to student learning.
8. Participate in budget development and recommend budget expenditures for material resources for the French Immersion Program.
9. Assess which resources will be used for each level, for the French Immersion Program, which corresponds to the Program of Studies.
10. Assist teachers in the development of year plans, unit plans and daily plans, as well as appropriate student assessments and reporting requirements.
11. Plan, schedule and implement cultural activities related to the French Immersion programs and levels.

12. Assist school administration in parent and student information related to the French Immersion Program as well as student registration.
13. Assist in the hiring practices of teachers and educational assistants for the French Immersion Programs.
14. Attend the monthly department head meetings.
15. Other duties as assigned by the School Principal for the French Immersion Program.