

FOLIO PAPER ONE: A PERSPECTIVE ON MOTIVATION  
AS AN ELEMENT IN THE PERSISTENCE AND  
PROFICIENCY OF THE SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNER

FOLIO PAPER TWO: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MOTIVATION  
OF THE STUDENT OF A SECOND LANGUAGE IN A  
SMALL SCHOOL/RURAL SCHOOL SETTING

FOLIO PAPER THREE: PUTTING RESEARCH INTO  
PRACTICE - FOLLOW-UP AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR THE MOTIVATION OF SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNERS

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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- Folio Paper One:** A Perspective on Motivation as an Element in the Persistence and Proficiency of the Second-Language Learner
- Folio Paper Two:** An Assessment of the Motivation of the Student of a Second Language in a Small School/Rural School Setting
- Folio Paper Three:** Putting Research into Practice - Follow-up and Future Recommendations for the Motivation of Second-Language Learners

*by*

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## Abstract

Although many second-language teachers would like to live in a world where all children eagerly look forward to French class, it is fair to say that, though there are students like that out there, they are far outnumbered by those who just do not like French. There are no doubt students whose problems and situations reach far beyond generalized suggestions for motivation. There are, however, many students who need to see a reason to listen to their teacher once in a while, and to realize how learning a second language can be important to them. These students need to be motivated - a concept which forms the basis of the three folio papers herein.

Folio Paper One addresses past and current issues pertaining to how and why researchers see motivation as part of a learner's success. This paper includes references to various studies which have attempted to define and explain second-language learners' achievements by studying the influences of various motivational factors. As well, it addresses issues of how motivation has been seen to be a factor in the attitudes of second-language learners and their subsequent persistence and/or attrition from programs. Finally, it reviews past and present literature on the concepts of integrative, instrumental, and assimilative motivation. It also reviews how these concepts have been seen to function in the second-language learner, and how they influence his/her desire to learn and achieve.

Folio Paper Two relates the literature on the motivation of the small/rural school student to personal experience of a teacher of a second language in a rural school. It attempts to show, through this personal situation, how the motivation of the small/rural school student is an integral part of second-language interest, proficiency, and persistence. It also presents a discussion of a survey completed by three rural Newfoundland Grade 7 classes. The survey explored their motivation and factors contributing to it. This paper will then attempt to link personal experience to results of the completed survey to determine recommendations and suggestions as to how best the typical small/rural school student can be motivated in the second-language classroom.

Folio Paper Three, using as a background current research and literature on the relationship between the motivation of second-language learners and their persistence and proficiency, provides concrete examples of how we might motivate our second-language students. It takes into account learner differences, interests, and geographical location. It attempts to focus on the results of the previously mentioned student survey when looking at activities which may motivate the second-language student.

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## **Folio Paper One**

**A Perspective on Motivation as an Element in the  
Persistence and Proficiency of the Second-Language Learner**



## Introduction

There are many issues which come to mind when one considers the learning, competency, production, and proficiency of students in a second-language classroom. Second-language teachers are constantly seeking information on studies which discuss the benefits of various teaching styles, differences in learner cognition and strategies, theories on second language acquisition, and the ultimate success or failure of students in becoming fluent and/or accurate in their second language. There is yet another area of interest which seems to have become an important concern and about which educators have been seeking more knowledge. This is the issue of *motivation* and its current role in second-language theory and practice.

This paper attempts to inform the reader about what motivation is, why it matters to the learner in a second-language learning environment, and how it is important to the second-language teacher who is attempting to foster an enjoyable yet also proficiency oriented learning milieu. As motivation is essentially an inherent desire to do something, it is understood that motivation meets a need, is goal directed, and provides a reasonable chance for success.

## **What is Motivation?**

There is no doubt that motivation is often a driving force in many areas of student expectations and success - not just in second-language learning. However, second-language teachers often find themselves faced with the very difficult task of teaching something that students do not want to learn. Students believe their "own language is enough to get by on" or they "don't really need to know how to say something another way if they can say it one way," or they'll "never have to speak to anyone other than in English anyway." This often becomes the basis for teachers' desire to see how better they can motivate their students to want to learn a second language.

Brown (1987) defines motivation as "an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to a particular action" (p. 114). Youssef (1980) suggests that motivating an individual basically means causing him or her to exert high effort because he or she perceives that doing so will pay off in some desired outcomes. Miller and Seller (1990), refer to Maslow's theory of human motivation based on the premise of human needs being in a hierarchy. Thus, once low level needs, such as physical necessities are met, higher level needs of security, identity, and self-esteem, which involve the desire for achievement, mastery, and competency, then become important for self-actualization. In other

words, individuals, once they have received food, water, warmth, etc., will then seek to fulfill the needs to achieve and master - factors which play a role in second-language learning. This is a premise of the behaviourist approach to motivation which assumes that we have basic psychological needs that motivate - hunger, thirst, sex, and so on. These needs are met by primary reinforcers, such as food, drink, etc. When these needs are met, certain events and experiences are associated with the primary reinforcers. These associated events become secondary reinforcers (Woolfolk, 1993). It follows that if our students come to school without their physical needs being met, they may not be disposed to achieve.

In no way does this paper attempt to say therefore that all students can be motivated to the same degree given the varied problems which they bring to the classroom. Similarly, it does not attempt to solve these problems, but it does attempt to provide a generalized look at how motivation can be enhanced in many circumstances. Ausubel (1968) lists six factors that account for human motivation. They include: (1) exploration, (2) manipulation, (3) activity, (4) stimulation, (5) knowledge, and (6) ego-enhancement. These factors may be applied to the explanation of how certain needs motivate certain people to learn something, including a foreign language. For example, exploration, manipulation, and activity in the language could lead to interest, stimulation, and knowledge.

## Research in Motivation

Pioneers in the study of motivation of language learners have been Gardner and Lambert (1972). They conducted extensive research into the question of why some people learn a foreign language quickly while, in the same situation, others fail to do so. They dealt primarily with anglophone and francophone adolescents, however, they did do some studies on other groups such as Filipino students in Montréal. Their work in motivational factors produced valid results which have been accepted and praised by many.

Pursuant to Gardner and Lambert's research, on the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery designed by Clement, Smythe, and Gardner (1978), it was found that *Motivation* (the individual's total drive to learn L<sub>2</sub> as defined by a questionnaire dealing primarily with reasons and choices regarding the learning of the second language), was the primary measure that had a direct influence on second-language achievement. At the same time, *Integrativeness* (positive orientation towards the specific target language group) and *Attitudes Towards Learning Situations* (evaluation of French teacher and course) had influence on the motivation of students at the secondary level. *Motivation* was shown to have the strongest relationship with intention to pursue French, French grades, and French achievement (Lalonde & Gardner, 1985). Thus, motivation is seen as a strong

predictor of persistence and achievement in this particular study.

Returning to Gardner and Lambert (1972), they based their work on the premise that, ultimately, a learner's orientation towards a learning task could be classified as either instrumental or integrative. They believed that instrumental motivation is learning a foreign language for utilitarian benefits of language proficiency, such as a higher salary or a better job. In contrast, integrative motivation would see the learner's desire to learn a second-language based on the student wanting to interact with the target language community. Similarly, Brewer, Dunn, and Olszewski (1988) refer to the differences between intrinsic motivation, which denotes aspects inside the individual, and extrinsic motivation, which denotes aspects outside the individual. This distinction could refer to the presence of a student's desire to learn a second language for his/her own benefit as opposed to learning it based on a teacher reward or praise system.

Both the humanistic approach and the cognitive approach to motivation emphasize intrinsic motivation. The humanistic approach emphasizes personal freedom, choice, and striving for personal growth (self-actualization). The cognitive approach is based on the assumption that people are active and curious learners, looking for information to solve problems. The behaviourist approach stresses extrinsic motivation. It assumes that as learners are consistently reinforced for certain behaviour, these learners will develop habits or tendencies

to act in certain ways (Woolfolk, 1993).

Graham (1984) described assimilative motivation as the desire of a learner, who has already had prolonged contact with another cultural group, to find out more about the second-language culture. This could perhaps be related to Norton-Peirce (1995) who writes that the relationship of the language learner to his/her changing social world depends on his/her social identity within another cultural community.

Returning to Gardner and Lambert's (1972) instrumental vs. integrative motivational distinction, many of their studies focused on the differences that exist in a variety of situations when it comes to analyses of a second-language learner's attitude towards the French speaking community, the French class, and quite possibly all cultural groups in general. With regard to their study of English-speaking high school students in Montréal who were studying French, as well as Franco-American groups studying English in Maine and Louisiana, they found that students with an integrative orientation were more successful in terms of second-language learner expectations and outcomes than were those who were instrumentally oriented. This conclusion was based on the students' results in language-learning aptitude tests, and questionnaires on attitudes toward the target language communities.

In attempting to link the social milieu with learners' motivational

orientation, Gardner and Lambert (1972) suggest that 'additive' language learning situations, where members of high status language groups add a second language to their first language proficiency, may give rise to an integrative outlook towards learning. On the other hand, in situations where minority language groups tend to replace the first language by a more prestigious second language, instrumental orientations are more likely.

A motivational questionnaire was administered to 134 learners of English in Hungary. It was found that it was instrumental motivation that most efficiently prompted learning up to the intermediate level, whereas beyond this, integrative motivation was a more important factor as it meant that the learner really wanted to learn the target language (Dornyei, 1990). Also, Dornyei argued that the data showed that learners with a high level of instrumental motivation and need for achievement were more likely to attain an intermediate level of proficiency. However, it was also agreed that it was both instrumental and integrative motivation that contributed to foreign-language learning. The conclusions were based on the assumption that, though beginners of a second language start with a variety of instrumental motives, many of these motives prove insufficient to sustain the long and tedious process of language learning and the learner subsequently drops out. Integrative motivation, on the other hand, provides the energy to persist and achieve an intermediate proficiency.

Overall, the concept of integrative motivation certainly seems to stress the appreciation of the second-language cultural group involved. Gardner and Lambert (1972) state that "learners who have strong ethnocentric or authoritarian attitudes or have learned to be prejudiced toward foreign peoples are unlikely to approach the language-learning task with an integrative outlook" (p. 16). Several articles have dealt with this concept of appreciation of the target language community. Esarte-Sarries (1989), in her explanation of the Durham project, where primary pupils in England were asked their views on aspects of French culture, reveals how many students had inaccurate and stereotyped ideas about France and French culture. Students thought, for example, that the French always wear onions around their neck and that they all wear "stripey" tee-shirts. She argues that it is plausible that motivation to learn a second language may be negatively affected by such misconceptions. She suggests teachers help students by helping them evaluate their beliefs, and then, if necessary, providing them with accurate cultural information.

Similarly, in a study of psychology students studying French, Gardner and MacIntyre (1991), using the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (which includes reference to attitudes towards French Canadians, the French language and foreign language in general), showed that anglophone students who had integrative motivation tended to have a favourable attitude foundation towards the other ethnic



community and other groups in general.

As one more reference to this point, Gardner, Ginsberg, and Smythe (1976) discuss a study in which grades nine, ten and eleven anglophone children attending schools of the London (Ontario) School Board showed increases in a positive attitude toward the second-language community and second-language courses which had a definite impact on the individual's motivation and persistence. In other words, the authors assume that cultural appreciation is essential in order to foster integrative motivation.

## Motivation and the Learner

One of the most influential and widely discussed models of language learning/acquisition in recent years is Krashen's Monitor Model. Within this model is the Affective Filter Hypothesis which argues that learners can only convert comprehensible input to acquisition and therefore learning, when they have low levels of anxiety, good self-confidence and self-image, and are motivated (Krashen, 1982). In other words, in a classroom setting, students must have low anxiety and high motivation in order for successful learning to take place. Anxiety can become a factor in student motivation. Anxiety appears to improve performance on simple tasks or heavily practiced skills, but it interferes with the accomplishment of more complex tasks or skills. Woolfolk (1993) writes,

"Anxiety can be both a cause and an effect of school failure - students do poorly because they are anxious, and their poor performance increases their anxiety" (p. 345).

At all stages of the language learning process, motivation plays a central role in a second language learner's persistence. As Clement, Smythe and Gardner (1978) state, "The most important determinant of the individual's persistence in second-language study is his [sic] motivation to learn the second-language" (p. 15). Their studies used scales of attitude, motivation, and desire (group specific attitudes, course-related characteristics, motivational indices, and generalized attitudes, all towards learning French).

The social learning approach to motivation emphasizes that motivation is the product of two main focuses: the individual expectation of reaching a goal, and the value of that goal to him/her. If either of these factors is zero, then there is no motivation to work toward the goal (Woolfolk, 1993).

Based on their research, Clement, Smythe, and Gardner (1978) suggest there should be the goal of special incentive programs of exchanges or visits to keep motivation high. Desrochers and Gardner (1981) show that students' social attitudes towards the second-language community are consistently related to their motivation to learn the second language, which, in turn, is associated with their achievement in that language. In terms of excursions, they believe that students

who have more interaction with French Canadians through bicultural visits are likely to have much more favourable attitudes toward the community and the language, less anxiety when using the language, and more intention to use it than students who have not participated in such an event. Gardner, Ginsberg, and Smythe (1976) also claim that students who actively meet with members of the second-language community through bicultural excursions have improved attitudes towards the second language.

Gardner, Ginsberg, and Smythe (1976) suggested that, besides exchange programs or trips which can become expensive and time-consuming, there are other ways in which student attitudes might be helped. One of their suggestions included a reference to a new type of French classroom which was experimented with at Dalhousie University. This class, unlike traditional classes, consisted basically of a self-instructional course with the students going to a language lab on their own, proceeding through the program at their own pace, and simply ensuring that the required work was completed by the end of the year with a certain standard in oral and written work being maintained. At the end of this experiment, it was shown that the experimental group, in comparison with a control group in a regular class, was less ethnocentric, more favourable towards French Canadians and showed higher motivation and interest to learn French. That such differences were attained was attributed mainly to the fact that this was

an "opt-in" type of program and that this factor had a positive impact on variables which reflected reactions to the language group, the language, the course, and the teachers.

Ramage's (1986) study of 138 students of second-level French and Spanish from three different U.S. high schools was done to investigate whether motivational and attitudinal factors were important in determining whether students continued studying the foreign language beyond the second level. The results of the study indicated a strong correlation between students continuing to study the language and interest in learning language for its own sake, interest in personal growth due to language study, positive attitudes toward the language and teacher (all referred to as intrinsic motivation - interest in the language itself) and meeting college requirements (extrinsic motivation - using language as a means to other goals). Another dimension of the integrative/instrumental focus of motivation can be seen here.

In other words, in order to promote persistence in foreign language study in the classroom, teachers must try to increase both intrinsic and extrinsic interest. Ramage suggests doing this through positive competence feedback, using tasks which focus on natural and normal communication, and teaching students about the language so that they can have some knowledge of where it came from, its social, educational, and professional uses, and its culture.

## **The "How" Question of Motivation**

Persistence is important, and is a result of strong motivation. Research has tried to reveal how one can foster motivation, thus leading to a continuing enjoyment and proficiency in the second language. This enjoyment and proficiency would include emphasis on a range of skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing, an appreciation of culture, as well as communicative and enjoyable activities. These activities should include those which stimulate student interest and achievement (Lee, 1986), and should be provided in a supportive and non-stressful environment, again referring to Krashen's Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982).

Green (1993) refers to a study done at the University of Puerto Rico of 263 students in their second semester of ESL learning to determine the correlation between enjoyment and effectiveness in foreign-language learning. Questions centered around both communicative and noncommunicative activities. The results revealed that, for the most part, communicative activities were rated as more enjoyable. However, when students were asked whether these two types of activities would help them learn English, both communicative and noncommunicative activities were thought to be effective. Thus, the overall conclusion was that enjoyableness promotes effectiveness, and effectiveness in turn

makes the classroom environment more enjoyable. Therefore, it was felt that teachers need to have an enjoyable classroom and that this, in turn, would motivate students into participating in effective activities.

In a somewhat similar survey of first-year Spanish students at two major universities, in order to identify a reliable set of learner beliefs associated with language learning, Bacon and Finneman (1990) identified a set of general language learning factors. Their results led them to conclude that curriculum must be designed so that the use of authentic input is incorporated. Their study showed that when authentic input, such as current events' materials were used, preceded by meaningful advance organization, students were more interested, and thus motivated to listen better. Using this approach, comprehension and levels of proficiency increased. Constructivist theorists believe that for students to learn the skills and knowledge of a given discipline, they should engage in authentic activities. A task then becomes part of the real outside world (McCown, Driscoll, Roop, Saklofske, Kelly, Schwean, & Gajadharsingh, 1996).

Similarly, Freinet (1979) argues that children bring an abundance of experience to the classroom, and teachers need to enhance this knowledge of the outside world. Students need to see the connection that real life and a second language have, and therefore must be given as much meaningful exposure to this second language as possible. Freinet believes it is important, as second-language

teachers, to ensure usage of authentic oral, listening, written, and reading work as motivators and as a means of overcoming cultural barriers to language learning.

## **Student Attitudes and Attributions**

Attrition, which is defined as an individual's loss of proficiency in second language usage due to the lack of use over time, is described by Gardner, Lalonde, and MacPherson (1985). They described a study of graduates of a Spanish immersion program. This study showed that attitudes and motivation did play a role in the retention of speaking and writing skills. Glikzman, Gardner, and Smythe (1976) demonstrated that students who were integratively motivated volunteered more in class, gave more correct answers, and appeared more interested, had higher motivation and better attitudes. These authors claimed that those attitudes would probably influence the extent to which students sought out opportunities to use their language later, thus reducing the degree of attrition. They then concluded that motivation and attitude are important as well in students maintaining the proficiency they achieve.

Attribution theories of motivation describe how a person's explanations, justifications, and excuses influence motivation (Woolfolk, 1993). Weiner (1979) has a theory of locus of control which is closely related to feelings of self-esteem. For example, if success or failure is attributed to internal factors, such as study and personal effort, success will lead to pride and increased motivation, whereas

failure will diminish self-esteem. If, on the other hand, success or failure is attributed to external factors, such as luck, the student is less likely to be motivated based on past success. Woolfolk explains attribution theory as follows:

Meeting needs for achievement will not encourage motivation if you believe the success was due to 'dumb luck' and probably won't happen again. Failure is not threatening unless you believe that it implies something is 'wrong' with you. In other words, our beliefs and attributions about what is happening and why - about why we succeed and why we fail - affect motivation. (p. 353)

It follows, therefore, that second-language teachers should attempt to develop students' belief in themselves as active participants with a sense of control over their learning experiences.

Massey (1986) discusses a survey that was done of grades six, seven, and eight students' negative attitudes towards learning French as a second language in a basic French program using the Attitude Motivation Test Battery. He concluded that, while students' negative attitudes may decrease slightly over time, the principal factor for change in attitudes, in both rural and urban schools, was the students' attitude towards what happened day by day in class. This factor, in itself, has tremendous implications for the classroom teacher. It may help a teacher to plan lessons by knowing where students stand. For example, they need to note which students seem to be internally motivated with high self-esteem and which students attribute academic success to forces beyond their control.



Activities designed to get students involved and active, which promote internally based attributions, are suggested in Folio Paper Three.

Smith and Massey (1987) conducted a further study of Core French students. Students in grades seven and nine were studied to determine whether their attitudes towards learning French as a second language were stable and enduring over time, what the nature of any attitude changes were and what the relationship was between students' attitudes towards French and their behaviour in the French classroom. Their results showed that, for the most part, at the individual and subgroup levels, significant changes in student attitude over time did occur. Positive changes related to what happened in the class and what the teacher did that led to the teacher being rated as liked and as being able to explain and make the subject interesting. Smith and Massey (1987) concluded that those students who had highly positive attitudes towards the second language exhibited more hand-raising, more interest, and more task-oriented activity. These signs probably indicated belief in their own ability to do French based on past experience. Thus, Smith and Massey argued that attitudes of students did play a part in the classroom environment of a second language and that more positive attitudes resulted in integrativeness, drive to attain the goal of learning French, and positive evaluation of the teacher and the course. Since students with positive attitudes participated more and were more task oriented, it may be that they were

also more likely to attribute success to their own efforts and involvement. Further study is needed here.

Morello (1988) explained the significance of university students' attitudes completing a final course of a language requirement. The more positive the attitude, the better the understanding of the language. He showed that students had a positive attitude as a result of their understanding of the course and its requirements, a feeling of having attained some degree of proficiency and an awareness that foreign language study is a necessity in the modern world. The majority of students participating in the study reported that their attitude toward the requirement of foreign language study at university was positive. Morello advises that, not only university professors, but all language teachers should keep in mind the following: If they are to continue to require that students study languages, it is their responsibility to assure that their students leave courses believing that the required experience was a worthwhile and productive one. The Nova Scotia Department of Education Teaching Guide (1978), "#21", suggests that the question of motivation is particularly important for students at the junior high level, as it is during this time that most of them will decide if they wish to continue to enrol in French classes.

Along these lines, Richards (1981) in an article on the aims of second-language education in Canada, suggests that attitude formation in students should be one of our

primary goals of teaching. He suggests that positive attitude formation may be achieved through activities designed to reduce ethnocentrism, through an appreciation of students' own and other cultures, and through lessons on how to listen well. "How to" lessons, like how to listen well, may also increase students' attributions of themselves as competent learners of a second language. He feels that attention to these issues will foster positive attitudes. These attitudes will then stimulate a sense of progress and achievement and, thus, further language study. Little research in the field of second-language teaching takes attribution theory into account, thus, this would be an important area for future research.

## **Motivation and the Second-Language Teacher**

In dealing with attitude formation, it is necessary to look at motivation from one other perspective, that of the attitudes and motivation of the second-language teacher him/herself. Thus far, we have seen research on why students should be encouraged to improve their attitudes towards the second language, and its cultural community, and how and why students need to be motivated in one way or another to take an interest in learning a second language and becoming proficient at it. In addition, it is only in considering the teacher's role that we can fully understand the concept of motivation in the second-language classroom.

Savignon (1976) writes,

Not until we have taken a hard, critical look at the attitudes and motivations of teachers, both individually and as a profession, will we be ready to determine what obstacles still lie in the way of creating the kinds of learning environments which would be most helpful for our students. (p. 12)

For teachers to be realistic in their goals, responsive to learner needs and have a good perception of their role and their language learning experiences, they must be encouraged to get away from their concern for "rules and charts," and their fear of not having enough grammar. They should have a good knowledge of the language they speak, but they should not be obsessed with it. Savignon (1976) refers to a type of "counselling learning" where the teacher is involved in "community language learning" as a resource person who helps learners to replace the emphasis on grammar with the communicative expression of their own thoughts. She claims that this would return the important sense of relationship that should be found in a "community classroom" where there exists openness and creative communication.

Similarly, Gayle (1984) claims that various teaching styles, whether they be the use of creative open language (which she calls type 'H'), restricted mechanical use (type 'L'), or a balanced mixture of both (type 'J'), are capable of influencing student motivation and attitudes. She feels that, in order for teachers themselves to motivate students, they need to analyze their own style and attitudes to decide

what they are really achieving and what they can do to alter their style to achieve even more.

Although Gayle's results come from an intense Language Teaching Record Scheme, which is a research instrument constructed specifically for the purpose of identifying teaching styles in second-language classrooms, she suggests that teachers can self-analyze through journals, student surveys, and peer assessment. The teacher who finds him/herself in the midst of unmotivated second language learners may find him/herself becoming unmotivated when it comes to reviving the interest of these students. In terms of dealing with the problem, teacher response varies from despair at having tried just about everything, to making every effort to remind pupils of the importance of second language learning. Chambers (1993) believes that the teacher who tries to give real encouragement for anything the pupils do, tries to make language lessons as cheerful, interesting, and lively as possible, and attempts to make his/her own enthusiasm for the language visible to the students, will ultimately see more motivation to learn on the part of these students. Essentially, Chambers argues for the whole teacher motivated/student motivated context.

According to Woolfolk (1993), in terms of attribution theory, there exist lessons for teachers. Teachers need to help students by encouraging their self-worth. They can do this by emphasizing a student's progress in a certain area, or making specific suggestions for improvement. They can also stress connections between past

efforts and past accomplishments, and model a mastery orientation of learning goals for students. Woolfolk also refers to teaching efficacy, which is a teacher's belief that he/she can reach even difficult students to help them learn.

Finally, Smith and Massey (1987) propose that,

Motivation to learn is not solely determined by what a pupil brings to the class, but is affected, even in one week, by what happens in the class, and by whatever it is that teachers do that leads to their being rated as being liked and as being able to explain and make the subject interesting. (p. 315)

If we explore, then, the various attitudes and motivations of teachers themselves and their relation to other teachers and their students, we can focus in better on improving the language-teaching process overall.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that attitudes and motivation play an integral role in second-language learning, and although far from complete, research makes it clear that they are an important part of the entire teaching/learning process and, therefore, cannot be dismissed. In addition, student attributions is an area of second-language teaching that needs further study. Motivation has become more and more of an issue in how second-language educators view attitude formation and persistence among second-language learners. The way we view motivation in terms of its relevance to the learning environment of students will enhance our

view of the need to motivate. How we motivate students needs to come from a sense of the needs of our students and what makes second-language learning meaningful for them. In this way, attitudes of students will improve, teacher involvement will be more productive, and the entire teaching/learning process will be much more of a success.

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## **Folio Paper Two**

**An Assessment of the Motivation of the Student  
of a Second Language in a Small School/Rural School Setting**

## **Introduction**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education Intermediate Core French Program Guide - Form and Function: The Total Process (1992) suggests that in a Core French class, teachers need to provide students with various activities which meet differing learning styles, encourage them to take risks, help them make decisions and choices, and encourage as much authentic communication as possible. These concepts are seen as the core of motivation. The guide suggests that when students realize they have developed a broadly useful skill, they are likely to have a more immediate sense of progress and achievement, and this realization could thus stimulate further language study. Richards (1981) says that it is towards goals like these that progress must be made if success in second-language learning is ever to satisfy the public's expectations in this country. It is also my own belief with reference to this province. Massey (1994) refers to the fact that Ontario's latest Core French Review proposes that the needs and interests of the students be the elements around which new curriculum be designed. Here in Newfoundland, this is a similar goal towards which revision of curriculum has been progressing as seen in current programs in use in the second-language classroom. These sources suggest that student interests must be reflected in the curriculum; thus motivating them to maintain positive attitudes.

The issue of motivating Core French students in a rural school setting in Newfoundland becomes important. It is often perceived by second-language teachers to be more difficult to motivate students to learn a second language when their contact with target language speakers is very limited. However, research, such as that of Degenhart and Bond (1981), and personal experience have led me to believe otherwise. Degenhart and Bond conducted a series of studies of small rural schools in Illinois. They found that though the students' contact with francophone areas was limited, the students' progress and the ease with which they acquired second-language skills was amazing. They felt the key was planning, communicative activities, and cultural focus through other means than actual physical contact. Students in rural areas can be just as motivated to learn a second language as those in urban areas when it is the student and his/her needs and interests on which we focus and when we attempt to make them realize that there is a whole multi-lingual world beyond his/her own doors.

Webster (1984) defines "rural" as "living in a country area; characterized by simplicity/lacking sophistication; a place with fewer than 1,500 people" (p. 1006). This definition may, at times, be difficult to apply or accept or may be questioned as to its being too narrow, too broad, or too stereotypical. However, there were, in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, as of 1996, 309 schools located in rural communities with 50, 378 students attending them - each

community having unique features. This uniqueness encompasses not just the culture, the history, and the people, but also the school system - and particularly, individual subject areas and how each are viewed by students, parents, and teachers alike.

This paper will first present my comments and experiences as noted in my eight years of teaching a second language in a small/rural school. It will then present and analyze the results of a survey questionnaire administered to students of three different small/rural school second-language classes. Note that, for ethical reasons, this survey was not given to my own classes but rather to classes that I had not taught. Finally, it will attempt to link my experience with that of these other groups to determine some possible recommendations and conclusions that could be drawn regarding the motivation of second-language small/rural school students. As the basis for this paper, therefore, through this narrative of personal experience plus evaluation of the informal study, I argue that a second-language program in a rural school is an area that demands attention. This is not simply because of the globalization of the world today which involves more and more the need for a second language in a truly international job market, but also because little has been written about it. As an issue, it needs to be addressed. For the sake of students who learn it and teachers who teach it, the need for the second language, and the needs of those involved must be examined in light of rural situations. As DeYoung (1987) says,

The demographic, economic, administrative, vocational, and community differences and needs existing in many rural regions of the country, it is argued, demand more particular attention from educational researchers and policymakers if rural schools are ever to achieve their full potential. (p. 140)

## **Personal Narrative and Background**

Carter (1993) writes: "Teacher stories do have the power to direct and change our lives" (p. 5). Good theory must be combined with teachers' lived experiences and narratives of teaching. She believes that when teachers share their own stories with each other, it may result in humanizing the whole teaching perspective. Teaching experience alone will not make an expert teacher. A teacher must be able to make sense of his/her experience and know how to learn from it. This reflective thinking can be seen in teacher narration (McCown, Driscoll, Roop, Saklofske, Kelly, Schwean, & Gajadharsingh, 1996). This paper will attempt to relay much of what will be said about the second-language rural situation through what may appear at times to be a narrative. It is believed by many, such as Carter (1993), Jardine and Clandinin (1987), and Goodson (1992), to name a few, that it is through such techniques that both research and experience may be combined to produce a look at how students in a small/rural school may be motivated to learn a second language.



I have been a teacher of French as a second language to students in grades four to twelve in an all-grade school for the past eight years. I believe my challenge, as a teacher in those years, has been to allow my students the chance to be the best they can be. I believe their needs are not simply met by my spilling over my knowledge in the hopes that they learn something. They are real people in a real school, which is more than just a place of pencils, paper, and tests. It is a place which is home, work, and hang-out, all at the same time, something which I feel embodies what a rural school really means. In this section, I will provide a brief personal perspective on the teaching of a second language in a rural setting.

I have faced many challenges in teaching in a rural area. As a French teacher, I often find it difficult to make both students and parents feel that a second language is a valuable thing to know. Often, students have not been outside their community. Most have been nowhere where another language is spoken. Thus, they find it hard to comprehend the fact that they may ever need to speak French.

Though I have brought a specialist approach to my area, which today is uncommon in rural schools, it is often lonely and frustrating that I am the only one in this particular curriculum area, and there is no one to whom I may confide my fears or successes. Brimm and Hanson (1980) refer to this as a commonplace problem in a rural school.

My presence has been beneficial, however, at the elementary level. Previously there has been a tendency to require the regular classroom teacher to teach French, whether or not he/she could do it. This is a situation that puts a rural student at a disadvantage.

My being there improves the attitude of regular classroom teachers as they don't have to worry about how they will struggle through the teaching of a subject they are not familiar with. This is a situation that has become a source of stress for many teachers who are forced into becoming leaders in all areas of the curriculum due to teacher allocation and restraint (Hutto, 1990). Student motivation often becomes a problem from the outset when there is a teacher in the second-language classroom who is not familiar with the subject, perhaps has never been in a French speaking milieu him/herself, or just does not have the interest in it to spark that of the students. How then can student motivation be enhanced to appreciate the language and its culture if there is no similar appreciation on the other side of the desk? Such a situation is often a problem not just in the teaching of a second language but in many areas of a rural school curriculum (Beckner & O'Neal, 1980).

Another feature often unique to rural schools is the challenge of teaching in a multi-grade French classroom. Just as there has not been a lot of literature written in the area of the teaching of French in a rural setting, so too there has

been very little treatment of the topic of teaching a second language in multi-grade classrooms. The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education Learning French as a Second-Language Guide (1990) suggests: "Teaching a sequential subject like French is a challenge in multi-grade classrooms" (p. 16). The challenge is in both structuring the organization of the course plus motivating the students in this class to see the material as meaningful and worthy of learning. Differences in age and ability levels in any multi-grade classroom often led to students' motivation decreasing. Either the material being done with the whole group, as is sometimes the most manageable course of action, is too difficult for the younger or lesser ability student or too easy for the student who is ready to face more challenging material. In any case, it rests with the multi-grade teacher, usually the small/rural school teacher to determine how best to meet the needs of his/her second language students. This may involve a segregated approach with clear distinction of each subject and grade, a grade-specific curriculum alternative approach with alternate courses for each grade and subject being taught in alternative years, or an integrative approach with various forms of subject grade integration (Mulcahy, 1992).

Although the practice of scheduling two or more levels of a second language into a multi-grade or multi-level classroom is commonplace in a rural school, it may also create problems in terms of additional preparation and discipline for

teachers and reduced second-language experience for students (Strasheim, 1989). Strasheim writes that three of the reasons second-language teachers find multi-level classes difficult are: planning problems, classroom management challenges, and student motivation. Seemingly, these problems stem from a sequential approach to the teaching of a second language as outlined in our curriculum. This approach leads to difficulties in a classroom with varied grades - each working at a different required level.

The biggest problem perhaps is the new communicative approach's emphasis on oral interaction, which makes it difficult to have students working at differentiated tasks. Strasheim (1989) suggests that there is a need for careful monitoring and a commitment on the part of teachers and administrators to find the best class sizes, age, and ability levels, and program management. Some administrators feel that an alternative to multi-grade classrooms is the use of interactive video courses delivered via satellite or microwave transmission. Such courses may reduce face-to-face interaction and cause a loss of a sense of personal relationships among teachers and students. At the same time, these courses may limit problems of overcrowding in multi-grade classes while allowing for more continuous oral usage, eventually leading to increased motivation to learn more about the language and thus to possible increased proficiency. Barker (1990) believes that the advantages of distance education far outweigh the disadvantages

in terms of allowing rural or small schools to deliver quality education to their students in the face of problems, such as low student enrollments, teacher availability, and the desire in students to do courses that otherwise would be impossible. Beauvois-Healy (1995) also explains that satellite communication allows students to avoid stressful verbal interaction in front of peers who are not always sympathetic to stutters and stammers. Instead, they find themselves more motivated to speak and thereby increase their output than when they are in a less stressful "on the spot" situation.

Although the school where I teach has employed distance education in the areas of math and science over the past few years, due to teacher shortages, Fall 1998 will see the first group of French students using this system. Students are a bit hesitant and are registering for it with guarded enthusiasm.

Rural schools in Newfoundland generally mean educational institutions where the numbers are small and the schools themselves are located far away from a more urban and, as many believe, culturally richer area. Though some dispute this, arguing that rural areas are just as cultured - but in a different way - the fact remains that these rural areas are often far removed from areas where French is seen as a vital "real" language. Although we attempt to make rural Newfoundland students aware of the rich French heritage in this province, pointing out French community names such as Jean de Baie, Beau Bois, or Grand Le Pierre (areas on

the Burin Peninsula) or the French first language areas on the Port au Port Peninsula, most students still perceive the French language as something remote and far removed from daily life.

The Nova Scotia Department of Education Teaching Guide (1978), "#21", says that students need to identify strongly with people who speak the language. Therefore, it suggests that second-language activities should include things which make the program "come alive", such as exchange visits to French communities, and satisfying contacts with French speaking people. Desrochers and Gardner (1981) state, "Students' social attitudes towards the second-language communities have consistently been shown to be related to their motivation to learn the second language, which, in turn, is associated with their achievement in that language" (p. 7). They believe that students who have more interaction with French Canadians through bicultural visits have much more favourable attitudes toward the community and the language, less anxiety when using the language, and more intention to use it than students who have not participated in such events.

It is my experience with French students in a rural school that such visits spark an interest and enthusiasm in them that can never be developed through a textbook. They see a reason for learning the second language, and they have a chance to realize that it is spoken. It is a great motivating tool to learn a little more for the next visit and to improve proficiency so they are even better

understood. Word gets around to those not sure if they want to take French next year - that it is actually worthwhile! Rural students need to develop such a positive attitude regarding this second language and its community. Otherwise, they may not have the interest to learn the language for communication's sake.

## The Study

If you were to ascertain that there were certain things that second-language students found enjoyable and others that were less so about their second-language experience, it would certainly provide insight into ways to motivate them. In order to have this motivation, the students need their say. Woolfolk (1993) believes that one of the ways student interest can be determined is by asking directly. Once this interest is clear, a teacher can apply this knowledge in his/her teaching.

In order to determine the wants and needs of a typical rural second-language class, I decided to conduct an informal study of the second-language classes of three rural colleagues to see what their students perceived as being "likeable" and "dislikeable" about their French classroom, courses, and method of teaching. This was based on the assumption that if emphasis is placed on likeable activities, students would be more likely to be active participants and, therefore, to develop a sense of self-efficacy. These students came from three rural schools, each from

a community with roughly similar size populations, and socioeconomic status. Each school has just one class of the grade studied (grade seven). The schools had respectively 12, 17, and 19 French students in the class. Each group had been doing French since Grade 4. This study was guided by three over arching questions:

- What are the general attitudes of rural students towards the learning of a second language?
- What is their overall impression of the target language culture?
- What types of activities seem to interest these rural students and thereby possibly lead to increased motivation and desire to learn the language?

The intermediate Core French grade seven level was chosen as the focus of this study, because it is often felt by teachers that, at around the grade seven level, student interest drops. This drop may be related to a cessation of the "fun and games" of elementary French. Negative attitudes often set in, thereby contributing to a lack of motivation.

Pupils' views were elicited by means of a questionnaire which had fairly simple and easy to read questions as Part I. These questions were then followed by a choice of a Yes, No, or Maybe response. The questions dealt with students' attitude toward French in grade seven, their attitudes towards the target language community, and their view of their parents' attitude towards their learning French.



Part II of the questionnaire was made up of statements written in English and in a simple way for ease of comprehension. Students were presented with statements with which they could "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree." This section presented students with a variety of activities often conducted in their classrooms. The activities were ones identified by their teachers in a pre-questionnaire interview. The students were thus given the opportunity to indicate their like or dislike of these activities, which incidentally covered the range of the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Finally, Part III was made up of a series of five open-ended questions which asked students to express, in their own words, what they thought of their French classroom. A copy of the questionnaire is presented in Appendix A. Questions used in this questionnaire were loosely based on articles by Zammit (1993) which looked at gender differences in the motivation to study foreign languages, Lee (1986) who studied attitudes towards learning French of a group of British intermediate students, and Richeux (1987) who conducted a study on the attitudes towards the learning of French of a group of Grade 8 British students.

What follows is a brief breakdown of the answers obtained from this survey. Also offered is a summary of the findings and tentative conclusions and recommendations for teachers.

## Study Findings

The analysis of the data collected in this questionnaire will be broken down into categories. They are based on the concepts of (1) enjoyment, (2) the four skills - speaking, listening, reading, and writing, (3) comfort, (d) difficulty, (5) cultural contact, (6) persistence, and (7) other. These categories are believed to encompass the areas which the questionnaire provided in terms of attempting to ascertain student interest and hence motivation. Discussion, therefore, will refer to questions in Parts I, II, and III as they apply to these topics.

### (1) Enjoyment

The number of students finding French enjoyable was considerably higher than the number of those not sure or actually disliking it. Part I, Question #1, showed that 30 students enjoyed taking French, 15 did not enjoy taking French, and 3 were not sure. This is seen in Table 1 (Appendix B). In Part II, when asked to agree or not with the statements regarding liking various aspects of things done in the classroom, most students strongly agreed that they liked things such as crossword puzzles (80%, Question #7), playing games (83%, Question #3), and particularly working in groups (87%, Question #4). These results can be seen in Table 10 (Appendix B). In Part III, Question #1, one student expressed his preference clearly when he wrote, "I am the happiest in French class when we

learn something that sparks my interest, such as puzzles, games, or activities where we're learning something new but we're doing it in a fun way. I also do much better and have more success."

In Part III, Question #3, although nine students expressed the sentiments that group work made them happy because, "... it gives me help and we get to learn from each other," there were five students who wrote they "enjoyed" group work for the 'wrong reasons': "You don't have to work so much. I let my partner do most of it," or "We have the chance to talk about other things." These students seemed to believe that a group structure was meant to lessen the work load and perhaps allow them time for other than work. There were those, as well, who expressed the belief that they were the ones on whom the whole group assignment was being dumped.

Again from Part II, many students were of the same mind on things they didn't particularly like about French class. These included reading stories (75%, Question #6) and doing presentations in front of the class (unless it was as a play or with a partner) (77%, Question #9). These results can be seen in Table 10 (Appendix B). One student said, "I don't like doing presentations in class 'cause I get afraid." Another reported, "I hate tests. (Can you tell Miss that?)"

## **(2) The Four Skills - Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing**

The majority of students indicated that the oral component was more important than the reading and writing aspects. This is perhaps due to our emphasis on oral communication in our current approach to second-language teaching. Part I, Question #8, indicates that 34 students thought it was more important to be able to speak French than to read and write it, 5 thought it was not more important to be able to speak French, and 9 were not sure. This is seen in Table 2 (Appendix B).

In Part II of the questionnaire, students were asked to react to a variety of activities which represented a range of approaches to second-language learning. Some focused on the four skills involved: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Activities which were either very popular or very unpopular were noted.

From the listening activities listed, the most popular was listening to French music (89%, Question #11), and the least popular was listening to workbook tapes (23%, Question #12). These results can be seen in Table 10 (Appendix B). On the other hand, according to Part III, Question #2, other material presented on tape, such as exercises from a workbook or even the telling of a story were not as popular as "they speak way too fast and I can't understand them."

In Part II, Question #1, 89% of students said they liked speaking French (See Table 10, Appendix B). In part III, Questions #3 and #4, speaking was

generally enjoyed when it was done in partner interview format, short presentations, or other group settings. However, many found it embarrassing to speak out alone or to have to perform in front of classmates. "I hate it when Miss makes me get up in front of the class. I forget everything." "I get tongue-tied when Miss calls on me to say something out loud in French. I can never figure out how to say it, and I'm afraid everybody will laugh."

Writing was not as unpopular as one might think. In Part II, Question #10, 75% of the students said they liked writing stories in French (see Table 10, Appendix B). In Part III, Questions #3 and #4, it was evident that some saw writing as a way to avoid speaking and get away on their own to work at something (especially the most diligent students), while others saw it as meaningless "busy work." "I hate writing stuff in our workbooks." "I don't like it when Sir puts red marks through all the words I spelled wrong."

Reading, for most students, had two reactions: one positive and one negative. In Part III, Questions #1 and #2, it was found that many students seemed to find the teacher reading aloud to them more interesting and enjoyable than when they had to read on their own. Although some enjoyed reading aloud, they were far outnumbered by those who did not like to do it and who did not like fellow classmates to do it either! "I like listening to our teacher read us stories. We have this book about a boy (Luc) from Quebec and Miss reads us a couple of pages every day. I like to find out every day what he's going to do next."

### (3) Comfort

Part I, Question #6, asked students about comfort in French class. Fifty percent of students surveyed said they felt more comfortable in French class than in other classes. There were, therefore, half the students who were not as comfortable in French class as in other classes. This result is seen in Table 3 (Appendix B).

In Part III, Questions #3 and #4, although a few students wrote comments like, "I'm most uncomfortable when the teacher walks in and class starts and most comfortable when class ends and she leaves," most students were quite specific about things that they could relax with and others that made them tense. Student answers varied but many claimed they were most uncomfortable when they did not understand something being taught, when there was a lot of noise or distraction in the classroom, and when the teacher was "angry" or sad. They were most comfortable when class was fun, when they succeeded, and when the teacher was in a good mood.

### (4) Difficulty

According to Part I, Question #2, as seen in Table 4 (Appendix B), an equal number of students surveyed found French hard and not hard. The results showed that 20 found French hard, 20 found it not hard, and 8 were unsure. In Part III, Question #2, some students found it necessary to express their views on what they

found difficult about French as part of what they liked least about French class. Several views were those which referred to the difficulty in understanding, the grammar, the translation aspect, and the immensity of vocabulary. ("I think it's backwards, 'cause they say everything backwards from us." "There's just too much to remember.") These may be concerns or fears best addressed at the beginning of the year so that students can understand that not everything done has to be memorized and that English is just as backwards to French speakers as French is to us.

#### **(5) Cultural Contact**

Questions, such as Part I, Question #4, concerning pupils' views on going to places where French is spoken and visiting French people resulted in a much higher number of students welcoming this idea than rejecting it. Unlike the other questions, significant differences were noted in this category within the three different schools surveyed. This is noted in the following discussion. In Part I, Question #4, 37 students said they would like to visit French speaking areas, 10 said they would not like to, and 1 was not sure. This is seen in Table 5 (Appendix B). In Part III, Question #1, many mentioned as well that some of their favourite activities included hearing stories about St. Pierre and Quebec and taking French trips. One point of interest from the rural perspective was the fact that one of the schools surveyed (School #1) was at the tip of the Burin Peninsula, very close to

St. Pierre while the other two (Schools #2 and #3) were at the further end, at a much greater distance. According to Part I, Question #4, there seemed to be a more favourable response towards the French culture, and the desire to visit a francophone area from the students of School #1 (95%) as opposed to Schools #2 and #3 (65%), indicating more positive attitudes from students who are closer to the French culture. Teachers in Schools #2 and #3 indicated that a lack of funds and difficulties in fundraising in a small area compounded the problem of not being able to visit French areas as often.

In Part III, Question #5, many students also said that they were looking forward to doing French in other grades even though, "I think it will be ... but you will be in a [higher] grade and it might be harder."

According to Part I, Question #5, a considerable number of students believed that they would need French sometime after their school experience. In School #1, 76% of students said they believed they would need to speak French after leaving school. However, in Schools #3 and #4, only 62% and 51% respectively felt they would have the need to speak French after their school experience. The overall results can be seen in Table 6 (Appendix B). In addition, according to Part II, Question #8, again an overall result shows 78% of students like learning about people where French is spoken (see Table 10, Appendix B).



### (6) Persistence

A majority of students expressed an interest in taking more French courses after their current junior grade. As seen in Table 7 (Appendix B), 29 students believed they would like to take more French courses, 11 believed they would not like to do so, and 8 were unsure. These results come from Part I, Question #3.

Many students said their parents were happy that they were doing French which perhaps has a motivating effect on the students. When asked the question about parents' reaction in Part I, Question #9, 30 students said they thought their parents were happy that they were learning French, 8 said they did not think they were happy, and 10 were not sure. These results can be seen in Table 8 (Appendix B).

### (7) Other

Though there were many students who seemed to like French and want to be able to speak it, there were fewer who wanted to be able to speak other languages. In Part I, Question #7, 19 students felt they would like to speak more languages, 24 said they would not like to speak more languages, and 5 were not sure. See Table 9 (Appendix B) for these results.

It was interesting to note the number of students who made reference to the use of substitute teachers in their French classroom (30%) in Part III, Questions #3 and #4. Although a few thought that when a substitute came in, it was 'great'; their reason for believing this was the same as the majority of the other students

who were unhappy when a substitute came in - this reason being because the substitute was often unqualified to teach French, and therefore, did not assign much for them to do.

These survey results are obviously not conclusive. What they do suggest is that once we know the range of learning styles and activity preferences in our classroom, we can manipulate our teaching strategies to best meet the needs of students. In this way, students will feel more comfortable, confident, and thereby motivated.

## Discussion and Recommendations

- A conclusion that could be drawn from the questions on enjoyment, particularly from Part III, Question #1, is that students at this level prefer to be actively involved in group work, games, and so on. Green (1993), in a study of student attitudes towards communicative French activities and the enjoyment students experienced from them, concluded that enjoyment probably enhances effectiveness. Therefore, it would be important to take these student opinions into account in planning classes and curriculum. Personal experience has led me to realize that student groups differ from year to year, thus, activities need to be geared towards specific group tastes in order to ensure enjoyability.

- From data collected in Part III, Question #3, it could be said that teachers need to be very careful with group assignments in terms of monitoring and also making sure each member is accountable for his/her own task along with the overall group project product. Woolfolk (1993) suggests that students may try to look smart within the group setting and thereby, protect their self-esteem. This has been particularly important in my own recent experience with the use of cooperative learning tasks.
- According to answers given in Part III, it may be concluded that on the part of the teacher, there needs to be an assessment done to see just what activities make students feel panicky and thereby resent French and to find ways that these activities can be done a little differently to foster more appreciation for the lesson and the language. This advice would encompass all four of the skills. For example, one group of my Grade 7 students would become quite anxious when they were given a task of making up simple conversations on a topic. After much hair-pulling, we found that using suitable comic strips without text, where they could write their conversations in the word bubbles, made the activity much more visual and entertaining for them.
- In Part III, Question #2, students expressed a dislike for listening to authentic materials. From a rural perspective, students are not at all

accustomed to hearing French spoken, either from those around them or from radio or television; a definite unfortunate disadvantage. Rural teachers are advised to provide students with exposure to taped radio or television programs and other native speech outside of the classroom work context so that students do not always equate it with a need to listen to complete assignments. Key pals exchanging greetings on tape, native singers singing popular French tunes (or English ones translated into French), and visits from nearby urban area Francophone R.C.M.P. officers to discuss issues of interest to youth, have all been positively received by my students. Meanwhile, if students do listening assignments regularly, and if the teacher explains that this practice is important and perhaps does not actually give a mark for them, one hopes that students will get used to them and actually find them helpful!

- In Part III, Questions #3 and #4, students expressed a dislike for speaking French aloud. Chambers (1993) notes that the fear of speaking aloud is common among all students - not just rural ones. Experience has shown me that teachers might assist students by encouraging as much group/partner oral activities as possible (since students do like group work), especially when it is evident that individual presentations make them uncomfortable.
- According to results obtained in Part III, Question #4, it could be concluded

that teachers' use and criticism of written exercises, if not handled with care, can have a demotivating effect. Hewins (1986) says for students to be motivated to write in a second language, they must see it as a process, must have a supportive atmosphere, and must have their fear of grading taken away through drafting, feedback, and a choice in work submitted. An activity I use with some of my classes is the use of a paper folio whereby students are given a choice of which topics they wish to write on over the course of several months. They have the opportunity to submit and resubmit rough drafts for comments and corrections before submitting a final version on a given date.

- Data obtained in Part III, Question #1, suggested that the teacher reading aloud is highly motivational for some students as it interests them and encourages them to want more! Again, as with oral work, it is not very useful to insist on individual reading when students are getting nothing from it. A further burden at times in a rural school occurs when library resources mean fewer age-appropriate reading materials are available than needed. However, use of the world wide web can provide all sorts of authentic reading materials. In addition, I have found "swap libraries" excellent sources of exchanging reading materials among rural schools to ensure a variety of materials are always on hand.

- If we are not comfortable in certain situations, we are certainly not motivated to pay attention, to seek help when needed, or to enjoy what we are doing. According to Part III, Questions #3 and #4, it follows that should our students not be comfortable in our classrooms, they will not be motivated to perform at their best. This, of course, is implicit in Krashen (1982), who believes that the main function of the classroom may be to provide comprehensible input in an environment conducive to a low-affective filter (i.e. high motivation, low anxiety). This is where getting to know your students' "quirks and quarks" from day one through surveys or oral questioning comes in.
- One of our most basic needs is the need to feel safe and secure. If we can instill this in our second-language students, they will certainly be more motivated to at least make an effort. Whether it is through giving praise and credit where it is due, being more aware of student understanding than the page number, or just being a little more aware of how our moods affect them, we can ensure that they do not all feel worse when we come in and best when we leave.
- With reference to use of substitute teachers as mentioned in Part III, Questions #3 and #4, a lack of qualified teachers is a problem unique to rural schools. It seems specialized areas, such as French, are difficult ones

in which to find a substitute teacher or even a full-time specialist in some small schools who can come in and continue on with the lesson, as they tend to have trouble understanding and using the language themselves. Matranga, Hill, and Noonan (1995) believe there often is a crisis situation in rural schools when it comes to the use of substitutes. They quote several rural principals from a survey they conducted: "A large percentage of our substitutes are not licensed or qualified. We either then place them there just to be responsible for the students or we send these students home" (p. 6). This situation certainly does nothing for the motivation of the students and only frustrates both student and teacher.

## Conclusion

To conclude, this paper has shown how certain situations exist in a second-language classroom which both contribute to and detract from the motivation of the second-language learners. From what interests and makes them comfortable to what bores them and makes them uncomfortable, students' beliefs are important for their sense of success. Research and studies mentioned herein, including my own, certainly imply that while students' attitudes and motivation may change in various situations, the principal factor for change is the students' attitudes towards what happens day-by-day in class.

We, as second-language teachers, need to keep in mind that in order to foster motivation, we need to find ways of enabling students to feel competent and in control of their own learning. We need to follow the guidelines as suggested by Woolfolk (1993) which are to ensure that all students have a reasonable chance for success, and above all, to remember that no matter what else, student effort is the key. In addition, as Smith and Massey (1987), argue,

Motivation to learn is not solely determined by what a pupil brings to the class but is affected, even in one week, by what happens in the class and by whatever it is that teachers do that leads to their being rated as being liked and as being able to explain and make the subject interesting. (p. 315)

This research, based on my own experiences and opinions, as well as those of the students, can provide insight into how to do this.



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**Appendix A**

**Survey Questionnaire**

## Grade 7 Core French Class

### Part I

Answer Yes, No, Maybe	Y	N	M
1. Do you enjoy taking French?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you think French is hard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Would you like to take more French courses when you get to high school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Would you like to visit a place where people speak French?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you think there will be any need for you to speak French when you leave school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Are you more comfortable in French class than in other classes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Would you like to speak many languages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Do you think it is more important to be able to speak French than to read and write it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Do you think your parents are happy that you are learning French?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# QUESTIONNAIRE

## Part II

Answer based on what you have done in elementary school and what you think you will like in junior high next year.

Strongly Agree SA

Agree A

Disagree D

Strongly Disagree SD

1. I like speaking French \_\_\_\_\_
2. I like listening to other people besides the teacher speaking French.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. I like playing games in French. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I like working in groups in French class. \_\_\_\_\_
5. I like working by myself in French class. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I like reading stories in French. \_\_\_\_\_
7. I like doing crossword puzzles in French. \_\_\_\_\_
8. I like learning about people from places where French is their main language. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I like doing presentations in French. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I like writing stories in French. \_\_\_\_\_
11. I like listening to French music. \_\_\_\_\_
12. I like listening to tapes to accompany the French workbook. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part III**

Think about what you have done in French class so far this year in Grade

7. Answer these questions honestly and personally. (Remember: This is anonymous!)

1. What kinds of activities do you like most in French class so far?

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2. What kinds of activities do you like least in French class so far?

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3. When are you happiest and most comfortable in French class?

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4. When are you most unhappy and least comfortable in French class?

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5. What do you think French will be like in Grade 8?

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# **Appendix B**

## **Survey Data**



## **Tables 1-9 (Part I Questionnaire)**

**Table 1:      Enjoyment**  
**Do you enjoy taking French? (Part I, Question #1)**

<b># Enjoyed French</b>	<b># Did Not Enjoy French</b>	<b># Not Sure</b>
30	15	3

**Table 2:      Speaking French**  
**Do you think it is more important to be able to speak French than to read and write it? (Part I, Question #8)**

<b># Thought More Important to Speak It</b>	<b># Did Not Think More Important to Speak It</b>	<b># Not Sure</b>
34	5	9

**Table 3:      Comfort in French Class**  
**Are you more comfortable in French class than in other classes? (Part I, Question #6)**

<b># More Comfortable in French Class</b>	<b># Not More Comfortable in French Class</b>	<b># Not Sure</b>
24	24	0

**Table 4:      Difficulty**  
**Do you think French is hard? (Part I, Question #2)**

<b># Found French Hard</b>	<b># Did Not Find French Hard</b>	<b># Not Sure</b>
20	20	8

**Table 5: Visiting French Speaking Areas**  
**Would you like to visit a place where people speak French? (Part 1, Question #4)**

# Like to Visit French Speaking Areas	# Not Like to Visit French Speaking Areas	# Not Sure
37	10	1

**Table 6: Need to Speak French**  
**Do you think there will be any need to speak French when you leave school? (Part I, Question #5)**

# Thought needed to Speak French	# Did not Think Would Need to Speak French	# Not Sure
35	10	3

**Table 7: Taking Further Courses**  
**Would you like to take more French courses when you get to high school? (Part I, Question #3)**

# Like More French Courses	# Not Like More French Courses	# Not Sure
29	11	8

**Table 8: Parent Reaction to Students Doing French**  
**Do you think your parents are happy that you are learning French? (Part I, Question #9)**

# Thought Parents Happy	# Thought Parents Not Happy	# Not Sure
30	8	10

**Table 9: Other Languages**  
**Would you like to speak many languages? (Part I, Question #7)**

# Like to Speak More Languages	# Not Like to Speak More Languages	# Not Sure
19	24	5

**Table 10 (Part II Questionnaire)**

**Table 10: Percentage of Students who Liked Various Activities in the French Classroom**

89%	Speaking French
69%	Listening to others besides teacher speaking French
83%	Playing games in French
87%	Working in groups in French class
13%	Working alone in French class
75%	Reading stories in French
80%	Doing crossword puzzles in French
78%	Learning about people from places where French is spoken
77%	Doing presentations in French
75%	Writing stories in French
89%	Listening to French music
23%	Listening to tapes to accompany French workbook

## **Folio Paper Three**

**Putting Research into Practice - Follow-up and Future  
Recommendations for the Motivation of Second Language Learners**

## Introduction

Motivation is defined as the inherent desire to do something (Webster, 1984). It is that which meets a need, is goal directed, and involves a reasonable chance for success. Ultimately, we are emotional, as well as intellectual beings, and it is just as much the emotion as the intellect which motivates us and makes our learning meaningful. The two preceding papers establish why we need to motivate students in the second-language classroom. We now need to focus on how we can do this. From the perspective of an eight-year, second-language teacher whose daily concern has been maintaining and enhancing the interest, effort, and persistence of her students, I will attempt to provide some practical suggestions for how we can motivate second-language students. These suggestions will take into account learner differences and interests, and the social conditions of students. Such suggestions will be based on personal encounters and experiences as well as on current research in this area. Based on attribution theory (Woolfolk, 1993; McCown, Driscoll, Roop, Saklofske, Kelly, Schwean, & Gajadharsingh, 1996), as outlined in Folio Paper One, many of the suggestions are also designed to develop students' sense of self-worth and competency.

As teachers of second languages, we show our students maps of where these languages are spoken, and statistics illustrating the number of people who speak

these languages. We also discuss their importance in the worlds of business and trade. However, the effort of the student is the key when it comes to understanding of the importance of a second language. Although there are many practical reasons for studying a second language, teachers need to find ways of presenting them that will excite students, stimulate their interests, and pique their curiosity in the domain of second languages. This is what motivating is all about. Cognitively, understanding is the most important outcome of learning. Understanding means acquiring information which, in turn, motivates students to seek application of this information (McCown, Driscoll, Roop, Saklofske, Kelly, Schwean, & Gajadharsingh, 1996).

## **Involving the Student**

Much research has been done on the issue of how one can foster motivation in the second-language classroom. Researchers, such as Lee (1986), Massey (1986), Smith and Massey (1987), and Morello (1988), to name a few, believe that student involvement and motivation go hand in hand when it comes to the planning and preparation of second-language courses. Renger (1991) writes, "Tell me and I forget, show me and I know, but ... involve me and I learn" (p. 6). Our students, in order to be motivated in the second-language classroom, need to be involved in the whole process of learning. From the choice of activities to their

implementation, students must make an effort to become part of their own learning process. The term 'active learning' means students engage in meaningful tasks in which they have ownership of content. A cognitive perspective points to the conclusion that teachers who foster active learning enhance the outcomes of learning for the student and foster true understanding (McCown, Driscoll, Roop, Saklofske, Kelly, Schwean, & Gajadharsingh, 1996).

I always find it extremely useful at the beginning of the school year to give my students a survey where they are asked their opinions on a variety of activities, preferences, and dislikes in their French classroom. This enables me to "see into" my students and plan my year for one that will best meet their needs and keep them involved in the kinds of activities they like, thus increasing the chances that active learning will take place. Similarly, Lee (1986), after a survey conducted to elicit pupils' views on how they feel and think about second-language learning, concluded that teachers need to look for ways to interest students in the target language and make it enjoyable. Gardner, Ginsberg, and Smith (1976) found that the attitudes and motivation of students of French as a second language are most influenced by their changing perceptions of classroom events in the first few weeks of the school year, and their input into these events.

It appears that a good starting point when motivating our second-language students, is to find out exactly what the attitudes of our students are and what

excites them. These attitudes and their experience in these first weeks will be what they bring to their learning environment, and hence, what they put into their work. In other words, their attitudes and early experiences will certainly be key in their motivation. As Renger (1991) says, "Young people of today and tomorrow will be more receptive to French as a second language if their teacher makes an effort to motivate them" (p. 4).

The start of a new school year often brings with it new faces. What better way to "break the ice" than with an activity such as "Mon Profile - C'est Moi" where a roll of toilet paper is handed around the class and students are instructed to tear off as much as they wish. (Some jokers will take lots!) Afterwards they are told that for every square they have taken, they are to give one piece of information (*en français bien sûr!*) on themselves! They have certainly directed the course of this activity - though perhaps unwittingly. Or, how about "La Petite Culotte" where students are given two pairs of paper underwear to pin to their shirts. They must then circulate and ask each other questions in French to which the other person must answer without using "Oui" or "Non". If they are tricked into doing this, they lose their underwear to the questioner. The student who collects the most wins! These types of activities that both provide entertainment and foster real communication in the target language can foster positive attitudes during those crucial first days of class.



Morello (1988) describes attitudes of university students completing a final course of a language requirement. Essentially, he says that, as a result of their understanding of the course and the requirements of this course, students had positive attitudes, a feeling of having attained some degree of proficiency and an awareness that foreign language study is a necessity in a modern world. The majority of students reported that their attitudes towards the requirement of a foreign language at university were positive. Morello then advised university professors and all language teachers that, "if we are to continue to require that students study languages, it is our responsibility to assure that they leave our courses believing that the requirement experience was a worthwhile and productive one" (p. 439). Similarly, Richards (1981), in an article on the aims of second-language education in Canada, suggests that positive attitude formation in students should be one of our primary goals of teaching. This may be achieved through activities designed to reduce their ethnocentrism and enhance their appreciation of their own and target language cultures, to teach them how to listen well, and finally, to develop the other skills of speaking, reading, and writing. He feels that if these recommendations are followed, good attitudes will be formed. If students are successful, their self-efficacy will be raised, more effort will be made, and thus, motivation will be heightened, and a sense of progress and achievement and thus further language study would be stimulated. In terms of student attributions,

this also relates to McCown, Driscoll, Roop, Saklofske, Kelly, Schwean, and Gajadharsingh's (1996) argument that when students realize their own success, they will develop a belief in their ability to continue such accomplishments.

Some of the most motivational, culturally rich activities that can be done with students involve the use of music. Many students love to see the differences and similarities in what they and their French peers listen to. They are often surprised to learn that they have many of the same tastes. They are also fascinated to hear "French" music, particularly that which is popular among French adolescents. Motivation enhancing activities that go along with this concept include matching titles with a thirty-second clip of a song that is played for them, filling in the blanks with words that have been omitted from a copy of the song, or researching information on the singer and doing a "Fiche Personelle" of them. There is also drawing a picture of the image that the song provides, making them aware of how to listen for "mots clefs" that can give them the general idea of the song's meaning. Of course, just listening for the pleasure of listening may also reduce ethnocentrism and enhance motivation.

The Nova Scotia Department of Education Teaching Guide (1978), "#21", suggests that the question of motivation is particularly important for students at the junior high level, as it is during this time that most of them will decide if they wish to continue to enroll in French classes. Omaggio-Hadley (1993), supports

this, emphasizing the importance of motivating students in all aspects of the second-language classroom whether through interesting activities or just by showing that the teachers' own attitudes are positive.

We shall now take a more in-depth look at several other activities and attitudes that may serve to motivate students of the second-language classroom, based on my personal practice as well as current research.

First of all, it must be remembered that timing and organization are extremely important when it comes to the introduction of ideas, activities, or lessons with which we hope to motivate students. Omaggio-Hadley (1993) sums it up when she writes,

In using activities in the classroom, it is important to remember that sequencing activities for practice is almost as important as designing contextualized practice in the first place. It is best to integrate the whole sequence of lesson materials into a single theme, content, or general situation, at least in designing one class day's work or unit of study, instead of jumping from one context to another. (p. 250)

This summary suggests that it is important to do a variety of activities to stimulate students, but, at the same time, to ensure that these activities are not haphazard or unconnected to the curriculum. These activities need to be structured and linked to the current program and resources. Ralph (1989) suggests that teachers need to plan and prepare for meaningful instruction, engaging students in learning situations which students can relate to their interests. A teacher, in a lesson, might

include themes such as personal appearance, peer acceptance, social relationships, athletics, entertainment, social issues, and food. It is, in part, through activities which focus on these kinds of ideas that negative student attitudes towards the second language will be reduced. In addition, such themes are often directly related to the current communicative curriculum.

Obviously, if topics covered are beyond the interest or level of students, it will be a lot more difficult to motivate them and arouse their interest. As well, it must be noted that certain activities are considered to be more useful, enjoyable, and easy, as determined by both students and teachers. Lee (1986), in her survey of junior high French students, found that these students believed French to be more interesting, and therefore motivating when activities such as games, puzzles, skits, watching videos, songs, and drawing maps or diagrams were used.

Personal experience has shown that as "warm-ups" and "cool-downs" to lessons, puzzles and brain teasers are quite popular; games are useful, especially if they are designed to teach a grammatical or language lesson. Some that I find particularly motivating yet also valuable in terms of reviewing vocabulary or grammatical structures, include popular game shows such as "La Roue de la Fortune" where students choose letters to uncover the identity of a word of a certain category or "Jeopardy" where simple clues are given for students to guess the identity of a person, place, event, etc., that is being described. Jeopardy is

also good for practice in the interrogative. "Les Pictogrammes" are fun as brain teasers where students must guess the French word represented by the picture. As well, "Des Petits Problèmes Amusants" is a challenging yet exciting way for students to hear or see the language (depending on whether you write the problems on the board or read them aloud) and is a way for them to also think critically to solve the puzzle:

i.e.,: Jean Baptiste Berger a cent moutons. Combien lui en reste-t-il s'il a décidé d'en vendre cinquante. R: 100-il a juste décidé d'en vendre cinquante!

Role playing is also extremely valuable when oral presentations, particularly individual ones, are considered by many students to be frightening and intimidating. Role playing an interview with a rock or movie star to elicit questioning and answering techniques, or role playing a restaurant scene with staff and clients to practice use of possessives (du pain, de la viande etc.) as well as related vocabulary, are examples of motivating role playing techniques.

Holmes (1991) says resources must be designed to make communication in the second language easier and more enjoyable. He also says that students "need to be reassured that the activities they engage in are valid in themselves and have tangible results. They need to see the fruits of their labours" (p. 28).

## **Motivational Practice and the Four Skills**

Obviously, communication could involve any of the four skills which our resources attempt to develop. There are many meaningful ways in which we can motivate our students using a four-skill communicative approach. Green (1993) suggests that communicative activities are more useful when students find them enjoyable. He suggests teachers cultivate an enjoyable classroom environment where students understand the purposes of the communicative activities used. Kinginger (1994) advocates the use of oral activities in the second-language classroom, either through small groups or pair activities. He believes that learner-to-learner conversations present many advantages, such as increased oral practice time, or a greater variety of interactional roles for students. Conversations also allow students the opportunity to gather optimal input through the negotiation of meaning. This concept of optimal input is based on Krashen's (1982) view of comprehensible input as a necessary condition for second-language acquisition.

Through oral activities, such as role playing, small group discussions on a "comfortable" topic, oral games, etc., students experience use of their second language in ways that they find stimulating, enjoyable, and thus motivational. These activities can then lead to higher levels of communicative confidence and interest. Getting students to practice oral questioning related to personal

biographical information can be achieved through an activity such as "Qui Suis-Je?" where students have names of people living or dead, real or fictional, taped to their backs - without them knowing who it is. They must then ask "yes" or "no" questions of each other until they guess the secret identity.

A great cooperative learning activity is "Les Tribles" where students are shown different expressions found on the faces of five little fuzzy characters, ranging from sad to excited. They must briefly explain which one they most closely resemble today and why. This activity provides for not only oral presentation, but also authentic communication and building inclusion and sharing among classmates.

Omaggio-Hadley (1993) writes: "Oral classroom activities can be selected to correspond to current levels of proficiency and to those in the next highest range so that opportunities for progress along the scale can be maximized" (p. 233). Above all, we must remember that our students will be more motivated to produce orally if they are not pushed to produce when they are uncomfortable doing so. They should be provided with an interesting reason to communicate and be encouraged to do so.

Omaggio-Hadley (1993) also presents a wide variety of writing ideas and activities which can be motivational, depending on the students' proficiency level. She suggests choosing writing activities that are contextualized, meaningful, and

personalized, such as journal writing, seeing visual descriptions, or curriculum-related activities, like preparing a menu, writing letters, or writing diary entries - all suited to the students' level of interest.

An activity called "Activité de Motivation" enables students to practice creative writing. In this activity, they are asked to choose their favourite color, animal, and body of water and write three adjectives that describe each of these three items. After, they are told to analyze their results. The three color adjectives describe how they see themselves, the three animal adjectives correspond to how others see them, and the three water adjectives show how they view the world. They are usually fascinated by their results!

Hewins (1986) refers to the importance of motivating students to write in a second language. She feels it is necessary to create a supportive atmosphere in order to motivate writing. In her opinion, such an atmosphere would include creating a real audience or reason for writing, such as might be accomplished through penpals or "keypals." Holmes (1991) also believes that exchanges with real people who speak the second language must be encouraged through letters and the exchange of materials about each others' homeland, etc.

Again, we see possibilities of e-mail exchanges, conferencing, web pages, etc., which can contribute to endless opportunities for collaborative projects and



learning experiences. Commercial second-language programs, productive software such as CD rom encyclopedias or the Internet, are also extremely valuable reading and writing tools. Lowe-Dupas (1995) believes that projects about the second-language community, whether they are research on the geography and history of the area, presentations about their banking systems, or their school systems, etc., are authentic and also give not just reading practice, but possibly writing and speaking as well.

With our current age of computers and students having so much access to them, it would be remiss to not stress the importance of the use of the computer in our second-language classroom. Opportunities for second-language communication are available through the Internet and particularly the World Wide Web. Through the "French Connection" (<http://frenchconnection.stemnet.nf.ca>), a network of second-language chatlines, I was recently able to involve my senior high class in a computer exchange program with a group of students in France. They have been able to learn so much about each other and each others' culture from letters exchanged. Computers are particularly advantageous for small rural schools as they enable students to communicate with French students and provide easy access to authentic web sites.

Another method of motivating students to write is getting them to prepare articles for a newspaper. This helps them to realize that their efforts do not have

to be perfect and that their fear of grades can be diminished by the fact that not all work will be graded. As well, they can choose for themselves what they want graded.

In this day of the communicative approach, aural activities are extremely prevalent and important in the second-language classroom. Students themselves are quick to point out that some of their favourite second-language activities are listening to music, having the teacher read stories aloud to them, and listening to teenagers like themselves speak about the things that interest them. This was evidenced in a personal study conducted with my students as referred to in Folio Paper Two. In that study, students were given the opportunity to express what they liked about French class. They were also quick to point out what makes them uncomfortable. For example, it appears that listening activities can become dreaded when students become frustrated with the speed of native speakers' speech, or when there is a requirement of them to try to focus on memorizing too much of what they've heard.

The key to motivation in the area of aural comprehension is certainly pace. Students cannot be expected to focus specifically on every element of everything they hear. They must be taught to take a globally, comprehensive perspective on understanding what they are hearing and look for a general understanding. The specifics then become clearer (Omaggio-Hadley, 1993).

Activities such as understanding generally the topics of a news or weather report, following simple directions on a map, listening to a sports event, or taped penpals are all examples of listening activities that are do-able and interactive. Such activities can also contribute to fine tuning the students' listening capabilities. Renger (1991) talks about her use of personal phone calls, on occasion, to her students. She says these calls make them feel important and are highly motivational. Students are given a personal experience and are helped to develop both the oral and aural skills.

"Les Extra-Terrestres" is a wonderful listening activity which involves the teacher or another student viewing a weird picture of an extra-terrestrial and describing it to the other students. Each student must take what he/she hears and understand and draw what it is he/she imagines this alien to look like. It is great fun afterwards to compare his/her version with the originals! Similarly, a popular activity with the younger students is "Simon Dit" where students must follow the leader's oral directions, but only if "Simon dit!"

In terms of reading skills, Pulliam (1993) maintains that students often lack either an intrinsic or extrinsic motivation to read in the second language, and thus, must be encouraged to encounter positive and enjoyable learning experiences, for example, through the use of authentic materials; music, magazines, newspapers, etc. This view is further supported by Rickert (1995) who advocates the use of

current newspapers and magazines in the classroom. Again students are not expected to understand everything perfectly but are expected to be able to get the gist of the article and to answer a few well-chosen questions or do a follow-up activity.

Finally, in terms of authentic use, Bacon and Finneman (1990), through their research, have come to believe that curriculum must be designed so that the use of authentic input is incorporated. Their study showed that authentic input interested the students and thus motivated them to listen better. By better listening, their comprehension and levels of proficiency were increased. Thus, it is important, as second-language teachers, to ensure usage of authentic oral, listening, written, and reading work as motivators and a means of overcoming cultural barriers to language learning.

Lee (1986), in her student survey, found that students also enjoyed reading French magazines or story books by themselves but definitely not aloud in class. Temple and Rodero (1995) suggested making reading real, taking it from the real world, and letting students become independent by giving them responsible choices to make instead of always forcing a common curriculum upon them. Finally, Hood (1996) stressed the importance of reading strategies such as identifying key words or sequencing paragraphs. Such strategies allow students to gain more competence and confidence in the second language. Simple reading activities

could include games such as "Chasse au Trésor" where objects to find are listed and must be obtained as quickly as possible, or the activity "Connaissez-vous vos camarades de classe?" where students must find a person who matches varied descriptions found in a grid. Again, key words in these descriptions are emphasized to the students to help them understand and focus (i.e., Trouvez une personne qui n'a jamais eu un os cassé).

A common motivational element in all of the four skill areas mentioned above is the one of ensuring the comfort and ease with which students should be able to enter into activities. If they are not given sufficient opportunity to become familiar with strategies and expectations, they will most certainly not be interested in pursuing involvement. Guisset (1991) says, "Nous pensons que, dans un cours de langue, toutes les activités proposées aux élèves doivent être présentées de telle sorte que ceux-ci les trouvent intéressantes, en retirant le maximum de profit et progressent, grâce à elles, vers les objectifs qu'ils se sont fixés" (p. 16). He goes on to explain how pre-reading and pre-listening activities are important for students as they often find reading and listening activities difficult. When they are faced with some sort of pre-organization technique, they can break the content down into manageable pieces on which they can focus more clearly, thereby becoming less frustrated and more motivated to continue. Hood (1996) and Omaggio-Hadley (1993) also emphasize the importance of advance organizers, which are

introductory materials at a high level of generality presented in advance of the new material to be learned. These might include pictures showing the general context for the new material, titles for stories, or review of previously learned grammatical rules. These authors suggest that students must be encouraged to read and listen selectively for overall global comprehension, rather than getting bogged down in trying to focus on every detail, every word.

## **Cultural Integration**

Ramage (1986) writes, "An understanding of what culture is should be promoted as a goal rather than fulfillment of a requirement" (p. 208). She believes that culture is not something that should be gained solely through the time to time imparting of facts but rather should be an all-encompassing, enjoyable experience. Omaggio-Hadley (1993) devotes an entire chapter to teaching culture and she strongly suggests, among other things, that cultural lessons and activities need to be well planned, related to thematic and grammatical content, used with a variety of skills, and tested as carefully as other things. Above all, they need to be experiential, not just factual. Rickert (1995) insists, as well, on the importance of the teaching of culture in the second-language classroom. He believes it can engage students in learning French through its intense emotional appeal.

Essarte-Sarries (1989), in her explanation of the Durham project where

primary pupils in England were asked their views on aspects of French culture, reveals how many students have inaccurate and stereotyped ideas about France and French culture. Students, in her study, thought everything about the French from "they always wear onions around their neck" (p. 68) to "they all wear stripey tee-shirts" (p. 69). She argues that motivation to learn a second language may be negatively affected by these misconceptions. Therefore, she suggests teachers help students by evaluating their beliefs and then providing accurate cultural information so that students will gradually, yet consistently, want to learn more about the language and its concepts.

As Gardner and Lambert (1972) state, "The individual's motivation to learn is determined by his or her attitudes towards the second-language group in particular and toward foreign people in general and by his [sic] orientation toward the learning task itself" (p. 3). It is this attitude that is formed through exposure to second-language culture and the appreciation that students come to have of the second-language community. This understanding is likely to motivate them to know more about francophone cultures and communities. Visits to the classroom by native speakers where students are encouraged to ask questions, or activities like taking a map of our province and getting students to stick thumbtacks into any areas whose names appear to be French (to show the prevalence of the French influence in our own culture) are excellent means of cultural enhancement.

One of the most culturally rich activities that a second-language teacher can plan for his/her second-language classroom is a trip to a target language community. Many researchers, such as Clement, Smythe, and Gardner (1978), Desrochers and Gardner (1981), Gardner, Ginsberg and Smythe (1976), and Archibald and Libben (1995) agree that these trips are a definite motivation and an enhancer of positive student attitudes towards the second language. Students need to develop positive attitudes towards the target language community, otherwise, they will not see the point in learning the language for communication's sake.

Gardner, Ginsberg, and Smythe (1976) refer to their study of grades nine, ten, and eleven anglophone children attending schools of the London (Ontario) School Board. They found that improvements in attitude towards second-language courses impacted on the individual's motivation and persistence with his/her involvement in inter-ethnic contact programs such as bicultural excursions and exchanges.

The Nova Scotia Department of Education Teaching Guide (1978), "#21", suggests that students need to identify strongly with people who speak the language. Therefore, it recommends that second-language instruction include activities which make the program "come alive." Such activities could include exchange visits to French communities, and satisfying contacts with French-



speaking people. Again, this need, at times, can be met simply through "computer travel" where much can be learned at the touch of a key.

Desrochers and Gardner (1981) point out that, "Students' attitudes towards the second-language community have consistently been shown to be related to their motivation to learn the second language, which, in turn, is associated with their achievement in that language" (p. 7). In terms of excursions, they believe that students who have more interaction with French Canadians, through bicultural visits, have much more favourable attitudes towards the community and the language, and more intention to use it than students who have not participated in such events. Gardner, Ginsberg, and Smythe (1976), as well as Desrochers and Gardner (1981), also claim that students who actively meet with members of the second-language community through bicultural excursions have improved attitudes towards the second language. Archibald and Libben (1995) agree that improved attitudes towards the target culture will increase students' motivation to learn the second language.

## **Media and the Second-Language Classroom**

Many researchers and second-language teachers agree that one of the most highly motivational tools in any second-language classroom is media. Whether it is television, computers, or simply cassette tapes, such resources provide an

enjoyable means of teaching the second language. Such resources also give an opportunity for students to see and hear native speakers. Ralph (1989) cites the use of a variety of motivational activities including video presentations and short films. Otten (1988) as well devotes an entire article to the use of video tapes and radio plays in the second language classroom. She says:

When they [students] are interested in what they see and hear, they are willing to work harder in order to build the vocabulary necessary to understand and communicate content in simple language. As a result, their listening, speaking, and writing skills increase considerably faster than if they had been exposed to the language only by reading books. (p. 1)

She points out that we learn a great deal about people and their culture by watching them on television - after all, "a picture is worth a thousand words." Di Giura (1991) argues that the use of television in the classroom can be extremely motivating as it can lead to a new level of comprehension even for the weaker students. She writes, "L' expérience télévisuelle des élèves en tant qu' usagers habituels de la télévision, est mise à profit" (p. 66). This included the viewing of programs from local French stations, ranging from cartoons for younger students to news reports or movies for older ones.

Jarvela (1994) argues that the more technologically rich a second-language learning environment is, the greater will be the number of higher mental processes used by students and the stronger will be their general motivation. The use of

computers in the second-language classroom is believed by Jarvela to allow choice and independence on the part of the student and a decrease in teacher dominance. Both contribute to positive task orientations. Richeux (1987) also believes that the use of computers in the classroom can be motivational, even when it is such activities as grammar exercises which are being used. Beauvois-Healy (1995) stresses the importance of computer use in the second-language classroom, and particularly that of e-mail, where students are given the opportunity to exchange conversation with other students who are either studying or are native speakers of the second language. Peebles (1973), in her research, found that the use of a variety of media materials produced a significant increase in student motivation. She says a teacher should increase his/her use of all forms of media instruction to motivate students to develop critical and decision-making abilities.

## **The Unmotivated Learner**

We have discussed ways of improving our classroom environment and thus motivating students to enjoy and use the second language. Unfortunately, in every second-language classroom there will exist students who have no interest in the language or who have particular disabilities which make it difficult for them to function in the classroom. In such situations, it is difficult for teachers to motivate them, even to try to work as part of a group. Ralph (1989) believes that such

students need to feel accepted by teachers and peers, and, despite their previous record of low achievement and/or misbehaviour, can be motivated. He suggests increased motivation can be brought about through a variety of positive reinforcers. Such motivation might include rewards, making activities real and interesting, being humorous and creative, and finally, planning and implementing firm yet fair strategies. Through the use of such reinforcers, he argues that negative attitudes of unmotivated students will diminish.

Holmes (1991) writes, "They [pupils with learning difficulties or underachievers] need to be reassured that the activities they engage in are valid in themselves and have tangible results. They need to see the fruits of their labours" (p. 28). The techniques of cooperative learning and grouping are evident as a means of motivating these students, as these techniques can encourage students to interact more with their peers and receive help from each other. Such students also receive more comprehensible input and are encouraged to do a good job to meet with an overall group success. They are able to feel as if they are a contributing effective part of the process and product. This view is supported by researchers, such as Cushing (1991), Asher (1995), and Omaggio-Hadley (1993).

Social cognitive theory, with its emphasis on goal setting, performance feedback, rewards, and attributional feedback, offers a useful perspective on the motivation of unmotivated students (Schunk, 1991). As well, in terms of

attribution, it appears that inclusion of students with learning problems and cognitive deficiencies with other learners in a regular classroom has been shown to be beneficial as long as the group succeeds (McCown, Driscoll, Roop, Saklofske, Kelly, Schwean, & Gajadharsingh, 1996).

Chambers (1993) talks about the "demotivated" learner and suggests that there are ways that we can take the "de" out of "demotivation." These ways include trying to give encouragement for anything pupils do, finding pupils' levels, setting tasks at which they will succeed, giving immediate pay-offs (such as stickers or merit awards), giving time and support to them, and using interest and age-appropriate materials and tasks. Above all, he believes that these students often need time for both their attitudes and those of their parents, friends, and society to be adjusted before real success can be achieved.

## **Learning Style Variations**

Inherent in the research on the unmotivated student is the idea that not all students are the same. Students do not all learn the same way and cannot be motivated in the same fashion. This is a critical point to remember when we strive to provide an interesting and supportive second-language atmosphere. There are various learning style variations that exist within our classrooms, and we need to learn to deal with them. Consequently, whatever motivating activities we use, a

variety of teaching styles and methods must be employed in order to suit our students' varying learning styles. Omaggio-Hadley (1993) says we must use a balance of activities, ranging from activities that are relatively simple to activities that are more complex. Fitz-Gibbon and Reay (1982) say that teachers must use novelty and a variety of instruction methods in their teaching. Using such methods can lead to enjoyment and achievement on the part of students. Renger (1991) sums this up when she says, "Every French teacher who is involved in a communicative, interactive, and motivational way of Core French language teaching will actually need to be something of a chameleon!" (p. 5). Cox, Sproles, and Sproles (1988) believe that once a teacher knows the profile of learning style characteristics of students in the classroom, teaching strategies can be identified which will take advantage of learners' preferences. While there will be students who may have non-adaptive learning characteristics, these students can be helped through special attention.

## **Student Attitudes**

One of the most fundamental components of a student's motivation to learn a second language is the attitude he/she possesses about the class, the teacher, and the course itself. It is this attitude which can make or break his/her motivation. Massey (1986) states that:

Despite the many ways in which attitudes are defined, the communality among the various definitions is illustrated by noting that attitudes are selectively acquired and integrated through learning and experience; that they are enduring dispositions, indicating response consistency, and that positive or negative affect toward a social or psychological object represents the salient characteristic of an attitude. (p. 609)

He concludes from his study of student attitudes towards the learning of a second language that attitudes towards the classroom environment, the course, and the teacher play an important part in the second-language classroom. Gayle (1984) points out that the teacher and his/her style have a very powerful effect on enhancing a positive attitude or reducing a negative one. Wieczorek (1993) also suggests that, along with what teachers themselves bring to the course, teachers should keep in mind the attitudes of students and vary the teaching program accordingly. It is then that daily teaching practices will further motivate the students to learn.

## Conclusion

Youseff (1981) argues that an individual will be motivated to exert high effort if he/she perceives that doing so will pay off in some desired outcome. It is hoped that through the ideas and concepts presented in this paper second-language teachers will have a better understanding of how better to motivate their students so that they will see this "payoff expectancy." Obviously, teachers have

to realize that it is going to be next to impossible to motivate all students. There will constantly be factors, such as affective variables in both students' and teachers' lives which will hinder attempts at motivation. However, it is in the best interests of both our students and ourselves to, at least, take the opportunity to try. At the same time, a key point in all this is the need for students to be given more say in what they do in class, especially since French, unlike most subjects, does not have a core content as such. Required aspects of the language are what are to be mastered. Students need to be given some degree of control over the curriculum, and thereby can let us know what it is that interests and motivates them to learn. We can motivate students by giving them confidence in themselves, and with this confidence will come hope which will inspire them to action! As Renger (1991) says, "The challenges are great, but the rewards of being able to motivate the citizens of tomorrow are infinitely greater" (p. 5).



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