

QUALITY OF SCHOOL LIFE MODEL FOR EARLY
WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CORE FRENCH PROGRAM

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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WILLIAM ROSE



QUALITY OF SCHOOL LIFE MODEL FOR EARLY
WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CORE
FRENCH PROGRAM

by

William Rose

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in partial fulfillment of the
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Abstract

The research analyzes student perceptions of their school lives and how this correlates and impacts upon other variables in accounting for early withdrawal from core French. Six basic questions are researched, which include: (i) Why do many students decide to withdraw from core French sometime before beginning grade ten? (ii) To what extent do certain background variables account for this early withdrawal from core French? (iii) How does ability in French contribute to this early withdrawal? (iv) To what extent do students' perceptions of school life account for this early withdrawal? (v) To what extent does attitudes toward core French instruction account for this early withdrawal? (vi) To what extent does student well-being or satisfaction and dissatisfaction with schooling account for this early withdrawal?

The sample for this study was taken from within the Exploit's White Bay Roman Catholic School District. Included in the sample were all grade nine students who were enrolled in core French during the school year 1989-90. The students were from eight schools ranging from a small school with 2.7 percent of the sample to a school with 21.3 percent of the sample. The data were gathered by administering student questionnaires, a French achievement test and a student intention form. The instruments measured four domains of each of the quality of school life, attitudes towards French and

student well-being (satisfaction and dissatisfaction). Permission was given by parents and the school board to conduct this research.

Multiple regression and second-order factor analyses were conducted in determining the significance of the various relationships. The model included a dichotomous dependent variable which was determined by the actual decision of the students to withdraw or not to withdraw from core French. The alpha reliabilities were acceptably high for each measure. The direct, indirect and total effects of independent variables on dependent variables were calculated along with correlations and t-values.

In terms of total effects, the gender and quality of school life variables were of negligible significance as predictors of early withdrawal from core French. The impact of French attitude was marginally significant as a predictor of early withdrawal in that the more positive the attitude the less likely students were to withdraw other things equal.

The re-specified model for early withdrawal from core French indicated that the most important factors in the model were both French achievement at the beginning and end of grade 9, and the overall satisfaction with schooling. Students who were performing well in French at the end of grade 9 were likely to stay in French. However, students who were least satisfied with school were more likely to withdraw from core

French than students who were experiencing greater satisfaction with school.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

Problem Focus

Research on the effects of students' perceptions of the quality of their school life is a fairly new phenomena. Some recent studies (Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe, 1991; Roberts and Clifton, 1991; Whitt, 1988; Epstein, 1981; Fraser, 1986) have demonstrated that there are significant statistical relationships between student well-being and student achievement and how they perceive their quality of school life. The present study concerns the influence of student perceptions of the quality of their school lives on the decision whether to study Core French at the secondary school level or whether to withdraw from French. This is the first time in which a quality of school life approach has been used to predict withdrawal/retention rates. In this respect, this study differs from previous studies dealing with the question of why students decide to withdraw from taking French.

Problem Components

The learning of French as a second language, according to Canadian standards and expectations, should be an integral part of every child's education. Current research indicates that learning a second language is important, and in some cases essential, for utilitarian, social, and cultural reasons as well as for personal growth and satisfaction. The French classroom and the school which are the main locations for the

Core French learning/teaching process, should be places where positive French attitudes are fostered. Ideally, the school climate should promote feelings of enjoyment, warmth, belonging, tolerance and acceptance. Students must feel a need for learning French and derive a high degree of worth and satisfaction from the learning process. Each child in our school system should have the opportunity to learn Canada's official second language especially since French is spoken by 24.3 percent of the population. If the student perceptions of their quality of school life or if other factors addressed by this study prove to have a significant affect on enhancing this opportunity, then it will have been worthwhile. It is worthy to note, however, that in the absence of coercion, such as making French compulsory, the ideal will only be approximated.

Advantages of French Education

For Individuals: The Utility of French

Bilingualism has a utilitarian component. Despite political changes which may occur within Canada, employment opportunities in the public sector will continue to be superior for the bilingual applicant than the unilingual one. In other words, given the present Canadian social structure, bilingual citizens will have less difficulty finding jobs which offer high status and high pay.

The influx of immersion students on the job market will generate greater competition for available employment positions. The core French students who constitute the vast majority in Newfoundland and throughout Canada will require effective Core French programs to allow them to take advantage of these opportunities.

The current international situation and the development of free market economies has created a world of "global" communication where the ability to communicate in French and English is a decided advantage. Gardner and Lambert (1972) make reference to students, "learning one of the two most prestigious languages in the world, French or English" [p. 1]. Early withdrawal from Core French denies students the opportunity to choose from the numerous careers in a future society where bilingualism will be recognized as advantageous.

For Individuals: French for Its' Own Sake

An abundance of evidence exists which demonstrates that bilingualism is highly significant in intensifying creative thinking, cognitive ability and problem solving skills. For example, Gardner and Lambert (1972), from a study of six Montreal French schools found that, "bilinguals performed better than monolinguals on verbal and non-verbal intelligence tests" [p. 277]. They support this finding with the following explanation:

The picture that emerges of the French-English bilingual in Montreal is that of a youngster whose wider experiences in two cultures have given him advantages which a monolingual does not enjoy. Intellectually his experiences with two language systems seems to have left him with a mental flexibility, superiority in concept formation, and a more diversified set of mental abilities, in the sense that the patterns of development by bilinguals are more heterogeneous.

Furthermore, Genesee (1987), in reference to studies by Cummins (1976) and Diaz (1983), states that, "the results from these studies tend to show that bilinguals are not intellectually impaired and that, in some respects, they demonstrate cognitive advantages when compared with monolinguals" [p. 79].

Learning a second language will also increase the probability of enhancing students' abilities to develop a greater tolerance and a better understanding of languages and cultures in general, including one's own native language. From a student's perspective, one student summarizes her perception of the advantages of studying French as follows: "French is important to me because I like to travel. It's fun to learn and it helps me to make new friends" (Canadian Parents for French). If all students in Newfoundland had

this perception of learning French then obviously early withdrawal from core French would not be a problem.

For the Province and for Canada

Porter (1979) wrote that, "an increase in bilingualism can create a workable system which might result in positive and beneficial French-English relations in Canada" [p. 112].

Wade (1964) stated: "...in the last analysis the Canadian partnership of English and French can only flourish upon a basis of a more widespread mutual understanding" [p. xi]. Kniewasser (1985) in an article entitled Our Brave New World said:

Canada is at the threshold of unprecedented opportunities for progress and growth. The foreseeable future, however, is very different from our past and more demanding for young people. Language skills will be critical to our success.

[p. 1]

The early withdrawal from core French deprives students in our Newfoundland schools the French language proficiency and cultural background to be able to contribute to the growth of Canada as a bilingual country.

The present economic conditions in Newfoundland do not transcend optimistic visions. Crocker (1989) discusses the recommendation of a recent Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment. He pointed out that, "in particular, the

commission calls for an improvement in the quality of basic education, especially in rural areas, for programs which enhance self-reliance..." [p. 23]. Crocker also said, "if the concept of education as an economic catalyst has any merit, the payoff from such a decision can be expected to be an economy which is more attractive to those seeking high level human resources, and which is much less vulnerable to external events" [pp. 25-26]. In consideration of these facts and the opportunities which bilingual education will offer, much more emphasis and research is required for determining factors which motivate students to remain in the core French programs within this province so that students will elect to continue. The result will be increased bilingualism which will certainly be beneficial for the betterment of Newfoundland society.

A Description of the Problem: Problem Magnitude

Objective 15 of the Aims of Education in Newfoundland and Labrador reads as follows:

To ensure that both English language and French language pupils are provided with the opportunity to ...study English or French as a second language.

(Department of Education, 1984)

In light of this objective, establishing the educational importance of second language learning and identifying any contributing factors which have direct or indirect effects on the opportunity to continue learning French should be

considered worthy of investigation. In the majority of Newfoundland schools it is recommended that all students study French as a second language until grade nine. When students begin level one of secondary school, usually grade ten, a large percentage choose not to continue with the study of French. The 1986-87 to 1990-91 Department of Education reports entitled, **Educational Statistics (Elementary-Secondary)** provide the Table 1.1 and 1.2 data.

Table 1.1

Provincial Withdrawal Rates from Grade 10 Core French

Year	Total students in grade 9. Core French	Year	Total students in Core French *2100	Percentage of withdrawals
1986-87	8,471	1987-88	4,989	41.1
1987-88	8,239	1988-89	4,971	39.7
1988-89	8,107	1989-90	4,823	40.5
1989-90	8,172	1990-91	4,745	41.9

* Core French 2100 is the first Core French course taken in grade ten.

Table 1.1 shows that approximately 40 percent of the grade nine students who were enrolled in core French were not enrolled in grade ten. The total student enrollment in Newfoundland as compared to enrollment in core French as in

Table 1.2, demonstrates approximately 50-55 percent of the grade ten students were not enrolled in French. The statistics contained in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 are very similar to those of the Exploit's-White Bay Roman Catholic School District, as shown in Tables 1.3 and 1.4. These statistics were available from the Exploit's-White Bay Roman Catholic School District Office. All grade nine students who were enrolled in core French in this district in 1989-90 formed the sample for this study.

Table 1.2

Enrollment in Core French as a Proportion of Total Enrollment

Year	Total students in grade 9.*	Year	Total students in Core French 2100	Percentage of enrollment
1986-87	11,286	1987-88	4,989	44.2
1987-88	10,664	1988-89	4,971	46.6
1988-89	10,314	1989-90	4,823	46.8
1989-90	10,848	1990-91	4,745	43.7

* Includes a small number of French Immersion and French First Language students.

Table 1.3

District* Withdrawal Rates from Grade 10 Core French

Year	Total students in grade 9. Core French	Year	Total students in Core French 2100	Percentage of withdrawals
1986-87	224	1987-88	122	45.6
1987-88	180	1988-89	95	47.3
1988-89	188	1989-90	107	43.1
1989-90	150	1990-91	81	46.0

* The Exploit's-White Bay Roman Catholic School District.

Table 1.4

District* Enrollment in Core French as a Proportion of Total Enrollment

Year	Total students in grade 9. Core French	Year	Total students in Core French 2100	Percentage of enrollment
1986-87	227	1987-88	122	53.7
1987-88	206	1988-89	95	46.1
1988-89	245	1989-90	107	43.6
1989-90	207	1990-91	81	39.1

The findings presented in Table 1.4 show that the enrollment in core French is steadily declining. The enrolment has fallen from 53.7 percent in 1986-87 to 39.1 percent in 1989-90. In short, the problem is increasing. In that the early withdrawal statistics are very similar within the district and the province, this study should contribute to the overall plan to improve the quality of education for Newfoundland students.

On the Desirability of a Solution

Numerous research studies have indicated that variables like achievement, attitudes, age, gender, parents' education, and community size are factors which determine quality of education and various student outcomes. The study is longitudinal in that it encompasses both grade 9 and grade 10 over a period of two years and will attempt to identify the factors which account for early student withdrawal from core French. If successful in this endeavor it may be possible to recommend changes in educational policy in order to alleviate the problem.

Explanation and Prediction

This study analyzed student perceptions of the quality of their school lives and how this correlated and impacted upon other variables in accounting for early withdrawal from core French. The variables included a dichotomous variable for

retention/withdrawal; a statement of retention or PLAN variable; four background variables; two achievement variables; four dimensions of the quality of school life; four dimensions of a French attitude variable; and two dimensions (satisfaction and dissatisfaction) of overall student well-being.

It was posited that the quality of school life would mediate the effects of independent variables on dependent variables. In this respect it is argued that the dimensions of the quality of school life would prove to be significant predictors of early withdrawal from core French, achievement in French and student well-being.

On the Importance of Policy Manageable Variables

The dimensions of the quality of school life, which for this study included perceptions of status, opportunity, adventure and teachers, were hypothesized to account for satisfaction with schooling and for the decision to remain in the core French program. The four domains of the French attitude variable, utility, interest, opportunity for French and self-concept, were also hypothesized to account for the same three outcomes over and above the effects of the quality of school life. This study attempts to identify some policy manageable factors such as these dimensions of the quality of school life. It recognizes that the identification and control of such variables are important for future research and

educational development and implementation. For example, if research shows that student's perceptions of school as a place where one feels safe, secure and personally gratified, and if these perceptions influence students' performance and decisions, then steps can be taken to attempt to enhance these perceptions. The dimensions of the quality of school life in this study are disaggregated in order to determine the total effectiveness of each.

A Reference to the OSL theory as an Explanatory Framework

The fact that this study investigates the significance of the responsiveness of early withdrawal, well-being and achievement to student perceptions of the quality of their school lives is its distinctive feature. To this date no prior study of the problem has examined the impact of student perceptions of their school experiences or quality of school life on subject withdrawal. The inclusion of a French attitude variable as an additional intervening variable will permit an examination of the indirect effects of the background variables. A detailed description of these variables and the theoretical framework will be integrated within the review of the literature in chapter two.

Research Questions

The focus of this study is on the significance of student perceptions of the quality of their school lives and overall

well-being as determinants of early withdrawal from core French programs. The main purpose of this study is to identify the factors which affect student retention/withdrawal from the core French Program at level one. The following research questions stem from this purpose:

1. Other things equal, to what extent do background factors such as age, gender, parents' education, years of French instruction, and French achievement at the beginning of grade 9, account for student perceptions of their quality of school lives, and for attitudes towards French as a foreign language?
2. Other things equal, to what extent do background factors and the first set of intervening variables -- the quality of school life and attitudes towards French as a foreign language -- account for satisfaction and dissatisfaction with schooling, and later achievement in French as a foreign language?
3. How responsive are student plans to withdraw from mandatory core French to a set of background factors and two sets of intervening variables?
4. How responsive is the actual decision of whether or not to withdraw from core French instruction to a set of background factors and three sets of intervening variables?

5. In general, why do some students, sometime before beginning level one (grade 10), decide to withdraw from core French?

Limitations

A perceived limitation of this study is that it encompasses only one school district within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Nevertheless, this district is comparable to other school districts in terms of district size, the urban-rural population distribution, class size and ratio of large to small schools. For example, (Department of Education, 1991, Table 6) the Exploit's White Bay School District has: a median school size of 127 and the provincial median school size is 202; (Table 7) five urban schools and nine rural schools and the provincial ratio is approximately three urban to seven rural; (Table 5) eleven schools and the provincial average is eighteen.

Other possible limitations of this study include:

1. The research involved a compromise in that the students could have chosen between taking French or an alternative course. In some schools, students were able to choose either doing French 2100 or another level one course such as a Social Studies course. Nevertheless, students still had the opportunity to choose or not choose core French.
2. Within the sample of students, neither in-depth follow-up discussions nor interviews were held regarding

reasons for withdrawal. The students' reasons as to why they withdrew or remained in core French may have contributed to the verification of some hypotheses.

Organization of the Thesis

The first section of this study presented the preliminaries including an outline of significant tables and figures. The opening chapter provided a description of the problem and identified the research questions which determine the structure of the later chapters in this thesis. Some limitations were noted and an explanation was provided of the significance of the study.

The second chapter reviews the current literature on early withdrawal from core French in terms of proximate and most recent achievement in core French, students' satisfaction and dissatisfaction with schooling, students' perceived quality of school life along with their attitudes towards French and prior achievement in French. Student early withdrawal is also considered in terms of background factors: namely; the years of investment in core French, the educational resources of the home, and the students' age and gender. The formulation of original arguments and theories are presented and new hypotheses are examined in lieu of the absence of applicable current literature. The conceptual model and the ordering of the predicted significant variables as well as the hypotheses are specified.

In the third chapter, the research methods are presented. These include a description of the sample, the types of instruments, and data gathering and analysis. The fourth chapter analyses the measurement models and refers to the reliability and validity of the instruments used in the study. The fifth chapter presents the findings. The findings are presented in relation to the research questions and the hypotheses. A summary of the findings is included. The closing chapter provides discussion and interpretation along with some theoretical and practical implications, conclusions and suggestions for future research within this area of study. A bibliography and relevant appendices are given at the end of this document.

CHAPTER 2

THEORY

Literature Related to Retention/Withdrawal

Porter (1979 p. 112) wrote:

the teaching of French in anglophone Canada has been described as a continuing catastrophe. If that is so the future of a bilingual Canada remains very much in question. ... bilingualism will decline the greater the distance from Quebec and Ottawa.

The low percentage of students who actually continue and successfully complete High School French in Newfoundland and Labrador certainly supports this statement. For example, only 41.9% of the total number of High School students (levels 1-3) in this province in 1989-90, were enrolled in French (Department of Education, 1990, Tables 14, 19). This includes Core French, French First Language and Accelerated French. Approximately 20% of the possible graduates in level 3 successfully completed French 3200 in 1989-90. (Department of Education, 1990, Tables 14, 37).

Research on student retention in Newfoundland and Labrador has also demonstrated that the percentage of early school leavers in this province has been very high and still remains a concern. Crocker and Riggs (1979) reported that the problem of student retention was extremely serious. Pope (1984) stated that, "it was most distressing to discover that

but 50.0 percent of (their) study group graduated from high school," with the dropout rate (early leavers) ranging from 33 to 44 percent. The Student Retention Report (1988) by the Department of Education of Newfoundland and Labrador, stated that the dropout rate was between 35 and 40 percent. More recent statistics have shown however, that this trend has changed. The Department of Education, Educational Statistics (1991), show that approximately 67.8 percent of the school population graduate from high school and 82.3 percent of 18 year-olds are involved in some sort of educational program. A report by Statistics Canada, "School Leavers Survey" (1991) found from a survey of 20 year old students that only 25.9 percent of Newfoundland students had ever withdrawn from school.

In comparison, there has been much more research on early withdrawal from school than from any specific subject within the school curriculum. In fact, existing literature on the latter is quite limited. Other things being equal however, it is reasonable to predict that the factors which influence withdrawal/retention and their quantitative accountability would be very similar, if not equivalent.

The following documentation will point out the independent variables which are predicted to significantly affect student withdrawal/retention in core French and the similarities which exist between school withdrawal/retention and withdrawal/retention in relation to core French.

Achievement Factors

In the report of the Task Force on Mathematics and Science Education in Newfoundland and Labrador: Towards an Achieving Society (1989), Crocker states that, "academic failure has been widely believed to be a primary cause of students dropping out of school." A Saskatchewan study (Cepywnyk, Pawlovich & Randbana, 1983) showed that between 55 to 65 percent of early leavers experienced some sort of academic failure throughout their school lives. The Department of Education Student Retention Report (1988) expresses the importance of achievement and the effects of early withdrawal within the following statement:

The young people who drop out of school suffer because, having obtained a low level of academic skills, they often experience difficulty finding steady, well-paying jobs not only when they first leave school but generally over their entire lifetime. [p. 23]

Numerous documentation exists which supports this high significance of achievement to early withdrawal from school and therefore further elaboration within this study is not deemed necessary. However, several reasons exist which explain why achievement is related to dropping out. It appears that students experiencing failure, firstly, tend to convince themselves that the subject which they are failing (mathematics, reading, etc.) is not important for them.

Secondly, as a result, they tend to choose to either avoid the subject(s) or improve within the subject(s) in which they are failing. If this avoidance is a process phenomenon (such as reading or mathematics) then the effect could well prove debilitating in all subjects. The problem, of course, is cumulative unless the vicious cycle of failure is broken through some kind of intervention procedure such as remedial reading or alternative schools. The axiom reads: achievement stimulates achievement.

Speiller (1988) in the study "Factors That Influence High School Students' Decisions to Continue or Discontinue the Study of French and Spanish after Levels II, III, and IV" found, "that the level of progress that the students are making in their present foreign language classes influences their decision to continue or discontinue foreign language study was supported" [p. 541]. The study indicated that while students who continued were satisfied with their achievement, "...many discontinuers were greatly influenced by a low level of progress" [p. 541]. Lewis and Shapson (1989) in a study of students who leave secondary French Immersion programs discovered that, "about 62 percent of the grade 9's cited the difficulty of the program or the concern for grades as the major reason for leaving" [p. 540]. Genesse (1987) confirms that, "studies of students who have dropped out or transferred out of immersion have found that poor academic achievement is often a correlate of transfer" [p. 83].

The obviously high correlation then between early 'French' withdrawal and early school withdrawal, in regard to the effects of achievement, is well supported within the above findings.

Attitude Factors

Research (Havighurst, et al., 1962; Gillespie, 1979; Hinkley, 1979; Cepywnyk, et al., 1983; School Retention Report, 1988) documents the influence of student attitudes as being a highly significant contributing factor to student withdrawal/retention. Student attitudes towards French according to Speiller (1988), including student perceptions of opportunity and usefulness of French along with student interest in French, proved to be highly significant determining the student outcome of either continuing or discontinuing the study of French [p. 538]. Genesse (1987) refers to a study by Buick (1985a) who, "found that children who transferred out of an early French Immersion program in Montreal expressed less positive attitudes toward learning French" [p. 83]. Spain and Sharpe (1990) claim that "lack of interest", was the reason given by 49 percent of the students in their study who were early school leavers [p. 37].

Gardner and Lambert (1972) refer to the effects of student attitudes towards learning a second language as an "orientation" which is "integrative" in determining motivation. According to other research related to student attitudes

(Zeller, 1966; Burstall, 1975; Spain, Netten and Sheppard, 1980; Swain and Lapkin, 1982; Martin and Baksh, 1985; Lee, 1986; McGrath, 1989; Crocker, 1989) the numerous substantial direct as well as integrative effects will significantly account for any curriculum or school-related student decision-making process.

Demographic Factors

In Newfoundland there is a direct relationship between early school leaving and community size. Pope (1984) discovered, "that the highest percentage of early leavers is found in predominately rural districts". It also appears that highly significant differences occur from one school district to another. Crocker (1989) suggests, "that characteristics of a school district, beyond the rural/urban distinction, have a major influence on achievement" [p. 85]. Since achievement is a strong predictor of retention/withdrawal, one can assume that the percentages of withdrawal would be greater in the lower achieving districts. Table 5 shows the results of a study by Spain and Sharpe (1990) which reveals that a much greater percentage of early leavers are from rural districts. [p. 27].

Table 2.1

The Distribution of the 2109 Early Leavers By Rural/Urban

	Interviewed	Identified	7-III Population
Rural			
Freq	882	1349	33150
%	69.1	64.0	52.58
Urban			
Freq	394	760	29892
%	30.9	36.0	47.42

Responsiveness of Quality of School Life and French Attitudes to Background Variables

Some variables which have a significant affect on the students' perceptions of the quality of their school lives also influence attitudes towards French. It appears from the literature that there will be a significant relationship between the variables: years of French and French Achievement in relation to both Quality of School Life and French Attitudes.

Whitt (1989) found that neither of the variables: gender, age, or parents education, "contributed significantly to QSL" [p. 144]. Since this study builds on Whitt's (1989) study Responsiveness of High School Achievement to the Quality

of School Life for Grade Ten Students in Newfoundland, it is predicted that these variables will not account for any variance for QSL within this model. Bulcock, Whitt, and Beebe (1991) support and summarize these findings. They state that, "our attempt to explain student perceptions of the quality of school life on the basis of selected demographic variables -- age, gender, urban-rural residence and socioeconomic status -- was unsuccessful" [p. 23].

Whitt (1989) also concluded, "that at the High school level students' perceptions of the quality of school life contribute to their achievement" [p. 148]. The study is predicting that the reverse is also true, that achievement in French will significantly contribute to students' perceptions of the quality of their school lives. This is related to and can be compared with the findings of a study by Gardner and Lambert who concluded that, "early achievement in French affected later attitudes towards learning French and later achievement in French to a significantly greater extent than early attitudes towards learning French affected the subsequent development of either attitudes or achievement" (Burstall, 1975, p. 400). This relationship strongly indicates that students who experience success in the early stages of French study should also more positively perceive the quality of their school life.

The number of years then in which a student studies French may not positively influence their attitudes towards

French or their perceptions of the quality of their school lives. Burstall (1975) states that, "it is cruelly naive to cling to the belief that by introducing French at an early age, all children will begin their study of the language from an equal standpoint" [p. 401]. Stern (1976) concludes that, "both Canadian experience and British research have brought us to the conclusion that small daily amounts of language in the elementary school do not of themselves provide a satisfactory answer to the language issue. Early learning as such is no guarantee for success" [p. 291]. Spicer (1980) found that, "attitudes towards learning French are...less reliable predictors of later achievement in French than early achievement is: in the language learning context nothing succeeds like success" [p. 418]. The years in French and its influence on French attitudes and students' perceptions of the quality of their school lives may even have a negative affect depending upon these early experiences. The longer students are enrolled in French the greater the chance that these negative experiences will occur.

Responsiveness of French Attitudes to Background Variables

Savignon (1976) claims that, "attitude is the single most important factor in second-language learning" [p. 295]. There is some evidence that student attitudes towards French which in this study included utility for French, interest in French,

opportunity for learning French and self concept of French ability, will be influenced by the background variables: age, gender and parents' education.

Children in primary and elementary grades generally exhibit a positive attitude toward French whereas high school students express more negative attitudes. Spain, Netten and Sheppard (1980) refer to Gardner and Smythe (1975) who, "reported that students in grades nine to eleven who had dropped French showed less favorable attitudes towards French" [pp. 14-15]. Genesse (1987) claims that,

Young children are generally thought to be better second language learners because they have fewer attitudes and prejudices that can interfere with learning. Older students, in contrast, may have had experiences or may have formed attitudes that can jeopardize learning, especially second language learning which is fraught with social and political significance.

[pp. 14-15]

The literature suggests that girls have more favorable attitudes towards French than boys. Burstall (1975), from results of The British Experiment conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research, concluded that, "the attitudes of the girls towards learning French were also consistently more favorable than those for boys" [p. 391]. Burstall attributes this discrepancy between boys and girls to

perceived differences in the usefulness of French for employment. Lee (1986) in three surveys by NFER found that, "on each aspect of attitudes, that is usefulness, enjoyment, difficulty and contact, higher proportions of girls than boys had positive views..." [p. 73].

The significance of parents' education and attitudes toward French seem to have an influential impact upon student attitudes towards French as well. Much research exists (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Burstall, 1975; Savignon, 1976; Pack, 1979; Spain, Netten and Sheppard, 1980; Speiller, 1988) which supports this statement.

**Responsiveness of School Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction
Background Variables; Quality of School Life
and French Attitudes**

Background Variables

There is some evidence to suggest that the age of the student accounts for dissatisfaction with schooling. Bulcock, et al. (1991) found that age did not account for schooling satisfaction but, "age, paradoxically, was a significant factor in accounting for schooling dissatisfaction. Older students in grade 10, other things equal, were less dissatisfied with schooling than younger students..." [p. 23]. Research, (Crocker and Riggs, 1979; Pope, 1984; Spain and Sharpe, 1990) however, on student retention in Newfoundland indicated that the majority of early leavers were above

average age for their particular grade level. It is quite possible that factors which are not satisfaction/dissatisfaction related could account for this correlation.

Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe (1991) found, "that in terms of overall schooling satisfaction girls are generally more satisfied than boys, whereas, in terms of overall schooling dissatisfaction there are no discernible differences" [p. 21]. Pope (1984) also found that a higher percentage of boys than girls cited "hated school" as a reason for early leaving, indicating that boys were more dissatisfied with their schooling than are girls.

Spain, Netten and Sheppard (1980) state that, "the relevant research would seem to indicate a strong connection between parental attitude and perceptions of the value of learning French and the motivational characteristics of their children" [p. 16]. Speiller (1988) found that, "the importance of the family members' influence on the continue/discontinue decision was stronger for the continuing students than for the discontinuing students" [p. 593]. This study proposes that parents' education will have a positive effect on student satisfaction with schooling and a negative effect on dissatisfaction.

The number of years a student is enrolled in French in relation to satisfaction/dissatisfaction with schooling has not been directly addressed in the literature. Nevertheless, the impact of this variable in relation to French attitudes

which has been previously outlined in this study indicates that the probability exists, particularly owing to the lack of highly qualified teachers in this district (as in most areas of Newfoundland), that a negative relationship exists. That is to say that the greater the number of years spent in French will negatively influence satisfaction with schooling and positively influence dissatisfaction. This study proposes that achievement factors which influence student retention/withdrawal from core French as earlier indicated will also significantly account for satisfaction/dissatisfaction with schooling.

Quality of School Life

Netten and Behan (1976) state that, "the quality of life could be improved if people viewed diversity as enriching life rather than hindering it. Studying a second language can assist in helping a student both to deal with diversity and to value it" [p. 101]. In the same manner the quality of a student's school life can be improved to increase satisfaction with schooling and decrease dissatisfaction.

Williams and Batten (1981) in *The Quality of School Life* refer to Jencks et al., (1972) who made this following statement regarding schools:

'Some schools are dull, depressing, even terrifying places, while others are lively comfortable and reassuring ... such differences are enormously

important and eliminating these differences ... would do a great deal to make the quality of childrens' ... lives more equal. Since children are in school for one fifth of their lives, this would be a significant accomplishment.'

Williams and Batten (1981) refer to school climate and attitudes as two basic approaches to the question of quality of school life [p. 2]. They determine the measure of Quality of School Life as, "The degrees of positive and negative affect that arise as part of life in school" [p. 8].

Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe (1991), in a study, Gender Differences, Student Well-Being and High School Achievement, state that, "those reporting a low quality of school life tended to be the least satisfied and the most dissatisfied with schooling" [p. 22].

Research (Hohol, 1955; Watson, 1974; Cepnynyk, et al., 1983; Pope, 1984; Student Retention Report, Department of Education, 1988) indicates that dissatisfaction with various aspects of school related criteria is highly accountable for leaving school early. An abundance of research (Crocker and Riggs, 1979; Pope, 1984; Collard and Laing, 1989; Crocker, 1989; Spain and Sharpe, 1990) cite student reasons for leaving school like "lack of interest", "school was dull and uninteresting", "hated school", "didn't like the teachers", "didn't like the subjects", "couldn't do the work", etc. as significant factors in the decision. The Department of

Education, Educational Statistics (1991), shows that the most significant reason for leaving school early is "lack of interest". The probability exists that these students have a low perception of the quality of their school lives which strongly influences dissatisfaction with their schooling.

Speiller (1988) found that student motives like, "relationships between students and their foreign language teachers", "level of progress in present class," and "student interest in learning a foreign language", as significant indicators in determining the continuing/discontinuing of foreign language study. Lewis and Shapson (1989) discovered that 44 percent of the students in their study were dissatisfied with the quality of instruction. The students, "saw many of the tasks associated with French Immersion as boring and repetitive. They also seemed to feel that they lacked opportunities to use French in any meaningful way" [p. 545].

The four domains which constitute the Quality of School Life in this study are opportunity, adventure, status and teacher. The concept of Opportunity refers to how the student perceives the relevance of school in terms of future prospectives. Williams and Batten (1981) state that, "opportunity involves feelings of security in being confident of fair treatment, and feelings of adequacy in coping with qualificatory tasks" [p. 11]. If the students feel a sense of Adventure from their schooling or have experiences which are,

"intrinsically rewarding" or create "self motivation" then they will be more satisfied with their schooling (Williams and Batten, 1981, p. 11). Furthermore, Colton and White (1985) summarize this relationship in stating that, "students are likely to participate in a wider range of school related activities ... if they have generalized feelings of satisfaction with school" [p. 244]. Status refers to, "an acknowledgement of the prerogatives and prestige of the student" (Williams and Batten, 1981, p. 11). The perceptions of the feelings of others towards oneself within the school accounts for status. If students feel accepted and of some value to others then this will transpose into a greater satisfaction with schooling and a sense of overall well-being. These domains are based upon the Spady-Mitchell (1977) model.

The "teacher factor" was identified by Williams and Batten (1981) who stated that, "since teachers loom large in the lives of students and have to be a major influence on the quality of students lives this is not too surprising" [p. 40]. Ralph (1989) in reference to Watson (1986) points out that, "educational psychologists agree that student morale ... increase(s) when students feel accepted by both the teacher and their peers as being worthwhile, contributing members of the class" [p. 137]. Williams and Batten suggest that, "the quality of this interaction (student-teacher) ought to be a matter of concern to students and an influence on their well-being" [p. 55].

The impact of teachers on student satisfaction/dissatisfaction with schooling is captured by this Newfoundland "drop out":

I feel that the teachers are responsible for people failing and dropping out of school, because they 'do not' make classes interesting, instead they follow the same routine which becomes boring. I feel that its time that the teachers changed some of their old habits and tried to make school as interesting as possible for both themselves and students.

(Martin and Baksh, 1985, p. 3)

French Attitudes

An abundance of research on the relationship of attitudes towards school subjects shows that they significantly account for student outcomes. This study predicts that attitudes towards French will significantly impact upon satisfaction/dissatisfaction with schooling which in turn will account for student retention/withdrawal from Core French.

Schooling Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

Recent studies and research (Williams and Batten, 1981; Whitt, 1989; Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe, 1991) recognize that student well-being which is measured by satisfaction and dissatisfaction is highly responsive to independent variables.

The Student Retention Report (1988) refers to the importance of a positive school climate as a powerful predictor for student retention [p. 10]. It is evident that student satisfaction and dissatisfaction will be highly accountable to this factor. This study predicts that student satisfaction and dissatisfaction when constructed as an independent variable will significantly account for the dependent variable, student withdrawal/retention in core French. Both the positive affect (satisfaction) and negative affect (dissatisfaction) will be used to determine student well-being and the relationship to student withdrawal/retention.

Responsiveness of French Achievement to Background

**Variables: Quality of School Life;
and French Attitudes**

Background Factors

Stern (1976), in reference to the NFER Report, states that, "it shows that achievement in French is sensitive to the experiences of success and failure in the early stages; to socioeconomic factors; to parental expectations; to gender expectations; to motivation; to the teaching methodology; to teachers' attitudes; to classroom environment; etc." [p. 392]. The significance of many of these variables and others are considered in this study.

In terms of age of the student it appears that older students in a grade level are basically repeating because of

low achievement as determined by the school. Whitt (1989) concluded that for both subjects (mathematics and reading) "the correlation with age was negative, indicating that older students were lower achievers" [p. 147]. Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe (1991) found that, "the older students in grade ten are the weakest students. In other words, by grade ten, age in the Newfoundland school system is to some extent a proxy for grade repeating and developmental delay" [p. 23]. In this study, the vast majority of students were of the same age.

In relation to achievement, Crocker (1989) reported that, "the overall pattern of gender differences (for mathematics and science) in this province is one which seems to favor girls" [p. 86]. The report pointed out however that these differences are marginal [p. 89]. Educational Perspectives (1988), a publication by the Department of Education in Newfoundland, reported that the results of the Canadian Tests of Basic Skills showed that, "there were significant sex differences in achievement with girls out-performing boys on all subtests" [p. 16]. Burstall (1975) states that, "the girls in the experimental sample scored significantly higher than the boys on all tests measuring achievement in French" [p. 391].

There is much evidence in the literature which shows that parental education is highly instrumental in accounting for student achievement. Crocker (1989) reported that, "the educational level of adults in the home were significant

indicators of high achievement" [p. 87]. Whitt (1989) concluded, "that the level of the parents' education influences the achievement of the students" [p. 149].

The number of years a student is enrolled in French may not necessarily mean higher achievement or performance in the second language. In considering the "Canadian experience" and "British Research" Stern concludes that, "early learning as such is no guarantee of success" [p. 391].

In this study, an achievement test/retest was administered mainly for the purpose of analyzing reliability. It is predicted that early achievement will be an indicator of later achievement.

Quality of School Life

Whitt (1989) found that achievement (at the high school level) was responsive to QSL, and in particular, to two of its domains namely status and opportunity" [p. 145]. This study also predicts that students who have positive perceptions of the quality of their school lives will be the high achievers in French and the students who have a negative perception will for the most part be the low achievers.

French Attitudes

In a recent report of a Task Force on Mathematics and Science Education in Newfoundland, entitled, Towards an Achieving Society (1989, p. 87), the relationship was found

that, "negative attitudes, such as the view that mathematics is difficult, a fear of failure, and the feeling that mathematics and science are not important for career plans are all associated with low achievement." It also stated that "boredom and lack of interest in schools are as much a problem as failure" [p. 47]. These factors, which are predominately based on student attitudes also pertain to the study of French. For example, there is much research to support this conclusion by Spicer (1980) regarding attitudes towards French and achievement: "Positive attitudes towards France and the French also towards the potential usefulness of a knowledge of French tend to be associated with a high level of achievement" [p. 417].

**Responsiveness of Students' Plan for Retention/Withdrawal
from Core French Programs to Quality of School
Life; French Attitudes, School Satisfaction/
Dissatisfaction; and French Achievement**

This study proposes that the students' plan for retention/withdrawal from core French will be directly related to the actual decision. Therefore the variables which influence plan will be consistent with the variable for retention/withdrawal which is contained in the following section.

**Responsiveness of Retention/Withdrawal from Core French
Program to Quality of School Life, French Attitudes;
School Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction;
French Achievement and Plan for
Retention/Withdrawal**

Quality of School Life

A study by Gardner and Smythe (1975) revealed, "that motivation to learn French evidences a stronger association with choice to re-enroll in the French course than do either the individuals achievement or his linguistic aptitude" [p. 692]. It is anticipated in this study that the students' perceptions of the quality of their school life will be as strong a predictor of retention/withdrawal as this variable.

French Attitudes

Clement, Smythe and Gardner (1978) refer to the work of Diana Bartley who studied personal characteristics of students who chose to continue or discontinue Spanish courses. They stated that: "Her results show that those students who continued their second language instruction evidenced a significantly more positive attitude toward foreign languages than did the dropouts" [p. 688].

They also state that according to a study by Gardner and Smythe (1975) there is "a consistent association of attitudes with choice to stay-in or drop-out of French courses" [p. 692]. Numerous research on the relationship of attitudes to

retention/withdrawal either from school or school-related subjects support this significance.

Schooling Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

Recent studies and research (Williams and Batten, 1981; Whitt, 1989; Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe, 1991) recognizes that student well-being which is measured by satisfaction and dissatisfaction is highly responsive to their perceptions of the quality of their school lives. The Student Retention Report (1988) refers to the importance of a positive school climate as a powerful predictor of student retention [p. 10]. It is evident that student satisfaction and dissatisfaction will be highly accountable to this factor. This study predicts that student satisfaction and dissatisfaction when constructed as an independent variable will significantly account for the dependent variable, student withdrawal/retention in core French. Both the positive affect (satisfaction) and negative affect (dissatisfaction) will be used to determine student well-being and the relationship to student withdrawal/retention.

French Achievement

It has been shown through the numerous citations in this study that achievement in French will strongly account for student retention/withdrawal in core French. In this respect this study reinforces and builds on the findings of Whitt

(1989) in predicting the direct and indirect affects of QSL through the variable, French Achievement.

Plan for Retention/Withdrawal

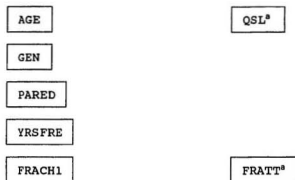
If students indicate their intentions of retention/withdrawal from core French then, other things equal, they will follow through with these intentions. A highly positive correlation between plan for retention/withdrawal and actual retention/withdrawal will eliminate the possibility of parallel course offerings as being a significant factor.

Analytical Models

The accountability of five variables to early withdrawal from core French will be analyzed in this recursive conceptual model of the quality of student life and early withdrawal from core French. This model allows for an analysis of the direct and indirect effects of these variables on early withdrawal. The structure of the model will also give an indication of the direct effects of QSL and Attitudes towards French on core French Achievement, Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction.

In Figure 2.1, five background variables are included: age (in years), gender (1 = male, 2 = female), parents' education (mother's educational attainment + father's educational attainment), the number of years studying French, and French achievement (FRACH1). This model allows for an analysis of the accountability of the dependent variables

(QSL, and French Attitudes, to these five independent background variables.



Time Frame: All data gathered at the beginning of grade 9.

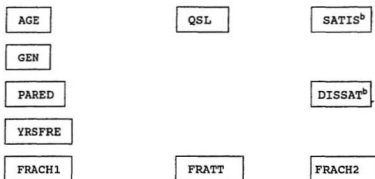
Key: AGE = age in years, GEN = gender (1 = male, 2 = female), PARED = parents' education (mother's educational attainment + father's educational attainment), YRSFRE = the number of years studying French, FRACH1 = French achievement at the beginning of grade 9, QSL = quality of school life, FRATT = attitudes towards French.

- * QSL and FRATT are second-order, weighted additive composite variables.
- * Variables to the right are responsive to all variables to the left.

Figure 2.1. An elaborated model of the quality of school life and early withdrawal from core french.

In Figure 2.2, the prediction will be that within the model, the analysis will indicate significant positive relationships within all paths except when either the dependent or independent variable is Dissatisfaction. The five background variables are included: age, gender, parents' education, the number of years studying French, and French achievement at the beginning of grade 9. This model allows for an analysis of the accountability of the dependent variables (French Achievement, Dissatisfaction, Satisfaction, QSL, and French Attitudes, to these five independent background variables. The indirect effects of the dependent variables: French Achievement, Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction will also be analyzed through QSL and French Attitudes.

Figure 2.3 depicts, through direct effects, the accountability of the dependent variable, Early Withdrawal, to five independent variables: French Achievement, Dissatisfaction, Satisfaction, French Attitudes and QSL. The indirect effects of the background variables on the dependent variable, Early Withdrawal, will be analyzed through the five other dependent variables: French Achievement, Dissatisfaction, Satisfaction, French Attitudes and QSL.

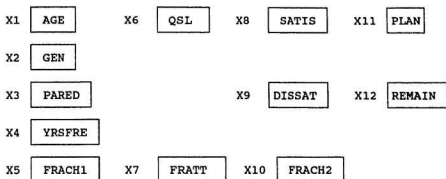


Time Frame: Beginning of Grade 9. End of Grade 9.

Key: AGE = age in years, GEN = gender (1 = male, 2 = female), PARED = parents' education (mother's educational attainment + father's educational attainment), YRSFRE = the number of years studying French, FRACH1 = French achievement at the beginning of grade 9, QSL = quality of school life, FRATT = attitudes towards French, SATIS = Satisfaction with schooling, DISSAT = dissatisfaction with schooling, FRACH2 = French achievement at the end of grade 9.

- ^a QSL and FRATT are second-order weighted, additive composite variables.
- ^b SATIS and DISSAT are weighted additive linear composites.
- * Variables to the right are responsive to all variables to the left.

Figure 2.2. Stage two of the QSL model of early withdrawal from core French.



Time Frame: Beginning of End of Beginning
 Grade 9. Grade 9. Grade 10.

Key: AGE = age in years, GEN = gender (1 = male, 2 = female), PARED = parents' education (mother's educational attainment + father's educational attainment), YRSFRE = the number of years studying French, FRACH1 = French achievement at the beginning of grade 9, QSL = quality of school life, FRATT = attitudes towards French, SATIS = Satisfaction with schooling, DISSAT = dissatisfaction with schooling, FRACH2 = French achievement at the end of grade 9, PLAN = whether student plans to withdraw from core French or not in Grade 10, REMAIN = actual decision in grade 10 to remain or to withdraw from core French.

* Variables to the right are responsive to all variables to the left.

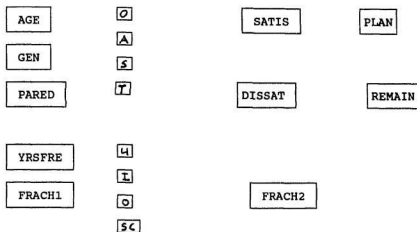
Figure 2.3 Stage three of the QSL model of early withdrawal from core French.

Measurement Models

The outcome variable, Early Withdrawal, in this study includes: PLAN (Student statement of intent at the end of grade 9 to either withdraw from or remain in level 1 core French); and REMAIN (actual retention or withdrawal). The dependent variable, PLAN, was measured by a statement of intention form, and the various schools were contacted to determine the outcome of the dependent variable, REMAIN.

In determining the observable outcomes for the dependent variable, French Achievement, a French achievement test was administered both at the beginning and end of grade 9. The test was constructed from 48 items.

Figure 2.4 shows how the QSL model of early withdrawal from core French was disaggregated. The variables QSL and FRATT were designed as second-order composites; while SATIS and DISSAT were designed as linear composites. In theory, then, the QSL model can be broken down into a more elaborate model by including the first-order components of QSL (namely, the opportunity to learn, O; adventure in learning, A; student status, S; and perception of teachers, T) and the first-order components of FRATT (namely, perceived utility of French as a foreign language, U; interest in French, I; opportunity to learn French, OF; and self concept of French competence, SC) respectively. The disaggregated model is shown in Figure 2.4.



Time Frame: Beginning of End of Beginning
 Grade 9. Grade 9. Grade 10.

Key: AGE = age in years, GEN = gender (1 = male, 2 = female), PARED = parents' education (mother's educational attainment + father's educational attainment), YRSFRE = the number of years studying French, FRACH1 = French achievement at the beginning of grade 9, O = opportunity to learn, A = adventure in learning, S = student status, T = perception of teachers, U = perceived utility of French as a foreign language, I = interest in French, OF = opportunity to learn French, SC = self concept of French competence, QSL = quality of school life, FRATT = attitudes towards French, SATIS = Satisfaction with schooling, DISSAT = dissatisfaction with schooling, FRACH2 = French achievement at the end of grade 9, PLAN = whether student plans to withdraw from core French or not in Grade 10, REMAIN = actual decision in grade 10 to remain or to withdraw from core French.

* Variables to the right are responsive to all variables to the left.

Figure 2.4 A disaggregated model of early withdrawal from core French.

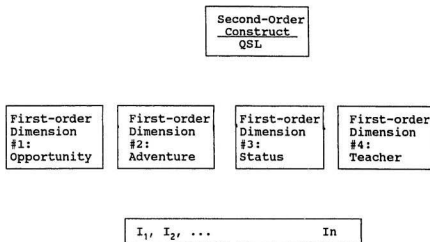
Figure 2.5 is an illustration of a second-order measurement model as, for example, the QSL model. Linear composites such as satisfaction with schooling (SATIS), and dissatisfaction with schooling, (DISSAT), are constructed as first-order composites.

There were six items used to construct the dependent variable, Dissatisfaction, and seven items for Satisfaction.

The four domains of the French Attitudes instrument include: Utility (French utility items), Interest (Interest in French), Opportunity (Opportunity to learn French), and Self Concept (Self concept of French ability). There were six items used in the construction of each domain.

The four domains of the Quality of School Life instrument include: Opportunity, Adventure, Status, and Teacher. There were six items each used in the construction of Opportunity, Status and Teacher and five items for Adventure. (The original plan for an "Identity" composite was abandoned owing to the low reliability of the cluster.)

This figure is representative of the items used to construct each domain.



where I_1 and I_2 are indicators of the first-order constructs; and where the first-order constructs (dimensions) are indicators of the second-order construct (QSL).

Figure 2.5 Conceptual model of a second-order factor composite.

Derivation of the Hypotheses

The research questions contained in the first chapter of this study will determine the order and content of the following hypotheses. These hypotheses will be constructed in relation to the conceptual models within this chapter. The hypotheses will be specified as depicted in Figure 2.3, where all variables to the right are responsive to all variables to the left.

Hypotheses as Depicted in Figure 2.3

1. There will be no significant relationship between the quality of student life construct and the background variables--age, gender, parental education, years of French instruction and French instruction at time one.

2. There will be no significant relationships between French attitudes and the background variables.

3. There will be no significant relationships between each of the second set of intervening variables--schooling satisfaction, schooling dissatisfaction, and French achievement at time two--and either the background variables or the first set of intervening variables--quality of school life and attitudes towards French.

4. Likewise, there will be no significant relationships between withdrawal plans at time two and the three sets of prior variables--background variables and the two sets of intervening variables.

5. There will be a significant relationships between the actual decision to remain or withdraw from core French at time three (grade 10) and the four sets of predictor variables--background factors and the three sets of endogenous variables--namely, quality of school life, French attitudes, satisfaction with schooling, dissatisfaction with schooling, French achievement at time two, and plans to stay or withdraw.

Given the notation of Figure 2.3 the model can be expressed as a set of linear additive equations, as follows:

$$X6 = a_1 + b_{61}X1 + b_{62}X2 + b_{63}X3 + b_{64}X4 + b_{65}X5 + e_1 \quad (1)$$

$$X7 = a_2 + b_{71}X1 + b_{72}X2 + b_{73}X3 + b_{74}X4 + b_{75}X5 + e_2 \quad (2)$$

$$X8 = a_3 + b_{81}X1 + b_{82}X2 + b_{83}X3 + b_{84}X4 + b_{85}X5 + b_{86}X6 + b_{87}X7 + e_3 \quad (3)$$

$$X9 = a_4 + b_{91}X1 + b_{92}X2 + b_{93}X3 + b_{94}X4 + b_{95}X5 + b_{96}X6 + b_{97}X7 + e_4 \quad (4)$$

$$X10 = a_5 + b_{10,1}X1 + b_{10,2}X2 + b_{10,3}X3 + b_{10,4}X4 + b_{10,5}X5 + b_{10,6}X6 + b_{10,7}X7 + e_5 \quad (5)$$

$$X11 = a_6 + b_{11,1}X1 + b_{11,2}X2 + b_{11,3}X3 + b_{11,4}X4 + b_{11,5}X5 + b_{11,6}X6 + b_{11,7}X7 + b_{11,8}X8 + b_{11,9}X9 + b_{11,10}X10 + e_6 \quad (6)$$

$$X12 = a_7 + b_{12,1}X1 + b_{12,2}X2 + b_{12,3}X3 + b_{12,4}X4 + b_{12,5}X5 + b_{12,6}X6 + b_{12,7}X7 + b_{12,8}X8 + b_{12,9}X9 + b_{12,10}X10 + b_{12,11}X11 + e_7 \quad (7)$$

CHAPTER 3

THE SAMPLE

Introduction

The population for this study was taken from within the Exploit's White Bay Roman Catholic School District. Included in the population were all grade nine students who were enrolled in core French during the school year 1989-90, a total population of 147 students. The students were from eight schools ranging from a small school with 2.7 percent of the population to a school with 21.3 percent of the sample. There were 42 percent females and 58 percent males in the group. A total of 6 percent of the students who had repeated a grade once and 2 percent had repeated twice. The remainder were of age for their grade level. The home communities of the students ranged in sizes from a population of approximately 500 to 16,000. In total, this encompassed 150 students. The particular group was chosen because they would have a choice in level 1 (September, 1990) to either continue with French studies or to withdraw.

The sample which actually included all grade 9 students in this school district has similar characteristics to many others in Newfoundland. The findings in the study may not be representative of those likely to be found in other districts. However, while the sample is not representative of the province, there are other school districts in Newfoundland with similar characteristics in terms of size, urban-rural

distribution and culture to those of the Exploits-White Bay Roman Catholic school district.

Types of Instruments

The instruments included a 9 item background information questionnaire and a 69 item student questionnaire as shown in Appendix A. The questionnaire entitled, **School Life and Liking for French Survey**, had a four point response scale. The four point scale has advantages over the 5 point scale which contains an "uncertain" middle category. This middle category could represent those who are uncertain as to the meaning of the question; those having no opinion; those who are ambivalent concerning questionnaires or those with low intensity opinions. Owing to the ambiguity there is error introduced when large numbers of respondents opt for the middle category. This, in turn, inflates the error variance in the subsequent measures of association between the questionnaire items. The error variance produces unnecessarily low alpha reliability coefficients, and if construct validities are calculated as well, they will also be attenuated or reduced in magnitude.

The School Life Survey section was composed of 45 items and **The Liking for French Survey** section had 24 items. The students had to be precise in stating their responses which consisted of: definitely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, and definitely disagree.

Another instrument administered, as shown in Appendix B, was a 48 item French achievement test. Each multiple-choice type item had four possible responses. This same instrument was administered early and late in the school year.

The final instrument, as shown in Appendix D, was a statement of intent which was composed of one item and a four point response scale. The variable Plan was recoded into two possible outcomes which included whether the student would probably continue or probably not continue in core French.

Description of "The Quality of School Life" Instrument

Each of the original five domains of the QSL instrument were composed of the following items. Students responded to the beginning phrase, **School is a place where...**, and were required to circle the number which matched their response.

Opportunity (7 items)

- I am happy with how well I do.
- I know the sorts of things I can do well.
- I know how to cope with the work.
- I get satisfaction from the work I do.
- I feel good about my work.
- I can handle my school work.
- The work I do is important to me.

Adventure (6 items)

- I like to learn new things.
- I find the work interesting.
- I like all my subjects.
- I am genuinely interested in my work.
- My friends and I get together on our own time to talk about things we have learned in class.
- I learn the things I need to know.

Status (5 items)

- I know that people think a lot of me.
- People come to me for help.
- I feel important.
- People credit me for what I do.
- People think I can do a lot of things.

Teacher (7 items)

- Teachers treat me fairly in class.
- Teachers are usually fair.
- Teachers listen to what I say.
- Teachers give me the marks I deserve.
- Teachers help me do my best.
- I like my teachers.
- Teachers ask me to help out.

Identity (6 items)

- I learn to get along with other people.
 - I can get along with most of the students even though they may not be my friends.
 - Having different kinds of students in my class helps me get along with everyone'
 - You have to get along even with students you don't like.
 - I sometimes wish I were different than I am.
 - I have lots of friends.
- * Identity cluster was disregarded owing to low reliability of the **IDENT** construct..

In the construction of the domains for well-being, which included satisfaction and dissatisfaction, the following items were used. Each of these items were introduced by the same phrase, School is a place where...

Satisfaction (7 items)

- I like to be.
- I get enjoyment.
- I feel great.
- I really like to go.
- Learning is a lot of fun.
- I feel happy.
- I feel proud to be a student.

Dissatisfaction (7 items)

- I feel lonely.
- I get upset.
- I feel restless.
- There is nothing exciting to do.
- You feel bossed around too much.
- I feel bored.
- I feel sad.

The beginning of this QSL questionnaire contained nine items on background information. These included: name, school, grade, gender, age, teacher, years in specific school, parents education and years in French. The following is a sample from this instrument which is included in its' entirety in appendix A.

PART A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Name _____

2. School _____

3. Grade (circle one)	Grade 8	1
	Grade 9	2
	Grade 10	3
	Other	4

- [illegible]

5. How old were you on your last birthday? (circle one)

13 years old 1

14 years old 2

15 years old 3

16 years old	4
--------------	---

17 years old 5

Other	6
-------	---

6. Please write your French teacher's name

Description of "French Attitude" Instrument

Each of the four domains of the "French Attitudes" instrument was composed of the following items. Students responded to the beginning phrase, **I am studying French because...**, and were required to circle the number which matched their response.

Utility (6 items)

- There are people in my community who speak French.
- My mother (or father) speaks French.
- These days a person needs French to get ahead.
- It is compulsory in my school.

- It is required for entry into many occupations in Canada today.
- I believe it will prove useful to me one day.

Interest (6 items)

- I like French.
- It is a subject I find interesting.
- It is interesting to learn about my fellow Canadians.
- I find it more exciting than most of my school subjects.
- It is such an interesting subject.
- It is a subject I would like to know better.

Opportunity for French (6 items)

- It is a subject in which I do well.
- I am pleased with my present progress.
- It gives me a feeling of satisfaction.
- It is a subject I can handle.
- It is one of the more important subjects we do in school.
- If I don't people like me will not have much of a chance in life.

Self Concept (6 items)

- I get better marks in French than in other subjects.
- I want to get better at French than I am now.
- It is important to me to get good grades.
- I insist on doing well in school.

- I want to be one of the best students when I finish high school.
- If I try I get mostly A's and B's.

Description of the "French Achievement" Instrument

The achievement test was developed from the grade eight resources which are presently being used in Newfoundland and from various other resources (Kenney, Burnville, Hickox, Hill, Potter 1980; Levy, 1984; Ontario Ministry of Education, 1980; Wardrop, 1976) which the researcher deemed appropriate for this particular grade level.

Each section of the test was introduced with an example similar to the items within the section. The sections included: **Section A**, Grammatical Structures and Vocabulary from Context; **Section B**, Grammatical Structures; Vocabulary; "Weather Idioms"; **Section C**, Grammatical Structure; Sentence Formation; Vocabulary; Time; **Section D**, Grouping; Vocabulary Distinction; **Section E**, Reading Comprehension; **Section F**, Sentence Structure; Reading Comprehension. See Appendix B for example of test items.

Description of Student "Statement of Intent" Instrument

The following is the actual instrument which was administered.

Name _____

School _____

STUDENT INTENTIONS

I want to find out how many students will be choosing to do French next year.

Please circle the response which best describes your intentions regarding French for next year.

	Definitely	Probably	Probably	Definitely
			Not	Not
I will be taking				
French next year...	1	2	3	4

Data Gathering Method

Permission was granted by the district superintendent and the various principals to administer the instruments during class time within each of the schools. A letter, as shown in appendix E, was sent home from each school to parents for approval of their child to participate in the study. The sample included students from eight schools and communities of

various sizes. In October, 1989, instruments were personally administered by the researcher in each of the eight schools. In May, 1990, the same achievement test which was administered in October was administered by the various teachers and completed by the students. In May, 1990 these students also completed an intent form to indicate whether they would be continuing with core French or withdrawing in the coming school year. Each of the eight schools were contacted in September, 1990, and provided a retention/withdrawal list for core French 2100, which was the required course for level I.

Data Analysis Method

Each of the items on the **School Life and Liking for French survey** and the **French Achievement Instrument**, as well as each of the variables, was analyzed for frequencies and percents. For the purpose of analysis, responses on the French Achievement were assigned the value 0 for incorrect answers; 1 for correct answers; and 9 for missing values.

A reliability analysis using the covariance formula was conducted on each of the items in all instruments as well as for the four domains of the Quality of School Life and the four domains of French Attitudes. The alpha reliability was computed for all non-dichotomous variables. Both predictive and concurrent validities were also calculated. These analyses were reported within chapter 4 of this study.

A multiple regression analysis was used to investigate the magnitude and significance of model relationships. These findings are reported in chapter 5 of this study. This analysis followed the logic of the conceptual model of **The Quality of Students Life and Early Withdrawal from core French** (see model, Figure 2.3 above). The multiple regression determines, "the maximum correlation between a dependent variable and a combination of independent variables" (Bartz, 1988, p. 202). This type of analysis also determined the statistical significance of the relationships.

The various betas and t-values, as shown in chapter 5, allowed for analysis of the significance of the relationship between all the variables. Both direct and indirect effects were calculated using these statistics.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF THE MEASUREMENT MODELS

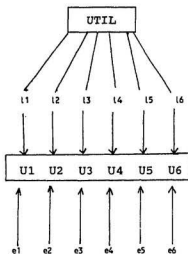
Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to construct variables with desirable psychometric properties. Since this is an exploratory study it is important that the model variables be accurately measured. The measurement models from this study were constructed on the basis of the instruments which have been described in the previous chapter. The number of items composing each construct or linear composite varied. Following a recoding of the indicators (which was necessary to insure positive correlation matrices), reliability estimates were determined which included the alpha reliability and standardized alpha for each construct. This analysis was conducted for the purpose of retaining significant items and excluding those which proved to be insignificant.

The purpose of the reliability analyses was to assist in locating redundant or non-effective scale items; that is, items which detracted from the psychometric properties of the scale. For instance, utility for French, as shown in the Figure 3.1, was a latent variable or first-order construct which was determined through the responses of the six items contained on the student questionnaire for this variable. Utility, however, was only one of the four hypothesized dimensions of the composite variable, French attitude. The other dimensions were interest in French, opportunity for

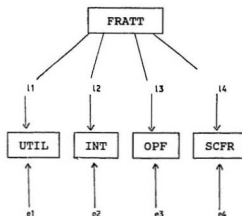
learning French, and self concept of French ability. The quality of school life variable was also hypothesized to be multidimensional. The four dimensions were opportunity to learn, adventure in learning, student status and perception of teachers. Student well-being was also hypothesized to be a multidimensional, second-order composite. The two dimensions were satisfaction with schooling and dissatisfaction with schooling. An illustration of the French attitude construct is presented in Figure 3.2.

A multiple regression analysis determined the significance of the model by identifying, through various types of analyses, the significant and insignificant variables. In a second-order factor analysis, the dimensions of the quality of school life, (opportunity, adventure, status and teacher), and those of French attitudes, (utility, interest, opportunity for French, and self concept), were used as indicators for the outcome variables. Also, satisfaction and dissatisfaction were used in the multiple aggression analysis as indicators of well-being. The dissatisfaction variable was later dropped from the overall model which will be elaborated upon in this chapter.



where l_1 through l_6 represent the factor loadings, e_1 through e_6 represent the error terms, and U_1 through U_6 represent the indicators of the utility of French construct.

Figure 3.1 Conceptual model of the utility of french



Key: UTIL = student perception of the utility of French as a foreign language.

INT = student rating of interest in French.

OPFR = student perception of the opportunity for learning French.

SCFR = self concept of French ability.

FRATT = attitude toward core French.

Figure 3.2 Conceptual model of a second-order construct

Measurement Model Components

Eleven first-order measurement models were constructed: namely; parental education, opportunity to learn, adventure in learning, student status, perception of teacher, utility of French as a foreign language, interest in French, opportunity to learn French, self-concept of ability in French, satisfaction with schooling and dissatisfaction with schooling. Four of these constructs: opportunity to learn, adventure in learning, student status, and perception of teachers, were used as indicators in a second-order construct labelled student perception of the quality of school life. Another four -- utility, interest, opportunity to learn French and French self concept -- were used as indicators as a second second-order composite labelled French Attitude. This gives a total of 13 measurement models.

As in most studies of an exploratory nature, some of the items in the proposed linear composites did not scale. For example, they had low correlations with other items as their inclusion reduced the scale reliability. In such instances the offending items were dropped from the list of indicators.

The **total statistics** tables are included in this chapter for the purpose of depicting commonalities between the items and the particular latent variables. The significance or worth of each specific item within the constructs is depicted through these statistics. The construction of composite variables could have been further refined by conducting a

factor analysis of the included items in order to calculate the factor matrix or item weights. However, given the high reliabilities of these variables and the exploratory emphasis of the research, it was decided to construct additive, rather than weighted, composites. If the purpose of the study had been to construct an instrument with the most desirable set of psychometric properties weighted, additive composites would have been preferred. It is unlikely, however, that the extra precision would have made much difference in scale properties; and, in any case, the extra refinement would not have affected the magnitude of ordinary least squares estimates to any great extent. In other words, interpretation of the findings would have remained unaffected. The items which were deleted have been included in order to show the reasoning for these exclusions from the clusters. For example, in the Utility construct, the original item UT04 was deleted in order to strengthen the alpha reliability and validity of that construct.

Background Factors

Following research in this tradition a number of background factors were included in the model. Some of these factors were later excluded from the respecified model because preliminary analyses showed that they were redundant; that is, they lacked explanatory value.

Other findings were not supported in the Newfoundland context especially in the rural school situation and were dropped from the subsequent analysis.

The beta coefficients in each model represent the magnitude of the relationship after all the effects of the covariates have been taken into account, thus, increasing the likelihood that the relationships are not spurious. However, many models are often misspecified in that either the important covariates have been erroneously excluded or included. These are the kind of variables which were dropped in the present analysis.

Some irrelevant variables were also dropped from the analysis because the ratio of predictor variables to cases was less than 20 to 1. The addition or subtraction of several cases can produce significant variations or fluctuations in the parameter estimates. In order to avoid this, the analyst in this study minimized the number of predictor variables in each equation by dropping redundant variables.

The parent's education variable was retained owing to its reasonably high reliability (.682). This variable was composed of the mother's education and the father's education. The correlation matrix and the mean and standard deviation for parent's education are shown in Table 4.1.

In the respecified model for early withdrawal from core French all background variables with the exception of sex and French achievement 1 were excluded. The independent

variables: AGE, PARED and YRSFRE were dropped owing to their insignificant effects on the endogenous variables.

Table 4.1

Correlation Matrix for Parent's Education

	MED	FED	X	SD
MED	1.0000		3.4056	1.8047
FED	.5182	1.0000	3.3706	1.8488

Table 4.2

Total Statistics for Parent's Education

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation
MED	3.371	3.418	.518	.269
FED	3.406	3.257	.518	.269

Alpha reliability = .6829

The Domains of the Student Quality of School Life
Measurement Model

Opportunity

The six items which were used to construct the latent variable Opportunity are shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.3. The mean and standard deviation is also given. In the construct Opportunity, the original item representing OP02, as shown in Table 4.3, was dropped for two reasons:

- i. The low correlation with other items in the matrix as shown in Table 4.4.
- ii. The fact that in dropping this item the reliability of the composite was enhanced.

The alpha reliability for Opportunity was .879 with a construct validity of .937 and concurrent validity of .858.

Adventure

The five items which were used to determine the latent variable Adventure are shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.5. The original item representing AD06 was dropped for the same reasons that OP02 was dropped in the opportunity measurement model. The alpha reliability for this construct was .767 with a construct validity of .873 and concurrent validity of .801.

Table 4.3

Correlation Matrix for the Opportunity Domain

	OP01	OP02	OP03	OP04	OP05	OP06	\bar{X}	SD
OP01	1.0000						1.9645	.8735
OP02	.3632	1.0000					1.9078	.6425
OP03	.4572	.5179	1.0000				1.9433	.7998
OP04	.5556	.4977	.5715	1.0000			1.9574	.7917
OP05	.4161	.5940	.4696	.5350	1.0000		1.7163	.6796
OP06	.3007	.3091	.4847	.3763	.2781	1.0000	1.6667	.7432

Table 4.4

Total Statistics for the Opportunity Domain

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
OP01	10.809	9.113	.547	.350	.793
OP02	11.156	11.118	.298	.107	.826
OP03	10.865	9.875	.613	.447	.782
OP04	10.830	8.942	.665	.480	.769
OP05	10.816	8.894	.686	.501	.765
OP06	11.057	9.725	.608	.444	.782
OP07	11.106	9.996	.471	.270	.804

Table 4.5

Correlation Matrix for the Adventure Domain

	AD01	AD02	AD03	AD04	AD05	\bar{X}	SD
AD01	1.0000					1.4444	.6233
AD02	.3546	1.0000				2.1736	.7874
AD03	.2940	.5741	1.0000			2.6389	.8819
AD04	.3064	.5118	.5716	1.0000		2.0694	.7160
AD05	.2380	.3761	.2845	.3970	1.0000	1.6597	.9303

Table 4.6

Total Statistics for the Adventure Domain

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
AD01	11.583	7.643	.384	.160	.727
AD02	10.854	6.363	.597	.426	.667
AD03	10.389	6.012	.592	.442	.666
AD04	10.958	6.558	.623	.425	.664
AD05	11.368	7.395	.436	.216	.715
AD06	9.986	7.035	.295	.097	.767

Status

All of the original items used to construct the latent variable Status were retained and are shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.7. The alpha reliability for this construct was .765 with a construct validity of .877 and concurrent validity of .777.

Teacher

All of the original items used to construct the latent variable Teacher were retained and are shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.9. The alpha reliability for this construct was .760 with a construct validity of .872 and concurrent validity of .773.

The Domains of French Attitudes**Utility**

The six items which were used to construct the latent variable Utility are shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.11. The mean and standard deviation is also given. In the construct Utility, the original item UT04 was dropped for the same reasons as previous items within measurement models. The alpha reliability for Utility was .703 with a construct validity of .830 and concurrent validity of .757.

Table 4.7

Correlation Matrix for the Status Domain

	ST01	ST02	ST03	ST04	ST05	ST06	\bar{X}	SD
ST01	1.0000						2.1479	.6408
ST02	.2477	1.0000					2.3662	.8628
ST03	.5191	.4094	1.0000				2.0282	.7336
ST04	.4615	.3862	.4890	1.0000			1.9718	.7336
ST05	.2622	.3343	.3335	.3136	1.0000		2.0423	.8067
ST06	.3815	.2702	.3880	.2256	.3512	1.0000	2.0704	.7404

Table 4.8

Total Statistics for the Status Domain

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
ST01	10.479	7.216	.531	.362	.727
ST02	10.261	6.620	.471	.250	.743
ST03	10.599	6.568	.625	.421	.700
ST04	10.659	6.852	.538	.348	.722
ST05	10.585	6.083	.451	.219	.745
ST06	10.556	7.114	.451	.249	.743

Table 4.9

Correlation Matrix for the Teacher Domain

	TE01	TE02	TE03	TE04	TE05	TE06	T	SD
TE01	1.0000						1.8865	.8543
TE02	.5137	1.0000					1.9220	.7935
TE03	.5829	.3248	1.0000				1.9787	.7697
TE04	.3353	.3032	.4057	1.0000			1.6241	.7977
TE05	.3969	.2444	.3353	.3994	1.0000		1.5461	.6265
TE06	.3613	.1548	.3007	.2372	.2919	1.0000	2.0284	.7741

Table 4.10

Total Statistics for the Teacher Domain

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
TE01	9.099	6.219	.663	.505	.677
TE02	9.064	7.232	.448	.286	.740
TE03	9.007	6.836	.582	.395	.704
TE04	9.362	7.104	.478	.266	.732
TE05	9.440	7.705	.481	.254	.733
TE06	8.957	7.570	.376	.171	.758

Table 4.11

Correlation Matrix for the Utility for French Domain

	UT01	UT02	UT03	UT04	UT05	X	SD
UT01	1.0000					3.6364	.6770
UT02	.4982	1.0000				3.7762	.6757
UT03	.1194	.1248	1.0000			1.5804	.7998
UT04	.1203	.1090	.5498	1.0000		1.6993	.8963
UT05	.1585	.0986	.6510	.0428	1.0000	1.6154	.9187

Table 4.12

Total Statistics for the Utility for French Domain

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
UT01	10.933	7.092	.241	.261	.542
UT02	10.853	7.168	.219	.255	.549
UT03	13.049	5.807	.511	.457	.424
UT04	12.308	7.313	-.028	.010	.703
UT05	12.930	5.432	.523	.442	.404
UT06	13.014	5.338	.527	.542	.399

Interest

All of the six original items used to construct the latent variable Interest were retained as shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.13. The alpha reliability for this construct was .915 with a construct validity of .955 and concurrent validity of .922.

Opportunity For French

The six items which were used to construct the latent variable Opportunity For French are shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.15. The mean and standard deviation is also given. In the construct Utility, the original item OF06 was dropped for the same reasons as previous items within measurement models. The alpha reliability for Opportunity For French was .879 with a construct validity of .937 and concurrent validity of .939.

Self Concept

All of the six original items used to construct the latent variable Interest were retained as shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.17. The alpha reliability for this construct was .836 with a construct validity of .915 and concurrent validity of .903.

Table 4.13

Correlation Matrix for the Interest in French Domain

	IN01	IN02	IN03	IN04	IN05	IN06	X	SD
IN01	1.0000						2.5000	1.1582
IN02	.8404	1.0000					2.4521	1.1690
IN03	.6382	.6681	1.0000				2.7945	1.0823
IN04	.5484	.6151	.4681	1.0000			2.4589	1.0043
IN05	.7816	.8621	.7060	.5954	1.0000		2.5959	1.1542
IN06	.6435	.6643	.4228	.5483	.5395	1.0000	1.9589	1.0364

Table 4.14

Total Statistics for the Interest Domain

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
IN01	12.260	20.566	.836	.740	.888
IN02	12.308	19.980	.894	.836	.879
IN03	11.966	22.502	.684	.522	.910
IN04	12.301	23.426	.644	.436	.915
IN05	12.164	20.511	.847	.788	.887
IN06	12.801	23.084	.656	.511	.913

Table 4.15

Correlation for the Opportunity for French Domain

	OF01	OF02	OF03	OF04	OF05	X	SD
OF01	1.0000					2.4150	1.0125
OF02	.6724	1.0000				2.3741	.9877
OF03	.6608	.6003	1.0000			2.6327	1.0074
OF04	.8172	.6755	.6122	1.0000		2.1973	1.0179
OF05	.4505	.4299	.5125	.4840	1.0000	2.3810	1.0226

Table 4.16

Total Statistics for the Opportunity for French Domain

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
OF01	12.157	13.338	.758	.720	.776
OF02	12.197	13.817	.706	.540	.788
OF03	11.939	13.880	.677	.527	.794
OF04	12.374	13.318	.756	.707	.776
OF05	12.000	14.644	.571	.352	.815
OF06	12.191	16.977	.231	.103	.879

Table 4.17

Correlation for the Self Concept Domain

	SC01	SC02	SC03	SC04	SC05	SC06	X	SD
SC01	1.0000						2.9517	.9598
SC02	.3439	1.0000					1.8483	1.0296
SC03	.4344	.4740	1.0000				1.8000	.9761
SC04	.3831	.3651	.7542	1.0000			1.8069	.9376
SC05	.2055	.4378	.5195	.6084	1.0000		2.0000	.9860
SC06	.4733	.3773	.5873	.5970	.3795	1.0000	1.8138	.9279

Table 4.18

Total Statistics for the Self Concept Domain

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
SC01	9.269	14.295	.471	.285	.837
SC02	10.372	13.624	.519	.318	.829
SC03	10.421	12.468	.756	.637	.779
SC04	10.414	12.814	.736	.667	.785
SC05	10.221	13.562	.564	.433	.819
SC06	10.407	13.410	.642	.454	.804

Quality of School Life

The quality of School Life was a second order composite which was constructed from the latent variables: Opportunity, Adventure, Identity, Status and Teacher. The Identity domain as shown in Table 4.20 was dropped for the same reasons as previous items within measurement models. The alpha reliability for the Quality of School Life construct was .813 with a construct validity of .903.

French Attitudes

The French Attitudes construct as shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.18, was a second order composite which was constructed from the latent variables: Utility, Interest, Opportunity For French and Self Concept. The alpha reliability for these domains was exceptionally high and ranged from .703 to .915. The alpha reliability for the French Attitudes construct was .893 with a construct validity of .952.

Satisfaction

All of the seven original items used to construct the latent variable Satisfaction were retained as shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.23. The alpha reliability for this construct was .862 with a construct validity of .928 and concurrent validity of .749.

Table 4.19

Correlation Matrix for the QSL Construct

	POPPY	ADVENT	IDENT	STAT	TEACH	X	SD
POPPY	1.0000					12.6939	3.5647
ADVENT	.6864	1.0000				13.0204	3.0509
IDENT	.2490	.3327	1.0000			10.5170	2.2706
STAT	.5842	.4585	.3104	1.0000		12.5850	3.0763
TEACH	.4979	.5420	.3344	.4905	1.0000	10.9932	3.1438

Table 4.20

Total Statistics for the QSL Construct

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
POPPY	47.116	76.021	.691	.568	.740
ADVENT	46.789	83.811	.690	.537	.714
IDENT	49.293	108.756	.375	.164	.826
STAT	47.225	86.956	.614	.408	.765
TEACH	48.816	85.959	.614	.386	.765

Table 4.21

Correlation Matrix for the French attitudes Construct

	UTIL	INTER	OPPYF	SELCON	X	SD
UTIL	1.0000				14.6408	2.9084
INTER	.4282	1.0000			14.7183	5.5280
OPPYF	.5349	.8624	1.0000		14.5211	4.4749
SELCON	.6007	.7432	.8064	1.0000	12.1388	4.2697

Table 4.22

Total Statistics for the French attitudes Construct

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
UTIL	41.373	177.385	.550	.381	.918
INTER	41.296	106.380	.803	.755	.841
OPPYF	41.493	121.018	.888	.811	.790
SELCON	43.880	129.397	.832	.703	.816

Table 4.23

Correlation Matrix for the Satisfaction Construct

	SA01	SA02	SA03	SA04	SA05	SA06	SA07	X	SD
SA01	1.0000							2.3542	.7797
SA02	.4333	1.0000						2.1597	.8250
SA03	.3525	.4984	1.0000					2.2778	.9118
SA04	.5289	.3924	.4725	1.0000				2.5833	.9199
SA05	.3375	.4894	.5618	.4558	1.0000			2.1806	.8980
SA06	.4123	.4270	.4547	.4934	.3759	1.0000		1.9167	.8121
SA07	.5638	.4473	.5389	.5362	.5633	.5767	1.0000	2.1389	1.0000

Table 4.24

Total Statistics for the Satisfaction Construct

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
SA01	13.257	16.654	.582	.424	.850
SA02	13.451	16.333	.593	.383	.848
SA03	13.333	15.497	.646	.453	.841
SA04	13.028	15.496	.639	.437	.842
SA05	13.431	15.715	.624	.456	.844
SA06	13.694	16.186	.611	.412	.846
SA07	13.472	14.419	.730	.570	.828

Dissatisfaction

The five items which were used to construct the latent variable Dissatisfaction are shown in the correlation matrix in Table 4.24. The mean and standard deviation is also given. In the construct Dissatisfaction, the original items DI05 and DI07 as shown in Table 4.25, were dropped for the same reasons as previous items within measurement models. The alpha reliability for Dissatisfaction was .726 with a construct validity of .851 and concurrent validity of .048.

The variable dissatisfaction was dropped from the respecified model for the following reasons:

- i. The dissatisfaction reliability was significantly lower than the satisfaction reliability.
- ii. The correlation between satisfaction and Dissatisfaction was high with a coefficient of $-.626$, which indicates that one of these variables is a fair proxy for the obverse of the other.
- iii. As shown in Table 4.24, the reliability for dissatisfaction was significantly lower than most of the other variables. In any equation it is better to use a dependent variable with a reliability as good as or better than most of the predictor variables.

Student Well-Being

Student Well-Being was measured using the two constructs of Satisfaction as shown in Table 4.23 and Dissatisfaction as

shown in Table 4.25. As previously stated and substantiated, only the satisfaction variable was maintained in the respecified model as an indicator of student well-being.

French Achievement I and II

The latent variables French Achievement I and French Achievement II were each constructed using an identical set of 48 items. A correlation matrix was constructed for each variable which showed the correlation of each individual item to the others. The mean and standard deviation for each item was also calculated. The French Achievement I variable showed a high alpha reliability of .914 and French Achievement II .932. The correlation or predictive validity between French achievement 1 and French achievement 2 was highly significant with a coefficient of .828.

Student Statement of Intent or "PLAN"

The variable Plan was constructed as a dichotomous variable consisting of two possible responses. The students indicated whether they planned to remain in core French or withdraw.

Table 4.25

Correlation Matrix for the Dissatisfaction Matrix

	DI01	DI02	DI03	DI04	DI05	X	SD
DI01	1.0000					2.7222	.8963
DI02	.3711	1.0000				2.9514	.9262
DI03	.4076	.3976	1.0000			2.6250	.8997
DI04	.2512	.3105	.3325	1.0000		3.3264	.8093
DI05	.3655	.3125	.3249	.3758	1.0000	2.9653	.8889

Table 4.26

Total Statistics for the Dissatisfaction Construct

Item	Scale Mean If Item Deleted	Scale Variance If Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha If Item Deleted
DI01	18.507	9.986	.487	.273	.666
DI02	18.278	9.894	.480	.262	.667
DI03	18.604	9.919	.498	.288	.663
DI04	17.903	10.592	.437	.251	.679
DI05	17.708	11.663	.266	.117	.716
DI06	18.264	9.860	.520	.286	.657
DI07	18.111	11.079	.284	.130	.717

Withdrawal/Remain

The model for Withdraw/Remain was constructed as a dichotomous variable with two possible outcomes. The students either continued with core French in grade 10 or withdrew.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

The alpha reliability and the standardized item alpha, Cronbach's alpha, were calculated for each measurement model. As shown in Table 4.27, the reliability for each of the composites is relatively high and ranges from .679 to .932.

Validity

The validity as well as the reliability for each composite is estimated which includes both the construct validity and the concurrent validity as shown in Table 4.27. Validity indicates the degree to which each construct can be considered as representing a unitary trait. This is achieved by determining whether the covariation among construct indicators can be accounted for by only one construct. In this respect, measures of reliability only, are insufficient [Nunnally (1967), p.187].

Table 4.27

Reliability Estimates (following a recoding of the items/indicators)

Composite/ Construct	N Items	Alpha Reliability	Standardized Item Alpha	Construct Validity	Concurrent Validity
PARED	2	.682	.682	.826	...
UTIL	5	.703	.689	.830	.757
INTER	6	.915	.913	.955	.922
OPPYF	5	.879	.879	.937	.939
SELCON	6	.836	.838	.915	.903
SATIS	7	.862	.862	.928	.747
DISSAT	5	.726	.725	.851	.048
OPPY	6	.827	.830	.911	.858
ADVENT	5	.767	.762	.873	.801
STAT	6	.765	.770	.877	.777
TEACH	6	.760	.760	.872	.773
FRATT	4	.893	.906	.952	...
QSL	4	.813	.816	.903	...
WELLB	2	.856	.856	.925	...
FRACH1	48	.914	.917	.958	.828*
FRACH2	48	.932	.937	.968	.828*

* = Predictive validity

... = not available

In actual fact, if it can be assumed that a composite's variance is due largely to one underlying construct, that is, if one can assume that invalidity equals zero, then validity is the square root of reliability. This can be referred to as unweighted validity or construct validity. Concurrent validity is a more acceptable estimate of validity which consists of the correlation of the constructed composite as, for example, the quality of school life, and the underlying variables or indicators of the construct, such as opportunity or adventure. Thus, the concurrent validity of the constructs SATIS and DISSAT is the correlation between SATIS and WELLB and DISSAT and WELLB respectively.

The correlation between FRACH1 and FRACH2 is the predictive validity of FRACH1. Predictive validity is the degree to which the predictions made by a test are confirmed by the later behavior of the subjects (Borg and Gall, 1989, p. 252). Establishment of the predictive validity from a test in a given situation means that there will be a significant period of time between the test administration and the criterion measurement (Bartz, 1988, p. 377). This was the case in the administering of these two instruments. In the relationship between French achievement 1 and French achievement 2, the validity coefficient is $r = .828$, indicating high predictive validity.

Predictive validity was also high for the exogenous variables, PLAN and WITHDRAW. The validity coefficient for

these variables is $r = -.612$, indicating that a highly significant number of students who stated their intentions to withdraw from core French actually did withdraw.

CHAPTER 5

THE FINDINGS

Introduction

The findings of this study and the related statistics are presented in this chapter. The findings which are pertinent to each of the relationships within the respecified model of Early Withdrawal from Core French are given as follows. First, the findings of the relationship between the independent variables (gender and French achievement 1) to the dependent variable, quality of school life are presented. The other original background variables were excluded from the respecified model because they were found to be redundant. This was explained in Chapter 4. The findings of the relationship between the independent variables (gender and French achievement 1) and the dependent variable, French Attitudes, are presented next. Thirdly, the findings of the relationship between the independent variables (gender, French achievement 1, quality of school life, and French attitudes) and the dependent variable, Satisfaction, are presented. For reasons related to the psychometric properties of the variable "dissatisfaction with schooling", which were explained in Chapter 4, the variable was dropped from the respecified model. The findings of the relationship between the independent variables (gender, French achievement 1, quality of school life and French attitudes) and the dependent variable, French achievement 2, are then estimated. The findings are presented for the relationship between all the

independent variables and the dependent variable, Plan. Finally, the findings of the relationship between all variables in the model and the dependent variable, Withdraw are estimated. The hypotheses, as contained in chapter 2, are outlined in terms of the relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variables as per the respecified model. A summary of the findings is given at the end of this chapter.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the original model with all background variables: QSL and French attitude composites, along with the respective dimensions of these composites (five dimensions of QSL and four dimensions of French attitudes); and the exogenous variable dissatisfaction, are included in Table 5.1. Some of these variables have been excluded or combined within the respecified model, in order to increase the interpretability of the over-all model. It is often desirable in model building and estimation to use data reduction techniques. This is especially the case when there are many potential independent variables in relation to the sample size. For instance, if the ratio of cases to independent variables should be less than 20 to 1, there is a chance that sampling fluctuation will prove problematic. Sampling fluctuation occurs when, if a few cases are added to or subtracted from the data set, the model parameters (the

beta coefficients) fluctuate; thereby making the model difficult to interpret. It is helpful if the model is composed of variables that are reliable and if the independent variables are relatively free from the problem of multicollinearity.

In the present instance, in order to minimize this problem several potential confounding background variables were dropped from the analysis because, in fact, they proved to be redundant. In addition, several constructs were used as indicators of even higher order constructs through the use of second-order factor analysis. In both these ways the data were reduced to the maximum number of variables which the analyst could handle while preserving stable structural equations.

It is pertinent to note that modeling of this kind is not designed to generate comprehensive explanatory models of the phenomenon under investigation. Given the current state of the art this is neither possible nor desirable. Instead, what the analyst is looking for is a set of relationships which help make the model more manageable. The policy maker does not wish to become immersed in trivial detail; rather, the policy maker would like to get a handle on a wider perspective. The good teacher is the teacher who has a theoretical model of what the important elements are in the environment in which teaching occurs, and who is then able to omit the hundred and one stimuli that confound the situation

in order to focus on these key elements. This screening process creates fewer elements which allows for a greater focus on the heart of the matter. This is what the model which is estimated in this chapter is designed to do. For the purpose of comparing relationships, a correlation matrix for all the variables within the specified model for early withdrawal from core French is included in Table 5.2.

The regression variables within the respecified model found in Table 5.1 were represented by the following mnemonics: SEX = gender (coded male 1, female 2), FRACH1 = French achievement 1 (sum of items 1 to 48), OPPY = opportunity (a quality of school life domain), ADVENT = adventure (a quality of school life domain), STAT = status (a quality of school life domain), QSL = quality of school life, FRATT = French attitudes (sum of the utility, interest, opportunity for French and self concept domains), SATIS = satisfaction (one of two components of student well-being), FRACH2 = French achievement 2 (sum of items 1 to 48), PLAN = plan (recoded from intention where 1,2 = 2 for plan to withdraw and 3,4 = 1 for plan to remain), WITHDRAW = withdrew from French.

The mean of 1.584 for the variable SEX as shown in Table 5.2, indicates a greater percentage of female (58%) over males (42%) in a total sample of 150. In this study, males were given a code of (1) and females (2).

Table 5.1

Descriptive Statistics for Variables used in the Original Model of Early Withdrawal from Core French

Variable	X	SD	Variance	Cases
AGE	1.966	.444	.197	147
SEX*	1.584	.494	.244	147
PARED	5.610	2.283	5.211	146
FRACH1*	32.320	9.417	88.671	147
OPPY*	18.721	3.353	11.244	147
ADVENT*	14.925	2.707	7.330	147
STAT*	17.211	3.184	10.140	147
TEACH*	18.803	3.308	10.942	147
QSL*	69.660	10.078	101.568	147
UTIL	12.592	2.752	7.572	147
INTER	15.259	5.526	30.535	147
OPPYF	12.810	4.120	16.977	147
SELCON	17.707	4.331	18.756	147
FRATT*	58.367	14.961	223.823	147
SATIS*	19.306	4.578	20.954	147
DISSAT	10.401	3.038	9.228	147
FRACH2*	34.649	9.380	87.976	134
PLAN*	1.709	.435	.189	134
WITHDRAW*	1.499	.499	.249	147

* Variables used in the respecified model.

Table 5.2

Correlation Matrix for all Variables Within the Respecified Model of Early Withdrawal from Core French.

	SEX	FRACH1	QSL	FRATT	SATIS	FRACH2	PLAN	WITHDRAW
SEX	1.000							
FRACH1	.304	1.000						
QSL	.292	.452	1.000					
FRATT	.358	.583	.652	1.000				
SATIS	.238	.357	.744	.552	1.000			
FRACH2	.217	.828	.368	.436	.285	1.000		
PLAN	.236	.457	.279	.412	.227	.450	1.000	
WITHDRAW	-.211	-.480	-.270	-.346	-.127	-.424	-.612	1.000

* All of the zero-order relationships are statistically significant except for the SATIS/WITHDRAW relationship. Every relationship greater than .25 is significant at the .001 level or less. Many of the hypotheses, then, are likely to be supported but before making factual statements it is necessary to look beyond the correlations to the estimates of the regression analysis.

Effects of Background Factors on Quality of School Life

Table 5.3

Multiple Regression coefficients, t-values and levels of significance for variables in the Quality of School Life Equation

Independent Variables	QSL				
	B	SE B	Beta	t*	Sig t
SEX	3.468	1.564	.170	2.217	.028
FRACH1	.429	.082	.400	5.219	.000

Multiple R = .481

R Square = .231

Residual = .887

* t > 2.0 is significant at the p < .05 level. This t-value is for direct effect parameters.

Table 5.3 represents the first equation in the overall student withdrawal model. Within this equation both of the hypothesized relationships were supported. While gender, in favor of girls, was a predictor of quality of school life, the French achievement/quality of school life relationship was much stronger. That is to say, even though the sample size was biased in favor of girls (58 percent compared to 42 percent) girls reported a higher quality of school life than

boys. The relationship between French achievement and perceived quality of school life was also significant; and, further, this relationship was more than twice as strong in terms of magnitude of effect as the gender/quality of school life relationship.

Effects of Background Factors on French Attitudes

Table 5.4

Multiple Regression Coefficients, t-values and Significance Levels for Variables in the French Attitudes Equation within the Respecified Model

Independent Variables	FRATT				
	B	SE B	Beta	t*	Sig t
SEX	6.028	2.092	.199	2.882	.005
FRACH1	.829	.110	.522	7.552	.000

Multiple R = .613

R Square = .375

Residual = .791

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for direct effects.

Both of the exogenous variables which are shown in Table 5.4 were predictors of French attitudes. As in the first

equation, the French achievement variable was more powerful than gender; and as before, the gender/French attitude relationship was in favor of girls. Table 5.2 shows that the correlation between gender and French achievement at time one was also in favor of girls. Superficially, it would seem that girls benefit more from school in so far as the French curriculum is concerned than boys.

Factors Influencing School Satisfaction

Table 5.5

Multiple Regression coefficients, t-values and significance levels for variables in the Satisfaction with Schooling Equation within the Respecified Model

Independent Variables	SATIS				
	B	SE B	Beta	t*	Sig t
SEX	.035	.557	.004	.064	.949
FRACH1	-.010	.034	-.021	-.296	.768
QSL	.305	.034	.671	9.072	.000
FRATT	.038	.025	.125	1.526	.129

Multiple R = .750

R Square = .562

Residual = .662

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for direct effects.

The only independent variable which accounted for a significant amount of the variance in schooling satisfaction in this equation was QSL. While gender and French achievement at time one do not have direct effects, it is conceivable that when their indirect effects via QSL and FRATT are considered their total effects on SATIS would be significant. It is possible that the higher achieving students are most dissatisfied with school. The negative coefficient on the FRACH1/SATIS relationship indicates this inference; however, the relationship is not statistically significant. This is a case of sign reversal where the zero-order relationship is both positive and significant ($r = .357, p < .001$) whereas the same relationship when holding other factors (gender, quality of school life and French achievement) constant is $-.021$. Effectively, a coefficient of $-.021$ is zero which means that when controlling for other variables in the model French achievement has no effect on schooling satisfaction.

Table 5.6

Correlations, Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, Total Effects and T-Values for the Effects of the Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable, SATIS.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Correlation	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	t-value*
SATIS	SEX	.238	.004	.139	.143	1.740
	FRACH1	.357	-.021	.333	.313	1.968
	QSL	.744	.671			
	FRATT	.552	.125			

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for total effects. The t-value for total effects may have a different distribution (in terms of the ratio of the estimator to its standard error) than the t-value for direct effects. The jury of statisticians is still out on this issue as noted by Bollen (1987). The most recent literature (Bollen and Stine, 1990) shows that in moderately large samples, of which the present study is an example, the distribution of the estimator is close to that assumed by the classical method. Thus, throughout this study the t-values were estimated using the standard classical procedures.

As shown in Table 5.6, the total effect of gender on satisfaction with schooling is not significant. However, since gender had a significant effect on QSL (Table 5.3) and QSL had a powerful impact on schooling satisfaction then gender most likely had an indirect effect on schooling satisfaction. This is actually the case; however, the total effect is not substantial enough for the analyst to claim that the total effect of gender on schooling satisfaction was statistically significant.

The French achievement/quality of school life relationship is significant and the quality of school life/schooling satisfaction relationship is also significant. Thus, even though the direct effect of French achievement on schooling satisfaction is negligible ($\beta = -.021$) the indirect effect via the quality of school life might be substantial. In fact, from Table 5.6 this is shown to be an actuality and, further, the total effect is significant in statistical terms.

In summation, given the model estimates of this equation, the answer to what accounts for schooling satisfaction is unambiguous. Neither gender nor attitude toward French seem to be statistically significant though both are in the hypothesized direction; that is, in favor of girls and in favor of positive attitudes towards French as a foreign language. Both French achievement and the perceived quality of school life were found to be significant factors in

accounting for overall schooling satisfaction or liking for school. In the case of French achievement the effect was indirect as mediated by the quality of school life. The QSL effect, however, was twice as powerful in terms of magnitude as the effect of French achievement. From the residual in Table 5.5 one is able to conclude that the data has a good fit to the model. R-squared values which are greater than .5 in models of this type can be considered to be high.

Factors Influencing School French Achievement 2

Table 5.7

Multiple Regression Coefficients, t-values and Significance Levels for Variables in the French Achievement 2 Equation within the Respecified Model

Independent Variables	FRACH2				
	B	SE B	Beta	t*	Sig t
SEX	-.524	.959	-.028	-.546	.586
FRACH1	.865	.058	.868	14.888	.000
QSL	.037	.058	.039	.633	.528
FRATT	-.053	.043	-.085	-1.232	.220

Multiple R = .831

R Square = .690

Residual = .557

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for direct effects.

The most powerful determinant of French achievement at the end of grade 9 was French achievement at the beginning of grade 9. This relationship was so powerful that it towered over the impact of all other factors (gender, QSL, and French attitudes) even though the zero-order relationships between these factors and FRACH2 were all positive and significant (Table 5.2). The results of the indirect effects analysis (Table 5.8) did not alter this interpretation.

The standardized beta of .868 for the FRACH1/FRACH2 relationship is unusually high. This also means that FRACH1 is a valid measure of FRACH2 since it is an estimate of what is called predictive validity. As indicated in the FRACH1/SATIS relationship, when controlling for FRACH1, the FRATT/FRACH2 relationship is negative, but not statistically significant.

The indirect effects analysis provides no additional information over and above that noted in Table 5.7.

Table 5.8

Correlations, Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, Total Effects and T-Values for the Effects of the Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable, FRACH2.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Correlation	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	t-value*
FRACH2	SEX	.217	-.028	-.010	-.038	-.457
	FRACH1	.828	-.868	-.028	.840	17.799
	QSL	.386	.039			
	FRATT	.436	-.085			

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for total effects.

Table 5.9

Multiple Regression Coefficients, T-values and Significance Levels for Variables in the PLAN Equation Within the Respecified Model

Independent Variables	PLAN				
	B	SE B	Beta	t*	Sig t
SEX	.071	.068	.081	1.040	.300
QSL	-.001	.005	-.034	-.282	.778
FRATT	.007	.003	.265	2.598	.010
SATIS	-7.083	.010	-.007	-.068	.946
FRACH2	.015	.004	.332	4.097	.000

Multiple R = .516

R Square = .267

Residual = .856

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for direct effects.

Factors Influencing Future Plans

At the end of grade 9, French attitudes and French achievement were the only two factors which proved significant in accounting for future plans. Compared with the previous two equations the fit of the PLAN equation was quite modest with only a little more than a quarter of the variance being accounted for. However, this kind of fit is not uncommon when the dependent variable is a dichotomy.

The indirect effects analysis in this instance does not supply much additional information. Students' perceptions of the quality of their school lives was not a relevant factor in determining student's future plans.

The direct effects model has a good fit with 43 percent of the variance in the decision to withdraw from core French being accounted for. This is particularly significant given the dichotomous dependent variable. There were three factors which accounted for most of the variance; namely, satisfaction with schooling, achievement in French at the end of grade 9, and, most importantly, the plan to withdraw at the end of grade 9. Over and above these three factors, the variables quality of school life and French attitudes had little effect.

Table 5.10

Correlations, Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, Total Effects and T-Values for the Effects of the Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable, PLAN.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Correlation	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	t-value*
PLAN	SEX	.236	.081	.034	.115	1.329
	FRACH1	.457	.000	.400	.400	5.014
	QSL	.279	-.034	.008	.026	.299
	FRATT	.412	.265	-.029	.236	2.791
	SATIS	.227	-.007			
	FRACH2	.450	.332			

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for total effects.

Table 5.11

Multiple Regression Coefficients, T-values and Significance Levels for Variables in the Withdraw Equation Within the Respecified Model

Independent Variables	WITHDRAW				
	B	SE B	Beta	t*	Sig t
SEX	-.036	.070	.035	-.510	.611
QSL	.008	.005	-.180	-1.659	.099
FRATT	-.002	.003	-.051	-.548	.585
SATIS	.022	.011	.203	2.095	.038
FRACH2	-.008	.004	-.158	-2.076	.040
PLAN	-.583	.086	-.508	-6.794	.000

Multiple R = .652

R Square = .426

Residual = .758

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for direct effects.

Table 5.12

Correlations, Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, Total Effects and T-Values for the Effects of the Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable, WITHDRAW.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Correlation	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	t-value*
WITHDRAW	SEX	-.211	-.035	-.058	-.093	-1.125
	FRACH1	-.480	.000	-.307	-.307	-3.884
	QSL	-.270	-.178	.143	-.035	-.422
	FRATT	-.346	-.051	-.108	-.159	-1.939
	SATIS	-.127	.203	.004	.207	-2.548
	FRACH2	-.424	-.158	-.169	-.327	-4.167
	PLAN	-.612	-.508			

* $t > 2.0$ is significant at the $p < .05$ level. This t-value is for total effects.

Factors Influencing the Decision to Withdraw

The indirect effects analysis added information to the direct effects analysis. Apparently, early achievement in core French at the beginning of grade nine accounted for variance in WITHDRAW over and above the direct effects of French achievement at the end of grade nine. The variables, gender, quality of school life and attitude toward French, in the last analysis were not significant determinants of the decision to withdraw.

Review of the Findings Pertinent to the Hypotheses

The hypotheses which refer to the relationship between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable in the respecified model of early withdrawal from French were analyzed. The hypotheses relate to the tables and figures for each equation as contained in this chapter.

Hypotheses in the QSL Equation

It appears from a statistical analysis of the variable gender that females in the study had a somewhat more favorable perception of their quality of school life than males. The t-value for the direct effects is marginally significant at least at the $p < .05$ level.

Early achievement in French proved to be highly significant in relation to the students perception to their quality of school life. These two variables correlated highly

at .452, with a direct effect or beta coefficient of .400. The t-value for the direct effects was highly significant at 5.219.

Hypotheses in the French Attitudes Equation

The correlations, direct effects and t-values, as shown in Table 5.5, indicate that hypothesis 3 had to be rejected whereas hypotheses 4 was accepted. The relationship between the independent variable gender and the dependent variable FRATT is marginally significant with a correlation coefficient of .385 and beta coefficient or direct effect of .199. The t-value is 2.882 which is significant at least at the $p < .05$ level. Along with having a somewhat more favorable perception of their quality of school life, females showed a somewhat more favorable attitude towards French.

Early achievement in French proved to be highly significant in relation to the students' attitudes towards French. These two variables correlated highly at .583, with a direct effect or beta coefficient of .522. The t-value for the direct effects is highly significant at 7.552.

Hypotheses in the Satisfaction Equation

The relationship of Gender on Satisfaction was in favor of girls but probably not statistically significant, with a total effect of .143 and a t-value of 1.740 for the total effects. Table 5.6 shows the direct effect for the

relationship between these two variables. The direct effect, along with a t-value of only .064, indicates that the relationship shows little statistical significance. However, the indirect effect through QSL and FRATT gives a total effect of .143. with a much higher t-value of 1.74, therefore increasing the probability that this relationship is significant. Once again, as found by (Whitt, 1989), there is modest support for the proposition that girls find their schooling experiences more satisfying than boys (Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe, 1991, p.21).

The effects of early French achievement on satisfaction with schooling is almost certainly significant with a total effect of .313 and a t-value of 3.968. This supports the argument that students who experience early success in core French exhibit a greater sense of well-being and satisfaction with their schooling.

In relation to hypothesis 7, and in support of recent findings (Whitt, 1989), students' satisfactions with schooling greatly depends on their perception of their quality of school life. Table 5.6 shows a correlation coefficient of .744, a direct effect of .671 and a powerful t-value of 9.072. This is a highly significant relationship and is supportive of previous findings that those reporting a low quality of school life tended to be the least satisfied and the most dissatisfied with schooling (Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe, 1991. p.22).

The relationship between the variables French attitudes and satisfaction, as shown in Table 5.6, does not confirm the related hypothesis. A direct effect of .125 and a t-value of 1.526 indicates that the relationship is most likely not statistically significant.

Hypotheses in the French Achievement 2 Equation

The effects of Gender on French achievement at the end of grade 9 proved to be insignificant. The total effect of $-.038$ is shown in Table 5.9. However, within this equation, the effects of French achievement at the beginning of grade 9 on French achievement at the end of grade 9 proved to be highly significant. The total effect was $.840$ with a powerful t-value of 14.888 for the direct effects and 17.799 for the total effects.

The relationship between students perception of their quality of school life and French achievement at the end of grade 9 showed insignificant results. As shown in Table 5.8, the direct effect or beta coefficient is $.039$ and the t-value $.528$. The students attitude towards French proved to be statistically insignificant in relation to French achievement at the end of grade 9. The direct effect, as shown in Table 5.8 was $-.085$.

Hypotheses in the PLAN Equation

A direct effect of .035 and a total effect of .115 indicates no significant relationship between gender differences and plans to stay in core French. The effects of French achievement at the beginning of grade 9 on plans to stay in French was .400, hence significant. The higher the early achievement in French the more likely students plan to stay in French. As shown in Table 5.10, the effect of students' perceptions of their quality of school life on plans to stay in French was $-.026$; thus, perceptions of quality of school life did not affect plans to stay in French. The total effect of French attitudes on plans to stay in French was .236. Also, on the basis of a correlation coefficient of .412 and t-value for total effects of 2.791, hypothesis 16 was accepted. The more positive the attitude toward French the more likely students plan to stay in French in grade 10.

According to Tables 5.10 and 5.11, the findings show that the effect of student satisfaction with schooling is not a predictor of student plans to stay in core French. The direct effect was $-.007$; thus the relationship between these two variables was insignificant. French achievement at the end of grade 9 proved to be a strong predictor of student plans to stay in core French. As shown in Table 5.10, the correlation coefficient equaled .450; the direct effect was .332 and the t-value was 4.097. The higher the achievement at the end of grade 9 the more likely students plan to stay in French.

Hypotheses in the WITHDRAW Equation

The correlation coefficient, total effect and the t-value, as contained in Tables 5.12 and 5.13, show that the relationship between Gender and early withdrawal from core French is statistically insignificant. The model indicated that the withdrawal rate from core French was neither higher with females nor males in this study.

The negative correlation coefficient $-.480$ for early French achievement indicates that the higher the early achievement the greater the probability that the student would not withdraw from core French. The total effect of $-.307$ and t-value of 3.884 shows that early achievement in core French is a predictor of early withdrawal from core French.

A total effect of $-.035$ between the variables QSL and early withdrawal from core French showed that the relationship was not significant. QSL did not account for early withdrawal from core French, however, it has a great influence on student satisfaction with schooling which proved to be a significant indicator.

Students' attitudes towards French was a marginally significant predictor of early withdrawal from core French. The total effect between these two variables was only $-.035$ with a t-value of $-.584$ for the direct effects, however, the t-value for the total effects was 1.939 and significant at the $P < .05$ level.

As indicated, the findings show a significant relationship between satisfaction with schooling and early withdrawal from core French. The total effect was .207 with a t-value of 2.548. These statistics suggest that students who are less satisfied with schooling tend to withdraw from core French whereas students who are more satisfied tend to remain.

In models such as these there should be at least 20 cases per independent variable in order to minimize the problem of sampling fluctuation. Thus, technically, the minimum number of cases required to conduct the analysis presented in Table 5.11 is 120. In fact, there were 147 cases; therefore, the rule of thumb was met. However, the rule assumes that the ordinary least squares assumption of linear independence will be met; that is, there will not be any multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is a state of affairs where the independent variables are highly correlated. Sign reversals as between a model parameter and the underlying correlation coefficient is usually an unambiguous warning that multicollinearity is problematic.

The correlations between the six independent variables in the "withdraw" equation (Table 5.11) range from a low of .217 to a high of .774 (between QSL and SATIS) with a mean correlation of .383. This evidence supports the position that multicollinearity is probably problematic. While the matrix is not singular in that there are no linear dependencies, the correlation of .774 is relatively high suggesting that the

SATIS vector and the QSL vector could be proxies for one another. In other words, the SATIS vector is an approximation of the QSL vector. Unfortunately, multicollinearity is a thorny problem, yet to be resolved by statisticians. Some variance reduced but biased estimators known as ridge regression estimators have been used to address the problem; however, the statistics for these estimators are not found in commercial statistical application packages. In any case the problem is beyond the scope of the present investigation.

It can be said with some confidence, however, that the model is misspecified in that one of the variables, QSL or SATIS, may be redundant; and that to address this problem with confidence the analyst would require a larger data set than the one available. For the time being the estimates of the last equation in this recursive model will have to be regarded with a healthy skepticism. The results with respect to the effects of the quality of school life and schooling satisfaction on the decision to withdraw from French were found to be inconclusive.

The findings show that the total effect between French achievement at the end of grade 9 and early withdrawal from core French was significant at $-.327$ and the t -value, -4.163 . Students who were successful achievers at the end of grade 9 remained in core French.

Students who indicated at the end of grade 9 that they planned to withdraw from core French usually did so. The statistics, including a correlation coefficient of $-.612$, a direct effect of $-.508$ and a t -value of -2.076 shows that PLAN was a powerful predictor of WITHDRAW. It is worthwhile to note, however, that the t -value (-2.076) is a modest one given such a powerful parameter estimate. This indicates that the standard error for the parameter estimate must have been high, which is yet another indicator of the presence of multicollinearity.

Summary of the Findings

In terms of total effects, the Gender and QSL variables were of negligible significance as predictors of early withdrawal from core French. The impact of French attitude was marginally significant as a predictor of early withdrawal in that the more positive the attitude the less likely students were to withdraw other things equal.

The respecified model for early withdrawal from core French indicated that the most important factors in the model were both French achievement at the beginning and end of grade 9, and the overall satisfaction with schooling. Students who were performing well in French at the end of grade 9 were likely to stay in French. Also, students who were least satisfied with school were more likely to withdraw from core

French than students who were experiencing greater satisfaction with school.

CHAPTER 6

THE CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This chapter contains some discussion and interpretation of the research findings and offers some conclusions and recommendations for future research. The implications for theory and practice are also presented.

Discussion and Interpretation

The major focus of this study was to analyze and determine factors which influence student withdrawal from core French at the end of grade 9. This study differed from previous studies in this area in that it investigated the influence of student's perceptions of the quality of their school lives on early withdrawal from core French, and also on student well-being and student achievement in core French. The research addressed six basic questions with the major general question being: why do some students decide to withdraw from core French before beginning grade 10? The specific questions included:

- (i) To what extent do the background factors such as age, gender, parent's education, and years of French instruction and French achievement at the beginning of grade 9 account for student perceptions of the quality of their school lives and attitudes towards French as a foreign language?

- (ii) How responsive is satisfaction/dissatisfaction with schooling and later achievement in French to a set of background factors, student perceptions of their quality of school lives and attitudes toward French as a foreign language?
- (iii) How responsive are student plans to withdraw from core French to a set of background factors, student perceptions of their quality of school lives and attitudes toward French as a second language?
- (iv) How responsive is the actual decision of whether or not to withdraw from core French instruction to a set of background factors, satisfaction/dissatisfaction with schooling and later achievement in core French?
- (v) How responsive is early withdrawal from core French to all independent variables within the model?

This study is supported by recent research in the area of student perceptions of their quality of school life. The predominant references and findings have been cited from a study by Whitt (1989) as well as one by Bulcock, Whitt and Beebe (1991). The whole idea of Quality of School Life and the domains which compose the conceptual framework originated from Williams and Batten (1981).

Included in this study was a sample of 147 students from eight schools within the Exploit's-White Bay Roman Catholic School Board District. The instruments included a school life

and liking for French survey; an achievement test which was administered at the beginning and end of grade 9 and a statement of intention form. Parent approval was granted for each of the students in the sample to participate in completing these various instruments.

The analyses included various descriptive statistics, reliability analysis and multiple regression analyses which allowed for determining the direct, indirect and total effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables. The findings for each equation can be summarized as follows:

Effects of Background Factors on Quality of School Life

The multiple regression analysis showed that the variable Gender was somewhat significant in determining students' perception of their quality of school life. The relationship was in favor of females. It may be that the general nature of the adolescent male student elicits more negative reactions from teachers and schooling in general, thus, accounting for a less favorable perception towards schooling in males. This "general nature" seems organically based. There are hormonal differences at this age between post-pubescent males and females. In particular, the testosterone (male hormone) levels are different, which seem to account for the more aggressive male disposition. This explanation is of the ex-post-facto kind.

Early achievement in grade 9 proved to have a significant influence on the students' perception of their quality of school life. One can predict from these findings that early success or positive perception of such, will be a strong predictor of later success owing to an overall strengthened self-image. Gender and French achievement at the beginning of grade 9 were the only background variables which were retained within the respecified model.

Effects of Background Factors on Student Attitudes

Towards French

The effects of gender difference on attitudes towards French showed that females in this study had somewhat more favorable attitudes than males. Once again, it appears that in certain instances, females seem to have more satisfying and rewarding experiences than males. As earlier indicated, the results were only marginally significant.

The predominant factor in relation to attitudes towards French was early achievement in French. The findings indicate that French achievement is a powerful predictor of determining attitudes towards French. The French achievement variable played a dominant role in this study as a major determinant of the overall effects of the aspects of student schooling which were analyzed.

Effects of Independent Variables on Satisfaction
with Schooling

This research showed that students' satisfaction with schooling greatly depends on their perception of their quality of school life. Three domains of the QSL construct (Opportunity, Adventure and Status) were highly correlated with Satisfaction, with coefficients of .586, .721, and .536. The Adventure domain accounted for the greatest amount of variance. It appears from these findings that students, in general, require more challenging and interesting schooling in order to increase the degree of satisfaction within the realms of their educational setting.

Effects of Independent Variables on Student Achievement

The early achievement at the beginning of grade 9 proved to be an extremely powerful predictor of achievement in core French at the end of grade 9. The students who were high achievers at the beginning of grade 9 continued to perform highly towards the end of grade 9. This finding further supports the idea that early success is a strong predictor of later success and therefore students who achieve highly in earlier grades will probably continue to do so in later years of schooling.

Effects of Independent Variables on Student Plan to
Withdraw from Core French

This study showed that the higher the achievement in core French the greater the probability that the student would decide to remain in the core French program. This proved true for both early and late achievement in grade 9. Also, the students' attitudes towards French contributed significantly to their decision to either remain in core French or withdraw from the program. In this instance, it appears that the decision to withdraw from core French was made before the students were actually confronted with the decision.

Effects of Independent Variables on Early Withdrawal
from Core French

Apart from French attitudes being somewhat significant, the most powerful predictors of early withdrawal from core French were early and late French achievement and satisfaction with schooling. High achievement in core French greatly influenced student decisions to remain in the program and vice versa. Both early and late achievement combined, highly accounted for student withdrawal from core French. However, apart from the direct effects of late achievement, early achievement at the beginning of grade 9 also proved to be a significant factor in determining why students withdraw from core French.

It appears that the students who were least satisfied with school were more likely to withdraw from core French. One can infer, however, that owing to the probable presence of multicollinearity, as explained in the concluding pages of Chapter 5, that the results regarding the impact of QSL and SATIS on WITHDRAW were inclusive given this problem. The fact that the underlying coefficient (Table 5.12) between satisfaction and withdrawal is $-.127$ and the beta coefficient is $+.203$, thus, creating a sign reversal, indicates interference through multicollinearity.

The student's perceptions of their quality of school is the predominant predictor of school satisfaction, which also includes strong indicators such as: perceptions of their opportunities within schooling, their status and their teachers.

Implications for Theory and Practice

Since achievement in French is highly related to student's perceptions of their quality of school life which is a powerful predictor of the student's well-being, educators should strive to ensure that students are able to achieve and experience a high degree of success with their study of French. In that the domains within the quality of school life construct proved to be strong indicators of QSL, then future initiatives in this area should place great emphasis on the role of these predictors; and, in particular, the adventure

domain which is concerned with students' intrinsic interest in schooling. Every effort should be made to ensure that students experience a sense of belonging within the school setting. Teachers should plan to be more receptive to appropriately challenging students in meeting their interests and needs. The manipulation of the various indicators of the quality of school life model should be a major consideration in order to attempt to increase the degree of schooling satisfaction.

Overall achievement in French has also been shown as a strong indicator of student attitudes towards French which is somewhat related to student's decisions to either remain in or withdraw from core French. Educators must devise means and utilize existing strategies which evaluate students on their own strengths, thus ensuring that each student experiences a high degree of success. Much consideration should also be given to the value of criterion referenced testing as opposed to the current norm referenced tests and its relation to formative methods of evaluation in French as opposed to the summative methods of evaluation which are currently in use.

The findings in this study somewhat favor females over males in regard to their perception of their quality of school life and attitudes towards French. In lieu of these findings, French teachers should make every effort to provide equal encouragement and motivation to male students. The fact that early achievement in French greatly determines later

achievement in this subject area should encourage French teachers to ensure that their students experience success in achievement at early stages in the French program.

Since the dimensions of the quality of school life have been proven in this study to significantly affect students' degree of satisfaction with their schooling, and these dimensions like opportunity, adventure and status can be manipulated, then more initiative should be taken to promote positive perceptions for the students. If school becomes a place where students are interested, challenged and have a feeling of belonging and self worth then they will be more satisfied with their overall schooling and experience a greater sense of achievement. These factors should greatly increase the probability that students will choose to remain in programs such as core French.

Suggestions for Further Research

From this study one could expand the research by possibly conducting the following studies:

1. A study which explores further the relationship between satisfaction with schooling and withdrawal from or selection of particular programs or courses within the High School curriculum.
2. A similar study regarding early withdrawal from core French which includes a sample from the whole province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

3. Similar studies which involve the relationships between students' perception of their quality of school life and other school-related areas such as teacher expectations for and attitudes towards students.

4. A study which investigates the effects of student time spent within a particular area of the curriculum in relation to students' perception of their quality of school life and satisfaction/dissatisfaction with schooling.

5. A study which explores and identifies other characteristics and significant factors for students' perception of their quality of school life and student well-being.

6. A study which further explores the relationship between the domains of students' perception of their quality of school life, Gender and Achievement in French.

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APPENDIX A
Student Questionnaire

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE
SCHOOL LIFE AND LIKING FOR FRENCH SURVEY

DIRECTIONS: We are trying to find out how students feel about their school and school life. In particular, we want to find out why some students decide to continue with French education in high school and why some students withdraw.

This is not a test. Your teacher and your principal will not see your answers. We simply want you to tell us how you feel about your school and your schooling experiences.

PART A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Name _____
2. School _____
3. Grade (circle one)

Grade 8	1
Grade 9	2
Grade 10	3
Other	4
4. Are you a boy or a girl? (circle one)

Boy	1
Girl	2
5. How old were you on your last birthday? (circle one)

13 years old	1
14 years old	2
15 years old	3
16 years old	4
17 years old	5
Other	6

6. Please write your French teacher's name

7. How many years have you been at this school? (circle one)

Less than one year	1
2 years	2
3 years	3
4 years	4
5 years	5
6 years	6
7 years	7
8 years	8
9 years or more	9

8. What was the highest level of education your parents received? (circle one for each parent)

	<u>Father</u>	<u>Mother</u>
Elementary school	1	1
Some high school	2	2
Some technical/vocational training	3	3
Completed high school	4	4
Completed technical/vocational training	5	5
Completed university degree (B.A., B.Sc., B.Ed., etc.)	6	6
Some graduate level work	7	7
Completed graduate degree (M.Ed., Ph.D., etc.)	8	8

9. How many years have you taken French? (circle one)

Less than 3 years	1
4 years	2
5 years	3
6 years	4
7 years or more	5

PART B: SCHOOL LIFE SURVEY

Circle the response which best describes how you feel about school. Insert the phrase **SCHOOL IS A PLACE WHERE...** in front of each question.

School is a place where...	Definitely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Definitely Disagree
10. I like to be....	1	2	3	4
11. I feel restless....	1	2	3	4
12. I am happy with how well I do....	1	2	3	4
13. I like to learn new things....	1	2	3	4
14. I learn to get along with other people....	1	2	3	4
15. I know that people think a lot of me....	1	2	3	4
16. teachers treat me fairly in class....	1	2	3	4
17. I get enjoyment....	1	2	3	4
18. there is nothing exciting to do....	1	2	3	4

School is a place where...	Definitely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Definitely Disagree
19. I know the sorts of things I can do well....	1	2	3	4
20. I find my work interesting...	1	2	3	4
21. I can get along with most of the students even though they may not be my friends....	1	2	3	4
22. people come to me for help...	1	2	3	4
23. teachers listen to what I have to say....	1	2	3	4
24. I feel great...	1	2	3	4
25. I feel bored....	1	2	3	4
26. I know how to cope with the work....	1	2	3	4
27. I like all my subjects...	1	2	3	4
28. I have lots of friends...	1	2	3	4
29. I feel important....	1	2	3	4
30. teachers are usually fair...	1	2	3	4
31. I really like to go...	1	2	3	4
32. I feel sad....	1	2	3	4

School is a place where...	Definitely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Definitely Disagree
33. I get satisfaction from the work I do....	1	2	3	4
34. I am genuinely interested in my work...	1	2	3	4
35. having different kinds of students in my class helps me get along with everyone...	1	2	3	4
36. people credit me for what I can do....	1	2	3	4
37. teachers give me the marks I deserve....	1	2	3	4
38. learning is a lot of fun...	1	2	3	4
39. I feel lonely...	1	2	3	4
40. I feel good about my work...	1	2	3	4
41. I learn the things I need to know....	1	2	3	4
42. you have to get along even with students you don't like....	1	2	3	4
43. teachers ask me to help out....	1	2	3	4
44. teachers help me to do my best....	1	2	3	4

School is a place where...	Definitely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Definitely Disagree
45. I feel happy....	1	2	3	4
46. I get upset....	1	2	3	4
47. I can handle my school work...	1	2	3	4
48. my friends and I get together on our own time to talk about what we have learned in class...	1	2	3	4
49. I sometimes wish I were different than I am...	1	2	3	4
50. people think I can do a lot of things....	1	2	3	4
51. I like my teachers....	1	2	3	4
52. I feel proud to be a student....	1	2	3	4
53. you are bossed around too much....	1	2	3	4
54. the work I do is important to me....	1	2	3	4

PART C: LIKING FOR FRENCH SURVEY

Circle the response which best describes how you feel about French. Insert the phrase **I AM STUDYING FRENCH BECAUSE....** in front of each question.

I am studying French because...	Definitely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Definitely Disagree
55. there are people in my community who speak French...	1	2	3	4

I am studying French because...		Definitely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Definitely Disagree
56.	I like French....	1	2	3	4
57.	it is a subject in which I can do well....	1	2	3	4
58.	I get better marks in French than in other subjects....	1	2	3	4
59.	my mother (or father) speaks French....	1	2	3	4
60.	it is a subject I find interesting....	1	2	3	4
61.	I am pleased with my present progress....	1	2	3	4
62.	I want to get better at French than I am now....	1	2	3	4
63.	these days a person needs French to get ahead....	1	2	3	4
64.	I find it more exciting than most of my other school subjects....	1	2	3	4
65.	it gives me a feeling of satisfaction....	1	2	3	4
66.	it is important to me to get good grades....	1	2	3	4

I am studying French because...	Definitely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Definitely Disagree
67. it is compulsory in my school....	1	2	3	4
68. it is interesting to learn about my fellow French Canadians....	1	2	3	4
69. it is a subject I can handle....	1	2	3	4
70. I insist on doing well in school....	1	2	3	4
71. it is required for entry into many occupations in Canada today....	1	2	3	4
72. it is such an interesting subject....	1	2	3	4
73. it is one of the more important subjects we do in school....	1	2	3	4
74. I want to be one of the best students when I finish high school....	1	2	3	4
75. I believe it will prove useful to me one day....	1	2	3	4
76. it is a subject I would like to know better....	1	2	3	4

I am studying French because...	Definitely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Definitely Disagree
------------------------------------	---------------------	-----------------	--------------------	------------------------

77. if I don't, people
like me will not
have much of a
chance in life....

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

78. if I try I can get
mostly A's and
B's....

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

APPENDIX B
STUDENT FRENCH ACHIEVEMENT TEST

French Test

Four answers are given for each exercise, but only one of these answers is right. You are to choose the one answer that you think is better than the others. Then, circle the number beside the correct answer in each of the following.

SAMPLE EXERCISE

0. Je __ français.

- 1) vais
- 2) mange
- 3) joue
- 4) parle

SECTION A: (GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES AND VOCABULARY FROM
CONTEXT)

1. J' ai __ lait

- 1) du
- 2) de la
- 3) des
- 4) de l'

2. Il a __ argent.

- 1) de la
- 2) de l'
- 3) des
- 4) du

3. J' ai __ cafe.
- 1) de la
 - 2) du
 - 3) des
 - 4) de l'
4. Il __ intelligent.
- 1) es
 - 2) sommes
 - 3) est
 - 4) suis
5. Elle __ stupide.
- 1) sommes
 - 2) est
 - 3) es
 - 4) suis
6. L' enfant __ petit.
- 1) suis
 - 2) es
 - 3) sommes
 - 4) est
7. Je parle __ enfants.
- 1) a la
 - 2) au
 - 3) aux
 - 4) a l'

8. Elle arrive __ magasin.

- 1) aux
- 2) a l'
- 3) au
- 4) a la

9. Ils mangent __ restaurant.

- 1) aux
- 2) a l'
- 3) au
- 4) a la

10. Il __ au magasin.

- 1) vas
- 2) vais
- 3) va
- 4) aller

11. Nous __ a l' ecole.

- 1) allons
- 2) allez
- 3) aller
- 4) vais

12. Je __ chez Jacques.

- 1) vas
- 2) va
- 3) vais
- 4) vont

13. Je __ lundi.
- 1) vient
 - 2) viennent
 - 3) viens
 - 4) venons
14. Tu __ lundi.
- 1) viennent
 - 2) viens
 - 3) vient
 - 4) venons
15. Nous ne __ pas.
- 1) venons
 - 2) vient
 - 3) viennent
 - 4) viens
16. Voilà __ stylos.
- 1) vos
 - 2) votre
 - 3) notre
 - 4) ton
17. Voilà __ maison.
- 1) mon
 - 2) mes
 - 3) ma
 - 4) vos

18. Il __ beau ce matin.
- 1) fais
 - 2) fait
 - 3) faites
 - 4) faisons
19. Je __ le diner.
- 1) fait
 - 2) fais
 - 3) faisons
 - 4) font
20. Nous __ le diner.
- 1) fais
 - 2) fait
 - 3) faisons
 - 4) font
21. L' auto ne marche __.
- 1) maintenant
 - 2) ici
 - 3) pas
 - 4) hier
22. Maman prepare __ déjeuner.
- 1) la
 - 2) le
 - 3) les
 - 4) l'

SECTION B: (GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES; VOCABULARY; "WEATHER IDIOMS").

"QUEL TEMPS FAIT-IL?"

Circle the number of the expression which best matches each picture.

- | | | |
|-----|---------|---------------------------|
| 23. | _____ | 1) Il pleut. |
| | PICTURE | 2) Il fait froid. |
| | | 3) Il neige. |
| | | 4) Il fait du vent. |
| 24. | PICTURE | 1) Il fait froid |
| | | 2) Il fait chaud. |
| | | 3) Il fait frais. |
| | | 4) Il pleut. |
| 25. | PICTURE | 1) Il fait beau. |
| | | 2) Il fait mauvais. |
| | | 3) Il fait du soleil. |
| | | 4) Il fait chaud. |
| 26. | PICTURE | 1) Il fait du soleil. |
| | | 2) Il fait du brouillard. |
| | | 3) Il pleut. |
| | | 4) Il neige. |
| 27. | PICTURE | 1) Il fait chaud. |
| | | 2) Il fait du soleil |
| | | 3) Il fait froid. |
| | | 4) Il pleut. |

SECTION C: (GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE; SENTENCE FORMATION;
VOCABULARY; TIME)

Read the paragraph and the following questions. Then circle the number beside the correct answer in each question.

Jacques va a St-Jerome en autobus. Il y a un accident sur la route et Jacques arrive a St-Jerome a cinq heures et demie. Marie qui l' attend au terminus, est tres fachee parce qu'il est maintenant trop tard pour aller faire du ski.

28. Jacques rencontre Marie a m

1)

3)

2)

4)

29. Jacques est

1) a 1' heure

2) en avance

3) en retard

4) a temps

30. Quand Jacques arrive a St-Jerome, Marie

1) n' est pas content.

2) fait du ski.

3) n' est pas au terminus.

4) entend Jacques.

SECTION D: (GROUPING; VOCABULARY DISTINCTION.)

"FIND THE INTRUDER"

Circle the number of the word which does not suit the other three words in each exercise:

SAMPLE EXERCISE

0. 1) vert

2) rouge

3) joli

4) orange

> In this exercise you would circle number 3, because it's the only one which isn't a color. <

31. 1) cafe
2) the
3) fraise
4) eau

32. 1) garcon
2) fille
3) sucre
4) homme

33. 1) le football
2) le baseball
3) le magasin
4) le hockey

34. 1) semaine
 2) jour
 3) jamais
 4) an
35. 1) nez
 2) main
 3) soir
 4) oreille
36. 1) sur
 2) aller
 3) dans
 4) sous

SECTION E: (Reading comprehension)

Read the following passage and circle the number of the sentence in each of the following exercises which is a true statement.

La famille de Charles

Les parents de Charles habitent a Paris dans une maison de six etages. Aujourd'hui, a Paris, il y a des immeubles de quarante etages.

L'appartement de monsieur et madame Dupont, les parents de Charles, est confortable; mais il n'est pas l'air conditionne.

Dans l'appartement, il y a un salon immense avec vue sur Seine et la tour Eiffel. Dans le salon, il y a un piano et trois portraits de famille. Un des portraits est de la mere de Charles.

Dans la chambre de Charles il y a un lit, deux lampes, quatre chaises, un poste de television et une guitare.

La chambre de Charles est a cote de la chambre de monsieur Dupont. La chambre du pere de Charles est a cote du salon.

Charles a un frere; il s'appelle Jean. Il n'a pas de soeurs.

Le pere de Charles est pilote. Il est un des pilotes d'Air France.

SAMPLE EXERCISE

0. 1) Charles' parents live in Canada.
2) Charles' parents live in France.
3) Charles' parents live in New York.
4) Charles' parents live in Grand Falls.
(In this exercise you would circle number 2)

37. 1) There is a television in the living room.
2) There are two lamps in the living room.
3) There is a guitar in the kitchen.
4) There is a piano in the living room.
38. 1) Charles has two sisters.
2) Charles has one brother.
3) Charles has no brothers or sisters.
4) Charles has only one sister.

39. 1) Charles lives in a comfortable apartment.
 2) Charles lives in a four story house.
 3) Charles lives in a one room apartment.
 4) Charles lives in an air conditioned apartment.
40. 1) Charles' father tunes pianos.
 2) Charles' father is an apartment superintendent.
 3) Charles' father is a pilot.
 4) Charles' father works at the Eiffel Tower.

SECTION F: (Sentence structure, Reading comprehension)

Directions: In each of the following exercises, circle the number by the answer that is most appropriate for the question shown.

SAMPLE EXERCISE

0. Ou est Marc?
- 1) Ils sont au restaurant.
2) Elle est au magasin.
3) Il n' est pas au cinema.
4) Ils ne sont pas a la salle de recreation.

(The correct answer is "Il n' est pas au cinema", so you would circle number 3.)

41. 1. Ou est-ce que tu travailles?
- 1) Je travaille au restaurant.
 - 2) Je travaille vite.
 - 3) Je travaille avec mon pere.
 - 4) Je ne travaille pas parce que j'ai mal a la tete.
42. 2. Quand est-ce qu'il arrive?
- 1) J'arrive a huit heures.
 - 2) Il arrive a six heures.
 - 3) Il arrive au restaurant.
 - 4) Elle n'arrive pas a huit heure.
43. 3. Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle ne danse pas.
- 1) Elle ne danse pas.
 - 2) Elle danse beaucoup.
 - 3) Elle ne danse pas parce qu'elle a mal a la jambe.
 - 4) Elle danse depuis l'apres-midi.

SECTION G: (Sentence structure, Vocabulary distinction, grammatical structure.)

DIRECTIONS: In each of the following exercises, circle the number by the question that gives the answer shown.

SAMPLE EXERCISE

0. Ils sont devant la classe.

- 1) Ou est-il?
- 2) Ou sont-ils?
- 3) Ou sont-elles?
- 4) Ou est-elle?

(The correct question is "Ou sont-ils", so you would circle number 2.)

44. 1) Marie etudie.

- 1) Pour ç'i est-ce elle etudie?
- 2) Est-ce qu' elle etudie?
- 3) Qui etudie?
- 4) Qui est-ce qu' elle attend?

45. 2) Elle travaille pour nous.

- 1) Qui travaille?
- 2) Pour qui est-ce qu' elle travaille?
- 3) Est-ce qu' elle travaille?
- 4) Elle travaille beaucoup?

46. 3) Nous avons peur?

- 1) Qui est peur?
- 2) Qui peur?
- 3) Qui a peur?
- 4) Est-ce que vous avez peur?

47. 4) Je regarde mon ils.
- 1) Qui est-ce que vous regardez?
 - 2) Est-ce que vous regardez ton fils?
 - 3) Qui est-ce qu' elle regarde?
 - 4) Qui est-ce qu' il regarde?
48. 5) Si, je vais au cinema.
- 1) Est-ce que tu ne vas pas au cinema?
 - 2) Est-ce que tu vas au cinema?
 - 3) Tu vas au cinema?
 - 4) Qui vas au cinema?

APPENDIX C
Construct Items

Items Which Composed The "The Quality of School Life"
Instrument

Opportunity (7 items)

- I am happy with how well I do.
- I know the sorts of things I can do well.*
- I know how to cope with the work.
- I get satisfaction from the work I do.
- I feel good about my work.
- I can handle my school work.
- The work I do is important to me.

Adventure (6 items)

- I like to learn new things.
- I find the work interesting.
- I like all my subjects.
- I am genuinely interested in my work.
- My friends and I get together on our own time to talk about things we have learned in class.
- I learn the things I need to know.

Status (5 items)

- I know that people think a lot of me.
- People come to me for help.
- I feel important.
- People credit me for what I do.
- People think I can do a lot of things.

Teacher (7 items)

- Teachers treat me fairly in class.
- Teachers are usually fair.
- Teachers listen to what I say.
- Teachers give me the marks I deserve.
- Teachers help me do my best.
- I like my teachers.
- Teachers ask me to help out.

Identity (6 items)**

- I learn to get along with other people.
- I can get along with most of the students even though they may not be my friends.
- Having different kinds of students in my class helps me get along with everyone'
- You have to get along even with students you don't like.
- I sometimes wish I were different than I am.
- I have lots of friends.

Satisfaction (7 items)

- I like to be.
- I get enjoyment.
- I feel great.
- I really like to go.
- Learning is a lot of fun.
- I feel happy.
- I feel proud to be a student.

Dissatisfaction (7 items)

- I feel lonely.*
- I get upset.
- I feel restless.
- There is nothing exciting to do.
- You feel bossed around too much.*
- I feel bored.
- I feel sad.

Items Which Composed The "French Attitude" Instrument

Utility (6 items)

- There are people in my community who speak French.
- My mother (or father) speaks French.
- These days a person needs French to get ahead.
- It is compulsory in my school.*
- It is required for entry into many occupations in Canada today.
- I believe it will prove useful to me one day.

Interest (6 items)

- I like French.
- It is a subject I find interesting.
- It is interesting to learn about my fellow Canadians.
- I find it more exciting than most of my school subjects.
- It is such an interesting subject.
- It is a subject I would like to know better.

Opportunity for French (6 items)

- It is a subject in which I do well.
- I am pleased with my present progress.
- It gives me a feeling of satisfaction.
- It is a subject I can handle.
- It is one of the more important subjects we do in school.
- If I don't people like me will not have much of a chance in life.*

Self Concept (6 items)

- I get better marks in French than in other subjects.
- I want to get better at French than I am now.
- It is important to me to get good grades.
- I insist on doing well in school.
- I want to be one of the best students when I finish high school.
- If I try I get mostly A's and B's.

* Items which were dropped after original analysis.

** Identity cluster was disregarded owing to low reliability of the IDENT construct.

APPENDIX D

Student Statement of Intent Form

Name.....

School.....

STUDENT INTENTIONS

I want to find out how many students will be doing French next year.

Please circle the response which best describes your intentions regarding French next year.

	Definitely	Probably	Probably Not	Definitely Not
I will be taking French next year.....	1	2	3	4

.....

APPENDIX E

Parental Permission Letter

Dear Parents of grade 9 students,

In October and May of this school year your child will be asked to participate in a study with respect to why students decide to withdraw from doing core French. This study is being done as part of a graduate thesis for Memorial University. Your child will be asked to complete information regarding her/his educational background; a questionnaire entitled A Liking for School and French Survey; and an achievement test. I would like to indicate that your child's responses on each of these items will be strictly confidential and not used in anyway for personal evaluation.

Please sign the consent form below if you wish your child to participate in this study.

I grant permission for _____ to participate in this study.

Parents signature _____.

Thanking you for your assistance.



