THE PROVISION OF THE ELEMENTARY CORE FRENCH PROGRAM IN SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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THE PROVISION OF THE ELEMENTARY CORE FRENCH PROGRAM IN SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis has investigated the provision of the Elementary Core French Program in small rural schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. The implementation of the communicatively based program *Aventures* in our province in the 1980s required a shift in teaching methodology and a teacher who was comfortable in the language and who fully understood the philosophy of communicative language teaching. I was interested in examining how effective this implementation has been in the small rural schools in the province. Frequently, teaching in a multi-graded setting, the teacher in a small school is responsible for all subjects, including French, at different grade levels. My study sought to develop a profile of the Elementary Core French Program in these small schools.

The review of the literature was done in two domains: (1) second-language teaching and learning, and (2) rural education. A survey questionnaire was developed from the themes and concerns prevalent throughout the literature and administered to the total accessible population (schools with student populations of 100 or less which offered elementary core French) in May of the 1994-95 school year. Data gathered via the completed questionnaires was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used mainly

frequency distributions and means, served to establish an overall picture of the Elementary Core French Program in small rural schools with respect to qualifications of teachers, resources available, support for the program, and use of communicative strategies. The inferential statistics consisting of chi-squares provided several significant relationships between teacher preparation in French and variables such as use of communicative strategies and proficiency levels.

The results suggest that teachers in small rural schools are not adequately prepared to provide an effective Elementary Core French Program. Thus, the program objectives cannot be achieved. In addition, the findings of this research provide the basis for several recommendations which address the problems with elementary core French in small rural schools.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In the mid-nineteen eighties, a set of elementary core French curriculum materials was introduced into the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. After some piloting and feedback, the program *Aventures* was implemented in all elementary schools in 1989. This program was developed by Anne Burows Clarke, Gail S. Leder, and Rauda M. Tautins Dickinson, a team of authors who hold masters degrees in education in second-language curriculum. The program, published by Copp Clark Pittman Ltd., manifests the ideals of communicative language teaching.

Traditionally, French was taught through the study of rules with little regard for the need to communicate. The shift in second-language teaching methodology from a language study base (teaching of grammar and translation) to a communicative base demands a parallel shift in both philosophy and teaching strategies.

The importance of aural/oral abilities advocated by the curriculum guide for teachers of elementary core French is manifested in *Aventures*. The Department of Education has chosen an appropriate set of materials to deliver a

communicatively based second-language program. While the connection between curriculum objectives and program materials is present, a difficulty arises in the classroom in delivering a program to elementary students in our province which focuses on interaction in the second language. *Aventures* is a program used in all Grade 4, 5, and 6 classrooms in the province, whether they are urban or rural, large or small. With the emphasis on communication, it naturally follows that the classroom teacher must be proficient in French.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis has been to investigate the capacity of small rural schools in Newfoundland and Labrador to deliver a communicatively based program. Through no fault of their own, many elementary core French teachers have had to cope with a program which imposed new expectations on elementary classroom teachers (for teachers in small rural schools, this is in addition to having to frequently teach in multi-grade classrooms). It is known that many teachers were not prepared to conduct classes in French, to facilitate in group activities nor to promote communication despite the fact that this new approach was supported by the literature as being much more effective. Seven years have passed since the full-scale adoption of *Aventures*, and while we may now have more trained second-language teachers, there are still those who do not have the necessary background

nor skills to teach French.

1.3 Teacher Qualifications

Throughout the data gathering process, I chose not only to survey teachers but also to seek the opinions of three people who possess a knowledge of the French program. I wrote letters to: Cheryl Riggs, French Coordinator of the Western-Avalon Roman Catholic School Board for 1994-95; Patricia Goulart, Core French Consultant, Department of Education and Training; and Jacquie Donat, Editing Consultant, Copp Clark Pittman (publisher of the curriculum materials, *Aventures*, currently in use in the province). These three people could provide their perceptions regarding minimum and desired qualifications for elementary core French teachers. Qualifications are comprised of French post-secondary and methodology courses and oral proficiency. A copy of the questionnaire, which I forwarded, is contained in Appendix B. Copies of these letters can be found in Appendix B. When analyzing my data in light of their feedback, which is supported by the literature written on the communicative approach, it was obvious to me that a great percentage of teachers in small rural schools did not have even the minimum qualifications alluded to by these three professionals The results of the three questionnaires are presented in Tables 1.1 and 1.2.

Table 1.1
Summary of Minimum Qualifications

Respondent's Name	Post-Secondary French Courses	Methodology Courses	Oral Proficiency on Scale of 1 to 10
Patricia Goulart (Department of Education)	2 plus time in a French milieu	Elementary core French methods course	5
Jacquie Donat (Copp Clark Pittman)	Minor for Grade 5, Major for Grade 6	Elementary core French methods course	6
Cheryl Riggs (1994-95 French Coordinator)	Minor in French and minimum of 6 weeks in French milieu	Elementary core French methods course	7

Table 1.2
Summary of Desired Qualifications

Respondent's Name	Post-Secondary French Courses	Methodology Courses	Oral Proficiency on Scale of 1 to 10
Patricia Goulart (Department of Education)	Minor in French	Elementary core French methods course	7
Jacquie Donat (Copp Clark Pittman)	Major in French and time in French milieu	Elementary core French methods course	8
Cheryl Riggs (1994-95 French Coordinator)	Major in French and at least one semester in a French milieu	Elementary core French methods course	10

From the data presented in Tables 1.1 and 1.2, there is agreement on the fact that to teach the Elementary Core French Program one should have completed methodology courses and French language courses at the university level with at least a proficiency level of 5. Two of the respondents suggest this level to be 6 or even 7. Returning to the data gathered in my surveys to teachers, 50% had completed 5 or less post-secondary French courses, 61% had not even completed a single French methodology courses, and 34% rated themselves with a proficiency level of 5 or less.

The three individuals who assisted me with determining minimum and desired qualifications have taught French and have done undergraduate as well as graduate courses (in some cases) in French instruction. They have also worked with teachers in implementing , inservicing, and teaching new programs such as *Aventures*. For this reason, they would possess some degree of expertise in this area.

It is not as though the Department of Education had no knowledge of the need to establish minimum qualifications for core French teachers. In 1986, a committee submitted a document containing information about the state of core French in Newfoundland and Labrador to the Department of Education. This report outlined the criteria required to teacher core French and stressed a major

lack of qualified French teachers at the elementary levels. However, in 1995, there are still no minimum qualifications to teach elementary French.

The thrust of my research has been on small rural schools with student populations of 100 or less. However, I have spoken to several people about the situation in large centres as well. In conversations I had with Patricia Goulart, Consultant for Core French Programs at the Department of Education, and Joan Netten, Professor of French Methodology Courses, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, the point has been raised that the same situation exists in urban schools. That is to say that larger schools do not have qualified French teachers to offer the Elementary Core French Program either. From my three years experience in a large school (4-12 with over 400 students), the core French program was taught by each classroom teacher to their own class. These teachers had little, if any, oral French background but were forced to teach a communicatively based program.

I do not have any data to make a conclusion regarding the qualifications of elementary core French teachers in larger urban schools. My study focused on small schools and larger centers were beyond the scope of my research. It would certainly be worth investigating the situation in larger schools in light of the concerns raised.

1.4 Rationale

My research provides some data on the provision of French in small rural schools with respect to such issues as teacher qualifications, support for the program, resources available, use of communicative strategies, and evaluation techniques. By surveying all small schools in this province with populations of 100 or less, I obtained information on the various aspects outlined. The results of my study can inform those involved in curriculum implementation and evaluation as to the need for previewing the real situation before implementing a program for which many in the system were not ready.

In 1996, the Department of Education seeks to evaluate the Elementary Core French Program by administering an assessment instrument based on the objectives set down in the provincial curriculum guide to all grade six students. The data which I obtained provides information on the readiness of students in small rural schools for the department's test. The theory of the communicative approach may be sound and may be thought to have been put into practice, but if instructional strategies now in use in Newfoundland and Labrador are in conflict with the evaluation procedures included in the departmental criterion-referenced test, major difficulties will be obvious in the results.

1.5 Questions to be Investigated

In probing the thesis topic of the provision of the Elementary Core French Program in small rural schools in the province, I have specified several questions to which I sought answers. The questions to follow arose from my review of the literature, my discussions, and written correspondence with professionals in the province who have had involvement with second-language teaching and from my years of teaching experience.

Below is the list of questions:

1. What are the qualifications of teachers of French in small rural schools?
2. Are these qualifications adequate to teach the program used?
3. What resources are available to the teacher of French in small schools?
4. Are these resources adequate?
5. Should expectations for teaching the objectives of the French program in small schools be the same as those for larger schools?
6. Should the Department of Education use a criterion-referenced test to assess whether the aims are being achieved province-wide?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Section I. Second Language Teaching

2.1 Introduction

Since the purpose of my research was to investigate the provision of French in the elementary grades in small rural schools in Newfoundland and Labrador, it was necessary to review the literature written in two different domains. One must first understand the fundamentals of the approach to second-language learning currently prescribed for use in the classroom. In addition to this, one needed to examine the writings on rural education, for it is only in this manner that the thrust of my thesis can be comprehended.

The first section of this chapter will give an overview of past trends in second-language education, leading to an examination of the communicative approach. The second part of this chapter will focus on a presentation of the particulars, both positive and negative, involved in teaching in a small rural school. By viewing these two aspects of the topic, one will be able to see the link which was made between them in my study.

2.2 Historical Background of Second-Language Teaching

Over the years, second-language teaching methodologies have come and

gone. According to Kelly (1969) and Titone (1968), cited in Turell (1985), there are really no new approaches to teaching a language, and one only rearranges ideas which have been around since man began analyzing language teaching and learning. However, the debate on teaching methods has "evolved particularly over the last hundred years" (Stern, 1983, p. 452).

As early as the year 1693, Locke advocated the premise that languages should be learned by use rather than systematic study (Stern, 1983). In Locke's view, a systematic approach has its place in the training of professional writers and linguists. He proposed that learning by conversation was the route to follow. Thus, the roots of today's communicative approach were present over 300 years ago.

Prior to 1950, statements and ideas regarding second-language teaching were not based on research but, rather, on feelings and opinions (Stern, 1983). The more common methods of second-language teaching are described in the paragraphs to follow. It is not easy to determine when exactly various methods were used since, in some cases, two different methods were used during the same time period (for example, grammar-translation and audiolingual) and some educators selected aspects of different methods. In addition, second-language teachers may view a single method as having a number of features. The following paragraphs will serve to provide an overview of the ideas which preceded what is

now known as the communicative approach.

Structuralism, as the term suggests, thought of language as very learnable. The emphasis was on generalizing linguistic rules (Howatt, 1988; Tremblay, 1992) and formal features of the language including grammar (Allen, 1984; Doggett, 1994; Stern, 1983). A combination of Bloomfieldian structuralism and Skinner's operant-conditioning theories laid the foundation for the audiolingual method (Allen, 1984; Melrose, 1991). Because it incorporated two scientific theories - structural linguistics and behaviourist psychology - the audiolingual method was considered highly scientific (Tremblay, 1992). This method was implemented in Newfoundland schools with the program *Le Francais Partout*. Class work took the form of memorizing dialogue material and intensive pattern drills so that performance would become automatic (Brooks, 1960, cited in Allen, 1984; Doggett, 1994).

The principles of structural grading used in the audiolingual method assume that once students possess a knowledge of grammatical structures, they will be able to communicate (Allen, 1984). The lack of real communication in the classroom by using artificial drills was among the criticisms of this method in the late 1960s (Schulz and Bartz, 1976).

Grammar-translation or the traditional method, which still prevails (or

elements of it) in some classrooms, focuses on the translation from and into the target language (Stern, 1983; Doggett, 1994; Allen, 1983). As in the previous method, the analytical thrust is ever present; however, the system of rules is related to first language rules.

The direct method, viewed as a predecessor of present-day immersion, is characterized by the rise of the second language in instruction and communication in classrooms. New vocabulary in the target language is presented in a variety of ways - pictures, props, gestures, and so on, but never the mother tongue (Doggett, 1994). The exclusion of the first language in learning in a second language resulted in two major criticisms of this method (Stern, 1983). First, it was difficult to give meaning and to avoid misunderstanding without using the first language. Secondly, there was concern over how to use this method with learners beyond the beginning stages.

The mid-seventies saw the beginnings of a shift in second-language pedagogy to a focus on communicative outcomes (Phillips, 1993). With the extensive history and the widespread acceptance of different views of second-language learning, there now appears to be some sort of consensus on the importance of meaningful language use as the way to meet basic proficiency levels in core French (Phillips, 1993; Valette, 1993; Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1985).

People have sought to acquire second languages for centuries. Numerous methods and combinations of methods have been utilized, but it appeared that many in the field of second-language learning were dissatisfied with the results. The individual could not effectively function in a second-language milieu.

In the early 1980s, Stern was aware that teaching from a purely linguistic framework leads to low levels of communicative ability and does not contribute much to a learner's overall education. Knowing grammar rules, sentence dialogues, and the like, does not enable learners to communicate (Krashen, cited in Chastain, 1993; Baltra, 1992). After years of effort and exposure, students cannot speak the language they are studying. Valette (1993) refers to Francois Govin (1980) who had this same experience. He had tried to "learn" German by memorizing rules and vocabulary while his three year-old nephew had "acquired" French by hearing and using the language in context.

In Canada, in the mid-eighties, core French teachers were faced with the prospect that the program was failing while French immersion was gaining popularity (Payen and Gibson, 1990). However, Stern (1982) attributed part of the blame to the "preoccupation with French" (p. 57). He was well aware of the fact that the majority of French language learners will have to learn French in a core program so he was determined to improve both the curriculum and teaching methods of core French. Stern believed that given the proper conditions, higher

objectives could be set. Dr. Stern was committed to locating a medium through which learners would become able to interact in the target language. Until his death, he was involved in much work and in founding the National Core French Study which initiated much interest in this field. In fact, the idea of the communicative/experiential syllabus was completed by Tremblay, Duplantie, and Hust (1990) due to the inspiration of Stern.

The movement towards communicative language teaching provides a broader view of language for communication as opposed to the narrow view of language and language proficiency as comprised only of grammatical aspects (Harley et al. 1990). The Canadian Immersion Program (Stern, 1989, cited in Stern, 1983), and the Welsh Bilingual Project (Beaussteln et al., cited in Stern, 1983) demonstrate that the communicative strategy is an effective means of language teaching and learning by transforming the classroom into a communicative, situational context.

Tremblay et al. (1990) suggest that the communicative/experiential syllabus distinguishes itself from traditional language syllabi by emphasizing learning processes rather than linguistic content. Tremblay (1992) equates the communicative approach with "quality language learning" (p. 814).

2.3 What is the Communicative Approach?

Countless methods have been available to teach French. In the paragraphs to follow, I will describe the ideals of the communicative approach which, according to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (1990), is the approach to be used in schools in this province.

Language has many functions, one of which is to communicate. To be human necessitates communication or interaction with others. In the communicative approach, the teacher should try to work towards a goal: providing the learner with enough language to operate in everyday situations (Tardif, 1985; Ducroquet, 1986). Thus, the student is motivated to learn the language since it serves him/her both inside the classroom in daily activities and outside, since the language can be used with native speakers.

Widdowson (1984) believes that language should be taught for communication. He distinguished between teaching language as communication versus teaching language for communication. Stern (1990) suggests a similar idea as he equates analytic teaching strategies to teaching "about communication" and communicative teaching as teaching "through communication by involving the learner as a participant" (p. 96). It is the job of our education system to develop in the learner the capacity for communication behaviour. We are reminded by Stern that the teaching of language elements as communication will not

automatically trigger off the use of language as communication. That is to say, a student may possess a great knowledge of French structures, vocabulary, and so on, but cannot use the language. At the elementary level, for example, linguistic elements are only pursued to permit the learners to carry on conversations or for other communicative purposes (Gunterman and Philips, 1979). Communication is not a matter of learning language items. Therefore, we need a methodology which will enable the learner to engage in communication in the classroom (LeBlanc, 1984; Duplantie, 1983; Terrell, 1985, and Baltra, 1992) in acquisition instead of learning activities (Loughrin-Sacco, 1992). Through interaction, students can increase their store of knowledge from their peers. They can use all they have learned in real life exchanges where expressing their real meaning is important to them (Rivers, 1987; Valette, 1993). With meaningful communication, the students experience emotional growth since elements such as increasing self-understanding, closeness among students, and positive self-image are fostered by such a humanistic approach (Moskowitz, 1978). The teacher must be able to set up conditions whereby the learner can use what they already know to learn more. Language learning is, hence, a cumulative activity (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1990).

In giving their philosophy of second-language learning, the writers of

Aventures state that the program is "based on a philosophy of communicative language teaching" (Clarke, Leder, Dickinson, 1990, p. viii). The summary of the major components of this philosophy reiterates many of the principles included in the communicative approach:

(a) learner involvement

(b) language is learned better by activities as opposed to drills

(c) use of groups and cooperative learning

(d) students draw on prior knowledge

(e) language learning is sequential

(f) the teacher plays the role of "observer, organizer, facilitator, and guide" (p. viii).

This set of curriculum materials presents numerous opportunities to develop the skills of listening and speaking. These two skills are supposed to occupy 80% of instructional time in the elementary program according to the curriculum guide. After completing the current Elementary Core French Program, students should be able to communicate in French on many topics of interest to them.

2.4 Implementation of the Communicative Approach

The emphasis on language use over language usage which was evident in previous traditional approaches indicates that the best way to learn a language is

to use it (Widdowson, 1984). This approach is learner centered, highly motivates students as they meet with much success in a very supportive atmosphere and involves active participation promoting the nature of the elementary student (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1990). Theory has been translated into practice in the classroom.

This transition sounds very simple. Those responsible for curriculum design and implementation were convinced that *Aventures* was the way to go towards the goal of encouraging communication in the province's elementary classrooms.

In a report prepared for the Department of Education in 1986, it was noted that one of the greatest difficulties with the core French program in this province is in finding qualified staff, especially at the elementary level, "... it is the teachers who are already in the system, however inadequately prepared, who must teach the programs" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1986, p. 18). Many recommendations arose from the committee responsible for this submission to government regarding such things as minimum requirements for French teachers, modification of post-secondary courses, and degree regulations at Memorial University of Newfoundland and inservicing provided by both the Newfoundland Teacher's Association and school boards. Despite these suggestions from nine

years ago, there are still no minimum qualifications for the hiring of French teachers, nor required courses in French for Bachelor of Education candidates. There has been more inservicing throughout the province in the form of institutes and/or mini-immersion sessions, either in a French milieu such as Quebec or St. Pierre, or in a center in Newfoundland, conducted with the assistance of francophones or bilingual persons. One may question, however, since the majority of sessions do not last more than several weeks, how effective they are in training fluent French teachers.

The emphasis on the use of French versus the mother tongue is essential if students are supposed to be exposed to a communicative approach. Calvé (1993) cites a study done by Wong-Fillmore in 1985 where it was concluded that immigrant children who were taught the second language in that language were communicatively superior to children taught in classes where the teacher would translate into the mother tongue. If translation is used in the classroom, the learner will not see French as the real language of communication (Calvé, 1993) and will believe that important items cannot be explained using the second language (Morain, 1993). The learner will then feel no need to study the second language. The North York Study by Calman (1988, cited in Lapkin et al., 1993) found that English was used too much in over two-thirds of core French classrooms and the need for upgrading was also noted by observers. Calvé (1993)

even goes so far as to say that using English too often is the principal barrier in the effectiveness of core French programs. By using English in the classroom, the teacher is seen as sacrificing valuable opportunities for well-motivated second-language use (Brumfit, 1984). Classes must be conducted in French with the focus on communication within the second-language program. If this is not done, it is the students who suffer since a situation which proposes eventual second-language proficiency but uses the first language will have lasting effects (LeBlanc, 1990).

Carroll, as cited by the Canadian Teachers Federation (1981), says that teacher competence in the foreign language makes a significant difference in student outcomes. "The sine qua non of a good foreign language teacher is the ability to communicate with ease in the foreign language" (Morain, 1993, p 101). Among the proper conditions for learning French is a teacher who is specialized in the target language and in language teaching (LeBlanc, 1985; Poyen and Gibson, 1990; Canale, 1988; LeBlanc, 1990).

> Fluency in French is an essential requirement for communicative language teachers who must make the language come alive for the students, conduct classes entirely in French, and be able to encourage unstructured and spontaneous learning. (Poyen and Gibson, p. 17)

Shapson and Kaufman (1978), cited in Lapkin et al. (1993), disclose three important results of a British Columbia French study which connect teachers' competence in French with student achievement. Greater student use of French

in the classroom (Carroll, 1975, cited in Lapkin et al., 1993) correlates with higher achievement scores in French.

It is interesting to note as well that competence in French alone may not transfer to an ideal communicative classroom. One must also be cognizant of the principles of communicative language teaching and, more importantly, be ready to utilize strategies conducive to the communicative approach. The Burstall Report (1975) stresses the importance of methodological training. Burstall (1975) found that in an extensive study of younger children learning a second language in England, teachers who were fluent in French but had not completed methodology courses appropriate for the grade level they were teaching were less successful than those with less fluency but who had the proper methodological background.

If the role of the teacher is to facilitate communication and provide opportunities for the learner to interact with the teacher and his/her peers, then the teacher must be competent in the language and be able to use his/her knowledge for communicative ends. The National Core French Study (1985-89), undertaken to improve the quality of core French offered in schools throughout Canada, caused a major shift, particularly in elementary core French. Among its many statements directed at ways to build on the core French program, it states, "the French-as-a-second-language teacher must have a thorough knowledge of French so that he can assume his role as language model for his students" (LeBlanc, 1990, p. 92; cited in Netten, 1993).

Section II. Rural Education

2.5 Introduction

My study examines the quality of the Elementary Core French Program in small rural schools. I have presented what is entailed in offering a communicatively oriented program. In the pages to follow, I hope to describe, in some detail, the dimensions of education in small rural schools. In Newfoundland and Labrador, and throughout Canada and the United States, multi-grading is a part of education in a small school. A multi-grade classroom is one in which students in two or more grades are combined for instruction under the supervision of one teacher (Craig, 1987; Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1992). This unique situation in which the teacher is responsible for at least two curricula in most, if not all, subject areas, exists in the majority of small rural schools.

2.6 The Positives of Rural Education

The quality of education in general in small rural schools has often been questioned particularly when results of standardized tests are released without ever investigating the real situation. Many believe that small schools are bad schools and that rural is inferior and not valued (Haas, 1991; McCracken and Miller, 1988). Negative ideas towards rural education are frequently used to argue for consolidation, along with economical inefficiencies that are present in small

schools (Dunne, 1977). The advent of consolidation in this province shows that stakeholders share much of the same negativity as those in other parts of Canada and the United States.

There is such a pessimistic view of small schools, but the problem with this is (a) there are many strengths in rural education, and (b) the reasons behind poor achievement in particular subject areas have rarely been investigated.

Throughout the numerous writings on small schools, there prevails many positives for the student due to the "smallness." Among those listed in the literature are:

- less ability grouping
- more recognition of students as individuals
- less discipline problems
- more positive attitude towards school
- high self-esteem
- closer relationships between parents, community, and the school
- more student participation

(Beckner and O'Neal, 1980; Grimm, 1980; Freeman, 1984; Marshall, 1985; Miller, 1990).

In an age when the students' needs have become the all important consideration, and when book after book has been written suggesting ways to

organize one's classroom as student centered, the focus on the child present in small schools is the most substantial advantage.

Characteristics of a desirable learning atmosphere are apparent in small schools. Those common across the literature have been listed above but there are several other conceptions of small schools worthy of discussion here.

The familiarity of the teachers with their students, due to the small number and the fact that teachers usually have these children for two years or more, promotes a sense of security and belonging (Hutto, 1990; Galbraith, 1992). The care and concern in small schools, as opposed to the preoccupation with numbers in larger schools, is a definite plus and is instrumental in the social development of the child. The closeness and strong relationships extend beyond the classroom as the principal-teacher, teacher-teacher, and teacher-community interactions are more personal and relaxed. In a study done by Baksh and Singh (1979) to investigate the involvement of teachers in the communities in which they teach, it was concluded that teachers in small rural communities are expected to participate and become part of the community. This was not true of their counterparts in larger centers. Better relationships between the school and the community was also a finding of the Small Schools Study Project (Riggs et al., 1987).

Individualized instruction and peer tutoring goals of all educational institutions, are commonplace in small schools. Teachers in small schools

frequently have students of not only different abilities but different ages as well, so working at one's own pace and cooperation and assistance among students (Edmonds, Date Unknown) is the logical path to follow.

2.7 Perceived Negatives of Small Schools

None of the literature proposes that everything about rural education is positive. Lack of resources, limited programs, and lower academic achievement are the perceived inadequacies of small schools. When school board officials seek to consolidate rather than conserve small schools, these three negatives carry much weight in convincing parents and the whole community that a certain school must be closed. Furthermore, the threat of multi-grading or double-grades, when painted as a terrible consequence, frightens people into accepting the "inevitable" closure of a small school.

Three general areas of weakness have been identified as student achievement, curriculum, and staffing (Moreau, 1987).

2.8 Student Achievement

In a study conducted by Pratt (cited in Moreau, 1987) of multi-age classrooms in small rural school systems, it was found that there was no consistent effect on academic achievement in reading and mathematics. Rehwoldt (1957) earlier found that students in multi-grade classrooms actually exceeded those

students in single-grade classrooms in the same subjects (arithmetic and language). In Miller's 1990 review of quantitative research on multi-grading, it was concluded that students in multi-grade classrooms did not differ significantly from those in single-grade classrooms with respect to achievement (Gajadharsingh and Melvin, 1987) but held a much more positive attitude toward schools. Miller (1990) cites Pratt and Tracy (1986) who indicate that academic progress is not affected by how students are grouped (single-grade versus multi-grade). Miller (1990) also admits that there are few empirical studies focusing on multi-grade instruction. A number of studies have shown that school size makes very little difference, especially if variables such as father's occupation, socioeconomic status, and family attitudes are taken into consideration (Beckner and O'Neal, 1980). Size of a school is not the determining factor in quality education (Brimm, 1980; Beckner and O'Neal, 1980). Coleman (cited in Hutto, 1990) found that the variable with the greatest relationship to student achievement was composition of the student population. Green and Stevens (1988, cited in Horn, 1990) concluded that many factors must be taken into account when evaluating a school's effectiveness, and small size alone does not lower academic achievement. The results of their study in Kansas revealed that students in small rural schools performed above the state average on all areas of the Kansas Competency Test and gave no evidence that small schools are doing an inferior job. Differences in achievement on the Canadian Test of

Basic Skills are apparent (Brown and Martin, 1989), but only 20% of comparisons favoured single-grade classes while 80% were equal to or favoured multi-grade classes.

Generally, then, achievement does not decrease with a decrease in student population as many would believe. If the research does not support this understanding, why does it exist? Barker and Gump (cited in Marshall, 1985) insist that larger schools were more impressive on the outside but with closer examination, the smaller school provided a better quality of education. Big is not necessarily better (Dunne, 1977). There exists an anti-rural bias which assumes that rural means backward which is equated with inferior (Haas, 1991). The relationship between school/class size and pupil performance has not been proven and has been questioned in much of the literature (Beckner and O'Neal, 1980; Gajadharsingh and Melvin, 1987; Horn 1990; Miller, 1991).

2.9 Staffing

The areas of curriculum offered in small schools and obtaining qualified staff are interdependent. It is impossible to offer a broad range of course offerings if the personnel to teach them is unavailable. One may believe that at the elementary level this would not pose a problem. However, specialized subjects such as music and French require teachers trained in these areas.

First of all, there is tremendous difficulty in attracting specialist teachers to small rural schools (Beckner and O'Neal, 1980; Moreau, 1987, Brimm and Hanson, 1980). This results in teachers in small schools being responsible for all subject areas (including specialist areas such as French, science, and music) often in a multi-grade classroom (Galbraith, 1992). "A wide range of professional specialization cannot be achieved, and as a result, teachers are often assigned to teach in subject areas in which preparation is inadequate" (Brimm, 1980, p. 24). If a specialist is acquired for a small school, it is usually just a stepping stone towards employment in a larger center (Dunne, 1977; UNESCO, 1980). In this province, perhaps the same is true. However, with so many government cutbacks and teacher layoffs, new teachers often have to begin in small rural areas (Murphy and Cross, 1990). Hutto (1990) disagrees with the view that teachers are forced into small communities. He feels that teachers normally choose rural areas instead of larger urban or inter-city schools.

The recruiting of teachers <u>should</u> be no less important in rural areas and a plan for attracting qualified staff <u>should</u> be in place (Wollman, 1991). Wollman connects student achievement with teacher qualifications, and having found from a study done in Nebraska that a good program for teacher recruitement is not provided for rural areas, insists that the goal of proper student learning outcomes must be all important. This can only be achieved by hiring effective teachers.

Undoubtedly, every small school would appreciate a specialist to teach French and music. However, the problem is more complex than acquiring specialists. Teaching in a small school with multi-grades requires preservice preparation (Gibson, 1994; Craig and McLellan, 1987) to function effectively and provide quality education. There are few university programs which present the rural context. Hence, teachers take positions in rural areas with inadequate preparation. Most post-secondary courses are directed towards single grade classrooms without even the mention of multi-grading (Haas, 1991; Miller, 1991). Much reference has been made in recommending that universities establish teacher preparation programs to include more emphasis on instructional strategies for multi-grade/multi-age groupings (Gibson, 1994; Riggs et al., 1987; McCracken and Miller, 1988; Mulcahy, 1993; Miller, 1990; Baksh and Singh, 1979; Pennell et al., 1987). Murphy and Cross (1990) describe a program which is in place at the University of Victoria in British Columbia which requires students to spend a good part of their third and fourth years in rural field experiences. These post-secondary students will also have taught in at least two rural schools.

There are not only concerns over the preparedness of teachers for work in small rural communities but also their professional development and support after they become a multi-grade teacher. The fact that small schools are usually separated from each other, sometimes by great distances, leaves teachers isolated

in their work (Brimm, 1980). There may be no other teacher at the same level to share ideas with, to ask for help or suggestions, or simply to offer encouragement if need be. Multi-grade teachers learn by experience in trying various strategies until they reach success (Brown and Martin, 1989).

Professional isolation worsens when one takes into account that this may cause difficulty for teachers to keep up with new instructional techniques, subject matter and resources available (Gibson, 1994). There is a lack of inservice opportunities, not merely because workshops are not offered but because of the distance to travel or a lack of financial support to attend (Galbraith, 1992). A study by Baksh in 1980 delved into the whole concept of isolation. He concluded that teachers in small Newfoundland communities feel isolated from not only their colleagues but, in the bigger picture, from educational authorities in the province. They felt neglected which supports the statement made teachers in Mulcahy's (1993) study of multi-grading "Newfoundland ends at the overpass" (p. 73).

It has been said that teaching in a small rural school demands a special type of individual. One must be able to organize, modify, and promote cooperation as well as independence (Miller, 1991;). These qualities may be apparent, but once one takes into consideration the lack of preparation time allotted to multi-grade teachers (Brown and Martin, 1989), the job becomes more demanding. As our province operates on a graded system, teachers in small schools could be

responsible for all the subjects in two grades or more, including lesson preparation, correction of the same. In a single-grade classroom, one expects various ability levels. When one enters a multi-grade environment, the diversity increases. It stands to reason, the wider the range of student abilities, the more planning required to meet individual needs (Miller, 1991). All of this to do plus adapting the existing curriculum which will be explored in the next section of this chapter.

Edmonds (Date Unknown) uses the term "versatile" to describe teachers in small schools. The choice of this word indicates the esteem held by Edmonds for teachers in small schools. Dedication of teachers in small schools is manifested in the level of achievement in this province (Mulcahy, 1993). Small rural schools require "unique competencies in the teachers" (Jones, 1987; cited in Mulcahy, 1993).

2.10 Curriculum

Despite the enthusiasm and perseverance of a multi-grade teacher, the one major hurdle would have to be teaching the prescribed curriculum. On the surface, one can see great problems in completing two or more years of work in one school year. Policies are made and implemented that rural schools may not be able to deliver (Haas, 1991). This province does not offer a different

curriculum for multi-grade classes, but the Department of Education states as one of its aims the right to receive quality education for all children in this province. Rural schools must follow much the same syllabus as town schools (Griffiths, 1968). There is a strong urban bias in everything related to education (Anderson, 1994). The Royal Commission which investigated the education system in Newfoundland and Labrador included this comment regarding curriculum and small schools: "Although some small schools have always had multi-grade classrooms, curriculum documents and personnel have not recognized this fact and assume a structure with discrete subject-area grade boundaries" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1992, p. 296). Riggs' (1987) study of small schools called for modifications to the provincial curriculum but added that this be the responsibility of the Department of Education and school boards. Thirty percent of the teachers who completed Mulcahy's (1993) questionnaire said that they were provided with guidance or support for dealing with multi-grade classes. In short, without guidelines and specially written materials, multi-grade teachers are on their own in developing effective instructional strategies. Gajadharsingh (1991) summarizes the neglect throughout Canada of multi-grading with this statement:

> Although the increasing number of such classrooms is making the multi-grade class something of a norm in many school districts, it appears that neither curriculum experts nor school personnel have adequately addressed the many complex problems inherent in teaching such classes. (p. 7)

Without a doubt, modifications to curriculum are inevitable (Pennell et al., 1987), regardless of who is responsible or what provincial curriculum guides set as the standard. Again, the multi-grade situation is very different from teaching in a single grade. While it may be easier to employ "innovative" practices such as multi-age grouping, peer tutoring, or team teaching (Brimm, 1980), there is, and should be, concern when provincial achievement tests are used (Craig and McLellan, 1987). The implications become more serious when the results are manipulated to show the small rural school in a negative light. If the tests are based on set objectives, gaps in student learning may emerge. In a project in multi-grading at St. Agnes School in Pouch Cove, the curriculum has been adapted with different expectations for children at different levels. However, the evaluation tools used are developed in relationship to the objectives decided upon in the school, the curriculum content chosen by the teacher(s) involved and the actual instructional strategies used (Canning and Strong, 1994). This particular project has taken into account the fact that if objectives in a multi-grade classroom are different from the provincial objectives, then the assessment has to be adjusted accordingly. All criterion-referenced testing that has been done in the last seven or eight years in science and mathematics was administered province wide. Students in small school took the exact same test as students in larger centers. There was no adjustment made.

2.11 Teaching French in a Multi-Grade Classroom

As previously stated, French is a specialized area. Riggs et al. (1987) suggested using itinerant teachers to offer French in small rural schools, enabling a number of small schools to benefit from the expertise of a qualified French teacher. However, since most small schools are fairly long distances apart, this is easier said than done. Also, to provide a quality French program, students should receive French each day from thirty to forty minutes (10% of instructional time) (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1995). Itinerant teachers usually spend two or three days in one school and the same in the other. If there are more than two schools, the situation is further complicated. The French instruction received, in this case, would lack continuity.

Marshall (1985) indicates that some curriculum areas cannot be offered in a multi-grade setting. Here, he refers to the province of Manitoba where basic French (Grade 4) must be taught in the single grade. In the only article written about teaching French in the multi-grade setting, Daniel (1988) understands teaching in a multi-grade classroom as teaching two separate programs and refers to the senseless splitting of the class time in half. He makes a valid point in saying that if you are working with one group and assign the other group seatwork, you are taking away the emphasis on listening and speaking set down in the province's curriculum guides. The thematic approach could be used but he

says that we are still waiting for one to be developed. Grouping could be another option while the teacher is working with one grade, but Daniel questions the language ability of students to function without the teacher in the second language. Curriculum developers should be concerned about teaching French programs in a double grade. It is interesting to note in this article that Daniel's description of the difficulties in multi-grade classes does not include the lack of qualifications of teachers of French. The reason for the absence of this important issue that Daniel presumes "French teachers," a context which is the exception rather than the rule in this province.

The Royal Commission of Inquiry also saw the need to give more importance to core French, "... particularly in rural areas where often French is not offered" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1992, p. 23). This document was published three years ago, and with a proposed criterion-referenced French test to be administered province-wide in the Spring 1996 to all Grade 6 students, there have been no modified programs for rural schools other than what the teacher himself/herself has done.

2.12 Conclusion

Offering the Elementary Core French Program, *Aventures*, in this province with the principles of daily use of French, interaction among students and between

students and teachers and the ultimate focus on listening and speaking skills place new demands on teachers in small rural schools. These demands are introduced into a context which already operates very differently from schools in urban centers. Given the notions of small rural schools and multi-grading present in the literature, it is fair to say that an investigation into the Elementary Core French Program in this province was warranted. We do have many small rural schools which are trying to deliver a specialist program in the face of major obstacles.

Are elementary students in small rural schools at a disadvantage with respect to the quality of the French program they are receiving? The study which I have completed will provide some interesting information regarding core French programs for elementary students in small rural schools.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

As has been stated previously, the goal of this research was to examine the core French program at the elementary level in small rural schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. To acquire data on this topic, descriptive research was used. Teachers of French in small rural schools in the province can best provide information on the current status of French in their schools. Therefore, self-report research using a survey was chosen as the means to gather data.

Firstly, having completed an analysis of the available literature, one can immediately see that the topic of core French in small rural schools is not addressed in the research literature. There was only one article written specifically about teaching French in the multi-graded class. A few other articles made some reference but that was all. This is obviously an area of research and development that warrants attention by departments of education and faculties of education throughout the country. Secondly, given the principles outlined in the literature on both communicative language teaching and rural education, a questionnaire was designed to explore various concerns. Demographic information, strategies used (involving both French instruction and multi-grade instruction), support offered, as well as teachers' attitudes and opinions were the main components of the survey.

The questionnaire, a copy of which is included in Appendix A, consisted of forty-six (46) items, the majority of which were structured. Respondents were required to supply information by either checking an appropriate statement or category. Specific data such as age, number of post-secondary courses in French, population of school, and other concrete items were not categorized in the survey.

There were also a number of unstructured items which were mainly the result of branching. That is to say, if a respondent answered an item with yes, for example, he/she would be asked to elaborate further through two or three other questions. Besides branching, there were also several opportunities for respondents to offer additional comments on particular concerns and concepts. By including open-ended questions, I was able to receive valuable feedback on teachers' feelings regarding core French instruction in small rural schools and multi-grading.

The questions on the questionnaire were chosen after a reading of the available literature on the two components in my study: (a) communicative language teaching, and (b) small rural schools. Many of the concerns raised in the literature regarding the principles of the communicative approach, teacher preparedness in small schools, resources available in small schools, multi-grading and achievement curriculum objectives, provided the basis for the questions selected for use in the questionnaire.

Since I sought to investigate core French in small rural elementary classrooms, the questions asked served to give an overall picture of the core French program in small schools.

3.2 Population and Sample

My survey was a census survey in that I attempted to gather information from each and every member of the population. I first obtained a list of all small schools in Newfoundland and Labrador which offered any or all of Grades 4, 5, and 6. The list provided classified small schools by the Department of Education's definition and named 168 schools as being small. Since I was interested not only in core French in small schools but also in how French is taught in multi-graded situations, I decided to reduce this number by choosing to study schools with student populations of 100 or less. Using the same list, the number of schools left to consider was 99. However, further investigation led me to discover that some of the schools with the population I sought did not qualify for my study since they were joint service schools (putting the population above 100 students) or were improperly represented on the initial list as their populations were greater than 100. My final number of schools to be surveyed was 88.

For my research, then, my target population was all elementary core French teachers in small rural schools with student populations of 100 or less. The

accessible population was all elementary core French teachers in small rural schools in Newfoundland and Labrador with student populations of 100 or less. My sample was the entire available population (88 schools). Realistically, in this case, the entire accessible population could be surveyed and would better allow for generalizability of the results.

In my study, my sample size decreased further due to the fact that 5 schools advised me that French was not offered in their school. It is also possible that there were other schools among the nonrespondents who also did not offer French. My actual sample size was 83.

3.3 Procedure

Before surveying my population, I had to obtain permission. Since my population consisted of schools, the permission had to be granted by the various school boards. A copy of the letter sent to the superintendents is included in Appendix A. Of the 27 school boards in Newfoundland and Labrador, only 23 had schools fitting my criteria. Permission was granted from all 23 boards by mail, by fax, or by phone.

To ensure that all teachers involved in this study would be reached, I sent two questionnaires to each school. The questionnaires were accompanied by a cover letter (see Appendix A) which informed the individual teachers of the

purpose of my research and seeking their consent to participate. The two surveys were sent to the principals of the schools with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to expedite return. I enclosed a letter to the principal of each school asking him/her to see that any teacher in the school who taught French in any of Grades 4, 5, or 6 received a copy of my questionnaire. (A copy of the letter to principals can be found in Appendix A.)

After two weeks of the initial mailing, I made some follow-up calls to schools which had not returned completed surveys. I chose to telephone rather than to send a second letter as my research carried into June and there would not be ample time to mail and receive replies prior to the end of the school year.

By the end of June, I had received 40 completed questionnaires, or 48% of eligible respondents.

3.4 Limitations of the Study

The low return rate (48%) may be perceived as a limitation. However, when one takes into account the fact that I surveyed the entire population and not a sample, there can be more confidence in the results received. Since this survey was sent towards the end of May, it is understandable that some teachers perhaps did not have time to complete it. It was important to carry out my research in the 1994-95 school year for two reasons:

1. to get feedback prior to the administration of the department's French test, and
2. to reach the schools listed as having populations of 100 or less before there were changes for the new school year due to consolidation, school closures, or other factors. Regardless of how many small schools are closed, there will always be a number of small schools in this province for geographical reasons. I wanted to get an idea of the situation in small schools with regard to elementary core French from the largest number of schools possible.

A second limitation was the lack of data to compare the situation in small schools to schools in larger areas. There were no "small" urban schools by my definition of 100 students or less. I did not choose to survey larger schools since I did not plan to compare large schools with small schools. I was interested only with the provision of elementary core French programs in small rural schools. Also, the magnitude of such a study was beyond my means.

My research was concerned only with those schools in small rural areas with student populations of 100 or less. Many believe that students in small schools are disadvantaged. It would be profitable to gather the same information on teachers of elementary core French in larger schools. By doing so, it could be determined if these teachers are qualified to teach elementary core French, use communicative teaching strategies, and agree with the specifications of the proposed criterion-referenced French test in Grade 6.

3.5 Generalizability of Results

Since almost half of the population responded in this study, the conclusions reached could be transferred to fit any French teacher in any small rural school. The concerns and questions investigated in this survey, which came from a review of the literature written throughout Canada and the United States, are representative of areas besides Newfoundland and Labrador.

3.6 Conclusion

In the next chapter, I will present my findings by examining the results for each question contained in my survey. The same headings used in the questionnaire: personal information, school setting, support for the program, inservicing, professional development, time allocations, resources, communicative language teaching, and attitudes towards standardized testing are used in discussion of the data. Percentages and means were the two main statistics presented. There were also some relationships established between variables with chi-squares (based on the p-value).

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In analyzing the information provided by the completed questionnaires, I used mainly descriptive statistics (frequency distributions and one measure of central tendency - the mean). To discover if there were any significant relationships between certain variables, I used the Pearson-r correlation coefficient by generating a number of chi-squares.

Prior to any analysis, I assigned value labels to those variables which required it. These labels define the values shown in specific questions and are provided with the data on the applicable items.

I will be discussing the data under the same headings as were used in my questionnaire with the final section of this chapter focusing on the inferences provided by the use of chi-squares. In addition, the question number of the survey is indicated in parentheses for reference.

4.2 Personal Information

The average age of respondents (Question 3) was 34 years with 50% of teachers less than 32 years. Half the teachers in my survey are inexperienced since the data showed 50% of teachers had 10 years or less teaching experience.

If one looks at the preparedness to teach French (number of post-secondary courses in both French and methodology courses completed), one could conclude that teachers in small rural schools are not ready to teach French. Fifty percent of teachers had completed five or less post-secondary French courses (Question 3). Ten percent of this 50% had not a single French course completed. It is difficult to expect teachers to offer a communicatively based French program without an adequate background. The average number of courses completed is seven which is not even a minor or a concentration in French according to Memorial University's definition. When asked about their proficiency level in French (Question 14), the average level was 6 on a scale of 1 to 10. Thirty-four percent rated themselves as having a level of 5 or less with 60% indicating the level at 6 or less. When one considered the extensive use of French suggested by proponents of the communicative approach, the developers of the *Aventures* program and the Department of Education of Newfoundland and Labrador in its curriculum guide for elementary core French, there is cause for concern. How can a teacher who does not perceive him/herself as being proficient in the language reach the objective of 80% listening and speaking in the classroom?

Stemming from this point, I found that 72% of teachers conducted 50% or less of their class in the second language (Question 31). How can these

classrooms be communicative settings if, half of the time, English is being used? As emerged in the literature, unless the teacher uses French, students will perceive that the second language serves no important function or purpose.

Seventy-four percent of teachers were teaching French 10 years or less with the mean being 7 years (Question 8). The data on completion of post-secondary French methodology courses (Question 5) is startling with 61% having no courses completed, 5% with one course, and 22% with 2 courses. In other words, 88% had completed 2 or less methodology courses. Hence, the majority of teachers do not have a strong academic background of how to deliver the Elementary Core French Program in the province since they have not completed methodology courses. If one adds this to the fact that 55% received their degree in 1987 or earlier (Question 6), there is cause for concern. The communicative approach was not implemented province-wide until 1988, so over half of these teachers would not have been exposed to the fundamentals of the communicative approach. This means teachers have had to rely on inservices provided by the department and individual school boards. (The degree to which this has occurred is discussed in Section 4.5, p. 50).

In the literature, there is much evidence of the demands placed on teachers in a multi-grade setting. Trying to provide effective education in more generalist areas such as mathematics and language arts to two different grade levels presents

many obstacles. However, trying to deliver a foreign language in a multi-grade setting further complicates the situation. In small schools, teachers are responsible for virtually all subjects in at least two grade levels. Fifty-eight percent of teachers surveyed are teaching French in a multi-grade setting, some not only in two grades, but, in some cases, three or more grades (Question 9). Forty-two percent of teachers are teaching 7 or 8 different subjects (Question 10). The grade levels of these other subjects range all the way from kindergarten to Level 3 (Question 4). Also, the data showed that 44% of the extra subjects are taught in a multi-grade setting (Question 12).

Respondents provided information which agrees with the literature written on the amount of work entailed in teaching in a small school (two or more grades, many subjects, varied grade levels), the lack of experienced teachers in small schools (50% under 32 years), and the unpreparedness of teachers in small schools to teach French. (50% with five or less post-secondary French courses and 61% with no methodology courses completed).

4.3 School Setting

Fifty percent of schools who responded were K-6 schools while 18% were K-12 schools (Question 15). The other 32% were made up of other combinations. The average population of schools was 62 students (Question 16). This number

would have been lower but one school had a population of 300 since it was joint service with the elementary section fitting the definition of 100 or less. A second school indicated a population of 140 but mentioned that 46 of these students moved into the school during the year due to a school closure. By including these two extremes, the average is affected. Fifty-nine percent of schools still come out as having student populations of 65 or less.

The communities in which these schools are found are small communities with the mean being 454 (Question 17). Fifty-two percent of communities had a population of 350 or less (Question 18). As is the case in many small schools, there is sometimes more than one community served. Fifty-three percent of schools had a total population of 1,000 people in the community they served. The extreme of 6500 perhaps accounts for having a mean of 1327. From this, one can see that small schools are found in small communities.

The fact that 44% of schools said that French began in the primary grades was interesting (Question 19). The required starting point for core French is Grade 4 in this province. This is indeed a positive since it gives students more exposure to the language and can assist in motivation. When I further analyzed this point, I found that students generally begin French in Grade 3 because of their class grouping. That is, the class was either a Grade 3 and 4 or a Grade 3, 4, and 5 combination. In the absence of hard data from larger schools and since 44% of

respondents indicated that students began French in Grade 3 because of multi-grade groupings, one could conclude that students in small multi-grade schools tend to begin French earlier.

4.4 Support for the French Program

In the literature, the positives of community and parental support are evident. With teachers perceiving 64% of parents to put French on the lower end of the scale in terms of importance and only 31% being positive about French instruction, there was not much support, at least in terms of the French program (Question 20). When asked about their feeling of the community's attitude, teachers also did not perceive much support in the community with 62% answering "do not care" (Question 21). The communities did not appear to have any opinion towards francophones - 53% with no opinion. The reason for this indifference towards the French program is unclear.

There was much support, however, perceived by teachers from the principal (Question 23). Eighty-nine percent of principals show support for the French program. Eighty-seven percent of board personnel, other than the French coordinator, support the French program (Question 24). The French coordinator was not seen in such a positive light (Question 25). First of all, 8% of teachers said that there was no French coordinator in their district. Only 35% said that the

French coordinator offered support while 38% had negative attitudes towards the French coordinator - 24% indicated that the coordinator did not contact them and 14% did not offer support. It is very good to know that the principals of schools are supportive since it is the principal who sets the standards for the school. It is also him/her who can give the French program proper attention and priority. It is very disheartening, however, to know that teachers do not see the person who is most able to offer his/her expertise in French and French instruction - the coordinator as being supportive. Once again, I can refer to the uniqueness of teaching in a small school/multi-graded setting and the necessity of offering support for teachers in small rural schools. The idea of professional isolation presented in the literature is apparent here since usually there is only one teacher in a small school teaching French without anyone to discuss curriculum or instructional strategies.

4.5 Inservicing of *Aventures*

With regard to the amount and benefit of inservicing, 51% of respondents received inservicing before the implementation of the *Aventures* program while 49% did not receive inservicing prior to implementation (Question 26). One-half of all respondents were not made aware of the revised methodology for elementary core French nor did they know what was entailed in the program. Given the

unpreparedness of teachers, it is even more important that teachers at least be made aware of the type of program which they will be teaching. The claim of Baksh's (1980) study that teachers in small rural schools feel neglected is certainly supported by these findings.

Of the 51% of teachers who did not receive inservicing, 95% felt that it was beneficial but only 67% felt the length of such inservicing was sufficient (Question 27). 75% of the inservicing consisted of only one day which does not allow for an introduction to a new program in a small language as well as the examination of the principles of a new approach. Fifty-nine percent of those who attended inservices said that an overview of the program was given and a presentation of a curriculum materials was given. When asked how inservicing could be improved, 60% of teachers suggested more time (Question 28). So often the curriculum designers attempt to implement a program without taking adequate time to prepare teachers for their new role.

4.6 Professional Development

In this province, there has been an attempt at professional development and upgrading for teachers of French. The Department of Education, in conjunction with school boards, provides opportunities for teachers to attend what is termed "mini-immersions." These courses place teachers in a French milieu either in a

real context such as Quebec, St. Pierre, or the French speaking region of New Brunswick or in an artificial setting in some areas in Newfoundland and Labrador. In this "French setting," teachers are encouraged to speak French and participate in activities which will give them practice in French and should strengthen their oral proficiency to transfer to the classroom. Sixty-nine percent of teachers indicated that they had taken part in mini-immersions with a strong 95% of these saying that the courses were helpful in the classroom (Question 29).

The locations chosen varied:

New Brunswick	29%
Newfoundland	33%
St. Pierre	18%
Quebec	28%

It is interesting to notice the percentage of courses offered in Newfoundland where the chance for interaction with native speakers is limited. Ninety-eight percent of respondents did not suggest any ways to improve such sessions.

4.7 Time Allocations

The Program of Studies developed by the Department of Education indicates that 10% of instructional time be devoted to French which translates into 180 minutes in a six-day cycle. Seventy-two percent of schools in this research had less than the prescribed time allotment with the average being 146 minutes (Question 30). However, criterion-referenced tests are based on the assumption

that schools are adhering to the suggestions of the Program of Studies. The department does make reference to the fact that these time allotments may vary in a multi-grade setting, not for French alone, but in all subject areas.

In the *Aventures* program, there are six "tours" or six units. Eighty-five percent of teachers reported that they completed five "tours" or less. Forty-one percent only finished four "tours" or less. In other words, the program is not being completed (Question 32). Remember that most of these schools fall below the set number of minutes for elementary core French. Twenty-six percent said they did not finish all six "tours" because there is too much material in the program. Eighteen percent said there was not enough time because they are in a multi-grade setting. If, in each of three years (Grades 4, 5, and 6) the program is not finished, how prepared will students be at the end of the third year to take a test based on the provincial guidelines for French at the elementary level?

4.8 Resources

There are certain materials which are required to deliver the elementary French program. From the results presented in Table 4.1, all schools had seven out of the eight items but 15% of schools did not have the provincial curriculum guide (Question 33). This shows that, regardless of smallness, rural schools do have the basic resources to provide the French program to their students.

There are some items which can be referred to as supplementary. Videos, other cassettes, and records (although records are virtually obsolete in schools today), filmstrips, dictionaries, and so on, could be found either in the classroom, in the school and/or in the district (perhaps in another school or at the school board office). Wherever they are located, at least, the teacher would have access to them to reinforce themes found throughout the program instead of relying solely on the *Aventures* materials. The data received in this area is presented in Table 4.2 (Question 34).

For the most part, small rural schools do not have access to many other resources, not even at the district office. Cassettes (74%) and dictionaries (67%) are the most common extra materials which teachers have in their classrooms. There are many videos available to assist teachers at the elementary level. For example, *Sol,* produced by TV Ontario, and *Téléfrancais*, also produced by TV Ontario are geared towards younger children and revisit most themes covered in *Aventures.*

Table 4.1
Availability of Required Program Materials in Schools

	Resources	Percentage
1.	*Aventures* Student Texts	97
2.	*Aventures* Student Workbooks	97
3.	*Aventures* Teacher's Manual	97
4.	*Aventures* Flashcards	97
5.	*Aventures* Cassettes	97
6.	Cassette Recorder	97
7.	Curriculum Guide (Learning French as a Second Language)	85

Notes: Items 1-5 are purchased directly from the publisher (Copp Clark-Pittman) by school boards.

97% is recorded since there was one missing observation. One questionnaire did not have this section completed. However, 100% of those who completed this section did indicate that they had these items.

Table 4.2
Supplementary Resources in School

Resource	Percentage who have resource in their classroom	Percentage who have resource in their school	Percentage who have resource in their district
Records	23	26	23
Cassettes	74	51	39
Filmstrips	15	31	33
Videos	21	41	46
Dictionaries and other Reference Books	67	54	28
Newspapers	10	23	23
Francophone Speakers/Visitors	0	3	29

Reference books are quite useful for students in Grades 4-6. There are numerous vocabulary-picture books which can guide students and foster acquisition to new words. All classrooms should be equipped with these books.

A newspaper entitled *Le Journal des Jeunes* is available to schools. Although elementary students would not be able to comprehend all the articles, the paper does include pictures of current events with headlines and stories. Since there are words which could be understood due to their closeness to the English, it is a resource worth having. By viewing the English cognates, even early French

students can benefit from *Le Journal des Jeunes*. It is unfortunate that only 10% of schools have this or other newspapers to use in their classrooms.

The final resource listed, French speaking people, was not common. This supports the findings of the literature that small communities are lacking since in larger centers such as St. John's or in areas near French speaking regions, there can be contact with native speakers.

The publishers of the *Aventures* program have released a document designed for teachers of French in multi-graded classrooms. It is entitled *Strategies pour Les Années Multiples*. Ten percent of respondents had this document and none of these commented on its usefulness (Question 35). It is important to note, however, that it is only available in French. Given the French background of teachers in this survey, it may be difficult to make use of this document.

4.9 Communicative Language Teaching

The literature refers to several strategies to be used in the instructional setting in order to offer a communicative program. The list of strategies presented in Question 36 of my survey evolve from an analysis of the principles of the communicative approach to second-language teaching. They were included to determine to what extent classrooms in small rural schools are following the communicative approach (Question 36). The information presented in Table 4.3

summarizes the percentages of teachers who use the different strategies in their classrooms and how frequently, if at all. The data in this table demonstrates that, overall, teachers in small schools are using the strategies which make up the communicative approach.

Overall, teachers in small rural schools are aware of the components of the communicative approach. They use games, small group work, and cassettes provided with the program. Errors are not corrected all the time which allows children to take risks and make mistakes in a supportive atmosphere. Teachers are aware of the fact that speaking is more important than writing at the elementary level since few teachers have students engaged in a lot of writing. Activities are personalized for students as teachers have indicated that children in their classes are speaking about themselves. In making the context real, teachers motivate their students to use the language. The one discouraging result in this data is the use of French by the teacher to carry out daily routines. Throughout the literature, the point has often been raised that teachers have to use the language if they wish students to use it. Only 27% of teachers always use the language to carry out daily routines.

Since most teachers in small rural schools are faced with teaching French in a multi-grade setting, I asked them about the strategies they used (Question 37). There were nine different types of strategies used in multi-grade French classes listed by the respondents. The percentages of teachers using various strategies are given in Table 4.4.

Table 4.3
Use of Communicative Strategies by Teachers (Question 36)

Strategy	Percentages				Missing Cases
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	
1. Brainstorming	8.3	30.6	55.6	5.6	4
2. Role play	8.6	22.9	62.9	5.7	0
3. Games	20.5	53.8	25.6	0	3
4. Small group work	12.8	43.6	41.0		1
5. Practice of situations in pairs	7.7	25.6	64.1	2.6	1
6. Use French to carry out daily routines	27.0	24.3	45.9	2.7	3
7. Correct errors as they occur in class	5.1	46.2	43.6	5.1	1
8. Correct errors only if they interfere with conveying meaning	21.2	33.3	36.4	9.1	0
9. Personalize themes by having students write about their own interests	0	15.8	65.8	18.4	2
10. Personalize themes by having students speak about their own interests	2.7	32.4	54.1	10.8	3
11. Use cassettes provided with the program	46.2	41.0	10.3	2.6	1

Table 4.4
Strategies Used in Multi-grade Setting (Question 37)

Strategy	Percentage
combine topics	16.7
curriculum rotation	12.5
work with one grade at a time	0
teach thematically	16.7
group work	8.3
teach same to all groups	8.3
games	25
French is not multi-graded	4.2
worksheets	8.3

Missing Cases = 16

Teachers use a variety of strategies to teach in a multi-grade setting as would be the case with other curriculum areas as well (Mulcahy, 1993).

Games are the most frequent strategy used. Elementary students like to be active as is stressed in the Core French Curriculum Guide as well as in other writings on the nature of the elementary student. The program *Aventures* includes games as an integral part of second-language instruction. By playing games students enjoy themselves, use the language and are active participants.

It is obvious from the above results that teachers cope with their multi-grade classes in their own ways; employing whatever works for them. Without much

guidance from post-secondary institutions, the Department of Education or selected curriculum materials as to how best to proceed in a multi-grade class, teachers are availing of different methods of approaching French in a multi-grade class.

4.10 Attitudes Towards Standardized French Testing

The final section of my questionnaire sought to discern the feelings of teachers towards a proposed criterion-referenced test for Grade 6 students. At the time this research was carried out, the field test for this assessment tool had not been administered. The only outline of what was to be in this test was contained in a set of specifications from the Department of Education. The important point to keep in mind is that the test will be based on the objectives contained in the province's curriculum guide and the same test will be given province-wide (to urban as well as rural schools).

Table 4.5 includes the percentages of teachers indicating their attitudes to each statement (Questions 38-46).

There is agreement that it is necessary to assess the competence of Grade 6 students in French. This assessment hopes to serve two purposes:

1. To determine the success of the *Aventures* program.
2. To determine if students across the province are meeting the curriculum objectives set down by the Department of Education.

Table 4.5
Teachers' Attitudes Towards Proposed Standardized Testing (Questions 38-46)

Statement Included in Questionnaire		1 Strongly Agree	2 Slightly Agree	3 Undecided	4 Slightly Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree	Missing Cases
38.	There is a need to assess the overall competence of Grade 6 students.	37.8	40.5	16.2	2.7	2.7	3
39.	I feel my students will be prepared for this test.	13.9	41.7	22.2	13.9	8.3	4
40.	The specifications of the test instrument (80% listening and speaking) parallel my students' classroom experience.	18.9	40.5	21.6	10.8	8.1	3
41.	The results of my students will be a reflection of the grade I would give them.	10.8	27.0	32.4	18.9	10.8	3
42.	I look forward to viewing the results of my students in this test.	50.0	22.2	16.7	5.6	5.6	4
43.	I feel that this test should not be administered to students in small schools.	13.9	16.7	25.0	11.1	33.3	4
44.	I feel that the students' results will negatively reflect my competence as a teacher.	5.4	10.8	21.6	13.5	48.6	3
45.	I have all the resources I need to meet the objective set down in the Provincial Curriculum Guide.	29.7	40.5	18.9	10.8	0	3
46.	I feel that I am less prepared to offer the program than teachers in larger schools	18.9	21.6	13.5	10.8	35.1	3

Numbers given reflect percentages.

I do not disagree that some form of assessment should be carried out but the concern is that the situation in which students find themselves (rural school, multi-graded classroom, teacher without French background and/or French methodology courses) should be considered as it is sure to be reflected in the results.

A little more than half (56%) agree that students will be prepared for such a test. This is more than 20% less than those who agreed with a need for assessment. One has to question why teachers feel that students will not be prepared. The fact that only 59% of teachers felt that the specifications for the test paralleled the students' classroom experience follows from the attitude towards student preparedness. Teachers may not be able to offer a communicative classroom context and therefore view a test based on communicative language teaching as unfair to their students. In preparing a test in any subject, the teacher takes into account not only what has been taught, but how it has been taught. This is reflected in the test. However, in the case of the department's French test for Grade 6, no attempt has been made to find out how French is being taught in small rural schools. Undoubtedly, much discussion will occur after the test has been administered, especially if certain areas and/or certain schools achieve poorly. It would be more logical to investigate the school context prior to the test than after.

Only 38% agreed that the grade received in the provincial test would be close to a grade the teacher would assign. Again, this indicates that teachers are

skeptical towards the contents of this test and think that there will be discrepancies between what occurs in their classrooms and what will be asked of their students on the test.

Half of the teachers strongly agreed that they looked forward to viewing the results. It is debatable why this is the case. Once could assume that many teachers are curious to see how their students did compare to other schools. Nevertheless, one must also be cognizant of the fact that 28% were either undecided or did not look forward to viewing the results. Connected to this point is the idea of teacher competence. Do teachers feel that results in a standardized test, such as the one proposed for elementary core French, will negatively reflect on the teacher? Although 51% did not feel that competence was an issue, 49% had a fear of accountability. If a teacher has not had the opportunity to have acquired the French language and is not prepared to teach French that results of a test based on the assumptions that teachers are "French teachers" should cast a negative light on that teacher. Teachers in small rural schools are dedicated to providing quality education as has been a prevalent theme in the literature. There is no preparation for teaching in small rural schools and multi-graded classrooms much less for teaching French in this special situation.

The final statements for analysis deal with the issue of small schools. Forty-one percent of teachers feel that they are less prepared than teachers in

larger schools for the criterion-referenced test. 14% were undecided. Since 70% of teachers indicated that they have all of the resources they need to offer the French program, lack of resource would not be the reason for the unpreparedness. It is interesting to note that 35% of teachers feel that they are as prepared as teachers in larger schools. This means that either they feel comfortable teaching French and are among those who have some French background or they feel that they are no worse off than larger schools.

Thirty-one percent agreed that this test should not be administered to small schools with 24% being undecided. This result suggests that there is some question as to whether small schools should be given the same test when often modifications to the curriculum objectives are necessary to accommodate teaching in a multi-grade classroom.

4.11 Inferential Statistics

To discover the relationships between several sets of variables, the test of significance called "chi-square" was used. Since the frequencies were categorized along more than one dimension, a two-dimensional chi-square served as most appropriate. The degrees of freedom for each chi-square is given. To determine whether or not there was a relationship, the correlation coefficient - Pearson - was calculated along with the significance value. Any value which was less than .05

will be noted. The actual data is found in Appendix C. The tables included here are summaries of the data only.

The number of post-secondary French courses completed is related to the use of French to carry out daily routines, as shown in Table 4.6. Teachers without a solid grounding in the French language would not be able to use French in the classroom. The literature points to the importance of using French in class. If students are not exposed to French for everyday routines, they will not come to see French as being of real use and may lose some of their motivation for learning the language.

Table 4.6
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Use of French in the Classroom

Use of French to Carry Out Daily Routines	Number of Post-Secondary French Courses	
	1-5	More than 5 Courses
Always		10
Often	4	5
Sometimes	12	5
Never	1	

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .00313$)
Missing observations = 3

The relationships between teachers' perceived proficiency levels and use of French in the classroom is also related, as shown in Table 4.7. If teachers rate their oral ability in French as low, they will not (and cannot) use the language in the classroom. Obviously, if a teacher cannot function comfortably in the French language, he/she is not going to be able to provide a communicative setting. It is interesting to note that several of the strategies associated with communicative language teaching are not related to the number of French post-secondary courses completed (see Table 4.8A), the number of French methodology courses (see Table 4.8B), nor the teacher's fluency level (see Table 4.8C).

Since the significance levels are greater than .05, this conclusion can be drawn.

Table 4.7
Relationship Between Proficiency Level and Use of French in the Classroom

Use of French to Carry out Daily Routines	Proficiency Level	
	1-4	5-8
Always		9
Often		8
Sometimes	6	10
Never	1	

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = 0.01139$)
Missing observations = 6

There were significant relationships found between some supplementary resources and school populations. One may expect that schools with small populations would not have access to many extra resources in their schools. However, when crosstabs was employed to produce chi-squares for extra resources (videos, newspapers, francophone visitors, etc.) only two squares suggests significance levels of less that .05 (see Table 4.9). The only two resources in the schools which are connected to school population are records and videos (see Table 4.10). It may be added that a relationship was evident between school population and videos in the school district (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.8A
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Use of Small Group Work in Classroom

Use of Small Group Work	Number of Post-Secondary French Courses	
	1-5 Courses	More than 5 Courses
Always	3	2
Often	8	9
Sometimes	7	9
Never	1	

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .68593$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.8B
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Use of Small Group Work in Classroom

Use of Small Group Work	Proficiency Level	
	1-4	5-8
Always	1	4
Often	3	13
Sometimes	3	11
Never	1	

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .30417$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.8C
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Use of Small Group Work in Classroom

Use of Small Group Work	Number of Methodology Courses	
	None	More than 1
Always		1
Often	9	3
Sometimes	9	11
Never	4	

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .06784$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.9
Relationship Between Access to French Records and School Population

French Records	School Population			
	1-24 Students	25-49 Students	50-74 Students	75-300 Students
Have French records in school	5	2	1	1
Do not have French records in school	3	8	8	10

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .03168$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.10
Relationship Between Access to French Videos in School and School Population

French Videos	School Populations			
	0-24 Students	25-49 Students	50-74 Students	75-300 Students
Have French videos in school		5	3	8
Do not have French videos in school	8	5	6	3

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .01417$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.11
Relationship Between Access to French Videos in School District and Population of School

French Videos in School District	School Population			
	0-24 Students	25-49 Students	50-74 Students	75-300 Students
Have French videos in school district		8	4	5
Do not have French videos in school district	8	2	5	6

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .00927$)
Missing observations = 3

Teacher attitudes towards the administration of a provincial Grade 6 French test were cross-referenced with three variables: post-secondary courses completed in French, French methodology courses, and teacher fluency. The literature on French language instruction continuously assumes that teachers are prepared to deliver a communicative program. My data suggests that a high percentage of teachers are not equipped to offer a French program in the elementary grades as is set down in the province's curriculum guide. If the province seeks to determine the proficiency of Grade 6 students, it is certainly worth exploring whether or not the preparedness of teachers to teach French has any bearing on their attitudes towards the proposed testing.

The majority of chi-squares generated showed no relationship between the three variables previously described and the attitude of teachers. There were, however, several which will be discussed here.

There is a relationship between the number of French post-secondary courses and the number of teachers who agreed with a need to assess the competence of Grade 6 students.

French methods courses and the number of teachers who saw a need to assess competence are not related as is shown in Table 4.13. The p value is .47249 (greater than .05).

Table 4.12
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Desire to have Grade 6 Students' Competence Assessed

There is a need to assess the competence of Grade 6 students	Number of Post-Secondary French Courses	
	1-5 Courses	More than 5 Courses
Strongly Agree	4	10
Slightly Agree	6	9
Undecided	6	
Slightly Disagree	1	
Strongly Disagree		1

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 4, $p < .05$ ($p = .02656$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.13
Relationship Between Number of French Methodology Courses and Desire to have Grade 6 Students' Competence Assessed

There is a need to assess the competence of Grade 6 students	Number of French Methodology Courses	
	None	More than 1
Strongly Agree	7	7
Slightly Agree	8	7
Undecided	5	1
Slightly Disagree	1	
Strongly Disagree	1	

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .47249$)
Missing observations = 3

The number of post-secondary French (see Table 4.14) and French methodology courses (see Table 4.15), fluency levels (see Table 4.16), and teachers in small schools feeling that they are less prepared to offer the French program than teachers in larger schools are all significant. It was the teachers who had more post-secondary French courses completed who felt more prepared to have the competence of their students assessed. In viewing Table 4.14, one can see that the relationship is strong with a p-value of not less than .05 but less than .005.

Table 4.14
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Teacher Preparedness

Teachers in small schools are less prepared to offer the French program	Number of Post-Secondary Courses	
	1-5 Courses	More than 5 Courses
Strongly Agree	7	
Slightly Agree	6	2
Undecided		5
Slightly Disagree	2	2
Strongly Disagree	2	11

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .00047$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.15
Relationship Between Number of French Methodology Courses and Teacher Preparedness

Teachers in small schools are less prepared to offer the French program	Number of French Methodology Courses	
	None	More than 1
Strongly Agree	7	
Slightly Agree	8	1
Undecided	2	3
Slightly Disagree	2	2
Strongly Disagree	5	8

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .02837$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.16
Relationship Between Teacher Proficiency Level and Preparedness to Offer French Program

Teachers in small schools are less prepared to offer the French program	Teacher Proficiency Level	
	1-4	5-8
Strongly Agree	4	3
Slightly Agree	2	6
Undecided		5
Slightly Disagree	1	3
Strongly Disagree		

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 3, $p < .05$ ($p = .00313$)
Missing observations = 3

As would be expected, teachers with more methodology courses completed (see Table 4.15) were most comfortable with the assessment tool being administered. This group also felt that they were no less prepared than larger schools.

Table 4.16 indicates that teachers with a perceived higher proficiency level were confident that small schools were as prepared as larger centers to offer the elementary French program.

The number of post-secondary French courses is related to age, as shown in Table 4.17. Teachers who are younger than 32 years would have been in university when the communicative approach emerged in the province's schools.

This is one reason why the age distinction is made as presented in Table 4.17. The younger teachers have more courses completed than older teachers.

Methodology courses completed is related to years of experience, as shown in Table 4.18. Years experience was categorized as 1-10 years with over 10 since it was approximately ten years ago that the province began piloting the communicatively based program *Aventures*.

The lack of a relationship between age and French methodology courses (see Table 4.19) is important because it shows that even younger teachers, those who attended university in the past ten years, have no more courses completed in how to teach the French program. This evidence supports the idea that universities are still not preparing teachers for multi-grade classrooms/small schools since in most cases the same teacher is responsible for all subjects including French.

Table 4.17
Relationship Between Age of Teacher and Number of Post-Secondary French Courses Completed

Number of post-secondary French courses	Age of Teacher	
	Younger than 32	Older than 32
1-5 courses	6	14
More than 5 courses	14	6

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 1, $p < .05$ ($p = .01141$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.18
Relationship Between Years of Teaching Experience and Number of French Methodology Courses

Number of French Methodology Courses	Years of Teaching Experience	
	1-10	Over 10
None	9	16
More than 1	11	4

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.
N = 40, DF = 1, $p < .05$ ($p = .02224$)
Missing observations = 3

Table 4.19
Relationship Between Age of Teacher and Number of French Methodology Courses Completed

Number of French Methodology Courses	Age of Teacher	
	Younger than 32	Older than 32
None	10	15
More than 1	10	5

Numbers indicate number of respondents fitting each category.

N = 40, DF = 1, $p < .05$ ($p = .10247$)

Missing observations = 3

4.12 Conclusion

The correlations, or lack thereof, discovered by means of the chi-squares serve to demonstrate that much of what is proposed by education writers in the literature is true. Teachers without a French background (a combination of French courses and methodology courses) cannot (and do not) employ the principles of the communicative approach. The significant relationships, discovered by the chi-squares, between proficiency level, number of French courses and methodology courses, and use of communicative strategies prove the point.

In having frequency distributions as well as inferential statistics such as the chi-square, a more in-depth picture of the provision of the Elementary Core French Program in our province's small rural schools is developed. The inferential statistics allowed me to substantiate claims which I felt were true. Small rural schools do not have teachers who are able to deliver the *Aventures* program as it was meant to be taught.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study has been to investigate the provision of the Elementary Core French Program in small rural schools in this province. In this final chapter, I will present a summary of the findings from the data analysis along with the implications of these findings. I will then offer some recommendations which emerge as a result of my conclusions based on the data.

The Elementary Core French Program in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador appears to require a teacher who has a strong oral base in the language in addition to a sound understanding of the principles of the communicative approach to second-language instruction. In both documents prepared by the Department of Education and Training (*Program of Studies* and the *Curriculum Guide for Elementary Core French*) any mention of objectives for the program refers to a high level of communication in the language. If one were to read "In Grades 4-6 language experiences are organized around familiar themes and are presented in French. While approximately 80% of class time is devoted to aural-oral practice and use of French, students are provided with opportunities to read and write their new language" (Program of Studies, 1995-96, p. 55) or "The main

linguistic objectives of the Core French Program in Grades 4-6 focus on the development of listening and speaking skills with the emphasis on meaning and communication" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1990, p. 8), one would assume that the person responsible for delivery of this program would be able to function with relative ease in the second language.

Having completed my research, I have discovered that teachers who are attempting to offer the Elementary Core French Program in small rural schools are not prepared for the task.

5.2 Program Implementation

The over-riding neglect obvious from my findings has been the failure of the Department of Education to preview the real situation in elementary classrooms prior to implementation of the *Aventures* program. Had there been investigation into schools regarding the qualifications and preparedness of teachers, it would have been discovered that indeed, much work needed to be done before teachers across this province could be expected to teach this new program There should have been interconnectedness among curriculum designers, implementers, and evaluators. It appears that the work of each of these groups was carried out independent of the others. Perhaps those who developed and planned the new French curriculum were from larger centers and were not aware of the situation

in smaller schools.

Implementation requires strategic planning, encompassing much more than piloting a new program in a few select schools than implementing it full scale.

Miller and Seller (1990) identify seven primary components of an implementation plan:

1. A study of the new program.
2. Identification of resources.
3. Role definition.
4. Professional development.
5. Timelines.
6. Communication system.
7. Monitoring the implementation (p. 276).

It is clear that steps in the implementation plans were omitted in the case of *Aventures* since there was one major resource missing - a qualified French teacher to offer the program. The new role of the teacher in this program could not be fulfilled if the teacher did not possess the necessary French background. Professional development was offered in the form of mini-immersions sessions of up to six weeks as discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis, but a short immersion session is not enough to make a teacher fluent in French. Professional

development, in this case, must entail full-scale study or preparedness of teachers at a post-secondary institution.

Monitoring of implementation was dealt with informally at the school board level by French coordinators. However, approximately seven years after the initial implementation of *Aventures I* in grade four, monitoring will be formally carried out by use of a criterion-referenced test in grade six in the spring of 1996. I assume this will also serve to evaluate the curriculum as well. I question, however, the fairness of evaluating a curriculum which was not properly implemented and which had many obstacles. These hurdles should have been dealt with before the program was adopted province-wide.

5.3 Summary of Findings

The initial chapter of this thesis included six questions for study. In the paragraphs to follow, I will answer these questions in light of the information gathered.

1. What are the qualifications of teachers of French in small rural schools?

Teachers in small rural schools are not qualified to offer the *Aventures* program. Half of the respondents had not even a minor (8 courses) in French with an average proficiency level of 6 on a scale of 1 to 10. The vast majority of respondents (88%) had two or less French methodology with 61% of these without

a single course.

2. ***Are these qualifications adequate to teach the program used?***

The answer to this question is definitely not. A communicatively based program which includes use of French in the classroom, interaction in the second language with students, facilitating group work in the language, and in the Grade 6 program, brainstorming in French demands a teacher who is fluent in French and comfortable with the methodology and philosophy of communicative language teaching. A teacher without a proper background cannot effectively deliver this program.

3. ***What resources are available to the teacher of French in small schools?***

It is obvious that teachers in small schools have the resources provided by the Department of Education (textbooks, manuals, flashcards, and so on), as well as other supplementary resources. If the extra resources, such as videos and newspapers, are not in the classroom, they are available in the school or at the district board office.

4. ***Are these resources adequate?***

While it is great to see that, overall, small schools do not lack resources, it is still disturbing that the one resource missing, as discussed in Questions 1 and 2, is a qualified teacher. The students need a person who can use these resources to their potential. Therefore, the answer to Question 4 is yes. There are enough

resources, but they cannot be manipulated to provide a communicative language context in the classroom.

5. ***Should expectations for teaching the objectives of the French program in small schools be the same as those for larger schools?***

The results of Question 46 on my survey indicated that about half of the respondents felt they were less prepared to offer the program than teachers in larger schools: 18.9% strongly agreed, 21.6% slightly agreed, and 13.5% were undecided. This result only follows from the lack of qualifications discussed in Question 1 of this section. Some of the comments which were included in the returned surveys support the same idea. Hence, one can conclude that the expectations (in the minds of the respondents) should not be the same.

However, from informal discussions with various professionals, the general consensus is that these objectives may not be met even in larger schools. There may need to be some investigation into the delivery of the program in larger centers to provide some data for comparison.

6. ***Should the Department of Education use a criterion-referenced test to assess whether the aims are being achieved province-wide?***

From the results of Question 38 in my survey, over 78% of teachers agreed that there was a need to assess the competence of Grade 6 students. If the results received in the Spring of 1996 are used to improve the delivery of the program

and to provide assistance to these schools (small and large) which require it, then the test would have a positive impact. If, however, those administering the test use the results to shed a negative light on schools, it is pointless. It is inherently absurd to design objectives and then test these objectives if the objectives cannot be achieved, which is the case in small schools.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on my literature review, my data analysis on the surveys of teachers in small rural schools, my feedback from and conversations with professionals in the field of French teaching, I feel that I can make a number of recommendations to address the difficulties encountered in the delivery of the Elementary Core French Program in small rural schools. These include:

1. The Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, require the completion of courses to prepare elementary teachers in small rural schools, including French courses and courses in multi-grade instruction.
2. Given the fact that teachers in small rural schools are usually responsible for all subjects including French, the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, require French methodology courses for prospective elementary teachers.
3. The curriculum guide for elementary French include a practical section on

how to best provide French instruction in a multi-grade setting.

4. French curriculum materials be developed for use in small schools, bearing in mind the background of teachers of French in these schools.
5. French curriculum materials be provide for use in a multi-grade setting.
6. The Department of Education set a minimum standard of qualifications for teachers responsible for the Elementary Core French Program so that qualified teachers could be hired for all schools.
7. To determine the situation in larger schools with regard to the elementary core French, a study should be carried out. This would provide a means of comparing preparedness of students for the criterion-referenced test.
8. Those responsible for the design and administration of the Grade 6 test be cognizant of the "real" situation in small rural schools before any interpretations of the results are made.
9. Further study should be conducted into the Elementary Core French Program in the province to determine the need of teachers so as to improve the quality of the program provided to our students.

5.5 Conclusion

During the course of this undertaking, I have been able to delve into the context in which the program *Aventures* should be offered juxtaposed to the

situation in which it is being offered in small rural schools in this province. My research findings, coupled with literature written on this topic, permit me to conclude that there is a wide gap between the proper conditions for communicative language teaching and the actual situation. Teacher qualifications are below the "minimums" referred to by the three professionals I contacted. Since there are no standards for elementary core French teachers set down by the Department of Education, teachers who are not qualified are attempting to teach the program. Despite the lack of academic qualifications, teachers in small rural and multi-graded schools are striving, to the best of their abilities, to provide a quality French program for their students.

The Department of Education is placing great emphasis on the evaluation of both teacher and student performance. This is mainly done by administering standardized tests and examining the results. Those responsible for evaluation do not recognize the link between teacher and student performance. When the Grade 6 French criterion-referenced test is given in the Spring of 1996, the absence of such a link may come to light. Teachers are not prepared but students are being evaluated as if teachers were reaching the stated program objectives. Those in positions of authority, with respect to curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation, need to address the concerns of elementary core French teachers in small rural schools for the benefit of the students entrusted to our care. The question which is left unanswered is, "Should French not be taught at all rather than be taught poorly?"

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Appendix A

Section 1. Personal Information

1. Code Name ( )

2. Sex: _____ Male
   _____ Female

3. Age: _____

Teacher Training

4. How many post-secondary French courses have you completed? _____

5. How many methodology courses in the teaching of French have you completed? _

6. Year Degree(s) Completed:

Degree	Date
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Number of years of teaching experience: _____

8. Number of years teaching French: _____

9. Grades of French Currently Taught:

   1. Grades 4-6 _____
   2. Grade 4 only _____
   3. Grade 5 only _____
   4. Grade 6 only _____
   5. Multi-graded classroom (please specify grades) _____

10. Number of subjects taught other than French _____

11. Grade level of subjects specified in # 10 _____

12. (If subjects other than French are at different grade levels or are taught in a multi-grade setting, please give details below.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. Length of time in current position _____

14. I would rate my oral proficiency in French as _____ on a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 = little or no knowledge, and 10 = very proficient in oral French).

Section 2. School Setting

15. Type of School in Which You Teach

1. K-6 _____
2. K-8 _____
3. K-12 _____
4. 4-12 _____
5. Other (please specify) _____

16. School Population: _____

17. Population of community in which school is located _____

18. If your school serves more than one community, total population of these communities. _____

10. In my school, students begin French:

1. In primary (specify grade) _____
2. In Grade 4 _____
3. Other _____

Please check the statement(s) which describe your perceptions of the degree of support for the French program.

20. Parents attitude towards French instruction:

_____ Parents have a positive attitude towards their children learning French.

_____ Parents put French on the lower end of the scale in terms of importance.

_____ Parents have a negative attitude towards French instruction.

_____ Parents do not care one way or the other if their children learn French.

21. Community's attitude toward learning French:

_____ The people in the community where I teach have a positive attitude towards learning French.

_____ The people in the community where I teach have a negative attitude towards learning French.

_____ The people in the community where I teach do not care about learning French.

22. Community's attitude towards francophones:

_____ The people in the community where I teach have a positive view of francophones.

_____ The people in the community where I teach have no opinion of Francophones.

_____ The people in the community where I teach have a negative view of francophones.

23. The principal of my school:

_____ Demonstrates strong support for the French program.

_____ Demonstrates little support for the French program.

_____ has a negative attitude towards learning French.

24. Personnel (other than the French coordinator) from district office:

_____ Show support for the core French program.

_____ Place little emphasis on the learning of French.

_____ Have a negative attitude towards French instruction.

25. The French coordinator in my district:

_____ Contacts me often.

_____ Offers me support in my delivery of the program.

_____ Does not contact me.

_____ Does not offer me support in my delivery of the program.

_____ Provides me with practical advice.

_____ Assists me with teaching in my multigrade setting by providing me with activities which can be used with more than one grade.

Section 3. Classroom Instruction

26. (a) Did you receive inservicing before implementation of the program *Aventures*?

1. Yes _____
2. No _____

(b) If yes, how much?

1. _____ 1/2 day
2. _____ 1 day
3. _____ 2 days or more (not necessarily at one time)

Please briefly describe what was entailed in your inservicing.

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Did you feel that the inservicing was beneficial?

1. _____ Yes
2. _____ No

If no, how could it have been improved?

_____

_____

28. Did you feel that the inservicing was sufficient?

1. _____ Yes
2. _____ No

If no, how could it have been improved?

_____

_____

_____

_____

29. Have you participated in any mini-immersions to assist you in your oral competence in French?

1. _____ Yes
2. _____ No

(a) If yes, where did the session(s) take place? _____

(b) How long was it/were they? _____

(c) Did this/these session(s) prove practical and helpful in the classroom? ___

(d) How could the session(s) have been improved?

_____

_____

_____

_____

30. Number of minutes of French instruction your pupils receive:

1. _____ minutes per day, or
2. _____ minutes per 6 day cycle

31. What percentage of a class period is conducted in French?

1. _____ less than 25%
2. _____ between 30-50%

3. _____ between 50-75%
4. _____ more than 75%

32. Number of "tours" (units) completed in last school year:

1. _____ 3 or less
2. _____ 4
3. _____ 5
4. _____ 6

(a) If not all completed, please indicate why below (reasons other than the teachers' strike):

_____

_____

_____

_____

33. Please check which materials/resources you have in your school.

_____ *Aventures* Student Texts
_____ *Aventures* Student Workbooks
_____ *Aventures* Teachers' Manual
_____ *Aventures* Flashcards
_____ *Aventures* Cassettes
_____ Cassette Recorder
_____ Curriculum Guide (Learning French as a Second Language)

If there is any item(s) in the above list which you do not have, briefly explain why not below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

34. What other resources do you have access to?

	In Your Classroom	In the School	In the District
Records			
Cassettes			
Filmstrips			
Videos			
Dictionaries/Reference Books			
Newspapers			
Francophone Speakers/Visitors			

35. Do you have a copy of publisher's suggestions for multigrade teaching? (Strategies pour Les Années Multiples)

1. _____ Yes
2. _____ No

If yes, do you find it useful? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Section 4. Communicative Language Teaching

36. Please indicate to what extent you use the following strategies in your delivery of the French program.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
1. Brainstorming				
2. Role Play				
3. Games				
4. Small group work				
5. Practice of situations in pairs				
6. Use French to carry out daily routines				
7. Correct errors as they occur in class				
8. Correct errors only if they interfere with conveying meaning				
9. Personalize themes by having students write about their own interests.				
10. Personalize themes by having students speak about their own interests.				
11. Use cassettes provided with the program.				

37. What strategies do you use in your multigrade classroom?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Section 5. Proposed Criterion-Referenced Test

In this section, please check the category which most clearly describes your attitude to the statement. Please answer all questions.

	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Undecided	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
38. There is a need to assess the overall competence of Grade 6 students.					
39. I feel my students will be prepared for this test.					
40. The specifications of the test instrument (80% listening and speaking) parallel my students' classroom experience.					
41. The results of my students will be a reflection of the grade I would give them.					
42. I look forward to viewing the results of my students in this test.					
43. I feel that this test should not be administered to students in small schools.					
44. I feel that the students' results will negatively reflect my competence as a teacher.					
45. I have all the resources I need to meet the objective set down in the Provincial Curriculum Guide.					
46. I feel that I am less prepared to offer the program than teachers in larger schools					

If there is any item/question on which you would further like to elaborate, or if there are any additional comments/concerns regarding the French program in your school which you would like to add, please feel free to do so below.

Once again, thank your for your assistance.

P.O. Box 45
Mount Carmel, NF
A0B 2M0
May 16, 1995

Mr. Domino Wilkins
Pentecostal Assemblies Board of Education
34 Bond Street
Grand-Falls-Windsor, NF
A2B 1J4

Dear Mr. Wilkins:

I am a graduate student at Memorial University of Newfoundland pursuing a Masters Degree in Education (Curriculum and Instruction). As a teacher of elementary core French in a small rural school in this province, I have chosen as my thesis topic: The Provision of the Elementary Core French Program in Small Rural Schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. I am working under the direct supervision of Dr. Dennis Mulcahy with the assistance of Mrs. Joan Netten, both of Memorial University.

In an attempt to examine this topic, I plan to send a questionnaire to all teachers of elementary core French in small rural schools in the province. My survey includes items on background in French, amount of time spent on French instruction, school structure, use of communicative strategies in the classroom, and support for the French program.

As this information is crucial for the completion of my thesis, I am seeking your permission to survey the teachers in small rural schools in your district. My proposal has already been passed by the School of Graduate Studies and my questionnaire has been approved by the Ethics Committee of Memorial University. All information collected will be kept in the strictest confidence, and no individual school or teacher will be identified.

Thank you for your cooperation, and I look forward to your reply

Sincerely,

Peggy Ryan

P.O. Box 45
Mount Carmel, NF
A0B 2M0
May 26, 1995

Dear Principal:

I am a graduate student at Memorial University of Newfoundland pursuing a Masters Degree in Education (Curriculum and Instruction). As a teacher of elementary core French in a small rural school in this province, I have chosen as my thesis topic: The Provision of the Elementary Core French Program in Small Rural Schools in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I am working under the direct supervision of Dr. Dennis Mulcahy with the assistance of Mrs. Joan Netten, both members of the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

I am surveying all teachers of elementary core French in small rural schools across the province in an attempt to get some idea of the situation with regard to the provision of French for elementary students in small rural schools.

I have enclosed two copies of my questionnaire, and I am asking you to distribute them to any teacher in your school who teaches French in any or all grades from four to six. Would you please ask you teachers to complete this brief survey and return it to me by the date specified in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

If there are more than two teachers involved, feel free to make additional copies.

Sincerely,

Peggy Ryan

P.O. Box 45
Mount Carmel, NF
A0B 2M0
May 26, 1995

Dear Teacher:

I am a graduate student at Memorial University of Newfoundland, working towards my Masters Degree in Education (Curriculum and Instruction). I am writing my thesis under the direct supervision of Dr. Dennis Mulcahy, with the assistance of Mrs. Joan Netten, both of whom are members of the Faculty of Education, MUN.

The purpose of my study is to investigate the provision of elementary core French in schools with populations of 100 students or less. Your participation will consist of completing the enclosed questionnaire. Participation is voluntary and you may refrain from answering any question(s) you would prefer to omit.

It is only through your invaluable input that my research can be carried out and your concerns can be voiced. I would ask you to kindly take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey and return it to me in the envelope provided by June 9, 1995. All information collected will be kept in the strictest confidence. No individual teacher or school will be identified. The results of this study will be available upon request.

This study meets the ethical guidelines of the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. If you would like to inquire about the research being conducted, you may contact Dr. Steve Norris, Associate Dean, Research and Development, MUN. Although Dr. Norris is not working directly with me in this research, he could certainly address any general questions for you. Should you require further clarification on any aspect of this questionnaire, feel free to call me collect at (709) 521-2109.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,

Peggy Ryan

I _____ (teacher) agree to take part in the study of the provision of elementary core French program in small rural schools being undertaken by Peggy Ryan. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary, that all information is strictly confidential, and that no individual will be identified.

_____ _____

Date Teacher's Signature

Appendix B

P.O. Box 45
Mount Carmel, NF
A0B 2M0
May 16, 1995

Ms. Patricia Goulart
Core French Consultant
Department of Education
St. John's, NF

Dear Ms. Goulart:

I am a graduate student at Memorial University of Newfoundland, pursuing a Masters Degree in Education (Curriculum and Instruction). As a teacher of elementary core French in rural Newfoundland, I have chosen as my thesis topic: The Provision of the Elementary Core French Program in Small Rural Schools in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I am working under the supervision of Dr. Dennis Mulcahy, Faculty of Education, MUN, with the assistance of Mrs. Joan Netten, Faculty of Education, MUN. Since my thesis focuses on the program *Aventures* and its delivery in small rural schools, I would like to ask you, as the person responsible for French programs in our province, a couple of questions related to qualifications necessary to deliver a communicative program such as *Aventures* (see attached questionnaire).

Thank you for your cooperation in responding to this request which will assist me in my research. Should you require any further clarification on anything included in this letter, I can be reached at the following telephone numbers:

(709) 525-2661 (school)
(709) 521-2109 (home)

Please return the completed questionnaire to me as soon as possible.

I will be looking forward to hearing your reply.

Sincerely,

Peggy Ryan

P.O. Box 45
Mount Carmel, NF
A0B 2M0
August 23, 1995

Ms. Patricia Goulart
Core French Consultant
Department of Education
St. John's, NF

Dear Ms. Goulart:

In May, I wrote you a letter (a copy of which is attached) asking you for your assistance with research I am doing for the completion of my master's thesis. I included a questionnaire regarding the minimum and desired qualifications for elementary teachers of Core French in this province. I sent the same questionnaire to the publisher of the *Aventures* program and the French coordinator for my district, both of whom replied to my request.

Since you may have overlooked or perhaps not received my initial letter, I am sending a second copy of my questionnaire. I would appreciate it if you could provide me with this important information as the Department of Education's person responsible for Core French as soon as possible.

I will be looking forward to hearing from you.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peggy Ryan

P.O. Box 45
Mount Carmel, NF
A0B 2M0
May 16, 1995

Ms. Cheryl Riggs
French Coordinator
Western Avalon R.C. School Board
Carbonear, NF

Dear Cheryl:

As you are aware, I am working on my Master's Degree in Education (Curriculum and Instruction). I have chosen as my thesis topic: The Provision of the Elementary Core French Program in Small Rural Schools in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I am working under the supervision of Dr. Dennis Mulcahy, Faculty of Education, MUN, with the assistance of Mrs. Joan Netten, Faculty of Education, MUN. Since my thesis focuses on the program *Aventures* and its delivery in small rural schools, I would like to ask you, as the French Coordinator for our board, a couple of questions related to qualifications necessary to deliver a communicatively based program such as *Aventures* (see attached questionnaire).

Thank you for your cooperation in responding to this request which will assist me in my research. Should you require any further clarification on anything included in this letter, I can be reached at the following telephone numbers:

(709) 525-2661 (school)
(709) 521-2109 (home)

Please return the completed questionnaire to me as soon as possible.

I will be looking forward to hearing your reply.

Sincerely,

Peggy Ryan

P.O. Box 45
Mount Carmel, NF
A0B 2M0
May 16, 1995

Ms. Jacquie Donat
Copp Clark Pittman Ltd.
2775 Matheson Blvd. East
Mississauga, On

Dear Ms. Donat:

I am a graduate student at Memorial University of Newfoundland, pursuing a Masters Degree in Education (Curriculum and Instruction). As a teacher of Elementary Core French Program in rural Newfoundland, I have chosen as my thesis topic: The Provision of the Elementary Core French Program in Small Rural Schools in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I am working under the supervision of Dr. Dennis Mulcahy, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, with the assistance of Mrs. Joan Netten, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Since my thesis focuses on the program *Aventures* program distributed by your company, I would like to as you, as a consultant and promoter of this set of curriculum materials, a couple of questions related to qualifications necessary to deliver a communicatively based program such as *Aventures* (see attached questionnaire). Incidentally, I have attended several Modern Language Conferences at which you were presenter. At these sessions, I have found you to have a sound understanding of second-language education at all levels. Thus, I feel that you would be a good person to ask about this subject.

Last year, I received a supplement from your company, Copp Clark, for use in a multi-graded classroom (Stratégies Pour Les Années Multiples). My copy was written in French. I was wondering if this document is available in English.

Thank you for your cooperation in responding to this request which will assist me in my research. Should you require any further clarification on anything included in this letter, I can be reached at the following telephone numbers:

(709) 525-2661 (school)
(709) 521-2109 (home)

Please return the completed questionnaire to me as soon as possible.

I will be looking forward to hearing your reply.

Sincerely,

Peggy Ryan

Questionnaire

1. What, do you feel, are the minimum qualifications for a teacher of the Elementary Core French Program *Aventures*? (please check one).

(a) **POST-SECONDARY COURSES**

No background in French required _____
At least two university level courses in French _____
A minor in French (8 courses) _____
A major in French (12 courses) _____
Other (please elaborate below)

_____

_____

(b) **METHODOLOGY**

No university French methods course _____
Elementary core French methods course _____

(c) **ORAL PROFICIENCY**

On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 = little or no knowledge, and 10 = very proficient in oral French), indicate the minimum requirements for an elementary core French teacher.

_____

2. What, do you feel, are the desired qualifications for an elementary core French teacher? (please check one)

(a) **POST-SECONDARY COURSES**

Two or more university level courses in French _____
Six weeks or more spent in a French milieu _____
A minor in French _____
A major in French _____
Other (please elaborate below)

_____

_____

(b) **METHODOLOGY**

No university French methods course _____
Elementary core French methods course _____

(c) **ORAL PROFICIENCY**

On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 = little or no knowledge, and 10 = very proficient in oral French), indicate the minimum requirements for an elementary core French teacher.

_____

Appendix C

Table 4.6
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Use of French in the Classroom

Use of French to Carry out Daily Routines	Number of Post-Secondary French Courses		Row Total
	1-5	More than 5	
Always		10 100.0 50.0	10 27.0
Often	4 44.4 23.5	5 55.6 25.0	9 24.3
Sometimes	12 70.6 70.6	5 29.4 25.0	17 45.9
Never	1 100.0 5.9		1 2.7
Column Total	17 45.9	20 54.1	37 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40,\ DF = 3,\ p < .05\ \ (p = 0.00313)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.7
Relationship Between Proficiency Level and Use of French in the Classroom

Use of French to Carry out Daily Routines	Proficiency Level		Row Total
	1-4	5-8	
Always		9 100.0 33.3	9 26.5
Often		8 100.0 29.6	8 23.5
Sometimes	6 37.5 85.7	10 62.5 37.5	16 47.1
Never	1 100.0 14.3		1 2.9
Column Total	7 20.6	27 79.4	34 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40, \quad DF = 3, \quad p < .05 \quad (p = 0.01139)$

Missing observations = 6

Table 4.8A
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Use of Small Group Work in Classroom

Use of Small Group Work	Number of Post-Secondary French Courses		Row Total
	1-5 Courses	More than 5 Courses	
Always	3 60.0 15.8	2 40.0 10.0	5 12.8
Often	8 47.1 42.1	9 52.9 45.0	17 43.6
Sometimes	7 43.8 36.8	9 56.3 45.0	16 41.0
Never	1 100.0 5.3		1 2.6
Column Total	19 48.7	20 51.3	39 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$$N = 40, \quad DF = 3, \quad p < .05 \quad (p = .68593)$$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.8B
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Use of Small Group Work in Classroom

Use of Small Group Work	Proficiency Level		Row Total
	1-4	5-8	
Always	1 20.0 12.5	4 80.0 14.3	5 13.9
Often	3 18.8 37.5	13 81.3 46.4	16 44.4
Sometimes	3 21.4 37.5	11 78.6 39.3	14 38.9
Never	1 100.0 12.5		1 2.8
Column Total	8 22.2	28 77.8	36 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40,\ DF = 3,\ p < .05\ \ (p = .30417)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.8C
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Use of Small Group Work in Classroom

Use of Small Group Work	Number of Methodology Courses		Row Total
	None	More than 1	
Always		1 100.0 6.7	1 2.7
Often	9 75.0 40.9	3 25.0 20.0	12 32.4
Sometimes	9 45.0 40.9	11 55.0 73.3	20 54.1
Never	4 100.0 18.2		4 10.8
Column Total	22 59.5	15 40.5	37 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40,\ DF = 3,\ p < .05\ \ (p = .06784)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.9
Relationship Between Access to French Records and School Population

French Records	School Population				Row Total
	1-24 Students	25-49 Students	50-74 Students	75-300 Students	
Have French records in school	5 55.6 62.5	2 22.2 20.0	1 11.1 11.1	1 11.1 9.1	9 23.7
Do not have French records in school	3 10.3 37.5	8 27.6 80.0	8 27.6 88.9	10 34.5 90.9	29 76.3
Column Total	8 21.1	10 26.3	9 23.7	11 28.9	38 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40, \quad DF = 3, \quad p < .05 \quad (p = .03168)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.10
Relationship Between Access to French Videos in School and School Population

French Videos	School Populations				Row Total
	0-24 Students	25-49 Students	50-74 Students	75-300 Students	
Have French videos in school		5 31.3 50.0	3 18.8 33.3	8 50.0 72.7	16 42.1
Do not have French videos in school	8 36.4 100.0	5 22.7 50.0	6 27.3 66.7	3 13.6 27.3	22 57.9
Column Total	8 21.1	10 26.3	9 23.7	11 28.9	38 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40,\ DF = 3,\ p < .05\ \ (p = .01417)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.11
Relationship Between Access to French Videos in School District and Population of School

French Videos in School District	School Population				Row Total
	0-24 Students	25-49 Students	50-74 Students	75-300 Students	
Have French videos in school district		8 47.1 80.0	4 23.5 44.4	5 29.4 45.5	17 44.7
Do not have French videos in school district	8 38.1 100.0	2 9.5 20.0	5 23.8 55.6	6 28.6 54.5	21 55.3
Column Total	8 21.2	10 26.3	9 23.7	11 28.9	38 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$$N = 40, \quad DF = 3, \quad p < .05 \quad (p = .00927)$$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.12
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Desire to have Grade 6 Students' Competence Assessed

There is a need to assess the competence of Grade 6 students	Number of Post-Secondary French Courses		Row Total
	1-5 Courses	More than 5 Courses	
Strongly Agree	4 28.6 23.5	10 71.5 50.0	14 37.8
Slightly Agree	6 40.0 35.3	9 60.0 45.0	15 40.5
Undecided	6 100.0 35.3		6 16.2
Slightly Disagree	1 100.0 5.9		1 2.17
Strongly Disagree		1 100.0 5.0	1 2.7
Column Total	17 45.9	20 45.1	37 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40,\ DF = 4,\ p < .05\ \ (p = .02656)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.13
Relationship Between Number of French Methodology Courses and Desire to have Grade 6 Students' Competence Assessed

There is a need to assess the competence of Grade 6 students	Number of French Methodology Courses		Row Total
	None	More than 1	
Strongly Agree	7 50.0 31.8	7 50.0 46.7	14 37.8
Slightly Agree	8 53.3 36.4	7 46.7 46.7	15 40.5
Undecided	5 83.3 22.7	1 16.7 6.7	6 16.2
Slightly Disagree	1 100.0 4.5		1 2.7
Strongly Disagree	1 100.0 4.5		1 2.7
Column Total	22 59.5	15 40.5	37 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40$, $DF = 3$, $p < .05$ $(p = .47249)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.14
Relationship Between Number of Post-Secondary French Courses and Teacher Preparedness

Teachers in small schools are less prepared to offer the French program	Number of Post-Secondary Courses		Row Total
	1-5 Courses	More than 5 Courses	
Strongly Agree	7 100.0 41.2		7 18.9
Slightly Agree	6 75.0 35.3	2 25.0 10.0	8 21.6
Undecided		5 100.0 25.0	5 13.5
Slightly Disagree	2 50.0 11.8	2 50.0 10.0	4 10.8
Strongly Disagree	2 15.4 11.8	11 84.6 55.0	13 35.1
Column Total	17 45.9	20 54.1	37 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40, \quad DF = 3, \quad p < .05 \quad (p = .00047)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.15
Relationship Between Number of French Methodology Courses and Teacher Preparedness

Teachers in small schools are less prepared to offer the French program	Number of French Methodology Courses		Row Total
	None	More than 1	
Strongly Agree	7 100.0 30.4		7 18.9
Slightly Agree	8 87.5 30.5	1 12.5 7.1	5 13.5
Undecided	2 40.0 8.7	3 60.0 21.4	4 10.8
Slightly Disagree	2 50.0 8.7	2 50.0 14.3	4 10.8
Strongly Disagree	5 38.5 21.7	8 61.5 57.1	13 35.1
Column Total	23 62.2	14 37.8	37 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40,\ DF = 3,\ p < .05\ \ (p = .02837)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.16
Relationship Between Teacher Proficiency Level and Preparedness to Offer French Program

Teachers in small schools are less prepared to offer the French program	Teacher Proficiency Level		Row Total
	1-4	5-8	
Strongly Agree	4 57.1 57.1	3 42.9 11.1	7 20.6
Slightly Agree	2 25.0 28.6	6 75.0 22.2	8 23.5
Undecided		5 100.0 18.5	5 14.7
Slightly Disagree	1 25.0 14.3	3 75.0 11.1	4 11.8
Strongly Disagree			
Column Total			100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40,\ DF = 3,\ p < .05\ \ (p = .00313)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.17
Relationship Between Age of Teacher and Number of Post-Secondary French Courses Completed

Number of post-secondary French courses	Age of Teacher		Row Total
	Younger than 32	Older than 32	
1-5 courses	6 30.0 30.0	14 70.0 70.0	20 50.0
More than 5 courses	14 70.0 70.0	6 30.0 30.0	20 50.0
Column Total	20 50.0	20 50.0	40 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$$N = 40, \quad DF = 1, \quad p < .05 \quad (p = .01141)$$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.18
Relationship Between Years of Teaching Experience and Number of French Methodology Courses

Number of French Methodology Courses	Years of Teaching Experience		Row Total
	1-10	Over 10	
None	9 36.0 45.0	16 64.0 80.0	25 62.5
More than 1	11 36.0 45.0	4 26.7 20.0	15 37.5
Column Total	20 50.0	20 50.0	40 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$N = 40,\ DF = 1,\ p < .05\quad (p = .02224)$

Missing observations = 3

Table 4.19
Relationship Between Age of Teacher and Number of French Methodology Courses Completed

Number of French Methodology Courses	Age of Teacher		Row Total
	Younger than 32	Older than 32	
None	10 40.0 50.0	15 60.0 75.0	25 62.5
More than 1	10 66.7 50.0	5 33.3 25.0	15 37.5
Column Total	20 50.0	20 50.0	40 100.0

Table contains count, row percent, and column percent as the table represents information from a chi-square.

$$N = 40, \quad DF = 1, \quad p < .05 \quad (p = .10247)$$

Missing observations = 3