

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS, OPINIONS AND
ATTITUDES OF PARENTS ELECTING AN EARLY
FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAMME FOR THEIR CHILDREN

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS, OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES
OF PARENTS ELECTING AN EARLY FRENCH IMMERSION
PROGRAMME FOR THEIR CHILDREN

by



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A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

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August, 1980

St. John's

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the parents of children being enrolled into kindergarten French immersion in the school year 1979-80 in Cape St. George, Newfoundland. Three aspects were investigated in the study. First, selected background characteristics of the parents and home were investigated. Second, a survey of parental opinion respecting various aspects of immersion French education and biculturalism was conducted. Third, parental attitudes with respect to biculturalism were measured. The purpose of the study was to discover if differences on these factors could be found between the groups of parents who elected to place their children in the immersion French stream and the group electing to place their children in the regular English stream.

The sample for the study consisted of 19 fathers and 30 mothers of children entering kindergarten in September, 1979. The parents were divided into two groups, depending upon the kindergarten stream chosen by them for their children, and compared in the analysis on the various measures. All the data for the study was obtained during one to two hour interviews with each parent included in the sample. Background characteristics were investigated by a series of questionnaires developed by the researcher, while an opinionnaire was designed to gather information on parental opinion. Parental attitudes with respect to biculturalism were determined with the use of an attitude questionnaire comprised of five subscales designed by Jokobovits (1970), based on scales originally developed by Gardner and Lambert (1969). The major statistical procedures used in this study were analysis of

variance, or chi square test for independence, and a factor analysis.

Significant differences were found in all of the three main areas of investigation. The two groups differed in areas such as French speaking, proficiency and various other language related background factors. Experience with immersion French, educational level of parents, and parental aspirations for their children all proved to be significantly different. Parents also differed with respect to their opinions on the effectiveness of the immersion French programme, economic benefits of the immersion programme as compared to the English programme, cultural benefits of the immersion French programme, as well as characteristics of students who are most successful in the immersion French programme. With respect to bicultural attitudes, the groups differed significantly in terms of French attitudes, authoritarianism, and anomie. The factor analysis indicated that French language background was a clear and independent factor in the parental decision-making process. It was also suggested that parents viewed the English and immersion French programmes as having different strengths. The English programme was seen to have more academic merit, while the immersion programme was seen to make an important cultural contribution. When academic merit was related to the economic benefits of the programme, the suggestion seems to be that the risk of academic failure is weighed against economic benefit when choosing one programme over the other. The factor analysis also indicated that persons who were less educated and had less direct experience with innovations in education are more likely to opt for the known, more traditional educational programmes unless they are endowed with unusual inner direction.

In light of the study's findings, recommendations were made in

two areas - programme evaluation and programme recruitment. Programme evaluation has to be viewed in the context of parental motivations for choosing one programme in favor of the other. Former simple comparisons of outcomes of the programme required the assumption that inputs into the two kindergarten classes had been the same, or else, had little to do with outcomes. This assumption must now be rejected. Arguments for programme recruitment, normally taking the stand that educational risks are minimal compared to potential it presents for cultural renewal and economic improvement, must now be modified.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to gratefully acknowledge the guidance and assistance offered in the preparation of this thesis by Dr. William Spain, who supervised the entire project. Special thanks are also expressed to Mr. Peter Heffernan of the Port au Port School Board for his advice and cooperation during the data collection. The writer extends sincere thanks to his wife for her encouragement and kind consideration throughout the course of this study. To the staff of Memorial University Education Library, the writer would like to express his appreciation for the valuable services made available to him whenever needed.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The first French immersion programme was introduced to Canada in 1965 at St. Lambert's, Québec, many others have been implemented elsewhere throughout the country in one form or another. Barick and Swain (1976) have attributed this increase in popularity to three factors; (1) the increasing emphasis on bilingualism in Canada over the last decade, (2) the lack of satisfaction with traditional school programmes of French as a second language, and (3) the reported success of the Lambert experience.

At the present time, French immersion exists in varying degrees in all ten provinces in Canada. Newfoundland was the last province to follow suit, when in 1975 the Port au Port School Board on the west coast of the island decided to implement an early French immersion programme in its school at Cape St. George. Cape St. George is Newfoundland's only officially designated bilingual district. This community, and surrounding areas on the peninsula, was originally settled by French immigrants from the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon in the late nineteenth century. To the present day, there still exists a strong French element throughout the whole area. Economically, the area is quite depressed. Statistics Canada (1976) indicated the unemployment rate to be at 20.6 percent as compared to 15.1 percent for the Province. These facts alone made Cape St. George

a truly unique setting for a French immersion programme.

Statement of Purpose

This report describes a study of parents of children in Cape St. George, Newfoundland, who had children entering kindergarten in September, 1979. The study had three aspects. First, selected background characteristics of the parents and home were investigated. Second, a survey of parental opinion respecting various aspects of immersion French education and biculturalism was conducted. Third, parental attitudes with respect to biculturalism were measured. The purpose of the study was to discover if differences on these factors could be found between the group of parents who elected to place their children in the immersion French stream and the group electing to place their children in the regular stream.

Significance

Two considerations motivated the study. The first was based upon a need to validate the evaluation designs which were being used in the evaluation of immersion French programmes in Canada, and in Port au Port. Typically, these programmes have been evaluated by comparing the performance of immersion French classrooms with control classrooms selected from regular French programmes. The assumption made in the design has been that each set of classrooms has had characteristics similar enough to the other, and that similar performance could be expected from the two, given equivalent instructional programmes. In the case of the evaluation of smaller programmes such as Port au Port, further assumptions have been required about the equivalence of

instructional factors such as teaching competence and instructional materials.

To date, evaluation studies have not given sufficient attention to the voluntary nature of the programmes. It was evident that in making the choice about which programme was appropriate for their children, parents could have been introducing systematic differences between immersion French and regular English classrooms. These differences could have influenced conclusions about the effects of the programmes. In interpreting the differences and similarities of the immersion French and regular English programmes, information about parental characteristics was needed.

The second, equally compelling reason for initiating this study was to produce an immersion French programme which responded to community needs, and which provided instruction which reacted adequately to the differences in student characteristics which may have been found. This was the key to the continuing acceptance of the programme by the community and parents. In addition to providing a basis for modifying the immersion programme, information on parental opinion could lead to different emphases in publicizing the programme, and could help to clarify misunderstandings about the programme. The possible consequences of this could be a broadening of the appeal of the programme, and thus, improved viability in the school district.

Research Questions

Background. Data were collected to determine if the parents electing the immersion French programme differed from parents electing the English programme on the following variables:

- 4
- a. General level of aspiration for the children
 - b. Community of residence
 - c. Education level of the parents
 - d. Proficiency speaking French
 - e. Language spoken at home
 - f. The ability of the child to speak French
 - g. Experience with the immersion French programme.

Opinion. The opinions of the two parent groups were compared with respect to several general aspects of the programme.

- a. The nature of the programme
- b. Characteristics of children best suited for the immersion programme
- c. The economic benefits of learning French
- d. The cultural benefits of learning French
- e. The effectiveness of teaching.

Attitudes. The scores obtained by the two groups of parents on five specially adapted scales were compared.

- a. French Attitude
- b. Anomie
- c. Ethnocentrism
- d. Cultural Allegiance
- e. Authority

Setting and Study Limitations

The project in immersion French education conducted by the Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board was unique in a number of respects. First, it was in the only officially designated bilingual

district in Newfoundland, even though French was a minority language. The French spoken was non-standard, and had, over the years, acquired a distinct, local character due to the isolation of the population from other French-speaking cultures. In general, French was almost completely oral, with no tradition of French literacy. After a long period of decline of the language, an interest in renewing the language and culture had recently developed in the area.

A second aspect of the uniqueness of the setting was the relative weakness of English as the first language. The level of adult literacy was quite low, and school children in the area typically scored lower on normed tests than most children in the Province. The economy was based on fishing and subsistence farming, with some work being found in Stephenville, or away from home, i.e., logging in the interior of Newfoundland or in Quebec.

In circumstances such as those described above, the motives of parents in electing to place their children in an immersion French programme were quite likely to be different from those of parents in metropolitan areas like Ottawa and Montreal, or more prosperous rural areas such as Cornwall. Therefore, the findings of this study should be generalized with a great deal of caution.

Another limitation was found in the design. In general, interviews with parents took place after the decisions were made about the kindergarten placement of their children. The assumption which had been made in this study was that parental opinion influenced the decision. There was the possibility, however, that the decision influenced the opinion.

A final limitation of the study relates to the statistical decision rules which were used. Statistical tests were rejected at the .25 level of significance, which at first glance would appear to be counter to the common use of .05 or .01 as the level of significance. In considering the purposes of the research, it was evident that it was more important to avoid TYPE II, rather than TYPE I, error. Both of the purposes stated for the study related to the potential importance of differences between the groups of parents studied. If differences existed, other research would require new interpretations, and school boards would have to deal differently with the groups of parents. Therefore, it was felt to be more important to discover differences if they existed, that is, minimize risk of TYPE II error, than it was to incorrectly conclude that differences existed, that is, commit TYPE I error.

The risk of TYPE II error can be minimized in three ways. Some statistical tests are more powerful than others, but this is very much dependent upon the scaling of the data. This study utilized the most powerful procedures that were consistent with the scaling. Large sample sizes lead to more powerful statistical analysis; but as this study sampled all the available parents, larger samples were impossible. Finally, lower risk of TYPE II error occurs if higher risk of TYPE I error is taken. The conservative levels of significance could be seen, in this study, to lead to a high level of risk of TYPE II error. A liberal level of significance, the .25 level, was selected to lower that risk, as other options were not possible. This led to limitations in the interpretation of the outcomes, as a consideration of the risk of TYPE I error must be made by the reader.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the last twenty years, much research has been undertaken in order to try to isolate the factors influencing success in second-language learning. While aptitude had been considered an important factor, it appears that this variable was not the only or perhaps the major characteristic responsible for achievement in learning a second language. As an example, Jakobovits (1970) estimated that about 33 percent of the total variance can be assigned to aptitudinal factors. Intelligence, personality and motivation, and others, accounted for 20, 33, and 14 percents respectively.

Intelligence and Second-Language Learning

Recent research conducted on immersion programmes, particularly within the Canadian context, tended to indicate that the role of intelligence in second-language learning varied with different aspects of language acquisition. It had been suggested that while intelligence plays a role in the degree of achievement which a pupil will be able to master with regard to reading and language usage, it was a much less significant factor in the development of listening comprehension and interpersonal communication skills. Genessee (1976) concluded that "groups of children with different levels of intellectual and academic ability are equally able to learn second-language skills which are related to interpersonal communication" (p. 287). Genessee further

concluded that pupils of all ability levels in an immersion programme could be expected to succeed in learning communication skills in a second language, and that they should also be able to achieve in academic subject areas in relationship to their aptitude and the degree of academic success which could be expected if they were following a regular English school programme. These findings were consistent with others who had found that I.Q. level was not the exclusive or necessarily the most important variable in mediating second-language success. (Dockrell & Brosseau, 1967; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Malherbe, 1946).

While these conclusions are generally accepted, there is greater concern about their validity in low Socio-Economic Status (SES) areas.

Socio-Economic Status

Possibly one of the most significant findings of current investigations into success in second-language learning was the effect of socio-economic status (SES). In general, the argument had been put forward that positive attitudes and high achievement in second-language learning are characteristic of higher SES groups. (Burstall, 1968, 1970, 1974). It has now been suggested that parents in higher SES communities were more supportive of children who began new learning experiences (for example, in Great Britain - Douglas, 1964; Robinson, 1971). Furthermore, it had been suggested that ethnocentricity was greater amongst those from lower SES. Burstall (1968, 1970, 1974) reported higher levels of achievement and more positive attitudes towards foreign culture among the grammar and comprehensive school pupils, while lower levels of achievement and more ethnocentric attitudes were associated with the bilateral and secondary modern

school pupils. In general, these conclusions may apply to the learning of French in the Canadian context where students in regular Foreign Second Language (FSL) programmes have normally been from the more academic stream of regular high school programmes, where higher proportions of middle and upper SES students are typically found.

These conclusions have generally been supported by more comprehensive studies with regard to the learning of language, and the effects of schooling for children from lower SES communities.

Investigations into the learning of the mother-tongue have suggested both that there are social class differences in the rate at which children acquire mastery of the syntactic rule system of the mother-tongue (Dewart, 1972) and that there are differences in the quality of language used by lower SES as compared with middle class groups (Poole, 1972; Bernstein, 1971). These considerations, coupled with investigations which suggest an interrelationship between mother-tongue mastery and second-language competence (Cummins, 1978, MacNamara, Tkutnabb, Kangass & Toukomoa {cited in MacNamara, 1978}) have led to questions about the most effective way to introduce, or combine second-language learning with mother-tongue maintenance for children in lower SES communities.

In addition, children with a history of failure in school, which tends to accompany lower SES, tended to develop low aspirations, and a negative view of their learning potential, particularly with regard to second-language learning (Burstall, 1975). Others, such as teachers and administrators, tended to have low expectations of their success, and this attitude affected their achievement. Aspy and Roebuck

(1972) concluded that there was an association between the teacher's positive regard for students and the level of cognitive functioning which the teacher was able to elicit. Hughes (1973) concluded that the achievement test scores of pupils were positively related to the teacher's positive or minimal reactions to the children's responses in class. The importance of this type of relationship has been further investigated through the work of Brophy and Good (1970).

It would appear that these considerations, which have been demonstrated to have effect in the regular classroom, would be of particular significance in the second-language classroom where the concept of reward and success are particularly important in motivating youngsters to persist with second-language learning.

Attitudes and Motivation

Although there exists a large number of conflicting theories regarding what constitutes an attitude, most researchers agreed that attitudes are associated with motivation. In light of findings by Gardner and Lambert (1972), this has important implications for second language learning. These findings indicate the learner's attitude towards the cultural group and orientation towards language learning are believed to regulate or control both the motivation to learn and ultimately the success or failure in mastering a new language. Burstall (1975) reported that "a considerable body of experimental evidence now exists which lends support to the view that pupil's attitudes towards learning are positively and significantly related to their eventual level of achievement" (p. 78). This conclusion, applicable to school work in general, has also been demonstrated to be true for second-

language learning in particular (Jordan, 1941; Pimsleur, Stockwell & Comrey, 1962; Lambert, Gardner, Barik & Tunstall, 1963; Carroll, 1967; Feenstra & Gardner, Note 1; Gardner and Santos, Note 2; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Stern (1963) indicated that more attention should be paid to the social and emotional factors which influence second-language learning, particularly in the early years. Jakobovits (1970) maintained as a result of his studies, that a student's attitudinal orientation toward the second-language group will influence progress and efficiency in adopting novel and strange linguistic habits into a repertoire. Gardner and Lambert (1972) advocated large-scale longitudinal studies so that information with regard to attitudes, values, and other motivational factors could be studied in order to "disentangle attitudes and proficiency so that one can follow more closely the causal sequence" (p. 143).

Contact with Culture

One of the reasons for instituting the immersion French programme in the Cape St. George area was the existence of a French language oral culture. It was felt that a programme of this nature would help strengthen the francophone heritage on the peninsula. Teaching a language has been considered to be a relatively important means of creating more positive attitudes towards the people represented by that language. Cziko, Lambert, and Gutter (1974) attempted to discover whether there were reliable and socially relevant differences in students' perceptions of ethnolinguistic group differences, and whether these perceptions were attributable to school programmes. They concluded, from studying 8 groups of Montreal children in Grades 5 and

6, that extensive experience with the other group's language in school appeared to reduce the perceived ethnolinguistic differences between the English-Canadian and French-Canadian groups of students to a significant degree. Some of the success which has attended the development and expansion of early grade immersion French programmes in Canada, in contrast with early second-language learning programmes in other parts of the world, has been attributed to the attitudes in the Canadian community which have favoured the development of these programmes.

Contact with the cultural group represented by the second-language being learned has also been perceived as an incentive to more positive attitudes towards learning and higher levels of achievement. Carroll (1967) indicated that students who went abroad had superior second-language skills, and the longer the period abroad, the more marked the differences. Burstall (1974) indicated that students who went to France expressed more positive attitudes towards learning French, and towards the French, and reached a significantly higher level of achievement in both spoken and written French than those pupils who did not travel abroad. In addition, Burstall (1974) reported that "undoubtedly the most powerful incentive to learn French, from the pupil's point of view, is the prospect of being able to establish contact with French-speaking people" (p. 249). Stern (1976), in his evaluation of the immersion French programmes of the Ottawa and Carleton School Boards, found that the attitudes of students enrolled in immersion French classes were much more positive than those of students in regular FSL programmes.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) took the position that the major

causative variable influencing second-language acquisition was the attitude of the learner towards the culture represented by the language being learned. Gardner and Smythe (1975) further suggested that in order to learn a language, the student has to acquire not only a new set of skills, but also the behaviour patterns of another linguistic and cultural group. They further suggested that, "the student's attitude towards other groups in general will affect the extent to which he can incorporate the behaviour patterns of the other cultural group" (p. 225). Thus, they developed an outline of various personal characteristics which they felt were of significance in determining the type of learner who would be successful in a second-language programme. These characteristics included both personality traits and school-related attitudes (i.e., attitudes toward the learning situation).

Jakobovits (1970) developed a series of questionnaires in which he attempted to isolate various attitudinal factors which would significantly affect the ability of the individual to learn a second language.

Integrative vs. Instrumental Motivation

Related to considerations with regard to the importance of contact with the cultural group represented by the second-language being learned is the question of motivation. Gardner and Lambert (1972) suggested that "the learner's motivation for language study... would be determined by his attitudes and readiness to identify (with the cultural group represented by the language being learned) and by his orientation to the whole process of learning a foreign language" (p. 132).

Two contrasting types of student motivation were identified,

integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation reflected a willingness or desire to be similar to or associate with representative members of another language community. This type of motivation involved a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group. An instrumental motivation suggested a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantage through a knowledge of the second language. The benefits accrued would be of a non-interpersonal nature. Gardner and Lambert (1959) carried out studies with English-speaking high school students in Montreal who were studying French and concluded that students who were more integratively motivated were more successful in second-language learning than those who were instrumentally motivated. Further studies done by Gardner and Lambert (1970) led them to the conclusion that "students' orientations are not simply a reflection of their parents' skill (or lack of it) in French or to the number of French acquaintances the parents had. That is, the integrative motive is not simply the result of having more experience with French at home, rather it seems to depend on the family's attitudinal disposition" (p. 5).

Gardner and Santos (1970) departed somewhat from this original view in a study conducted in the Philippines. They concluded that integrative orientation may not lead inevitably to superior achievement in second-language learning, if the cultural context is one where the acquisition of second language has obvious practical value. In this study, students who were instrumentally motivated, and who received support from their parents for this orientation, were more successful in acquiring a second language than those not indicating this type of motivation.

Burstall (1974) gave some support to this point of view.

Although the pupil's attitudes and achievement level were closely associated, the motivation of the pupils studied in the British context appeared not to be exclusively integrative or instrumental in character. Pupils taking French seemed to show some integrative motivation whether they liked learning French or not, and among those who were successful learners of French, there was much evidence of instrumental motivation in the realization of the possibility of improved opportunities for employment.

Gardner and Smythe (1975) further modified the earlier position in a study undertaken in London, Ontario with students learning French as a second language in Grades 7 to 11. From this study they concluded that motivation to learn a second language was something more than merely wanting to learn the language. It involved a total attitudinal orientation towards not only the French-speaking community, but also the French class. A later study further supported the importance of the attitudes toward the French programme as being an important contributing factor to positive attitudes and achievement in a second language.

Gardner, Smythe, Clement, and Glikzman (1976) reported that "It is quite clear that the integratively motivated students are much more active in French class; they participate more than the non-integratively motivated students. It seems quite likely that the integratively motivated student is much more interested in learning French and seizes every opportunity to work and learn" (p. 208). Gardner and Smythe (1975) also reported that students in grades 9 to 11 who had dropped French showed less favourable attitudes toward French, perceived less

encouragement from their parents, and exhibited less effort and desire to learn a second language.

Burstall (1974), however, argued that causation may be in the opposite direction. These findings suggested that "early achievement in French affected later attitudes toward learning French and later achievement in French to a significantly greater extent than early attitudes toward learning French affected the subsequent development of either attitudes or achievement" (p. 232). From this position, Burstall suggested that "the acquisition of foreign-language skills and development of attitudes toward foreign-language skills and the development of attitudes toward foreign-language learning during later years may be powerfully influenced by the learner's initial and formative experience of success or failure in the language-learning situation" (p. 235).

Parental Encouragement, Motivation, and Achievement

In much of the research into achievement and motivation in second-language learning, the importance of parental encouragement has come to the fore. As already indicated in the Gardner and Santos (Note 2) study in the Phillipines, it was reported that students who were instrumentally oriented, and who recieved support from their parents for this orientation, were more successful second-language learners. In a study undertaken by Gardner and Lambert (1959), information was gathered on the attitudes of parents of students toward the French community. It was reported that students who reflected integrative motives had parents who held similar attitudes. As already mentioned, a study in the London, Ontario area (by Lambert and Smythe, 1975)

indicated that drop-outs from the French programme perceived much less parental encouragement for the study of French. This finding was in small measure supported for Newfoundland high school students in a study completed by Pack (1979). Burstall (1974) reported that there was an association in the British context between parent's support for foreign language learning and the parent's evaluation of its relevance to the children's employment prospects. Jakobovits (1970) found that a student's general attitude towards a foreign culture reflected that of their parents and that parents with positive attitudes toward the other language community encouraged their children more actively to learn that language than did parents with a less favourable attitude. A study conducted by Gardner and Smythe (1973) concerning motivational variables associated with second language acquisition found a clearly significant relationship between the two. One of the variables they used was parental encouragement to learn French. The authors found that encouragement from parents helped students perceive the language learning experience as reinforcing. Thus, the relevant research would seem to indicate a strong connection between parental attitude and perceptions of the value of learning French and the motivational characteristics of their children.

In considering the place of second languages in the education of young children, Stern and Weinrib (1978) contended that "a unilingual upbringing is not more natural than a multilingual one; the emphasis on the vernacular as the sole medium of education is, after all, an artifact of the nineteenth century nation-state" (p. 18). It can be argued, therefore, that language education as well as other parts of

the primary curriculum, e.g., social studies, should reflect this reality (that ethnic pluralism and linguistic context exists in most countries).

Although much remains to be investigated in order to determine the most appropriate way in which to undertake second-language education for young children, rather than abandon the attempt, as suggested by some, a more realistic appreciation of the contribution of second-language learning to the language education of young children has been observed. There is now a recognition of the need to spell out more precisely the conditions of success (Council of Europe, 1976). It is in some small way that this study has been undertaken in order to help determine the conditions for success of the immersion French programme in the Cape St. George area.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The Sample

The sample used in this study consisted of the majority of parents of those students who entered kindergarten beginning September, 1979, at Notre Dame du Cap primary school, Cape St. George, Newfoundland. The parent population was divided into two categories: those who enrolled their children into French Immersion and those who enrolled their children in the Regular English class.

Out of a total number of 33 families with at least one child entering kindergarten, there were 30 families in which only one parent was included. Of the 30 families included in the study, 21 fathers and 28 mothers were contacted. There were 19 families in which both mother and father were contacted.

Collection of Data

The study was designed in a relatively straight forward fashion to collect data bearing on the research questions from the parents after the decision was made by them about the enrollment of their children in immersion French. Information normally available to the school board in the early spring permitted the identification of all children eligible for enrollment in kindergarten in the fall. Structured interviews were held with the parents. These interviews were conducted by two male interviewers in the homes. One of the interviewers was anglophone, a

graduate student who was recently a teacher in the area, and familiar with the people and the customs. The other interviewer was a bilingual college student who was native to the area, and fluent in the French spoken in the area.

The only purpose of the interview was to collect information for the study. Information about the kindergarten programmes at school was not volunteered by the interviewers.

An interview procedure would normally be considered a cumbersome way to collect the data of this study. The decision to interview was taken in consideration of the low level of adult literacy in the area. It was known that many parents had less than a grade eight education. A questionnaire approach would have undoubtedly led to a low, and unreliable response rate from these parents, who made up an extremely important target population for the kindergarten programmes in Cape St. George. This same consideration also led to modification in the instrumentation, to be described in a later section.

In order to insure that all information was gathered, the essential content of the interviews was completely structured. The interviewers were given no latitude concerning the questions they asked. However, they were free to determine the approach to the interview, and could explain the questions to the extent that they did not lead the response of the subject. The interviewers did not know which kindergarten programme had been chosen by the parents, at the time of the interview.

Instrumentation

All the data was obtained for this study during the interview. Interviewers made a judgement about the French proficiency of the parent,

collected some background information on the degree of exposure to French and the French Immersion programme, obtained opinions from the parents about the programme, and surveyed the bicultural attitudes of the parents.

French Proficiency. Nearly all the people in the area who spoke French were bilingual, and most had preferred, in the past, to speak English in their contacts with the school, and with other outside their immediate circle of intimates. This made it difficult to determine the French competency of individuals, even though it was possible to learn if they did use French. There had never been a tradition of literacy in French, so only the oral proficiency of the parents was assessed.

A general appreciation of the language background of the families was available to the interviewers through their personal knowledge of the community, and from information received from the school. At the beginning of each interview, parents were asked about their proficiency in French. The interviewers asked those known to have some proficiency if they wished to continue in that language thereby giving the bilingual interviewer an opportunity for some conversation in French. The assessment of a parent's proficiency was made subjectively by the bilingual observer based on the elements of expressed level of proficiency, known proficiency in the community, and interaction with the interviewer.

Proficiency was assessed on four levels. (See Appendix A). Mother tongue proficiency was assessed if, in addition to possessing a high level of fluency, parents indicated that French was the primary language at home when they were young. Fluency in French was assessed where there was a high level of proficiency evident, but no indication that it was

mother tongue. The bilingual interviewer made judgements to discriminate between those who spoke a little French, but without obvious proficiency, and those who spoke no French at all.

Background Information. During the interview, background information was requested from the subjects about the number of years of school completed.

Parents were asked to indicate their aspirations for their children after graduation from school. They were asked if they preferred their children to attend university, other schooling, go to work, or if they would allow their children to decide for themselves.

The place of residence of the family was recorded. Our Lady of the Cape Primary School serves five small communities, two of which have the majority of French speaking residents in the area.

The parents were asked if they spoke French, English, or French and English at home, and to indicate how frequently French was spoken in the home. They were also asked to express an opinion about their children's proficiency in French. Information was obtained about the number of other children in the family who had been in the immersion French programme, and if the parents had friends with children in the immersion French programme.

Opinionnaire. An opinionnaire was developed to assess parental opinion in five areas. The five general areas of the questions were selected based upon factors which were thought possibly to have an influence upon the placement decisions of the parents.

The work of Gardner and Lambert (1972) suggested that instrumental and integrative factors could have been important considerations with

parents. Therefore, a set of questions about the perceived economic (instrumental) and cultural (integrative) benefits of immersion French were devised.

Parents were also asked their opinion on a variety of questions having to do with the general nature of the immersion French programme, and its academic effectiveness vis a vis the English language programme. Since the inception of the programme, a primary concern of parents in the Port au Port programme, as in others, had been the maintenance and development of proficiency in English. It was apparent that this factor would be considered independently by parents, regardless of the desirability of learning in French.

Parental opinion was sought in two other areas. First, questions were asked about the characteristics of children whom parents thought would be best suited to an immersion French situation. Second, parents were asked their opinion about the effectiveness of teaching in immersion French.

Questions were developed in each of the five areas, and screened by personnel in the school district in terms of their relevance to the study, and their technical adequacy. About half the questions were worded positively, in favor of the immersion French programme. The other half were worded negatively, in favour of the English programme. As it was desired to limit the interview to about one and one-half hours, the opinionnaire was reduced in size to 22 questions. It was decided to request a simple agree/disagree, or yes/no response as it was thought that asking a more complex response might reduce the reliability of the

response in the target group of parents. (See Appendix B).

Attitude Scales. The attitude questionnaire was comprised of five subscales designed by Jakobovits (1970), based on scales originally developed by Gardner and Lambert (1969). The scales selected for this study were the French Attitude Scale, Anomie Scale, Ethnocentrism Scale, Cultural Allegiance Scale, and Authoritarian Scale. (See Appendix C).

The French Attitude Scale was designed to indicate attitudes toward French-speaking people and their culture. High scores would be said to reflect positive attitudes. The French Attitude Scale was comprised of 20 items.

The Anomie Scale was designed to measure the degree to which a person has a cultural identity. The term, anomie, means "being without norms or social ties" (Gardner and Lambert, 1969, p. 16). As scored in this study, higher scores were associated with higher levels of anomie. Twelve items comprised this scale.

The Ethnocentrism Scale was comprised of four items, and referred to the "belief in the superiority of one's own culture" (Jakobovits, 1970, p. 90). Higher scores indicated higher levels of ethnocentrism.

The Cultural Allegiance Scale, comprised of nine items, measured the degree to which persons were patriots of their own culture. An examination of the scale shows that the subject had to make judgements about the French and French culture, values and attitudes. The scale possibly measured acceptance of the culture of the French, more than it measured the allegiance of the respondents of their own culture. Higher scores would reflect a lower level of acceptance of the French culture, and a higher acceptance of Canadian culture.

The Authoritarian Scale was a thirteen item scale intended to measure authoritarian or anti-democratic ideologies. More authoritarian attitudes were said to be held by persons with higher scores.

As developed by Jakobovits, the scales were presented to the subject as a questionnaire using a likert response in six categories. Again, considering the nature of the target parent population in this study, the questions were presented by the interviewer, and a simple agree/disagree response was requested.

Statistical Procedure

Two approaches were taken in the analysis. The first was to contrast the two groups of parents on the various variables studied. Either analysis of variance, or the chi square test for independence was used, depending on the nature of the dependent variable being analyzed. The null hypotheses were tested at the .25 level of confidence as it was desired to increase the power of the statistical test. In this report, however, statistical significance was reported at both the .25 and .05 level of confidence to assist readers who may have wished to apply different decision rules.

In the second approach, a factor analysis was done on the various variables which were studied. All variables which discriminated between the two groups of parents were included in the analysis. In addition, those questions on the opinionnaire which did not discriminate were included on the preliminary analysis. Based upon the common factor loadings on the preliminary analysis, two additional questions were included in the final analysis.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie, 1975) was used

for all the analysis. In the factor analysis, a principle factor solution was found, and oblique rotation was used. Factor loadings larger than .40 were considered significant.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

French Proficiency

Table 1 shows the frequency of parents in each category of proficiency in speaking French. A chi square test was significant at the .25 level of confidence, suggesting differences between the immersion and English parents. Examination of the table indicates that two-thirds of the parents who spoke French fluently were in the immersion group. The proportion speaking only a little French was the same in each group.

Table 1
Proficiency Speaking French

Proficiency	Frequency		Total
	Immersion Group	English Group	
Mother Tongue	5	2	7
Fluent	1	1	2
Speak a little	8	11	19
None	6	15	21
Total	20	29	49

$\chi^2 = 4.102$; Significant at the .25 level of significance

Background Factors

Language Related Factors. Tables 2, 3, and 4 compared the two groups of parents with respect to the language spoken at home, the frequency with which French was used in the home, and the parents' perception of their children's ability to speak French. A chi square test showed significant differences between the groups of parents on all of these factors. In each case, the immersion parents indicated more use of French in the home. It is interesting to note that although seven parents indicated that French was their mother tongue, only two spoke French as their primary language in the home, and both of these were immersion parents.

Table 2
Language Spoken at Home

Language	Frequency		Total
	Immersion Group	English Group	
English	9	21	30
French	2	0	2
English and French	9	8	17

$\chi^2 = 5.388$; significant at the .25 level of confidence

Table 3
Frequency French is Spoken at Home

Frequency	Frequency		Total
	Immersion Group	English Group	
Often	4	2	6
Occasionally	10	12	22
Never	6	15	21

$\chi^2 = 3.159$; significant at the .25 level of confidence

Table 4
Child's Proficiency Speaking French

Child's Proficiency	Frequency		Total
	Immersion Group	English Group	
Very Good	3	0	3
Not Bad	3	8	11
Not Very Well	9	15	21
Not At All	5	6	11

$\chi^2 = 5.392$; significant at the .25 level of confidence.

Experience with Immersion French. Tables 5 and 6 compared the group with respect to families with older children in the immersion French programme, and with respect to friends with children in immersion

French. In each case, a chi square test showed significant differences between the groups, which suggested that parents electing immersion French for their children tended to have more experience with the programme themselves, or access to trusted sources of information about the programme.

Table 5

Previous Children in Family in Immersion French

Number of Children	Frequency		Total
	Immersion Group	English Group	
None	6	16	22
One or More	6	2	8
Total	12	18	30

$\chi^2 = 5.568$; significant at the .25 and .05 level of confidence

Table 6

Parents Whose Friends Have
Children in French Immersion

Friends with Children in French Immersion	Frequency		Total
	Immersion Group	English Group	
Yes	19	23	42
No	1	6	7

$\chi^2 = 2.379$; significant at the .25 level of confidence

Education Level of Parents. Table 7 shows the statistics and analysis of variance source information on the education level of the parents. The average level of schooling of the immersion parents was significantly higher than the schooling of the English parents. In addition, the variance of the immersion group was significantly higher, suggesting that the education level of the English parents was more homogeneous than the immersion parents.

Table 7

Education Level of Parents
(Years of School)

Parent	Statistic	Immersion Group	English Group	Total
Male	N	9	12	27
	Mean	9.0	7.3	8.04
	SD	4.58	1.87	3.32
Female	N	11	17	29
	Mean	8.8	7.6	7.5
	SD	3.92	1.66	1.72
Total	N	20	29	
	Mean	8.9 ^b	7.5	
	SD	4.12 ^b	1.72	
ANOVA				
SOURCE	SS	DF	MS	F
Programme	25.196	1	25.196	2.833 ^a
Sex of Parent	2.278	1	2.278	0.256
Programme x Sex	3.417	1	3.417	0.384
Within	400.168	45	8.893	

^a Significant at the .25 level of confidence

^b Difference in variance of the programmes; $F = 5.74$

Significant at the .25 level of confidence

Table 8 examined the variability in education level in greater detail. The homogeneity of the English group of parents can be seen,

ranging from about five to ten years of school. The immersion group had a much greater range, from three to sixteen years.

Table 8
Years of Education of Parents

Years	Frequency		Total
	Immersion Group	English Group	
3 - 4	4	1	5
5 - 6	2	6	8
7 - 8	2	15	17
9 - 10	4	6	10
11	4	1	5
12-15	3	0	3
16+	1	0	1

Parental Aspirations for Their Children. Table 9 shows the aspirations expressed by parents for their children. The chi square test showed significant differences between the groups of parents. The most obvious differences appeared to be that the parents of the English group were more laissez-faire in their aspirations, with greater numbers saying that they would allow the child to decide.

Table 9
Parental Aspirations for Their Children

Aspiration Level	Immersion Group	English Group
University	14	12
Other Post-Secondary Schooling	4	5
Child to Decide	2	9
Go to Work	0	3

$\chi^2 = 6.28$; significant at the .25 level of confidence

Opinionnaire

Table 10 gives a comparison of the responses of immersion French and English parents to each item on the opinionnaire. The response of the two groups were significantly different on eight of the items. Of these items, five related to programme effectiveness, two to cultural benefits, one each to economic benefits and student characteristics. Neither of the two items on teaching differentiated the two groups of parents.

In Table 11, a subscore was calculated for each of the item groupings by summing the item scores after correcting for the direction in which the question was stated. A total score was computed in a similar manner. With the exception of the teaching subscore, there were significant differences between the two groups of parents, the immersion French parents being higher in all cases. When the variances of the scores were compared, the variances of the English group were significantly higher than the immersion French group, again with the exception of the teaching subscale.

An interesting statistic was found by correlating the effectiveness subscores within each group with the subscores on the other item sets, and the total score with the effectiveness subscore taken out. Within the group of immersion parents, effectiveness did not correlate significantly with the other subscores. However, effectiveness did have a significant negative correlation with the total score when the effectiveness score was taken out. Within the English group of parents, the effectiveness subscore correlated significantly, and positively, with all the other subscores except teaching. It also had a significant positive correlation with the total score when effectiveness was taken out.

Table 10

Responses to the Parent's Questionnaire

No.	Category	Question	Frequency				χ^2
			Immersion Group		English Group		
			Yes	No	Yes	No	
1	Effectiveness	Children quickly adapt to instruction in French	20	0	21	8	4.73 ^a
2	Stu. Char.	"Better off" families send their children into French immersion.	3	17	5	24	0.00
3	Economics	Children who speak both French and English have a better chance of getting a job in other provinces.	20	0	27	2	0.22
4	Cultural	Children must appreciate that both French-speaking and English-speaking people are important to the development of Canada.	20	0	27	2	0.22
5	Effectiveness	Subjects such as Science and Mathematics are best taught in English	3	17	12	17	2.74 ^a
6	Stu. Char.	Children enrolled in French immersion are more outgoing.	5	15	10	19	0.15
7	Economic	Bilingual people get better jobs with the government.	19	1	20	9	3.47 ^b

Table 10 (continued)

Responses to the Parent's Questionnaire

No.	Category	Question	Frequency				χ^2
			Immersion Group Yes	Immersion Group No	English Group Yes	English Group No	
8	Teaching	The overall quality of instruction in the French immersion programme has been at least as good as in the English programme.	20	0	27	2	0.22
9	Effectiveness	Children in French immersion learn to read as well in English as those in the English programme by the time they finish elementary school	19	1	18	11	5.27 ^a
10	Stu. Char.	Children learn a second language better when they are older.	1	19	5	24	0.71
11	Economics	No matter what the type of work, being bilingual would be an asset in terms of getting a job.	16	4	24	5	0.00
12	Cultural	The French immersion programme at school has helped to make families in the area more involved in their French heritage	18	2	21	8	1.30 ^a

Table 10 (continued)
Responses to the Parent's Questionnaire

No.	Category	Question	Frequency		Frequency		χ^2
			Immersion Group Yes	No	English Group Yes	No	
13	Effectiveness	Children in the French immersion programme make more friends.	6	14	8	21	0.00
14	Stu. Char.	French immersion is better for brighter children.	5	15	10	19	0.15
15	Effectiveness	Parents of French immersion children feel they are more a part of the child's education in school.	13	7	6	23	8.01 ^a
16	Teaching	Better teachers are needed for the French immersion programme than the English programme.	6	14	7	22	0.02
17	Cultural	Children in the French programme learn as much about their heritage as children in the French programme.	12	8	22	7	0.75
18	Stu. Char.	Shy children are best taught in English	4	16	11	18	1.05

Table 10 (continued)
Responses to the Parent's Questionnaire

No.	Category	Question	Frequency		Frequency		χ^2
			Immersion Group Yes	No	English Group Yes	No	
19	Economics	People who are bilingual are most likely to go to college.	7	13	8	21	0.06
20	Stu. Char.	The English programme is better for students from typical, average families.	0	20	7	22	3.83 ^a
21	Effectiveness	Children learn better when they are instructed in English.	1	19	12	17	6.27 ^a
22	Stu. Char.	Slow learners can learn just as well in French as in English	13	7	17	12	0.02

^a Significant at the .05 level of confidence

^b Significant at the .25 level of confidence

Table 11

Opinionnaire Summary Subscales

Subscale	N Items	Group	Mean	t	S.D.	F	Correlation (Effectiveness)	Z
Programme Effectiveness	6	Immersion English	4.65 3.00	3.96 ^a	0.988 1.669	2.85 ^a		
Student Characteristics	7	Immersion English	5.75 4.93	1.98 ^b	1.208 1.557	1.66 ^b	-.247 .302	-1.02 ^b 1.54 ^b
Economic Benefits	4	Immersion English	3.10 2.72	1.84 ^b	0.718 1.032	1.95 ^b	.126 .249	0.52 1.27 ^b
Cultural Benefits	3	Immersion English	2.35 1.90	2.72 ^a	0.489 0.724	2.19 ^b	-0.169 0.354	-0.70 ^b 1.81 ^b
Teaching	2	Immersion English	1.70 1.69	0.073	0.470 0.471	1.00	-0.136 -0.161	-0.50 -0.82
Total	22	Immersion English	17.55 14.24	4.56 ^a	1.234 3.066	6.17 ^a	-0.390 0.570	-1.32 2.91 ^a

^aSignificant at the .05 level of confidence^bSignificant at the .25 level of confidence

Bicultural Attitudes

Tables 12 through 16 show the statistics obtained on the bicultural attitude questionnaire for the groups. In addition to making a comparison according to the kindergarten grouping of the parents, comparisons were made on the basis of the sex of the parents. ANOVA summary tables have been included in each of the tables.

French Attitude. Table 12 shows the results of the French Attitude subtest. A significant interaction was found, which can be seen in Figure 1. Apparently, fathers of the English kindergarten children scored higher than all other parents from both groups, who scored at about the same level.

It should be noted that this scale had a raw score range of 20 points and that therefore the scores obtained by parents in this group are very low, and close to the extreme negative end of the scale. Because the scale was redesigned, it was not possible to make comparisons with other students to make a judgement about the significance of the low scores.

Table 12

French Attitude Raw Scores

Parent	Statistic	Immersion Group	English Group	Total
Male	N	9	12	21
	Mean	2.44	5.83	4.38
	SD	1.88	4.53	3.96

Table 12 (continued)
French Attitude Raw Scores

Parent	Statistics	Immersion Group	English Group	Total
Female	N	11	17	28
	Mean	3.45	2.59	2.93
	SD	1.44	2.67	2.28
Total	N	20	29	
	Mean	3.00	3.93	
	SD	1.68	3.84	
ANOVA				
SOURCE	SS	DF	MS	F
Programme	3.583	1	3.583	0.382
Sex of Parent	10.178	1	10.178	1.084
Sex x Programme	37.971	1	37.971	2.980 ^a
Within	422.445	45	9.388	

^a Significant at the .25 level of confidence.

^b Difference in Variances of programmes; $F = 5.22$, significant at the .25 and .05 level of confidence.

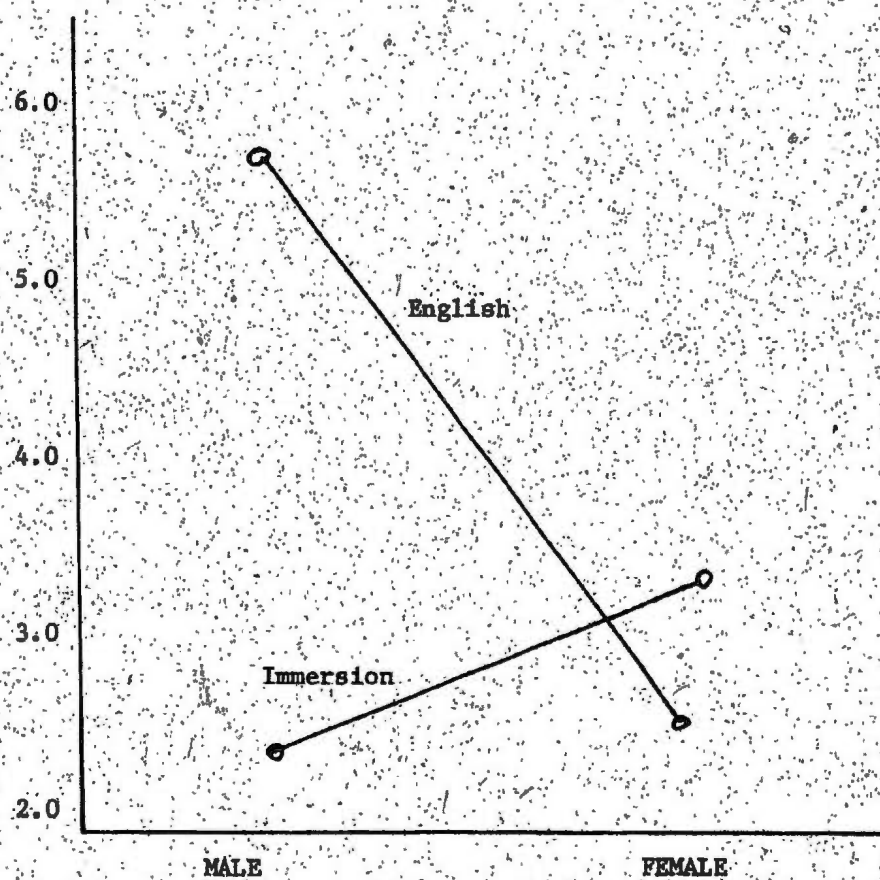


Figure 1. Interaction of French Attitude

Anomie. The results for the Anomie subscore are shown in Table 13. In general, the mothers of the immersion children had significantly lower scores than all the other parents. In the case where a significant interaction is found in ANOVA, it confounds interpretation of a significant main effect. Figure 2 shows that the mothers of the immersion children had the lowest anomie scores, all others scoring at about the same, higher level.

Table 13
Anomie Raw Scores

Parent	Statistic	Immersion Group	English Group	Total
Male	N	9	12	21
	Mean	7.11	7.17	7.14
	SD	1.90	2.29	2.08
Female	N	11	17	28
	Mean	5.18	7.53	6.61
	SD	2.23	1.62	2.18
Total	N	20	29	
	Mean	6.05	7.38	
	SD	2.26	1.90	
ANOVA				
SOURCE	SS	DF	MS	F
Programme	27.015	1	27.015	6.542 ^a
Sex of Parent	1.105	1	1.105	0.268
Programme x Sex	11.734	1	11.734	2.841 ^b
Within	185.830	45	4.130	

^a Significant at the .05 level of confidence

^b Significant at the .25 level of confidence

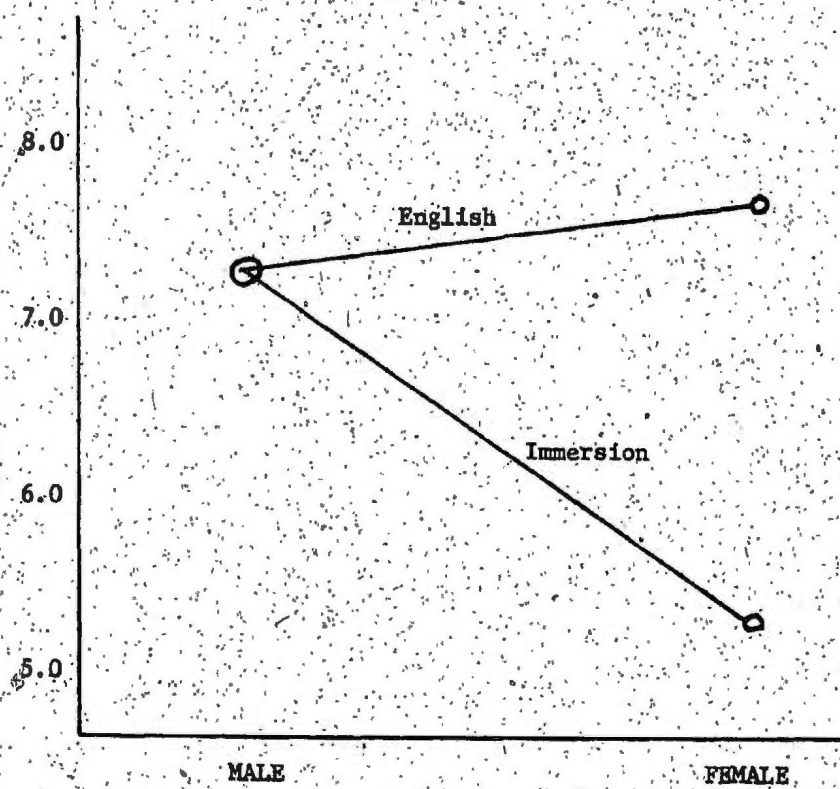


Figure 2. Interaction of Anomie

Ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism results are shown in Table 14. No differences were observed among the groups. The researchers decided, for a variety of reasons, that the performance of this scale was not satisfactory, and did not consider it further in the analysis and discussion. First, it had only four items, and was therefore likely to be less reliable than scales with more items. Second, the agree/disagree response tended to reduce the response variance from that contemplated by the authors; and third, some of the items made such extreme statements that item variance would be predictably low.

Table 14
Ethnocentrism Raw Scores

Parent	Statistic	Immersion Group	English Group	Total
Male	N	9	12	21
	Mean	1.78	1.50	1.62
	SD	0.97	0.80	0.92
Female	N	11	17	28
	Mean	1.54	2.00	1.82
	SD	0.82	0.71	0.77
Total	N	20	29	
	Mean	1.65	1.79	
	SD	0.88	0.77	
ANOVA				
SOURCE	SS	DF	MS	F
Programme	0.396	1	0.396	0.584
Sex of Parent	0.240	1	0.240	0.353
Programme x Sex	0.396	1	0.396	0.353
Within	30.54	45	0.697	

Cultural Allegiance. Outcomes on the Cultural Allegiance

subscale are shown in Table 15. No significant differences were found. After considering item content, it was decided to eliminate this scale from further analysis and discussion. Even though it was a nine item scale, it can be seen that score variance was very low, suggesting that scores were probably very unreliable. It was believed by the researchers that the items were too ambiguous for the respondents. In particular, the terms 'The French' and 'French-speaking' would be difficult for them as it was not clear, in the first instance, to which 'French-speaking' people the items referred. Local 'French-speaking' people are not 'The French'. 'The French' locally were more likely to be Quebecois than, from France, introducing a second ambiguity into the items.

Table 15

Cultural Allegiance Raw Scores

Parent	Statistic	Immersion Group	English Group	Total
Male	N	9	12	21
	Mean	1.67	1.58	1.62
	SD	0.50	1.00	0.80
Female	N	11	17	28
	Mean	1.45	1.94	1.75
	SD	0.69	1.30	1.11
Total	N	20	29	
	Mean	1.55	1.79	
	SD ^a	0.60	1.18	
ANOVA				
SOURCE	SS	DF	MS	F
Programme	0.846	1	0.846	0.838
Sex of Parent	0.030	1	0.030	0.030
Programme x Sex	0.206	1	0.324	0.328
Within	45.437	45	1.010	

^aDifferences in the Variances of programmes; $F = 3.87$, significant at the .25 level of confidence

Authoritarianism. The outcomes on the Authoritarian Scale are shown in Table 16, where it can be seen that the immersion parents scored significantly lower than the English kindergarten parents. It was also found that the responses of the immersion parents on this scale were significantly more variable than those of the English parents.

Table 16
Authoritarian Raw Scores

Parent	Statistic	Immersion Group	English Group	Total
Male	N	9	12	21
	Mean	8.89	9.92	9.48
	SD	3.52	2.27	2.84
Female	N	11	17	28
	Mean	9.36	11.18	10.46
	SD	2.69	1.38	2.15
Total	N	20	29	
	Mean	9.15	10.66	
	SD	3.01 ^a	1.87	

ANOVA

SOURCE	SS	DF	MS	F
Programme	29.817	1	29.817	5.12 ^b
Sex of Parent	4.823	1	4.823	0.828
Programme x Sex	2.678	1	2.678	0.460
Within	262.071	45	5.824	

^a Difference in variances of programmes; $F = 2.59$, significant at the .25 and .05 level of confidence.

^b Significant at the .25 and .05 level of confidence

Factor Analysis

Table 17 shows the factor pattern after oblique rotation of the factor matrix obtained from the factor analysis of the variables discriminating the immersion French and English parents.

Table 17

Factor Pattern for Selected Parental Characteristics and Opinions

Characteristic	I	II	III	IV	V
French Attitude	.18	-.20	.82 ^c	-.03	.17
Anomic	.28	.24	-.08	.53 ^c	-.41 ^c
Authoritarian	-.03	-.08	-.07	.82 ^c	.18
Education	.06	.12	.01	-.49 ^c	.19
Fr. Fluency	.76 ^c	-.04	.08	.05	-.08
Home Language	-.90 ^c	.10	-.12	.01	-.03
French Frequency	.90 ^c	.03	.13	-.04	.10 ^c
Child's Fluency	.56 ^c	-.18	.04	-.22	.60 ^c
Number of Children in Immersion	.07	.03	-.19	-.63 ^c	-.11
Adaptability (item 1)	.06	-.09	.71 ^c	.11	-.05
Math (item 5)	-.10	.51 ^c	-.09	.05	.07
Govt. Jobs (item 7)	.08	-.01	.71 ^c	.01	-.13
Reading (item 9)	.13	-.26	.52 ^c	.18	-.11
All Jobs (item 11)	-.44 ^c	-.03	.40 ^c	.11	.11
Heritage (item 12)	-.25	-.46 ^c	.28	.01	-.02
School Involvement (item 15)	.02	-.21	.15	-.11	-.57 ^c
Shyness (item 18)	.01	.48 ^c	.20	-.22	-.17
Typical (item 20)	-.17	.62 ^c	-.11	-.15	.05
Instruction (item 21)	.00	.95 ^c	.05	-.01	.08
Percent of Factor Variance	41.3	25.4	14.5	11.8	7.0

^c Factor loading $\geq .40$ were considered significant

N.B., Opinionnaire items were scored so that lower scores reflect a positive opinion relative to the immersion French programme.

Factor correlations are shown in Table 18. Factor loadings greater than .40 were considered to be significant.

Table 18
Factor Correlations

Factor	II	III	IV	V
I	-.10	.02	-.08	-.05
II		-.25	-.25	-.11
III			-.02	-.18
IV				-.11

Factor I was a language-related factor. The negative loadings of home language and item 11 were a function of the wording of the questions. Item 11 stated that being bilingual would be an asset in getting a job. The loading of this question on this factor could be related to the fact that it has been traditional in the district for some French-speaking men to go to Quebec to work in the woods. This factor was not correlated with any of the other factors, and it was interesting that French attitude did not load on this factor.

Factor II and III were interesting because of the similarity of their make-up. The major difference between the two appears to be in the way the items were worded. In Factor II, the items were worded to favour the English language programme. In Factor III, the items were worded to favour the immersion French programme. In both factors,

the items were from several of the different opinionnaire subscales. There was a correlation of $-.25$ which would be consistent with the common content of the factors.

An anomaly in Factor II was the high, negative loadings on item #12, which was a positive statement about the impact of the immersion programme encouraging involvement in the French heritage of the area. The other items on the factor were statements which were positive toward the English programme. A closer examination of the items suggested other differences existed between those loadings on Factor II and those on Factor III. On Factor II, opinionnaire items 5, 18, 20 and 21 all suggested the idea that the English programme, overall, was best in terms of instructional benefit to the children, but item 12 suggested that the immersion programme was best in terms of its cultural benefits. Factor II may have been bi-polar, reflecting the idea that one factor influencing parental decision-making was a weighing of perceived instructional and cultural benefits.

In Factor III, items 2, 7, 9, and 11 suggested two ideas; first, that there was economic benefits to the immersion French programme; and second, that children could succeed in the programme without serious risk. This is quite different from saying that the programme was instructionally the best. French Attitude loads on Factor III, where low French Attitude scores were related to positive opinions about French immersion. Again, this could have meant that Factor III was bi-polar, so that decisions about French immersion were arrived at as a result of a weighing of attitude toward the French, the perceived benefits of being bilingual, and the perceived educational risk involved in the immersion French programme.

Factor IV was bi-polar as well, representing a contrast between feelings of anomie and expressions of authoritarianism, and education and experience with immersion. There was, apparently, some tendency for subjects who had lower anomie and authoritarian scores, to have higher education levels and more experience with the programme. Of course, the reverse was also true.

The fifth factor was a composite which seemed to contrast a consideration of the perceived French language ability of the child, and the parents' feelings of anomie and involvement in the school. High anomie and the opinion that French immersion lessened parental involvement at school was contrasted with the perception that the child had a good ability to speak French. Low anomie and the opinion that the immersion programme increased involvement of parents was associated with the perception of the child's poor ability to speak French.

The reason for the correlation between Factor II and III has been considered. Factors II and IV also correlated. This could be due to a relationship between item 12, having to do with the cultural impact of immersion French, and level of anomie. No other significant correlations were observed among the factors.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Overview

In a sense, the research questions posed in the initial chapter have been answered. Differences were found between parents electing early immersion French for their children, and those electing the English programme in virtually every area of investigation. Parents differed in terms of their background and language experience, education level, experience with French immersion, aspirations for their children, bicultural attitudes and opinions about the programme. In areas where no differences were found, for example, opinions about the effectiveness of teaching or ethnocentrism, the data collection procedures could be seen to be deficient.

While the findings describe general differences between the groups, it was obvious that justice had not been done to understanding the relationships which were found between the factors. For example, while it was apparent that parents with French language backgrounds tended to elect the immersion French experience for their children, some parents with this background placed their children in the English language programme. Likewise, opinion about the immersion programme tended to be positive, even among parents electing the English programme. The initial analysis seemed to suggest that decisions made by parents about which programme was best were based on diverse combinations of factors varying from parent to parent.

Basic Differences

Language Background. One of the most profound differences between the two groups of parents appeared to be in their language background. There was a pronounced tendency for parents with French backgrounds to choose the immersion French programme, and for those with English backgrounds to choose the English programme. Eighty-two percent of all parents were considered to be Anglophone. Of these, sixty-five percent chose the English programme. Sixty-seven percent of parents who spoke French fluently chose the immersion programme for their child. These figures do not lead immediately to a prediction about election into the immersion programme as only thirty families were involved in the study, with forty percent of the children having been placed into the immersion programme.

The weight of language background appears to have been maintained when the proportion of children entering immersion French was considered, although a complication was introduced when the language experience of the two parents differed. Both parents from nineteen of thirty families were interviewed. In five of these families, the language background of the parents was mixed. Three had elected the immersion French programme for their children. Both parents were of French background in only one of the families, which had elected the immersion programme for its child.

Education Level. The second, most apparent difference between the two groups of parents was the level of education. The group electing immersion French had a higher average level of education. The more profound difference was in the variability of the education of the two groups. Referring back to Table 8, it can be seen that almost all parents with grade eleven or higher elected the immersion programme for

their children. As well, it would appear that the most poorly educated parents chose the immersion programme, although a great deal of confidence cannot be placed in this conclusion. It is very important to note that the differences in education level did not appear to be significantly related to differences in language background.

Education level is inevitably linked with considerations of socio-economic status. SES was not directly investigated in this study because the Cape St. George region tended to be quite homogeneous with respect to this variable. Earlier reports on the project had failed to find any differences in SES among the groups that were significant. Nonetheless, a few families in the area would be regarded as having higher SES, as for example, the teachers. The immersion French classroom appeared to have represented both the extremes and the mainstream of the socio-economic and educational backgrounds of the community. The English classroom apparently was much more homogeneous, representing the typical SES of the community.

Motives for Parental Decisions

A simple comparison of the groups suggested many motives for the parental decisions which were made, but also introduced some contradictions. The areas of teaching effectiveness, parent opinion about the aspects of programme effectiveness, cultural and economic benefits, and student characteristics showed differences in the expected direction. None of the differences were extreme, however, and in each area of concern there was considerable similarity between the two groups. Many parents in both groups had highly positive opinions about immersion French. The difference between the two groups appeared to be that while some parents

in the English group had rather negative views in one or more of the areas of opinion, almost none of the immersion group parents were as negative.

In retrospect, it was unreasonable to have expected criticism of teaching, even if it were justified. The character of the people, and the close relationship of church and school made it unlikely that the respondents would have openly expressed concerns that they might have had about the teaching. It cannot be concluded from the data, therefore, that concern about the quality of teaching was not a factor.

The complexity of the decision-making process was better understood by considering the outcome of the factor analysis. There, French language background was a clear, and independent factor. This factor was not related to any of the others which were found.

The second factor suggested that parents viewed the English and the immersion French programmes as having different strengths. The English programme was seen to have had more academic merit by some parents, while the immersion programme was seen to have made an important cultural contribution. Parents weighed these aspects in making their decisions about the placement of the children.

The third factor was somewhat related to the second, and was interesting because it focused upon the fathers of children in the English kindergarten. In the second factor, the academic merit of the programmes was an issue. This reoccurred in the third factor, but in relation to the economic benefits of the programme, which suggested that the risk of academic failure was weighed against the potential economic benefits. Attitude towards French-speaking people was also

implicated. Apparently, in the sample of parents, those with higher scores on this scale tended to make more negative judgements about academic risk and economic benefits. In the analysis, it was found that fathers in the English group scored highest on the French Attitude Scale. Perhaps because of their role as breadwinner, the father's assessment of the economic benefits of the programme was an important aspect of decision-making.

This left open for speculation the interesting contradiction between positive attitudes toward the French, and negative attitudes toward the immersion French programme. There seemed to be no reason why these two attitudes should have been related. If a relationship had existed, it would have been expected to be positive. Perhaps the answer may be found in the design of the study. Except for the fathers of the English group, all other people in the study had low French Attitude scores, whereas one would have expected scores to be much higher. These scores suggested that most people, including those with a French background, had rather negative French attitudes, which was clearly not the case, at least among the people who lived in the area. It was possible, then, that most people found the French Attitude Scale ambiguous and responded in ways not intended by the test authors. The English group fathers, having recently been responsible for a decision leading to a rejection of the immersion programme, may have responded to the scale in a different way than did the others. If their views on the academic risks relative to economic benefits of the programme were strong enough to make a difference in the decision, then they may have responded to the French Attitude scale with a positive bias to show that they were not rejecting the French, but were thinking of what was best

for their children.

The fourth and fifth factors were associated with the mothers of the immersion children, who had lower Anomie scores than did the other parents. Factor four associated experience, Anomie and Authoritarianism. Experience was viewed in terms of education level and direct experience with the immersion programme by having had other children in it. Low Anomie and low Authoritarianism was related to higher education and direct experience with the programme. In the analysis, all of these factors were seen to discriminate the immersion parents, in particular the mothers, from the English group of parents. The low Anomie scores would be related to feeling the existence of norms and a direction for living. The lower Authoritarian scores indicated that the norms were inner based and directed, rather than external. The higher education levels and the direct experience with the programme would be seen as causally related to low Anomie and low Authoritarian attitudes. This factor, then, would appear to have been related to social expectancy and tradition. Persons who were less educated and had less direct experience with innovative approaches in education were more likely to opt for the known, more traditional educational programmes unless they were endowed with unusual inner direction.

The fifth factor, because of its loading on Anomie, was also associated with the mothers of the immersion children. This factor seemed to have focused on a concern for the immediate welfare of the children as a value or norm guiding the actions of the parents, and might likely have been an important factor when the child was perceived

to have had some handicap which could have threatened success. According to the analysis, the language ability of the child could have been seen as a possible handicap by some parents. Thus, the ability of parents to be involved with the programme would have become an important, mitigating factor for those who had assumed the responsibility for the educational welfare of their children. It was interesting that education and language background did not load significantly on this factor; thus, it was a factor which cut across the main distinction of education and language background which was in this study.

In conclusion, although language background and education level appeared to be important factors related to the decision made by parents about the kindergarten placement of their children, several modifying considerations were in evidence. Several constructs could be hypothesized. There appeared to be an underlying tendency to view the traditional English programme as best in terms of the academic welfare of the child. This outlook may have been modified by several, essentially independent considerations. Among these considerations were the perceived economic and cultural benefits of the programme, a belief that parental involvement could be influential, and knowledge about the programme, together with the broader educational outlook which might have been possessed by parents who had more education, themselves.

Implications

Returning to the theme of the first chapter, implications can be seen in two areas - programme evaluation, and recruitment.

Programme Evaluation. From this study, it is clear that in the Port au Port bilingual education project, evaluation which focuses upon

comparisons of the immersion French and English classrooms can be only marginally useful. This is so, first, because of the differences in the backgrounds of the children in terms of language experience and home influence due to the educational levels of the parents; and second, because of apparent differences in the motives of the parents, themselves, in selecting the immersion programme.

The recent literature has emphasized that language background and experience, and that the support in the home for language learning may be critical in language achievement in bilingual education programmes. It may be expected that this would be particularly the case in Cape St. George, where the environment would suggest marginal support for development in either French or English.

In the more homogeneous English classroom, development in the English language should proceed quite predictably, with perhaps the exception of the few children from Francophone, or bilingual home backgrounds. It is possible that these children will develop at a less rapid pace than will children from the English homes. Even though the level of education of their parents is similar to that of their Anglophone peers, there would not be as high a level of support in the home for learning English.

The children in the immersion classroom present an entirely different picture because of the variability of their backgrounds. In those instances where the level of home language experience is low, it is possible that children from Anglophone backgrounds will develop slowest of all in both French and English. It is not clear at this time if they would be able to achieve to expectation in either language.

When the home background is Francophone, or bilingual, it is possible that in combination with the immersion French programme, greater strength can be developed in French, leading ultimately to greater gains in English. In those cases where there is a strong Anglophone background, there is every hope that participation in immersion French will enhance development in English.

There is also some evidence that parental motives will have some influence upon the second-language achievement of children. In particular, it is possible that economic considerations are more powerful than the cultural consideration, if the instrumental and integrative categories of Gardner may be applied in this way. Because it is likely that parental decisions consider the economic and culture factors independently, it is possible that the various children in the programme will be influenced differently in terms of parental motivation.

In conclusion, evaluations which compare English and French streams in Cape St. George can give some indication of the relative achievements of the group, but they cannot provide insight into the variations in achievement to be expected given input characteristics of the children. Particularly, in view of the uniqueness of the area, the factors associated with volunteering are potentially influential in determining programme outcomes. The motivation of parents must be a consideration in interpreting these outcomes. To make simple comparisons of results requires the assumption that inputs into the two programmes have little to do with outcomes, an assumption which now must be rejected.

Recruitment. The viability of immersion French in Cape St. George is dependent upon the maintenance of a high level of support among

parents locally. Unlike programmes in more populous areas which can be maintained with only a small portion of the total school population, the Cape St. George project must draw about one-half of school-age children if it is to be maintained. As the years have progressed, its attractiveness appears to have decreased somewhat. The major issue with parents would appear to be their assumption that the English programme is best in terms of the academic welfare of the children. Any information which will modify this attitude could lead to larger enrollments in the immersion programme because of the undoubted attractiveness of the economic and cultural arguments that can be advanced for the programme.

There are two aspects of this problem. The first, is the accumulation of evidence about the academic effectiveness of immersion French, and in particular relating this to the varied backgrounds of the children. The second task is to communicate this meaningfully to parents.

Until now, the programme in Cape St. George has been presented as an option to the parents. The argument has been that the educational risks are minimal compared to the potential it presents for cultural renewal and economic improvement. It is not surprising, therefore, that these attitudes are reflected by the parents in making decisions about the placement of their children. It is time to examine the possibility that for some children, there may be real educational merit in the programme, and that immersion French may serve as a vehicle to help children achieve academically.

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APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. FRENCH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND

Mother _____ Mother tongue is French

_____ Speaks French fluently

_____ Speaks French a little

_____ Speaks no French at all

Father _____ Father tongue is French

_____ Speaks French fluently

_____ Speaks French a little

_____ Speaks no French at all

2. LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME

_____ English _____ French _____ English & French

_____ Other (Please Specify) _____

3. HOW OFTEN IS FRENCH SPOKEN AT HOME?

_____ very often _____ often _____ now and then

_____ rarely _____ never

4. HOW WELL DOES YOUR CHILD SPEAK FRENCH?

_____ as well as English _____ very well

_____ not bad _____ not very well

5. HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE ENROLLED IN FRENCH IMMERSION?

_____ none _____ one _____ two
_____ three _____ four

6. DO YOU HAVE ANY CLOSE FRIENDS WITH CHILDREN IN THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM?

_____ yes _____ no

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL OPINIONNAIRE

1. Children quickly adapt to instruction in French.
2. Subjects such as Science and Mathematics are best taught in English.
3. Children in French Immersion learn to read as well in English as those in the English programme by the time they finish Elementary School.
4. Parents of French Immersion children feel they are more a part of the child's education in school.
5. Children learn better when they are instructed in English
6. The English programme is better for students from typical, average families.
7. Bilingual people get better jobs with the government.
8. The French Immersion programme at school has helped to make families in the area more involved in their French heritage.
9. Children in the English programme learn as much about their heritage as children in the French programme.
10. 'Better off' families send their children into French Immersion.
11. Children who speak both French and English have a better chance of getting a job in other provinces.
12. Children must appreciate that both French-speaking and English-speaking people are important to the development of Canada.
13. Children enrolled in French Immersion are more outgoing.
14. The overall quality of instruction in the French Immersion programme has been at least as good as in the English programme.
15. Children learn a second language better when they are older.
16. No matter what the type of work, being bilingual would be an asset in terms of getting a job.
17. Children in the French Immersion programme make more friends.
18. French Immersion is better for bright children.
19. Better teachers are needed for the French Immersion programme than the English programme.
20. Shy children are best taught in English.

21. People who are bilingual are most likely to go to college.

22. Slow learners can learn just as well in French as in English.

APPENDIX C

FRENCH LANGUAGE ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

FRENCH ATTITUDE SCALE

1. The French people who have moved to our country have made a great contribution to the richness of our society.
2. The more I get to know French-speaking people, the more I want to be able to speak their language.
3. French-speaking people are very democratic in their politics and way of thinking.
4. French-speaking people have produced outstanding artists and writers.
5. By bringing the old French way of life to our society, they have contributed greatly to our own way of life.
6. French-speaking people's underlying faith in their religious beliefs is a positive force in this modern world.
7. The French-speaking person has every reason to be proud of his race and tradition.
8. If Canada should lose the influence of French-speaking people, it would indeed be a great loss.
9. French-speaking people are much more polite than most older Canadians.
10. We can learn better ways of cooking, serving food, and entertaining from the French-speaking people.
11. French-speaking people are very dependable.
12. Canadian children can learn much of value by associating with French-speaking playmates.
13. French-speaking people set a good example for us by their family life.
14. French-speaking people are generous and friendly to strangers.
15. Canadians should make a greater effort to meet more French-speaking people.
16. It is wrong to force the French-speaking person to become completely English Canadian in his habits.
17. St. John's would be a much greater city if more French-speaking people would move there.

18. French-speaking people are generally more sincere and likeable than any other group of people.
19. The French-speaking people show great understanding in the way they adjust to the way of life of other Canadians.
20. In general, the Canadian work force tends to benefit from the employment of French-speaking people.

ANOMIE SCALE

1. In Canada today, government is really not very interested in the problems of the average man.
2. Our country is by far the best country in which to live.
3. The state of the world being what it is, it is very difficult for a student to plan for his career.
4. In spite of what they say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better.
5. These days a person doesn't really know whom he can count on.
6. It is hardly fair to bring children into the world with the way things look for the future.
7. No matter how hard I try, I always seem to get a raw deal.
8. The opportunities offered young people today are far greater than they ever have been.
9. Having lived this long here in this country, I'd be happier living in some other country now.
10. In this country, it's whom you know, not what you know that makes for success.
11. The big trouble with our country is that it relies on the law of the jungle: "get him before he gets you".
12. Sometimes I can't see much sense in putting so much time into education and learning.

PARENTAL ETHNOCENTRISM SCALE

1. The worst danger to real Canadians during the last 50 years has come from foreign ideas and agitators.
2. Certain people who refuse to salute the Canadian flag should be forced to do so or be imprisoned.
3. Canada may not be perfect, but the Canadian way has brought us about as close as human beings have ever been to a perfect society.
4. It is only natural and right for each person to think that his family is better than any other.

PARENTAL CULTURAL ALLEGIANCE SCALE

1. Compared to French-speaking people, other Canadians are more sincere and honest.
2. Family life is less important to French-speaking people than it is to other Canadians.
3. Canadian children are better mannered than French-speaking Canadian children are.
4. Compared to other Canadians, the French are a very unimaginative people.
5. The French way of life seems crude when compared to ours.
6. The French would benefit greatly if they adopted many aspects of English Canadian culture.
7. People are much happier in France than they are here.
8. If I had my way, I would rather live in France than in this country.
9. The opportunities offered young people in Canada are far greater than in France.

PARENTAL AUTHORITY SCALE

1. Obedience and respect for authority are the most important things children should learn.
2. What young people need most is strict discipline, rugged determination, and the will to work and fight for family and country.
3. Nowadays, when so many different kinds of people move around and mix together so much, a person has to protect himself especially carefully against catching an infection or disease from them.
4. What this country needs most, more than laws and political programs, is a few courageous, tireless, devoted leaders in whom the people can put their faith.
5. No weakness or difficulty can hold us back if we have enough willpower.
6. Human nature, being what it is, there will always be war and conflict.
7. A person who has bad manners, habits and breeding can hardly expect to get along with different people.
8. People can be divided into two distinct classes: the weak and the strong.
9. There is hardly anything lower than a person who does not feel a great love, gratitude and respect for his parents.
10. The true Canadian way of life is disappearing so fast that force may be needed to preserve it.
11. Nowadays, more and more people are prying into matters that should remain personal and private.
12. If people would talk less and work more, everybody would be better off.
13. Most people don't realize how much our lives are controlled by plots thought of in secret places.





