TEACHERS' BELIEFS and PRACTICES CONCERNING the USE of FRENCH and ENGLISH in GRADE 7 LATE FRENCH IMMERSION

A Thesis

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Abstract

This is a qualitative study, the main goal of which is to provide insight into three Grade 7 late French immersion (LFI) teachers' perspectives on their use of the target language (TL) and of their students' first language (L1); the researcher himself is one of the three participants. A review of the literature for and against L1 use in second language teaching is presented. Pre- and post-interviews were conducted, along with classroom observations and follow-up interviews using stimulated recall techniques. Two research questions were addressed: What are the beliefs and practices of three Grade 7 LFI teachers regarding TL and L1 use? What factors shape LFI teachers' belief systems and practice concerning their use of the TL and the students' L1? All three teacher-participants provided students with exposure to large amounts of rich TL input and opportunities to communicate in the TL. However, while one of the three teachers used the TL almost exclusively, the other two believed that they could enhance student comprehension of TL input and TL production by using the students' L1 in certain situations. A re-thinking of the current TL-only guidelines in LFI is recommended and a model for professional development is proposed through which teachers can develop a personalized yet pedagogically-principled approach to TL and L1 use.

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I am also very grateful to the six late French immersion (LFI) teachers who welcomed me into their classes and agreed to share their beliefs and strategies for maximizing students' target language intake, production and learning.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Mayumi, my daughters, Leia and Rui, and my parents, Dawn and Wayne, for their support and understanding as I worked on what seemed to everyone, I'm sure, like a never-ending task.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Rationale, Research Questions and My Experiences

1.1 Rationale

> "There is nothing that should always or never be done in the classroom, and even that is an over generalization."
> (Penny Ur, quoted in *Why English Teachers in Japan Need to Learn Japanese*, by David Barker, 2003)

Since the advent of communicative-style language teaching in the 1970's, codeswitching – that is, switching between the target language (TL) and the students' first language (L1)[1] – has been widely viewed as either counterproductive to the learning process, or as an unfortunate but sometimes necessary "recourse". In much of the second language acquisition (SLA) literature, the proponents of TL exclusivity (or near exclusivity) have either discouraged teachers' use of their students' L1, or have simply treated it as a non-issue by omitting any reference to it (Cook, 2001). Recently, however, a growing number of researchers have made strong arguments in favour of a limited, but positive role for the learner's L1 in the second language (L2) classroom. Advocates of judicious codeswitching are very much in favour of providing students with exposure to large amounts of rich TL input and ample opportunities for meaningful communication in the TL; however, they argue that codeswitching can, in certain circumstances, enhance L2 learning within a communicative approach.

As the name of the program implies, and in accordance with government policy in several Canadian provinces, French immersion teachers are generally expected to conduct lessons exclusively in French. Thus we might expect that there would be no codeswitching by late French immersion[2] (LFI) teachers; perhaps L1 use is a non-issue in LFI programs. However, where teachers are afforded a certain degree of professional freedom concerning TL and L1 use, some may deviate from official guidelines in situations where they feel it is necessary or

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[1] This definition is used by Macaro (2005); others (e.g., Liebscher & Daily-O'Cain, 2004; Celik, 2003) have adopted more technical definitions for codeswitching, however I use the word in its broad sense throughout, as I have here.
[2] Late French immersion is a program that begins in grade 6 or 7, usually preceded by three years of core French; in the present study, grade 7 is the students' first year of immersion classes and students typically have very limited French skills upon entering the program.

beneficial to students' L2 learning. Indeed, it seems that L2 teachers in general tend to develop an individualized approach to TL and L1 use; several studies have shown a wide range of TL use among instructors in various non-immersion contexts (for example, from 10% to 100% TL use, Duff and Polio, 1990). Levine (2003, p. 343) suggests that the approach L2 teachers take may be influenced by their teacher training, knowledge of the SLA literature, official policy, and classroom experience – yet for many teachers, their approach to TL and L1 use "appears to be based primarily on classroom experience and intuitions about what feels right."

LFI is an intensive program, requiring students with low levels of TL proficiency (especially in Grade 7) to achieve learning outcomes equivalent to those of the regular English program in subjects such as social studies, math and science. Given this special challenge of teaching the curriculum in the TL, and taking into consideration students' different learning styles and abilities, we might expect – as has been observed in other L2 teaching contexts – that some LFI teachers may use the students' L1 for carrying out certain pedagogical functions, at least with some students, even where guidelines proscribe L1 use. In my own practice as a Grade 7 LFI teacher, and to a much lesser extent with my Grade 8 and 9 LFI students, I have used English in certain teaching situations and often wondered about the relative benefits and potential negative effects of either using the students' L1 or remaining in the TL. Prior to beginning work on this thesis, I was aware of anecdotal evidence suggesting that at least some other LFI teachers also used English, to varying degrees. At the same time, I also knew that many LFI teachers used very little codeswitching, or conducted all lessons entirely in French. Having encountered these differences in other LFI teachers' beliefs and practice, and confronted with the fact that my own codeswitching was not completely in keeping with ministerial guidelines concerning TL and L1 use, I decided to undertake the present study.

Research in the area of teachers' beliefs and TL and L1 use has mainly examined post-secondary level foreign language instruction; there have also been a number of studies involving secondary level modern foreign language (MFL) teachers in countries other than Canada. While I assisted with one study into core French teachers' belief systems and TL and L1 use (Turnbull, 2005), few other studies have examined teachers' beliefs and practices concerning L1 use in Canadian second language programs (e.g., Arnett, 2001; Turnbull & Lamoureux, 2001). The present study investigates, from a qualitative perspective, Grade 7 LFI teachers' beliefs and practice related to TL and L1 use. To my knowledge, there have been no other studies to date (September, 2006) which have attempted to examine LFI teachers' beliefs surrounding TL and L1 use, and their actual use of English[3].

That the topic of TL and L1 use has not been more directly addressed by LFI educators and researchers may be a reflection of the belief on which the program was founded, as Calvé articulates:

> L'immersion a été fondée sur la foi que des apprenants exposés *exclusivement* à la langue seconde apprendraient, non seulement la langue elle-même, mais les matières enseignées dans cette langue. Et, c'est animés de cette foi dans l'extraordinaire faculté humaine d'apprendre n'importe quelle langue lorsque confrontée à de véritables besoins de communication, que des milliers d'enseignants accueillent chaque année dans leurs classes des apprenants qui ne comprennent pas un mot de français et qui pourtant devront apprendre tous leurs sujets scolaires dans cette langue, et ce *dès la première journée de classe*[4] (italics added, Calvé, 1993, p. 17-18).

[3] English was the L1 for all students in the classes involved in this study. I recognize that codeswitching from French to English may not be as practical or as useful in LFI classes in Canada where students do not share the same L1.

The question of teacher L1 use is a complex and sensitive issue, especially in immersion settings where curriculum guidelines prescribe 100% (or near 100%) TL use. Given the assumption that LFI teachers use the TL exclusively, the issue of codeswitching by teachers rarely, if ever, enters professional discussions. However, some LFI teachers may question whether their personal approach to TL and L1 use (whether they use the L1 to a certain extent or not) is appropriate or most beneficial for their students' L2 learning. These teachers are left without a clear picture of what other teachers actually do. Thus one further goal of the present study is to demystify the issue of LFI teachers' TL and L1 use. I hope that by opening the issue up for discussion, different approaches to TL and L1 use may be acknowledged and better understood. By reviewing the research literature on the topic and reflecting on our own beliefs and practice related to TL and L1 use, I hope that the participating teachers (myself included), as well as others, will be empowered to find what is, for them and their students, the optimal balance between maximizing opportunities for TL input and production, and the pedagogically principled use of the L1.

1.2 Research Questions

This study was designed to explore the following questions:

1) What are the beliefs and practice of three Grade 7 LFI teachers regarding TL and L1 use?

2) What factors shape LFI teachers' belief systems and practice concerning their use of the TL and the students' L1?

These research questions stem, to a large degree, from my own experience as a Grade 7 LFI teacher; deciding when and how to use my students' L1 and when to persist in the TL has been a challenging issue for me. In the remainder of this chapter, I describe my experiences as a language learner and teacher to show how my beliefs concerning TL and L1 use have been shaped, and to make readers aware of the biases that my background may entail.

1.3 My Experiences as a Second Language Learner

As far as I can recall, after three years of core French[5] in Grades 4 to 6, I had learned how to count to 20 and say "Bonjour," "Au revoir" and "Est-ce que je peux aller aux toilettes?" along with perhaps a dozen or so other words and phrases (*chien, maison, je m'appelle, sur la table,* etc.). Then, in Grade 7, I started late French immersion. I remember that for the first day or two, my Grade 7 teacher spoke some English, but he told us that after those first couple of days he would start speaking 100% French. No more English. I remember wondering whether I would be able to understand. How hard was it going to be? I was a bit nervous – however, the fact that our teacher was going to be speaking "totally in French" wasn't a surprise to us. We expected as much because we were in French immersion and that was the whole idea of the program. That was how we were going to learn French. We had chosen to enter the program, or had been encouraged to do so by our parents, and it was understood that French immersion was 100% French. I can only recall a very few times during the year when my Grade 7 teacher spoke any English – once or twice when the class had misbehaved and made too much noise, and perhaps a few words used in humor; I remember him joking with us in English a few times after school. We studied our verbs from the beginning; I remember copying long lists from the blackboard. I didn't always understand what was going on that first year – I remember doing whole pages in my workbook incorrectly, because I hadn't understood (hadn't been able – or sometimes hadn't even tried – to read) the instructions; I know I wasn't the only one! I remember being told to study numbers up to 100, then not studying them and being worried that I would fall so far behind that I wouldn't be able to catch up, as we had been warned would happen. I did eventually learn my numbers and a lot more besides. As we progressed through Grade 7 and

[5] Core French typically begins in grade 4. Most provinces and territories aim to provide about 600 hours of core French instruction by the end of elementary or middle school, however instruction time varies from school to school; the amount of core French instruction in elementary schools often depends on teacher availability and qualifications (*Core French in Canada*, Canadian Parents for French – retrieved August 11, 2006 from http://www.cpfnb.com/core_FAQ/CoreFAQ.html).

built up a critical mass of vocabulary, I believe my teacher was able to explain more and more unknown words using synonyms or by paraphrasing in the TL.

Grade 8 was much like Grade 7, except that by then I basically understood all the French used by the teacher for conducting daily routines and explaining activities. Again, as far as I can remember, my Grade 8 teacher almost never spoke English. In Grade 9, my teacher was a Francophone[6] and, as far as we could tell, he didn't speak very much English; we only heard him speak a word or two of English during the year. I can remember times, when he was explaining things at length in French, listening and trying to figure out what he was saying. Sometimes he would speak continuously for several minutes and I often felt that I was one of the few students who were able to understand even part of what he was saying. Indeed, it seemed that I was sometimes one of the few who was even trying to follow his explanations, as we had some fairly serious discipline issues in that Grade 9 class. I was often able to infer what he was trying to get across, based on the words I did understand; however, I also remember that I sometimes could only catch a few words here and there and really had no idea what he meant. I enjoyed the challenge of trying to figure out what the teacher was saying and remember feeling proud when I was able to provide an answer that fit more or less with what he had been asking. I also remember feeling disappointed and embarrassed when I gave an answer that completely missed the mark. I also remember his frustration when we were unable to grasp what he was saying.

During my three years in LFI, I developed a real appreciation for French-Canadian language and culture. I always tried to make connections with what I already knew in English. We studied French-English vocabulary lists. Many of the short stories we read featured L1 translations alongside the text and exercises would often ask us to find French words in the text related to English words. Taking note of L1/L2 similarities and differences was a useful strategy

[6] I believe that my grade 7 and 8 teachers were also native French speakers. They were certainly highly proficient in the target language, however they were both equally proficient in English.

for me as a learner. I always looked for TL-L1 cognates and often noticed similarities and differences in sentence structure, grammar and verb tenses. For example, I remember realizing that the -"ant" verb ending in French was used much the same way as gerunds in English; knowing this, I was able to internalize this structure almost immediately. Even where TL and L1 forms were different, I was able take note of the differences. Looking back, I wonder if other students relied as heavily on making these connections. Perhaps making L1-L2 connections is related to learning style preferences. I'm sure there were times when a word or two in English would have helped me to understand more fully, although I also wouldn't have wanted the teacher to use more than was really useful to me.

By the end of Grade 9 I had achieved a fairly high level of fluency as far as communication in the classroom was concerned. I don't remember speaking much French with my fellow students; we usually spoke English amongst ourselves. My L2 production mostly consisted of trying to answer the teacher's questions and doing a number of presentations in front of the class, along with larger amounts of written work. Again, in Grades 10 to 12, my teachers spoke French 100% of the time – I can't remember them ever speaking English, but by then there would have been very little need to. However, I do remember reading novels and plays from Quebec (*Florence*, *Ti-Coq*, *Zone*, *Agaguk*) and finding that unknown words sometimes made it hard to follow parts of the story. I enjoyed reading these works; however a word or two in English by times would likely have helped me to process the unknown vocabulary and appreciate the stories even more.

At university, I decided to continue my French studies and for the first time seriously considered becoming a French teacher. In most university classes, we were given little opportunity to develop our speaking skills. We spent most of the time listening to the professor, followed by reading and writing assignments at home, with the exception of one younger, avant-

garde professor who designed more communicative-type activities and really encouraged us to speak French (although students still spoke quite a lot of English during collaborative activities). By this time, I had come to rely heavily on my French-English dictionary, which contained many expressions and example sentences. When writing assignments, I would spend hours looking up words and expressions, often first thinking of what I wanted to say (or write) in English and then consulting my dictionary to see how it should be said in French. This allowed me to express more complex ideas and to use advanced-level words and expressions that I simply wouldn't have known otherwise. I tried to make my writing as natural-sounding or native-like as possible, but the complexity of the ideas I wanted to express, or the register of language I wanted to use, was sometimes still beyond my level of proficiency. I knew better than to try to translate directly word for word – a sure recipe for Franglais!

After three years of university French courses, I felt that I had learned about as much as I could in an English-language environment. I wanted to "live" in French in order to further improve and become truly "bilingual," so I decided to go to a Francophone university in Quebec for the final year of my B.A. While there, I tried to avoid spending too much time with other native English speakers in order to maximize my exposure to French. My whole reason for going to Quebec was to speak and socialize with native French speakers, and indeed this helped strengthen my French skills immensely. By this point, I could understand almost anything that was explained to me in French but it was still helpful for me to know what words meant in English, even if I only made the connection myself, in my head; this helped me to understand and also remember new words. By now I was able to really think in French and express myself almost as well as in English. I had come a long way since Grade 7, when I had to try to mentally translate almost everything I heard in French into English, and things I wanted to say from English into French.

After becoming a French teacher and teaching LFI for a few years, I started learning Japanese. I had only learned a few basic phrases before leaving for Japan to teach English. I didn't take any formal Japanese classes, but used self-study books and practiced through communicating with friends, colleagues, and students (mostly outside of class) on a daily basis. As I learned Japanese, as well as while teaching English to Japanese students, I found that there was an even greater need to refer to my (or the students') L1 compared to when I learned and taught French. I believe that this was due in part to the fact that while Japanese has many loan words borrowed from English, there are not as many as the roughly 23,000 French-English cognates (LeBlanc & Séguin, cited in Calvé, 1993) which benefit Anglophone learners of French as a second language. In the LFI context, many of these cognates may be evident to students, which should lessen the teacher's need to provide L1 equivalents. However, based on my experience, these cognates may not always be obvious, or at least not to all students, and of course some resemblances between French and English are misleading and need to be identified as such.

1.4 My Experiences as a Second Language Teacher

After deciding to major in French at university, I took a course in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). This was the first time I was really exposed to SLA theory. It was the late 1980s and the main thrust of this course was based on Krashen and Terrell's "Natural Approach" (1983). We learned about the comprehensible input hypothesis (i + 1), the monitor hypothesis, the difference between learning and acquisition, and so on. As I read these theories, I thought that they made a lot of sense, and when I became a teacher a few years later, Krashen's theories formed the foundation of my beliefs about L2 learning. These theories reaffirmed the TL-only approach my own LFI teachers had modeled as the best way to teach a second language (my

apprenticeship through observation), although my teachers had not necessarily followed such a "naturally" communicative approach.

However, in contradiction to this seemingly well-established principle of L1 avoidance, the strategies I had actually used myself as a learner often relied on making TL-L1 connections. While I was aware, as I took this first SLA course, that my L1 had played an important role in my own L2 learning, I hadn't yet fully recognized the need to reconcile these different approaches. Indeed, as I learned more about Krashen's theories, I was quite willing to set aside what I thought I knew from my own learning experience and to accept this exciting, innovative, more "natural" approach as the best way to teach and learn a second language, especially since it powerfully reinforced the TL-only philosophy that had governed, on the surface at least, my own LFI experience.

Following my year in Quebec, where I finished my B.A., I enrolled in a two-year B.Ed. program at another French-Canadian university, specializing in teaching French as a second language. While I learned a great deal in many of the courses, I don't recall any real focus on strategies for maximizing TL use (or any mention of codeswitching); it was understood that immersion teachers should strictly avoid using the students' L1. Thus my own experiences as a student in LFI, my time spent in Quebec, and what I had retained of Krashen's theories formed the basis of my beliefs regarding TL and L1 use. However, as a Grade 7 LFI teacher, I soon found that using the TL exclusively wasn't always the easiest or the most effective strategy for me and my students. This is not to say that I used what I would consider to be large amounts of English. I generally spoke English on the first day of school with some French, and then used a mixture of the TL and L1 for the first several weeks, which I would estimate at perhaps 80% French and 20% English for most activities, with others requiring little L1 use or none at all. Beyond the first month or so, I generally spoke 95% French – sometimes more, sometimes less. I

used English mainly for presenting certain vocabulary words, usually where a known TL synonym didn't present itself, an explanation in French seemed likely to further confuse the matter, or the word was not easily represented by a picture. I also sometimes used a word or two of English for communication repair during spontaneous discussions and for checking comprehension (usually asking students to give an English equivalent). Finally, I used English for pointing out similarities and differences between French and English, such as cognates, "faux amis," and grammatical structures. Many times, before switching to the L1, I would give a synonym or description in French, or would draw a picture. I would then often see that some students had understood, but others – sometimes many, sometimes only a few – hadn't. Other times, I would give hints in French and ask students for the meaning in English; if they didn't know, then I would provide the L1 word. I often asked students to look up new words in their bilingual dictionaries. Only on rare occasions would I use more than a word or two of English at one time, usually for administrative announcements.

After a few years of teaching Grade 7 LFI, along with a few Grade 8 and 9 classes, I went to Japan to teach English. As an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT), my main objective was to help increase the amount of English (TL) used in English foreign language classes through team-teaching with Japanese English teachers and facilitating the implementation of more communicative activities[7]. I sometimes found it very difficult to teach English to students when I did not speak, nor *understand*, more than a few basic phrases in their L1. Communication breakdowns were fairly common – there were several times when I was grateful to have my

[7] It is quite common for Japanese English teachers at the intermediate and high school level to use Japanese when giving instructions, explaining English words and grammar, etc. Recently, however, more and more Japanese English teachers are using the TL as the main language of instruction, and are placing more emphasis on communicative-type speaking activities. The JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) Programme hires ALTs to – among other things – help Japanese English teachers implement a more communicative approach. For more information on the JET Programme, visit: www.jetprogramme.org

Japanese teaching partner with me to help bridge the communication gaps, using Japanese or a combination of Japanese and English.

After a year or so of living in Japan and studying the language, my Japanese had improved and I was able to make use of simple words and phrases where necessary during lessons, usually for communication repair. As my Japanese improved, so did my relationships with students. We were able to use both English and Japanese when talking in small groups or one-on-one, in class and at lunchtime or after school. They seemed to appreciate any effort I made to help them understand my stories and jokes using a few Japanese words. The main focus of my teaching was still to provide as much authentic yet comprehensible TL input as possible, while also providing students with plenty of opportunity for communicating in English. To this end I tried to limit my use of the students' L1, using it as a support where helpful for ensuring comprehension. I'm quite sure that the Japanese I used had a net benefit for most of my students (at least most of the time). My selective use of codeswitching helped them to understand more of what I was saying in English, while if I had not used any Japanese they might have understood very little or nothing at all. I had usually already used several modification techniques (speaking slowly, repeating, providing synonyms, paraphrasing, simplifying syntax, drawing pictures) before adding a word or two of Japanese. Time was another factor, since I taught a large number of classes and only spent about four hours per month with each class. This made it difficult to build on what we had worked on in previous lessons. With more regular contact, students could have become familiar with TL words and expressions more quickly, which probably would have lessened the need for codeswitching.

After four years in Japan, I returned to work as a Grade 7 LFI teacher in Canada. I taught French language arts, math and FPS[8] to two Grade 7 classes. Again, I used English from time to time – sometimes more, sometimes less. I still tried to use French as much as possible, but I think that, having seen some Japanese students' struggles, I had a greater appreciation for the difficulties experienced by some students when faced with virtually total immersion in the TL. I still felt somewhat uncomfortable, or slightly guilty, about using English, but I believe this had more to do with what I felt was expected of me rather than my L1 use going against my beliefs of what worked best for my students. I felt that my use of English was, for the most part, justified; but I also felt that by using the L1 I wasn't quite doing what – according to ministerial guidelines and the expectations of certain others (teachers, parents, and students) – I was supposed to be doing. I knew that some of my stronger students likely did not need to hear or see many of the English words I used; some may have been surprised and perhaps even disappointed when I did use English. I sometimes wondered what other teachers were doing, but I found that it was a difficult subject to discuss with other LFI teachers. Our discussions regarding L1 use were usually focused on trying to get our students to speak more French.

My beliefs have changed over the years. At the beginning of my career, I made a conscious effort to speak as little English (L1) as possible. I would always explain things in French, and if some students still didn't understand, I would try another way, again in French. I was also more at ease with the idea of leaving students to deal with a certain amount of ambiguity, as I believed that they would come to understand eventually through repeated exposure to the TL. I believed that students would "acquire" (in Krashen and Terrell's sense of the word) the TL through exposure to comprehensible input, which no doubt they did to some extent. However, as I gained more experience I found that students often required the meaning of

[8] Formation personnelle et sociale (FPS) is a health education course, covering themes such as healthy eating habits, exercise, decision-making, relationships and human sexuality.

a French word, or needed to be given a French word to meet their immediate communicative or academic needs (for example, completing an exercise in their workbook, writing a story, preparing for a test, or just trying to understand me) long before they would have the chance to infer meaning and acquire TL words and rules through repeated exposure. Compared to my first year of teaching Grade 7 LFI, I gradually became less hesitant about codeswitching. This is not to say that I used large amounts of L1; even in my last year of teaching I would estimate my TL use at 95% for most activities. Most of my codeswitching consisted of providing isolated L1 equivalents for unknown TL words during discussions or when introducing vocabulary at the beginning of an activity. This is not to say that I always used English in these situations; I often used synonyms and paraphrasing in the TL when I thought students would understand, along with gestures and pictures (I am a visual person and I like to draw). My expectation was that once students knew what a word meant in English, they would then be able to start using the word and codeswitching would no longer be necessary. I felt that the benefits of my use of the L1 outweighed any potential negative effects, as I didn't believe that my use of English was detracting from their exposure to French in a serious way. I thought that I was a good linguistic model, providing students with exposure to large amounts of rich, high quality TL input, and this made me feel somewhat less guilty about occasionally using some English. I found that codeswitching could, by times, also be helpful in trying to maintain the pace of the lesson and for keeping certain students focused on the task at hand.

Nonetheless, I'm sure there were times when I could have opted not to use the L1. These TL/L1 decisions were usually made "on the fly," some of my codeswitching was probably quite helpful to many students, but at other times perhaps less so. However, as I re-examine my past practices, I feel that my teaching, and my students' L2 learning, could have benefited much more

from changes to some of the materials I used and the types of activities I planned than from my using a little less English or more French.

In this first chapter, I have explained why I think the very important, yet often neglected topic of L1 use in LFI deserves closer examination; I have also given an account of how my beliefs have evolved, thus declaring my biases before presenting the rest of this thesis.

In Chapter 2, I provide a review of the relevant literature. Chapter 3 provides details concerning the design of the present study, including the context, selection of participants, methods, data analysis, and reliability, validity and transferability of my findings. Chapter 4 contains my analysis of the data collected, examines the belief systems of the two other LFI teacher-participants and gives an account of how they used the TL and L1 with their Grade 7 classes. Finally, in Chapter 5, I summarize the findings, relating them to my two research questions and my theoretical framework. I also include some reflections and then make recommendations based on the findings, including a rethinking of TL/L1 guidelines for LFI. I also propose directions for future research, including a model for professional development for LFI teachers based on TL/L1 action research.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

In the first part of this chapter, I examine the theoretical arguments for and against TL exclusivity in L2 teaching. Next, I look at how TL exclusivity came to be widely accepted as best practice at all levels of L2 teaching, and the recent trend towards accepting that judicious L1 use can play a beneficial role in L2 teaching and learning. I then consider the case for TL maximization and the potential benefits of judicious L1 use. Finally, I review previous relevant studies regarding teachers' beliefs and actual TL and L1 use, as well as studies on students' use of the TL and L1. The goal of this literature review is to challenge the TL-only paradigm by presenting leading-edge theory and empirical evidence in support of the idea that limited, judicious L1 use can increase L2 learning in certain situations. Throughout, I keep in mind that the main goal of French immersion, as in most second or foreign language programs, is to develop students' communicative competence. As expressed by Calvé (1993), this is undoubtedly best achieved through a communicative approach in which students are exposed to large quantities of rich, comprehensible TL input, mainly supplied by the teacher, and are also provided with ample opportunity for production and interaction in the TL. C'est en forgeant qu'on devient forgeron[9]!

2.1 L1 Influence within a Cognitive Approach to L2 Learning

Although the debate surrounding TL and L1 use in L2 teaching goes back at least several hundred years (Krashen & Terrell, 1983), current acceptance of TL exclusivity, or L1 avoidance, as best practice can be traced to the cognitive revolution of the late 1950s (van Lier, 2000). In the 50's and 60's, Skinner's behaviourist account of L2 learning and proponents of Contrastive Analysis considered that the L1 played a central role in L2 learning, with L1 transfer viewed as

[9] "Practice makes perfect", or literally, "It's by smithing, that one becomes a blacksmith". This is an example of an expression that I would explain to students by using their existing L1 knowledge and TL-L1 cognates (forge) in order to convey meaning and also aid with retention. I would also point out to my students that French verbs ending in *–ant* are equivalent to the English *–ing*.

habits carried over from the L1, most often causing interference. However, with Chomsky's refutation of Skinner's behaviourism, the influence of the L1 on L2 learning was also largely discounted: "because [L1] transfer was strongly associated with behaviourist thought, a way of arguing that second language learning was not a behaviourist-based activity was to argue that transfer was not a major, or even important, factor in attempts to account for second language learning" (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p.79).

Dulay and Burt (1974, as cited in Gass & Selinker, 1994) first developed the idea that young L2 learners acquire their new language in much the same way that children acquire their L1, guided by innate mechanisms – such as Chomsky's Universal Grammar – and actively constructing rules "until the mismatch between what they are exposed to and what they produce is resolved" (p. 37, cited in Gass & Selinker, 1994, p. 80). Morpheme order studies[10] (e.g., Dulay & Burt, 1974) attempted to show that learners with different L1s progressed through a similar pattern of English L2 development, thus providing evidence for innate, universal factors and downplaying the importance of L1 influence on L2 acquisition. However, these researchers extended the implications too far: "Whereas it may be the case that there is a predicted order of the acquisition of English morphemes, *it is not the case that all of acquisition takes place in a predicted order and that there is justification to minimize the role of the native language*" (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p. 87, my italics). In trying to demonstrate that the influence of the L1 was insignificant, researchers hoped to gain approval for the cognitive view of SLA as the successor to the behaviorist account. "However, this line of argument attacks incorrect assumptions. It is more appropriate to question whether transfer is a habit-based phenomenon or not, because it is not inconceivable that one could adopt a cognitive view of SLA and maintain the significance of the NL (native language)" (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p. 87).

[10] See Gass & Selinker (1994) for a critical review of these studies.

2.2 *TL Exclusivity and the L1 = L2 Hypothesis*

The main theoretical argument which underlies TL exclusivity in L2 teaching is the L1 = L2 hypothesis. Guest and Pachler (2001) note that a central methodological question "concerns the extent to which teachers should make the structure of the TL explicit or how much they should try to mimic the L1 acquisition process" (p. 85). To a large degree, young children learn their L1 without receiving direct instruction, that is without being explicitly taught words and grammar rules. Rather L1 acquisition takes place implicitly[11] or incidentally, as well as through inferencing (guessing using contextual cues) and hypothesis testing. Furthermore, monolingual L1 learners make no reference to any other language, since by definition they cannot. Thus, if L2 learning is equivalent to L1 learning, there would be no need for L2 rules to be explicitly taught for conscious learning, and teachers would not have to provide translations for unknown L2 words or point out similarities and differences between L1 and L2 structures.

2.2.1 *Implicit and explicit learning.*

Krashen's theories on L2 acquisition, which have had an important influence on L2 teaching and research over the past 20 years, were largely based on the L1 = L2 hypothesis. According to Krashen (1985), L2 acquisition was to take place subconsciously through exposure to comprehensible input (i + 1) in the TL, with the learner focusing on meaning rather than form, and TL rules were to be acquired via inference rather than through explicit instruction. Krashen and Terrell (1983) stated that according to their Natural Approach to L2 learning, "the instructor always uses the target language" (p. 20). They added that while the teacher was to speak in the target language "exclusively", students were free to use their L1 until they themselves felt ready to try speaking the TL (p. 74).

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[11] "Implicit learning is the process through which we become sensitive to certain regularities in the environment (1) in the absence of intention to learn about those regularities, (2) in the absence of awareness that one is learning, and (3) in such a way that the resulting knowledge is difficult to express" (Cleeremans, 2002, p. 2).

In response to Krashen's overemphasis on subconscious acquisition, a number of authors have argued in favour of the role of conscious knowledge in L2 learning. Long (1990) argues that "the need for awareness and/or attention to language form for the learning of some aspects of a SL means that a theory that holds all language learning to be unconscious is inadequate" (p. 660). Alternatively, the variable competence theory (Bialystok, 1982; Tarone, 1983; Ellis, 1991, as cited in Adair-Hauck & Donato, 1994), "acknowledges the interplay of controlled/conscious and automatic/subconscious cognitive processes of the learner" (Adair-Hauck & Donato, 1994, p. 534). This theory seems to provide a better account of L2 learning processes, as it recognizes the importance of both explicit instruction and implicit learning through communicative interaction.

2.2.2 Hypothesis testing and inferencing.

Teacher talk in the L2 features modification techniques similar to child-directed speech in the L1 and these modifications make the L2 input easier to understand and "pick up" or acquire. Related to inferencing is the idea that learners do not need to understand everything that the teacher says, or at least not right away. Aided by the ability to tolerate a certain amount of ambiguity, learners try to understand the gist of the message using contextual cues and will eventually "figure out" the meaning contained in the input (Calvé, 1993).

Macaro (2001) contends, however, that even if the L2 teacher could imitate L1 care-giver talk (the classroom environment precludes this to a large degree) "the input and interaction effects of child-directed L1 speech require several thousands of hours of exposure to the L1 during the first few years of life" (p. 534), while he estimates "at best 400 hours of input in five years" for most secondary FL programs. LFI students receive a good deal more exposure – between 1,200 and 2,000 hours over the course of Grades 7, 8 and 9 (Turnbull, Lapkin, Hart & Swain, 1998). However shortcuts such as a focus on language form, including limited use of codeswitching,

can still be beneficial, especially for Grade 7 beginners who have high-level cognitive demands placed on them by the curriculum.

Macaro (2001) asserts that, like L1 learners, L2 learners do figure out rules through L2 hypothesis testing (using Macaro's example – "Mum baked the bread" therefore "Mum broked the cup") and later confirm or disconfirm these constructions. However, Macaro also suggests that while a subconscious language processing system, such as Chomsky's Language Acquisition Device, may be "operational" in L2 learners, "it is superseded, especially in older learners, by high level cognitive skills that have been developed through the L1" (p. 534), such as using their L1 knowledge to compare syntactic patterns, and decipher, store and retrieve L2 words and rules. Cook (2001) insists that L2 learners differ from very young L1 learners in that they are mentally more mature, have greater social skills, have more short-term memory capacity and already know "how to mean" (p. 406), as is the case with Grade 7 LFI students, who, for the most part, have well-developed academic skills in their L1, and thinking skills which far exceed their ability to express themselves in the TL.

Macaro agrees that input modification helps students develop inferencing skills, and that important learning takes place through inferencing:

> Learners do increase their vocabulary store and syntactic models through inferencing – that is through implicit processes. This can only be achieved through extensive exposure to the target language. On the other hand inferencing the correct meaning of a word in a given context does not necessarily mean that there is retention of the inferred meaning since the immediate communicative need will have been met. Learners may need to be guided to 'notice' features of vocabulary and syntax in the input. In the case of oral interaction, we do not know as yet whether noticing is more facilitated by a codeswitch or by maintaining the L2. Until we have more evidence

teachers will want to continue to provide a balance of L2 inferencing and L1-L2 equivalents (2005, p. 81).

Macaro (2005, p. 80) cites three studies on vocabulary memorisation strategies which examined the relative effectiveness of learning TL elements through inferencing as compared to making L1-L2 connections: Brown and Perry's (1991) study in which students were better able to recall new words when learned through semantic association strategies and key word techniques involving L1 visual imaging; Lotto and De Groot's (1998) findings that recall was better using L1-L2 equivalents compared to a picture-L2 word learning method; and Prince (1996), who found that while providing L1 equivalents leads to improved vocabulary learning, learning words in context via inferencing leads to better use in context. Macaro notes that these three studies were concerned with written text with ample time given for processing, and that further research into oral interaction is needed to determine whether vocabulary is better learned through inferencing or through L1 equivalents.

Several researchers have pointed to the advantages of focusing on the deliberate learning of a start-up vocabulary during the early stages of L2 learning. Waring and Nation (1997) advocate a systematic approach to memorizing the first 2,000 to 3,000 high frequency words[12] out of context, using TL-L1 lists or flash cards, pointing to studies (Nation, 1982 gives a review) which have shown this direct or decontextualized learning to be much faster than indirect or incidental learning. However, learning from lists or word cards is only meant as an initial stage of learning, bringing beginner-level learners to a threshold from where they can start to learn more effectively from context. Further repeated exposure to the words through reading, listening

[12] A small number of words in any language occur very frequently. In English, just 1,000 word families (a group of words that share the same basic meaning – e.g., *create, creation, created, creative,* etc.) account for more than 70% of the words a learner is likely to encounter. With knowledge of about 2,000 word families, L2 learners can understand roughly 80% of most written texts; knowledge of the same 2,000 words families gives roughly 96% coverage of informal conversation (Waring & Nation, 1997).

and production is necessary in order to consolidate and deepen learning. This approach recognizes the complimentary relationship between decontextualized learning from TL-L1 word lists or cards, inferencing from context, and incidental learning.

While inferencing may indeed be an important means of L2 learning, it should be noted that some students tend to be better at inferencing than others. This may be attributable to different learning and reception strategies (Black, 1993; Nassaji, 2004) or to differences in students' TL knowledge base (Nassaji, 2004). Guessing from context is very difficult when learners are presented with a high proportion of unknown words. For example, Hu and Nation (2000) suggest that when reading graded readers for pleasure, learners need to know about 95% of the other words in the text in order to successfully guess the meanings of new words; at a rate of one new word in 10 the probability of guessing correctly is near zero. In the Grade 7 LFI context, for some students, almost all words are new words. Furthermore, the meanings of some words would be extremely difficult to infer no matter how rich the contextual cues (e.g. *azote* – nitrogen). This is not to say that inferencing is not an important learning strategy. However where inferencing is encouraged, it can be helpful to give students, especially beginners, confirmation – either through the TL or L1 – that they have inferred correctly. Negotiation of meaning, another theory which discounts the usefulness of codeswitching, will be discussed in section 2.7 below.

The idea that L2 teaching and learning should be based on the way in which monolingual children acquire their first language implies that since monolingual L1 children do not have another language, therefore L2 learners should not rely on their other language (Cook, 2001). Cook suggests that this line of reasoning might lead us to conclude that "since babies do not play golf, we should not teach golf to adults" (p. 406). Dodson (1985, cited in Cook, 2001) points out that a more legitimate comparison would be based on young bilingual children, and

Butzkamm (1998) informs us that research on bilingual families has repeatedly demonstrated that "the young developing bilingual makes skilful use of one language in order to improve competence in the other language" (p.83). Similarly, Cummins' (1996, 2001) language interdependency model is relevant to this discussion. Cummins posits an underlying language proficiency common to L1 and L2 that learners use to support their L2 development. LFI learners' skills in L1 are relatively strong and well established. Therefore making explicit connections between L1 and L2 allows learners to build on the common underling proficiency of both languages, especially when dealing with cognitively demanding subject matter. Despite the fundamental differences between L2 learning and L1 learning (L2 learners already know another language, while L1 learners do not) and the arguments just presented which support an important role for the L1 and the importance of both explicit and implicit learning, the L1 = L2 hypothesis is still used as a justification for L1 avoidance in LFI classrooms.

2.3 The Role of the L1 in L2 Learning

Contrary to the L1 = L2 hypothesis, the learner's L1 has indeed been shown to play an important role in L2 learning. In Finland, Ringbom (1987) compared English learners whose L1 was Swedish, a language closely related to English, and those whose L1 was Finnish, a language not even in the Indo-European family of languages; cross-linguistic influence clearly benefited the Swedish speaking Finns. Ringbom states: "What emerges is a consistent difference in test results between two groups which are very much the same culturally and educationally, but which have an entirely different linguistic starting point when they set out to learn English. One conclusion is that the importance of the L1 in L2-learning is absolutely fundamental" (1987, p. 134). Similarly, Van Lier (2000) reports that at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California, it takes adult English native speakers 24 weeks to achieve a certain level of proficiency in "level one" languages (more closely related to English, such as Dutch, Italian and

Spanish), while students take 67 weeks or more to achieve the same level of proficiency in "level four" languages, such as Arabic, Japanese and Korean.

Current thinking on crosslinguistic influence sees learners as being capable of actively deciding what is transferred and what is not, which is consistent with a cognitive view of L2 learning. Based on the learner's perception of the distance between the TL and the L1, learners use their L1 to make predictions about what works in the TL (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p.100). Of course, learners often make incorrect assumptions (e.g., an English native speaker learning French may produce "je *suis* 12 ans," using the verb *être* – "to be", when in fact the verb *avoir* – "to have" should be used). Indeed, until shown some negative evidence of transferability, some Grade 7 LFI students may assume that all L1 elements can be directly transferred into the TL.

According to a cognitive perspective, L2 learning is a creative process in which learners are seen as actively and consciously using strategies. Van Lier (2000) states: "Learning is a process of relating the new to the known, and language learning is no exception. . . . Our strategies and conscious learning actions are greatly assisted if we can connect the known (L1) to the new (L2) in a principled, realistic manner" (p. 6). Van Lier further asserts that "no one has been able to show, to my knowledge, that problems caused by L1-L2 related phenomena can be dealt with more efficiently by 'hiding' the L1 (not explicitly pointing out the differences) than by encouraging students to consciously examine both languages in order to determine where the problems lie, and then steadily working towards improvement. As a rule, a battle is easier to win if you know the enemy" (p. 6-7). Van Lier advocates use of L1-L2 contrastive analysis[13] by learners "so that conscious and autonomous learners can benefit from doing analyses of their own learning processes which take L1 influences into account" (p. 7). Spada and Lightbrown (1999, cited in Macaro, 2005, p. 75), and Calvé (1993) also claim that codeswitching is an

[13] L1-L2 Contrastive analysis (CA) was originally used as a way of predicting L1 influence and planning an effective curriculum, but fell out of favour when behaviourism was discredited in the 1960s; CA, also termed "crosslinguistic influence," is now used in psycholinguistic studies of learning processes (see van Lier, 2000, p. 6).

appropriate vehicle to give learners negative evidence of the direct transferability of certain L1 structures to L2 structures.

Cook (2005) asserts that codeswitching is viewed negatively because, for many people, the ideal form of bilingualism is that in which no L1 interference can be detected in the L2, a level of proficiency which only a very few L2 learners actually achieve. This ideal is represented by Weinreich's (1953, cited in Macaro, 2005) theory of bilinguals developing two separate language-specific lexicons in the brain. However, Libben (2000, cited in Macaro, 2005, p. 65) reports recent neurological research showing that a homogeneous architecture is much more likely, with all representations being activated by a given stimulus. Cook (2001) argues that the TL should not, and probably cannot, be kept separate from the learner's L1 since the L1 and L2 are connected in the learner's mind in many ways: in vocabulary (whether L1 and L2 words are stored together, or separately but with a single conceptual system), in syntax, in phonology, and in pragmatics. Cook also points to the advantages of bilingual dictionaries, dual language texts, and L2 films with L1 subtitles, which all use L1-L2 connections to help students understand L2 input. Skinner (1985, cited in Macaro, 2001) argues that exclusive use of the L2 can hamper connections between the TL and prior knowledge and ideas already developed in the L1.

Macaro (1997) asserts that excluding the L1 from L2 teaching robs learners of an important cognitive tool for L2 learning. Many theorists now agree that "the language of thought for all but the most advanced L2 learners is inevitably his/her L1" (Macaro, 2005, p. 68). Macaro (2005) argues that codeswitching is used by beginner and intermediate learners (and also to some extent by advanced learners) to lighten the cognitive load on working memory. This may be especially relevant in Grade 7 LFI where the cognitive load of many tasks is heavy and students' TL skills limited. Kern (1994, cited in Macaro, 2005, p.74) examined the language of thought of 51 students (L1 = English) in a college French class as they performed a L2 reading

comprehension task and concluded that learners were using their L1 to reduce working memory constraints, to avoid losing track of meaning, to consolidate meaning in long term memory, to convert the input into more familiar terms (helping to reduce anxiety), and to clarify the syntactic role of certain lexical items. "A codeswitch can reduce the selective attention dedicated to a single communication breakdown, freeing up working memory capacity to work on the meaning of larger chunks of input whilst at the same time offering the hearer the opportunity of quick storage of an L1-L2 equivalent they were previously not aware of" (Macaro, 2005, p. 74-75; see also Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Behan, Turnbull & Spek, 1997). Cook adds: "Keeping the languages visibly separate in language teaching is contradicted by the invisible processes in students' minds" (2001, p. 408).

Although considered to be a strong proponent of TL exclusivity, Krashen has also conceded that there can be pedagogical value in limited L1 use. In his book, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* (1982), Krashen reviews different teaching methods, including Suggestopedia: "Several Suggestopedia procedures are specifically designed to aid comprehensibility of input. Initial dialogues are based on situations familiar to the student, *and the use of the students' first language in Part One is partly justified on the grounds that it helps the student confirm that he has indeed understood the text presented in the target language*" (my italics, p. 144). Krashen goes on to say that with regards to quantity of input, "Suggestopedia seems to meet this requirement as well. *While there is some explanation in the first language, the long and varied dialogue dominates the session, both as pure input and as a basis for communicative use of the L2*" (my italics, p. 145-146). Krashen seems to be willing to go along with some limited L1 use where it aids comprehension, so long as the main conditions for a communicative L2 pedagogy are met – quantity and quality (comprehensibility) of TL input and

ample opportunity for students to communicate using the TL. If Krashen is not wholly opposed to the use of the L1 per se, then who is?

2.4 TL Exclusivity and Hegemony[14]: TL/L1 Policies in Other Contexts

> "It is assumed throughout that the teacher's success is judged by the rarity of his lapses into the foreign tongue."
> (Thorley, *A Primer of English for Foreign Students*, 1918, cited in Cook, 2005, p. 58)

As suggested by the above quote, the ideal of monolingual TL instruction – the idea that L1 avoidance, or TL exclusivity, constitutes best practice – has been a prevailing view in the field of second and foreign language teaching over much of the past hundred years (Cook, 2005). Looking back over the past 25 years, government agencies in certain jurisdictions have prescribed a ban on L1 use in the L2 classroom. Although the Canadian LFI context differs in important ways[15], it is useful to consider TL/L1 policy for Modern Foreign Language (MFL) teaching in Great Britain, where strong reaction to policies prescribing TL exclusivity has resulted in extensive literature on the topic. Some parallels can perhaps be drawn between recent trends in British MFL TL/L1 policy and what may be the first signs of change to guidelines for LFI teachers in Canada.

In the early to mid-1990s, TL/L1 guidelines in Great Britain were in keeping with the maximalist position (very much like those in the 1997 APEF[16] LFI guide, see chapter 3), which assumes that "there is probably no pedagogical value in learner use of the L1 and almost certainly none in teacher use of the L1" (Macaro, 2000, p. 184, cited in Guest & Pachler, 2001, p. 86). Macaro (2001, p. 532) gives an account, outlined here, of the implementation of the National Curriculum in England and Wales which claimed that "from the outset, the foreign

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[14] Hegemony refers to dominant ideas which are taken for granted and "which are seen as being so self-evidently right that they do not need any discussion or justification" (Atkinson, 1995, p. 1).
[15] E.g., on average, British students only have one MFL class per day, similar to Canadian core French in terms of instructional time; the British educational system also features school inspectors – this is quite different from the types of professional evaluation used in Canadian jurisdictions.
[16] Through the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (APEF), Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland collaborate on various curriculum design projects.

language rather than English (L1) should be the medium in which classwork is conducted and managed" (Department of Education and Science [England and Wales], 1988, p. 12) and that "the natural use of the target language for virtually all communication is a sure sign of a good modern languages course" (DES, 1990, p. 58). School inspectors reiterated this anti-L1 stance, saying that "teachers should insist on the use of the target language for all aspects of a lesson" (Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), 1993: section 37), and that students had no difficulty in understanding lessons which were "competently" conducted entirely in the target language (OFSTED, 1995). Exams were then introduced in which the sole method of understanding and answering questions was through the TL. Interestingly, the justification for this was based on the assertion that it was a perfectly successful practice in the TEFL world (Neather, Woods, Rodriguez, Davis & Dunne, 1995, cited in Macaro, 2005). Macaro asserts that this acceptance at face value of the TEFL model of best practice served to deny any further debate about the potential benefits of codeswitching and, for inspectors, provided a simple way to judge the competence of teachers. "The measurement of success came to be to what extent could the bilingual teacher deny and overcome his/her bilingualism" (Macaro, 2005, p. 67). Macaro suggests that there may have been little research evidence, if any, in support of such strong anti-L1 statements: "As, unfortunately, teacher autonomy in the past has not been shored up by strong research evidence, people in power have tried to impose certain methodologies regardless of the lack of evidence for their propagation" (2005, p. 66).

Atkinson (1995) and Phillipson (1992, cited in Atkinson, 1995) describe this "TL-only" approach as having enjoyed, and perhaps still enjoying in certain circles, hegemonic status. Several authors (Atkinson, 1995; Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2005) have suggested that the TL-only approach may have originated and received such wide-spread support because "the proponents of these theories simply did not speak the first language of their subjects or students" (Macaro,

2005, p. 66), such as in situations where a native speaker teacher teaches in a foreign country but doesn't speak the students' L1, or in classes where the students do not share the same L1 and avoidance of the L1 becomes a practical necessity. Atkinson (1995) contends that "Western" English Language Teaching (ELT) "has tended to deprive students of the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the L2 through comparison and contrast of it with their L1 by downplaying the role of the L1 in the learning process".

Macaro, notes that "it is not difficult to trace the political and economic forces at play" and "it is in the dominant cultures' (UK, USA) interest to promote the idea that codeswitching is bad practice in the ELT classroom" (2005, p. 65). Given its prominent position in the field, it is not unreasonable to think that theory, research and accepted practice in the ELT world may have had some influence on the TL/L1 debate in other areas of L2 teaching, lending authority to calls for TL exclusivity (Cook, 2001). For example, Calvé (1993) cites Wong-Filmore's (1985) study of immigrant children learning ESL in the U.S., which presented evidence showing concurrent translation[17] to be ineffective and as a result called for a complete separation between the TL and the L1. Of course, many ESL/EFL teachers do recognize the pedagogical value of judicious L1 use. Barker (2003, para. 3) reports that there now appears to be a "gradual move over the past few years away from the 'English only' dogma that has long been a part of the British and American ELT movement".

It is interesting to compare the anti-L1 policy in effect in England through much of the 1990's with guidelines in effect in France and Germany during the same period. In France, teachers were being advised that the learner should be "led gradually towards distancing himself/herself from the mother tongue" (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 1993, p. 11, cited

[17] Concurrent translation refers to the teacher regularly translating what is said in the TL into the L1, or "speak[ing] a little in one language, and then translat[ing] what was said into the other language" (Krashen, 1985, p. 81). Butzkamm (1998) remarks: "It is only too obvious that a technique where the teacher says everything twice should fail [...] And it seems unjustified to draw far-reaching conclusions as to the use of the L1 from such a coarse-grained and simplistic approach" (p. 82).

in Macaro, 2001, p. 533), and: "learning a foreign language implies developing a gradual awareness of the way that they function. This reflection on the language, including reflection on French *(L1), contributes to the development of conceptual abilities* [italics added] and encourages autonomy of expression" (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 1996, p. 15, cited in Macaro, 2001, p. 533). Chambers (1992) reports that in Germany, teachers are encouraged to adopt a "target language with common sense approach" (*aufgeklärte Einsprachigkeit*) when deciding when to use the L1. Chambers asks: "If the Germans do it, why can't we [MFL teachers in Great Britain]? We are encouraged to copy their models in almost all other aspects of education!" (p. 66).

More recently, it seems that British policy has begun to reflect the growing consensus that judicious teacher use of the L1 can indeed be beneficial to L2 learning in certain situations. The end of the 1990s saw National Curriculum Orders in England and Wales shift towards the so-called optimal use position, which sees "some value in teacher use of L1 and some value in learner use of L1" (Guest & Pachler, 2001, p. 85). The new Modern Foreign Language (MFL) Framework (Department for Education and Skills (DfES, 2003) is also consistent with the optimal position, calling for "teaching through the medium, as far as possible" and allowing that "teachers may need to use some English judiciously for carefully specified purposes in some parts of a lesson" (p. 26) for teaching to be effective and to ensure that pupils make progress. The MFL Framework gives teachers further guidelines for acceptable uses of English: essential clarifications, checking comprehension, comparing TL with points of English, giving brief explanations, and responding to individual queries (section 3, appendix 1, p. 66). In a support document designed to help teachers implement the MFL Framework titled *Improving transfer and transition in Key Stage 3 modern foreign languages: a focus on progression* (DfES, 2005), reading for gist, and the ability to infer the meanings of words are recommended as skills which

are to be developed; however, interestingly, the use of translation is also promoted as a valuable exercise[18].

Returning to the Canadian LFI context, the recently published *Guide pratique d'enseignement*, published by the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (CAIT) (Bajard, 2004) is also somewhat more flexible in its guidelines for TL/L1 use compared to those in the 1997 APEF LFI guide (see p. 50 of this thesis). The CAIT guide recognizes that "the gap between the student's cognitive level and the vocabulary s/he possesses is much greater in late French immersion than in early immersion", adding that "this can cause the student to feel a fairly large amount of frustration" (my translation, p. 97). Given that LFI students face this special challenge, the guide advises: "L'enseignant doit reconnaître qu'il peut s'avérer nécessaire d'employer l'anglais, mais en dernier recours seulement et très brièvement, pour expliquer ou clarifier certains concepts abstraits" (p. 97). On the following page however, endorsement of this limited use of the L1 seems almost to be retracted: "Grâce à une immersion *initiale totale et sans relâche*, ces élèves déjà formés en anglais se montrent vite capables d'étudier toutes leurs matières scolaires en français" (p. 98, my italics). The final mention of TL/L1 use comes under the heading of Basic Principles for LFI: "Le français est la langue de communication dans la classe; enseignant et élèves évitent autant que possible le recours à l'anglais" (p. 98). Thus while there is some recognition in the new CAIT guide that use of English is occasionally necessary and helpful for explaining abstract concepts, L1 use is still characterized as an unfortunate last resort, which is to be "avoided as much as possible." However, on the whole, perhaps this marks a small but significant shift from the 1997 APEF LFI guidelines (see p. 50 of this thesis), which claim that even occasional use of the L1 has a negative impact on L2 learning.

[18] "Translating into English is still a valuable way for pupils to practice applying meaning, and can help give them confidence in understanding the detail as well as the gist of a text" (p.12). Retrieved March 1, 2006 from http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3/respub/mfl_trans.

In recent years a growing number of second language researchers have effectively challenged the idea of equating best practice with the "ideal" of maintaining 100% TL exclusivity at all levels and in all L2 learning situations. Furthermore, some organizations and government departments which represent second language teachers and set standards for good practice have also begun to view judicious L1 use more positively, such as the new MLF Framework in England and the recently published CAIT guide in Canada. If we now recognize that the L1 can, in certain situations, play a beneficial role within a communicative approach to L2 teaching and learning, the question becomes: What should that role be? While certainly an improvement over unjustified calls for TL exclusivity, saying that the TL should be used, or the L1 avoided, "as much as possible," is a subjective statement, open to interpretation; this may not be a bad thing, as it leaves teachers with a measure of professional autonomy. However, teachers would surely welcome further evidence indicating what the most and least beneficial uses of L1 actually are. The present study sheds light on what three Grade 7 LFI teachers consider to be the optimal TL/L1 balance, while giving an account of leading-edge theory and research into TL and L1 use.

2.5 TL Maximization

Several authors have called for the maximization of the TL, which is equivalent to saying that the TL should be used, or the L1 avoided, "as much as possible." TL maximization is beneficial to learners in that it guarantees exposure to large quantities of TL input. Studies have shown that the amount of TL input does affect learners' TL development (e.g., Larsen-Freeman, 1985; Lightbrown, 1991). Turnbull (2001) reports findings from his 1999 study showing that TL use varied widely for four Grade 9 core French teachers, with one teacher conducting only 9% of activities observed in the TL and another 89%; as we might expect, the classes with higher rates of TL teacher talk achieved higher scores than the other two classes on measures of general TL

proficiency and on tests based on the curriculum taught during the observation period (differences were not linear, but statistically significant). Turnbull (2001) also cites studies by Carroll (1975) and others (e.g., Burstall, Jamieson, Cohen, & Hargreaves, 1974; Wolf, 1977) that found a direct correlation between learner achievement and teacher use of the TL, although Carroll's findings show that the amount of instructional time was the main factor. Given this positive relationship, and given that teachers are often the only linguistic model and source of TL input, Turnbull supports maximizing the TL in the classroom; he adds, however, that "this does not mean that there is a linear relationship between teachers' TL use and learners' TL proficiency" (p. 534).

Ellis (1984) argues that when teachers *overuse* the L1, they are depriving learners of input in the TL. Other researchers (e.g., Calvé, 1993; Atkinson, 1995) are also not opposed to L1 use per se; they do not see it as detrimental to L2 learning, so long as it is not used excessively. As Calvé (1993) warns, switching to the L1 can be habit forming and teachers should reflect on whether the benefits of using the L1 in a given situation outweigh the benefits of persisting in the TL. Turnbull (2001) agrees that the TL can sometimes be more easily processed by making reference to the L1, but also cautions that the overuse of L1 will unduly reduce learners' exposure to TL input.

2.6 Maximizing TL Comprehension, Use and Learning

I agree with Gary Chambers' assertion that: "it is of great importance that students are exposed to the target language as much as is reasonably possible" (1992, p. 66). However, the input must be accessible to the learner, or be somehow made comprehensible. Ellis (1994) claims that TL exposure is necessary, but not sufficient to guarantee TL learning, since TL input must become intake – the TL input must be understood by students and internalized. Cook (2001) and Van Lier (2000) agree, claiming that the quality of the input is as important as the quantity, and

that teacher use of the students' L1 can help make some TL input more comprehensible for the learner, aiding intake.

Thus the idea of maximization is dependant on what are considered to be uses of the L1 that may contribute to student TL comprehension, use and learning. I would add here that insofar as it can increase comprehension of TL input, judicious L1 use should, in turn, lead to increased subsequent TL use by both teachers and students. With this in mind, time, or discourse space, allocated to small amounts of L1 use need not detract excessively, or at all, from TL input – indeed, it may lead to more TL input and production. Macaro and Mutton (2002) found that "teachers could communicate quite a lot in L1 in a very short time thus still allocating plenty of discourse space to the L2" (cited in Macaro, 2005, p. 70). It can be argued that using TL modification techniques, followed by a brief codeswitch, will not result in any lost TL input. Macaro contends that if teachers use a combination of modification techniques, such as repetition, paraphrasing, and codeswitching, they are "activating the maximum number of connections and reinforcing them for future recall" (2005, p. 79).

Turnbull (2001) and others (e.g., Macaro, 1997; Polio & Duff, 1994; van Lier, 2000) question what "maximizing" TL use means in terms of "optimal" TL and L1 use. Atkinson (1987) proposed about 5% L1 use as a reasonable amount, but Papaefthymiou-Lytra (1990, cited in van Lier, 2000, p. 8) makes the important point that the function served by the L1 is perhaps a more important consideration than the exact ratio. Auerbuch (1993) suggests the following uses for the L1: classroom management, language analysis, presenting grammar rules, discussing cross-cultural issues, giving instructions, explaining errors, and checking for comprehension. Similarly, Cook (2001) argues that teachers should be free to make use of the L1 for explaining grammar, organizing tasks, disciplining students, and implementing tests, or

whenever it is too difficult or time-consuming to try to communicate in the TL. However, Turnbull remarks that this would leave "few functions left to be conducted in the TL" (2001, p. 537). Certainly, given students' consistent and extensive exposure to rich TL input in the LFI context, I agree that these tasks can *usually* be carried out, even at the Grade 7 level, exclusively (or almost exclusively) in French; but there are also certain occasions when the L1, even just a word or two, can be helpful in carrying out these functions. We shall further examine teachers' actual use of the TL and L1 according to different pedagogical functions in section 2.7.

Van Lier (2000) suggests that certain activities should be L2-only, while others may require some L1. Along these lines, I suggest that Grade 7 LFI teachers can conduct many activities entirely, or almost entirely, in French, with generally less and less L1 required as students' comprehension and proficiency increase. However, even beyond Grade 7 the L1 may be useful, even necessary, where material with a heavy cognitive load, either related to the concepts themselves or the amount of new language needed, surpasses students' ability to understand and process information. Atkinson suggests that we cannot decide on an across the board, "ideal" TL percentage, since the most appropriate TL/L1 balance at a given time depends on a number of variables: "the level, the stage of the course, the particular activity being used and its aims, etc., etc." (1993, p. 4). In the Grade 7 LFI context, we might add to this list the range of proficiency levels within the class, and students' age and emotional maturity.

2.7 Motivation and Learner Preferences

MacDonald (1993) argues that when teachers maximize TL use, students' motivation will increase as they can see how knowledge of the TL will be immediately useful to them. He also suggests that over-use of the L1 can lead to student de-motivation, since students will have no immediate need to understand the teacher's TL talk. Wong-Fillmore (1985, cited in Calvé, 1993) also claims that when learners can count on translations or explanations in the L1, they will make

little effort to understand TL input. This is no doubt true for some, perhaps even most students. On the other hand, if over-use of the L1 can reduce student motivation to try to understand the TL, then it should also be clear that not enough input modification (through L1 use or other types of modification) may cause some learners to become frustrated and disengage from the input if they aren't able to understand what the teacher is saying. Chambers (1992) asserts that if a teacher fails to recognize situations where the L1 is necessary "then the alienation and demotivation of the pupils can result" (p. 66). Guest and Pachler (2001) contend that "the effort required by both learners and by teachers to maintain maximum TL use can lead to reduced levels of performance on the part of teachers and alienation from the learning process on the part of pupils" and that "the developing of good social relationships between teachers and learners, it can be argued, requires non-curriculum-specific TL, which learners do not have at their disposal" (p. 85). Van Lier (1995, p. 40-41) also suggests that one benefit of codeswitching can be the creation of a supportive language environment in the classroom.

Duff and Polio (1990) found that a large majority of learners in FL university classes were satisfied with the amount of L1 used by their teachers, regardless of the amount of L1 spoken by teachers (TL use ranged from 10% to 100%). Most learners also reported that they understood most of their teacher's TL use. In Macaro's (1997) study examining learners' perspectives on their teachers' TL and L1 use, a small group (mostly academically inclined girls) said that they preferred exclusive TL use by their teacher, while most students reported that they sometimes needed their teachers to speak the L1 in order to understand; many students also said that they could not learn if they could not understand their teacher. Macaro (1997) found that students generally fit into one of two categories – those who get frustrated when they can't understand the teachers' TL talk and who want to know the exact meaning of what is said, and others who are more comfortable with TL exclusivity (or near exclusivity). Students belonging to

this latter group felt that, while codeswitching might facilitate comprehension, they would learn more in the long run if the teacher avoids L1 use. It has not been shown that higher achieving learners prefer TL exclusivity; further research is needed to better understand students' individual preferences. For now, Macaro can only affirm that "some like the teacher to make immediate and explicit L1/L2 connections [while] others do not feel this is necessary" (2005, p. 70).

Beck's (2005) study on attrition in LFI, in which six students who had opted out of the program were interviewed, found that, for some students, failure to develop a positive relationship with their teachers was an important factor in their decision to leave the program. Poor academic results, not surprisingly, were another important factor contributing to students' decision to leave the LFI program. Listing practices which contribute to high levels of learner L2 use, Macaro (2000) suggests that teachers should avoid becoming "remote and unapproachable figures" by finding time to interact with small groups or individual students, sometimes in the TL and sometimes in the L1 (p. 185).

2.8 Teacher Beliefs and Actual TL and L1 Use

How much time do teachers actually devote to L1 use, and for what functions is the L1 used? I now review the findings from a number of studies. Although almost all of them were carried out in non-intensive language learning contexts – MFL at the secondary level in Great Britain, core French in Canada, or foreign language courses at the university level – some of the findings undoubtedly still have relevance for TL and L1 use in LFI.

Many researchers have found that TL and L1 use varies widely among teachers in various second and foreign language contexts (e.g. Duff and Polio, 1990; Polio & Duff, 1994; Turnbull, 1999, 2005). On the other hand, Macaro (2001) video recorded lessons of pre-service teachers teaching beginner and lower-intermediate level 11-14 year old learners of French in England and

found that the percentage of codeswitching was quite low: an average of 4.8% for the whole lesson (based on time) and 6.9% of the total oral interaction. Only two lessons featured more than 10% teacher L1 use, with the highest being 15.2%. This is significantly lower than Chaudron's (1988) estimate of around 30% L1 use for core French teachers, and also lower than Turnbull's (2005) finding of an average of 20% L1 use, also for core French teachers.

In his review of studies on what teachers say and believe about TL use and L1 exclusion, Macaro comes to the following conclusions (2001, p. 535):

- none of the studies found a majority of teachers in favour of banning the L1 completely;
- in all of the above studies, teachers expected the majority of interaction to be in the L2;
- the L1 was mostly used for giving procedural instructions for complex activities, relationship building, control and management, teaching grammar explicitly, and providing brief L1-L2 (or L2-L1) equivalents;
- major factors determining how much L1 was used were learner ability (or level of proficiency) and time pressures.

Macaro's 1997 study examined TL and L1 use amongst secondary level foreign language teachers in England and Wales, using surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. Most teachers reported that, other than with the most highly motivated classes, it was impossible and undesirable to use the TL exclusively; however, most also believed that using the TL was an important component of good FL pedagogy. Macaro found that the teachers in this study used the L1 most often to give and clarify complex instructions, to give feedback to students (detailed feedback on progress rather than I-R-F questioning feedback), and for translating and checking comprehension in order to speed things up because of time pressures. These teachers also tended to use the L1 for disciplining, socializing with students, and for explaining difficult grammar. Most teachers indicated that students' ability in the TL, regardless of age, was the most

important factor in determining the amount of TL they were able to use. This finding may be applicable in the Grade 7 LFI context, considering students' low level of proficiency and the cognitive challenges of the curriculum, and also the differing levels of ability or proficiency among students in the same class.

Conducting a further analysis of data from their 1990 study, Duff and Polio (1994) found five common uses of students' L1 (English) by university instructors who were native speakers of the TL: classroom administration, teaching grammar, classroom management, building empathy and rapport, and for the teachers to practice English (their L2). TL use among these 13 teachers varied from 10% to 100%; they tended to use known vocabulary or switch to English rather than attempt to use words they perceived as too difficult for students.

Castellotti (1997) promotes conscious and principled codeswitching in SL and FL classes as a way of enhancing the TL input for students. She recorded two Spanish and two English secondary foreign languages classes during which the L1 was used to help students understand, to check comprehension, to highlight important points or vocabulary items, to draw students' attention to what they already had studied, and to act as a resource for students who were developing into bi- or multilinguals.

Arnett's (2001) study examined the use of L1 as a modification strategy, used by a Grade 9 core French teacher to help students with learning difficulties. The most often used modification strategy was "Use English to Clarify" (used in 44.9% of episodes in which French was the primary language of instruction). This teacher used English to clarify difficult points of the TL, such as grammar and vocabulary, and reported feeling that she needed to use the L1 to help students, especially those with learning disabilities, to understand and process the TL.

Turnbull (2005) observed nine core French teachers and found that TL use by teachers ranged from 40% to 100%, with an overall average of 80%. The main factors influencing these

teachers' beliefs and actual TL use were empathy for students' TL anxiety, strength of conviction that one should speak the TL, teacher confidence in French, and class make-up (learning and behavioural needs). Other notable themes for individual teachers were parental, administrative and collegial support, and teacher fatigue.

Burnett (1998) examined codeswitching by a first-time university instructor teaching French through computer-assisted language learning and found that "neither consistent nor meaningful interaction in French was attained". The instructor's emphasis on teaching students to use computers to improve efficiency and eliminate errors in writing took precedence over communicative goals and "led to classroom practices which rewarded the end more than the means and which ultimately affected language use and choice" (p.106). While the instructor rationalized L1 use in the name of efficiency, students (some of whom had little experience with computers) also found that their own use of English helped them get their work done and achieve better grades in this type of classroom environment. Burnett notes that "it seemed there was a tacit agreement between students and teacher, since speaking English helped both attain their goals" (p. 108); unfortunately their immediate goals were not focused on communicating in the TL. These findings testify to the difficulties faced by language teachers in situations where their own knowledge and experience are limited and also show how focusing on covering subject content, certainly important in its own right, can sometimes get in the way of TL use and a communicative approach to L2 teaching.

Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) examined the TL/L1 use of four introductory level French instructors at an Australian university. Unlike the findings in most other studies, the range of L1 use for all four teachers was quite low (0% to 18.2%). The L1 was primarily used to clarify unknown vocabulary by providing L1 equivalents within TL sentences and to compare TL and L1 structures. Teachers' decisions to use the L1 depended on the type of learning

activity; the L1 was also used for some classroom management and social interactions with students. The authors hypothesize that by codeswitching within the same sentence to contrast the TL and L1, teachers may be able to reduce negative transfer of inappropriate L1 forms. They also suggest that strategic translation may help to enhance input by drawing attention to specific features of the TL, thus promoting uptake.

Celik (2003) proposes "code-mixing" as an effective technique for introducing target vocabulary items. Code-mixing, a common occurrence in bilingual speech, consists of using only one L1 word in an L2 utterance, thus use of the L1 is carefully limited. Celik told a story to first-year EFL teacher trainees, inserting L1 words alongside new TL vocabulary items in a spoken text. Students then discussed the story, and finally wrote a summary of their discussion in the TL. Students were able to successfully use many of the previously unknown words in their written texts. Interestingly, students never attempted to use the L1 words the teacher had used, either in their discussions or in the writing task.

In his review of studies of teacher beliefs across educational contexts and age of learners, Macaro (2000) found that "by far the majority of bilingual teachers regard codeswitching as unfortunate and regrettable but necessary" (cited in Macaro, 2005, p. 68). Taken together, the studies leave an "overwhelming impression that bilingual teachers believe that the L2 should be the *predominant* language of interaction in the classroom" (p, 68, emphasis in the original), yet Macaro knows of no study in which the majority of teachers are in favour of completely excluding the L1. However, teachers' reasons for allowing some limited use of L1 are not based on a perception of its value in terms of L2 learning, but rather because the ideal conditions which would allow 100% TL do not exist. In other words, many teachers say they would like to use 100% TL, but that either external factors are getting in the way, or they don't feel *able* enough to stay in the TL; many teachers report feeling guilty when they use the L1.

Given the nature of French immersion programs, we might expect to find significantly higher rates of TL use than those just seen. However, as in England and other jurisdictions where guidelines have prescribed virtual TL exclusivity, some teachers have been found to use the L1, either because they find it too difficult to teach exclusively through the TL, or because they believe that some L1 use is actually beneficial to their students' TL learning. While we may expect L1 use to be dependant upon grade or student proficiency levels, anecdotal evidence suggests that this is not always the case (e.g., some Grade 8 and 9 LFI teachers may use more L1 than certain LFI Grade 7 teachers). To the best of my knowledge at this time (October, 2006), there are no studies to indicate how often French immersion teachers in Canada use their students' L1. Two studies have investigated French immersion students' use of English during collaborative tasks: Behan, Turnbull and Spek's (1997) study involving Grade 7 LFI students; and Swain and Lapkin's (2000) study involving Grade 8 continuing French immersion students. Both of these studies are discussed in section 2.9, which deals with teacher and student TL and L1 use.

One recent study (Butzkamm, 1998), however, examines the use of brief codeswitches in a context that closely resembles that of LFI. Butzkamm transcribed the interaction during a history lesson taught through the medium of English as a foreign language, involving 13 year-old German girls and boys. The students were in their third year of English instruction, but it was their first year of history taught through the medium of English (the only "bilingual content subject" offered at this school so early). During this lesson, the students were engaged in a complex discussion, often inserting L1 terms and asking the teacher for the TL equivalents. Butzkamm concludes (p. 95):

> The pupils who, on encountering difficulties with vocabulary, ask for the foreign language equivalent by giving the expression in the mother tongue, behave the

same way as in many natural bilinguals in families where the two languages are spoken . . . It provides the most immediate and direct access to the foreign language expression needed to carry on the conversation and to get one's message across. The pupils have no qualms about seeking their teacher's assistance through German, and the teacher's helpful responses give them confidence. Conversely, it would probably undermine students' confidence if the mother tongue was made a taboo or if the teacher did not speak the pupils' mother tongue.

Note that the teacher in this lesson did not need to speak the L1; rather the students did the actual codeswitching. Having reviewed the transcript of the discussion, it seems to me that the students' level of proficiency in the TL was quite high, perhaps equivalent to that of the average Grade 9 LFI class (the discussion topic was 'The war in the Gulf – a holy war?'). Thus it makes sense that the teacher would have less need to perform comprehension checks or provide explanations using the L1, a strategy I believe can sometimes be useful in teaching Grade 7 LFI students.

2.9 Teacher TL and L1 Use and Student TL and L1 Use

While teacher TL and L1 use is the main focus of this thesis, one of the reasons some argue for maximizing teacher TL use is to encourage student TL use (and discourage student L1 use). However, Macaro's (2001) study with pre-service teachers found no correlation between teacher use of L1 and the use of L1 by beginner and lower-intermediate learners aged 11 to 14. He also found no significant increase in student TL use when the teacher used the TL exclusively or almost exclusively. He concludes that "codeswitching by the teacher has no negative impact on the quantity of students' L2 production and that 'expert codeswitching' may actually increase and improve it" (Macaro, 2005, p. 72). Macaro (2000) also reminds us that while teacher TL use is very important in its own right, *student use of the TL is the ultimate goal of L2 learning*. He

warns that too much focus on teacher TL use, with long periods of input modification, may result in teacher-fronted lessons in which "individual learners speak the L2 for astonishingly little proportions of time, sometimes an average of 5 seconds for each individual pupil" (p. 184). I have had experiences similar to that described by Gary Chambers (1992) and Cook (2005, p. 59) where explaining a fairly complicated activity in the TL using a variety of input modification techniques takes more time than is then left for students to actually do the activity, and in the end, it may still be necessary to use a few L1 words to help some students understand. I have also observed (and taught) classes in which the teacher spoke 100% in the TL, but where many of the students spoke mostly in their L1, if they spoke at all in either language. Conversely, I have also used and observed other teachers using the L1 in a limited and judicious fashion while the vast majority of the students made consistent efforts to speak as much as possible in the TL. Nevertheless, there is no doubt a threshold for teacher L1 use beyond which student L1 use may increase, potentially having a negative effect on L2 learning. We must keep in mind that one of the teacher's main roles is to act as a linguistic model by providing rich, yet comprehensible TL input. Macaro (2005) suggests that, based on his own research in a limited context, the nature of codeswitching seems to change at around 10-15% (p. 82). I would argue that, for students in a Grade 7 LFI context, much less L1 use than this is usually sufficient to ensure comprehension and facilitate L2 learning. The most notable exception to this may be during the first month or so, when students are still acquiring a critical mass of TL words and expressions which will then allow them to function more and more in French.

According to a communicative approach, teachers should try to maximize opportunities for students to use the TL while carrying out meaningful tasks and activities, which often involve pair and group work. Related to this is "negotiation of meaning," another theory which has served to downplay the usefulness of codeswitching. Most of the earlier studies based on

interaction (see Pica, 1994, for a review) focused on how TL input is negotiated and made comprehensible by learners interacting through the TL. These studies tried to show that communication breakdowns in collaborative talk can be repaired through students' requests for clarification, comprehension checks, repeating information, and so on, using the TL. This negotiation, or repair, leads to increased comprehensible TL input and acquisition. While negotiation of meaning in the TL may indeed provide learners with comprehensible input for acquisition, and "some of the most effective L2 experiences for learners will take place during such moments" (Chaudron, 1993, cited in Auerbach, 1994), it does not give a full picture of what really goes on during student interaction, especially at beginner and intermediate levels. As many LFI teachers will attest, students (especially beginners) will often switch between the TL and their L1 when working collaboratively, and policing the entire class to discourage L1 use – and promote L2 use – can be a trying task (see Behan, Turnbull & Spek, 1997).

More recently, several studies have used sociocultural theory and a Vygotskyan analysis of verbal interaction (revealing the interrelatedness of speaking and thinking) to examine learners' use of the L1 as a cognitive tool in carrying out collaborative tasks. This L1 use is especially important for learners with a low level of TL proficiency dealing with challenging tasks and content, such as in LFI. Brooks and Donato (1994) analyzed the speech of secondary-level learners of Spanish working on a problem-solving speaking task. They found that the learners, especially beginners, often benefit from using the L1 when negotiating meaning. They observed that, in small group work, less proficient learners use their L1 in order to manage the task and their exchanges in the TL. They suggest that some use of the L1 during L2 interactions "is a normal psycholinguistic process that facilitates L2 production and allows the learners both to initiate and sustain verbal interaction with one another" (p. 268).

Behan, Turnbull & Spek (1997) tape-recorded Grade 7 LFI students working in groups to prepare for an oral presentation. While all groups were encouraged to speak in French as they worked together, two of the groups were closely observed by the researchers and reminded to use French whenever they switched to English. The other unmonitored groups used more English as they worked collaboratively and were later judged by the researchers to have made better presentations than the two monitored groups. Use of the L1 was found to be helpful for task management, information sharing and vocabulary searches. Behan et al. concluded that "L1 use can both support and enhance L2 development, [both languages] functioning simultaneously as an effective tool for dealing with cognitively demanding content" (p. 41).

Antòn and DiCamilla (1998) studied L1 use by adult beginner-level learners of Spanish working in pairs on L2 writing tasks. These students used the L1 as a cognitive tool for providing each other with scaffolded help, for maintaining cooperation, and for externalizing their internal speech. Antòn and DiCamilla also suggest that by using the L1, the teacher can provide students with a cognitive tool to help scaffold L2 learning.

Swain & Lapkin (2000) report that Grade 8 continuing French immersion students were able to complete a collaborative task more successfully by using English (rather than French only) to manage the task, to aid in retrieving French vocabulary from memory, to focus on form, and for interpersonal interaction. As previously mentioned, some LFI teachers may hesitate to assign group work because their students will likely speak a considerable amount of English with each other; however, while students in Swain and Lapkin's study used some L1 in roughly 25% of the turns taken, only 12% of these were off-task. By far, most of students' L1 use served important cognitive and social functions. The authors conclude: "Judicious use of the L1 can indeed support L2 learning and use. To insist that no use be made of the L1 in carrying out tasks

that are both linguistically and cognitively complex is to deny the use of an important cognitive tool" (p. 269).

Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2004) studied advanced level university students who envisioned their class as a community of practice and as a bilingual space. With no constraints put on L1 use, these learners used the L1 for L2 repair, and also used codeswitching like bilinguals in the real world. They conclude that "when there is a shared understanding among both student and teacher that, in addition to learning the subject matter, one of the main goals is L2 use, permission to use the L1 can be granted without fear of jeopardizing the language learning endeavour through overuse of the L1" (pp. 519-520). Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain suggest that as these advanced students developed their own codeswitching patterns, the need for teacher L1 use was significantly diminished. However, they question whether beginner-level learners can develop these TL/L1 functions to the same extent. They call for more research to determine whether beginners need to be instructed on how to use codeswitching as a resource.

Finally, Van Lier (2000) gives an account of Fleming's (1994) study of an Argentinean learner of English in conversation with two English-speaking friends – one who knew no Spanish at all, and one who did know Spanish (the learner's L1). By comparing transcripts, the second conversation was found to be much richer than the first. Spanish was used from time to time to clarify thoughts and misunderstandings, and to find the right expressions. In interviews following each conversation, the learner indicated that in the first conversation he had stuck to very familiar topics and ignored the monolingual speaker's comments whenever he did not understand them; in the second conversation, the learner often changed topics, asked for clarification, and found out new words and incorporated them into his own English. In this case, the possibility of using Spanish greatly facilitated his use of English and created far richer learning opportunities for him.

If beginner and intermediate level learners often use the L1 as their language of thought and as an important cognitive tool for sustaining TL interaction and managing collaborative tasks, then it seems reasonable to argue that the teacher's use of the L1 can also potentially benefit students' TL comprehension and learning when communication breakdowns occur or when the task or content is complex. Given the weight of the findings just reviewed, it seems that some mixture of TL and L1 use may indeed be "optimal" in certain learning situations, such as with 12 and 13 year-old beginners in Grade 7 LFI. It also seems that, for teachers, small amounts of L1 use can often go a long way towards enhancing TL learning, without detracting unduly from important exposure to rich and abundant TL input.

As Turnbull (2001, 2005) suggests, if teacher use of the L1 is to be accepted as a valuable part of L2 teaching, pedagogical principles for codeswitching need to be articulated in order to guard against overuse. We are beginning to understand some of the ways in which principled L1 use can improve the effectiveness of TL teaching; however, more research is needed in order to define a theory of optimal TL/L1 use. In the meantime, reviewing the relevant literature, discussing the issue of TL and L1 use with colleagues, and analyzing TL and L1 use in their own classes – conducting action research as Van Lier (2000) suggests – would seem to be the best way for teachers to achieve optimal TL/L1 use with their students. This is the main goal of the present study.

Chapter 3 – Study Design

This chapter describes the context of the study and explains the selection of participants, research design, and methods. I then outline my epistemological stance, and discuss issues of reliability, validity, and transferability and some limitations.

3.1 The Context: LFI in P.E.I.

In Prince Edward Island, the LFI program was launched in 1976 to provide an alternative entry point into French immersion for children who began their schooling in the regular English program (Beck, 2004). Two Grade 7 LFI classes were originally established, one at Queen Charlotte Intermediate and the other at Birchwood Intermediate. The LFI program has proven to be quite popular over the years; by 1997-1998, total enrollment in Grades 7, 8 and 9 had grown to 427 students and this had increased to 743 students by 2003-2004 (Beck, 2004). The LFI program is presently offered at each of the four large intermediate schools in the Charlottetown area; it is not offered in other areas of the Eastern School District (ESD), nor in the Western School Board.

Students receive between 1,200 and 2,000 hours of instruction in French over the three years of the LFI program (Turnbull, Lapkin, Hart & Swain, 1998). As a graduate of the LFI program, and as an LFI teacher, I can attest to the fact that the majority of LFI students achieve high levels of success in learning French – especially given this relatively short amount of time on task – and are able to continue in Grade 10 immersion courses right alongside students who have been in early immersion since Grade 1. However, in every class there are students who struggle to complete the requirements of the LFI program, and some decide to switch back into the regular English program. Halsall (1997, cited in Beck, 2004) reported that between 1996-1997 and 1997-1998, the attrition rate from LFI in the ESD was 2.6%, while Beck (2004) found

that this rate was 7.9% for 2003. This brief overview of LFI in P.E.I. describes the context in which LFI teachers are asked to adhere to the following guidelines regarding TL/L1 use.

3.2 Ministerial Guidelines Regarding TL and L1 Use

According to the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (APEF) LFI guidelines regarding TL and L1 use, LFI teachers are expected (officially at least) to teach exclusively in the TL:

> **Le français – langue de communication dans la salle de classe**
>
> L'apprentissage doit être intensif sans toutefois être une noyade. Les élèves doivent très tôt pouvoir comprendre le français et l'utiliser pour communiquer. Il est donc essentiel que la seule langue de communication dans la salle de classe soit le français.
>
> Selon Calvé (1993), l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde suit une "loi naturelle" qui s'énonce comme suit: "Apprendre à communiquer efficacement dans une langue seconde, que ce soit en milieu naturel ou en milieu scolaire, exige une exposition massive à cette langue en contextes signifiants et l'occasion d'effectuer dans cette langue des actes communicatifs."
>
> L'emploi de la langue maternelle, même à l'occasion, empêche les élèves de développer progressivement les stratégies qui leur permettront de fonctionner exclusivement en français en classe.
>
> (*Programme de français immersion tardive – 7e, 8e et 9e année – version provisoire*[19], p. 9, La Fondation d'éducation des provinces de l'Atlantique, 1997)

[19] Although this document was a draft version, these were the official guidelines still in effect in P.E.I. as of Feb. 2006, since no final version was ever produced. Similarly, Nova Scotia's Program Policy for French Second Language Programs (1998) states the basic principle of all programs: "All teaching in French second language programs shall be in French". Retrieved February 10, 2006 from http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/french-core-immersion/policy-fl2.pdf

These APEF guidelines correspond to what Macaro refers to as the Virtual Position: "The classroom is like the target country. Therefore we should aim at total exclusion of the L1. There is no pedagogical value in L1 use. The L1 can be excluded from the FL classroom as long as the teacher is skilled enough" (Macaro, 2001, p. 535). On first reading, the guidelines may seem to form a solid argument for eliminating the students' L1 from the classroom. It is declared *essential* that French be "the only language of communication in the classroom". Although it isn't made clear whether this 100% TL guideline is intended for both teachers and students, it appears to apply to both (other statements in the guide seem to indicate this as well). The APEF LFI guide clearly favours learning vocabulary through inferencing rather than through explicit instruction and making TL-L1 connections. Teachers are advised that pre-teaching vocabulary, or having students look words up in a French-English dictionary, "***do not represent*** *effective methods of teaching*"[20] (p. 74, my translation, italics and bold in original). Rather, the teacher should use realia or visual representations to impart the meanings of words, or should present new words in rich, meaningful contexts so that students will be able to infer their meanings.

3.3 Participants

All late French immersion teachers in P.E.I. were invited to participate in the present study, which is part of a larger study on teacher beliefs and TL and L1 use being conducted by Dr. Miles Turnbull. Six late French immersion teachers from two large schools in the Charlottetown area (four teachers from one school and two from another) volunteered to participate in this larger study:

Teacher #1 (Grade 7 LFI, school A)
Teacher #2 (Grade 7 LFI, school A)
Teacher #3 (Grade 7 LFI, school B)
Teacher #4 (Grade 8 LFI, school B)
Teacher #5 (Grade 8 LFI, school B)
Teacher #6 (Grade 9 LFI, school B)

[20] The original reads: "Enseigner ces mots essentiels avant d'aborder une leçon ou en faire rechercher la définition dans le dictionnaire ***ne représentent pas*** *des méthodes d'enseignement efficaces*" (Programme de français immersion tardive, 7e, 8e et 9e année, APEF guide, 1997, p.74).

Analysis of data collected from all six participating teachers will be included in the larger project being lead by Dr. Miles Turnbull (in progress); here I focus on two of the teacher-participants, using purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002, p. 244) to illustrate characteristics of a particular subgroup. I have selected teacher-participants #1 and #3, whom I refer to as Pierre and Frank, for the following reasons: both teach beginner-level Grade 7 classes and both have 10 or more years of LFI teaching experience; neither was formally trained as a French immersion teacher. Over the years, they have each developed their own strongly-held, personal belief system regarding TL/L1 use; Pierre is a native French speaker; Frank's first language is English; both teach math (and other subjects); and finally, their beliefs and teaching practices contrast in important ways. For Pierre, making use of the students' L1 is an important teaching strategy, while Frank focuses on maximizing TL use (nearly 100%) and strictly avoiding L1 use. In large part, Pierre and Frank most closely represent the two contrasting positions outlined in my introduction. Educators who refer to this study should find that their TL beliefs and practices agree to a certain extent with those of Pierre or Frank. Readers may also have their beliefs challenged as they think about the beliefs that guide different approaches to TL and L1 use, and the research findings which support them. I hope that the participants in this study (myself included), as well as other educators who may eventually refer to its findings, will benefit from questioning and further defining their own TL/L1-use belief systems.

3.4 Myself as Participant: A Foray into Action Research

This thesis has a built-in action research[21] component as I consider myself to be the third participant in this study. The goal of this self-analysis is to help me gain a clearer understanding

[21] Action research is concerned with 'problem situations' in the real world of the classroom; strategies of planned action are identified, implemented, and then systematically submitted to observation, reflection and change. Action research is collaborative and participatory, with teams of teachers and researchers conducting and implementing the research together. It implies a 'bottom-up' rather then a 'top-down' view of teacher development and assumes that improvements in practice should be grounded in insights generated by teachers. "In action-research, 'theories' are not validated independently and then applied to practice. They are validated through practice" (Burns, 2000).

of my own "hotspots" – inappropriate or over-used maxims (Richards, 1996; see section 3.7) regarding TL and L1 use. Since I took time off from teaching to conduct the present study, I was not able to video-tape my own TL and L1 use during lessons and thus had to rely on my memory of past practices. My reflections and understanding of my own practice have been greatly enhanced by the observational and interview data provided by my six fellow LFI teacher-participants. I plan to carry on with this action research in collaboration with colleagues in the future, as I continue to try to find the optimum balance for my students between maximizing TL talk and the judicious use of the L1.

3.5 Methods

I conducted an initial semi-structured, one-on-one interview with Pierre and Frank in January 2005. Questions focused on the details of their current teaching assignment, their experiences as a second language learner, teacher training and previous L2 teaching experiences, and other important influences shaping their beliefs about TL and L1 use in LFI. These initial questions are included in Appendix 1. I then conducted three classroom observations per teacher (approximately once per month), and a final interview was conducted in June, 2005. I took detailed field notes during classroom visits, using a modified MOLT observation scheme (Turnbull, 1999). The second and third classroom observations were also videotaped (videotaping focused on the teacher, not on students). Immediately following each of the three classes observed, I interviewed the teacher to review and discuss any instances in which the teacher used the students' L1 (or perhaps could have, but did not). Stimulated recall procedures[22] were used in interviews following the video-taped lessons. The final "post" interview allowed for checking and further clarification of information collected from the previous rounds. All interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed verbatim. As I transcribed the interviews, I

[22] Stimulated recall has been widely used in second language research to "explore participants' thought processes (or strategies) at the time of an activity" (Gass & Mackey, 2000, p. *xi*) and is intended to reduce recall error as much as possible.

took notes on emerging themes, and similarities or differences between Pierre and Frank's beliefs and strategies. I met with Dr. Turnbull several times throughout the process to review transcripts and discuss additional questions which arose or statements which needed to be clarified in subsequent interviews. The notes I took also included my reflections on my own practice as a second language teacher. The field notes and interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic open coding techniques. While I was able to begin to identify certain themes as I transcribed the interviews and took notes, the final themes were arrived at through systematic coding of the interview transcripts.

3.6 Research Design

This study is informed by grounded theory data collection and analysis techniques. Grounded theory methods consist of systematic guidelines for collecting and analyzing data in order to build a middle-range "theory" that explains the collected data at a broad conceptual level (Charmaz, 2000; Creswell, 2005). Grounded theorists rely on theoretical sampling, a form of purposeful sampling which distinguishes grounded theory from other qualitative approaches to data collection. Theoretical sampling involves "the simultaneous and sequential collection and analysis of data" (Creswell, p.405). Grounded theorists collect and then analyze data immediately instead of waiting for all data to be collected. This ongoing analysis informs the researcher's decision about what data to collect next; I collected data, analyzed it for preliminary categories, and then decided what data to collect during the next round of interviews based on this initial analysis. After several rounds of data collection and analysis, the grounded theorist eventually determines that they have reached saturation of categories; further data collection will not provide any new information. Originally, I had planned to interview each teacher on six different occasions – pre and post interviews, plus four classroom observations each followed by recall sessions. However, I determined after the third classroom visit that both teachers had given

full accounts of their beliefs and practice concerning TL and L1 use and so decided to forgo the fourth classroom observation. I used the final post interview to confirm data collected in earlier rounds.

I have adopted Charmaz's constructivist approach to grounded theory, which more fully recognizes the researcher's role throughout the process. Charmaz asserts that her constructivist approach "assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects' meanings" (Charmaz, p. 510). Thus my background and beliefs, as described in the first chapter of this thesis, should be recognized as having influenced my analysis of the data.

3.7 Data Analysis

Whereas earlier research on second language teaching mainly focused on observable (quantifiable) classroom behaviours and their effects on learning outcomes, a number of more recent studies have examined the role of teachers' beliefs and attitudes in determining actual practice in the classroom (Richards, 1996). Three theories regarding teachers' beliefs will help to inform my analysis of the data collected: Richards' maxims (1996), Woods' beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (BAK) (1996), and Kennedy and Kennedy's (1996) version of Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour.

Richards proposes that motivations for language teachers' decisions and actions can be understood by examining the "working principles or maxims which teachers consciously or unconsciously refer to as they teach" (1996, p. 282). He suggests that teachers' guiding maxims can be made explicit and analyzed through narratives, journal writing, discussion, and other forms of critical reflection. Teachers can then evaluate their own teaching by reviewing the lesson and seeing the extent to which they were successful in implementing their maxims and considering whether others would have been more appropriate (1996, p. 294). The present study

did exactly this. Teacher-participants were video-taped and then reviewed and reflected on their TL and L1 use during the lessons.

Woods (1996) takes an integrated view of teachers' beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (BAK). He examined how BAK were used in teachers' decision-making processes and discussed how teachers' BAK can evolve over time, how conflicts or "hotspots" arise when teachers realize that their BAK are not sufficient to deal effectively with certain teaching situations, and how, "under pressure from the teacher's desire to resolve the conflicts, resolutions can develop through subsequent experiences" (p. 203). I describe teachers' BAK and identify potential hotspots (including my own), having analyzed our beliefs and practices related to TL and L1 use.

Kennedy and Kennedy (1996) adopted Ajzen's (1991) "theory of planned behaviour" in order to explain the gaps that sometimes exist between teachers' beliefs and their actual practice. Subjective norms[23] and perceived behavioural control[24] may strengthen or weaken teachers' attitudes and behavioural intentions, affecting their plans to carry out an action. I analyzed data in an attempt to determine how LFI teachers, faced with pressures and obstacles, were able to continue using a preferred strategy, or why they may have employed other strategies which did not match their understanding of the "best" way to teach.

3.8 Reliability, Validity and Transferability

Qualitative research results are sometimes criticized as being unreliable, since the data is produced by leading interview questions. In addition, since it is a given that participants cannot provide full, "true" answers and since different researchers may interpret answers differently according to their unique frames of reference and biases, qualitative findings may not

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[23] Subjective norms reflect what a person believes others think about a particular behavior (i.e., exclusive use of the TL). If a teacher believes that "important others," such as colleagues, principals, Ministry officials, parents and students, are supportive of a particular behavior, the teacher's intentions to carry out the behavior will likely be strengthened, and vice versa.

[24] Perceived behavioral control refers to "enhancing or limiting factors associated with the context" (Kennedy & Kennedy, p.356). Internal factors, such as a teacher's abilities, and external factors, including circumstances and environmental considerations, contribute to perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior.

be considered "valid" in the modernist/quantitative sense of the word. Patton (2002, p. 433) observes that in qualitative research:

> No straight forward tests can be applied for reliability and validity. In short, no absolute rules exist except perhaps this: Do your very best with your full intellect to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study.

Kvale (2002) explains how validation of qualitative research according to postmodern conceptions of knowledge differs from the modernist view of "true knowledge as a mirror of reality" (p. 299). While modernist thinkers uphold predictive validity as the mark of "good" research, Kvale sees validity as "an expression of craftsmanship, with an emphasis on quality of research by checking, questioning and theorizing on the nature of the phenomena investigated" (p. 299). The qualitative paradigm espouses a pragmatic view of validity, favoring applicability over the justification of knowledge. Postmodernists view validity as "the social and linguistic construction of a perspectival reality where knowledge is validated through practice" (Kvale, 2002, p. 300).

Member checking was also used to help validate the findings in this thesis. Member checking is a strategy to determine the accuracy or credibility of findings. Participants are asked "whether the description is complete and realistic, if the themes are accurate to include, and if the interpretations are fair and representative" (Creswell, 2005, p. 252). Member checking was built into the interview sessions, as participants gave their reasons for using either the TL or L1; at the end of each interview they were given the opportunity to change or add any information. As an additional form of member checking, Dr. Turnbull and I organized a professional development (PD) day in November, 2006 during which all six participants from the larger study were asked

to reflect on initial analyses and again make any changes or additions to the information we had collected the previous year. During this PD session, the teachers were asked to what extent the APEF LFI guidelines influenced their TL and L1 use and were also asked to reflect on how their participation in the study had affected their beliefs and teaching practice. Each participant submitted written comments, and due to the potentially sensitive nature of the guidelines question, these were not shared with other participants. Finally, participants also had the opportunity to share strategies for maintaining high levels of TL use and for using the L1 strategically. These discussions were important since they served to demystify the often neglected issue of TL and L1 use amongst LFI teachers and also yielded additional interesting comments which were added to the interview and observational data for analysis.

With relatively small numbers of participants, qualitative studies cannot claim to be generalizable. Qualitative inquiry allows for in-depth, purposeful sampling, unlike larger, random quantitative sampling which is geared towards breadth and generalizability. Guba and Lincoln (1985, cited in Patton, 2002, p. 581), emphasize the importance of context, by proposing the concept of "transferability" in place of generalizability: "If context A and context B are "sufficiently" congruent, then working hypotheses from the sending originating context may be applicable in the receiving context" (Patton, 2002, p. 583). Returning to teachers' use of students' L1, I believe there may be some general guidelines for best practice that can be applied to a variety of contexts, however, teachers must ultimately decide for themselves the degree to which they use the students' L1 (if at all), based on their personal philosophy of language teaching, the grade level, time of year, students' learning styles and personalities, the teacher's own degree of fluency in the L2, time constraints, distance between the L1 and the language to be learned, and so on.

3.9 Limitations

Patton lists the limitations which are inherent in all data collected through observations and interviews:

> Participants may behave in some atypical fashion when they know they are being observed, and the selective perception of the observer may distort the data. Observations are also limited in focusing only on external behaviors – the observer cannot see what is happening inside people. Moreover, observational data are often constrained by the limited sample of activities actually observed . . . Interview data limitations include possibly distorted responses due to personal bias, anger, anxiety, politics, and simple lack of awareness since interviews can be greatly affected by the emotional state of the interviewee at the time of the interview. Interview data are also subject to recall error, reactivity of the interviewee to the interviewer, and self-serving responses. Observations provide a check on what is reported in interviews; interviews, on the other hand, permit the observer to go beyond external behavior to explore feelings and thoughts (2002, p. 306).

While it is indeed true that participants may "behave in some atypical fashion when they know they are being observed", and that teachers and students may have acted somewhat differently than they would have otherwise, this is not necessarily an undesirable outcome. If teachers became more mindful of their own L1 and TL use through participating in this study one of the purposes of this study will have been realized: to help teachers examine and then adjust, or reaffirm, their beliefs and practice related to TL and L1 use.

Furthermore, the influence of my own experiences and personal bias as a second language teacher and as a researcher cannot be ignored or explained away. In qualitative inquiry, the researcher takes on an active, involved role which unavoidably leads to a certain degree of bias in the interpretation of the data. Charmaz (2000, cited in Creswell, 2005, p. 397) points to the need for researchers to acknowledge their role throughout the research process and according to Patton, "authenticity and trustworthiness can be gained through ownership of voice and perspective" (2002, p. 66). Throughout this thesis, I have tried to clearly explain how my beliefs and practice have evolved and where I currently stand on the issue. Of course I remain open to making further changes as I continue to learn. I know that others hold different views and I believe that teachers should make informed decisions for themselves. I doubt that any "one best way" exists. I believe that teachers should be permitted (within certain parameters and after having examined the research evidence available on which to base their decisions) to exercise their professional judgment and do what they feel is most effective for their students.

The first weeks and months of Grade 7 LFI are potentially the most interesting in terms of teacher TL and L1 use; however, I was not able to observe teachers at the beginning of the school year. I had originally hoped to begin observations in September or October, as I believed that teachers might then tend to feel the most need to use English. However, the time required to obtain approval from the university ethics board, the school board and school principals, and then to actually recruit teacher-participants precluded this earlier start. For this important transitional period (from September to November) I had to rely on reported TL and L1 use in the interviews. I believe, however, that Frank and Pierre accurately described how they made the transition, at considerably different rates, to maximizing their use of the TL.

It was early December before this approval/recruitment process was complete and so it was decided that we should begin in January. Pierre commented that the results obtained would

have been very different had observations taken place at the beginning of the year; Frank commented that one of the reasons he chose to participate in this study was to show that it is possible to use the TL almost exclusively, even from near the beginning of the year. Clearly, further observations and reports of TL and L1 use by LFI teachers in September and October should yield interesting results and this is certainly an area worthy of future study.

Chapter 4 – Results and Analysis

In this chapter I describe Frank and Pierre's TL and L1 beliefs systems and the factors which have shaped their beliefs. I then describe their TL and L1 use as I observed it during classroom visits and their reported TL and L1 use during the first four months of the year, prior to the beginning of observations. Finally, I examine factors which influenced their planned and unplanned use of the TL and L1.

4.1 Description of Teachers' TL and L1 Belief Systems

Frank and Pierre had very different philosophies regarding TL and L1 use. Frank firmly believed that students learn French best when exposed to as much of the TL as possible; he believed it was his professional responsibility to maximize his use of French and to conscientiously avoid speaking English. Frank did, however, see a need to use some English at the very beginning of the year with Grade 7 LFI classes and perhaps a word or two on very rare occasions later in the year. While Frank agreed that beginner-level students may sometimes need to refer to their L1 (e.g., for mental translation during production, when trying to understand unfamiliar TL input, when asking for TL equivalents), he felt that these strategies were not beneficial in the longer term. Frank believed that rather than trying to make TL-L1 connections, which most often lead to inappropriate transfers, students should try to think in the TL and develop a separate TL system.

Pierre, on the other hand, believed that Grade 7 LFI students need to relate new TL elements to existing L1 knowledge and used TL-L1 translations as a means of ensuring or verifying comprehension. He used the L1 systematically over the course of the first two to three months of the year, providing or asking students for L1 translations each time new TL vocabulary and expressions were introduced. Once students had become familiar with a basic start-up vocabulary, Pierre gradually reduced the amount of English he used; after the first three

months of Grade 7 he only used isolated L1 words, either in order to elicit TL vocabulary by giving the L1 equivalent, or for checking comprehension (sometimes inviting students to give a translation of a word as a comprehension check).

4.2 Factors which Shaped LFI Teachers' Belief Systems

4.2.1 Teachers' experiences as L2 learners.

Lortie (1975) was the first of many researchers to note that teachers' beliefs and practices are often influenced a great deal by their own previous experiences as students. However, some teachers may not be consciously aware of the effects of this apprenticeship. Both Pierre and Frank's TL/L1 belief systems seem to have been influenced to a considerable degree by their own past language learning experiences. Frank acknowledged this on several occasions during the interviews. Pierre, however, did not see a real connection between his beliefs and teaching practice concerning TL and L1 use and his past experience as an L2 learner. While the context of Grade 7 LFI is certainly very different from his own L2 learning experience, his approach to TL and L1 use may have been more influenced by his own learning experience than he was consciously aware of.

Pierre grew up in a bilingual Acadian community. While French was his first language, he also learned English as a young child. He grew up immersed in both languages and was almost equally fluent in English and French before he started school. In many of his classes (English as a second language and other subjects) the teachers and students would alternate between French and English which is consistent with natural codeswitching amongst bilinguals. For example, his high school math and science classes were conducted mainly in French. However the students used English textbooks (this seems to have been a fairly common practice 20 to 30 years ago in some Acadian schools) which tended to result in a fair amount of switching between the two languages. Codeswitching was quite common in other classes as well, since

students and teachers were all fluently bilingual. However, Pierre didn't really feel that this experience as a student influenced his approach to TL and L1 use, since he considered the French first language school context to have been very different from the LFI context.

Frank grew up in an Anglophone community with no exposure to French outside of school. He took core French classes from elementary school through to Grade 12, but felt that he never had the chance to develop his L2 speaking skills; high school French classes mainly focused on writing skills, and Frank's teacher, although he was a Francophone, rarely spoke French with students. After completing his bachelor's degree at an English-language university, Frank spent two years in Quebec, studying French in an immersion-type program at a French language university, then taking regular courses alongside Francophones, and also working as an English Language Monitor[25]. Frank said that he had been influenced in his own teaching by one of his university professors in Quebec who had used a variety of TL modification techniques to make herself understood by students. Here Frank tells how this professor had encouraged him to develop his listening skills rather than relying on visual cues:

> One particular teacher I had at university, she never used English with us, but she used to find our crutch and mine was visual. I almost read her lips and she clued into that, she used to turn my face away and see if I could get it auditorially . . . So I always kind of thought back to her and thought, you know, she always found another vehicle by which to get the language communicated, and for us to absorb it and comprehend and so that's what I try to do.

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[25]This program (now known as the Odyssey program) is for Anglophones and Francophones who have completed one year of postsecondary education (or, in Quebec, who have obtained their Diplôme d'Études Collégiales); participants work as assistant language teachers to help L2 students discover and appreciate the target language and culture. For more information, visit the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada website: http://www.cmec.ca/olp/ or http://www.monodyssee.ca/

Frank later said that the strongest influence on his approach to L2 teaching had been his experience in this immersion program in Quebec:

> I guess it was the non-Francophone program I took at university in Quebec, and you know, that it was totally in French and I had a very strong teacher and, you know you model the way you were taught, I guess and I think that's what I did when I arrived . . . and I was to be the grade seven late immersion teacher . . . You know, nobody was there to tell me what the program was, the teacher was *gone*, who had been there and I just developed it and so I kind of you know, based it kind of more or less on the way I had been taught ... and that we took many roads to the same destination and so you know, you did the gestures, you did the visual, you did the audio-visual, you did the reading, you did the acting, you did whatever you could to get the message across – but you did it in French.

While living in Quebec, Frank tried to gain the maximum benefit from this real-life French immersion experience. He took advantage of every opportunity to practice his French with native speakers in the community and avoided using English, only occasionally spending time socializing with other native English speakers. During our interviews, Frank said that his TL/L1 beliefs were based on intuition and his personal experience, and that using English did not help him while learning French in Quebec. In the following quote, he wonders how much more French he might have learned had he not spent a certain amount of time with other Anglophone students, which took away from his opportunities for French exposure and interaction:

> When we were just together we would speak English . . . but as soon as there would be a Francophone included, you know, in a social gathering, we would all speak French . . . but I thought maybe I should have tried to go totally alone without even that crutch, you

know, how much quicker and deeper would my language acquisition have been – but just knowing that maybe any English I had detracted a little bit from progress, and you try to give a truer and better experience to the experience you're in control of.

4.2.2 Teacher training and experience in other contexts[26].

Pierre did his teacher training at a French-language university, preparing him to teach Francophone students in French-language schools; he had no formal L2 teacher training. Earlier in his career, before teaching LFI, he taught one year of core French, he taught at a French first language school, and then in an early immersion program at the elementary level. He began teaching Grade 7 LFI without having had the chance to observe late French immersion classes; he did not receive (or seek out) training or advice from Ministry consultants concerning TL/L1 use. As Pierre was the only Grade 7 LFI teacher in his school and had little contact with other Grade 8 and 9 LFI teachers, he developed his own approach:

> J'ai juste développé mon style. Je faisais n'importe quoi pour avoir le plus de français possible. Si ça fonctionnait bien, mais je l'utilisais l'année suivante puis je changeais un petit peu jusqu'à ce que pour moi ça fonctionnait vraiment bien.

Like Pierre, Frank didn't have any formal training in second language teaching, although he did do one of his practice teaching assignments in early French immersion. Frank and Pierre both told very similar stories of their first year as Grade 7 LFI teachers; they received little professional support and they were each the only grade 7 LFI teacher at their schools when they started. Like Pierre, Frank also explained that he developed his own approach to teaching Grade 7 LFI, and TL and L1 use. Frank told of starting his first year as a Grade 7 teacher, walking into

[26] Interviews were conducted in French and/or English.

a classroom with piles of books on which he assumed he was to base his programs: "Nobody told me what the curriculum was, what books I was to use, I just kind of surmised from what seemed to be there in class sets. And I made up my own program." Frank also attended a number of summer institutes for immersion teachers over the years; while none dealt specifically with TL and L1 use, the communicative approach was always the overarching theme.

Although neither Frank nor Pierre had specific training in teaching French as a second language, they each developed their own approach and both had very strongly-held beliefs regarding TL and L1 use. My training was in teaching French as a second language. However, much like Frank and Pierre, I'm sure that my approach to TL and L1 use, and my L2 teaching in general, has been more strongly influenced by my own experiences as a second language learner and subsequent "on-the-job" training as an L2 teacher. In many L2 teacher-training programs in the 1980s and 1990s, the issue of TL/L1 use, if discussed at all, was dealt with only in passing. TL exclusivity (or nearly exclusivity) and avoidance of the L1 were considered to be best practice, especially in an immersion context, and were therefore taken for granted. My training did not provide me with any real strategies for maximizing TL use (or for using the L1 judiciously). Over the course of my first two years as a Grade 7 LFI teacher, I came to view L1 use more positively, but still wondered about the possible advantages and disadvantages of codeswitching in different situations. When I began interviewing Frank and Pierre, I found that they were very clear in their own minds as to why they used the TL and L1 in the ways they did; they also seemed to be equally confident that their respective approaches to TL and L1 use were the most beneficial for their students' L2 learning.

4.2.3 Teachers' perceptions of the APEF TL and L1 guidelines.

I did not ask any questions about the APEF guidelines[27] during the five interview sessions with each teacher, nor did either of them refer to the guidelines during the interviews. My reason for not broaching the subject was that I wanted to get a picture of these teachers' beliefs and practices "as they were" over the course of the study (January – June, 2005). I did not know the extent to which their beliefs and actual TL and L1 use were influenced by the APEF guidelines, or whether they were even aware of the guidelines; I did not want them to change their beliefs and practice in the course of the study due to my raising the issue of the guidelines and making them feel that it was important that they uphold the policy prescribing L1 avoidance, nor did I want them to think that I was necessarily in favour of judicious L1 use with Grade 7 LFI students. It is also quite possible that being more aware of the guidelines or my personal opinion regarding TL and L1 use would not have influenced them anyway, as they both seemed quite firmly committed to their beliefs and practice.

However, I did want to know, in the end, whether they were aware of the guidelines as they appear on page 9 of the APEF LFI program guide, and to what extent these guidelines influenced their beliefs and individual approaches to TL and L1 use. Thus during the professional development day held (for all six teachers) several months after the completion of the observations and interviews, I asked participants what they believed the Ministry's guidelines (or expectations) were concerning TL and L1 use in LFI. I also asked to what extent their teaching was influenced by the guidelines and how they felt about them. Participants answered these questions in writing, so that other participants were not privy to these written comments given the potential sensitivity of these questions.

In explaining what he believed the TL/L1 guidelines to be, Pierre wrote:

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[27] The APEF guidelines are given on p. 50.

> Les attentes du ministère sont (probablement?) que les élèves puissent communiquer ou exprimer leurs idées en français. Les élèves devraient aussi être capables de lire un texte et de partager leurs idées. Le ministère doit s'attendre à ce que l'enseignant parle principalement en français.

While Pierre did not seem to be completely sure of what the guidelines were (given his insertion of "probablement?"), he thought that the guidelines most likely called for LFI teachers to speak "mainly" in French; however his response was more focused on what students should be able to do, perhaps feeling that this was more important than trying to pin down exactly how a teacher deals with TL and L1 use. This preoccupation with student learning outcomes was also reflected in Pierre's response when asked how the guidelines influenced his teaching and how he felt about them. A teacher's opinion of the guidelines would of course be a reflection of what they perceived them to be and not necessarily what the writers of the actual guidelines intended. Pierre wrote:

> Les directives viennent du côté de résultats d'apprentissage concrets plutôt que le côté de la langue (quantité). Je suis d'accord que l'enseignant doit utiliser le "maximum" de français possible.

Here he states that the TL/L1 guidelines must be connected to actual TL learning outcomes rather than focusing too much on the exact quantity of TL and L1 use. At the same time, he agrees that TL maximization is good practice; however, as mentioned earlier, teachers' ideas about maximizing TL use depend on what they consider to be useful or necessary uses of the L1. During the interviews, Pierre was quite surprised to hear that some teachers did actually teach Grade 7 LFI nearly exclusively in French, further showing that he did not know what the official expectations were concerning TL and L1 use. He felt it was normal to make use of the

L1 to a certain extent with Grade 7 students, while at the same time providing them with rich TL input and plenty of opportunities to interact in the TL.

Frank also may not have known exactly what the guidelines were, but his view of them accurately reflected the TL exclusivity actually prescribed. He wrote:

> Car on a besoin d'un niveau de langue supérieur pour enseigner l'immersion, je m'attends à ce qu'on doit parler le plus possible (à 100% préférablement) en français!

Frank clearly believed that immersion classes, by their very nature, were to be conducted entirely (or nearly entirely) in the TL. It is also worth noting that Frank connects the level of proficiency required of LFI teachers with TL exclusivity. This seems to imply that the main reason LFI teachers need to possess an excellent command of the French language is so that they won't have to resort to the L1, or that highly proficient teachers should have no need to use the L1. In other words, the main reason an LFI teacher would have for codeswitching would be in situations where their French skills were lacking. Pierre's case counters this, since he is Francophone and views L1 use as an appropriate and effective teaching strategy for Grade 7 LFI.

Asked how he was influenced by the guidelines and how he felt about them, Frank wrote: "Je suis d'accord! C'est ce que j'essaie de faire quotidiennement. C'est ce que j'exige de moi-même." Again, Frank sees it as the professional responsibility of LFI teachers to maximize their use of French and avoid L1 use as much as possible; this is clearly a strongly held conviction.

4.3 TL and L1 Use during Classroom Observations (January – June)

Given that TL/L1 use is a potentially sensitive issue for some LFI teachers, it was left up to participating teachers to decide which classes I would observe and when. I observed three of Frank's math classes (Frank's only Grade 7 classes were math and FPS). For Pierre, I observed

two social studies classes and one math class. I am not attempting to make direct comparisons between the TL/L1 use observed in the two teachers' classrooms, since social studies classes tend to feature more discussion and interaction as compared to math classes. Of course, the amount of teacher talk and teacher-student interaction may depend even more on the particular lesson and type of activities planned by teachers, regardless of the subject – it is not difficult to imagine a math class with more teacher talk and more interaction than we might find in certain social studies classes.

While they only represent snapshots of teacher TL and L1 use in three classes during the second half of the year, I believe that my observations give a good indication of how Frank and Pierre's TL/L1 beliefs translate into their Grade 7 LFI teaching practice. Given the focus of this study and also due to space limitations, I will not attempt to report here all the instances where effective communication took place without any reference whatever to the students' L1 – this would represent a monumental task, well beyond the scope of this study. The vast majority of communication in both classes took place in the TL. Both Frank and Pierre reported using, and were observed to use, a wide array of TL-based and extra-linguistic strategies to effectively convey the meanings of French words to students and facilitate L2 learning. These strategies included explanations in the TL, paraphrasing and synonyms, gestures, drawings, visual and auditory cues (e.g., showing and scraping the edge of a plastic "mira" in geometry class, making frog noises), repetition, and humour.

During my observations, I mainly focused on occasions where teachers felt it necessary to use the L1, or used it because they saw it as more beneficial for student learning than remaining in the TL. I also noted situations where students, sometimes at the request of the teacher, used English; when French-English dictionaries and TL-L1 cognates were used; and when teachers persisted in the TL even when a breakdown in communication appeared to occur.

I now describe the pertinent episodes of TL and L1 use in each of the three observed lessons.

4.3.1 Pierre.

Pierre used the L1 in a direct fashion – he himself said or wrote an English word or words, in two of the three lessons I observed. However, he only used English for providing isolated L1 equivalents, or requesting them from students, in order to ensure or check comprehension. All of Pierre's L1 use took place when difficult words came up during spontaneous discussion in two social studies classes.

Observation 1 (February)

The main theme of the first lesson was immigration and respect for other cultures. The topic was introduced by asking students to give definitions, in French, for key words. Students then presented posters, which they had made during a previous lesson, on how to stop racism. A discussion followed, with students giving their opinions. Finally, Pierre presented students with a number of scenarios which they discussed in small groups; they took notes before presenting their reactions to the situations.

After having asked students to give an explanation for the French terms "racisme" and "discrimination", Pierre asked the class "Qu'est-ce que c'est le mot en français pour *treat*[28]?" Several students knew, and gave the French equivalent, "traiter". In the interview following the lesson, Pierre stated that it was a relatively new verb for students, one they had only seen or heard a few times in previous lessons, and that asking students if they knew the French word was a test to see if they had remembered it. He added that students, who hadn't remembered, would understand by his mentioning the word in English and that they would have another chance to learn it by hearing other students reply with the French word "traiter". Thus for Pierre, this use of

[28] All English (L1) words used in the lesson are italicized; other reported speech (non-italicized) given in English here was actually said in French by the teacher or by students.

the L1 was intended to check for knowledge of the vocabulary item and to ensure comprehension by students who did not know the word, and also help them learn the word.

Further on in the lesson, Pierre asked students "Qu'est-ce que c'est le mot en français pour *life*?" Again, several students answered with the French equivalent "vie". In the interview, Pierre said that he did this several times during an average lesson in order to ensure that students understood the necessary vocabulary; he added that he would use the L1 less and French synonyms and explanations more for this purpose later in the year.

The next use of L1 occurred when a student, in reference to Martin Luther King, asked Pierre "Comment dit-on *speech*?" Pierre gave the French equivalent; the student then completed his sentence and the discussion continued. In the follow-up interview, Pierre said that encouraging students to use "Comment dit-on ___ ?" was very important because it enabled students to participate more fully, even when they didn't know all the words needed to express their ideas. Students used "Comment dit-on ___ ?" on three other occasions during the lesson (for *get*, *not accept* and *witness*); Pierre provided the French equivalents and the discussion continued in the TL.

Next, Pierre asked students the French word for *to know*: "Je veux savoir qu'est-ce que c'est *to know* ... Je veux savoir – savoir – qu'est-ce que c'est *to know*?" Again, a number of students answered: "savoir." Pierre joked that this was a trick question, since the answer was already contained within the question. During group work, a student asked Pierre for a French word using "Comment dit-on ___ ?", but was told to look it up in his French-English dictionary. Pierre commented in the follow-up interview that while he gave French equivalents during conversation, he would have them consult other students, or use a French-English dictionary, when they had time to do so (such as with writing tasks). Later in the lesson, a student asked how to say *it doesn't make a difference* and Pierre told her that he would only translate one or two

words and not a long phrase containing words the student already knew; it turned out that the student had asked about this particular expression several times before in previous classes and really only needed to be reminded of a word or two before remembering how to say it herself.

The final activity consisted of students presenting what they had written in their groups to the class. The first student used the expression "une foule fachée" and Pierre asked which words he had looked up in the dictionary ("Quel mot as-tu cherché en anglais?"); the student replied, "*angry mob*." Pierre asked the same of another student who used the word "grève" (*strike*) in his presentation to the class. During the interview, Pierre explained that his reason for doing this was to help the students who hadn't used their dictionaries to look up these words and therefore didn't know them (possibly other students in the same group or even the reporter if they weren't the person who had actually looked up the word).

Pierre also wrote French synonyms on an overhead to help students understand the more difficult French words. He commented in the interview that he probably would have written English equivalents at the beginning of the year, but that by January students had a sufficient vocabulary base to understand the L2 synonyms.

Observation 2 (April)

The topic of the second social studies lesson I observed in Pierre's class was "les explorateurs." Students were first asked to identify the territorial boundaries of "La Nouvelle France" on a map. The class then discussed explorers of the past and present, answering questions from their workbook. Next, students brainstormed a list of potential problems faced by explorers and then discussed possible solutions. The lesson concluded with some choral reading for pronunciation practice and pair work on other questions in their workbook.

During the discussion on explorers of the past and present, Pierre asked students: "L'Allemagne? Est-ce que vous savez qu'est-ce que c'est l'Allemagne? Ça commence avec "G"

en anglais." A student answered correctly "Germany". In the interview, Pierre pointed out that *he* hadn't repeated the English word, and that if other students hadn't heard, he would have asked the student to repeat the English word rather than say it himself. He continued: "The only time they're allowed to say English words is when I ask them 'Comment dit-on ___ en anglais?', or when they ask me 'Comment dit-on ___ en français?'; that's the only time they are permitted to use English." Based on my observations, Pierre's students also made a concerted effort to speak French as much as possible when working together in groups, asking each other for help in expressing their ideas in French by making effective use of "Comment dit-on ___ ?" Although Pierre adopts a gradual approach to increasing his own and students' TL use, he clearly expects students to use French as much as possible from January; English is then only used when asking for French vocabulary and for checking or ensuring comprehension of French words.

As the discussion continued, Pierre asked students "Pourquoi est-ce que vous pensez que les explorateurs explorent?" and a student gave an answer partly in English:

Student: "Ils veulent *to learn*" (They want *to learn*).
Pierre (to the whole class): "Quel est le verbe français pour *to learn*?"
Most students: "Apprendre."
Pierre: "Apprendre, OK, ils veulent apprendre.

Pierre later commented that this was a verb the students knew well, one that they'd been using since the beginning of the year. He added: "*She* (the student) said it in English, so to make her think, you know, you know what it is, I asked the class to let her know, that verb, think a little harder."

When a student said that explorers wanted to find information, Pierre asked "Quelle expression française est-ce que je vais utiliser pour *about*?" and students answered "À propos!" During our interview, Pierre said that he asked this because students often say "à peu près", another equivalent for "about", but meaning "approximately": "They always get mixed up between "à peu près" and "à propos", so I wanted to be sure they used the correct term."

A moment later, when a student asked "Comment dit-on *king*?", Pierre just gave the French "roi" without asking the class, since he didn't expect that they would know the word. He said that they had encountered the word in passing a couple of months earlier, but didn't expect that they would have remembered it.

Further on in the lesson, Pierre asked "Quel est le mot pour *to send*?" and was quite surprised that a couple of students actually knew the French "envoyer"; he supposed that they had probably learned the word in French class with another teacher.

When a student asked how to say "diseases," Pierre asked the class "Comment dit-on *diseases*? Ça commence avec 'm' ", and wrote the first letter of the word on the board. After Pierre had given the first two or three letters of the word, several students answered "malade." Pierre then gave them the noun form, "maladie." Pierre said that he had been quite sure that the students would know the word, as they hear the word "malade" almost every day when the attendance is taken. Pierre added that with all the new words students are learning, they can sometimes forget words momentarily which they really do know. He sometimes has to give them the first two or three letters on the board as a hint; then if they still haven't come up with the word, he will tell them.

When a student asked "Comment dit-on *shipwreck*?", Pierre drew a blank himself and asked students to look it up in their dictionaries. Several students quickly found the word "naufrage". Pierre commented in the interview that students sometimes ask for TL words he can't think of on the spot, or doesn't know; Frank made this same comment and I have often had the same experience myself. We all agreed that it is good for students to see that teachers look up words in the dictionary too, as it models an important learning strategy – appropriate use of bilingual dictionaries – and shows that teachers, sometimes even native speakers, are still learners of the language. This can help to make teachers seem less like distant TL "experts"

whose level of proficiency may seem unattainable. The discussion then turned to using stars for navigation, and Pierre asked "Comment dit-on *clouds*?" He said that students had had a lot of difficulty with the word "nuage" (with pronunciation and confusing it with "neige") when they had learned it in a science class earlier in the year and in a previous social studies unit. Several times during the discussion when students were having trouble finding their words, Pierre gave them a minute or two to think by taking a comment or question from another student and then coming back to them. Students would work out how to express their idea, sometimes checking in their dictionaries. Pierre said that this was preferable to having students think and struggle to say something "on the spot," which could cause stress and disrupt the flow of the class, perhaps leading to disengagement on the part of other students.

Observation 3 (April)

About three weeks later, I observed a third lesson, this time a math class, during which Pierre only made one indirect reference to English. The aim of the lesson was to introduce the concept of bisecting angles and to practice different methods for doing so.

In introducing the lesson, Pierre made use of students' previously existing knowledge in English and French in order to have them come up with the French word "bissecter." He told students, all in French, that the word for "cutting in two, or dividing angles" was almost the same as the word used when talking about what is often done to frogs in a science lab (he also made a frog sound to help students understand the word "grenouille"). One student said she knew the word, but not in French, then gave the English word "dissect". Pierre said that the French word he was thinking of was very similar, but started with a different letter. Another student then came up with "bi – bissecte." Pierre explained that the class had previously discussed the meaning of the prefix "bi" (two) and so he had been quite sure they would be able to find the word.

The only other English word uttered during this class was used by a student when learning how to use a compass: "Mon compas a un *spring*." Pierre simply provided the unknown French equivalent, "ressort," and continued the lesson completely in French.

4.3.2 Frank.

Frank drew pictures, used gestures and made very effective use of TL synonyms and paraphrasing; he did not speak any English during the three classes I observed. Like Pierre, Frank provided several TL equivalents in response to student use of L1 and requests for French words ("Comment dit-on ___ ?") and sometimes also referred students to their French-English dictionaries.

Observation 1 (February)

In this first math class, Frank explained the instructions and then gave examples showing how to approach different questions in the book, all concerning ratios. These were written problems, most containing words unknown to students. The meanings of several of these unknown words could not be easily inferred, and so Frank gave explanations using TL synonyms and explanations, as well as gestures and pictures.

One of the questions contained the word "échantillon" (sample), which Frank explained by giving the French paraphrase "un exemple ou une partie pour tester". I wondered, based on the context of the word problem and given this paraphrase given in French, how many students would have understood, or would have realized that "échantillon" meant "sample" in English. Frank commented: "Even if it's very simplified, like "exemple" (for "échantillon"), you know, that's how I keep it in French . . . they know enough to do that question, like they wouldn't know enough to obviously use that word themselves, but that's not where we are right now." Frank added that when they came to a later chapter dealing with statistics, he would aim for a more precise understanding of the term "échantillon."

Another math question contained the word "mélange" (mix) in reference to mixing a cleanser with water for cleaning, and Frank explained "on mélange le nettoyeur, par exemple Mr. Clean, et l'eau". He commented:

> I find in the word problems, like the context, they wouldn't necessarily get, like we've never talked about cleaning mixes or carburetors and that kind of stuff. So anyway, you just kind of have to make it as simplistic as possible, and then when I would give them one on a test it certainly wouldn't be at that reading level. I might talk about making cookies and mixing eggs and sugar or something like that, you know, much simpler . . . words I know that even if they didn't know, they could easily look them up in their French-English dictionary in a second.

Another question dealt with "une moto hors route" (an off-road motorbike). Frank first explained the word "moto" by using a paraphrase in French – "c'est une bicyclette à moteur", trying to have students make a connection between "bicyclette" and "motocyclette"; a student responded in English "motorcycle". Frank then explained "hors route" by saying "comme dans un champ ou sur un sentier" (like in a field or on a path). While these are fine examples, this phrase was likely beyond most students' ability to comprehend, at least without other visual or contextual clues. Indeed, a moment of confused silence followed this explanation, which seemed to indicate that most students had not understood the TL paraphrase. Frank acknowledged this, but again added that they really did not need to know the meaning of "hors route" in order to complete the math problem:

> I thought well, that "hors route" is going to throw them if I don't tell them – and I mean, I tell them … *That* I'm not sure they got – but it didn't really matter as far as the calculation went. But if *someone* got it, at least it was worth it, the explanation. You know, the more I talk in French, the more they seem to absorb.

For the last question, Frank explained the words "essence" (gasoline) and "huile" (oil) by drawing a gas pump and a can of oil on the board. I was quite impressed by Frank's artistic flair and the meanings should have been obvious to everyone; the students all nodded their heads to show that they had understood.

After they had finished working on the problems, the students checked their work together on the blackboard. Frank had instructed them to write their answers in complete sentences, by using the question as a model and inverting the verb and subject (e.g., *Peut-on ...?* was transformed into *On peut ...*). Frank commented that he often taught French in math class, focusing on grammar and syntax but without using the students' L1.

Observation 2 (April)

The second math class I observed was a statistics lesson. Students were working on questions having to do with pie charts and stem and-leaf diagrams. Frank also took time during this lesson to help students with their written French; students wrote their answers in complete sentences and then Frank helped them to make corrections based on examples that volunteers wrote on the blackboard. We watched the video showing Frank going over some questions that had been assigned for homework the night before, and which contained two new expressions, "faible" (weak) and "au moins" (at least). Here Frank elicits TL synonyms for "faible" from students:

> Frank: Quel est le résultat le plus faible? "Faible" était un nouveau mot. Si vous avez cherché dans vos dictionnaires, "faible" veut dire le plus quoi?
> Élève: Weak.
> Frank: Oui, en anglais – ou en français on peut dire, pas le plus haut mais le plus ...
> Élève: Bas.
> Frank: Oui, ou le plus petit.

Frank commented: "Yeah, I don't want to say the (L1) word, but if I can bring them to a synonym, then they accept that, you know. And I used the gesture, not 'le plus haut', with my hand up, 'mais le plus ...' and one person said 'petit' and one said 'bas'."

The next question contained the expression "au moins" (at least), which several students had taken to mean "less than". Frank asked the class if they had looked up the word at home. He commented:

> I don't think really – nobody was giving me much feedback that way, so I thought well, they recognize "moins", and I just went on and told them "le minimum". You know, there are so many words that are so similar to English.

Observation 3 (May)

The third math class I observed started with a short 15-minute geometry test. Following this, Frank explained some new concepts (line segments and parallel and perpendicular lines) and then assigned some questions from the textbook.

When introducing the concept of a line segment in geometry, using drawings on the board, Frank asked the class: "AB ou CD, lequel est le segment?" When no one answered, Frank decided to confirm students' understanding of the French word "segment" by asking them for a synonym and writing its first letter, "p", on the board. Frank explained that the students had previously read the definition for "segment" in their textbooks, and that he had tried to have students associate "segment" with the French synonyms "portion" and "partie."

> In the definition, and we had read the definitions in the book, it's described as "une portion" ... So I wanted them to give me "portion" (French), because it looks like "portion" (English). And both segment (English) and portion (English) you know, are the same in English ... and then I also thought well, you know,

even if they didn't get that word, "partie" is a word that they know. I thought he (student) said "pourcent", but he kept repeating and he was saying "morceau." So he came out with another synonym, which he was more comfortable with, and actually the one he came out with was the most French! You know, which was weird, yeah ... here I'm trying to make it easy by using words that they might know in both languages and he comes out with one that's totally French, which was great!

In this case one of the students had obviously understood the word "segment" and had responded with a French word not related to English ("morceau"). Frank and I were both impressed by this student's knowledge of the word "morceau", since it *wasn't* a TL-L1 cognate.

The only other difficult word that came up during the lesson was "schéma" (diagram), which Frank was able to explain with the TL synonym and L1 cognate "diagramme".

4.4 Reported TL and L1 Use (September – December)

Since my classroom visits only began in January, I asked Frank and Pierre to explain how they used the TL and L1 during the period from September to December, as students made the transition to a near total French classroom environment. In the interviews, they also expanded on the beliefs which guided their practice regarding TL and L1 use; an important contrast was found.

4.4.1 Frank.

Frank believed that Grade 7 LFI classes should be conducted entirely in French. While he conceded that L1 use can sometimes be necessary (such as at the beginning of the year), Frank generally saw teacher L1 use as detracting from students' L2 learning. He thus avoided using English as much as possible. While this is sometimes more difficult for students, Frank believed that they are able to rise to the challenge and that they will learn more French in the long run. He

said that students "just have to stick at it" and persevere during the initial stages of TL learning as they gradually develop comprehension and proficiency in the TL:

> I think you have to give kids that opportunity to figure things out for themselves, and that may not happen this *first* year, but this is just the foundational block, you know, it's going to build, progress as years go on, but I don't think you can baby them so much as in "Oh, well I'll fill in what you don't know" or "I'll tell you what you don't know", like they'll catch on, but you've got to leave the holes there and they fill in eventually.

Frank felt that L1 use could be almost completely avoided by simplifying his speech, using French synonyms and paraphrasing, using concrete examples and visuals, and adapting the pacing of the lesson and activities to students' TL ability level. Rather than starting with larger amounts of L1 use and making a gradual transition towards maximizing TL use, Frank said that he speaks French "in a very simplified way" at the beginning of the year, and then his French gets more and more complex as students progress.

Frank reported using English for the first day of school, which is mostly spent dealing with administrative issues and explaining rules and procedures (Grade 7 students are not only new to being taught in French, they are new to the school). From the second day, he tries to speak French as much as possible, although he does find it helpful to use some English from time to time during the first few weeks:

> And September, granted, it's difficult to go in and do 100% right off the bat, but I go over all the school rules and all the homeroom stuff in the first week of school, and then I go right in and I do as much French as I can, and by October I really am speaking totally French.

Frank is able to use French exclusively from October throughout the rest of the year, except on very rare occasions when he might use one L1 word to introduce a new concept or method in math. He said that when introducing an activity at the beginning of the year: "I might tell them, you know, "assemblage" is "matching" but then do the matching in French". Frank also told of an occasion in which he had used one English word in the weeks preceding our last interview in June:

> In the last chapter, I was talking about integers and so I was telling them about "nombres positifs et négatifs", and they were all looking at me, so I did say the word "integer" at one point because they had had that in Grade 6 ... In that case I thought, I don't want them to think of this as something that they've never seen before, or take 20 minutes just to think – "Wait a minute, we did this last year."

Frank told of having a French consultant visit his class in one of his first years teaching LFI to confirm that it was possible to speak French exclusively from very early on with Grade 7 students: "I don't think he quite believed that someone could do it that early in the year, so he came in and he watched me, and you know, *the kids got it*. They're like sponges at this age, as long as they're willing, it's quite doable." Frank often expressed confidence in his students' ability to figure things out. He acknowledged that students don't always understand everything during the first few months, but affirmed that students soon catch the gist of key words and phrases through repetition:

> Well just the vacant look, you know, and you know they don't get it. But I firmly believe – well, next time around they will – so I'm very repetitive and I stick to key formats and key phrasings and I use them over and over the first few months and then I'll expand on them as the year goes on, because at least if they can catch those, they can catch the gist,

which is all I'm expecting. So they're usually harder on themselves than I would ever be, because I realize that it's going to take a number of goes and a number of times around. So I do things on the board and with gestures and you know, all of those non-verbal cues.

Frank explained that just before the initial interview for this study, he had come across an article in *Educational Leadership* on Spanish immersion in the U.S. which stressed that instruction must always be delivered in the second language, and that the teacher should never translate. Frank said that the article had reconfirmed his beliefs concerning TL exclusivity as best practice. While he knows of other LFI teachers who give translation exercises to their students, Frank does not believe it to be helpful:

I *do not* ask them to translate, I think that's a waste of time, you're activating part of the brain that you're trying to get them to forget about. I've always believed that. I know that kids need a French-English dictionary, but I don't ask for any translation because it's double-thinking and it's keeping the English in there.

Frank believes that it is very important to maximize his use of the TL, since the only opportunity students have for TL exposure and interaction is in the LFI classroom. If need be, personal or other school-related problems can be discussed in English between classes, at lunchtime, or after school. In order to maintain maximum TL use during class time, yet still address the difficulties some students have understanding the course content and/or French as the language of instruction, Frank offers extra help sessions conducted in both languages, mainly in French, but with some explanations in English. Frank said that seven or eight students regularly attended these weekly sessions, with as many as 30 out of 100 students (three classes) coming to get help or review concepts in English and French before tests. I too have often found it effective to give extra help in both English and French. Frank explains:

I do get around it though. Math is a core subject and sometimes it's not math, it's French that causes students difficulty, and that's just the reality of this program, so one day a week, on Wednesdays after school for 45 minutes I offer after school math help and we do it in both languages – and that's the only time, because it's *after school* and it's a commitment beyond the in-class time. It's not like I would refuse to help a student who's not getting a math concept because I won't speak their mother tongue – I won't in class, not even at their desk – but I would once a week, after school on Wednesdays.

Maintaining French as the sole language of instruction has always been a central feature of Frank's teaching in Grade 7 LFI. For most of his career, Frank taught other LFI classes in addition to math and FPS, such as French language arts, social studies and science. Giving an account of his past TL/L1 use in teaching these other subjects, Frank said that while he almost never spoke or used English directly, he often made use of students' existing L1 knowledge by teaching French language arts through nursery rhymes, Christmas carols and movies that students already knew in English, and by using L1-TL cognates:

If I wanted to show them a film and then have them do a character profile on the film, I'd choose a Disney so I would try to take the ambiguity out of out of the situation, but use the French. So you already know what you're doing, you already know the story, but now we're going to look at it, listen, develop your ear in French, and we're going to write out some simple sentences about the characters' physical appearance and personality. And then I would give a list of possible adjectives, and they would choose their adjectives, and I would use like "courageux", "ambitieux", stuff that they would know or that has *very* similar spelling in English Even for their pronunciation, I used to have them repeat nursery rhymes, so you know, they all know Ba Ba Black Sheep – well then now it's Ba

Ba Mouton Noir, so they didn't have to figure out what they were saying, but they had to focus on the pronunciation.

Frank also said that his students had always enjoyed reading and performing skits based on the "little yellow books", such as *Les monstres du Lac Champlain* and *Les OVNIs*[29]. I read these same little yellow books as a student and later used them quite often with my own Grade 7 students; they were some of the few resources available that were at the appropriate reading level (interest and level of language) for Grade 7 LFI students. Based on my experience, I believe that LFI students were able to understand and enjoy these stories almost from the beginning of Grade 7 because they contain many TL-L1 cognates. (A message to students in the introduction encourages students to look for and use cognates in order to facilitate comprehension of the text.) These books feature translations for most key words in the margin of every page, along with a French-English glossary at the back. Some students no doubt rely on the translations more than others, but the fact remains that many Grade 7 students rely heavily on translation and TL-L1 connections, especially at the beginning of the year.

Frank expressed concerns that codeswitching would cause students to depend on the teacher for English translations:

> I think if you perpetuate the English in your classroom, you perpetuate double thinking. If I'm going to discuss whatever mathematical concept, in one mouthful say, you know, "Quand tu multiplies les nombres positifs et les nombres négatifs, tu vas recevoir un produit négatif" and then say "A positive by a negative equals a negative" – well which one are you going to wait for? If they know that you're going to do this translation service, they're not going to buy into the French – some of it'll go in but certainly not to the degree that if they knew they had to get it. And maybe

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not the first time, but the second or a third repetition, then they'd be listening – but if they knew that you were going to, you know, as soon as someone wrinkled their brow, then you were going to say it in English, they'll just wait.

This is similar to the argument made by Calvé (1993), who warns that over-use of the L1 may cause students to ignore TL input. Frank also seems to be equating codeswitching with regularly making statements in both English and the TL. Teachers who make regular use of this "concurrent" technique may indeed undermine active thinking and promote a flawed understanding of TL words (Wong-Fillmore, 1985, cited in Calvé, 1993).

4.4.2 Pierre.

Compared to Frank, Pierre reported making extensive use of English over the course of the first two to three months of Grade 7. He believes that this is necessary in order to help students to build a "base", or foundation, which then allows them to make the transition to higher levels of TL use:

> Je trouve ça beaucoup moins stressant pour les élèves, quand ils arrivent en classe, c'est pas "Oh, qu'est-ce que c'est? Qu'est-ce que c'est?" – c'est "Oui, c'est qu'est-ce que c'est? Bon, maintenant utilisons ce mot la," alors ... Au début, c'est tout simplement pour l'enseignement de la langue. Ils ont besoin des mots. Il y a beaucoup de mots dans les deux langues qui sont très similaires, quand tu écris un mot au tableau, ils vont trouver la ressemblance puis ils vont savoir qu'est-ce que c'est, mais il y en a qui sont complètement différents. Alors pour enseigner le vocabulaire puis avoir une bonne base, alors on fait le plus possible pour, comme j'ai dit, dessiner ou montrer des objets en classe ou pointer ou trouver des comparaisons, mais parfois c'est vraiment impossible, on doit utiliser l'anglais. Très peu maintenant (en janvier), beaucoup au début de l'année.

Pierre puts a lot of emphasis on translation, especially at the beginning of the year, in order to establish the base:

> En *septembre* on commence graduellement. Ce n'est pas 100%, c'est loin de la. Mais ce que je fais en septembre, c'est *moi*, je parle anglais puis eux ils parlent en français. Alors moi, je commencerais la classe en disant "Hi", puis ils vont me dire "Bonjour" ... puis je dis "Today", puis eux autres, ils vont dire "aujourd'hui" ... "We're going to" – "Nous allons ..." – moi je dis "work" – (les étudiants disent) "travailler", puis après ca je leur demande de répéter la phrase – "Bonjour, aujourd'hui nous allons travailler avec les nombres". C'est eux qui parlent français. Moi, je parle anglais mais mon but c'est de les faire parler en français, et la compréhension ... Puis le lendemain quand ils arrivent – "Bonjour aujourd'hui nous allons étudier les sciences humaines ..." – boom, ils le savent. Et puis la je peux commencer avec "sortez vos livres", alors, tu sais, alors j'accumule, j'accumule, j'accumule ... Alors les premières six semaines, c'est comme ça, puis là ils ont une bonne base. Ça fonctionne vraiment bien.

Pierre said that he uses 30 to 40% French in September, and then gradually builds up to around 80 to 90% French by the beginning of November. He makes this gradual transition away from regular L1 use in such a way that by January, he uses only isolated L1 words, mainly to ensure and to verify comprehension (giving and asking students for L1 meanings for unknown TL words). During his first few years as a Grade 7 LFI teacher, Pierre had felt that his students were not speaking enough French; he thus developed this approach to TL and L1 use, which he believes helps students to develop a solid base of TL vocabulary, allowing them to understand, and speak, more French than they otherwise would:

> Réellement les pourcentages vont changer du mois de septembre au mois de décembre, il y a une grande, grande différence, mais après Noël, 100%, tu sais, le plus possible. C'est juste en septembre il y a beaucoup de personnes qui pensent "Oh, complètement français, complètement français" – c'est impossible. Tu peux le faire, mais c'est très frustrant pour les élèves, alors moi, j'aime leur montrer une base, on fait beaucoup de répétition, beaucoup de répétition, beaucoup, puis là, à chaque jour j'incorpore les nouveaux mots puis éventuellement on est complètement en français.

Pierre felt that use of the L1 was necessary for teaching vocabulary and expressions at the beginning of the year, before he could really begin to explain unknown words using paraphrasing or synonyms in the TL. His approach includes having students keep a running list of words that they are supposed to have learned over the course of the first several weeks. At different intervals, students brainstorm all the new words they have learned and add them to the list, which they are to study for homework. Pierre then expects that students will know these TL words, and so codeswitching is no longer required for them. As seen in chapter 2, this approach can be very helpful in helping learners establish a start-up vocabulary through deliberate, decontextualized learning, which in turn can lead students to become more effective at inferencing (Waring & Nation, 1997). In January, Pierre marks the final step toward maximizing TL use by posting a large sign on the board advising students that they must speak French and introducing a point system to encourage students to do so (see section 2.9 on student TL and L1 use, p. 43). Pierre explained why he continued to use L1 words for comprehension checks beyond the first few months:

> Si je voulais, je pourrais [enseigner] complètement 100% en français, mais je trouve ça quand même … bon pour les élèves. Ça m'aide à savoir s'ils comprennent ce qui se passe

et puis aussi à leur fait utiliser le français, qui est le but, pour qu'ils parlent français. Alors si je leur demande ces questions puis ils sont capables de répondre le mot que je leur demande, ils vont continuer à utiliser ce mot là.

4.5 Factors Influencing TL and L1 Use

The following emerged as important factors which influenced Frank and Pierre's beliefs and actual TL and L1 use, although what was an important influence for one was sometimes not for the other.

4.5.1 Teaching grammar.

As in Frank's class, Pierre's students can consult French posters featuring key words and phrases, however posters for the four most common verbs (aller, être, avoir and faire) at the front of Pierre's room also provide students with English equivalents (e.g. avoir – to have: j'ai – I have, tu as – you have, etc.). Pierre explained that students no longer need to refer to them after the first month or two. Here, he explains why he believes that these bilingual posters are helpful:

> Je crois qu'il est important par exemple les verbes, si tout le monde mémorise "je fais, tu fais, il fait, nous faisons" – mais il est important que les élèves savent que c'est "I'm doing, you're doing, he does" … Je trouve c'est important quand ils apprennent le français, qu'ils savent ce qu'ils apprennent, pas juste mémoriser des mots, parce que s'ils font juste mémoriser, mémoriser puis ils savent pas ce qu'ils mémorisent ils vont pas être capable de placer des phrases ensemble. Alors, tu sais, il y en a au début de l'année, j'avais donné un quiz sur ces quatre verbes là, aller, être, avoir et faire, puis je les avais écris en français puis leur demandais de les écrire en anglais puis, "Oh", c'était "whoa, ben, je ne sais pas qu'est-ce que c'est en anglais. Je peux dire j'ai, tu as, il a, nous avons, vous avez, ils ont, mais j'ai aucune idée qu'est-ce que c'est" … Alors au début de l'année c'est ça, faire certain qu'ils comprennent qu'est-ce que c'est – surtout les verbes!

Explicit knowledge of TL grammar, including TL and L1 similarities and contrasts, should help learners to "notice features in the input that otherwise would be ignored" and "compare what they have noticed in the input with output derived from their current interlanguage grammars" (Ellis 1997, p.123). Pierre uses the L1 to compare structures in French and English, although not to quite the same extent that I have in the past (see examples below). Like Pierre, I always told students (or asked them if they knew) the English meanings of verbs as we learned them, and usually asked them to write the L1 equivalents in their notebooks, at least for the infinitive. I did this early on in my career, even though it bothered me a little, since according to my beliefs at the time and what I had learned in my teacher training, the L1 was to be strictly avoided. I was also surprised on several occasions, like Pierre, by the fact that some students might be able to conjugate a verb, but would not know what it meant in English, or even what "tu" or "nous" meant – even after I had explained things and we had gone over different verbs on the board and had used them in a variety of contexts (perhaps they weren't paying attention – or didn't study!). At first I was somewhat surprised to see Pierre's bilingual posters on permanent and prominent display in his classroom, but the more I thought about it, the more I concluded that posting English equivalents for these key verbs would certainly be a big help to some students during the first couple of months of Grade 7 LFI.

I told Frank that I sometimes compared French and English structures so that students could see that the same structure existed in English (e.g., the infinitives used in *je veux aller* = I want to go; *je vais travailler* = I'm going to work), or to show that certain TL and L1 structures were not directly translatable (e.g., I am 12 years old ≠ *je suis 12 ans*). Here, Frank expressed doubt regarding the effectiveness of making explicit TL/L1 comparisons, instead believing that learning through use in context and repetition was the best method for teaching and learning verbs:

No, I would *never* do that. And it's not that, you know, I would maybe see those connections, but I don't think they know their English grammar very well. So I don't think they have that base for comparison anyway. So I try to get away from that as much as possible. No, I make no reference to English and no translation, I just say this is the way it is, you know. But ever since Christmas, because I think it's a really important thing for them to do, is they need to express themselves. Whenever it's Monday, first class I have them, it doesn't matter whether it's FPS or math, or whatever we all go around the room and we all take our turns saying one or two things we did on the weekend, and I have already started to instill in them, you know "j'ai fait", but "je suis allé(e)". And they have no reason – they have no idea why, other than I'm telling them that's how you say it, right? When they say "j'ai allé", non, non, non – "je suis allé(e)" and then "répétez" and they do. And I try to make it fun, you know, like most kids, it's about their hockey games or movies they've seen and stuff like that, but at the same time I'm teaching, or modeling proper use of être and avoir in the past tense, right? So I'm hoping that when they see that in the spring – "Oh, that's what that is!" But they don't have to know that from me now. They'll learn in time, you know. Because I always put it down to how you learn as a child, from sheer repetition, right? Nobody sat down and said this works, Brian, because, you know, these are the semantics of your mother tongue. No one ever really actually ever does that for you. You just learn how it all goes together and most of it's by ear.

For Frank, implicit learning in context is the key to achieving proficiency in the TL. He also viewed explicit instruction as useful – he often incorporated grammar mini-lessons and activities to develop students' writing skills into his math classes – but saw nothing to be gained from explicit instruction involving making connections with the L1. Implicit learning is certainly

extremely important for developing true communicative ability in the TL. However I believe that the L1 can sometimes play a positive role in both types of activities: those geared towards explicit learning and those aimed at fostering implicit learning.

4.5.2 Subject, materials and resources.

Due to the relatively small numbers of students enrolled in LFI programs across Canada, textbooks are not specifically produced by publishers for LFI students. The textbooks used in science, math, and social studies are produced for Francophone students, which means that the complexity of the language is often far beyond the limited reading skills of LFI students, especially Grade 7 students who can really only understand very simple sentences.
Pierre explains:

> Les textes sont *trop* avancés pour nos jeunes, alors au début de l'année on analyse des photos mais on ne peut pas le lire – on peut le lire, mais ça leur donne absolument rien. Alors si on avait des textes qui étaient beaucoup plus simples, alors là on pourrait lire les instructions, tu sais, ça ferait une grosse différence. Mais au début de l'année on a le cahier de sciences humaines bleu, puis on a maintenant un petit manuel en sciences qu'on va commencer l'année prochaine avec les méthodes scientifiques. Mais les manuels, pour vrai dire là, on se sert réellement des manuels qu'à partir du mois d'avril, puis ca c'est *grave* – excepté les exercices en mathématiques la, t'sais je prends les plus faciles. Mais ce serait définitivement un avantage si on avait des textes à un niveau approprié.

When I taught Grade 7 social studies in the past, we also rarely used the textbook. I taught Grade 7 math for the first time a few years ago and as a new teacher I relied more on the textbook than I should have; I found that using the textbook caused me to use considerably more English than I would have wanted. Since math is a tricky subject for many students to begin with, I found that the book in question (*Interactions 7*, Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1996), based

on a discovery approach and intended for native Francophone students, was often more of a hindrance than anything. For me, it made teaching math more difficult than it should have been, and impossible to do without using some English. Frank agrees that the math book is less than ideal for Grade 7 LFI students:

> It's very *wordy*, very language-based – and that's another reason why I offer extra help in English and in French, because I think it's above their abilities at the Grade 7 level. I mean they had the same text in this school in *English* and they abandoned it. They thought it was too difficult, you know, for the Anglophone students.

However, Frank and Pierre both said that they were able to get around this problem to a certain extent by avoiding the most difficult questions and modifying or simplifying questions, using the very straight forward "blackline masters" that accompany the text (containing many fewer word problems), using the old text (preferred by both teachers), and by making and using their own activity sheets. Frank commented: "I mean, everything you use in the late immersion program, you modify, so you get used to that after a while." I did use the old books and made up a number of my own activity sheets as well, but would have done so a lot more had I taught the course a second time around. This is not a new problem. Dr. Parnell Garland also cited problems with the reading difficulty of textbooks and classroom materials in his review of the LFI program after its first year of operation in P.E.I. in 1976-77 (cited in Beck, 2004).

Both Pierre and Frank felt that it was easier to use French almost exclusively for teaching math (as compared to other subjects) from the start of the year, citing the advantage of many L1-L2 cognates (e.g., addition, soustraction, multiplication, facteur, fraction), and also the fact that math is represented visually in its own language with numbers and symbols. Frank commented that after completing the first unit in math, avoiding the L1 became more of a challenge since

there were more word problems. Pierre claimed that, for him, the transition towards maximizing TL use is more gradual for science and social studies than in math due to the many difficult vocabulary items which can't be easily explained with French synonyms or visual representations (e.g., "l'azote" – nitrogen). Of course the type of activity and lesson content may often be more important than the subject itself in determining if, or how much, codeswitching is required.

Pierre also said he felt lucky due to the fact that he taught three different subjects to his homeroom class and found that he could often make links between TL vocabulary used in science and in social studies. I have found the same with vocabulary in French language arts and social studies; it would seem to make sense that knowing which words students have learned in other courses can help teachers to stay in French, knowing that their TL use is comprehensible, at least to most students.

4.5.3 Perception of student TL anxiety.

Frank and Pierre's approaches to TL/L1 use seem to be very clearly reflected in their perceptions of student TL anxiety.

When asked if the exclusive use of French can sometimes be difficult and anxiety creating, Pierre answered:

> Juste au début de l'année. Alors dès le mois de décembre, janvier il n'y a aucun problème, mais je trouve qu'il est important de pas faire paniquer les élèves, et puis de les faire sentir confortable dans leur peau, dans la classe comme groupe. C'est un gros défi pour commencer puis si tu pars sur le mauvais pied, c'est vraiment frustrant pour les élèves, puis décourageant, alors ma méthode c'est bravo, continue, bon tu t'en rappelles de ce mot là, continue! Bon, aujourd'hui on additionne trois autres mots. Alors tous les jours pour trois semaines, on écrit une liste au tableau au début de la journée, voici

qu'est-ce que vous devez savoir, puis tout d'un coup c'est comme s'ils arrivent en haut de la montagne, au sommet, puis tout d'un coup c'est comme "Oh, wow, regardez la banque de mots que j'ai, puis je peux communiquer, puis ..." – alors c'est vraiment, c'est excitant.

Here, Pierre explains that one of the main reasons he uses English, especially over the first few months, is to reduce as much as possible any anxiety students may feel:

Moi, j'ai besoin de savoir pourquoi pour comprendre, ca fait que moi, je veux éviter la frustration des élèves. Je ne peux pas commencer yak, yak, yak, yak, yak en français – les enfants vont, vont paniquer là. Ce serait beaucoup trop frustrant. Alors moi, j'ai trouvé une méthode qui fonctionne pour moi, et puis je trouve que les élèves sont beaucoup moins frustrés ... Et puis le changement de l'anglais au français c'est *très, très* graduellement, puis tout d'un coup, je dis "Ah, vous ne pouvez plus parler en anglais aujourd'hui, jusqu'au mois de juin!" Puis "Oh! On est capable!" ... et ce n'est pas juste confusion puis ... Alors moi, je fonctionne de la même manière que si moi, j'étais étudiante puis je voulais apprendre le français. J'essaie juste de m'imaginer dans leurs bottes là, tu sais. Si j'étais une élève comment est-ce que je voudrais apprendre? Pour avoir le moins de stress possible, c'est ca que je me dis.

Frank also recognized that students will experience a certain amount of frustration, but believed that students should be able to figure things out and to tolerate a certain amount of ambiguity; for Frank, these important qualities were key to learning a second language in an immersion context. He reassured students, preparing them for the ups and downs of the first few months in LFI:

> I tell them that right at the beginning and I tell their parents at Meet the Teacher Night, this is kind of like surfing, you're riding the wave and you're on the crest one day, but then the wave crashes and you bottom out, but you ride again and you bottom out, and you ride again. It takes a while for the waters to run still and smooth ... and certainly it takes until Christmas, and then they seem, after that two week break, to come back and they're refreshed again and, you know, they seem to understand *so* much more than before.

Frank often expressed confidence in students' abilities to rise to the challenge of understanding everything in French. In the same way that Pierre pictures himself in his students' shoes, Frank hopes that his students will be motivated enough to figure things out while referring to the L1 as little as possible, as he did when learning French in Quebec. For example, he explained how when living in Quebec, he had often heard people saying "j'en ai" (I have some) and at first thinking that they were saying "Johnny". Eventually, after hearing this expression used a number of times in different contexts, Frank was able to figure out what people were actually saying and what it meant – without being presented with an L1 equivalent. Frank is patient and tolerant of ambiguity:

> I wondered what certain words meant but I wasn't upset about it, I was just trying to figure it out. It was just like a big puzzle to me. I was just trying to figure it out and *happy* to do that. And I would *hope* that the motivation of these kids is similar. I remember being somewhat frustrated that I couldn't express myself, but I just had to patiently bide my time and build on it, and then when I did it on my own it was such a sense of accomplishment.

Frank said that he hoped students would "buy into" immersion as a "whole, total experience". He went on to further compare his students' immersion experience in the classroom with his immersion experience in Quebec, expressing confidence in students' ability to rise to the challenge:

> I think *they* have to go on their own journey, and I really think the English detracts from it. And I don't think we can sell these kids short ... like you did that, I did that – why wouldn't they be doing that? I don't think they need as many crutches as some people think they do.

4.5.4 Teachers' preferences, learning styles and personalities.

Given that we tend to teach in ways similar to those in which we were taught and in which we learned ourselves (Lortie, 1975), it would seem reasonable to think that teachers' beliefs and practice concerning TL and L1 use may also be influenced to a certain degree by their own preferred learning styles and personalities.

When asked if he could tolerate a large amount of ambiguity as an adult learner, Pierre replied "No, absolutely not". His other comments reinforced this detail-oriented preference: "I need to know how, why, who, when, where – and exactly"; and "I don't have much patience for ambiguity." Pierre's use of lists of learned TL words at the beginning of the year and his tendency to explain TL words and check student comprehension using the L1 seems to indicate a strong desire to be sure, as far as possible, that students have understood before moving on in the lesson. In our final interview, I asked him about the use of English words when asking for TL equivalents (Comment dit-on ___ en français?):

Brian:	If you, or the students, use an English word, instead of seeing that as a lost opportunity for instruction in French ...
Pierre:	It's comprehension.
Brian :	For you, it's to ensure comprehension and that allows you to carry on from there ...

Pierre: That's another word that I'm sure they understand.

Pierre also made the telling assertion that unless a student can rephrase a TL statement in their L1, they haven't really understood it. Clearly, for Pierre, knowing that students have understood is an important benefit of codeswitching.

Frank, on the other hand, feels that dealing with a certain amount of ambiguity is a natural part of L2 learning. While students may not understand everything the first time they hear it, or even the second or third time, Frank believes that students' comprehension will increase through repeated exposure to TL input in context. Frank explained that while students at times may not fully understand, he only expects them to get the gist when presented with new TL elements (see p. 84). Frank said that as an adult learner, he is happy to have a global sense of things; he can appreciate the beauty and usefulness of a concept without needing to analyze all of its details and inner workings. He also reported having a high degree of tolerance for ambiguity:

> I have accepted ambiguity, you know, like I've gone through that in Quebec and for whatever reason, looking back I was willing to play that game and figure it out as I went. I didn't have all the answers, you know, and I like a puzzle, I like a challenge, so yes, I don't have to be instantly good at things.

Frank pointed out: "I'm *somewhat* analytical too, a mix, I think." Indeed, people are not simply one or the other; however while we can use a variety of approaches and skills depending on circumstances, we usually also have preferred modes of operation.

Frank spoke of trying to stay consistent and uphold a standard with regards to his TL/L1 use with Grade 7 LFI students; he then told of trying to hold students in a Grade 8 continuing[30] immersion class to certain standards regarding their use of French grammar:

> I didn't want to live or die over it, but at the same time I thought – at this point in your career, as a student, you ought to know how to conjugate certain verbs, that agreement is important in your sentence, that you know, I'm going to evaluate you negatively if I don't see real effort. And you know, that your good looks aren't going to take you through and that kind of thing, and I had a very negative reaction in that class, but ... I don't know, you have to have thick skin I think, too. And just kind of do what you think is right.

As Frank suggested, I believe that the ability to conduct Grade 7 LFI classes exclusively (or nearly exclusively) in French requires a vast amount of patience and strength of conviction – you have to have a "thick skin." Frank believes very strongly that it is his responsibility as an LFI teacher to maintain the use of French, and avoid using the students' L1. I feel that it may often be easier to make a codeswitch instead of persisting in the TL (for teacher and students), although L1 use is certainly not always the best option.

4.5.5 Student TL and L1 use.

As mentioned earlier, teachers may perceive a direct link between their own use of the TL and L1 and that of their students. However, we can expect that students, especially beginners, will sometimes feel the need to use L1 words, when their TL vocabulary and mastery of French syntax are insufficient for expressing complex ideas, or when the cognitive demands of the material or task are too great (e.g., Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Brooks & Donato, 1994). Both Frank

[30] "Continuing" immersion students are typically those who began immersion in grade 1 or grade 3; they will be combined with LFI students in the same classes in grades 10, 11 and 12.

and Pierre recognize this fact, but also take different approaches in trying to encourage students to use as much French as possible.

Over the course of his career, Frank had tried various ways of encouraging students to use French (point systems, "dollars français") but in recent years has come to view a certain amount of L1 use during student interaction as natural and, to some extent, unavoidable. Here, Frank explains his expectations with regards to student TL use:

> Just kind of easing them into it without being really, you know, the language police or whatever, right? And even now, like I know some teachers really have a lot of angst over hearing the kids talk English amongst themselves, well I don't think you can just take that away in a few months or a year. As long as they're not talking English to *me*.

Frank expects students to try to speak French with him as much as possible; of course he is usually happy to answer student requests for TL equivalents. This approach is in agreement with the research findings discussed earlier regarding a certain amount of student L1 use as a normal feature of interaction, especially at the beginner level, again noted here by Frank:

> They'll help each other, like I find they don't have the security or the confidence you know, like you do all this standing on your head and explaining, right and it's still not good enough because when they go back to their desk and this buddy talks to that buddy in English to explain what I just said, but at least it's not me.

However, Frank also sees student TL use as being closely tied to his own. Here, he expresses how he views his role as a linguistic model for students as another important reason for maximizing his use of French:

> I think they have to know that that's what my expectation is, because if I relax, they will. So as long as I'm doing 100%, or 99.9%, then they'll come up to meet me. Whereas I

think if you brought in any little bit of English then their French is going to fall back. That's always been my philosophy.

While Pierre makes more extensive use of the L1, especially during the first two to three months of the year, he also takes a more active role in promoting student TL use. Beginning in January, Pierre uses a point system to encourage student TL use among themselves and with him. This rule is strictly enforced: "We start 100% French and they are no longer permitted to use English at any time in my class". The exception to this is of course when students ask Pierre for TL equivalents using "Comment dit-on ___?" By encouraging the free use of this expression as a communication strategy, Pierre feels that students are more willing to participate and express themselves, even if they don't have all the TL words needed. "Everyone wants to participate," he observed, "not just one or two." Contrary to the commonly held expectation that more teacher use of the L1 leads to more student use of the L1, I observed that Pierre's students really made a serious effort to speak French with their teacher and also among themselves. Indeed, about the only time I heard Pierre's students use English was when asking for French words using "Comment dit-on ___ ?"

I have tried to implement point systems with my students on a few occasions, usually with lukewarm success. It seems to me that Pierre's success in promoting TL use may have to do with the initial presentation of the system and consistency in its enforcement. Pierre explained how he made a big, dramatic production of introducing his system in order to make students "buy in," and stressed that he listened very carefully for, and reacted dramatically to, excessive L1 use (more than one or two words) by students, especially during the beginning stages of implementation. Of course, some students are more motivated to speak French than others. System or no system, I have had classes in which the majority of students made real efforts to speak French most of the time, and I have also had classes in which students were more resistant;

the students' level of personal motivation and the group dynamic always came into play. As suggested by research into student TL and L1 use (e.g., Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Brooks & Donato, 1994) the L1 can serve as an important cognitive tool when dealing with linguistically and cognitively complex material. Thus even the most motivated Grade 7 LFI students may need to use a few English words when trying to express complex ideas with a limited TL vocabulary, whether it be with the teacher or in collaboration with other students.

4.5.6 Teacher confidence in the TL: being Francophone, being Anglophone.

L1 use may be associated, rightly or wrongly, with a lack of proficiency in the TL on the part of some non-Francophone LFI teachers. As a Grade 7 LFI teacher, I felt that my own L1 use would be viewed by some as a sign that my ability in the TL was lacking; however it was actually extremely rare that I used English because of shortcomings in my own French skills.

Both Pierre and Frank agreed that a teacher who was not very confident in their own TL ability would likely have a tendency to switch to the L1 more often. This was certainly not the case for either Frank or Pierre; they both said that they were very confident in their French skills and in their ability to teach through the medium of the French language. Frank had been given a "superior" level rating on a Department of Education proficiency test and Pierre was a native French speaker.

Pierre said that, as an Acadian, he sometimes had to monitor what he said, being careful not to use regional expressions that students wouldn't understand. He added, however, that everyone has a different accent and expressions depending on where a person comes from.

It was suggested to Dr. Turnbull and me at the ACPI/CAIT 2005 national conference for immersion teachers[31] that Pierre might tend to use codeswitching more readily due to the fact that Acadians often switch to English in social situations to accommodate native English

[31] Dr. Miles Turnbull and I presented initial findings from this study (L'anglais en immersion tardive: Tabou? Défi complexe?) at the ACPI-CAIT Annual Conference, held October 27-29, 2005 in Moncton, New Brunswick.

speakers who cannot speak French. This had never emerged from the data during the main part of the larger study. However, in response to this suggestion, we raised this as a possibility at our professional development day, held for all six participants involved in Dr. Turnbull's larger study (Frank and Pierre plus four other LFI teachers). All of the Acadian Francophone teacher-participants expressed doubt that there was any effect of this sort. Further research into codeswitching by members of linguistic minority groups, and notions of identity and power negotiation in bilingual conversation in French immersion, may be warranted; however this issue is beyond the scope of the present study[32].

Frank said that as an Anglophone, he had taken part in various French courses over the years in order to keep up and improve his language skills. He added that it was often difficult to find opportunities to practice his French because he lived in an Anglophone community. Frank also told of how being an Anglophone gave an added sense of importance to avoiding the students' (and his) L1: "I just always felt that if I was going to do it right as an Anglophone, I had to do it in French." On another occasion, Frank again said that it was important to maintain near exclusivity of French in the classroom since students would "know" that he wasn't a native French speaker: "I understood as an Anglophone that I needed to have as *much* French *as soon as possible* ... or we would be having English class." I remember being told the same thing when I began teaching Grade 7 LFI; teachers who were not Francophone had to insist even more strongly on 100% French.

It may be that some Anglophone teachers feel that they have to compensate for shortcomings related to their not being Francophone (such as quality of language, knowledge of culture) by speaking French as much as possible. Perhaps they believe that Francophone LFI teachers use French exclusively and so they feel that they should try to emulate this TL/L1

[32] See Heller (1995) and Landry (2005) for more information on these issues.

approach, or that they should "play the role" of a unilingual (non-English-speaking) Francophone teacher. A bilingual teacher's aversion to codeswitching may be a reflection of the idea that native TL speakers represent the ideal. However, as Cook (2005) suggests, bilingual teachers, whether they be native or non-native speakers of the TL, are models of what their students will hopefully someday become – successful L2 users. Cook points out that "an implicit goal of language teaching has often been to get as close to the native speaker as possible, recognizing the native speaker as having the only acceptable form of the language" (p. 53). Instead, Cook argues that a more appropriate and more achievable goal is to make students into successful L2 users. The majority of L2 students may become successful L2 users, but very few, if any, will achieve native-like proficiency. The main goal of LFI is to develop students' communicative competence in French so that they may one day function as bilinguals (or multilinguals) in Canadian society and in the wider world. While many researchers view L1 use as a resource which can enhance L2 learning, others have argued that the L1 should act "as a resource for effective bilingual communication" (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2004, p. 504). Cook (2005) argues that it is wrong to impose a ban on L1 use in the classroom, "partly because it does not take account of the classroom as an authentic situation of L2 use, rather than pseudo-native speaker use" (p. 59). Cook sees introducing the L1 into the classroom as a way of producing "students who are able to operate with two language systems as genuine L2 users, not as imitation natives" (2001, p. 419). Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2004) affirm that codeswitching "is a characteristic feature of bilinguals' speech rather than a sign of deficiency in one language or the other" (p.502). Hagen (1992, cited in Macaro, 2001), also calls for codeswitching to be seen as a natural, highly useful skill used by bilinguals in the real world. As argued by Cook (2001), if the goal of L2 teaching is to create bilinguals, then some use of codeswitching in the classroom is both beneficial and appropriate.

Of course, as both Frank and Pierre pointed out, non-native speaker teachers must be effective and confident L2 communicators. Some non-native speaker teachers may not feel that their command of the TL is adequate for the demands of LFI teaching, or for maintaining TL exclusivity. However, as Cook suggests, "this is only relevant if it reflects shortcomings in being L2 users, not shortcomings in being like a native speaker" (2005, p. 58).

Both Frank and Pierre were highly proficient in both English and French, although some readers of this thesis may have expected that Frank, as an Anglophone, would have been the one who would use the L1 to a greater extent. Similarly, some people may believe that I am advocating the use of English (even small amounts for carrying out certain specific pedagogical functions) because I am not Francophone and perhaps my French is not good enough to allow me to teach exclusively in the TL. I have never taken the proficiency test for LFI teachers; however, I do feel quiet capable of conducting Grade 7 LFI classes entirely in French; I simply don't believe that it is always most beneficial for students to do so.

4.5.7 Students requiring individualized instruction.

Both Frank and Pierre said that, compared to 10 or 15 years ago, more and more students are coming into Grade 7 LFI with learning difficulties. Many of these students either struggle through, or end up leaving the program. Frank believes that it is important to maintain the standards of the LFI program and so does not change his approach to TL and L1 use in class. He does however give extra help once a week after school, in both French and English. Pierre's approach to TL and L1 use was guided by his beliefs as to what was most beneficial for the class as a whole; he did not feel that having students with weak academic skills was a factor which resulted in increased L1 use on his part. Both Frank and Pierre agreed that some students are not well suited to the LFI program and would be better off in English classes, partly because very little, if any, resource help is offered to students in LFI. In my case, a good deal of my L1 use

was aimed at helping weaker students. I don't believe I proactively used more English than I normally would have in anticipation of comprehension difficulties on the part of certain students. I used English mainly after it became apparent that certain students had not understood, whether due to the use of new TL words and expressions or the complexity of the content. I sometimes used a few words of the L1 when addressing the whole class; however, it was often when providing help in one-on-one situations, or when giving extra help after school.

4.5.8 Discipline.

The majority of teachers in other L2 teaching contexts have reported using the L1 for disciplining and reprimanding students (e.g., Franklin, 1990; Macaro 1997). However Frank and Pierre reported using English only for the most serious discipline problems. I agree that the L2 can be used very effectively to curb inappropriate behavior, while extreme situations may require some L1 use. The reason for our not resorting to the L1 for disciplining students may have much to do with the fact that the majority of LFI students are quite highly motivated and LFI classes have, in general, fewer behavioral problems than, say, the average core French class. Of course, this is not always the case (see p. 49 for a description of the context: LFI in P.E.I.). My use of English is sometimes related to my wanting to keep certain students on task. Students who are struggling with the material and who don't understand explanations in TL may quickly lose interest and this can lead to behavior problems. I occasionally use a few words of English with these students in a preventative fashion in order to help them get back on task. I worry that students will become discouraged and "switch off" if they don't feel they can process information and participate in activities with some degree of success.

4.5.9 Time and energy.

While Frank said that at the end of a long day, when running out of time and energy, he may be slightly more likely to use an English word, he added that this would be extremely rare.

Neither Frank nor Pierre said that a lack of time or the need to quicken the pace of the lesson would cause them to use more English. Both said that they would just finish what they could in the time that they had and then carry on from that point in the next lesson. For me, time and energy have been more important factors involved in my decisions to use English. If I have already explained something two or three times in French using different modification techniques and some students still haven't understood, I would be more likely to then use a word or two of English. I don't mind taking time to re-explain things in French, but one must also consider what is happening with the rest of the class – the students who have understood and are waiting for the lesson to continue or those who may not be listening. I also find that when activities take longer than anticipated, and time is running out, a quick injection of English can sometimes help to bring everyone up to speed and get the lesson back on schedule.

In chapter 5, I provide a summary of the results from this chapter by relating the findings to this study's theoretical framework (maxims, BAK and Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour) and the two research questions which guided this study. I also make recommendations concerning policy, practice, professional development, and areas for future research.

Chapter 5 – Summary, Discussion, and Recommendations

In this final chapter, I summarize the findings from chapter 4 by returning to the two research questions which guided this thesis. I examine the issues raised in terms of the theoretical framework dealing with teachers' beliefs and practice – maxims guiding practice; underlying beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (BAK); and Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour. I make recommendations concerning practice, professional development, and policy in LFI and also suggest areas for future research throughout.

5.1 Research Question 1

What are the beliefs and practice of three Grade 7 LFI teachers regarding TL and L1 use?

A teacher's practice concerning TL and L1 use can be seen in terms of "working principles or maxims which teachers consciously or unconsciously refer to as they teach" (Richards, 1996, p. 282). In answer to this first research question, I first formulate the maxims which appeared to guide Frank and Pierre's practices concerning TL and L1 use, and then my own. I will then review each teacher's underlying beliefs, assumptions and knowledge (BAK) systems.

5.1.1 Maxims

Frank's maxim for TL and L1 use could be stated as:

The Maxim of TL Maximization: Use French and strictly avoid using English in order to maximize students' exposure to rich TL input.

In following this maxim, Frank made a quick transition to near 100% TL use, only using English when necessary during the first few weeks of Grade 7. Beyond that point, and for the rest of the year, Frank used TL synonyms (especially TL-L1 cognates) and paraphrasing, along with extra-linguistic strategies, in order to convey the meanings of new French words and expressions. He did not provide or ask students for English equivalents to ensure comprehension,

nor did he make comparisons between TL and L1 structures. If a word could not be clearly explained through using non L1-strategies, and was not crucial to the task at hand, it could be explained in more detail later, when a clearer understanding of the word was required. The exception to this was at the beginning of the year, and also on very rare occasions when he used a word or two in English to help students to connect existing L1 knowledge to important concepts in the TL. Frank was not opposed to having students to look up the meanings of new words in their French-English dictionaries. He was also willing to compromise slightly by giving some extra help in English after school to students who were struggling, either due to the difficulty of the concept, the material being presented totally in French, or both.

Pierre's guiding maxim regarding TL and L1 would seem to be:

The Maxim of Maximum Comprehensibility: Provide rich exposure to the TL by using French as the normal means of communication and instruction, but use the L1 where helpful in order to ensure comprehension.

Following this maxim, Pierre, and his students, used the L1 at the beginning of the year to ensure that everyone clearly understood new TL words and expressions through making explicit TL-L1 connections. Once students became familiar with new TL words, codeswitching was no longer required. Pierre always had target dates in mind for increasing his own TL use and that of his students. He gradually increased his TL use from 40% during the first few weeks of the year (his own estimate) but by January he only occasionally used isolated L1 words to convey meaning and check comprehension; similarly, he set a clear date in January after which his students were to speak 100% French, except when asking how to say something in French ("Comment dit-on ___ en français?"), or when responding to the teacher's request for an L1 equivalent ("Qu'est-ce que c'est en anglais?"). After students had acquired a basic start-up vocabulary, Pierre tried to maximize TL input by using French synonyms and paraphrases, along

with extra-linguistic strategies (such as realia, drawings or gestures) to explain new words. However, where TL synonyms or paraphrasing could not be easily understood, or an abstract idea could not be easily represented through extra-linguistic means, he used an L1 equivalent, or elicited a translation from students, to ensure comprehension. While Pierre used single-word codeswitches on a number of occasions in the lessons I observed, his students received large amounts of high quality TL input and were very motivated to speak French in class.

My own guiding maxim for TL and L1 use has changed over time. At the beginning of my career as a LFI teacher, it was more like Frank's (TL Maximization), but over the course of my first year of teaching in LFI I found that using small amounts of English could, at times, be very helpful for me and my students, allowing me to achieve the level of comprehension I wanted. Thus my approach came to resemble that of Pierre (Maximum Comprehensibility), with two basic differences: the amount of L1 used over the first two to three months of the year, and the use of the L1 for comparing TL and L1 structures.

First, I tended to use somewhat less English at the beginning of the year. While Pierre estimated his English use at about 60% for the beginning of the year, I would say that I probably used 70 to 80% French on average during the first few weeks. However, it is difficult to generalize, since I might have used the L1 40% of the time for some lessons and perhaps only 10% L1 (or less) for others. There were times, especially on the first or second day, when giving information related to school orientation and administrative issues (such as school rules, lockers), when I would use English or mainly English with some French. Both Pierre and Frank also reported conducting orientation sessions in English during the first days and weeks of Grade 7 LFI classes.

The second difference between Pierre's TL/L1 maxim and my own is that I believe I make more extensive use of comparisons between TL and L1 forms, either at the lexical or

grammatical/structural level. I have quite often pointed out, or asked students to make, associations between TL words and related L1 words using word part analysis (prefix, root and suffix) to help students understand and remember the meanings of new words. For example, when explaining the French word "chute," I have given students the English equivalent (fall) and then also drawn a connection to the word "parachute" in French and English. Both Pierre and Frank also made use of this strategy at the word level; for example, Pierre used it when explaining the word "bissecter", as described in chapter 4 (see p. 77), while Frank would do so through TL-L1 cognates, avoiding direct reference to L1 equivalents. In comparing grammatical forms, I have told students to consider, for example, that in both English and French the infinitive is required in phrases such as "I'm going *to study"* and "we want *to eat*" – "je vais *étudier*" and "nous voulons *manger*" (and not "je vais *étudie*" or "nous voulons *mangé"*). This maxim could be termed:

The Maxim of Raising Metalinguistic Awareness: Make explicit cross-linguistic comparisons of TL and L1 forms.

While Pierre also reported pointing out similarities and differences between TL and L1 grammatical structures, I believe I use this strategy or maxim to a greater extent. Frank, on the other hand, said he did not find this to be a helpful strategy; he believed that it would lead to confusion or interference and also questioned whether Grade 7 LFI students would be able to understand their own L1 grammar well enough to make comparisons. While I still believe that this maxim can be beneficial in many situations, I cannot point to any concrete evidence to show that it has helped my students in their L2 learning. Perhaps it has been more helpful to some than to others? Perhaps, among my teaching strategies, this is to some extent an over-used maxim; I intend to reflect on my use of this strategy and examine its effectiveness more closely in the future.

While trying to select the most effective TL or L1-based teaching strategies in different situations, teachers should also try to use a range of strategies in order to cater to the needs and preferences of different students. As an alternative to supplying TL explanations or codeswitching themselves, teachers can show that they value students' knowledge and inferencing skills by first asking them to try to provide either TL-based explanations or L1 equivalents for their classmates. The three teachers involved in this study (Frank, Pierre and I) used a variety of strategies in order to maximize rich, yet comprehensible TL input for students, and also to promote student TL production. We all used synonyms (often TL-L1 cognates) and paraphrasing in the TL, along with gestures and visual aids, which allowed us to maintain TL use while making the TL input comprehensible. We also asked students to look words up in their French-English dictionaries, although this strategy was most often used when students were working on reading and writing activities and only occasionally during conversation or explanations. Pierre and I asked students for L1 equivalents in order to verify and ensure comprehension; in Frank's class, students sometimes gave answers in the L1, but this was not encouraged. Unlike Frank, Pierre and I provided L1 equivalents when it seemed to be the most effective, or sometimes the most obvious or most expedient, way of conveying the meanings of new words; we also drew comparisons between TL and L1 word forms and grammatical structures. A list of possible strategies – not exhaustive, but covering those observed and discussed over the course of this study – is provided in Appendix 2.

5.1.2 Beliefs, assumptions and knowledge (BAK).

The maxims just reviewed are based on teachers' beliefs, assumptions and knowledge (BAK) – the belief systems[33] which motivate and inform each teacher's practice with regards to TL and L1 use.

5.1.3 Frank's BAK.

Frank believed that L2 learning is most effective when kept separate from the existing L1 system, basically equating L2 learning with L1 learning. His beliefs were in agreement with the APEF guidelines and correspond to what Macaro (2001) refers to as the Virtual Position: "The classroom is like the target country. Therefore we should aim at total exclusion of the L1. There is no pedagogical value in L1 use. The L1 can be excluded from the FL classroom as long as the teacher is skilled enough" (p. 535). For Frank, the basic premise of French immersion was that instruction should occur through the target language. He used modification techniques (repetition, simplification of syntax, TL synonyms) in order to ensure that students understood, if not every word he said, at least the gist of his explanations and other TL input. While remaining in the TL in order to provide maximum exposure, Frank made frequent use of TL-L1 cognates to help students understand, but otherwise made no explicit reference to L1 equivalents. Frank wanted students to understand as much as possible through the TL; however, he felt that it was normal that beginners should experience a certain amount of ambiguity and that this would lessen as students progressed in their L2 learning. Students should eventually come to fully understand TL elements through repeated exposure in meaningful contexts. Frank believed that even when students didn't understand an explanation completely, implicit learning was taking place. Frank saw the ability to maintain (virtual) TL exclusivity as reliant upon the teacher's TL proficiency and ability to skilfully employ TL modification techniques. He felt that if he were to

[33] Woods (1996) points out the interwoven nature of beliefs, assumptions and knowledge, remarking that "In many cases it cannot be determined whether the interpretations of (...) events are based on what the teacher knows, what the teacher believes, or what the teacher believes s/he knows" (p. 194).

use even small amounts of English, it would detract from his students' L2 learning. He also believed that if he were to use English, his students, in turn, would likely have increased their use of English as well.

5.1.4 Pierre's BAK.

Pierre, on the other hand, saw the TL and the learner's L1 as being much more naturally linked in the minds and interlanguage of Grade 7 LFI students. Pierre saw making explicit connections to students' L1 knowledge as a natural process in the early stages of L2 learning and he encouraged students to build TL-L1 connections. He also seemed to be more concerned that students should have to deal with as little ambiguity as possible. While he considered TL maximization to be very important and provided students with large amounts of rich TL input, he felt that there was more to be gained by using a small amount of English in certain situations than by avoiding the L1 at all costs. Pierre viewed codeswitching as a legitimate teaching strategy, allowing students to make TL-L1 connections and allowing communication to continue successfully in French, while also allowing him to convey meaning and check comprehension quickly and effectively. He did not feel that he over-used the L1, as his class was always moving along a continuum toward more and more TL use (or less and less L1 use). Pierre set target dates for increasing both his own and his students' TL use, but allowed for some flexibility, moving the dates by two or three weeks according to the general ability level of the class.

5.1.5 My BAK.

I believe, as Pierre stated during one of our interviews, that for LFI students to really understand TL input, they should have a clear idea of what new TL words mean in their L1, or the nearest equivalent. Even when beginner-level students are not provided with an equivalent – either by the teacher, their dictionary, or another classmate – they are trying to make sense of the new TL words by connecting them with words and concepts they already know in their L1.

While some students are quite skilled at guessing the meanings of words and quite willing to do so, others are less so; providing L1 equivalents or asking students to translate ensures that Grade 7 LFI students attain a clear understanding in situations where using TL synonyms, paraphrasing or visual representations would be less effective. I believe that it is possible to maximize TL use while drawing on a variety of techniques (TL-based, L1-based, or other) to facilitate TL comprehension and learning. I believe that codeswitching with Grade 7 students can and should subsequently result in *more* TL use. It is important to guard against L1 over-use; as students build up their L2 system there should be a general trend towards replacing L1 use with TL modification techniques. I also believe that TL learning can be enhanced by encouraging learners to notice similarities and differences between TL and L1 words and structures.

For Pierre and for me, most L1 use seems to be based on a desire to make our teaching as clear as possible. Frank also wants to be as clear as possible, but there are times when this cannot be achieved to the same degree when conducting lessons entirely in French with beginner-level students. Of course, switching to the L1 does not guarantee full comprehension, such as in cases where students simply aren't paying attention, or the complexity of the concept itself is preventing comprehension for some students. A consistently recurring theme for Frank was that of students being motivated enough to figure out rules or word meanings for themselves and to tolerate a certain amount of ambiguity and anxiety; he often expressed confidence in the ability of students to do this. For all three of us, our TL/L1 beliefs seem to reflect our views about responsibility for learning, and the role of the teacher and learner in the learning process. Perhaps Pierre and I feel more personally responsible for ensuring that students understand the lesson and progress in their L2 learning. Frank, on the other hand, seemed to feel that students should be more responsible for their own learning, and that by making more of an effort and figuring things out more for themselves, their L2 learning would be deeper, richer and more meaningful. These

differing views of the roles and responsibilities of student and teacher may in turn be a reflection of our philosophies of L2 learning. Whereas Frank's more natural approach holds that "acquisition" occurs mainly through exposure to comprehensible input and incidental learning, as with L1 learning, Pierre and I put relatively more emphasis on explicit instruction and conscious learning.

Both Pierre and Frank seemed to be quite successful in implementing their maxims – in other words, as we reviewed the lessons during the recall sessions, they both felt that their practice with regards to TL and L1 use was congruent with their stated beliefs. They did not identify any real conflicts or "hotspots." Although Frank noted that, on one or two occasions, some students likely did not understand the explanations he gave in French, he did not consider this to be a real problem since students didn't need to know all the words in order to be able to do the math question. On these occasions, Frank did not believe that L1 use was justified – the difficult words would be dealt with in more detail later when they came up again, or when they were more central to the mathematical concepts being taught. Similarly, Pierre never said that he would have opted to use the TL if given the chance to "reteach" the parts of the lessons where he had used English, although he did say that when reflecting on a lesson he will occasionally feel that he has overused the L1: "Oh, it's too late in the year to be using English like that."

5.2 Discussion of Findings

Based on the present findings, I would like to suggest several areas that LFI teachers might consider when thinking about the most appropriate uses of the TL and L1: the importance of some L1 use during the first few weeks and months of grade 7 as students acquire a TL base; the use of codeswitching to promote intake and as a catalyst for increased TL use by the students; the importance of using a variety of strategies for conveying meaning; the importance of TL-L1 cognates and implications for dealing with TL words having no L1 cognates; and

finally, the potential benefits of some L1 use in meaning-focused and form-focused learning activities.

5.2.1 L1 use in the early stages of Grade 7 LFI.

The fact that all three teacher-participants used the students' L1 to some degree over the course of the first few weeks of Grade 7 LFI is an important finding. Both Pierre and Frank reported conducting orientation sessions in English during the first days and weeks of Grade 7 LFI classes, and Frank, who saw no real value in L1 use for TL learning, also reported using English to some extent for clarification during instruction (learning activities) at this early stage. Contrary to Calvé's (1993) assertion that immersion classes are conducted exclusively in the TL "from the first day of classes," and the CAIT guide (Bajard, 2004) which states that LFI students quickly show themselves able to study all their school subjects in French thanks to "an *initial total and constant* immersion" (p. 98, my translation and italics), it seems that some L1 use may indeed be necessary at this early stage of Grade 7 LFI. In September and October, students are developing a TL "base," along with study skills and attitudes toward TL learning, which will allow them to succeed in the LFI classroom and make the transition toward more and more TL use. Some teachers bring students through this transition more quickly, others more gradually.

Several considerations may affect a teacher's L1 use at this early stage of L2 learning. The basic key words and phrases needed to "survive" the first weeks and months of LFI are for the most part tied to the context of the classroom (e.g., *crayon*, *pupitre*, *poubelle*, *Est-ce que je peux tailler mon crayon?*, *Je ne comprends pas*). Thus L1 translations may not be required when teaching much of the initial start-up vocabulary since objects in the classroom and gestures can often help to convey meaning. Furthermore, many students may already be familiar with a number of these basic words and phrases, having learned at least some of them in grades 4, 5 and 6 core French. However, the fact that students begin Grade 7 LFI from a wide range of starting

points has to be kept in mind – core French instruction may differ from one feeder school to another, and some students may receive tutoring from parents or older siblings, while other students have no access to help with French outside of school. The teacher may get the impression, based on responses from the majority, or even from a few students, that much of this early stage content is simply a review; however, by moving ahead too quickly at this early stage some learners may not have the chance to properly acquire these basics. In addition, some subjects – such as math, as suggested by participants in this study – may lend themselves to being taught more easily through the TL from the outset, with the L1 potentially playing a more useful role later on as concepts and language become more complex. For example, teaching numbers, with which students may already be familiar and which can be represented by numeric symbols, can be done without using English, while some codeswitching may be helpful in situations where the cognitive demand of content and tasks is high, such as when teaching the order of operations for integers or word problems containing several unknown vocabulary items.

Initially, I felt that Pierre might have been over-using the L1 at the beginning of the year. Perhaps his use of the L1 for approximately 60% of his teacher talk can be considered to be an over-used maxim or potential hotspot. However, I then also started to consider that while 60% L1 use may be more than necessary for many students, this more deliberate and gradual approach – systematically making explicit TL-L1 connections at the beginning of the year – may help some students to catch up to other stronger students in the class, so that this L2 "base" is well understood by all students. What may be L1 over-use for more advanced students may be helpful to others.

While I relied on reported TL and L1 use for the beginning of the year, future research should more closely examine how LFI teachers use the L1 in the first weeks and months of the

school year; this is especially interesting in the case of Grade 7 students, who typically have very little French background when they begin LFI.

5.2.2 Codeswitching to promote maximum comprehension and TL use.

Based on the three lessons I observed, it seemed that Pierre's use of the L1 lead to further TL use and exposure: Pierre's limited L1 use was not incompatible with maximizing TL use. As Macaro (2005) suggests, there is likely a threshold, perhaps around 10 to 15%, beyond which teacher L1 use may begin to have a negative impact on student learning. Defining this threshold is the challenge. However Pierre's use of a small number of isolated L1 words would have been well below such a threshold and had no such negative effect. While providing large amounts of rich TL input, the teacher can model appropriate and beneficial L1 use and at the same time teach students when the L1 is not helpful or necessary and they should persist in the TL. As we have seen, learners use their L1, at least to some extent, as their language of thought as well as during interaction (e.g., Behan, Turnbull & Spek, 1997; Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Pierre's L1 use did not cause his students to increase their use of English. On the contrary, they were very motivated to speak French and, as far as I was able to observe, only used single L1words to ask for French equivalents so that communication could continue in French. I was very impressed with how Pierre's students made consistent efforts to speak as much as possible in French; this was also no doubt connected to Pierre's expectations and approach to encouraging maximum TL use. These observations support the findings by Butzkamm (1998), Libescher & Dailey O'Cain (2004), Macaro (2005), and others. A judicious use of the L1 does not necessarily lead to increased student use of the L1 and may actually increase and improve students' TL production.

5.2.3 Strategies for conveying TL meanings: some potential "hotspots".

Following the classroom observations and interviews, I speculated about certain episodes where the teachers might have chosen alternative strategies for conveying the meaning or checking comprehension of TL words. For example, Pierre might have acted out the word "malade" (sick) using facial expressions and gestures, or could have drawn a simple picture, rather than using the L1 word "disease" (although in this case a student had started off by asking for the French word for "diseases" and Pierre then used the L1 word in his question to the class). He also could have given students the first letter of the word ("m") as a hint – in fact Pierre did use this technique many other times when eliciting French equivalents. He might also have had students guess the word by putting it into a familiar context, for example:

> Teacher – Julie est absente. Elle n'est pas venue à l'école aujourd'hui parce qu'elle est ... quoi?
> Students – Malade!

Likewise, using a drawing or gestures, and a paraphrase for "cloud" (e.g., "Dans le ciel, quand il pleut, la pluie tombe des ...?") would have been an alternative to using the L1 word. In the two social studies classes I observed, asking students for and providing TL/L1 equivalents was Pierre's most commonly used strategy; this was very effective for conveying meaning and could be done quickly, allowing the discussion to continue in French. However, other strategies might have been equally as effective, possibly providing further TL input in some cases.

Frank's explanation in French for "hors route" made use of two other words ("champ" – field and "sentier" – path) which, while fine examples, did not seem to have been understood by most students in the class. Frank acknowledged this in the interview. Alternative strategies could include using gestures or pantomime depicting a bumpy road, drawing a picture, making an association with the French word "de*hors*," meaning "outside" (e.g., hors route = en dehors de la route) which may have been more familiar, or giving a contrasting example using well-known

TL words (e.g., "pas *sur* la route, mais *hors* route"). Another option could have been to provide a quick codeswitch: "off road." Of course these and other strategies could also be used in combination.

My reason for pointing out these other options is not to be critical of Frank and Pierre's use of strategies for maximizing French or using the L1. I have no doubt used my students' L1 many times in situations where a drawing or an explanation in French might have been equally as effective. Likewise, I have used French words or given explanations in French (consciously avoiding the L1) which a good number of my students likely did not understand. I cannot give specific examples here, because I only began to seriously study this issue while I was a full time master's student and do not have notes or recordings of my own TL and L1 use. However, looking at how Frank and Pierre opted to use the TL or the L1 in the ways they did has helped me to better understand my own practice and the benefits and limitations of each strategy. As part of my action research, I am looking at the strategies themselves with a critical eye as I try to gain a better understanding of the roles both languages can play in various situations.

Deciding in advance how to convey the meaning of new words in a lesson can help teachers to better ensure comprehension while catering to different learning styles and maximizing TL use. Of course, spontaneous situations do not allow for pre-planning. Teachers must think-in-action and quickly choose from among their repertoire of strategies. Fortunately, in most situations several strategies may be equally effective; I don't believe there is one single best way to convey the meaning of TL words. Teachers can maximize TL use while drawing on a variety of techniques (TL-based, L1-based, or other) to facilitate TL comprehension and learning; we should not *always* opt for codeswitching, nor should we *always* opt for explanations through the TL. Teachers may tend to favour strategies with which they feel comfortable, which they feel are more effective, or which can be carried out more quickly. Through reflective

activities, such as keeping a journal, we can keep track of our TL and L1 use in different situations and possibly identify the over-use of a particular strategy.

5.2.4 TL-L1 cognates as indirect use of the L1.

Upon reviewing the transcripts of the recall sessions, a pattern emerged: almost all of the English words used by Pierre and his students were not closely related to French (e.g., life, disease, learn, about, to know, to send, shipwreck), while Frank regularly conveyed the meanings of French words by using TL synonyms with English cognates (e.g., un exemple, une partie, une portion, le minimum). In the case of Frank's explanation of "hors route" – seemingly the least effective instance of TL use (Frank acknowledged that most students probably hadn't understood) – his examples were not obviously related to English – "champ" (field) and "sentier" (path). Based on the six lessons, it seems that Grade 7 LFI teachers' efforts to maximize their use of French are facilitated to a large degree by the use of French-English cognates. While this is not surprising – Frank and Pierre also reported this in the interviews – I would like to suggest that codeswitching can be a useful tool for explaining TL words where no TL synonym with an L1 cognate exists, especially if the words can't easily be explained by paraphrasing, or represented through gestures or pictures. In these situations, avoidance of the students' L1 for the sake of avoiding it takes away an effective pedagogical tool that teachers might use to increase intake and overall TL learning. When students are left in a state of uncertainty, the cost of avoiding the L1 may be greater than any benefit gained by refusing to employ a quick codeswitch.

5.2.5 L1 use in meaning-focused and form-focused instruction.

Frank, Pierre and I all helped students to focus on form, but in different ways and to varying degrees. Although incidental or implicit learning is certainly important, we can help students to notice similarities and differences through contrastive analysis (see Van Lier, 2000;

Harbord, 1992). Of course students will need to hear (or read) and produce the structures repeatedly in meaningful contexts in order to consolidate learning. In many cases, the actual pointing out of similarities and differences can be carried out in the TL, with the L1 used only as an example word or phrase; if some grammatical structures can be explained clearly in the TL, then perhaps there is nothing to be gained by making an L1 comparison.

Harbord (1992) recommends "exercises involving the translation of single words or phrases *in context*". He feels that "whereas translation out of context encourages students to translate word for word, translation within a specific context, by contrast, makes them more fully aware of the problems of single-word translation" (p. 355). As is widely accepted, Lightbown and Spada (1999) contend that a balance between communication-focused and form-focused instruction is the most effective approach to L2 teaching; instruction should focus primarily on meaning but also allow for a focus on form within meaningful contexts. I believe that reference to the students' L1 can, by times, be beneficial in both meaning-focused activities (as one means of repairing breakdowns in communication) and in form-focused instruction (such as when comparing and contrasting TL and L1 structures).

5.3 Research Question 2

What factors shape LFI teachers' belief systems and practice concerning their use of the TL and the students' L1?

I first deal with findings related to the factors shaping beliefs. Next, I use Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour to summarize findings related to the factors which shaped teachers' practice, reviewing internal factors and external factors which shaped teacher-participants' use of the TL and L1, and then discussing how subjective norms influenced – or did not influence – our practice.

For all three participants, our own L2 learning experiences, or apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975), and our own preferred learning styles were important factors in shaping our beliefs and practices. The fact that our beliefs and practices so closely mirror the ways in which we each were taught and learned our own second language may be attributable in part to the fact that we had very little, if any, pre-service or in-service training in TL and L1 use. While our own teachers may in some cases serve as excellent models for our future practice, LFI teachers can confirm the effectiveness of their approach to TL and L1 use with different groups of students, or endeavour to improve that approach, through reflective practice. Our beliefs also seem to have been shaped by our own preferred learning style and personality. Frank focused more on the global picture of things, was able to tolerate ambiguity, and enjoyed figuring things out for himself. Pierre preferred to have things clearly spelled out and was more analytical and detail-oriented. I am usually more of a big-picture person, but sometimes can also be (over)analytical.

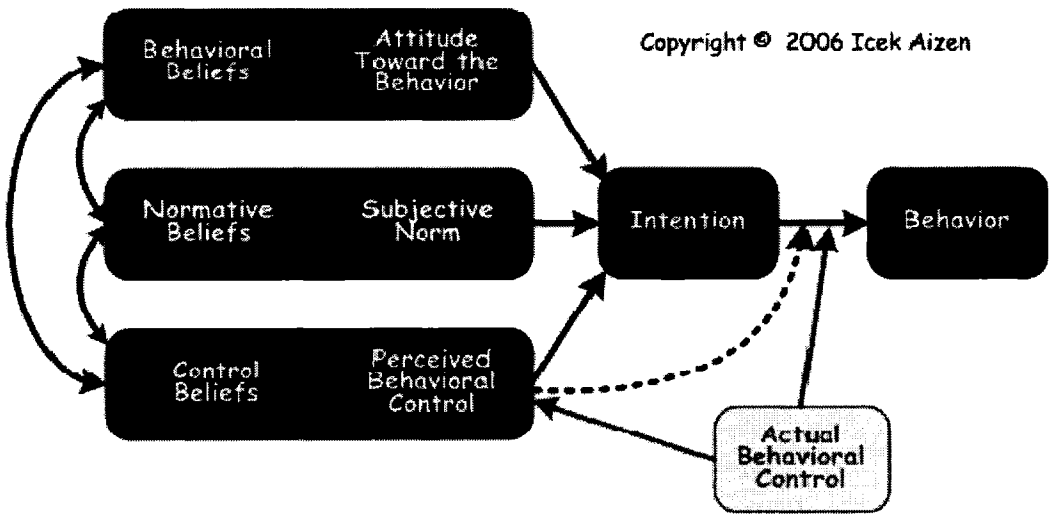
There is of course cross-fertilization between beliefs and practice – ideally, our beliefs drive our practice, but our past experiences also affect our beliefs concerning what works and what is achievable.

5.3.1 Ajzen's theory of planned behavior.

When I began my research, I assumed that teachers would report that certain factors prevented them from being able to maximize their TL use; I imagined teachers who intended to conduct a lesson completely, or nearly completely, in French, but then found themselves resorting to English when a word came up that could not be explained clearly without using English, or that other factors, such as running out of time or discipline issues, might cause a teacher to switch to English. Perhaps these expectations on my part were a reflection of how my beliefs and practices concerning TL and L1 use were still conflicted – I used the L1 in certain

situations, believing it to be highly useful, while at the same time in the back of my mind, I was still influenced by my older idea of TL exclusivity representing best practice. Of course, this didn't really happen, since Frank was able to maintain TL use and avoid using English (except at the beginning of the year and on a few other rare occasions, even in one or two instances where it might have been helpful). Pierre's use of English was intentional and didn't go against his plans for maximizing TL use – he used it as a natural way of explaining the words and verifying comprehension during class discussions (although he occasionally felt that he overused the L1).

As the following diagram illustrates[34], Ajzen's theory of planned behavior holds that our beliefs and attitudes, subjective norms (what we believe others think about a particular behavior), and perceived behavioral control (the belief that we are capable of performing the behavior) all contribute to our intentions to perform a given behavior.



I have described teacher-participants' beliefs and attitudes concerning TL and L1 use in response to my first research question (see section 5.1). I now examine the notions of perceived behavioral control and subjective norms to describe how different factors either enhanced or

[34] From Icek Ajzen's website: http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/%7Eaizen/index.html

limited teachers' ability to use the TL and L1 in a way that was congruent with their beliefs. Ajzen's theory works on an individual level; we must keep in mind the personal goals of each teacher – their attitudes and intentions with regards to TL and L1 use, or what they considered to be best practice.

5.3.2 Perceived behavioral control: internal and external factors.

By examining internal and external factors which either enhance or limit teachers' perceptions of their ability to perform a given behavior (for example, their ability to use codeswitching), we can see the extent to which they feel the behavior is under their control. With only a few exceptions, Frank and Pierre used the L1 to the degree that they felt was appropriate and most effective. For Frank and Pierre, *there would seem to have been no strong inhibiting factors* – internal or external – preventing them from using the TL and L1 as they saw fit. This is interesting, because their approaches are very different; no doubt this is due to the fact that Frank and Pierre are both experienced and capable teachers. From my point of view, external factors did sometimes cause me to use English where ideally I would have used French.

We could say that Frank's experience as a French learner in Quebec was an internal enhancing factor for him, in that he felt that it provided him with a model of true immersion which he was able to recreate, as much as possible, for his students. Having gone through the process himself, he was able to empathize with students and guide them through their immersion experience. Being a non-native yet highly proficient French speaker can also be considered an internal enhancing factor for Frank, giving him the ability to use TL modification techniques to help students understand TL input and provide students with an excellent linguistic model and a more complete, or natural, immersion experience.

Pierre's bilingualism could be seen as an internal factor which allows him to use codeswitching naturally and to compare TL and L1 forms while still providing students with rich

and abundant TL input. Pierre feels confident in his ability to use codeswitching as one of his regular teaching strategies while leading students through the transition towards more and more TL use. His system for doing this, and the way in which he implements it, are important factors; perhaps this is also a reflection of Pierre's confidence in students' ability to monitor their own TL and L1 use (an external factor).

I consider that my French skills allow me to provide rich TL input and serve as a fine linguistic model for students. Much like Pierre, I also see codeswitching and the ability to make TL-L1 comparisons as a special skill which can be used to help students in their L2 learning.

The textbooks used in the subjects could be considered an external limiting factor (limiting teachers' ability to use French exclusively) due to the level of language which is often inaccessible to Grade 7 LFI students. However, both Frank and Pierre reported that they had found ways of reducing this potential negative effect, such as simplifying questions and using other resources instead. Frank basically saw no need to use the L1, while Pierre's use of the L1 was determined more by his normal strategies for trying to ensure comprehension and the new words in the lesson. For example, in social studies, the word "traiter" is likely to be used in a lesson dealing with discrimination, regardless of the level of language contained in the textbook. While the language used in the textbooks sometimes presented challenges to staying in the TL, and while both teachers would have welcomed having more level-appropriate resources, they generally felt that they were able to find ways around the problem so that the textbooks did not lead to notably more L1 use. Like Frank and Pierre, I adapted or made my own materials, but when I did use the textbooks I often gave students the English equivalents for keywords, either at the beginning of the lesson, or by codeswitching as we went along. When I taught math for the first time, I relied heavily on the textbook and found it necessary to use English fairly regularly. I

felt that the level of language in the textbook was often an obstacle to TL use and students' understanding of the math concepts.

Student anxiety is another potential external limiting factor. Frank viewed TL modification and students' ability to tolerate ambiguity and figure things out as largely counteracting TL anxiety. His ability to modify his TL use so that it was accessible to students can be considered as an internal factor enabling maximum use of French, while students' ability to tolerate ambiguity and figure things out are external factors, also favoring maximum TL use.

Pierre's perception of student anxiety can be viewed as an external limiting factor, limiting the amount of French he feels he can speak before deciding to use some English. Pierre felt that students would become anxious and frustrated if he did not use some English, especially during the first three months of Grade 7. He put himself in his students' shoes, saying that he would feel anxious if he were a student and the teacher used French exclusively.

I also worry quite a bit about students' TL anxiety; I use codeswitching in order to facilitate comprehension and reduce any feeling students may have of being lost. Perhaps I have sometimes been too quick to use L1 equivalents, where leaving students more time to figure things out, or explaining in French in a different way may have been more effective.

Pierre did not seem to use the L1 more due to certain students' need for individualized instruction (at least this did not emerge during the interviews); rather, his use of English was generally directed at the entire class. It may be that Pierre's level of L1 use in class lessens the need for L1 use on an individual basis. Frank did see a need to use the L1 with students who were struggling, but this was done after school, enabling him to maintain a more complete TL atmosphere during class time. Like Pierre, a lot of my L1 use was directed at all, or most, students; I also used some English when helping students one-on-one in class and I used a mixture of English and French when giving help after school.

In deciding how or to what extent unknown TL words should be explained, perhaps the time required for providing clear explanations in the TL was more of a factor than acknowledged in the interviews. Pierre's use of the L1 allowed the class discussion to continue to flow without taking time to give longer explanations in the TL which could have potentially undermined students' engagement in the activity and may not always have been fully understood. As mentioned before, however, other non-L1 strategies may by times have been equally effective. Frank also alluded to this time factor when he explained why he did not take more time to fully explain certain words – a more detailed explanation was not necessary or could be given later, when needed. While I don't believe students need to know *every* word, I probably take time to explain a few more words than Frank might. Using a quick codeswitch allows me to do so clearly and concisely, although sometimes TL-based strategies are just as quick and effective. Lack of time, or wanting to save time, is sometimes the limiting external factor which pushes me to use more English than I would like.

Frank and Pierre both said that discipline was not much of a factor in terms of causing them to use more English; only in the most serious situations would they use the L1. I agree, although my L1 use may sometimes be aimed at helping certain students get back on task and allowing me to maintain control of the lesson.

5.3.3 Subjective norms.

Based on my experience as a LFI teacher, I believed that teachers who used English, even judiciously, would be more likely to be feel pressure to limit their L1 use based on the reactions of "important others" (Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996, p. 355), such as students, parents, colleagues, administrators and ministry officials who prefer that the teacher speak the TL exclusively (or nearly exclusively), since L1 use goes against the accepted view of best practice in LFI teaching.

However, LFI teachers in P.E.I. are generally not questioned about their use of the L1 and can, in most cases, use a certain amount of English without suffering any adverse consequences.

The subjective norm will influence teacher's use of the TL and L1 depending on what their beliefs and practices are, but also what they perceive others' expectations to be. The APEF guidelines clearly prescribe TL exclusivity as best practice. However the guidelines per se may not have had a strong influence on Frank and Pierre, based on their responses during the PD day (held several months after the classroom visits and interviews). While Frank didn't know the exact wording of the guidelines, he had a very clear idea of what was officially expected. During our interviews, he never specifically mentioned the guidelines, although he often made statements to the effect that immersion was supposed to be French-only. During the PD session, Pierre wrote that he thought LFI teachers were expected to use French *mainly* ("principalement") and *as much as possible* ("le maximum de français possible"). During our interviews, Pierre was genuinely surprised when I told him that some Grade 7 teachers used little or no English beyond the first few weeks.

At the beginning of my career, I basically accepted the TL-only philosophy at face value. I remember reading through the APEF guide – I think it was my second year as a Grade 7 LFI teacher – and thinking that the guidelines were no doubt well-founded and very much worth aspiring to. While there should be several copies of the APEF guide in schools, based on the PD day responses it doesn't seem to be consulted regularly by most teachers (I don't think I read the guidelines again until I began research for this thesis, nearly ten years later). But probably more so than the guidelines, my own background in LFI and talking with others (such as educators and parents) – or perhaps not talking enough – made me believe that I, as a LFI teacher, should never use English. According to the current APEF guidelines, there is no need to use the students' L1 and, in addition, doing so is actually counterproductive to L2 learning. This basically implies that

teachers who use the L1, for any of the reasons I have discussed, are lacking in French skills or lacking in L2 teaching skills, or both. We could add "lazy" or "uninspired" to this list since L1 use is often perceived as being "too easy." As I began to use the L1 in my teaching practice, I felt uneasy and sometimes guilty; I sometimes worried that someone would find out. I believe I provided my students with large amounts of high quality TL input and did a pretty good job of avoiding L1 use by employing various modification techniques, but there were times when it just seemed to make so much sense to use a word or two of English. I gradually came to view L1 use more positively and felt that I could justify – at least to myself – some of my codeswitching and TL-L1 comparisons. I have certainly overused the L1 by times and still have a lot to learn, but my use of the L1 was not a reflection of my poor French language skills or my substandard teaching skills. I simply wasn't able to fully comply with the guidelines, because doing so would have meant that I wouldn't have been able to teach the way I wanted to teach, the way I thought was best for me and for my students. Compared to Pierre, I had a much stronger sense that I was going against official expectations by using the L1, while Frank's confidence was helped by the fact that his approach was in keeping with official expectations. The question is: Should teachers who use the L1 judiciously feel guilty or inadequate, or be viewed as lacking in skills, when their approach may actually be just as effective, or perhaps more so, than that prescribed in the APEF guidelines?

In the present study, teachers' perceptions of student TL anxiety were one of the most important factors shaping TL and L1 use. Frank believed that students would rise to the challenges of a TL-only environment and would learn more by doing so, while Pierre and I worried more that students would not understand and would become frustrated if we did not sometimes use the L1. Some codeswitching may be viewed as an expression of feeling sorry for, or "giving in" to students whom teachers may perceive to be struggling. I have by times used

students' L1 with Grade 7 LFI students and with Japanese learners of English and in doing so felt that it helped me to "get on the good side" of students. Frank mentioned this same idea in talking about the fact that some other LFI teachers do use a certain amount of English in their classes, which makes students feel that he is "mean" in comparison: "by being a stickler for French, I'm then the mean teacher." During the pre and post interviews (in January and June), Frank said that in his view LFI teachers generally seemed to be using more English than they had in the past, and that some had decided not to participate in the present study due to the sensitive nature of the TL/L1 issue.

Despite not following the guidelines, Pierre was very comfortable with his level of L1 use and didn't report feeling any pressure to use less, or more, English. Interestingly, Frank reported coming under pressure from "important others" to *use more English with his Grade 7 LFI students*. This is particularly interesting because Frank's TL and L1 use had been in keeping with the APEF guidelines. By increasing his L1 use, Frank would have gone against the guidelines, but the guidelines did not weigh as heavily in his decision as did his own personal, strongly held beliefs (which happened to correspond to the guidelines). Because Frank felt so strongly that the L1 should be avoided, he remained true to his beliefs; his intentions to teach exclusively through the TL did not weaken despite considerable pressure to increase his L1 use. This suggests that some teachers may be receiving a mixed message, with officials at certain levels advocating TL exclusivity while at other levels judicious L1 use may be supported.

Having said all this, subjective norms, or the perceived reactions of "important others," may influence teachers' decisions regarding whether or not to use the L1, and some teachers may be more easily swayed than others. Teachers' commitment to their beliefs and their ability to rationalize their practice with regards to TL and L1 use will enable them to withstand criticism and maximize TL comprehension and use according to their own ideas of best practice, whether

or not their beliefs and practices are 100% in keeping with departmental guidelines. By familiarizing themselves with current research on the topic, sharing ideas with other teachers, and reflecting on the effectiveness of their own strategies for TL and L1 use and possible alternatives (by conducting action research), teachers can gain confidence in their beliefs and practices and "may come to experience and enjoy a new level of self-articulated professionalism" (Farrell, 1998 – final para.).

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present study and the body of literature reviewed in chapter 2, I make several recommendations with respect to the APEF guidelines for TL and L1 use, teacher training, and professional development.

5.4.1 Rethinking the APEF guidelines for TL and L1 use.

As the only reference given for the APEF TL/L1 guidelines for LFI, one would expect that Calvé's 1993 article should provide convincing evidence in support of its 100% TL policy. Surprisingly, his opening comments do not support 100% TL use for "absolutely everything in class":

> En réaction à la rigidité de l'approche audio-orale où, grâce à une progression par étapes minimales accompagnées d'acrobaties verbales, visuelles, gestuelles de la part du professeur, *absolument tout devait se faire en langue seconde dans la classe, les tenants de l'approche communicative ont fait montre généralement de beaucoup de souplesse concernant l'usage de la langue maternelle en classe. En principe, il n'y a sans doute pas de mal, à l'occasion, à traduire un mot, une expression indéchiffrable par d'autres moyens, à fournir aux étudiants certaines explications en anglais avant un test, une tâche difficile* (p.15-16, my italics).

Thus Calvé, and the communicative approach in general, seem to find acceptable a certain amount of flexibility in terms of L1 use, such as for occasionally providing translations or difficult explanations in the L1. This would seem to go against the APEF guidelines, which declare it "essential that the only language of communication in the classroom be French" and that use of the L1 "even occasionally" will have a negative impact on students' L2 learning.

Calvé (1993) goes on to explain how *occasional L1 use*, "harmless, in principle" (p. 16), can become problematic: "What should be an exceptional, rigorously controlled use of the L1 quickly becomes the rule for many teachers and students such that French never has the chance to implant itself as the language of use (communication) and therefore of learning, in the classroom" (p. 16, my translation). I believe that teachers can use the L1 *judiciously* without it becoming excessive, and that the amount of L1 use should generally *decrease* as learners' proficiency in the TL increases. In the classes I observed, Pierre demonstrated that this is not only possible, but can be a highly successful approach.

It should be noted how the following section of Calvé's article corresponds to the third paragraph of the APEF guidelines, cited on page 57:

> Le fait d'ouvrir la porte a la langue maternelle, d'utiliser celle-ci comme "dépanneur" devant toute difficulté de communication, empêche et le professeur, et les étudiants, de développer progressivement (et beaucoup plus vite qu'on ne le croit généralement) les stratégies qui leur permettront justement de contourner ces difficultés et d'en arriver à pouvoir fonctionner exclusivement, ou presque, dans la langue seconde en classe (p. 16).

Calvé warns against using the L1 *as a "fix-all", when confronted with any and all breakdowns in communication*, whereas the APEF LFI guide seems to have made an extrapolation, saying that *even occasional use of the L1* will prevent the development of L2 communication strategies.

Calvé's article does not provide evidence supporting the APEF French-only guidelines. Indeed, this does not appear to have been the intent of the article (it seems mainly to be aimed at encouraging core French teachers to increase their use of French). Rather, Calvé actually suggests that judicious L1 use can serve several useful functions. For example, he agrees with Harbord (1992) that the L1 can be useful for dealing with the "inevitable comparisons and transfers that students make, often unconsciously, between the L2 and L1" (Calvé, 1993, p. 26, my translation). Calvé's approach to TL and L1 use is consistent with what Macaro refers to as the optimal position: "There is some pedagogical value in L1 use. Some aspects of learning may actually be enhanced by the use of the L1" (2001, p. 535).

Although TL exclusivity has long been taken for granted as a cornerstone of immersion pedagogy, it is unclear that there is any empirical evidence to support strong anti-L1 guidelines for LFI such as those found in the APEF document. Macaro (2001) asserts that "no study so far, to my knowledge, has been able to demonstrate a causal relationship between exclusion of the L1 and improved learning," adding that this lack of evidence should, pending further research, lead researchers and educators to "avoid strong claims for the effectiveness of L2 exclusivity in classrooms where learners share the same L1" (p.544-545).

In light of the present findings and the body of literature reviewed in chapter 2, I would suggest that a review of the existing APEF TL/L1 guidelines is in order. I believe the TL/L1 guidelines for LFI should be brought in line with the "optimal" approach. Further, I believe the focus should be on helping teachers decide for themselves how limited, pedagogically principled

L1 use might benefit L2 learning as part of an approach which ensures that students are provided with large amounts of rich, comprehensible TL input and ample opportunity for TL production.

I don't doubt that officials who write guidelines calling for TL exclusivity and who advocate strict L1 avoidance have the best of intentions. However, any guidelines, if they are to be followed, should be based on practical knowledge and offer concrete solutions to the real difficulties that LFI teachers face day in and day out, particularly at the Grade 7 level. Chambers (1992) tells of how he attended a conference where one of the authors of the National curriculum anti-L1 guidelines in England presented an example of good practice:

> The topic he used in his illustration was 'Smoking'. Pupils could be asked whether or not they or members of their family smoked. Why did the pupils smoke/not smoke? How many did they smoke per day? I am not sure that I would have introduced the topic in quite the same way, but there was nothing terribly wrong with this approach. Arousing interest and establishing the pupils' knowledge of the topic is sound practice. What surprised me, however, was that he said that this could be done in the mother tongue. You could have knocked me over with a feather. I had been agonizing over my own shortcomings in terms of target language use and here was a member of the Working Party contradicting para 3.18[35] and saying that the mother tongue was legitimate, even when safety was not in question.

Perhaps immersion program designers and officials will come to view limited, judicious L1 use as a pedagogic tool for improving L2 learning, as indeed it seems that some LFI teachers

[35] "Communicating in a foreign language must thus involve both teachers and pupils using the target language as the normal means of communication. (...) In situations where, for reasons of safety, it is essential that instructions should be fully understood, they should be given in the language which is the normal medium of instruction in the school. When the teacher is satisfied that the instructions have been fully understood, they should be repeated in the target language" (*Modern Foreign Languages for ages 11 to 16*, para 3.18 – cited in Chambers, 1992).

already do. However, this change in attitude may not come easily for immersion educators for whom the TL-only approach *is* French immersion. Some will no doubt comment that I have argued too strongly in favour of L1 use, and have not made a strong enough case for TL maximization. My answer is that I feel that the principle of providing students with large amounts of rich, comprehensible TL input has already been well established in LFI and is well understood by most, if not all, LFI teachers. The focus of this thesis – the idea that limited, judicious L1 use has the potential to enhance L2 learning – seems to be less well recognized, certainly at an official level. The acceptance of the L1 as a legitimate pedagogical tool should not be seen as a licensing of unbridled codeswitching. Overuse of the L1 must be guarded against and TL exclusivity (or near exclusivity) is no doubt quite appropriate for teaching many lessons in Grade 7 LFI, and most of Grade 8 and 9 LFI classes.

Macaro (2005) suggests that in trying to determine optimal TL and L1 use, codeswitching may be used to ensure effective communication, but should also result in more learning taking place than if the L1 had not been used. He also suggests that teachers should determine for themselves what the best TL-L1 balance is according to the needs of their students and teaching situation:

> The answer may . . . lie in a dynamic interaction between functionally based codeswitching ('I need to use the L1 as a means to a better end') and a quantitative one ('if I gradually and constantly increase my use of L1 it will eventually stop being a foreign language lesson'). This dynamic interaction, based on evidence and reflection, will eventually empower the bilingual teacher rather than make him or her a victim of historical language learning developments, a puppet of the latest methodological fashions, or the scapegoat of uninformed government policies (p. 82).

Atkinson (1995) also suggests that teachers should be encouraged to develop their own pedagogically principled approach to TL and L1 use through professional development activities:

> It is still the case, as many will protest, that in many contexts overuse of the L1 is still the biggest barrier to really effective language teaching . . . however, the way forward lies not in acquiescing in the face of dogmatic platitudes but rather in accepting that there is no reason why the L1 should not play some role in the classroom and making the issue of exactly what this role should be one of the areas of focus in teacher training and development.

5.4.2 Towards optimal TL and L1 use through training, PD and action research.

Rather than adopting a top-down approach by dictating "one-size-fits-all" guidelines for TL and L1 use, I believe it would be more effective, both in terms of teaching and learning outcomes and in terms of bridging the gap between theory and practice, and also more democratic (Burns, 2000), to promote a professional development–action research approach, affirming teachers' ability to assess which practices are most effective for their students. This is the main thrust of any "theory" generated by the present study: *that LFI teachers should, within certain parameters, develop a personalized approach, based on evidence and reflection, which they feel best meets the needs of their students.* I don't believe, for example, that Frank or Pierre should simply be told when or how much TL and L1 use is appropriate, especially when there may be no solid basis for such pronouncements and when specific teaching situations, and personal styles and preferences differ. I believe that LFI teachers themselves are best placed to assess the effectiveness of their own TL and L1 use.

Atkinson (1993), van Lier (2000) and Macaro (2000, 2001) suggest that the relationship between the TL and L1 should become a much more central focus of pre- and in-service teacher

training. The issue is receiving more attention now as compared to when I did my teacher training. For example, in the new UPEI program for French second language teachers, student-teachers are being encouraged to reflect on pedagogically-principled parameters for TL and L1 use. Through workshops, practicing teachers could be encouraged to reflect on their own TL and L1 use and share strategies which they feel work well for them and their students. In terms of professional development (PD), teachers could be encouraged to engage in action research, possibly working in collaboration with other LFI teachers, department officials and university researchers. A voluntary PD program[36] of this type could be organized by the department of education, or individual teachers could organize it by themselves. I suggest that the maxims outlined in section 5.1.1 can provide the basis for a conceptual framework which may be helpful to teachers as they reflect on their practice in LFI.

As a teacher who often struggled with trying to decide when to use, or not use, my students' L1, I believe there is a real need for open discussion of this issue in LFI. It seems that other teachers share this feeling; Frank and Pierre both stated that participating in this project had been a very worthwhile professional development activity. They appreciated the chance to reflect on their beliefs and practice, and to discuss the issues with other LFI teachers. Pierre said: "Ça fait penser à la quantité d'anglais que tu utilises. Ça fait réfléchir à son enseignement, définitivement c'est un avantage", adding "Je suis *bien curieux* de savoir comment les autres profs font ça". Frank commented:

> Well it makes you reflect on what it is you do on a daily basis, because you don't sit around and think about these things very much, and we don't actually have a whole lot of professional discussion about it ... I'm glad somebody's looking at it, I really am. And you know, it's been something that's been near and dear to my teaching experience

[36] Thomas Farrell's article, "Reflective teaching: the principles and practices," might be used as a starting point for designing such a program; retrievable from http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol36/no4/p10.htm

and the *mission* I guess behind my teaching. You know, you like to look on it as more of a vocation than a job, and so I'm pleased that it's being looked at. So I've enjoyed it. I think I've reaffirmed what I've been doing maybe more so. And I think that a sharing session would be good, I may have perceptions of what's out there that could be totally off the mark, I don't know . . . that'd be nice to know. You know, you kind of teach in a vacuum. I'm not a big theorist to tell you the truth, I just kind of do what I feel is right and the most reflection I've done about it in years is talking to you.

J'ai bien apprécié l'occasion de réfléchir à propos de mon enseignement et j'ai encore de la confirmation que je fais ce que je dois faire pour le bien-être de mes élèves dans l'apprentissage de leur langue seconde. Je n'emploie pas l'anglais sauf après l'école quand j'offre de l'aide supplémentaire pour les élèves qui trouvent la matière, et surtout la matière enseignée en français, un grand défi.

Both Frank and Pierre stated that through participating in this research project they had basically reaffirmed their beliefs concerning TL and L1 use. This was certainly due in part to the firmness of their beliefs, but also because the main focus of this study was to give an account of LFI teachers' beliefs and practice; teachers were asked to reflect on and explain the reasoning behind their beliefs and practice, but no attempt was made to directly influence their beliefs and practice. Future research and training could include more "food for thought," similar to the model used in Macaro's 2001 study, using the teacher's own practice and beliefs and those of other teachers, as well as theory and research findings (such as those reviewed in chapter 2) as sources to stimulate teacher reflection[37].

[37] In Macaro's 2001 study participants were also "taught a new language for a day in order to experience and reflect upon being taught exclusively in a L2 and they had to observe experienced teachers' use of codeswitching, over an extended period of time" (p. 535).

Perhaps, as a result of their participation in this study and as they continue in their reflective practice as LFI teachers, Frank and Pierre will make adjustments to their beliefs and practices in the future. In chapter 1, I explained how my belief system evolved over time. My apprenticeship of observation and training, along with the prevailing anti-L1 attitude in the field of LFI teaching, served to shape my beliefs as I began teaching Grade 7 LFI. I held TL exclusivity as the ideal. However, as I gained experience teaching grade 7 LFI students, a conflict quickly arose – I found that it was not always possible to attain the level of student comprehension I wanted without occasionally making use of my students' L1. I came to appreciate the value of codeswitching and also of comparing TL and L1 structures, which had been one of my own preferred strategies for learning French and Japanese. At the same time, I believed that holistic language learning – through communication in context – was crucial to developing communicative competence. This was another conflict. My teaching was not always consistent with a communicative approach; this conflict was due in large part to my own lack of knowledge and the weakness of the materials and resources I had at my disposal. I don't believe that my limited use of the L1 interfered with my use of communicative activities; rather, I believe that judicious L1 use is compatible with communicative language teaching. While I may have occasionally over-used the L1, I don't believe the amount and the way in which I used it had any serious negative effect on my students' learning – rather I believe its effect was by and large beneficial. Engaging in this research process has allowed me to better define my beliefs and resolve some of the conflicts in my own TL/L1 belief system. I have gained confidence by finding that my beliefs are basically supported by a number of other LFI teachers and researchers. As I continue in my reflective practice, I will continue to refine my beliefs as I work towards what is, for me and my students, an optimal approach. Similarly, other teachers and teacher trainers (see for example Atkinson, 1993 and 1995; Turnbull, 2005) who have practiced

and advocated "TL only" approaches earlier on in their careers, have, as their beliefs systems evolved over time, come to view the L1 as a valuable tool when used in a limited, judicious fashion for L2 learning.

5.5 Further Directions for Future Research

In the Introduction to the 1997 APEF LFI guide, new research into different learning styles, technological innovations and the "evolution of the composition and the nature of the school population" are given as reasons, along with several others, which require that educators "rethink the means of learning" (p. 1, my translation). How do these relate to the use of French and students' L1 in LFI? Should students who favor making TL-L1 connections be permitted to use this strategy more than at present? What role might electronic dictionaries play, with the ability to provide TL and L1 equivalents at the push of a few buttons? Will new technology allow learners to become more active and autonomous with regards to making L1 connections? Should there be more emphasis on training learners to judge for themselves when to use the L1, and when to persist in the TL? Should teaching strategies be expanded to better reach students who prefer making TL-L1 connections? Atkinson (1987) and Danchev (1982, cited in Harbord, 1992) refer to judicious L1 use as a "learner-preferred strategy," as beginners try to make connections between TL items and their closest L1 forms, whether or not the teacher provides or "permits" translation. Atkinson and Danchev argue therefore that L2 methodology should attempt to work with this natural tendency rather than against it. As Macaro (2005) says, some students prefer to make TL-L1 connections, while others do not. Perhaps teachers should design materials that allow students to choose from two or three versions of an activity, offering various levels of L1 support. Further research is needed to determine how LFI teachers' TL and L1 use can better accommodate learning styles and student preferences. In addition, future research

should strive to define L1 overuse and determine the parameters for optimal, pedagogically principled TL and L1 use in different teaching situations.

Both Pierre and Frank pointed out that the learning outcomes were, after all, more important than a teacher's TL or L1 use. Perhaps a process-product study could be designed to show the relative effectiveness of TL-only and "optimal" approaches; perhaps the approaches will be found to be equally effective, depending on the teacher, the students, and other elements of the context. A final issue to be examined, one with much wider implications, is that of the relationship between TL and L1 use, power and social class reproduction[38].

In *L'État de l'enseignement du français langue seconde dans le Canada de l'an 2001*, François Lentz offers some thoughts to stimulate reflection on immersion pedagogy. He suggests several areas where deeper thinking about immersion seems to be required; however, as might be expected, the use of the students' L1 is not identified as one of these areas. He concludes:

> Parfois banalisée voire institutionalisée, l'immersion se regarde: elle mesure le chemin parcouru depuis plus d'un quart de siècle, déborde largement les frontières canadiennes, dresse un état des lieux en faisant valoir ses points forts mais également en recensant ses zones d'ombre; elle envisage également l'avenir selon une visée élargissante, où le foisonnement des questions, pédagogiques pour une large part, constitue a priori en tous cas, une dynamique porteuse d'élan[39] (pp. 22-24).

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[38] Bourdieu examined the role of education and the hidden curriculum in perpetuating social inequalities. See for example: Bourdieu, Pierre (1986). The Forms of Capital. In John Richardson, Ed. *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education.* New York: Greenwood Press, pp. 241-258.

[39] The English version reads: "Often taken for granted as a kind of institution, immersion is now undergoing a process of self-examination – taking stock of the accomplishments of the last quarter-century, extending its influence far beyond the boundaries of Canada, and drawing up a balance sheet with due credit for its successes, yet taking into account other areas that may need to be explored. Today, broad new vistas are unfolding for immersion, where the abundance of questions, mostly pedagogical, arguably could give strong impetus to future achievement" (CPF: *The State of French-Second-Language Education in Canada 2001*, pp. 22-24).

I suggest that the judicious use of students' L1 by LFI teachers should be added to this list of "zones d'ombre," or "pedagogical questions" which need to be further explored and which "could give strong impetus to future achievement."

Appendix 1 – Questions for initial interviews

The purpose of this interview will be to find out about your perspectives on the teacher's use of French and English in French immersion. The interview will be informal and more or less structured, so don't hesitate to jump in with a thought as it comes to you, or to ask me questions if things are not clear. **I would like to remind you that you may withdraw from this study at any time without giving me a reason and without consequences. You may also decline from answering a question at any time.**

- **Could you please state your name clearly?**
- **Now, before we get started, do you have any questions?**

1. I'm going to start with some general questions about your job:
   - What is your position?
   - How long have you been here?
   - Which subjects do you teach? How many classes?

2. Let's talk about your experiences as a student and second language learner ...

a) Did you learn French/English as a second language?
   - Have you learned any other languages?
   - When and where did you learn French/English?

b) Can you tell me about any of your teachers that you remember vividly?
   - What kind of class? What level?
   - Why do you remember him or her?
   - How much of the target language did he/she speak, in general?
   - Did you like his/her teaching style?
   - Did you learn a lot in his/her class?
   - Did he/she influence you in you teaching? Why or why not?

3. Before coming to this school, did you have any teaching experiences in other second language classes? If so, please tell me about them.
   - How would you describe your teaching methodology? And language use?

4. Before coming to this school, did you have the opportunity to observe any LFI teachers? (for example, in your B.Ed. program?)
   - Can you describe the situation? (when/where/what level?)
   - How much French and English did they speak?
   - Do these teachers influence your teaching? If so, how?

5. What about languages in the community where you were brought up - were they important?
   - How was French/English viewed?
   - Did your - parents encourage language learning?
     - friends encourage language learning?
     - teachers encourage language learning?
   - Did politics have anything to with it?
   - Does the bilingual policy have any influence on the reason for your teaching French or your passion/dedication?

- Was it your decision to learn French, or did your parents encourage you?

6. In an ideal world, what are your beliefs about the language spoken by the teacher in the classroom? Why?
   - When and why would English become appropriate?
   - Do you think that it is possible to achieve this? Why or why not?
   - With regards to teaching, what type of approach do you believe in?
   - Do you think that a teacher who believes in a communicative, project-based approach would have different beliefs about language use than a teacher who believes in a grammar-driven approach? Why or why not?

7. What factors do you feel influence a teachers' language choices in LFI?
   PROBES
   - Fatigue?
   - Age of the students?
   - Parental pressure?
   - Materials?
   - Do you think that using exclusively French in the classroom could be problematic? When or why?
   - What would you suggest a teacher do if there was a student who was having difficulty understanding French?

8. Is more or less English needed for teaching certain subjects?
   - Have you ever taught grade 7/8/9 LFI? How was it different?
   - As a core French teacher do you/would you use more English than you do in LFI? Why?

9. Do you think a teacher's confidence level (in French) can influence a teacher's language use, or one's tendency to "give in" to students or parents? Why?

10. Regarding your use of French and English, can you explain the transition that takes place over the first weeks and months of the year in LFI? Why?
    - Is it always the same? If not, why not?

11. Can you explain the transition that students make over the course of the first months of the year? Can students' level of comprehension sometime affect your decision to speak French or English?

12) Which strategies or rules do you use to maximize your use of French?

13) Which strategies or rules do you use to promote students' use of French?

14) Have you had any training with regards to the importance of maximizing/how to maximize your use of French (in your B. Ed. program, workshops, etc.)?

15) Is there anything else you'd like to say? Do you have any questions? Comments on the interview itself?

Thank you for your time! This has been very interesting!

Appendix 2 – List of possible strategies for maximizing TL use

- don't try to cover too much material too quickly (choose six questions instead of doing ten)
- establish routines
- repeat
- speak slowly
- paraphrase using synonyms or other more familiar words, especially TL-L1 cognates
- ask students to provide a synonym or an explanation for words that some students may not know (possibly volunteers chosen in advance)
  – "Donnez-moi un autre mot en français pour ~"
  – "Peux-tu me l'expliquer (en d'autres mots) en français?"
- give hints – "la première lettre du mot c'est 'p' ..."
- avoid using too many unknown or overly difficult words
- use codeswitching judiciously
- have students keep lists of words they are expected to know
- use examples and words that students have seen in other classes (sciences, etc.)
- find or create other resources to use in lieu of overly difficult materials
- re-write/simplify instructions
- use drawings and images
- use gestures and actions
- show concrete objects
- bilingual dictionaries
- pre-teach vocabulary
- ask students to look up key words in their dictionaries at the beginning of the lesson; students can consult their list during the lesson
- use student voices – the teacher asks students, or students ask each other "Comment dit-on ~ en anglais / en français?" ou "Qu'est-ce que ~ veut dire en anglais?"
- "Quel mot (anglais) as-tu cherché?" – when a student uses a French word that other students (and sometimes the teacher) do not understand
- Make a distinction to separate English and French (after-school help, rules with a point system, outside vs. inside the classroom, etc.)
- (bilingual?) posters on the walls
- speak some English quietly with individual students
- extra help after school or from a resource teacher
- humour
- patience
- enthusiasm
- energy
- others?

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