Mosaic

The Journal for Language Teachers

In this issue...

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The language graduate who never reads a professional journal and participates only minimally, if at all, in professional meetings, will stagnate. There is an onus on the profession in all areas to upgrade and keep abreast of current developments in the field.

– **Peter Heffernan**

Sandra J. Savignon

On "Communicative Competence": A Conversation with... Sandra J. Savignon

interviewed by Claudia Lombana

Sandra J. Savignon is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Penn State University. She teaches courses in second language acquisition, language and gender, and World Englishes. Her publications include Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice, *winner of the Modern Language Association of America Mildenberger Medal for an outstanding research publication in the field of second/foreign language teaching. She has taught in Asia, Europe, North America, South America, giving seminars and consulting on communicative language teaching.*

LOMBANA: *I would like to start off with some questions about* communicative competence. *The concept became well known in the 1970s with the work of Dell Hymes mainly, but your study on the effect of training in communicative skills (1972) at the University of Illinois has been widely recognized for the implications of the term in the field of second (foreign) language teaching and learning. What is communicative competence and what important findings resulted from this research?*

SAVIGNON: You're right. The sociolinguist Dell Hymes[1] is well known for having highlighted the social dimension of language use. For Hymes a theory of language competence had to include not only competence for grammar but competence for use, the ability to use language appropriately in social settings. He took issue with linguist Noam Chomsky[2] whose theory of lingusitic 'competence' was limited to syntax, the ability to produce grammatically correct utterances. He distinguished this underlying competence from 'performance', the actual use of language in concrete situations. However, Hymes saw competence for use as part of the same developental matrix as competence for grammar. Chomsky was of course not concerned with social interaction. His focus was and remains on the syntactic patterns of a so-called 'ideal native speaker'. And in their theoretical debate, neither Hymes nor Chomsky was concerned with foreign or second language learning and use.

I approached my 1971 classroom research on the acquisition of French L2 communicative skills from a more practical perspective. I had been teaching introductory and advanced conversational French for a number of years and had become increasingly frustrated with audiolingual methods that emphasized grammatical accuracy and error avoidance. Learners in my elementary-level courses learned to repeat and memorize but had no opportunity to relate what they were learning to their own experiences and interests. And advanced learners with years of audiolingual practice were so afraid of making errors that they were unable to participate in even the simplest conversation. What would happen, I wondered, if learners were not only allowed but also encouraged to make errors, not in the recitation of memorized dialogs but in the expression of their own thoughts? Could they learn strategies for participating in conversations even when they didn't know all the words? And could this experience help them to develop the communicative confidence they needed to go on to develop their communicative competence?

At the time, I was unaware of the work of Dell Hymes who, to my knowledge, had not yet used the term 'communicative competence' in a publication. My concern was with challenging the prevailing

Sandra J. Savignon

audiolingual method of language teaching that looked to structural linguistics and behaviorist psychology for theoretical support. In this I had the encouragement of my University of Illinois doctoral dissertation[3] director, Leon Jakobovits, a young professor and former student of Wally Lambert, the McGill psychologist known worldwide for his pioneering work in bilingualism and immersion schooling. (Wally was fond of referring to me as his intellectual grandchild!) When completed, my study offered the first empirical evidence of the value of providing classroom learners with opportunities for meaningful use of the L2. In terms of grammatical accuracy – a concern of teachers everywhere – learners who were given practice in self expression, for getting their message across, performed every bit as well on grammar tests as those who had spent an equal amount of time rehearsing grammatical patterns in the language lab. In addition, learners who had learned to make use of their limited L2 resources for participation in the negotiation of meaning demonstrated a communicative competence that the others could not begin to match. The significance of these findings gained wide attention in 1980 when a pair of researchers at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (now associated with the University of Toronto), Michael Canale and Merrill Swain,[4] published their influential "Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing" in the inaugural volume of the international journal, *Applied Linguistics* (pp. 1-47). The strategy training

included in my study became the basis for their identification of *strategic competence* as an essential component of communicative competence along with *grammatical competence* and *sociolinguistic competence.* Research continues today on the identification and training of communication strategies, and language test developers strive increasingly to distinguish between isolated structural and phonetic features and overall communication.

LOMBANA: *For the sake of increasing awareness among teachers, could you say something more about the concepts of strategic, grammatical and sociolinguistic competence as essential components of communicative competence?*

SAVIGNON: The focus of the audiolingual method was exclusively with grammatical competence, or what Chomsky termed *linguistic competence.* Syntactic patterns of an ideal adult native speaker were the goals set for L2 learners, and the path to attainment of those goals was seen to be the modeling and repetition of increasingly complex syntactic patterns with insistence upon native-like accuracy in both pronunciation and grammar. Memorized dialogs and pattern practice were supposed to be followed by so-called 'free conversation' in which learners were to use the grammatical patterns and vocabulary they had presumably 'mastered'. But in practice this follow-up rarely took place. The presumed 'transfer' proved painful and awkward for learners and teachers alike. And the inevitable 'errors' made it clear that patterns had not been mastered. Typically, then, instruction was limited to more comfortable memorization and pattern practice.

At the time, of course, second language learning theory was extrapolated from existing theories of language and learning. Documentation of actual language development, whether in a first or subsequent language, was quite limited. This would change with the explosion of accessible technology to capture and analyze language learner data, beginning with the tape recorder. By the 1970s language acquisition, both first and second, had emerged as a distinct field of research. The Canale and Swain (1980) paper represented then a more up-to-date understanding of what it means to know a language *(communicative competence)* with the inclusion of sociolinguistic and strategic competence in addition to grammatical competence. The sociolinguistic component represented Hymes concern with the social context. A successful speaker takes into account the context of situation. Who are the participants and what are their roles and expectations? What is the purpose or goal of the interaction? Social settings are unlimited in variety and complexity with the negotiation of meanings dependent on far more than 'ideal native speaker' syntax and vocabulary.

This, then, is where strategic competence comes into play. No matter how fluent we are in a language, even a language we have used since childhood, we cannot fully anticipate the contexts in which we will find ourselves. So-called 'native' users of a language vary widely as do the contexts in which they use language. Moreover, language use continues to evolve. New terms and styles of speech emerge throughout our lives.

The key to adapting to the unfamiliar is to remain interactive and make use of strategies to participate in the negotiation of meaning. This is especially true when your linguistic resources are quite limited to begin with, as is the case with L2 learners. Beginning learners should be given and encouraged to use communication strategies that will make them more secure in interaction. Simply learning to say in the L2 "I don't understand," "Could you please repeat?" "What is the word for _____?" is a useful start.

LOMBANA: *The literature on second language teaching and learning has been very prolific for the past 40 years. Yet the phenomenon of making successful communicators when the L2 is limited to the classroom remains a challenge. What do teachers and students need to know about communicative competence in a second language?*

SAVIGNON: The challenge is indeed great and the traditions of 'foreign' or 'second' language teaching so ensconced that breaking away is difficult. This is true of school language programs worldwide, including those in North America. At the same time, the need for programs that prepare learners for communicative language use has never been greater. With increasing study, work and travel across national boundaries, those with multilingual experience are best prepared to take advantage of the opportunities that arise. As the readers of **Mosaic** are no doubt aware, there are numerous resources for teachers who seek to make their classrooms more communicative. But teachers need help. They need the support of administrators, parents, students and colleagues. It's significant that you ask what *students* need to know about communicative competence. Teachers can explore student understanding of language learning. All too often, students expect to memorize vocabulary and rules of grammar, translate sentences, recite passages and take tests. They may have no experience of portfolio or project assessment. Teachers and learners should devote time to discussion of what it means to 'know' a language and how progress can be measured. Then, too, teachers who must deal with the daily pressures and frustrations of the classroom need to remain aware of what they are doing to promote learner progress. Even the best intentioned may be too quick to fall back on L1 translation and prolonged explanation of grammatical detail, limiting the opportunity for students to experience sustained L2 classroom negotiation of meaning.

LOMBANA: *Since you've watched the field of L2 language teaching and learning evolve, you understand the* 'ensconsed' *traditions we have inherited. This includes terminology to define what it is we do. How can teachers start making sense of concepts we find in current discussions, represented by terms such as foreign, second, and target language, mother tongue, native language, and acquisition and learning? Or does it make sense to even try?*

SAVIGNON: I grant you it's confusing. And theorists themselves do not always agree. Essentially, in the US at least, we have moved from the representation of languages other than English as 'foreign', preferring the term 'world' or L2. 'Foreign' has a connotation of not belonging, of 'other'. Worldwide moreover, the rapid increase in English language learning is a reflection of the widespread use of English as a *lingua franca* or language of wider communication. Since 'nonnative' speakers of English now outnumber 'native' speakers by more than two to one and varieties of English abound (referred to by some as *Englishes)*, we have to ask in what sense English can continue to be considered a 'foreign' language? Other familiar and seemingly useful terms like 'mother tongue' and 'native language' are today similarly being called into question. With increased awareness of migration and multilingualism we must ask if a 'native' language is one you learned as a toddler and then abandoned? Or is it the language in which you feel most comfortable? Is it possible to grow up without a 'native' language, the claim of a violinist friend of mine who as a toddler fled from Romania to Switzerland and then lived in Israel for several years before entering a music conservatory in New York? And since so-called 'native' speakers vary widely in overall communicative proficiency, we are left to question the value of the concept itself.

'Target' language is a term I find particularly unfortunate. It's a behaviorist notion dating from the audiolingual era when language was seen as a fixed goal to be mastered or 'hit.' The term 'target' itself may reflect the guiding US military role in the development and diffusion of ALM methods and materials initially known as the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). Today we understand that

1. ideal native-like proficiency is an unrealistic and inap-

propriate goal for L2 learners and that

2. the L2 itself is not a fixed target but rather an evolving means of communication between users of various degrees of competence.

Our goal as teachers is to prepare learners with the knowledge, experience and strategies they need to participate in that communication.

Steve Krashen[5] is known for his attempt in the 1970s to make a distinction between language 'learning' *(conscious attention to form)* and acquisition *(participation in communicative events).* At the time, his distinction helped to represent two essential processes in L2 development. In research, however, the role of each has been impossible to discern. The term 'acquisition' sounds to some more scholarly or research oriented, as in *language acquisition* as opposed to *language learning* that suggests teaching and pedagogy. In languages other than English, however, the distinction can be difficult if not impossible to make. *Apprendre* and *apprentissage des langues*, for example, nicely capture both meanings with their representation of the learner as an apprentice, concerned with both participation *and* attention to form.

LOMBANA: *As a proficient speaker of French whose native language is English, how has your personal experience in L2 informed your understanding of communicative competence?*

SAVIGNON: After a mandatory two years of Latin, I was a junior in high school when I began to learn French. I loved the language and my teacher and continued my study in college.

This was back in the 1950s when the prevailing method of language teaching was grammar translation. Since my underlying interest was not language study itself but international travel, I took advantage of a summer study program in France and ended up staying for a year. What an eye opener! I was dazzled by and immersed myself in French language and culture. So much to learn. My spoken French was quite limited and so I spent several months mostly listening, trying to fit in. When I returned to the US my proficiency was such that I changed my major from social studies and earned a degree in French teacher education. As a secondary school student teacher eager to use my newly acquired spoken French, I fully embraced the audiolingual emphasis. Although she was always very kind to me, my cooperating teaching must have felt rather uneasy with my ideas. She did not speak French and was fond of giving students irregular verbs to conjugate in 6 different tenses. That same June I married the French graduate student I had met in September. Our life together raising three bilingual children has offered me a rich appreciation of the challenges and joys of bilingualism, contributing in myriad ways to my understanding of the many facets of communicative competence.

LOMBANA: *As a parent and knowledgeable scholar who brings up three children in a priviliged bilingual environment, what do you think teachers and students need to know about a bilingual experience?*

SAVIGNON: First of all, that worldwide, monolinguals are the exception rather than the rule. As I mentioned earlier,

nonnative users of English now outnumber native users by more than two to one. Bilingualism or multilingualism is to be sure not without challenges, but the challenges pale in comparison to the obvious advantages. As in all endeavors, a supportive and understanding environment is of course a great asset. Monolingual English speakers are at a particular disadvantage in learning a new language where the prevailing community view is that not only the local language but also the culture is or should be universal. The goal of a good education is to counter this ethnocentrism with a broader worldview of reality.

LOMBANA: *It's true that "ethnocentrism" and "a broader worldview of reality" are today key concepts in the education of more intercultural communicators. What do you think are the most difficult challenges for the L2 teacher in introducing this education?*

SAVIGNON: Whether in an urban or rural setting, language teachers by their very presence in a school offer students a unique window through which to discover the world beyond. And language learning can quite naturally lead to a consideration of world geography, history, and current events from alternate perspectives. But the challenge can be considerable in communities where parents and other adult role models are not familiar with or open to other than mainstream local views.

LOMBANA: *The audiolingual method has been widely criticized today. What would you consider were some of the positive things the audiolingual method brought along?*

SAVIGNON: The great contribution of audiolingualism was the focus

on spoken language. Prior to the 1960s language teaching in public schools was viewed as an essentially intellectual pursuit with grammatical analysis at the core. Language teachers were mindful that in introducing the grammar of a modern language they were at the same time teaching students about their native language. Metalinguistic awareness, or learning how to talk about language, was an essential focus. The model for this training was the tradition of teaching Greek and Latin. The acceptance of modern languages in school curricula late in the 19th century was contingent upon making their study as seemingly rigorous as that of the classical languages. Learning to speak a modern language was not considered an appropriate goal of formal schooling. The marked swing to an interest in modern spoken language that occurred in the 1950s was a direct reflection of US World War II military needs to decipher a multitude of indigenous languages for which there were no written forms. Linguistic study shifted in turn from a primary focus on tracing the historical patterns of written languages to identifying spoken structural patterns of spoken languages with the aid of native informants. US – Soviet competition during the Cold War period that followed significantly impacted the course of language teaching. In response to the launching of the first satellite Sputnik in 1957, the US invested vast sums of money in an effort to improve education in the areas of science, math and modern languages. The funds for instructional materials, technology and teacher education provided by the National Defense Education Act of 1958

were directly responsible for the elaboration and widespread promotion of the audio-lingual method.

LOMBANA: *Since you have had experience with both children and adult learners, I would like to ask you how teachers could distinguish between L2 communicative competence goals for teaching children as opposed to teenagers and adults?*

SAVIGNON: In my 1983 (1997) book I proposed a communicative curriculum that can be adapted to a full range of instructional settings. There are so many variables in language programs including not only the age of the learners but the time allotted to study, the training of the teacher, and the accessibility of the L2 outside the classroom, to name but a few. The five components essential to all language programs are in my view:

1. Language Arts or explicit attention to form, including all manner of language games,

2. Language for a Purpose or meaningful classroom L2 use,

3. Theatre Arts, a variety of mime, role play, improvisation and other drama training activities,

4. Personal Language Use or allowing learners to develop their own L2 identity and interests, and

5. Beyond the classroom, activities that promote L2 interaction with the world beyond, whether within the local community, via the Internet, or both.

Adults and children alike need to be immersed in the L2 in order to develop their communicative competence. Theatre arts activities work well with all ages and are particularly helpful in

countering the natural reluctance of older learners to take communicative risks and appear foolish. Adult learners on the other hand can benefit from increased attention to Language Arts. Children are natural mimics and tend to 'pick up' accent, but adults are ultimately faster learners because of their ability to analyze and grasp grammatical concepts more readily. And learners with literacy skills in a first language have a significant advantage in learning to read and write in a second one. But when it comes to oral communication, initial efforts will be halting and incomplete. It's unreasonable to expect beginners, adults or children, to speak in complete sentences. And regardless of age, learners benefit from games and drama activities that help them discover a new identity in an L2.

LOMBANA: *Your 1983 communicative curriculum proposal calls for a lot of creativity on the part of both teachers and students. What do you think is the major difficulty in introducing these types of versatile L2 curricular activities?*

SAVIGNON: A major difficulty is that teachers do not typically receive training in the use of drama and other more performance-based activities. A typical language teacher education program focuses on L2 structure and pronunciation with perhaps some attention to culture and assessment. There are alas also programs in which language teachers receive little or no specific subject matter focus. Teachers who have not experienced more creative approaches to language learning face considerable challenges as they attempt to adopt them in their own classroom. That said, there are many teachers at all levels that

do indeed meet the challenge.

LOMBANA: *You have written extensively about language attitudes and how they can hamper or enhance L2 learning. Will you say something more about this? Do you feel there is a cultural attitude adverse to second languages in the United States?*

SAVIGNON: Learner attitude was a major focus of research by Lambert and his colleague Robert Gardner[6] prior to my 1971 study. Lambert and Gardner proposed a distinction between *integrative* and *instrumental* motivation and found that learners who expressed a strong desire to integrate or be accepted in a community of L2 speakers attained higher levels of proficiency faster than those who simply wanted to get a good course grade or use the language for their own purposes. I included measures of learner motivation in my own study and even provided one experimental group with a range of experiences designed to increase their integrative motivation to learn French. They learned about Paris and the geographical regions of France, were introduced to French art and cinema, and joined French exchange students at social gatherings. However, I found no relationship between type of motivation and learner performance on tests of either grammatical or the more comprehensive communicative competence. On the other hand, I found that at the end of the treatment period the more successful learners did have an overall higher motivation to pursue their study. This suggests that it is not so much motivation that promotes success but success that increases motivation. Learners who feel successful are more likely to want to continue their study.

Programs then that retain motivated learners are likely to be those that appeal to and reward learners with a broad range of abilities, not just those who are good at spelling and grammar.

Today our thinking about learner attitude and motivation has evolved along with our understanding of what it means to be bilingual. No longer are we concerned with integration or emulating hypothetical 'native speaker' models. As language programs worldwide deal with a diverse and heterogeneous student population who enter the classroom categorized as *heritage, second, bilingual, foreign,* or *native* language speakers, and as English in its many varieties is increasingly accepted as a *lingua franca*, providing a link between speakers of the many different world languages, our focus is rather on the development of skills needed to participate in communicative exchange. Questions of identity or of language ownership are best addressed by those involved.

The question you raise about US cultural attitudes toward second language learning and use is interesting. Unlike Canada, which is an officially bilingual nation, the United States recognizes only English. Despite a large and growing Hispanic population, Spanish is considered a 'foreign' language and its use a threat to social cohesion. US presidents and other political representatives are also noteworthy among world leaders as monolinguals. And in sharp contrast with other countries, only minimal second language study is required of college-bound students. In sum, although wide support is voiced for language and

international study, the prevailing community values are not supportive.

LOMBANA: *One last question on the topic of motivation. You have stated clearly "only the learner can do the learning" (Savignon 1997, p. 108), emphasizing the need for active learner participation in communicative events. And yet often teachers are blamed when students fail tests or "don't learn anything." What can teachers do to promote student responsibility for their own L2 learning?*

SAVIGNON: Learner autonomy has received considerable attention in recent years. Many industrialized nations are implementing learner-centered educational models in which the concepts of 'learner autonomy' and 'learning to learn' are central. Language learners are increasingly expected to acquire skills essential for self-direction and self-control. These skills are all the more important in task-based, group and portfolio assessment. Classic behaviorist learning perspectives did not foster learner autonomy. Today updated versions of the cognitive and constructivist views of learning that were introduced in the 1960s resonate in discussions of independent learning. Teachers can foster learner independence and responsibility by

1. clearly stating the communicative goals toward which students are working;
2. promoting group activities that let students work together and help one another to complete tasks;
3. including a variety of tasks that take students beyond the classroom to make use of Internet and/or com-

munity L2 resources. In emphasizing the importance of strategic competence in the development of overall communicative competence, teachers prepare students to maintain and develop their L2 skills once they have left the classroom.

By encouraging and rewarding learner independence, teachers prepare students for a lifetime of learning and discovery.

LOMBANA: *In the past 15 years or so a number of articles have questioned the "indoctrinating" pedagogical practices of the West in terms of language learning. In various Eastern and other cultures, some people perceive what they learn in the West as intrusive to their own educational practices, all the more so in L2 teaching and learning. (In learning a language you also learn other behaviors and social ways of carrying yourself.) What can you say about these ideological concerns and the fear of "alienation"?*

SAVIGNON: Because of the proliferation of British and North American applied linguistic scholarship, it's understandable that many perceive a communicative approach to language teaching as an essentially Western idea. In fact, however, the understanding that one learns by doing, as an apprentice so to speak, is found in the wisdom of cultures worldwide. Moreover, advances in the theoretical understanding of our world can be traced to cross-cultural exchange throughout history. With regard to linguistics, in particular, the British scholar Michael Halliday,[7] who elaborated a functional or meaning-based, communicative theory of language, was profoundly influenced by his study of Chinese language and linguistics.

Communicative approaches to language teaching (CLT) developed in reaction to audiolingualism which, with the support of US federal funding, was elaborated by U.S. linguists and methodologists and promoted worldwide in the 1960s as a universal method of language teaching. CLT, on the other hand, should be seen as an *approach* rather than a method. With world cultures and languages in closer contact today than ever before, communicative goals for language teaching are widely shared. However, how teachers and teacher educators go about meeting these goals depends on the local context in which they find themselves. The challenges are undeniable. Accounts of how local educators and ministries of education are analyzing and addressing these challenges is the focus of my Yale University Press (2002) volume, *Interpreting Communicative Language Teaching: Contexts and Concerns in Teacher Education.*

In answer to your question about 'alienation' in learning other social ways of being that go with language, I would say that it is only in learning about the 'other' that we can truly see and understand ourselves. We come to know the culture we take for granted and learn that there are other ways of being in the world. Since you yourself grew up learning Spanish in Colombia and have since become an accomplished user of English as an additional language, your question about 'alienation' may understandably reflect your own dual identity and even a sense of betrayal of your national heritage. If so, your feelings are shared by so very many who recognize the power and universality of English, a language that, in the words of the celebrated African author Chinua Achebe *(Things Fall Apart),* "history has forced down our throat." But in choosing to embrace the English language despite its colonial connotations, Achebe began the literary reclamation of his country's history from generations of colonial writers. Throughout his career he has argued for the right of Africans to tell their own story in their own way. In his native Nigeria, a country with several major languages, establishing a *lingua franca* was not only a practical and political necessity, it was also an artistic necessity, a way to give expression to the clash of civilizations that is his enduring theme. We are witnessing today the emergence of many varieties of English telling many stories, for which we are all the richer.

LOMBANA: *I would like to conclude this interview with one last question. I recall your mentioning once the tradition in our field of studying separately the "four language skills" (speaking, reading, listening, and writing). You also made reference to "receptive" and "productive" skills, and why we should start seeing these skills in a different way. Will you elaborate and explain to the readers of* Mosaic *why they are integrated in the new communicative competence paradigm?*

SAVIGNON: Prior to audiolingualism the goal of foreign language teaching was reading, translation and grammatical analysis. Ignoring the distinction between first and second language acquisition, audiolingualism not only introduced oral skills, it claimed that listening and speaking should

precede reading and writing. And so we began to speak of "the four skills." Initially, listening and reading were referred to as "passive" skills, speaking and writing as "active". Then when we realized that listeners and readers were, in fact, active, we spoke instead of "receptive" and "productive" skills. These terms remain widely in use today.

However, communication is always a two-way street and context dependent, involving not one but a multitude of skills. Speaking intimately with a trusted friend is not the same as speaking to a dissatisfied customer. And unlike the football that a quarterback throws to a wide-end receiver, the message that I send and the message that you receive is not the same. I *express* my meaning and you *interpret* my meaning. If we are having a face-to-face chat you may rephrase your understanding or ask me for clarification. Similarly, readers reading my words here or any other text will have different interpretations. We interpret both written and spoken texts based on our own experiences, expectations, and the context as we understand it. The U.S. Supreme Court justices offer a prime example of this interpretive process. An understanding of communication as ongoing and dependent upon the co-operation of all those involved is best represented then as the *expression, interpretation* and *negotiation of meaning*. It's more accurate to speak of *expressive skills* and *interpretive skills,* understanding that negotiation is an essential part of the process.

Lombana: *Thank you.*

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Mosaic

In the next issue
(Vol. 10. No. 3, Fall 2008)
an interview with

Stephen Krashen

professor emeritus

Southern California State University

Katherine Rehner and Naomi Beaulieu

The Use of Expressions of Consequence by Core and Immersion French Graduates in a Bilingual University Setting

The authors examine the development of sociolinguistic competence in spoken French by undergraduate university students taking French as a second language in an Ontario bilingual college who graduated from a core or immersion French program in high school. They investigate the use of donc, alors, (ça) fait que *and* so *to denote a consequence and explore the pedagogical implications of their findings.*

Previous Studies Of Consequence In L1 And L2 French

The intersentential use of expressions of consequence is a fundamental linguistic skill essential to the expression of coherent and cohesive discourse and is recurrent in the speech of native speakers. Given this importance, the question of whether and how well advanced second-language learners have mastered this linguistic skill is one worthy of investigation. While previous research has investigated the intersentential use of expressions of consequence by L1 speakers of French and by high school level learners of French as a L2, the question of such use by university level French L2 learners is only now being addressed.

Research on such use by L1 speakers has been undertaken by Dessureault-Dober (1974). Her research used a sub-sample of a corpus of Montreal spoken French and found that *(ça) fait que* was used 55% of the time during a semi-formal interview, *alors* 43%, and *donc* only 2%. *Donc's* low frequency was attributed to its status as a hyper-formal variant, while the vernacular variant *(ça) fait que* was associated with working class speakers and was found to be spreading rapidly among the younger speakers. In contrast, the standard variants *alors* and *donc* were used almost exclusively by the professional class. Dessureault-Dober also examined the effect of several linguistic factors (e.g., verb tense, mood), but concluded that none of them had a significant effect on variation.

As for L2 French, although no research has yet, to our knowledge, investigated the use of sociolinguistic variants by core French students, considerable work has examined such use by students in French immersion programs (cf. Mougeon, Nadasdi, and Rehner, 2002). Within this substantial body of literature, a study by Rehner and Mougeon (2003) investigated the intersentential use of *donc, alors, (ça) fait que* and *so* by high school French immersion students in Ontario. These authors found that in the context of a semi-formal interview, the 41 Grade 9 and 12 students never used the vernacular variant *(ça) fait que* (despite it being the most frequently used variant by Quebec Francophones), used the formal variant *alors* and the hyper-formal variant *donc* 78% and 15%

of the time, respectively, and used the English expression *so* 7% of the time.

In terms of the influence of extra-linguistic factors, the authors found that the use of *alors* was highest among students with greater exposure to French outside of the classroom, students from homes where a Romance language was spoken, students from lower-middle class backgrounds, and female students. In contrast, *donc* was used most frequently by students with lower levels of extra-curricular exposure to French, those from middle class backgrounds and by males. *So* was used most often by students with no extra-curricular exposure to French and by males. The authors concluded that use of this latter variant was primarily an indication that some students had not yet mastered the French variants to express a consequence intersententially.

The authors compared these patterns of student use to the patterns of use by immersion teachers and to those in the textbooks used by the immersion students under study. The authors found that the immersion students' use closely matched that of immersion teachers, who used *alors* 78% of the time, *donc* 20%, *(ça) fait que* 2% and *so* 0%. The students' use also matched, to a slightly lesser degree, the patterns of use displayed in the textbooks, where only *alors* and *donc* were used and where *donc* showed a clear association with informal dialogues rather than more formal written texts, despite its status as a hyper-formal variant in L1 speech. The authors explained the close match between the students' use and the classroom input by pointing to the students' high level of reliance on educational input for their exposure to French.

Methodology

The 61 students under study in the

Table 1   Characteristics of the student sample (%)

Extra-Linguistic Factors	1st Year Core	1st Year Immersion	4th Year Core	4th Year Immersion	TOTAL
Sex -female -male	91 9	84 16	100 0	92 8	90 10
L1 -English -Romance -Other	71 0 29	74 5 21	50 38 22	92 8 8	73 20 20
Elementary school -English -French -Mixed	100 0 0	88 6 6	100 0 0	85 15 0	91 7 2
High school -English -French -Mixed	100 0 0	100 0 0	100 0 0	92 8 0	98 2 0
Franc. Environment -no time -2 weeks -semester +	62 33 5	84 10 6	38 62 0	69 8 23	67 25 8

present research were enrolled in first or fourth year undergraduate studies in a bilingual university in Ontario at the time of data collection by Françoise Mougeon in 2005 (see F. Mougeon and Rehner, in progress, for a more detailed description of the student sample). The students come from various social and linguistic backgrounds. Their first languages include both Indo-European and non-Indo-European languages. Many of them are already fluent in languages other than English and French. Finally, they all belong to the same age group, 18-21 years of age.

Table 1 provides an overview of the student sample. As can be seen, just over half of these 61 students graduated from a French immersion program in high school, while just under half had taken core French courses. Among the students from immersion programs, 4 students had attended either an Elementary or Secondary French language school. None of the students who graduated from core French had ever been enrolled in a French language school or in an immersion program. Participants were considered as former immersion students if they had attended immersion programs or French language schools for longer than regular English schools. Table 1 also shows that the 61 students are predominantly female and English L1 speakers. Most of the students attended an English Elementary school (either with a French immersion program or with core French classes) and almost all students attended an English language high school (again, with either a French immersion program or with core French classes). Finally, Table 1 shows that two thirds of the students have never spent any time in a Francophone environment.

The methodology adopted in the present study is the same as that used in previous socio-linguistic research on the spoken French of high school French immersion students and of Francophones. Specifically, the 61 students were administered a

language background question-naire to determine their social characteristics and patterns of language use. Additionally, each student participated in an individual, semi-formal interview conducted by the same Franco-phone interviewer. Each interview lasted 40 to 50 minutes, during which students answered non-invasive and non-challenging questions on their experience at university, family activities, ideas on current issues, and their thoughts about their own bilingual competence. The interview design was inspired by that used by R. Mougeon and Beniak (1991) in their research on Franco-Ontarian high school students and, subsequently, by Rehner and Mougeon (2003) in their research on high school French immersion students' use of intersentential markers of con-sequence. The topics and que-stions in the interview were adapted from these sources to better address the concerns and interests of university students learning French in 2005.

The tape recorded interviews were transcribed and tokens of the variants (*donc, alors, (ça) fait que* and *so*) were identified using the concordance program MonoConc Pro (Barlow, 1998). Tokens were selected based on their use as an expression of consequence between two sentences or two clauses (i.e., intersententially). Once the tokens were identified, GoldvarbX (Robinson, Lawrence, and Tagliamonte, 2001) was used to run a multivariate analysis in order to obtain frequency counts and factor weightings that allowed for the identification of factors that were significantly correlated with the students' variant choice. The students' information for the various factors emerged from the language background question-naires and from the interviews.

Results

Among the 61 students, 8 first year

Table 2 Frequency of *alors, donc*, and *'so'* among first year students

Variants	Immersion graduates		Core graduates		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
donc	43	15.9	20	20.8	63	17.2
alors	225	83.3	66	68.8	291	79.5
so	2	0.7	10	10.4	12	3.3
(ça) fait que	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3 Frequency of *alors, donc*, and *'so'* among fourth year students

Variants	Immersion graduates		Core graduates		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
donc	40	14.5	93	68.4	132	31.4
alors	234	84.8	43	31.6	287	68.2
so	2	0.7	0	0	2	0.5
(ça) fait que	0	0	0	0	0	0

former core French students did not use any of the variants during the interview. As Tables 2 and 3 show, overall the students make frequent use of *alors,* moderately frequent use of *donc,* infrequent use of *so*, and nil use of *(ça) fait que*. Further, there is very little difference in these patterns of use for former immersion students from first year to fourth, while for former core French students, use of *donc* is dramatically higher among fourth year students than among first and use of *so* is significantly higher among first year students than among fourth.

The high frequency of use of the formal variant *alors* by former immersion students is similar to previous findings on the use of this variant by high school age immersion students (Rehner and Mougeon, 2003). As for the dramatically higher rates of *donc* use by fourth year former core French students than by their first year counterparts, it would be interesting to determine whether this pattern were a reflection of an increased in-class exposure to *donc* via the patterns of use by instructors at the university they attend as compared to an in-class exposure to *alors* by their high school core French classes. If this possibility were to be borne out by future research, it would point to

an interesting difference between former core and immersion graduates in terms of their susceptibility to be influenced by changes in their educational input. While this possibility awaits research-based attention, it remains clear that there is an interesting and distinct difference in the variant use patterns displayed by first versus fourth year former core French students.

As for the disappearance of *so* among the fourth year former core French students compared to their first year counterparts, the most likely explanation is their increased familiarity with the French variants and consequent lack of need to substitute the English word. Interestingly, the marginal use of *so* demonstrated by the first year former immersion students is also evident for their fourth year counterparts. A possible explanation for the lack of disappearance of this English variant among fourth year immersion graduates is that their initial rates of use, unlike the case with the former core French students, are not high enough to call explicit attention to such use, making it less likely to be addressed by fourth year. Again, this possibility awaits con-firmation.

Concerning *(ça) fait que,* it is interesting to note that this vernacular variant is not used by any of the students, a finding in line with the absence of this variant in the speech of the high school French immersion students studied by Rehner and Mougeon (2003). This finding suggests that university FSL students are no further ahead than high school learners when it comes to mastering the vernacular register of the target language. It will be interesting to see whether future studies of this population support the current finding.

Table 4 displays the GoldVarbX results for the various extra-linguistic factors as they correlate with the students' use of the hyper-formal variant *donc* and the formal variant *alors.* As can be seen, the language used in Secondary school was found to impact the use of the variants under study, while the language of Elementary schooling was not. Students having a French/mixed educational background in Secondary school favour the use of *alors* with a high level of statistical significance (0.968), while those students who attended an English language secondary school favour *donc* use. Given that the formal variant *alors* is used more often in spoken French by native speakers of Canadian French than is the hyper-formal variant *donc,* it is not surprising that students in a French learning environment in Ontario have picked up on this preference.

Also significant in its effect on *donc* and *alors* use is the factor of former core versus immersion program. As Table 4 shows, graduates from high school immersion programs show a slight preference for *alors* (0.574), while graduates of core French show a clear preference for *donc.* These patterns, as discussed earlier, are interesting and point to a potentially important role being played by in-class exposure to and

Table 4 Factors correlated with the students' use of *alors* and *donc*

	Alors (%)	*Donc* (%)	Factor Effect (*Alors*)
Secondary school			
-English	74	26	0.45
-French/mixed	90	10	0.96
Elementary school			
-English	73	27	n.s.
-French/mixed	78	22	
Program			
-core	49	51	0.32
-immersion	85	15	0.57
Francophone environment			
-no time	88	12	0.65
-2 weeks	48	52	0.25
-semester+	45	55	0.09
Native language			
-English	79	21	0.45
-Romance	18	82	0.10
-Other	99	1	0.95
Sex			
-female	78	22	0.61
-male	52	48	0.02
Year at university			
-first	82	18	n.s.
-fourth	69	31	
Total	75	25	

Log likelihood = -253.784   Significance = 0.001   Input probability = 0.86

use of French. However, their exact importance clearly awaits further study.

Table 4 also shows that having spent no time in a Francophone environment favours the use of *alors,* while stays of a semester or longer favour the use of *donc.* These findings are contradictory to those of previous research showing that increased extra-curricular exposure promotes less-formal variants as opposed to more formal ones. The reason behind these unexpected findings could potentially lie in the location of the semester-long stays that the students under study have had. These stays have been almost exclusively in Europe rather than Canada. While research shows that *alors* is more frequent than *donc* in Quebec spoken French, it is quite likely that similar research on European spoken French

would conclude that *donc* is the more frequently used of the two variants, a possible pattern that the students with such exposure would be picking up.

Another unexpected result from Table 4 concerns the impact of the students' L1. While Rehner and Mougeon (2003) found a remarkably strong association between a Romance language background and use of *alors,* the students in the present study from a Romance language background strongly favour *donc.* One possible explanation for this finding is that the students under study are being exposed to higher levels of *donc* use in their university classes via their instructors and that the students speaking Romance languages at home are more strongly in-fluenced by this in-class use than are their Anglophone counterparts because of the existence of a

Table 5   Factors correlated with the students' use of *so* versus *alors/donc*

	Alors/Donc (%)	*So* (%)	Factor Effect (*So*)
Program			
-core	96	4	0.79
-immersion	99	1	0.36
Year at university			
-first	97	3	0.81
-fourth	99	1	0.21
Elementary school			
-English	98	2	n.s.
-French/mixed	99	1	
Secondary school			
-English	98	2	0.45
-French/mixed	97	3	0.96
Francophone environment			
-no time	99	1	knock out
-2 weeks	96	4	
-semester +	100	0	
Sex			
-female	98	2	n.s.
-male	96	4	
Total	98	2	
Log likelihood = -59.112　　Significance = 0.049　　Input probability = 0.007			

similar variant in their home languages (for example *dunque* in Italian). While an interesting possibility, this potential explanation clearly awaits further research to confirm or revise it.

Finally, Table 4 shows that while year of study is not a significant factor in the students' choice of *donc* versus *alors,* sex is. In keeping with Rehner and Mougeon's (2003) findings, it is the males who prefer *donc* and the females who favour *alors.*

Turning to the analysis of *so,* Table 5 displays the results of the GoldVarbX analysis pitting *so* against *donc/alors.* As Table 5 shows, the use of the English variant *so* is most frequent among former core French students and among first year students, whereas fourth year and former immersion students favour the French variants *alors/ donc.* The explanations for these findings are in keeping with those provided above.

As was the case for *alors* versus *donc*, while the language of Elementary schooling is not a significant factor in explaining the students' use of *so*, their language of Secondary schooling is. As Table 5 shows, those students who attended a French language high school use the English variant *so* more often than do those students who attended English language Secondary schools. While this finding might seem unexpected given the above association between *so* and lack of familiarity with the French variants, it is important to note that many of the students who attended a French language high school did so in Ontario and previous research has shown that Franco-Ontarians make frequent use of the variant *so* in their spoken French (Mougeon and Beniak, 1991). Thus, it is not entirely unexpected that those students in the present study who have had high school education at least in part in French and who have

likely had the greatest degree of exposure to Ontario French demonstrate the highest levels of *so* use.

Interestingly, and in contrast, those students with the highest levels of exposure to French in a Francophone environment have nil use of *so*. Remember, however, that the majority of these semester-long stays are in Europe, not in Ontario.

Conclusion

The present study has investigated the sociolinguistic competence of former core and immersion French students enrolled in first or fourth year undergraduate programs in a bilingual university in Ontario. The study has focused on these students' use of variants expressing a consequence intersententially. The most common variant used by Quebec Francophones, namely vernacular *(ça) fait que,* was not used by the students under study. This finding is in keeping with previous studies of FSL learners (Mougeon, and Rehner, 2001) who make nil to highly marginal use of vernacular variants. This finding suggests that these university students, despite their continued exposure to and use of French beyond high school, have still not passed the threshold needed to make productive use of this vernacular variant.

The variant used most frequently by the students in the present study was the formal variant *alors,* a finding also in keeping with the above-mentioned research demonstrating a preference on the part of FSL learners for standard, formal variants. This finding suggests that whatever additional French-language activities are undertaken by these university learners compared to high school students are not enough to alter the pattern of preferential use of such variants established in earlier stages of FSL learning.

Further, the students in the current study were found to use hyper-formal *donc* slightly more frequently than did the high school FSL learners in Rehner and Mougeon's (2003) study, a pattern of use potentially reflecting higher levels of exposure on the part of the students to their university instructors who may favour *donc*.

In addition, the present study found that the university students used the English variant *so* only infrequently, a marginal level of use that is less frequent than the use of *so* and other English variants by the high school FSL learners examined in the above-mentioned previous research. This finding suggests that while the university students' exposure to and use of French are not yet sufficient to increase their use of vernacular variants or decrease their over-reliance on standard, formal variants, they are enough to markedly reduce their use of English variants in place of their French counterparts.

As for the factor analyses of *donc* versus *alors* and of *so* versus *donc/alors,* the results showed that, in keeping with previous research, *alors* was favoured by females and by students with greater exposure to French by means of their Secondary school education, particularly via an immersion rather than core French program. *Donc* displayed the opposite associations. Also in line with previous research was the finding that *so* was used most often by students with the least exposure to French, namely core French graduates and first year students, while its use was entirely absent among those students who had stayed in a Francophone environment for a semester or longer.

Several unexpected results were also obtained in the current study: greater use of *alors* was correlated with lower rather than higher levels of extra-curricular exposure

to French; speaking a Romance language at home strongly favoured the use of *donc* rather than *alors;* and students who had attended French/mixed-language high schools rather than English-language schools made greater use of *so*. While many of the explanations for these correlations await future research to either confirm or revise them, it is clear that the university students' patterns of use are influenced by many of the same extra-linguistic factors that affect the variant choice patterns of high school FSL learners. At the same time, however, what has emerged is that the particular ways in which certain factors impact the students' use have changed or progressed compared to their impact on the speech of high school learners.

Discussion

What specifically the above findings mean for university FSL instructors remains to be seen as further studies in this area either confirm or refute the present results and the proposed explanations. However, several broad implications can be drawn even at this early stage. First, university learners, like their high school counterparts, appear to still have some way to go before being able to approximate native norms of use in terms of their variant choice. In connection with this, it can be mentioned that in an experimental study, Segalowitz (1976) found that there are social and psychological costs associated with the use of too formal a register by L2 speakers when they interact with L1 speakers of the target language. These latter speakers perceived the L2 learners as too distant and uncooperative. Further, the present study has shown that the university learners, again like their high school counterparts, appear to be influenced by the nature and frequency of their input (whether

curricular or extra-curricular). This means that instructors should be cognizant of which variants they prioritize in their teaching and in their own in-class use and which ones they encourage and/or discourage in their students' output. Finally, instructors should continue to encourage students to seek extra-curricular exposure to French in a variety of settings to increase their likelihood of encountering a wider range of variants and of mastering the social and stylistic connotations of their use.

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Mosaic

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Julie Byrd Clark

Multilingualism, Investments, and Language Teaching

This paper discusses the significance of multilingualism in Canada through the voices of self-identified Italian Canadian youth, who are participating in a teacher education program training to become teachers of French in the urban, multicultural, and global landscape of Toronto.

Introduction

What does it mean to be and become multilingual and multicultural in today's globalized world? In societies, systems of education and linguistic markets, where multilingualism is becoming the norm and where multilingualism becomes a tool for local integration as well as for international mobility, this article makes a contribution to both knowledge and practice by exploring what multilingualism and multiculturalism represents for six self-identified, multi-generational Italian Canadian youth, Monica, Maverick, Tina, Timmy, Vanessa, and Anna Maria (all self-chosen pseudonyms) participating in a pre-service university French course (designed for students who wish to become teachers of French) in Toronto, Canada. Through their discourse, we can see that their conceptions of multilingualism are complex and multi-layered. Multi-lingualism, for them, represents many things, not just the attainment of economic and social capital, but also access to different ways of communicating and the possibilities of understanding and appreciating multiple perspectives and ways of being, doing, and thinking (Foucault, 1980). We are also permitted to see that it is the experiences which they encounter through language(s) that have come to shape the ways they see themselves and their linguistic practices as well as how they position others. While their representations are linked to Canadian nationalism and the new globalized economy, demonstrating how the youth are aware of the competitive and shifting international linguistic markets as regards defining the value of languages, they are also and particularly overlapped with personal attachments to languages infused with their desires to be recognized as unique, special and different as well as the volition of belonging and claiming membership to an ethnolinguistic group.

It is precisely these meanings and representations of multi-lingualism that I found important to share, especially with language teachers. What is useful when one talks about a person's engagement in and with language learning, is the notion investment (see Norton Pierce, 1995; 2000; Byrd Clark, 2008, in press). An investment does not necessarily have to be seen as a financial or economic term, but can also be positioned as a personal, social, or ideological term. In this article, we will see how six individuals invest in different ideologies, represen-tations, and concep-tions about multilingualism and being Canadian as well as how and why these investments are meaningful to them. My goal, in doing so, is that we as language educators can in turn, reflexively look at our own investments and positions in relation to multilingualism. This reflexivity may help us to see the impact of such investments on our students' learning, particularly as regards the delivery of our programs, and the ways in which we engage them.

So, Why Italian Canadians? Context and Rationale

Because there are so many de-mands and expectations placed on language teachers in today's urban, globalized world, I decided it might be interesting to talk with individuals training to become teachers of French in the multicultural Greater Toronto Area. As I was permitted to observe many different classrooms during my doctoral research, I could not help but notice that there were many self-identified Italian Canadian students, who were in the midst of training and completing their teacher can-didacy in French. Upon speaking with the youth, I found their interests and investments in French illuminating and im-portant to share, particularly with respect to integration in a pluralistic society.

To date, very little research has looked at how and what kinds of decisions Italian Canadian youth make regarding French language learning or multilingualism. This is significant, as Italian Canadians represent one of the largest 'eth-nic' communities in Toronto, as well as within the province of Ontario. According to the 2001 census, the highest concentration of Italian Canadians is found in the province of Ontario (781,345) and in the city of Toronto itself (429,690). Even with the continuing immigration from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, Italians are listed as the seventh largest community group in

Canada (Giampapa, 2004). Italians as an ethnic and immigrant group in Canada are continuing to undergo rapid change and experience increased social and economic mobility in an urban, globalized world. The samples that I share in this article reflect this shift, as we will see that many of the participants with whom I spoke invest in French language education with the hopes of attaining a teaching job, and what I refer to as "the next best thing" (see data samples section) as well as gaining access to continued social, geographical, and economic moblity. For many of them, French is a highly marketable and valuable tool. However, their investments in French went beyond economic interests as many of the individuals conveyed having a personal affinity and attachments to representations of the French language and culture, as well as positioning French/English bi-lingualism as an identity marker of what counts as a Canadian citizen. In the upcoming data samples, we will see that some of the youth invest in French as a way to gain access or membership to an ethnolinguistic group, while others try to please their parents, obtain recognition as being special, different, possessing a talent. A few positioned French and learning French as a "neutral space" a space where they can be free of conflicting parental expectations and a space in which they conceive of as giving them equal footing with other Canadians learning French. The samples that I provide here demonstrate that the participants' investments in French are multidimensional, ideological, complex, and at times, over-lapping.

Data Analysis and Overlapping Themes

The data discussed in this paper are drawn from a larger corpus which was collected for my doctoral thesis, a two year interdisciplinary, sociolinguistic ethnography, *Journeys of Integration in Canada's Pluralistic Society: Italian Canadian Youth and the Symbolic Investments in French as Official Language*. In it, I examined the discourse of 9 self-identified Italian-Canadian participants, employing multiple field methods (observations, interviews, journals, focus groups, popular culture sources including film production) that investigate language learning investment in French as official language and the overlapping discourses of *italianità* (what it means to be Italian), citizenship, multilingualism, and worldliness in Toronto, Canada and the GTA (the Greater Toronto Area).

I draw primarily on the data from the participants' interviews. From the interview data, certain themes emerged:

1. Investing in French as a Symbolic Resource and Representations of Canadianness/Canadianité;

2. "French as the Next Best Thing"; and

3. Conceptions of Competence and Accent.

Again, these themes are interconnected and highlight in particular how the participants desire to position themselves and how others position them in relation to Canadian citizenship and the development of linguistic repertoires.

Investing in French as a Symbolic Capital and Conceptions of Canadianness/Canadianité

In this first section, I demonstrate the relationship between language, ethnic identity, and citizenship. When I asked the participants to talk about why they are interested in teaching French, all of them unanimously exclaimed that being bilingual in English and French would offer them more career opportunities and access to increased social, geographic and economic mobility. Interestingly, English for the participants appears to have an assumed position. In other words, they don't seem worried about their access to this particular resource. It is French, as a symbolic resource that holds significance here, and as a valued commodity in the globalized economy, marking someone as an idealized Canadian. Italian, on the other hand, appears to be positioned as an additional language not assigned as high a value in the linguistic market, as Italian programs continue to be phased out from local school boards in the GTA. By looking at what they have to say, we can see that the youth are aware of the competitive linguistic markets, and while their investments are ideological (based on how they have come to see and view things in the ways that they do), they are equally personal and meaningful. Here's what Monica, Maverick, Tina, and Anna Maria had to say:

Monica: Canada is a like a very multicultural and also (pause) um (pause) in terms of also cause Canada is a bilingual country, right and I think it's important to teach French like I'm very excited about teaching French and cause I think it's very valuable right, especially cause we're Canadian you know if you go overseas people think that we should speak English and French but that's not the reality because very few people speak French fluently, very few Canadians.

Anna Maria: There's definitely an advantage if you speak French in Canada, you have a definite advantage in terms of getting government jobs, teaching jobs, business jobs, even when I open the newspaper and telemarketing jobs, a lot of them say, premium paid to

bilingual representatives, and you know what, you get more money… in Canada, that's what they want, they want French… but how many more people speak Cantonese?

Tina: I love school, um I had an easy time at French school… I think going to French school really gives me an edge over people just learning English… I know it's true for jobs, bilinguals are paid more, more languages opens more doors. Like my Mom wanted to put me in a Japanese school, but it didn't exist at the time. My first year at university, I took Spanish and I'm going to take Mandarin next year.

Maverick: I believe in a unified Canada, I absolutely do… having gone to a francophone school and being part of a linguistic minority, I understand these people, and I think English and French should be mandatory for all schools and all kids… I mean I can get a job pretty much anywhere… learning languages is one way to become part of a community, and helps you to become a more culturally conscious person, it's important for development, especially for globalization, but I'm not even going to get started on that… Canadians, we're dif-ferent, that's what we are.

Both Maverick and Tina attended French First Language schools, whereas Monica and Anna Maria were both students of Core French programs. Language, in these passages, particularly official French/English bilingualism, is seen as a tool, a very valuable and marketable tool as well as a marker of a national Canadian identity. It is interesting to see what French represents for them in relation to their own social realities and experiences of learning French. While their samples perpetuate nationalist

representations of how Canada is projected to the outside world, they also all highlight the important value of French in terms of attaining upward economic, social, and geogra-phical mobility, particularly the examples with Maverick, Tina, and Anna Maria; Maverick's investment in French represents a means to get him a job anywhere as Tina conceives that she has an edge over others through her investment in French as a commodity and invests in the study of more languages as commodities (items that can be bought and sold, and we can see the influence of her mother, wanting her to be placed in a Japanese school). Anna Maria, who, through her use of irony, reflects the social reality in the city of Toronto (which has the third largest Chinese population in the world), states, "they want French, but how many more people speak Cantonese?" It is uncertain who the "they" are in Anna Maria's discourse ("that's what they want, they want French…"); however, we can see in these samples that the youth appear to understand the competitive, dynamic, and unequal status of different linguistic capital. The next section further elucidates this awareness.

French as the "Next Best Thing" and Being Unique

"You know what, I just found that with French I always did well in it, I don't even know so much when I was young if I liked it, I just knew for some reason I always got high marks in it, and I couldn't, I never thought it was because I knew the dialect I just thought oh, I'm actually good at learning French, you know?" (Monica, April 2006).

There were many socio-affective aspects that impacted the investments of the five youth, such as the linguistic similarities between French and Italian,

having a passion for a language, etc. However, in this particular section, the passion for Italian and the economic and social reality of teaching Italian are revealed in Monica, Timmy, and Vanessa's discourse. These passages are linked to Bourdieu's (1982, 1991) discussion of linguistic markets, as there seems to be a hierarchy here allowing one form of capital (Italian) to be converted to another (French, teaching job = prestigious, well paid, job), the valuing of one over another. But interestingly, the participants here have in some ways appropriated as well as expropriated the studying of languages for themselves, creating some "wiggle room" (see Erickson, 2001) and taking an active role in pursuing Italian despite the complex, shifting, linguistic market. Here we see the complex choices and multiple conflicting voices of the youth as they negotiate their desires to invest in both Italian and French.

Monica: I love Italian, Italian is my passion. But you know what are you going to do with it, eh? They are cutting back Italian high school teaching jobs… that is why I am getting two teachables: French and Italian.

Timmy: I studied Italian in Grade 10, and I take it now at university at the 300 and 400 level… I want to preserve traditions and you know pass on the language to my children someday… I was planning to do a major in Italian, but y-know, it just worked out that way, the courses in French were more interesting, and you have a choice, y-know, different choices of courses for French you have, um with Italian you have choice, but you have to take a literature course but with French you don't have to, there aren't as many constraints. With Italian, there just aren't as many

options… Italian, I love it, but what am I gonna do? There's got to be choice… it's easier to do French, you'll get a job, jobs are easier to come by than teaching something else.

In both Monica and Timmy's discourse, we can see that Italian or rather maintaining the investment in Italian is important to them, however, they appear both aware of the competing job markets, and the "stigma" of Italian as Monica signals above, in not being able to find a job teaching Italian. Despite, this discourse regarding Italian "starting to diminish more and more", both Monica and Timmy have invested in Italian, and their actions (such as continuing to study Italian, and earn a Bachelor's as well as pursue a teaching degree in Italian) contradict and challenge the dominant voices echoed here, conveying a survival of critical agency (see Giddens, 1984) in their choices. In other words, despite what they have heard and what they say, both Timmy and Monica continue to invest in Italian. Yet, Timmy and Monica are aware of the decreasing value of Italian in the GTA, and while they invest in Italian, they do so with caution, and at the same time, invest in French, conceiving that it will earn them a more profitable rate of return.

Lucia, also considers teaching as a profession, and in this particular passage, uses critical agency against the advice of "they" (whoever they may be, those in charge of university career counseling, advisors in an academic department, her parents, etc.), or "some people" who advise her to "just drop the Italian". Here's what she had to say:

Lucia: Yeah, hopefully we'll see that was the thing, I wanted to be a teacher but when I went to go figure it out they were like well you could teach Italian but it's a teachable only in some places like you're not neces-sarily going to get a job just having Italian you're better off like like I had some people saying we may as well as just do French just drop the Italian and just do French I'm like well, (not pleased, reluctant) I want to know Italian for me even if I don't end up teaching it I need to know the language. So that's why I kept it (smiles) hopefully I'll be able to teach it too, possibly, we'll see. (Follow-up Interview, October, 2006).

What I most appreciated in Lucia's discourse is her optimism and determination to continue to invest in Italian, even if she won't necessarily find a job teaching Italian. In her discourse, it also becomes clear that Italian means more to her personally than a valued economic good, or a commodity in the new globalized economy. It also means something more to Timmy and Monica, who have equally invested and continue to invest in Italian. Consequently, for all three, in these particular samples, French appears positioned as a commodity, "just do French", as a back up, as "the next best thing" valuable resource that has the possibility of assuring/granting them upward social and economic mobility.

For Vanessa, French represents more than a commodity, it is also positioned as a possession that will render her unique and special, of being seen as "more than an Italian from Woodbridge".

Vanessa: I love Italian, like of course, it's part of who I am, it's my mother tongue (gah) but I don't know, I mean, I've always had this thing for French, I love it, when I hear people speaking it, I just want to stop whatever I'm doing and listen, ah absorb it all in, I-I always wanted to be part of that world, I wanted some-thing more… it was like some-thing went off in my head. I love learning it, hearing it (short pause) I actually love it more than Italian… you know I didn't just want to be like you know (short pause) I didn't want to be, I wanted some-thing more than than just to be seen as an Italian from Woodbridge…

Julie: And you were saying that you feel more of an affinity for French right now?

Vanessa: That's the thing I love the French language even if this is not nice to say even more than the Italian language. I feel like I can relate to it more I can connect with it more even though you know my Italian may be a little better than my French, but I I'm passionate about the language so I think that's my drive. […] I don't know, it's I think it's because it's knowing a language, knowing something that not everyone else around me knows and in a way I think it's a bit it has to do with being powerful in a way, (Julie: Uh-huh) yeah, which I… I find interesting like I love the French language, I love being able to com-municate with you know multiple ah multiple people, different nationalities, it's a great feeling… it's something that you have that not everyone else has, (Julie: Ah-ha, yeah) it's ah it's an identity thing, I think, it's um I don't know exactly what it is but it feels good to be able to speak a language with someone else and then everyone around you being like what is she saying, it's neat it's a guessing game. (Follow-up Interview, January 2007).

What I found fascinating here is Vanessa's reference to French as a valued possession, something that "not everyone else has" and one that changes how she is seen,

imagining that this investment will give her power or access to power that not everyone else has. This also builds upon Norton's (2000) material conception of investment, in this sense, as Vanessa imagines her investment in French will give her a wider range of and access to symbolic and material resources (speaking with multiple people, different nationalities, being able to communicate) and as such, this investment equally empowers her, giving her recognition of a highly valued resource that she construes not "everyone else has." There is also an emotional and ideological attachment to speaking French as well, as Vanessa states, "I love the French language" positioning language as a unitary, fixed, homogeneous, and imagined entity (as many of the participants here equate the French language as the Standard version associated with France) and yet as something for which she has a passion. However, intertwined with her passion is also an awareness (like the other participants) of the current job market.

Notions of Competence and Accent

In this section, we can see how investments are ideological in the ways that the participants invest in what they conceive of as legitimate and authentic competence, what kinds of messages they receive as well as appropriate, and more importantly, how this impacts their ways of seeing themselves and their linguistic practices.

Lucia: Oh yeah. My goal is to not have people realize that I've learned French or that I'm not in the process but that I know French, that I just know French like I don't want them to be like oh so you know you're learning French, eh? Like I want to be able to sound as fluent as possible. (Preliminary Interview, March 2006).

In this passage, Lucia positions school/university as a "strategic site" (Marcus, 1986) an imagined, neutral, cognitively enriching place where she will gain the tools and competency she needs to acquire "native-like" pronuncia-tion. She invests in her language learning classrooms as the legitimate space where she will acquire such fluency and perfection (to a certain degree). Somehow, this common sense ideology creates the illusion that students will take all of the required language learning courses, and like magic, will have acquired native proficiency without ever considering the significance of social interactions, relations of power, and com-municative contexts/diverse conditions. Here Lucia's discourse echoes a "common sense" ideo-logy which positions language learning as neutral, scientific, and as something that is fair for all. She buys into this discourse and reproduces it. However, in the next section, we will see how language learning is far from being neutral.

It is difficult to be aware of how we attach to and invest in certain ideologies; one of those being referred to as the ideology of the standard (a standard language). Investing in this ideology means that we come to believe that there is only one correct, natural, right way of doing something, in this case, communicating in a certain linguistic variety over others. Of course, many would argue, "well, how would we understand one another if we didn't have one unified language?" To attempt to respond to this question would be another article in and of itself, however, what I can put forth is to ask: Are there ways to teach languages and include space(s) to recognize, incorporate, and value/validate individuals' linguistic varieties, lived linguistic ex-periences, and/or linguistic practices? We claim to value diversity and heteroge-

neity in a pluralistic society, can we not extend this to our practices in classrooms? We need to think about this when we correct students on their pronunciation (see below), especially; is there really only one right way? What is perfect anyway? Why are we made to feel so ashamed if we cannot achieve this conceived and 'defined by standards' perfection, appropriateness, and represen-tation of competence? Why do we feel that we don't have the right to speak in particular places with certain people at different times? Much of this has to do with the ways in which languages and language education are presented in the classroom, most observable through teachers' discursive practices, and the messages that students in the classrooms receive and expropriate from them.

The following examples demonstrate the importance and need for us to become more aware and reflexive of our investments as educators of language education.

Vanessa: During my first year, I didn't feel like an outcast because we had mostly all grammar courses, but in my second year, I cried everyday. I just remember the Chair of the Department was teaching the course, and had put up overheads, I tried taking notes, but I couldn't understand everything... compared to everyone else, my French wasn't up to par compared to everyone else even though the professor said I spoke well, "for someone who attended Core French"... I thought I was going to quit.

Monica: Yeah, I am happy that I speak dialect, but like I would never speak it with my professors, well especially this one professor, I am always really careful when I'm around her, if I ever spoke in dialect, she would correct me and look

at me like I was stupid or you know, like I was low class.

Upon reflection of these samples, both Monica and Vanessa struggle and are made aware of the value (or devaluing) of their linguistic repertoires and in some ways they must appropriate and "play by the rules of the game" (see Thompson, 2005) so to speak, in order to attain what is ideologically conceived of as legitimate competence. With Vanessa's example, we are reminded of the disparities and social inequalities that occur through different French schooling experiences. In this passage, Vanessa feels linguistically inferior and incompetent. She claims her knowledge, all that she acquired and appropriated, grammar rules memorized and high grades achieved in Core French has been for nothing because now she is in a space that does not recognize or value this knowledge (this investment in French that she brings with her). She feels duped and at a loss. Many of the former Core French students that I had interviewed likewise confessed how they had struggled in their first entry class, and had to work doubly hard to keep their investments in French, particularly when they had been taught through a different approach, which does not explicitly focus on receptive skills. A lot of the participants commented that they were not often used to hearing French spoken at a faster and more fluid pace. When interviewing participants, I heard countless times how they did not feel 'good enough' or as 'competent' as the other students in the class, and were afraid to speak. Unlike others, Vanessa managed to continue and succeeded in keeping her investment in French. She allows herself to struggle, in a sense, in order to achieve her goal. Monica also struggles with her social identity in a similar way. She knows that the professor, who is in a position of power, does not approve of her linguistic variety of Italian, and therefore knows she must adhere to speaking the standard variety with this professor in order to "get ahead" (whether that be earning a high grade, obtaining a reference letter, etc.)

As teachers, we are constantly faced with complex challenges and constraints within our schools. But while we are called upon to adhere to certain ideologies, can we still leave some "wiggle room" for being reflexive of the impact that our own investments have upon our students?

Conclusion

I have attempted to demonstrate how six self-identified multigenerational Italian Canadian youth socially construct their identities and invest in language learning in an urban, globalized world while participating in a French teacher education program in Toronto, Canada. In doing so, I highlighted the different conceptions of what being Canadian, multilingual and multicultural means to these youth and the ways in which they position themselves vis-à-vis the acquisition of French as official language. While the participants each have different life experiences and social backgrounds, we can see that their investments in French are not only ideological, but also meaningful. Additionally, they produce an emerging discourse on the linguistic, cultural, economic, and symbolic value of French as well as positioning French/English bilingualism as an identity marker of what counts as a multilingual and multicultural Canadian citizen, yet at the same time, they position French as a personal attachment, as a means of being both unique and belonging to an ethnolinguistic group, To conclude, more ethnographic work is needed to further examine the impact and complexity of globalization and ideologies on individuals' investments (see Byrd Clark, 2007) in hope of fostering critical awareness of the choices that we make and the outcomes of those choices.

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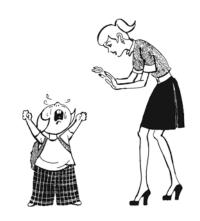
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– L'école est une perte de temps ! Je ne sais pas lire, je ne sais pas écrire et la maîtresse ne me laisse pas parler !

New Appointments to the Editorial Board

The editors of **Mosaic** are pleased to announce additional members to the Editorial Board of **Mosaic** **Monica Barni,** from the University for Foreigners of Siena and **Roberto Dolci,** from the University of Foreigners of Perugia, along with the existing member form the University of Venice, **Paolo Balboni,** will be the voices on the European scene; **Parth Bhatt**, the current French chair, at the University of Toronto, will bring his expertise in French linguistics, and **Callie Mady**, a newly-appointed assistant professor at the Faculty of Education, Nipissing University, North Bay,will bring a wealth of information on teacher education. And finally, **Lise Moore,** a former administrative assistant with the the Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association, will be responsible for the various advertisements which will appear in future issues of **Mosaic** We welcome these colleagues to the Editorial Board and thank them for assisting us with the expansion of the journal.

Monica Barni   Roberto Dolci   Callie Mady   Parth Bhatt

Jouons avec les mots

Anthony Mollica
Email: mosaic@soleilpublishing.com

L'alphabet
Transcrivez les phrases suivantes.

1. Je veux copier les réponses. N'FAC pas le tableau noir, monsieur.

   _____

2. En K d'accident, veuillez téléphoner à l'hôpital immédiatement.

   _____

3. Les astronautes sont considérés les RO de l'espace.

   _____

4. Ils ont RIG un temple en son honneur.

   _____

5. Après la mort de mon oncle, j'ai RIT beaucoup d'argent.

   _____

6. Il faut aider financièrement les PI en voie de développement.

   _____

7. L m'a raconté des choses qui m'ont bien NRV.

   _____

8. Les oranges coûtaient très chères ; il ne les vendait pas. Le prix était trop ELV. Il a, donc, décidé d'ABC le prix.

   _____

9. Autrefois, il OQP un poste très important dans le gouvernement.

   _____

10. "On ne fait pas d'omelettes sans KC des œufs" est un proverbe bien connu.

    _____

Department of Language Studies
University of Toronto Mississauga

FAST FACTS

- Recognized as a leader in literary and critical scholarship, interdisciplinary innovation in curriculum and technology, and for its tradition of excellence in teaching and pedagogical research.

- Award-winning faculty.

- Offers scholarships for students entering language programs as well as in-course awards.

- Opportunities available for students to work in partnership with faculty in the development of research.

- Has an established connection with the local community through activities, events, concerts, and guest speakers.

- Annual Italian Play named one of the 25 Best World Language courses by the AP World Languages Best Practices Study.

- Various texts and course materials authored by current faculty.

- Offers the prospect of studying abroad during the third year and/or the summer months, in France, Germany or Italy.

- Work-study positions allow students to gain career-related experience.

PROGRAMS AND SPECIALIZATIONS

French, Italian Languages
Teaching and Learning
Language and Literature
Language and Linguistics
Linguistics
Cinema Studies

Teaching and Learning courses and programs are designed for students who wish to gain an understanding of the methodology of teaching for further studies in Education.

Language and Literature programs allow students to learn a language and examine the cultural and historical aspects of it. The department also offers programs for students interested in studying a language or culture along with other subject areas (e.g. Functional French, Francophone Studies).

The **Linguistics** program provides students the opportunity to study the properties that characterize human language in terms of the cognitive processes and social aspects that lead to their acquisition. Linguistics also compliments further studies in speech therapy, communication and psychology.

Cinema Studies allows students to understand film, its properties, aesthetics, and impact on culture and society.

New to the Department! Arabic, Chinese, Hindi/Urdu, Latin, Persian, Sanskrit, and Spanish.

CONCURRENT TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

U of T Mississauga offers the Concurrent Teacher Education Program (CTEP) in collaboration with OISE/UT.

Students enrolled in the program will pursue either an Honours BA/BEd or Honours BSc/BEd. CTEP is for those who want to become teachers at the Intermediate/Senior level in Math, Chemistry or French and a second teachable subject (Art & Art History, Biology, English, Geography, History, Italian, Performance & Theatre (Drama), Physics).

For students entering directly from high school, CTEP is a five-year program. Students may also apply to CTEP after their first year of university.

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