

Teaching Core French in British Columbia: Teachers' Perspectives



BCATML/BCTF Research Report

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Executive Summary

This report presents the results of a provincial survey about the contexts and characteristics of British Columbia's core French teachers as well as the challenges they face in their teaching. It also presents the results of a parallel survey of core French teachers in Surrey, British Columbia's largest school district.

A total of 612 teachers completed the provincial survey online or by mail, responding to questions about their teaching context, background, experience; the support they receive from key stakeholders and resources; and their preferred forms of professional development. A concurrent survey was completed by 211 teachers in Surrey, BC.

The survey questionnaire was based largely on the instrument used in a recent national study of the working conditions of French as a second language teachers (Lapkin, MacFarlane, & Vandergrift, 2006). According to the 2006 survey results, the findings did not necessarily represent the perspective of British Columbia's core French teachers in the provincially mandated Grades 5 to 8. The present survey is a response to the national survey's call for a local study to address the gap in its data collection.

In some cases, the results of the national, provincial and district surveys were similar; however, both the BC and Surrey surveys highlighted factors adversely affecting the quality of core French teaching and learning, particularly at the elementary and middle years levels. The pressing challenges for British Columbia core French teachers identified in this study are how to achieve provincial learning outcomes with the lack of time and valuing allocated to French instruction and with low levels of teacher language proficiency and methodological background.

Stemming from these findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- provincial teacher associations can
 - lobby the Ministry of Education to ensure that the sustained study of a second language is an integral part of the graduation path of secondary students;
 - lobby the BC College of Teachers and university Faculties of Education to ensure that second language methodology is a required course in teacher education programs;
 - provide ongoing professional development for core French teachers (in conjunction with specialist and generalist teacher associations);
 - promote courses, certificate/credential programs and professional learning communities that offer sustained, long-term professional development.
- school boards/administrators can
 - ensure a minimum amount of instructional time per week (100 minutes in Grade 5 to 7; 185 minutes in Grade 8);
 - make core French an integral part of each school's curriculum and program;
 - ensure that those teaching core French have linguistic and methodological background;
 - provide consultant or mentorship support for core French teachers;
 - support and recognize professional development coursework undertaken by teachers.

Teaching Core French in British Columbia: Teachers' Perspectives

Background

A Brief History of Core French in Canada

The quality of core French programs in Canada has been questioned for decades. Stern (1976) criticized the core French model saying that it had not fulfilled objectives and was in danger of being abolished. It was, in his words, “a poorly working core program which did not deliver the goods” (p. 219). He lamented over a number of issues still on research agendas today, such as the lack of attainment of French proficiency, the undefined use of the term “bilingual”, and the need for consistent proficiency standards. In an article entitled, “French core programs across Canada: How can we improve them?” Stern (1982) suggested that language teachers and scholars “take a critical look at [their] own practices” (p. 38) in an effort to remedy the program’s shortcomings. The Canadian Teachers’ Federation consulted with Stern, and between 1985 and 1989, the National Core French Study (NCFS) took place. The study involved all provinces and territories, and its objectives were to examine core French policies and programs, to pool ideas, to strengthen core French and improve its outcomes.

The implementation of the NCFS curriculum has been uneven across Canada because its recommendations were based on two conditions that are highly problematic in some parts of Canada: sufficient instructional time and trained, bilingual teachers. The NCFS recommended “a program of 40 minutes per day commencing in Grade 4” (p. 2) delivered by “communicative teachers [who are] fluent or at least have the ability to communicate in the second language well enough that they feel comfortable in the teaching situation ... and have training in the latest methods of communicative second language teaching” (p. 6). Some provinces, such as Ontario and New Brunswick, are able to meet both of these conditions. Others, including British Columbia, are not.

A Brief History of Core French in British Columbia

The first record of French as an optional school subject in British Columbia is 1876 at Victoria High School (Raptis, 2004). French remained a part of university-bound secondary school students’ schedules until well into the 1960s. The early 1970s brought a wave of interest in and federal funding for French education at the elementary level for immersion, French first language, as well as core French, and districts opted to offer programs based on community interest. In 1977, Education Minister Pat McGeer recommended that British Columbia prescribe French as a required school subject: it was offered as such at the high school level and as a local option in the elementary grades. This optional status for elementary core French continued until the mid-1990s. In 1994, the BC Language Policy was enacted whereby all students in Grades 5 to 8 would study a second language, in most cases, French. This policy was followed by the development of a communication-focused curriculum, the *Core French Integrated Resource Package* (BC Ministry of Education, 1995), and in 1997 the policy and curriculum were fully implemented.

BC Action Plan Needed for Teacher Training and Recruitment

The ramifications of the language policy implementation were studied by Reeder, Hasebe-Ludt and Thomas (1997) who noted that “a cohesive action plan for teacher training, both pre- and in-service, and recruiting [was] essential” and recommended that all language teachers should be “not only thoroughly proficient in the respective language of instruction but also have a sound background in theoretical and methodological aspects of second language teaching and principles of language learning” (p. 387). The authors also suggested that standards be considered for determining a required level of qualification for teaching languages at all levels. This action plan did not take place.

Provincial FSL Teacher Standards

Standards for FSL teachers exist in other provinces, such as Ontario and New Brunswick. In Ontario, core French is a restricted teaching subject, meaning that a teacher must hold a special FSL pre-service qualification or the equivalent additional qualifications course known as French as a Second Language (Part 1):

Critical to the delivery of French as a Second Language, Part 1 is the ability of candidates to demonstrate a proficiency in oral and written communication skills in French to ensure positive and interactive learning experiences for all students. (Ontario College of Teachers, 2004, p. 3)

New Brunswick’s Ministry of Education (1994, revised in 2001) outlines the following standards for instruction of core French, mandated on a daily basis for all students in Grades 1 to 10:

All instruction in the FSL programs shall be carried out in French. It is expected that teachers will be well-versed in second language teaching methodology and approaches and will have proven competence in French. The minimum level of proficiency in French of a teacher of Core French should be the Advanced level [defined briefly as being able to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics]. (pp. 3-4)

In British Columbia, there are proficiency standards for hiring French immersion teachers that vary from district to district, but in general, teachers are screened for oral and written proficiency. There is, however, usually no screening for core French teachers. One exception to this is the Greater Victoria School District where elementary and middle years core French teachers must have taken one recent FSL methods course (3 credits) and be screened for functional oral competency. Such a model is worth considering more widely.

Teacher Education in British Columbia

Pre-service teachers enroll in a Bachelor of Education (UBC, UVic) program or Professional Development Program (SFU) in order to be certified by the BC College of Teachers. There is no course in second language methodology in these programs even though Grade 5 to 8 core French is mandated for all British Columbia students and has a fully developed curriculum document with prescribed learning outcomes, funding formulae for district budgets based on numbers of core French students, and reporting expectations.

A small proportion of teacher candidates receive specialized training in French at UBC and SFU. The candidates are screened for oral and written language proficiency, classified into core or immersion according to their assessed level, and enter a specialist cohort that takes its coursework in French and undertakes practica in core or immersion classrooms. In September 2007, UBC enrolled 45 elementary and secondary French immersion and core French specialists out of 783 teacher education registrants in total. It also enrolled 17 teacher candidates in its new FLAGS (French Language and Global Study) program for elementary core French generalists¹. SFU enrolled 56 elementary and secondary French immersion and core French specialists in January and September 2007 out of a total of 522 teacher candidates. UVic does not have a specialist program for elementary core French or immersion, although secondary teacher candidates may elect to teach French as a major or minor teaching area.

This means that the majority of elementary and middle years teacher candidates presently enrolled at these BC universities will graduate without any specialized training in second language methodology. An individual course is available as an elective at each institution, but most students' schedules do not permit extra courses. Therefore, many teacher candidates, with a background of Grade 11 French or lower, become certified generalist teachers with methods coursework in all subject areas except French.

Most of UBC's elementary French specialist teacher graduates since 2005 are now teaching in French immersion positions even though more than half of each year's teacher candidates undertook their practica in a core French classroom. The fact that their fluency level was high enough to qualify for the specialist cohort and to take coursework in French, combined with teacher shortages in French immersion programs, resulted in their being hired in the area of greatest need and, some would argue, valuing. What this meant for the field is that almost no new core French teachers entered the profession.

¹ FLAGS is a new program at UBC designed for elementary generalists with a special interest in teaching core French. The program begins with a 5-week summer immersion experience in a French-Canadian university (subsidized by the federal/provincial *Explore!* bursary program). In September, teacher candidates take the regular 12-month Bachelor of Education program plus a French methodology course (LLED 324) and a Communications course (EDUC 316) offered 50/50 in French/English. There is no screening test to enroll in the program; however, students must possess a rudimentary level of proficiency and a strong desire to learn and teach French. SFU also invites its students to take a 5-week summer immersion experience but does so at the end of the Professional Development Program year.

Challenges of British Columbia’s Generalist Core French Teachers

In-service for core French teachers has had limited effect on long-term change in the field. Carr (1999) studied a group of elementary generalist core French teachers who were trying to develop themselves professionally by taking a district-based university methodology course in Surrey, British Columbia. The teachers had, for the most part, taken French up to Grade 12 though, in a number of cases, to only Grade 10 or 11. The title of the study, *Fear of Teaching French*, describes the sentiment expressed by the teachers in the study. The challenges these teachers articulated were, among others, their lack of specialized training in the language and methodology and insufficient time to implement the many curricular changes also mandated in many areas. Generalists are, after all, responsible for teaching all subjects, including French.

The element of fear about teaching French has surfaced before. In an article written for the Provincial Intermediate Teachers Association (PITA) newsletter, former French Coordinator Julie Johnston states:

“Yes, teaching a language you can’t speak is scary. . . . Many middle and upper elementary teachers in BC struggle with their professional esteem because they know they ought to be teaching French to their class – and they aren’t. Why not? Some schedule French so that it never quite gets taught. Many have not been trained in French as a second language (FSL) methodology. For most, it’s simply because they can’t speak French. (Johnston, 1999, p. 18)

Johnston had worked as a curriculum consultant for the Prince George School District from 1988 to 1992 working with 150 Grade 5 to 7 teachers in 52 elementary schools in nine communities. Of that group, according to Johnston, “only about a dozen spoke French”; her advice to teachers was to “learn along with their students and do their best to send them to secondary school with a positive attitude toward French” (J. Johnston, personal communication, August 2, 2007). This emphasis on maintaining a positive attitude so that students will continue their studies in Grade 8 French and beyond is common among elementary core French teachers. Unfortunately, the attrition rates at the secondary level indicate that we need to do more in the early years of French instruction.

Professional Learning for BC’s Core French Teachers

Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia and the University of Victoria offer in-service programs for practicing French teachers, and there are plans underway to expand these offerings. Simon Fraser University (SFU) offers a Certificate in French Language Proficiency as well as individual courses in conversation and writing at various levels through its French Department. SFU’s Field Programs offers an Exploring Second Language Education Graduate Diploma for core French teachers and an equivalent diploma for French immersion teachers. The Diploma courses are offered in collaboration with various school districts throughout the province, for example, Surrey and Richmond. A similar diploma program is proposed for French immersion teachers on the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island.

The University of British Columbia (UBC) offers several courses in French conversation and grammar at different levels through its French Department and one course in core French methodology for elementary and middle years generalists through its Language and Literacy Education Department. A certificate program, combining linguistic and methodological development, is proposed for the near future.

Both UBC and SFU are collaborating on a new online course for core French, francophone, and French immersion teachers starting in 2008. This course, *Gramligne*, will combine a self-directed, online experience with weekly in-person meetings as a means of developing grammatical and linguistic competence through contextualized language practice within thematic modules. Both universities also offer graduate programs in French (M.Ed. and Ed.D. at SFU and M.Ed. at UBC); these are conducted entirely in French so are designed for specialists.

UBC's Continuing Studies (*Institut de Français*) and UVic's Continuing Education (*La maison française*) offer summer immersion experiences for practicing teachers. Participants are eligible for partial subsidy through the French Teachers' Bursary program funded by Canadian Heritage.

The University of Victoria's Division of Continuing Studies in Education, in collaboration with the Greater Victoria School District, offers two credentials for FSL teachers: one for French immersion teachers and one for middle years core French teachers. The immersion credential requires a high level of fluency to enter (determined by a placement test) and provides three courses specially designed to develop linguistic and methodological knowledge and skills. The credential for middle years teachers begins with a five-week summer immersion experience followed by a fall course conducted on Saturdays. Both credentials offer development in language and methodology. The School District and Continuing Studies Division have tailored the course to the needs of local teachers, provided financial support and demonstrated a valuing of these skills. The Coordinator of Languages extends this invitation to teachers who are interested in teaching French:

If you are willing to work, we can assist you to reach reasonable goals. We have a continuum of language development options. If you have no French at all, we can get you to the level of fluency and understanding of methods for K-5 core French. If you have Grade 12 French, we can get you to K-8 fluency and methods (core French). If you are from immersion or have achieved a high level of fluency some other way, we can help you get to immersion. And it's free and accessible to practicing teachers. French (core and immersion) is a definite asset in the Greater Victoria School District. (J. Mas, personal communication, October 10, 2007)

Such programs for practicing teachers hold tremendous potential for improving program quality and for developing and retaining French teachers. They are fueled by the value placed on them not only by participating teachers but also by their districts and administration.

Programs, rather than single workshops, offer a much greater chance of sustained professional development, especially where groups of teachers can work together, engage in professional conversations, and develop knowledge and skills over time. At present, teachers are eligible for federal funding, administered through the French Programs Unit of the BC Ministry of Education, to offset a portion of tuition costs for courses conducted in French. They do not, however, receive recognition or compensation in their districts unless they participate in a 15- or 30-credit program recognized by the district and eligible for a provincial 'Plus 15' designation (Teacher Qualification Service, 2007). Such a designation represents an average annual salary increase of approximately \$6000, depending on district and teaching experience.

The university-school district collaborations described above provide hope for the future, especially when methodology is coupled with language experiences. Another variation to the immersion-plus-coursework combination is occurring in the Richmond School District this year: a group of Grade 5 to 8 core French teachers is enrolled in an SFU Field Studies FSL Diploma program and also taking a non-credit French oral fluency course offered by the Collège Educacentre. These are innovative steps towards improving teacher capacity and program quality.

British Columbia's Middle School Core French Dilemma

Lionel Daneault, Coquitlam's former Language Coordinator, conducted a study in 1999 about core French in middle schools in the Coquitlam School District. He interviewed principals and surveyed core French teachers in the district's 12 middle schools. The study took place five years after the district had changed its grade configuration from elementary (K-7), junior secondary (8-10), and senior secondary (11-12) to elementary (K-5), middle years (6-8), and secondary (9-12). The reconfiguration process took place between 1994 and 1999 and had a deleterious effect on the quality of core French instruction. Daneault (1999) pointed out that the school district had adopted "an American model of middle school curricular organization which, in most cases, assumes that 'foreign language' study begins in high school (Grade 9)" (p. 5). He also discovered an unusually high percentage of teachers either new to teaching or new to core French teaching in Coquitlam's middle schools as well as "a significant number of teachers assigned to teach core French with little training, experience or fluency" (p. 15).

There are 81 middle schools (out of 2010 independent and public schools) in British Columbia (BC Ministry of Education, 2007) in 22 of BC's 60 school districts (Middle Years Association of BC, 2006). The grade range is typically Grade 6 to 8 or 9. The philosophy of middle schools favours a generalist model where students form attachments with a small number of teachers rather than what happens in the traditional subject specialist model found in secondary school settings. French is typically taught as part of the "Core Learning" portion of the schedule rather than during "Explorations", the latter reserved for "specialized" subjects such as Information Technology, Home Economics, Music, Fine Arts and Physical Education. As Daneault (1999) noted, "while the problem of 'Exploration management' is reduced, it is replaced with the challenge of

finding large numbers of generalist core French teachers who are also qualified to teach French” (p. 14). Interestingly, in the two middle schools where core French was taught as part of Explorations, the rationale provided by each school’s principal was, “It gets taught” (p. 3). The drawback to this delivery option is that homeroom teachers do not generally teach in the Explorations block, and the specialized subjects are delivered for only part of the school year.

The middle school principals interviewed by Daneault expressed concerns about the teachers’ lack of comfort teaching core French and inadequate teaching time. This lack of comfort could be attributed to the fact that over 70 percent of teachers of middle school core French had less than 10 years teaching experience, and nearly 75 percent had taught French for less than 5 years. Further, almost 25 percent of these teachers reported that the highest level they had studied French was Grade 11.² When asked to self-rate their facility in French, just over half of the teachers reported they could speak and write French from “a little” to “not at all” (p. 9).

Daneault’s study included recommendations for ongoing in-service that included designating lead teachers of core French in each middle school, increasing opportunities for school-based French in-service on non-instructional days or after school, continuing to offer district-based university methodology courses, sharing information through newsletters and/or promoting opportunities for federally-supported study in Quebec. His study was significant for raising awareness about the needs of middle school core French teachers and the decline in program quality for students. Unfortunately, it does not appear that much has changed since this report, as evidenced in a recent survey outlined below.

Delivery of Core French and Allocation of Instructional Time in British Columbia

A recent survey of British Columbia’s language and instructional coordinators (Carr, 2006) took place just prior to the provincial teacher survey. Its purpose was to depict how core French instructional time is allocated and delivered. The average amount of time reported was 80 minutes per week in Grades 5 to 7 and 185 minutes per week in Grade 8. A wide variety of delivery models was noted, especially in districts with middle schools, but the most common model was where a generalist teacher delivers his or her own core French. Only one district reported the use of specialist core French teachers at the elementary-middle school level; the term ‘specialist’ defined in that district as having

² British Columbia secondary students who wish to attend SFU or UVic must have taken a second language at the Grade 11 level (may be an introductory course, e.g., Beginner Japanese 11, Beginner Spanish 11). This is the same requirement for students who wish to enroll in a BSc program at UBC. Students who wish to enroll in a BA program at UBC must have taken a second language at the Grade 12 level (or register for an equivalent university course), but it is not necessarily French 12. at least one recent middle school or secondary FSL methods course and functional oral proficiency. The accompanying comments evinced deep concerns about the quantity and quality of instruction; for example,

There are some schools that only offer 80 minutes and even some that only have 45 minutes designated with a “specialist” and the generalist classroom teacher is supposed to make up another 45 minutes. This latter generally does not work and, in my opinion, is just about as bad as not offering it at all.

A few of the 6/7 teachers are less comfortable with French . . . lots of anxiety, however and a real challenge for many.

The time allocated to Core French 5-7 ranges from 45-90 minutes per week. Sometimes the amount of time depends on whether the classroom teacher feels comfortable teaching French - and I am quite sure that, where there is a lack of comfort, French is the first to go when there are other demands on classroom time.

Les profs de 8e ne sont pas tous des spécialistes -- loin de là. Alors, le niveau de langue qui est enseigné n'est pas très élevé dans plusieurs cas.

For some teachers, French is often the class that is the first to be dropped in the need to do something urgent. Of course, we might also question how they are also using their French time - some doing translation, lots of art, not much communication, etc.

Many of our schools have the generalist teacher deliver French to their own classes . . . time has been reduced and teachers are teaching French who do not know it – and against their will. (pp. 11-12)

The fuller scope of comments articulated by language coordinators, principals and some teachers in the report indicated a widespread lack of training in language and methodology.

Surrey School District’s Core French Program Review

Surrey is British Columbia’s largest school district with 20 secondary (Grade 8 to 12) schools, 99 elementary (Kindergarten to Grade 7) schools, and a total student population of just over 65,000 with approximately 4900 teachers. There is a history of support for second/additional language education in Surrey and two full-time helping teacher positions for French as a second language (one for International Languages and one for French immersion). Surrey has taken a leadership role in many provincial initiatives, such as implementing BC’s first intensive French program, contributing to the Core French Oral Pilot Project, coordinating the Provincial Challenge Exam Program, co-organizing *CASLT Chez Vous* conferences, among others. There are many opportunities for in-service and professional development, partnerships with local universities to deliver in-district courses, cultural presentations and a unified approach to resource acquisition and support.

In short, Surrey has many of the conditions that favour a strong core French program. However, even with these, there are concerns about program quality that led the district to conduct a review of its elementary core French program. Surrey's program review started in Fall 2006 and included a parallel survey to the provincial one (both were conducted in Spring 2007) as well as teacher and principal forums, meetings, additional questionnaires and other forms of data collection. The review is predicated on issues and concerns perceived by teachers, administrators and district staff, some of which include:

- staffing – wide discrepancy in language competency, lack of methodological background, high turnover rates, predominance of inexperienced teachers;
- program delivery – lack of consistent guidelines for teacher proficiency or time allotments;
- classroom and school resources – lack of dedicated classroom for itinerant teachers, unclear budgetary allotments;
- articulation – inconsistency in student preparedness for Grade 8.
(Horban & Taddei, in press, pp. 3-5, adapted)

The authors noted inconsistencies in time allotments in Surrey similar to those described in the earlier provincial survey (Carr, 2006) and suggest a minimum amount of time per week:

Time allotments for teaching EFSL [elementary core French] vary greatly from school to school - from a low of 30 minutes per week to 120 minutes per week. This inconsistency, coupled with varying levels of teacher competence, suggests very uneven program delivery. In order to meet the IRP [provincial curriculum document] learning outcomes, at least 100 minutes per week of dedicated instructional time is needed for French. (p. 3)

In addition, Horban and Taddei (in press) argue that the teaching of core French is not treated as a “mandated and valued program” nor as an “integral part of the literacy program of the school” (p. 5) but, rather, as a discretionary subject. The review will conclude with recommendations to be shared in a district-based document.

Studies of FSL Teachers and Programs in Other Provinces

A French as a second language program review was conducted in the Edmonton Public School Board in 2001-02 (Evaluation Plus, 2002) in order to improve the existing program and increase student enrollments. A number of elements were examined through the use of interviews, questionnaires, classroom observations and document analysis. The questionnaire was completed by principals, teachers, students and parents; the overall response rate was 54 percent. It was found that the majority of FSL teachers in that Board were generally well experienced, had a background in French, and perceived their level of language proficiency to be between intermediate and superior

levels (according to Public Service Commission of Canada guidelines). Teacher proficiency in French and teaching practices were, in fact, identified as key elements in the overall strengths of the FSL program. The program review included the following recommendations to improve the program and address decreasing enrollments in its FSL programs:

- improve articulation among elementary, junior high and senior high schools;
- increase instructional time to a minimum of 150 minutes per week;
- make FSL an integral part of the regular school curriculum;
- promote and market the FSL program at the school and district level;
- provide a variety of professional development opportunities;
- update supplementary learning resources;
- appoint an advisory committee to guide the district's language renewal project;
- adopt supportive French language policies at the district level;
- align program goals with national and international proficiency guidelines.

(pp. 11-17, adapted)

A survey of elementary core French teachers in Ontario was conducted by researchers at Brock University, the Ontario Language Teachers Association (via the Ontario Teachers' Federation), the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario, and the Ontario Elementary Catholic Teachers Association (Mollica, Phillips, & Smith, 2005). The study's two guiding questions were: Is there sufficient evidence that the necessary conditions exist to foster excellence in the FSL learning environment? Does the FSL learning environment support success for both the second language learner and teacher? A questionnaire was sent to all schools in Ontario and completed by 1500 respondents. According to the findings of this study, there is a very different context for FSL education in Ontario than in British Columbia. As has already been noted, a specialized FSL qualification is required, and the majority (86 percent) of core French teachers teach French full-time. Many teachers in Ontario deliver French on an itinerant basis, that is, without a designated classroom and, according to the study findings, many feel isolated, excluded and unsupported.

Mollica, Phillips and Smith (2005) concluded that "the conditions necessary to adequately foster excellence for students of core French do not exist" and there needs to be a narrower "gap between actual teacher practice and the policies that influence them" (p. 24). Recommendations put forth in study are as follows:

- place greater value on the role of French as a core subject;
- encourage core French teachers to become more visible and active in literacy initiatives at the school and board level;
- provide designated classroom space for core French;
- provide ongoing professional development for core French teachers;
- designate a core French qualified education officer at the Ministry of Education;
- advocate the importance of a core French consultant at the board level;
- ensure board and school accountability for mandatory hours of core French instruction and use of FSL grants and budgets;

- provide opportunities for ongoing professional learning related to language learning and integrating students with special needs.

(pp. 24 -26, adapted)

Richards (2002) examined the working conditions of mainly itinerant elementary core French teachers in Ontario and their marginalized position vis-à-vis colleagues, students and administrators. She argued that high teacher attrition rates in elementary core French are associated with this marginalization and that “in practice, elementary core French is treated as little more than an educational frill” (p. 53). Through in-depth interviews, she discovered that oppressive conditions increased the likelihood of leaving teaching or moving away from teaching core French.

Kissau (2005) examined federal and provincial language policy documents and interviewed school board officials in order to understand the status of FSL education in Canada. His findings suggested that the status of FSL instruction has depreciated to a point where declining enrollments are the result. Kissau argued that “enrollment in FSL would increase if the government and school boards placed greater value on learning the language” (p. 18).

National Studies of FSL Teachers

In 2006, the Canadian Teachers’ Federation, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) and the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (Lapkin, MacFarlane, & Vandergrift, 2006) conducted a national survey of second language teachers in core French, French immersion, extended French and intensive French programs. Just over 1300 teachers from all provinces and territories completed the online survey; among them were 82 respondents from British Columbia, of whom just over half were core French teachers from all grade levels. According to the survey results, the findings did not necessarily represent the perspective of British Columbia’s core French teachers in the provincially mandated grades 5 to 8.

A previous one-year study had been conducted by CASLT (2004) in which the needs of language teachers and their programs were the focus of a series of networking and workshop sessions, telephone focus groups and questionnaires. Some of the key questions were: What are the existing working conditions and practices for teachers of core French? What kind of support and resources are available? How is the core French program valued in the province? and What is the level of core French teachers’ self-esteem and confidence? Statements recorded about the Western provinces and rural areas painted a less than positive picture about the state of core French:

The most often cited reason that core French is being delivered by unqualified teachers is a lack of specialist French teachers. Lack of training and support for these teachers is stated as a grave concern relating to the quality of the program being delivered and may be affecting the actual teaching time done in French and on the French subject (less than mandated time allotments actually being delivered). (p. 1)

These corroborate the findings of earlier studies in British Columbia (for example, Carr, 1999; Daneault, 1999; Lewis, 1995; Swansborough, 1993). CASLT (2004) also reported that the lack of language proficiency and a fear of teaching middle years core French (Grade 7 and 8 students) negatively affected the level of core French teachers' self-esteem and confidence. CASLT underscored the need to revitalize core French programs and, in particular, to focus on developing teachers' language competency to enhance their confidence in teaching.

Rationale for the Present Study

The BCATML/BCTF survey is relevant and timely for a number of reasons. First, it has been ten years since the full implementation of the BC Language Education Policy (BC Ministry of Education, 1997). Prior to 1997, the teaching of core French in elementary schools was recommended though optional. Since the full implementation of the Language Education Policy, all Grade 5 to 8 students now study a second language; in most cases, French.

Second, we are now almost halfway through a ten-year action plan by the Federal Government to double the number of bilingual graduates in Canada by 2013 (Government of Canada, 2003). Recommendations were made to improve FSL outcomes and yet, in British Columbia, the only area of change or growth seems to be occurring in immersion and intensive programs, not in core French where the majority of students are enrolled (approximately 85 percent, according to Canadian Parents for French, 2004). At present, core French programs have very high attrition rates. Nationally, only 16.5 percent of students who begin core French in Grade 4 or 5 continue in the program to Grade 12 (MacFarlane, 2005), and most drop French once it is no longer mandatory (CPF, 2005). In British Columbia, the graduation rate is even lower than the national average with only one in ten students who take core French continuing to French 12 (CPF 2004).

Third, as mentioned in the earlier review of BC studies, there has been a decline in core French program quality at the elementary and middle years levels (Carr, 2006; Daneault, 1999; Horban & Taddei, in press) as well as in overall core French enrollments (Hawkey & Fort, 2007).

Fourth, it is clear that the British Columbia FSL context is different from that found in some other Canadian provinces. In BC, teachers are generally screened for language proficiency before being granted a position in a French immersion or intensive French class, but this is rarely the case in Grade 5 to 8 core French because a generalist model prevails and the availability of fully bilingual teachers is very limited. Furthermore, whereas generalists receive methodological training in their university pre-service program in Art, Language Arts, Math, Music, Physical Education, Science, and Social Studies, there is no French preparation unless teacher candidates are part of a small specialist French cohort or take an extra elective.

Statements made about the amount of instructional time allocated to core French education in Canada, for example, “approximately 600 hours of core French instruction by the end of Grade 8” (Turnbull, 2000, p. 174) simply do not apply in British Columbia. A recent survey of the province’s language and instructional coordinators confirmed that students in British Columbia receive an average of 260 hours of instruction during the mandated Grades 5 to 8 (Carr, 2006). This constitutes less than half of the national norm and only 40 percent of the amount recommended by the National Core French Study (Leblanc, 1990).

The focus in a number of reports to date has been on working conditions and the plight of the itinerant core French teacher, often referred to as one who teaches French “à la carte” and/or as the “prep teacher”. While this context also applies in some BC districts and schools (and is common in the Surrey School District), it is less widespread, according to the provincial survey data, because many teachers in Grades 5 to 7 teach French to their own class and, in some cases, to one or more class(es) in the school. The problems of alienation and lack of valuing expressed in some reports (for example, CASLT, 2004; Kissau, 2005; Mollica, et al., 2005; Richards, 2002) are somewhat less evident in British Columbia as well.

It was therefore imperative to address the challenge issued in the national report (Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergrift, 2006) to discover (or confirm) the pressing challenges for British Columbia’s core French teachers.

The Survey

The provincial survey was conducted in spring 2006. A parallel survey was conducted in the Surrey School District during the same period. Following is a description of the instrument used, how participants were recruited and how the data were analyzed.

Survey Instrument

The questionnaire used in the provincial survey – as well as in the district survey – was based on the instrument used in the national survey (Lapkin, MacFarlane, & Vandergrift, 2006) that was, in turn, based on a survey of teachers in minority French language schools by the Canadian Teachers Federation (Gilbert, LeTouzé, Thériault, & Landry, 2004).

A committee comprised of representatives from provincial and national teacher organizations (the BCTF, BCATML, APPIPC, CASLT, and ACPI, identified in this report's Acknowledgements) reviewed and tailored the national survey instrument to suit British Columbia. In the national survey, respondents were asked if they had considered leaving FSL teaching and whether this was associated with dissatisfaction with teaching FSL or teaching in general. The committee decided not to include these questions because it was felt that they added a negative cast. The committee also felt that it was important to differentiate among the three contexts (elementary, middle years or secondary) in which Grade 5 to 8 core French is taught in BC to discover any differences or similarities within those contexts.³ The survey data were, therefore, organized according to the type of school, as determined by its grade range. Finally, the number of items was reduced from 60 in the national survey to 47 in the provincial survey by including fewer items about resources, facilities and impediments to access of professional development.

Like the national version, the provincial questionnaire was organized into three sections:

- school context (delivery model, time allocation, availability of resources);
- pedagogical questions (teaching materials, professional development);
- teacher profile (language background, education, experience, self-assessed French proficiency).

Participants were also asked to respond to two open-ended questions:

- What two conditions are most helpful to your work as a core French teacher?
- What are the three most important challenges you face in teaching core French?

The questionnaire was produced in French and English, but it was decided that only the English questionnaire would be used. Knowing that many generalist teachers deliver

³ In British Columbia, Grade 6 or 7 core French can be delivered in an elementary or middle school, and Grade 8 can be delivered in a middle or secondary school, depending on the district.

core French in Grades 5 to 8, the committee felt that an English questionnaire would be less challenging for a majority of teachers. There was also the option of completing a paper version of the questionnaire; these were mailed to the BCTF, and the data entered into the online program by the administrative assistant. (A copy of the survey questionnaire is found in Appendix C.)

Participant Recruitment

Provincial (BCATML/BCTF) survey

There is no existing complete list of core French teachers in British Columbia or Canada. Just as with the national survey, it was necessary to disseminate information about the survey at the individual school level, that is, through the BCTF representative in each school. This was a much more effective way of reaching the teachers actually delivering core French than relying on the specialist network that is typically used by provincial specialist associations such as the BCATML or APPIPC.

District (Surrey) survey

The survey was sent to every Grade 5 to 8 core French teacher teaching in the Surrey District. Teachers were notified about the district survey before the provincial one and encouraged to complete the former because the District wanted to ensure a high response rate for its program review, and the data were going to be shared with the BCATML and BCTF in this report.

Sample Size

Provincial (BCATML/BCTF) survey

There is no way of knowing if all core French teachers in the province received notification of the survey; however, a notice was faxed to the BCTF representatives in all elementary, middle and secondary schools inviting core French teachers in Grades 5 to 8 to respond to the survey.

A total of 621 teachers core French teachers completed the provincial survey online or by mail. Of this number, 612 delivered French in Grades 5 to 8 (and in many cases to other grades as well) while 9 teacher delivered French only in Grades 9 to 12. This latter group of respondents was not included in the data analysis.

There is no way of knowing the response rate because there is no record of the total number of core French teachers in British Columbia. Provincial statistics show that there were 213,296 students taking core French in 2006-7 (Hawkey & Fort, 2007); however, there are no data for the number of core French teachers. The survey data indicate that there is a variety of delivery options, and not every Grade 5 to 8 classroom teacher is

delivering his/her own French instruction so, even with class size data, one cannot calculate the number of teachers.

District (Surrey) survey

Responses were received from 193 out of 320 elementary core French teachers (60 percent response), and 18 out of 60 secondary teachers (30 percent response). The total number of teachers is established each year through a reporting system between elementary school principals and the International Languages Helping Teacher.

Data Analysis

The provincial survey data collected by the BC Teachers Federation were sent to and compiled into an item-level response report by EduData Canada, available on line: (http://www.edudata.educ.ubc.ca/exampleproject/BCTF_frenchsurvey/BCTF_form.php). The three school levels, elementary, middle, secondary, were established by sorting the data according to each respondent's school's grade range and grades taught.

The anecdotal data were compiled by the author and coded according to emergent themes. Representative statements for each theme were extracted. A direct quantitative link to number of comments per theme was not established; however, the proportion of comments per theme dictated the order of inclusion in the compilation (Appendix B). A BCATML colleague verified the coding system and reviewed the classification of comments.

The Surrey School District's Research and Evaluation Department compiled the data collected at the district level. The findings were divided into two categories corresponding to the two school levels in that district; elementary (K to 7) and secondary (8 to 12). A similar process to that used in the provincial survey for compiling and coding the anecdotal data was used in treating Surrey teachers' comments. The compilation of provincial and district comments is presented in Appendix B.

Comparisons were drawn among the national, provincial and district findings to highlight key differences and similarities (Appendix A).

Findings

The provincial and district findings are reported separately because there are key differences between context and other factors. The provincial findings are reported according to the three school contexts in which core French 5 to 8 is delivered (elementary, middle years and secondary). The district findings are reported separately and according to its two contexts (elementary and secondary).

Provincial Survey Findings

Provincial findings are sub-divided according to the three contexts in which Grade 5 to 8 core French teaching takes place in British Columbia (that is, elementary: K to 7 (or K to 5 or K to 6); middle years; Grade 6 to 8 (or 6 to 9, or 7 to 9); and secondary: Grade 8 to 12 (or 8 to 10). Data from respondents who teach Grade 9 to 12 only were not included in the findings.

Provincial Elementary Teacher Findings

This group of respondents was predominantly female, anglophone, and representative of a range of size of board and school. Many deliver core French as a generalist, that is, as one subject among many in their teaching assignment, although about 25 percent are considered their school's French specialist and/or platoon the delivery of French, that is, teach their own class plus one or more other classes in exchange for the teaching of another subject. Most possess more than 10 years teaching experience but less than 10 years teaching core French.

About half of the respondents indicated a background as a student in core French, but most have not studied French at university. About half reported no difficulty modelling spoken French or correcting written work but only 22 percent reported ease in conversing in French and 20 percent in reading in French. The fact that such a large percentage of teachers do not feel confident conversing or reading in French is cause for concern; this lack of confidence in using French was corroborated in the open-ended section about challenges faced in teaching core French.

Overall, respondents considered commercial resources to be adequate, good or excellent. The majority reported good support from school colleagues and administration; however, only about half reported the same degree of support from parents or their community. About half reported that a district consultant was sometimes to always available.

In the area of professional development, less than half the respondents reported attending a local workshop once or more per year, and the majority do not take part in provincial or national conferences. Only 5 percent of elementary core French respondents belong to the provincial and national modern language teachers' associations (an automatic joint membership in BC). This corroborates a similar finding in the national study: "teachers who teach FSL exclusively are more likely to be members of national and provincial language teacher organizations than classroom generalists who also teach all other

subjects” (Lapkin, MacFarlane, & Vandergrift, 2006, p. 4). The preferred form of professional development is attending local workshops, discussing or collaborating with colleagues, and upgrading language skills.

A review of elementary teachers’ comments about the challenges they face in teaching core French showed, in order of frequency:

- insufficient methodological or linguistic background;
- not enough time allocated to core French;
- inconsistent valuing of French by parents, community;
- need for in-service and collegial collaboration.

Provincial Middle Years Teacher Findings

The contextual and experiential characteristics of middle years respondents were very similar to those of the elementary teachers with the exception of how French was delivered and teaching experience. Compared to their elementary colleagues, about half as many middle years teachers deliver French to their homeroom class and have less teaching experience generally and even less in teaching core French. Core French is most often platooned, that is, delivered by a more experienced teacher. More than half of the respondents possess less than 10 years teaching experience, and 80 percent have less than 10 years’ experience teaching core French.

As did the elementary group, most teachers in middle schools reported no difficulty modelling spoken French or correcting written work, but only 29 percent reported ease in conversing in French and 33 percent in reading in French. Again, the fact that such a large percentage of teachers do not feel confident conversing or reading in French is cause for concern, and this lack of confidence in using French was corroborated in the open-ended section about challenges faced in teaching core French.

In the area of professional development, there was slightly more activity than at the elementary level: half the respondents reported attending a local workshop and engaging in discussion/collaboration with colleagues once or more per year, and, just as the elementary group, the majority did not attend provincial or national conferences. Similarly, only 7 percent of this group belong to the provincial and national modern language teachers’ associations.

A review of middle years teachers’ comments about the challenges they face in teaching core French showed, in order of frequency:

- insufficient methodological or linguistic background;
- not enough time allocated to core French;
- negative student attitude;
- need for in-service and collegial collaboration.

Provincial Secondary Teacher Findings

Secondary core French teachers in BC are generally more experienced and better prepared to teach French than their elementary and middle years colleagues. The degree of confidence in using French is significantly higher than that reported by their elementary and middle years colleagues, with a majority reporting no difficulty at all modelling spoken French, correcting written French, conversing in French or reading a French journal article. An important feature of secondary respondents is that most deliver French to a range of grades (between Grades 8 to 12), and the majority are considered specialists.

This group reported high levels of stakeholder support with the exception of their community: just as the elementary and middle years respondents, only half of secondary teachers perceived their community to be somewhat to very supportive of core French teaching.

The most common forms of professional development reported and preferred by this group is local workshops, provincial/national conferences and discussion/collaboration with colleagues. Over half of BC's secondary respondents belong to the provincial and national modern language teachers' associations.

The challenges articulated by secondary teachers differed from elementary and middle years teachers in that much less mention was made about upgrading language or methodological proficiency (although language maintenance was a concern). Their comments were grouped according to the following priorities:

- articulation with earlier grades;
- concern about attrition;
- access to supplementary teaching resources;
- maintaining competence in French.

Surrey School District Survey Findings

This district survey, paralleling the provincial one, played an important role in the Surrey School District's elementary core French program review that is still in progress. Findings are sub-divided according to the two contexts in which core French is delivered: elementary (Kindergarten to Grade 7) and secondary (Grade 8 to 12).

Surrey School District Elementary Teacher Findings

Compared to the provincial findings, there were some similarities and several key differences. Surrey's elementary teachers had generally the same level of background in French as their provincial counterparts and perceived the same high levels of stakeholder support and satisfaction with resources. The differences are listed below.

In Surrey there were

- more itinerant teachers;
- more male teachers;
- more teachers reporting a high degree of support or availability of a consultant;
- more teachers who preferred local workshops;
- twice as many teachers who were members of provincial/national associations;
- fewer teachers with experience in teaching in general or in teaching French;
- fewer teachers reporting ease in conversing in French, modelling correct spoken French or correcting student work.

A review of Surrey elementary teachers' comments about the challenges they face in teaching core French highlighted similar concerns to those raised by provincial elementary teachers, such as insufficient background or confidence in French and not enough time allocated to core French. There were also concerns associated with being an itinerant teacher (a delivery model used in many Surrey elementary schools), such as lack of a classroom and lack of valuing, especially among students. Teachers in Surrey, as in other BC districts, expressed the need for in-service and collegial collaboration.

Surrey School District Secondary Teacher Findings

Surreys' secondary teachers' findings were generally very similar to their provincial counterparts, although there were several differences, listed below.

In Surrey, there were

- about three times as many teachers who had taken university courses in methodology or French language or literature;
- almost three times as many teachers who participated in professional development activities;
- twice as many teachers who attended summer immersion sessions;
- almost twice as many teachers reporting the support or availability of a consultant;
- fewer teachers reporting ease in modelling spoken French, correcting written French or reading an article in French.

It should be noted that the sample size was very small (18 teachers), but as was reported by provincial secondary teachers, Surrey's secondary respondents are French specialists. Their challenges relate less to their own methodological or linguistic needs and more to teaching students in Grade 8 who are not prepared to meet grade level learning outcomes or use grade level resources. Their dissatisfaction is likely a direct result of the limitations articulated by their elementary colleagues, that is, a lack of proficiency and confidence in French and insufficient teaching time.

Summary of Results

The findings generated by survey respondents provide a more representative picture of core French in British Columbia than was provided in the national survey. In many cases, the BC respondents (provincial and district) corroborated the national core French results, for example, teaching experience, gender, core French background, stakeholder support and preferred professional development activities. The key concerns raised in the BC surveys, however, were not the same as those raised in the national survey. British Columbia teachers reported much less methodological training, especially at the elementary and middle years levels (around 15 percent rather than the nationally reported 60 percent) or university French coursework (around 25 percent versus the nationally reported 93 percent). Further, French proficiency among BC's elementary and middle years teachers ranged from 20 to 50 percent ease of use as compared to 75 percent nationally.

The results of the three surveys are graphically presented in a comparative table in Appendix A of this report.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Teaching Core French in British Columbia: Teachers' Perspectives offers the first wide-scale report of current conditions and contexts of Grade 5 to 8 core French teachers in British Columbia. The quantitative and qualitative data collected, in addition to parallel data collected by the Surrey School District, provide rich insight into the reality of teaching core French in this province.

While the BC and Surrey surveys confirmed some of the national FSL teacher survey results and echoed some of the findings of studies in other provinces, the pressing challenge for BC's core French teachers appears to be how to achieve provincial learning outcomes with the lack of time allocated to French instruction and low levels of teacher language proficiency and methodological background. The findings generated by elementary and middle years respondents in particular should be a cause for concern.

Although it is impossible to assess the representativeness of this sample, over 800 teachers responded to a survey about their core French practice. Of this number, 84 percent teach in elementary or middle schools. Many of these teachers do not define themselves as French teachers but rather as generalists who teach French among other subjects. Most have not studied French at the university level and only an average of 21 percent reported ease in conversing in French and an average of 28 percent in reading French. Elementary and middle years respondents articulated their frustration about this lack of proficiency and background, at not having enough time allocated to teaching core French and the inconsistent valuing of French by parents and the community.

Secondary teachers in British Columbia are, for the most part, specialists, that is, French is their main teachable subject and/or they deliver it to several classes. This group of respondents reported higher levels of methodological training than their elementary and middle years colleagues and reported general ease in using French. Their challenges

relate to uneven competency levels among the students they receive in Grade 8, keeping students in French in Grade 9 and beyond, access to supplementary resources, and maintenance of their own French proficiency. All three groups of teachers underscored a need for in-service and collegial collaboration.

A number of organizations including the British Columbia Association of Teachers of Modern Languages (BCATML), the British Columbia Teachers Federation (BCTF), the British Columbia Language Coordination Association (BCLCA), the Provincial Intermediate Teachers Association (PITA), and the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) are keenly interested in understanding core French teachers' perspectives and supporting the work they do.

Given the clear results of this survey, these organizations can

- lobby the Ministry of Education to ensure that the sustained study of a second language is an integral part of the graduation path of secondary students;
- lobby the BC College of Teachers and university Faculties of Education to ensure that second language methodology is a required course in teacher education programs;
- promote ongoing professional learning opportunities for core French teachers, including diploma/credential programs and online options;
- combine efforts in offering professional development opportunities, that is, offer core French workshops at Intermediate Teachers' Association (PITA) or Middle Years Association (MYABC) conferences;
- provide incentives (with Ministry of Education support) for teachers to attend provincial or national language conferences and/or language immersion experiences.

The findings of this study and previous studies indicate that there is not enough time allocated to French and that there is inconsistent valuing of French. To ensure quality delivery of core French programs, school boards and administrators can

- ensure that core French in elementary and middle schools is delivered or platooned by teachers with linguistic and methodological background;
- identify a part- or full-time district-level helping teacher or mentor for core French in each school district or region;
- identify school- or zone-based teacher leaders who can be released/supported to attend provincial or national language conferences;
- provide time to facilitate teacher collaboration and professional learning;

- provide recognition and/or incentives to teachers who upgrade their language and methodological knowledge and skills;
- make core French an integral part of the regular school curriculum;
- ensure a minimum amount of instructional time (100 minutes per week in Grades 5 to 7; 185 minutes per week in Grade 8);
- refer to “core French teacher” rather than “prep teacher”; identify consistent space for core French teaching and/or storage of materials;
- celebrate and promote school and district language programs and events.

By surfacing the limitations and challenges articulated by over 800 core French teachers, a clear call to action has been sounded. A number of progressive initiatives, involving university-school district partnerships, have also been highlighted to show that, while some positive action is underway, more is needed. The implementation of this report’s recommendations – operating in concert with the various organizations, institutions and levels of government – could lead to a much needed renewal of British Columbia’s core French programs.

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Appendix A
Comparison of Data from National, Provincial and District Core French Teacher Surveys

	National Survey	Provincial Survey	District Survey
Number of respondents	1274	612	211
FSL Context	56% core French only 26% French immersion 12% core and immersion 6% extended and intensive French	100% core French 394 – elementary 105 – middle yrs 109- secondary (incl. Gr. 8) ²	100% core French 193 – elementary ¹ 18 – secondary (incl. Gr. 8) ²
Size of school district (i.e., number of secondary schools) Large = 25+ Medium = 10-24 Small = 9 or less	Large: 15% Medium: 32% Small: 53%	Large ³ : 12% Medium: 35% Small: 53%	Surrey is BC’s largest school district (20 secondary schools)
Delivery Model: HR = delivers core French to homeroom class; S = specialist (delivers only core French or platoons i.e., delivers core French to several classes) I = itinerant	Not provided	<u>Elementary</u> HR: 58% S: 25% I: 9% <u>Middle</u> HR: 34% S: 54% <u>Secondary</u> S: 81%	<u>Elementary</u> HR: 46% S: 22% I: 25% <u>Secondary</u> S: 100%
Percentage with 10 or more years teaching experience	62%	Elementary: 63% Middle: 41% Secondary: 70%	Elementary: 52% Secondary: 50%
Percentage with 10 or more years FSL teaching experience	56%	Elementary: 37% Middle: 20% Secondary: 54%	Elementary: 23% Secondary: 39%

¹ There are no middle schools in Surrey.

² Please note that provincial and district survey respondents teach Grade 8 core French but, in most cases, in other secondary grades as well up to Grade 12.

³ In British Columbia, a “Large” district was defined on the survey as having 15 or more secondary schools.

Percentage of female teachers	87%	Elementary: 85% Middle: 76% Secondary: 86%	Elementary: 78% Secondary: 83%
Percentage with French as mother tongue	27%	Elementary 2% Middle: 0% Secondary: 21%	Elementary: 4% Secondary: 11%
Percentage who have taken university French courses	93%	Elementary: 28% Middle: 23% Secondary: 46%	Elementary: 34% Secondary: 55%
French program attended as a student CF =Core French FI =French Immersion F =Francophone School	CF: 59% FI: 18% F: 25%	<u>Elementary</u> CF: 56% FI: 8% F: 1% <u>Middle</u> CF: 56% FI: 12% F: 5% <u>Secondary</u> CF: 50% FI: 8% F: 13%	<u>Elementary</u> CF: 47% FI: 7% F: 4% <u>Secondary</u> CF: 39% FI: 3% F: 1%
Highest grade level completed in core French	Not provided	<u>Elementary</u> Gr. 12: 26% Gr. 11: 11% <u>Middle</u> Gr. 12: 25% Gr. 11: 14% <u>Secondary</u> Gr. 12: 31%	<u>Elementary</u> Gr. 12: 29% Gr. 11: 17% <u>Secondary</u> Gr. 12: 41%
Highest grade level completed in French immersion	Not provided	<u>Elementary</u> Gr. 12: 4% Gr. 4 to 10: 4% <u>Middle</u> Gr. 12: 7% Gr. 4 to 10: 5% <u>Secondary</u> Gr. 12: 8%	<u>Elementary</u> Gr. 12: 3% Gr. 4 to 10: 4% <u>Secondary</u> Gr. 12: 2% Gr. 4 to 10: 1%
Percentage who attended summer immersion programs	no data	Elementary: 17% Middle: 19% Secondary: 22%	Elementary: 19% Secondary: 44%

Percentage who have taken one or more FSL methodology courses	61%	Elementary: 13% Middle: 16% Secondary: 21%	Elementary: 29% Secondary: 72%
Percentage who have taken one or more French language or literature courses	no data	Elementary: 15% Middle: 18% Secondary: 25%	Elementary: 34% Secondary: 67%
French Proficiency Percentage reporting no difficulty Model = modelling correct spoken French Correct = correcting student written work Converse = conversing in French Read = reading a journal in French	Model: 78% Correct: 79% Converse: 75% Read: 71%	<u>Elementary</u> Model: 53% Correct: 57% Converse: 22% Read: 20% <u>Middle</u> Model: 50% Correct: 58% Converse: 29% Read: 33% <u>Secondary</u> Model: 93% Correct: 95% Converse: 81% Read: 84%	<u>Elementary</u> Model: 28% Correct: 32% Converse: 13% Read: 30% <u>Secondary</u> Model: 58% Correct: 68% Converse: 84% Read: 95%
Stakeholder Support Percentage of perceived support (somewhat to very supportive)	School admin: 84% Parents: 69% Colleagues: 70% Community: 66% Students: 77%	<u>Elementary</u> School admin: 75% Parents: 57% Colleagues: 74% Community: 52% Students: 72% <u>Middle</u> School admin: 76% Parents: 48% Colleagues: 78% Community: 52% Students: 53% <u>Secondary</u> School admin: 86% Parents: 74% Colleagues: 84% Community: 54% Students: 71%	<u>Elementary</u> School admin: 81% Parents: 53% Colleagues: 77% Community: 52% Students: 75% <u>Secondary</u> School admin: 94% Parents: 67% Colleagues: 94% Community: 61% Students: 72%

Consultant Support/Availability (Percentage reporting sometimes to always available)	67%	Elementary: 56% Middle: 58% Secondary: 57%	Elementary: 75% Secondary: 94%
Preferred Professional Development Activities Workshops = local workshops Discussion = discussions with colleagues Conference = Provincial/national conferences Electronic = ProD via electronic media Language = upgrading language skills	Workshop: 22% Discussion: 16% Conference: 15% Language: 14% Electronic: 12%	<u>Elementary</u> Workshop: 36% Discussion: 22% Language: 16% Conference: 7% <u>Middle</u> Workshop: 29% Discussion: 24% Language: 16% Conference: 10% <u>Secondary</u> Workshop: 24% Discussion: 22% Conference: 18% Language: 10%	<u>Elementary</u> Workshop: 78% Discussion: 49% Language: 35% <u>Secondary</u> Workshop: 89% Discussion: 78% Conference: 44%
Second Language Association Membership	no data	<u>Elementary</u> BCATML/CASLT ⁴ : 5% <u>Middle</u> BCATML/CASLT: 7% <u>Secondary</u> BCATML/CASLT: 56%	<u>Elementary</u> BCATML/CASLT: 12% <u>Secondary</u> BCATML/CASLT: 50%
Level of satisfaction with commercial FSL resources (deemed adequate or good excellent)	77% (average of core French and French immersion teachers)	Elementary: 84% Middle: 69% Secondary: 94%	Elementary: 89% Secondary: 94%

Appendices B and C available on-line: <http://www.bcatml.org/cfsurveybc2007.html>

⁴ Membership in the BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages means an automatic joint membership in the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers