EFFECT OF PEER TUTORING IN READING FOR BOYS IN FRENCH IMMERSION

by

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Abstract

Inspired by concern for the low motivation for reading in French of boys in French immersion programs, a study was undertaken in an elementary school in Vancouver, British Columbia, in the form of a reading intervention program. The program consisted of a peer tutoring reading group for French immersion males where the tutors were Grade 7 boys and the tutees were Grade 5 boys. The program was based on the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ for French Immersion Schools, which was used successfully in Elementary schools in Vancouver. Students met with their partners every week and read together French texts that were especially selected for boys. In addition to increasing motivation for reading, a number of other outcomes were examined: Whether the program would encourage more home reading in French, whether the program would increase the confidence of the tutees, the effect of the gender of the tutors and any effects that the tutoring program had on the Grade 7 tutors. Data were collected in the form of questionnaires (pre-and post-program), and interviews. The results suggest that, overall, motivation for reading in French and confidence in French reading abilities of the tutees increased but that the role of gender was not as significant as anticipated. Effects on the Grade 7 tutors were minimal.
Preface

The following research received approval by a UBC Ethics Board Behavioural Research Ethics Board: Certificate Number H09-02517.
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background: Second Language Education in Canada

Canadian students have the opportunity to study a variety of languages such as French, German, Spanish, Punjabi, Mandarin, and Japanese. Out of these, French is considered a second language rather than an additional language as it is one of Canada’s two official languages. In 2003 a Federal Action Plan for Official Languages (Government of Canada, 2003) was implemented with the goal that by 2013 fifty percent of young Canadians would be bilingual.

In most provinces, the study of an additional language (not always French) is mandated from Grade four or five to Grade eight or nine. French instruction is offered through the following programs: Core French, French immersion, Intensive French, and Extended French. Core French is a program offered to students in the English stream (not French immersion students), which introduces the basics of French communication and cultural appreciation. Core French is offered throughout Canada; however, aspects of instruction such as scheduling and topics covered, vary from province to province. Scheduling varies from daily forty minute lessons (e.g., in Ontario or New Brunswick) to two forty minute lessons a week (e.g., in British Columbia).

French immersion is an optional program, dating from the late 1960s, in which students begin with 100 percent French language instruction and are introduced to some English instruction throughout the Elementary grades. However, across Canada, the ratio of French instruction to English instruction varies, as does the grade in which English is introduced. An advantage to the French immersion program is that at the end of Grade 12, French immersion students graduate with a bilingual diploma, which means that they are functionally fluent in both English and French and should be able to live and work in a French speaking environment.
Canada can be considered influential in the field of immersion education, as other countries such as Australia, Finland, Hong Kong, Singapore, Spain, and the United States have modeled similar bilingual programs based on the Canadian experience (Canadian Parents for French, 2010).

Extended French is an optional program that provides French instruction for a Core French class plus one additional subject delivered in French, such as Social Studies. It is offered only in Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland.

In British Columbia the study of an additional language (in most cases, French) is only mandatory from Grade 5 to Grade 8. In the 2007-2008 school year in British Columbia, there were approximately 200,000 students enrolled in Core French (Canadian Parents for French, 2007), and 43,964 students in French immersion in 2009 – 2010 (Government of Canada, 2009). Intensive French provides a French-only literacy based program for approximately 70 to 80 percent of the day for the first half of the year. For the second half of the year, students undertake a compacted curriculum in English and continue with one hour per day of French instruction. In 2010, there were approximately 300 students at the Grade 6 level in this program in British Columbia (personal communication, W Carr, November 5, 2011).

The dream of a bilingual Canada dates back to Trudeau’s Official Languages Bill of 1968 that encouraged all Canadians to learn English and French. According to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages 2010-11 report, only 17.4 percent of the population speak both English and French, even though 72 percent of Canadians are in favour of bilingualism (Canadian Heritage, 2009). However, there are many issues that stand in the way of bilingualism in Canada, one of which is boys’ apparent underachievement in literacy. As indicated by Booth, Elliott-Johns, and Bruce (2009),
The 2007 *State of Learning in Canada: No Time for Complacency* report found that for 2000, 2003 and 2006, girls score on average 32 points higher than boys in reading, and that boys have more difficulties in language and learning. Also, more males declared themselves to be “non readers” and were more likely to be secondary school dropouts (66%). In 2002 (Raymond, 2008), 11% more female students than males met the expected level in writing. (p. 2)

Similar findings are echoed internationally, as research reporting on results from 40 different countries suggests that girls are out-performing boys in literacy with Grade 4 girls achieving higher results than boys in reading tests:

On a recent Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, which measured performance on 4th-grade reading tests and other literacy indicators in 40 countries around the world, girls outscored boys in all educational systems from which sufficient data were available. (Sadowski, 2010, para. 9)

Another example of a large-scale study (2342 students) with similar results comes from Belgium, where an achievement gap in languages between boys and girls scores of cognitive ability in languages in the lower (technical and vocational) track of their school system was found (Van de gaer, Pustjens, Van Damme, & De Munter, 2006). The results showed that there were gender differences in language achievement in favour of girls in the lower tracks. The underachievement of boys was associated with boys’ less positive relationships with teachers, well-being at school and negative attitude towards schoolwork (p. 293). And in a British study, Jones and Jones (2001) examined boys’ underachievement in Modern Foreign Languages in their one year study of boys’ performance as reported in their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) results in 1999: 47 percent of girls achieved a higher grade pass in contrast
with 31 percent of boys. Additionally, in British universities, the number of female French undergraduates outnumbers males by a ratio of 3:1 (Callaghan, 1998).

In Canada, similar results are found in boys’ reading achievement in French: The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) data of the reading achievement of 15-year-olds enrolled in French immersion students in Canada in 2004 reported that girls outperformed boys in nine out of the ten provinces. In addition to the difference in performance between genders, there is also an unbalance in the gender representation. According to data provided by PISA, girls comprise approximately 60 percent of enrolment in every province except Quebec (Allen, 2004).

There are additional significant issues around French instruction in Canada, among which is student attrition due to difficulties in reading (Genesee & Jared, 2008), and problems attracting and retaining French teachers (Ewart, 2009). Taken together, these issues contribute to the overall depreciation of French in Canada. The increased academic difficulty of the French immersion program is due in part to the challenge of learning to read in a second language and using French sources and texts as the primary learning materials for content. In a study of the reasons behind attrition in French immersion programs, Obadia and Thériault (1997) cited “academic difficulty”, along with “limited choice of subjects, and peer pressure” (p. 1) as the main reasons behind students leaving French Immersion.

At 17.4 percent bilingual, currently (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2011), Canada is far from achieving its original goal of fifty percent bilingualism, one way to increase the number of bilingual French speakers may be through retaining boys in French immersion and encouraging students to pursue French. With this study I hope to obtain findings that will help understand the experiences of boys learning French by focusing on a group of boys
enrolled in French immersion. I am examining possible ways to increase their motivation towards reading French through the use of peer reading.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

There is a long-standing international sense of concern regarding the “boy problem” in education, broadly speaking (Brozo, 2006; Jones & Jones, 2001; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Kenney, 2007; Kissau, 2006; Lever-Chain, 2008). And since the 1930s, girls have been reported to generally outperform boys in reading (Brozo, 2006). There are even reports from as early as 1693 that suggest girls seemed to learn French faster than boys. John Locke (as cited by Cohen in Jones & Jones, 2001), pointed out that girls learned French faster and more successfully than boys. And some studies have suggested that there are brain based reasons to explain why girls are outperforming boys in language classes: “Studies dating back more than 50 years have cited biological reasons to explain the underachievement of males in the language classroom...female superiority in pronunciation, mean length of sentence, vocabulary and verbosity” (Kissau & Turnbull, 2009, p. 164).

The media and research constantly report that gaps between boys’ and girls’ reading abilities appear to widen with age (Brozo, 2006; Jones & Jones, 2001; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Kenney, 2007; Lever-Chain, 2008). According to Logan and Johnston (2009), “regardless of writing system, or even educational system, boys consistently perform more poorly, on average, on measures of reading comprehension” (p. 202). Several reasons have been put forward to account for boys’ underachievement in French. One of them is the belief that, for male students, second language learning is “feminine” (Callaghan, 1998; Kissau & Turnbull, 2009): “For boys who hold an oppositional view of gender where masculinity is associated with anything not thought to be feminine, underachieving in the second or foreign language classroom may be a
way of asserting one’s masculinity” (Kissau & Turnbull, 2009, p. 158). Other reasons put forward are that the teaching profession is feminised, with female teachers seen to dominate the teaching of reading, and that the teaching curriculum is biased towards girls, with boys’ attitudes towards reading consequently being more negative (Kissau, 2006; Logan & Johnston, 2009).

In Canada, quantitative data in the form of large-scale test scores such as PISA, show that girls are outperforming boys in reading. In Western Canada, Sanford and Blair’s (2003) on-going research project on Canadian adolescent boys and literacy examines male literacy practices to determine why they are struggling with literacy. Initial findings of the two-year qualitative study were based on surveying 29 boys between Grades 3 and 6 from three different communities in Western Canada. In the second year of the study, researchers observed the boys at school and interviewed them on their reading preferences. Results were consistent with claims that the educational system does not favour boys: “Our initial findings...fit with common beliefs that schools are failing boys, that ‘boys will be boys’ they don’t like to read and write, and they don’t interact around literacy and don’t have enough male models” (para. 4). The interviews also revealed boys’ penchant for reading as a social activity and for digital literacy:

The boys’ use of literacies to shape their identities and develop shared interests with friends connected to the themes that have emerged from our data. ... Many of the boys in our study have a great deal of expertise and interest in numerous forms of digital literacies, often much greater than their teachers. These literacies very often inform and transform the strategies and discourses they use in school.

(para. 4)

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1 Digital literacy is used here to refer to texts available in digital form, such as on-line books, articles from on-line magazines or newspapers, or blogs.
The issue of engaging boys in literacy is even more pronounced in French immersion since students face the challenge of learning how to read and write in two languages (English and French), and comprehending core subject materials in a second language. Good reading and comprehension skills are essential for success in the program. Yet, it has been noted that boys tend to have a higher rate of attrition in French immersion programs, and that this attrition is often largely due to problems with reading (Obadia & Thériault, 1997). Boys have also been noted to have lower motivation for reading and for learning a second language (Kissau & Turnbull, 2009).

In order to retain boys in immersion programs, it is important for intervention to occur early on in their schooling to try to increase boys’ motivation for reading in French (see Chapter Two for a more extensive review of boys’ motivation for reading in French immersion programs). One of the ways of doing this is based on Nicole Roy and Mary Chipman’s² success with the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ for French Immersion Schools in Vancouver elementary schools, in which younger students with minor reading difficulties are paired with older students for private reading sessions. The present study focuses on using a method based on this program with male pairs to determine whether having an older male role model for reading may have an effect on the younger students’ motivation for reading in French.

As a French immersion teacher, I have observed that once English is formally introduced in Grade 4 (in British Columbia), some boys lose interest in reading in French, especially for what is known as “extensive” reading (i.e., outside assigned school reading). Reading outside of

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² Mary Chipman is a parent volunteer, and Nicole Roy was a Resource teacher at an Elementary school in Vancouver where they started the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ for French Immersion Schools.
the school is usually in the form of a home reading program, where students select from a variety of levelled books that are kept in the classroom. Teachers expect students to read for 20 minutes a night with adult supervision and acknowledgement that they have completed the reading. However, through my experience and observation, home reading programs have to be strictly enforced and thus are not the most effective way to motivate students to read more as they are usually based on external rewards (report card marks, certificates, prizes), and they do not really improve students’ intrinsic motivation to read simply for the pleasure of reading or learning. Conversely, the peer tutoring program that is used in the present study is designed to improve students’ enjoyment of reading not through external rewards, but through making the actual reading experience more interactive and enjoyable. Its thesis is that students may learn to appreciate reading and not view reading as simply homework, or as something that is forced on them by parents and teachers; but rather as a social, entertaining activity. Students, particularly boys, may prefer to read with their peers in a more social environment, such as a book group or peer tutoring reading group, as opposed to using a home reading program. This is what this pilot program sets out to explore.

1.3 Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What is the effect on Grade 5 male students’ motivation for reading as a result of participating in a peer tutoring program with Grade 7 male tutors from the same school?
   a) Will the tutored Grade 5 boys read more at home as a result of the peer tutoring program?
   b) Will the tutored Grade 5 boys’ confidence about their reading ability increase as a result of the tutoring?
2. In what ways, if any, will the peer tutoring program affect the Grade 7 tutors?

3. What is the effect of having a male tutor for reading as opposed to a female tutor from the point of view of the tutees and the tutors?

1.4 Researcher Positionality

I taught at the school where the present research took place for two years, and have taught French as a Second Language (FSL) for two years, and French immersion for three years both at the Primary and Intermediate levels. As a French immersion teacher, I have experienced the frustration of trying to pique boys’ interest for reading in French. Girls often return from the library with stacks of books, whereas many boys will have hastily chosen a few books behind which they will later try to hide an English book when it is time for in class reading. Of course, this is not the case for every boy, and the problem seems to be more pronounced in Grades four to seven. Somewhere in their schooling, boys appear to begin to see reading as a feminine activity, preferring to “do” things rather than read about them (Giles, 2008; Kenney, 2007). Some researchers also say that many boys perceive French as feminine, which could explain their lack of motivation for reading in French (Kissau & Turnbull, 2009; Williams, 2002). In most French immersion classrooms, boys are already the minority (Allen, 2004), thus it is desirable (but difficult) to retain them. As difficulties with reading have been identified as a factor in attrition in immersion (Obadia & Thériault, 1997), intervention strategies for improving boys’ reading motivation and increasing the amount that they are reading (especially at home) are valuable for French immersion teachers.

One of the resources to which every teacher has access is students themselves. According to research by Bricheno and Thornton (2007), peers as role models can be more influential than
teachers when it comes to improving the behaviour and achievement of boys and, thus, peers could be instrumental for encouraging and inspiring their fellow students. Bricheno’s study set out to test the theory that boys need more male teachers as role models. This was done through investigating whether students regarded their teachers as role models, and if not, to find out who students’ role models were. Findings showed that peer influence is greater than teacher influence, which provides support for the idea of a peer reading group to motivate boys. Other studies have also shown that boys reject the traditional individual silent approach to reading, preferring instead to make it a more social activity (Macdonald, 2005), which includes activities such as group reading where students read texts out loud together and comment on them while they are reading. In light of these findings, the present research examines the effects of a peer tutoring reading program, where unmotivated male readers are paired with a proficient, motivated older male reading tutor (who has volunteered for the program and been recommended by the classroom teacher) to see if the boys’ motivation for reading in French increases.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether Grade 5 boys’ motivation and enjoyment of reading in French improves after an intervention including a peer tutoring reading program at school with Grade 7 male peer mentors. The current research project responds to Genesee and Jared’s (2008) call for “reading interventions or effective pedagogical strategies for promoting reading competence in immersion students” and the need for studies that “could examine the effectiveness of programs that promote more reading at home in French” (p. 145). Grade 5 boys were paired with a Grade 7 boy so that the younger students had a reading role model to look up to, someone who could encourage them to read more in French, and thus
increase their motivation for French reading. Grade 7 tutors were students that were recognised as good readers by their teacher, and since they volunteered to do tutoring, only motivated readers who would be positive role models were involved in the program.

According to Desrochers and Major (2008), “very few studies have been devoted to the effectiveness of intervention programmes designed specifically for immersion students” (p. 80). Those that have, such as Bournot-Trites’ (2004) study of the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ for French immersion, found positive effects for all stakeholders: tutors, tutees, parents and teachers. The educational community at large also benefits as the success of the program is shared with other schools and helps to promote French immersion programs and the use of French in areas where it is not the language of majority.

In light of these suggestions, it makes sense to propose that a peer reading program could help improve student confidence as they are provided with time to practise reading with a peers’ scaffolding, which may seem less intimidating than receiving individual help from a teacher or reading in front of the whole class.

1.6 Thesis Outline

The thesis is structured around five chapters. Chapter One includes the introduction to the project, the background of the problem and researcher positionality. A statement of the research problem, as well as the significance of the study, and the research questions that guide the study are presented.

Chapter Two consists of a review of the relevant literature. The concepts of reading in French immersion, boys’ motivation and achievement in additional language study and reading are discussed, as are strategies for improving boys’ motivation for reading.
Chapter Three focuses on the research design, the participants, and the context of the study. The design of the data collection and how the data were analysed are also described.

Chapter Four presents the results of the study in relation to the research questions. Both quantitative (surveys), and qualitative (interviews) sources are explained in detail.

Chapter Five includes a discussion of the results and their implications. From the results, recommendations are made for educators on how peer reading groups can play a role in improving boys’ motivation for reading in French immersion programs. This last chapter addresses the limitations of this study, and concludes with a number of suggestions for further research.
2 Review of Literature

This chapter reviews literature that is relevant to the present study. It first focuses on a series of studies that reveal the place of reading for boys versus girls, then reading in French immersion: how reading is presented in French immersion programs, the importance of reading, and the particular issues surrounding boys and their motivation for reading. It then presents studies that have suggested pedagogical solutions to help improve boys’ motivation for reading and learning second languages. The review also examines the place of peer tutoring and peer tutoring reading programs and the interventions that have been undertaken in these programs with boys and with struggling readers in general.

2.1 Boys’ and Girls’ Reading Achievement

Various Canadian and international large scale literacy assessments have revealed that girls’ achievement in literacy is higher than boys. Results of the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) indicate that girls outscore boys by 23 points. Similarly, results from the 57 countries participating in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) coincide in placing girls more favourably (Canadian Council on Learning, p. 2). Experimental studies that show that boys’ reading achievement is lower than girls’ include a 2009 study by Logan and Johnston in which 210 ten-year-olds completed a comprehension test and questionnaire. Girls scored higher: “Girls had better reading ability, read more frequently, and had a more positive attitude to reading and school compared to boys” (p. 207). A study that used data from large scale literacy tests is Chiu and McBride-Chang’s (2006) research, which analyzed data from 43 countries from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) from a PISA reading comprehension test and questionnaire on reading preferences and habits of 15-year-olds. Girls received higher scores than boys in every country, and Chiu and McBride-
Chang’s analysis of the data found that enjoyment of reading positively correlated with reading achievement. Other factors that positively correlated included family socioeconomic status (SES), schoolmates’ family SES, and the number of books at home. Results of this study show that, in order to improve reading achievement several variables are involved: “country, family, school, and student” (p. 331). Support from school and home is therefore required, and the student must be motivated to read.

Another study involving Canadian data is The Reading Literacy study conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), which took place between 1985 and 1994. One of the main aims of the study was to describe student achievement levels in literacy of the participating countries. Participants were 9-and 14-year-olds from 32 different countries, (Canadian data were from British Columbia). Data were collected in 1990-1991, via a reading test and a questionnaire. Key findings involving gender differences included the following: among 9-year-olds, girls achieved higher scores for narrative passages in all 32 countries, and they scored higher for expository passages in 24 countries. Among the 14-year-olds, girls achieved higher scores in the majority of the countries (IEA, 2011).

In addition to listening, speaking, writing, viewing and representing, reading is an essential skill for comprehension and communication in any language. Learning to read is one of the most important parts of a child’s language and literacy development, and competent reading can be a valuable predictor of future academic success (Genesee & Jared, 2008; Mucherach & Yoder, 2008; Sokal, Katz, Adkins, Grills, Stewart, & Priddle, 2005). Data from the IEA show that the amount that students read voluntarily outside of school correlates positively with their achievement (Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, 1985-1994).
Additionally, the IEA study shows that students who read more will have a larger vocabulary and better reading comprehension. The skills developed by students who are good readers, for example, reading comprehension, will apply across the curriculum (Logan & Johnston, 2009). Thus, students who are not proficient readers may find themselves not only at a disadvantage in language classes, but in all subject areas.

2.2 Reading in French Immersion

French immersion students have a greater challenge than their peers in the English stream as they must develop reading skills in both languages. As vocabulary building is a vital part of reading comprehension (Barringer, 2006; Lervag and Aukrust, 2010; Malatesha, 2005; Oullette, 2005), one of the best ways to improve students’ vocabulary is through reading. When reading authentic texts in French, students are exposed to new words, idioms, and target cultural language content. Consequently, students who read more have more exposure to authentic language, and this helps them improve their ability to learn new words, idioms, grammatical structures, and develop cultural insights. These pupils will find themselves better able to communicate than students who do not read in French. The types of texts students should be reading to experience authentic language are those that have originally been written in French for a French speaking audience, either by French Canadian authors or by authors from other French speaking countries. Authentic texts are preferable over translations because they contain important cultural information, such as idiomatic expressions, whereas a translated novel may contain over-simplified language and cultural allusions may have been removed, thus losing the richness of the original document (Leppihalme, 2005). If students only read translations they are losing the opportunity of exposure to target language cultural content.

Since many researchers have found that males are more likely to engage in the “new
literacies” such as texts that are found or created on-line (chat rooms, blogs, e-zines/ journals, or video film trailers, ads, packaging, diagrams, song lyrics, and graphic novels), the text may not necessarily involve traditional genres (such as novels). These new or “alternative literacies” are mostly used outside of school, likely because they may not always be acknowledged as suitable forms of literacy. In addition, the materials may not usually be found in all school libraries:

...many males and some female students are finding success with alternative literacies. Literacies such as chat rooms, internet, comic books, cell phones, blogs, trading cards, zines, film creation, and video games are a few of the new and alternative literacies that students are engaging in largely outside of school spaces. (Sanford & Madill, 2007, p. 434)

2.3 Boy’s Motivation to Read in French Immersion

There is a lack of research on gender differences and motivation in French immersion. Most of the research has focussed on the low motivation of boys in French as a second language (FSL) programs (Callaghan, 1998; Kissau, 2006; Williams, Burden & Lanvers, 2002). Studies have shown better attitudes than boys and greater motivation amongst female additional language learners (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Donovan, 2002). Girls have also been shown to be more likely to communicate orally in the immersion class, whereas boys demonstrate anxiety towards communicating in the second language (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000). These studies coincide with Gardner’s (1985) findings, which showed that girls are more motivated in language classes.

Larocque (2006) also investigated students’ attitudes towards French. This research was done in Ontario Francophone schools where French was the first language of the students. Sixty two Grade 7 and 8 students were involved in the study. The findings revealed that male students
demonstrated more negative attitudes than females towards French, and they were less interested in interacting with other native French speakers or in improving their French abilities. Allen (2004) found that in French immersion classes, boys are underrepresented, and data have shown that French immersion girls outperform French immersion boys in reading.

Kissau’s (2008) research also established that boys’ intrinsic motivation for learning French was lower than girls’, and that boys responded more positively to extrinsic motivation, such as prizes, in order to perform in FSL classes. Drawing on previous large-scale research of 500 Grade 9 FSL students, Kissau’s (2008) study results were obtained from eight of the Grade 9 students and 6 FSL teachers who participated in the large-scale study from 2003 and who completed further questionnaires and were interviewed.

Based on a review of available literature, Kissau (2009) found three common factors that contribute to boys’ lack of motivation for reading in French. These are that French is seen as feminine in schools; that boys are not interested in materials at their ability level, and that boys’ motivation to study languages is already low. Furthermore, the high rate of attrition for boys in the French immersion program (Obadia & Thériault, 1997) is consistent with their performance in other French as a second language (FSL) programs. One of the reasons for this may be a preference for boys to take German and Asian languages rather than French, as the latter is seen as a feminine language:

Acceptable forms of masculinity may serve as an even greater deterrent for boys studying French, a language often perceived as feminine. Dörnyei and Clément (2001), Carr and Pauwels (2006), Kissau (2006) and Rosenthal (1999) all reported French to be stigmatized as effeminate. While all languages were thought to be more appropriate for girls, Carr and Pauwels (2006)
suggested that French had “the monopoly on femininity”. (Kissau, 2009, p. 158)

In addition, many of the topics covered in language classrooms, such as house and home, family and daily routine, food and drink and shopping...” (p.156) are found to be geared towards females, and are thus unlikely to garner interest from the male population in the classroom.

The effects of masculinity on language leaning have also been examined. Kissau and Turnbull (2009) indicate that the pressure for boys to not appear feminine is more common in co-ed classes (classes which contain both boys and girls), where boys tend to avoid taking classes that are more popular with girls. In single-sex classes, this ceases to be a problem and boys are less inclined to stick solely with more “masculine” classes, such as the sciences. Boys also seem not to be as encouraged as girls to take languages. For instance, in Kissau and Turnbull’s (2009) Canadian study, Grade 9 boys taking FSL were shown to be less encouraged by their teachers and guidance counsellors to learn French than were girls.

The lack of male teachers may also play a role in the feminisation of French. In 2010-11, 72 percent of all teachers in British Columbia’s public schools were female (British Columbia Teachers’ Federation, 2010-11). Additionally, since the majority of French teachers are female, boys tend to associate French as feminine, and there is a scarcity of male role models to show them that French can also be mastered and enjoyed by males. Research also suggests that boys are likely to be more involved and participatory in classes taught by males (Callaghan, 2008).

Brain differences between males and females have also been used to explain males’ results in second language studies. However, brain based theory has been shown to be inconclusive and does not always explain why some males do succeed in second language classes (Kissau, 2009). Nevertheless, there are educators that still believe that their male students
are less capable, and this view, in turn, may negatively affect male students’ own perceptions of their own abilities (Kissau & Turnbull, 2009).

FSL student perceptions of French and gender have also been the focus of research. In Kissau’s (2003) study, five hundred Grade 9 Core French students in Ontario answered a questionnaire using a 7 point Likert scale. Certain questions were designed to determine if there was a difference between the genders as to how French was perceived. For example, “I think girls are better at learning French than boys”, or “The French language is for sissies” (p. 410). Eight of the students (four male and four female) were selected for an interview using stratified random sampling, and six teachers were also interviewed. Both the questionnaires and interviews showed that French is largely perceived as feminine.

While suggestions are made as to how to improve French for boys in schools, Kissau points out that a societal shift in attitude towards French is required in order to effect change. Kissau’s study was inspired in part by research in England by Jones and Jones (2001), which examined boys’ underachievement in language study. Jones and Jones’ study was commissioned by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in England in order to investigate why overall student performance in modern foreign languages (MFL) was lower than in other subject areas, and why boys’ achievement was lower than girls’. Their data compared boys’ and girls’ GCSE results. The research includes the experiences of teachers and students, and showcases the voices of the students and their opinions of language study. The participants were 1266 year nine students (boys and girls) in schools that were either above or at the national achievement average. Among the findings, as summarized by Macaro (2003), the study revealed that:

- boys find MFL particularly difficult;
- girls find French more enjoyable than boys;
• boys do not associate French with a particular gender, nor do they think that the gender of the teacher matters;
• both boys and girls were concerned with the fact that the poor attitudes of some of the boys in MFL classes negatively impact the class dynamics;
• MFL teachers are more likely to be seen as responsible for success or failure of their students as compared to other subjects.

There are many reasons provided by students in the Jones and Jones (2001) study to account for why MFL classes were found to be so difficult. These include the fact that repetition, memorisation, and practice are required in order to be successful, that more emphasis is placed on grammatical correctness than content, and that it is difficult to catch up if one is already behind since both vocabulary and grammar acquisition are cumulative. Yet, Macaro (2003) critiques the study by highlighting methodological concerns about the research, and he concludes that: “we are not told how the interview data was coded and consequently we do not know whether the quotations are typical, showing a majority view or examples of learner beliefs” (p. 100). Despite these concerns, the Jones and Jones (2001) study provides valuable insight into students’ opinions and experiences with MFL, and it can help educators to reflect on their own practices as MFL teachers.

The second factor for boys’ lack of motivation for reading in French may be that boys’ motivation to study languages is already low (Jones & Jones, 2001; Kissau, 2006; Williams et al., 2002). Kissau (2006) outlines numerous explanations for this, ranging from pedagogical to biological reasons. Pedagogical reasons include, for example, the repetitive way in which FSL courses are taught and the fact that students rarely have the chance for oral practice of the language. These problems are related to a more traditional, teacher-centred style as opposed to
the student-centered communicative language approach (CLA) that reflects more current developments in second language pedagogy. There is therefore a call for more consistent implementation of CLA to avoid male attrition in second or foreign language classrooms.

Another pedagogical issue is that boys may not feel a sense of control in language classrooms: In most subject areas students can pursue extra research if they do not understand the material, or they can ask another adult for assistance, but they feel more alone and less supported in their study of languages.

In addition to pedagogically related issues that account for the low motivation of boys to learn second languages, Carr and Pauwels (2006) found that there are socioeconomic factors that may play a role. Boys with lower socioeconomic status may not see the relevance for language study, as they have had less exposure to travel and may not foresee travel in their future. Conversely, language learning may be more relevant for boys with a higher socioeconomic status because they are more likely to be exposed to travel to a French-speaking culture. However, these students are also less likely to be interested in language learning because of the career options associated with this language: “Several boys thought language learning leads to less well paid careers like teaching and therefore is less popular amongst boys” (p. 157). The overall “depreciated” status of FSL in Canada also contributes to the lack of encouragement to take French, as budget cuts and inconsistencies in the teaching and programming of FSL create the impression that French is a less important subject (Kissau, 2007).

A third factor that may dissuade male immersion students from reading in French is the lack of interest in available materials at their ability level. If students try to find texts in French that are similar to texts they enjoy in English, the level of language is usually too difficult. Along with other factors (such as teacher intervention, use of comprehension and meta-cognitive
strategies), repeated exposure to reading authentic French texts is seen to improve students’ language abilities so that they are able to understand what they are reading. However, the initial frustration of not understanding idioms and the fact that students tend to rely too closely on their bottom up strategies (e.g., looking up most of the words in the dictionary) may be enough to dissuade some boys from reading in French. Yet, the hypothesis is that if students had the ability to persevere past the initial obstacles, they would probably see their French improve.

Furthermore, when students see that they are making progress they develop a sense of autonomy, which is one of the factors necessary for increasing motivation (Dörnyei, 2003; Spolsky, 1989; Spratt, Humphreys, & Chan, 2002).

Researchers have proposed a number of strategies to improve literacy for boys, especially in language classes, such as including more male teachers, a more boy-friendly curriculum and single-sex classes (Brozo, 2006; Cavazos-Kottke, 2006). Other researchers, such as Kehler and Martino (2007), posit that socio-economic class may play more of a role in literacy ability than gender. In their 2007 study, Kehler and Martino found that middle class boys outperformed working class girls on literacy achievement tests. These critics suggest that rather than gender, differences in reading ability are more apparent in working class and lower socio-economic boys, and that this factor coupled with other factors, such as race and family structure, are more likely to contribute to poor reading performance rather than gender. Other critics of the “boy problem” say that while boys may underperform in traditional forms of literacy, they are surpassing girls in the new, and perhaps more relevant, digital literacies and that, in the future, girls may be at a disadvantage for their reliance on more traditional literacies (Alloway, 2007; Cavazos-Kottke, 2006; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Katz & Sokal, 2008; Kehler & Martino, 2007; White, 2007).
Hence, as acknowledged in this review of literature, there is a great divide amongst those that believe that the “boy crisis” is greatly exaggerated (Alloway, 2007; Cavazos-Kottke, 2006; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Husain & Milimet, 2009 Katz & Sokal, 2008; Kehler & Martino, 2007; White, 2007) and those who believe that boys are being left far behind and are therefore trying to find ways to improve boys’ reading abilities (Brozo, 2006; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Kenney, 2007; Kissau, 2006; Lever-Chain, 2008). Even if the boy crisis is exaggerated, one point of consensus is that studies have shown that boys’ motivation for reading is lower than girls’, and that motivation for reading is an important predictor of academic success (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Logan & Johnston, 2009; Wentzel, 1989; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997, in Mucherach, 2008). Therefore, interventions that have the possibility of increasing motivation for reading, such as the peer reading program in the present study, could lead to an overall improvement in academic abilities.

2.4 Possible Solutions to Change Boys’ Attitudes towards Reading

The differences in boys’ and girls’ attitudes towards reading have been researched internationally, and similar results have been found across studies on this topic. Many studies have shown that overall, there is a tendency for boys’ attitudes towards reading to be negative, and that girls tend to have better attitudes (Booth, Elliott-Johns, & Bruce, 2009; Gambell & Hunter, 2000; Logan & Johnston, 2009; Wigfield and Guthrie, 1997). Boys’ attitudes and achievement in a subject area are closely related (Logan & Johnston, 2009), so interventions that can help to develop a positive attitude and increase confidence may lead to an increase in achievement. An Ontario report on boys’ literacy attainment (Booth, et al., 2009) compares Canadian boys’ attitudes and underachievement in literacy to those in the UK, US and Australia: compared to girls, boys tend to take longer to learn to read, read less, estimate their
reading abilities lower than girls, are more likely to give themselves the label of ‘nonreader’, express less enthusiasm about reading and do not value reading as an activity (p. 4).

In Logan and Johnston’s (2009) study, differences in attitude towards reading between girls and boys were more significant than their differences in actual competence in reading. Logan and Johnston also found that, for both boys and girls, attitudes to reading become more negative as they get older. This suggests that there might be a role that parents and teachers can play while students are young by encouraging reading and, as a result, develop students’ confidence in this ability. In order for boys to increase their intrinsic motivation for reading, it is important that teachers and parents help them to develop confidence in their reading abilities: “Boys in particular benefit from praise and encouragement to increase confidence in their abilities, which in turn promote more positive attitudes to reading and school” (Logan & Johnston, p. 210).

In addition to the role of parents and teachers, other factors, such as peer influence, may have an effect on developing a positive attitude and improving reading performance. Participating in a peer reading program may help younger students to develop these positive attitudes, especially if they have a student role model that is a good reader and enjoys reading. When students work with a peer, they do not feel as though they have to impress the teacher and they are not interrupted and corrected in the same way as when working with a teacher (Topping & Lindsay, 1992). Tutors may also benefit, as they may develop empathy for their peers through working collaboratively and helping each other. Furthermore, they can also become more aware of their own learning and abilities (Gisbert & Font, 2008). While younger students can see what
their future reading abilities may be like, older students can see how they have improved throughout the years.

### 2.5 Strategies that Increase Reading Motivation

Pedagogical strategies for motivating boys to read for pleasure or to enjoy reading in school include having single-sex language arts classes with novels picked especially for boys (for example, adventure stories, male protagonists, or non-fiction texts on topics of interest), as well as a male teacher that can provide a positive role model for literacy (Giles, 2008; Kenney, 2007). However, some studies have found that the gender of the teacher does not make a difference (Brincheno, 2007; Jones & Jones, 2001; Skelton, 2009). Rather, when it comes to reading, the availability (or lack of availability) of the materials that boys like to read is what may make a difference in the amount that boys read. Boys typically favour the types of reading materials that are not readily available in most school libraries (Alloway, 2007; Cavazos Kottke, 2006; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Kenney, 2007; Sanford & Midall, 2007), such as illustrated novels, comics, or “fact books”, which have less text and more action than standard novels:

They enjoy a range of fictional works, including fantasy, science fiction, realism, adventure, and mystery. They also read biographies, non-fiction texts, newspapers, magazines, internet texts, Pokémon and Yu-Gi-O cards, graphic novels, e-mails, and comic books. In a less traditional sense of literacy, they "read" TV, videos, and video games. (Sanford & Midall, 2007, p. 434)

Being cognizant of the types of books that boys prefer may make selection of appropriate materials easier for teachers or librarians for French reading materials. However, there are fewer materials for boys available in French (especially in the Western provinces). If boys are not motivated to read to begin with, and materials are hard to find, then there is virtually no
possibility for boys to read for pleasure at home. As a result, parental or teacher intervention is even more important (than in places where materials are available) to encourage boys to read.

Providing or making available material that is grade-level appropriate as well as interesting is challenging since schools usually have fewer resources in the second language than in the first language of instruction. School libraries, ideally, should offer a wide selection of materials for both genders. Yet, with funding constraints or a greater or lesser emphasis on French across schools, the differences in the number of French books can vary considerably. Additionally, it is also important to make available different kinds of text types that may motivate boys more, such as newspapers and stories/articles on the Internet and other non-fiction writing (Logan & Johnston, 2009). Non-fiction texts now typically include a variety of features such as fact boxes, graphs, charts, photos or other illustrations, captions, and hyperlinks. These types of reading materials often also have less text, which makes them more appealing to struggling readers as the complementary text features provide scaffolding for comprehension.

The fact that students are surrounded by multi-modal texts in their real lives means that the same type of texts should be made available at schools so that students can put into practice the different types of skills that are required for interpreting multimodal texts. A text that is more visual may require the reader to use inference skills in order to interpret the storyline: “...reading non-linear, multi-layered, intertextual texts, as well as reading images and other semiotic sign systems, are some of the literacy skills being practised with these alternative texts” (Sanford & Madill, 2007, p. 434). In addition to reading non-fiction texts as an alternative to the traditional fictional novel, illustrated novels provide another option. Many novels from classic literature have been reinterpreted as illustrated novels, which again provide the advantage of less text and the addition of illustrations to assist with comprehension. Magazines and short stories provide
other options as well. If students are introduced to a variety of texts, they are more likely to find something that interests them.

In addition to including different types of texts, there are also countless reading strategies and resource materials that teachers should use to motivate and guide students in order to help them become successful readers. According to Roberge (2008), one such resource is Sylvie Cartier’s book *Apprendre en lisant* (2007) which offers strategies to teachers on how to improve students’ motivation for reading and to maximise learning through this activity. Cartier highlights the importance of establishing the context and relevance of reading materials to students before they start to read them and of reflecting on prior knowledge about the themes or topics about which they will be reading. She emphasizes that it is important to teach reading strategies that successful readers use, such as making notes, tables and mental maps to organise the information that they are reading. Cartier’s strategies work across the curriculum and for students of all ages. If students can make a personal connection with reading material, then they will be more interested in it and more motivated to read. While Roberge refers to reading strategies that teachers should introduce in order to make reading more meaningful, Cartier emphasises that teachers must establish the context of books before they are read, as well as reflect on prior knowledge that students possess about genre and theme. Thus, active reading, using strategies such as note-taking, mental maps, and summary tables should also be encouraged.

Another popular book of reading strategies is Adrienne Gear’s *Reading Power* (2006), which has been translated in French for use by French immersion teachers. It describes comprehension techniques that teach students to think actively while they are reading. The strategies work well for both fiction and non-fiction texts, and they are based around five key
concepts: connecting, questioning, visualising, inferring, and transforming. Once students are familiar with these five concepts, they can be used for guiding activities such as literature circles and can also be incorporated into a peer tutoring situation.

Many other resources outline strategies for teaching reading in an additional language. Barnett (1989) outlines the importance of making reading an interactive process when teaching reading in an additional language. Reading a text involves several steps including “pre-reading”, “while-reading”, “post-reading” and “follow-up” activities. “Pre-reading” activities preview challenging vocabulary that will be found in the text. “While-reading” activities could include learning how to skim a text for the main idea rather than focussing on the meaning of every individual word in isolation, and using text features (such as titles, captions, illustrations) to assist with comprehension. Post-reading a text it is important to check for comprehension through having students demonstrate that they understood the text, either through dramatising what they read, retelling the story in their own words, or discussing elements that they did not understand with a group or as a class.

In his book, Boy Smarts, Canadian educator Barry Macdonald (2005) also provides strategies on improving boys’ literacy. He suggests that using a traditional Sustained Silent Reading program with enforced quiet time may turn boys against reading. Rather, “Social Reading” may be more appropriate for boys, where they read for a short period and then are encouraged to talk about what they read in a group. He suggests that even the most reluctant readers can discuss illustrations or photos that interest them. A peer reading program would allow boys the opportunity for such discussion. In addition, boys’ language skills also seem to benefit from being read to during peer reading: “They benefit through hearing new words and sophisticated sentence structure because they infer the meaning of words from context” (p. 135).
Other strategies that Macdonald suggests include stocking libraries with the types of books that boys prefer, such as humorous books and “books about risk-taking, about weird or unusual facts, about fearful dangers overcome” (p. 133). The strategies described here that are aimed at increasing boys’ motivation to read can benefit all students. They encourage dynamic reading programs with lots of different types of reading materials to catch students’ attention and assist with comprehension and vocabulary both before and while they read.

2.6 Boys and Peer Tutoring Reading Programs

Peer tutoring is not a new concept; it started to become popular in the 1960s as classrooms in North America became more diverse. In the 1970s and 1980s researchers began to study the collaborative aspects of peer tutoring programs in regular classrooms and the positive effects that they can have on both the tutor and the tutee (Topping, 1986). Over the years, teachers have become more methodical in how they set up peer tutoring programs, with more thought put into pairings and better trained tutors and volunteers. Among the first researchers to study peer tutoring was Topping (1986), who has researched the positive effects of peer tutoring on reading for boys. He claims that one of the reasons it works well is because boys, and some girls, are more oriented to auditory learning, hence they have more recall after having something read to them than when they read something silently. This refers to the type of peer tutoring when the tutor reads out loud to the tutee. There are however, different models of peer tutoring, such of which involve dividing the time between the tutor and the tutee, or having only the tutee read out loud to the tutor. Topping also notes that confidence increases after participating in peer tutoring reading programs. This can help poor readers, as many of them exhibit a learned helplessness and low confidence surrounding reading. Gisbert and Font’s (2008) study on the impact of peer tutoring outlines similar positive features: peer tutoring can be used with students
as young as Grade one because of the relative simplicity of instruction; it can help bridge the gap between total reliance on the teacher and self-reliance, or autonomy, which is needed to increase motivation to read; and the one-on-one attention of peer tutoring may be all that is needed to motivate and increase confidence, for both the tutor and the tutee. In fact, Gisbert and Font’s study found that peer reading is useful for both partners, as it can improve self-esteem and empathy for both parties involved. This is important for boys because better self-esteem could improve their confidence in reading.

Rubenstein-Avila (2003) also examined the relationships in tutor dyads with elementary school students and found that, in some instances, “the line between mentor and mentee can blur” (p. 83). In some cases this can be positive, such as when students collaborate by drawing upon each other’s areas of expertise to improve their literacy skills. However, sometimes a sense of competition can develop as the mentor uses the role to develop a sense of superiority over the mentee. This can result in resentment and frustration, which is not a desired result of a peer reading program. For this reason, pairings must be carefully determined, and peer tutors must be trained as to what their role is and what behaviours are acceptable.

None of the reading interventions for French immersion students has focused on boys as the only participants. However, outside of the immersion context, there have been many examples of successful reading intervention programs for boys, for example, Sokal et al.’s (2005) research in a Canadian inner city school on a 22-week paired reading program that used books of high interest to boys. In this investigation, third and fourth grade boys were paired with either a male or a female research assistant as their reading tutor. The study demonstrated that boys performed well in the pair reading context: their view of their reading abilities, self-concept
and reading performance improved. In this case, the gender of the tutor had no effect; the more important factor was whether the reading material was interesting to boys.

Some studies have found that peers and relatives play a more important role for boys than their teachers (Bricheno, 2007). Many schools have used sports stars as role models for reading (Bricheno, 2007; Carnell, 2005). However, capitalizing on students’ admiration for their older peers may be a more effective method to motivate boys to read. An older peer with a positive attitude towards both French and reading could help to eliminate stereotypes (such as the idea that French is feminine) that cause boys to dislike French or to not read in French. A male peer tutor would not only most likely be effective as a role model, but would also be more effective as a tutor because, even though matching the gender of the teacher with students does not increase student achievement (Skelton, Carrington, Francis, Hutchings, Read, & Hall, 2009), studies on peer tutoring have shown that students prefer a tutor of the same sex and that same-gender pairs tend to be more effective, showing that students may be more influenced by their peers than by their teachers (Friedland & Truesdell, 2004).

Other examples of reading interventions for boys found in the literature include providing reading material that is exclusively geared towards male readers or organising boys’ reading groups with older male role models from the community, for example, local athletes. Carnell (2005) studied British high schools that distribute the magazine Full On, a periodical geared towards high school boys. In the careers section, the magazine challenges male stereotypes and teaches boys about the importance of education for their future, as well as providing more motivating articles on sports and music. Teachers and students in Carnell’s study praised the magazine as a good tool to get boys to read, again pointing to the need to provide interesting and engaging reading material for boys.
While the gender of the teacher may not matter to male students, young boys nevertheless demonstrate the need for positive male reading role models (such as friends, or their father). Kelly (2007) examined a program where a rural Australian school worked with the public library to organize a series of activities such as blogging, night time book clubs, home reading programs, and book prizes in order to increase boys’ interest in reading. The program targeted boys from Grades 5 to 9. Kelly’s results show an overall improvement in attitude and engagement towards reading. The study also showed the importance of challenging the gender stereotype that reading is a feminine activity through providing male reading role models for the boys. Providing positive role models for boys both inside and outside the school is important. One way the school did this was through developing a partnership with a soccer team whose members would be role models for a national reading champions program.

The literature clearly suggests that, because boys generally have lower confidence than girls about their reading abilities, they require more external forces that motivate them to read. All of the reading intervention programs report favourable results with the same recurring themes: parents and teachers recognise the importance of improving boys’ reading abilities and are pleased with the results of the studies; boys’ motivation and self-concept as readers improve; and, while the gender of the teacher does not seem to have an effect, it does seem important to provide positive reading role models for young boys due to the negative stereotypes surrounding boys and reading.

2.7 Reading Intervention in French Immersion

The closest study to the present one in terms of context and method is Bournot-Trites’ (2003) reading intervention peer tutoring program for primary French immersion students with mild reading difficulties. Grade 2 and 3 students with reading difficulties were tutored by Grade
5, 6 and 7 students in three Vancouver elementary schools. The dyads met twice a week in the mornings for 30 minute sessions during the scheduled silent reading portion of class time. Parent volunteers were asked to help with supervision in the library where the sessions were held. Prospective tutors received intensive training in the form of an information session, formal training, shadowing, and a feedback session. Experienced tutors role-played tutoring sessions for potential tutors, outlining the strategies that are used during the sessions, such as pre-reading activities (predicting what will happen in the book), activities with new words, and conversation activities to engage the tutee with the content of the book. Tutors were also trained on how to deal with any discipline related issues and how to record the books and assess when it was time to move on to the next reading level. During the shadowing sessions, a new tutor was paired with an experienced tutor and observed a tutoring session. During the second phase, the new tutor led the session while the experienced tutor observed and offered feedback. The role play, observation and practice during the training sessions provided prospective tutors with valuable leadership skills which are essential for a teaching or mentoring environment.

Students, parents and teachers were pleased with the results of the program, as the student participants showed increased self-esteem and interest in reading. The study demonstrated that a peer reading program that pairs older students with younger students with minor reading problems can help to improve the reading level of the tutees, but that this approach is more limited with students with severe reading disabilities. Effects on the tutors included an increase in self-esteem and attitude towards reading. Effects on the tutored students included improved attitude and increased motivation towards reading and more awareness and understanding of their difficulties with reading. This is shown in the following summary of the results of the program.
Ninety two percent of the learners agree or strongly agree that they read better after the peer tutoring program. This is echoed by their parents (94%), by their teachers (100 %), and by their tutors (81.6%). The percentages of positive responses about the improvement in reading mechanics, such as decoding, were quite high: 76%, 91%, and 88% respectively for learners, their parents and their teachers. Comprehension was also perceived as being better from 83% of the learners, 83% of their parents and 85% of their teachers. In addition, 89% of the learners and 88% of their parents think that the learners’ concentration while reading has improved, while 100% of their teachers think this is the case. (Bournot-Trites, 2006, para. 4)

The project also had positive lasting effects on the schools that decided to continue the program in the future and also influenced other schools to adopt the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ for French immersion schools. The program also helped to increase the awareness of and support for French in the community, as it was featured in a news report during National Literacy Week.

It is important to retain males in French programs, whether in French immersion or FSL, not only to achieve Canada’s goal of bilingualism, but also to ensure that there are male French teachers in the future. Improving boys’ confidence and motivation for reading has been shown to correlate with achievement. The research points out that the types of texts, as well as the way in which reading is presented are crucial in motivating boys. Making texts available that reflect alternate or new literacies that are appealing to boys will help with motivation to read, as will presenting reading as a more “social” or interactive activity. The literature suggests that interventions such as a peer reading program may help boys feel a sense of progress as they are required (or expected) to read more and are also more systematically exposed to new vocabulary.
Peer reading programs may also help to encourage boys to read on their own. Indeed, according to Friedland and Truesdell (2004), a factor that contributes to voluntary reading is “...a partner with whom to read” (p. 76). Since a peer reading program would provide such a partner, reading intervention in combination with other pedagogical strategies may be effective for increasing boys’ motivation to read. Such a program may provide the scaffolding needed to make students more autonomous and thus more intrinsically motivated readers.

This literature review has shown that there is still debate about boys’ literacy abilities and whether there is really cause for concern. It has outlined the fact that boys’ negative attitudes towards reading may be one of the causes of their underachievement in literacy. The apparent lack of male interest and participation in French may have as a consequence fewer males pursuing French degrees and thus fewer male French teachers in the future. One way of improving this may be through interventions such as the following study which try to make French more appealing and accessible to boys.
3 Research Design

3.1 Context

This small-scale pilot research project was conducted in a French immersion elementary school in Vancouver where I taught in the spring of 2010. Prior to commencing the research, permission was sought and received by the Vancouver School Board and the school principal, and the research was approved by the University of British Columbia’s Behavioural Research Ethics Board. The Grade 5 students involved in the study were from another teacher’s Grade 5/6 French immersion class at the school, and the Grade 7 students were from my Grade 6/7 French immersion class. The school is dual track (English and French immersion classrooms) and is located in a middle class South Vancouver neighbourhood. The school population is very diverse, with students representing 30 countries and 26 languages. There are approximately 490 students from Grades K to 7 in the English program and 100 students in French immersion from Grades 4-7, with Grades K-3 at a nearby annex. Currently, all of the teachers in the French immersion stream are female.

The peer tutoring program was based on The Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ (Chipman & Roy, 2005) for French immersion Schools which was used in Vancouver elementary schools and consisted of pairing up an older peer with a younger reader with mild reading difficulties, with sessions held multiple times per week during the silent reading portion of the day.

Among the differences between the program in the present study and the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ for French immersion Schools were the ages of the students as Grade 2 and 3 students were paired with tutors from Grades 5 to 7, whereas in the present study, Grade 5 students were paired with Grade 7 students. Also, the pairs in the Peer Tutoring Literacy
Program included both genders while only boys participated in this study. Other differences include the extensive training that the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program was able to provide for the tutors, as this program was a large scale school-wide effort which received funding and a lot of assistance from parent volunteers and teachers, all of which does not apply to this study. With regards to the reading material, in the current study it was geared towards boys. In contrast, books in the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program were also pre-selected and levelled for the readers but since both genders were involved, books were not geared towards a particular gender.

Similarities of the programming are the following: a younger peer was paired with an older mentor, tutors received training prior to the programming, however the training was more extensive in the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™, books were pre-selected to avoid too much time being spent picking out a book, programming occurred during the silent reading portion of class time, and during both programs the tutoring sessions involved some pre-reading activities (including vocabulary and predicting activities). However, in the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™, the tutors read only a minor amount to the tutees at the beginning of each session, whereas in this study, the time was divided equally to examine whether having the opportunity to listen to a competent reader would increase tutees’ motivation for reading.

3.2 Method

The tutoring sessions in this program consisted primarily of time spent reading especially selected grade-level material with an older peer. Based on this research and my observation while teaching, I decided to incorporate illustrated novels in the peer reading program. Increased exposure to many types of literature, including fiction and nonfiction material, as well as making reading a more social activity and providing opportunity for discussion, may hopefully help to motivate disengaged readers.
Books of interest to boys based on surveying male students and French immersion teachers were selected from the library and put aside for the project. This helped eliminate time that would have been spent by the students choosing a book, in addition to ensuring that the reading material was of the appropriate reading level. The reading material was chosen from a selection of illustrated novels that the school librarian and other French immersion teachers had identified as especially appealing to boys. Also, the books had been levelled according to the difficulty of the vocabulary; the reading level was geared towards upper intermediate (Grades 5-7). The books were highly appealing, with full colour, glossy pages, and, the stories were based on real historical events, such as World War Two. In my observation, the types of reading texts that students struggle with refer to the traditional text-based novel, especially those that are considered “authentic materials (i.e., not translated from English) and thus contain many idiomatic expressions from a French speaking country or region. Additionally, many boys seem to respond more enthusiastically to different modes of literacy instead of traditional print novel, for example, digital literacy or print texts with different features, such as illustrated novels, which are books that are not text-based like the traditional novel, and they rely on illustration to convey the story. Thus for the purpose of this study, the books chosen for the boys to read were mostly illustrated novels at the upper Intermediate level; however, more “traditional” novels were also available to provide variety.

During a three month period, five mentors and five mentees met in the library twice a week for 30 minutes during the scheduled Silent Reading portion of class time. For half of the 30-minute period, the Grade 7 students read to the Grade 5 students, and then they switched. The purpose of the Grade 7 students reading to the younger peers was for the Grade 5 students to listen to a strong, confident reader and to enjoy the experience of being read to. Prior to being
paired up with their corresponding Grade 5 tutees, the mentors were trained to check for comprehension, for example, through asking if the tutee understood difficult words, and asking if they understood the plot of the story. They were also trained to use a dictionary to look up any new words together, to stop and ask the mentee to make predictions about what might happen next, and to make connections with the reading material and prior knowledge (for example, what does this remind you of? Have you ever met any people like this character? Have you ever tried the activity that the character is doing?). Records were kept of the books that they read together: each pair had a folder that the mentor was in charge of keeping and bringing to the sessions. Those folders included the list of books that they read and instructions and reminders of procedures for the tutor.

Prior to beginning the tutoring sessions, the tutees completed a questionnaire and after the program, both the tutors and tutees were interviewed and completed a post-program questionnaire. The questions in both the questionnaire and the interview were constructed to reflect the themes of the main research questions focusing on reading, language, motivation, and gender. The interview questions contained items that allowed participants to expand on the answers to key questions in the questionnaire. What follows is a description of how the interview and questionnaire items were developed and conducted.

**Tutees’ Pre-questionnaire**

The pre-questionnaire for the tutees had 11 items (see Appendix D). The concepts to be analysed in the questionnaire include:

1. Motivation: items 8, 9

The items on motivation were created to see whether the tutees had any intrinsic motivation towards reading in French prior to the program (item 8), for instance, by
borrowing a French library book on their own. Item 9 asks if they got bored/ frustrated easily while reading in French to see if this could be a reason for low motivation.

2. Attitude towards reading: items 1, 5, 6, 7, 9

3. Attitude towards reading in French: items 2, 6, 8, 9

The items on attitude were created to examine tutees’ attitudes towards reading in French and reading in general, as they may have a negative attitude towards French reading, but not in their first language (generally English for all of the tutees). It should be noted that although the general population of the school is very linguistically diverse, there are very few English Language Learners (ELL) students in the French Immersion program, thus only one of the students in the program is an ESL student). Item 7 asks whether someone reads with the tutee at home. This could show the degree to which French reading is encouraged/ supported in home, which may help to develop a good attitude towards reading.

4. Effect of gender: 11

This item was created to find out the tutees’ preference for tutor gender before the program.

5. Confidence/ self-esteem: items 3, 4, 10

The items on confidence/ self-esteem were created to reveal if tutees with low motivation also have low confidence in their French reading abilities, as one of the aims of the program is to help learners improve in these areas.

6. Reading at home: items 5, 6, 7
The items on reading at home were created to have a record of how much the tutees reported that they were reading at home prior to the program as compared to after the intervention.

Tutees’ Post-questionnaire

The post-questionnaire for the tutees had 18 items (see Appendix F). The following is a list of the concepts to be addressed in the questionnaire:

1. Motivation: items 3, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
2. Attitude towards reading: items 3, 6, 7, 9
3. Effect of gender: items 5, 10, 16, 17, 18
4. Attitude towards reading in French: items 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9
5. Confidence/ self-esteem: items 4, 8
6. Increase reading at home: item 2

Most of the questions were parallel between the pre and post questionnaires, including the following pairs: questions 2 (pre) and 3 (post), questions 4 (pre) and 4 (post), questions 8 (pre) and 6 (post), questions 6 (pre) and 2 (post), questions 9 (pre) and 9 (post), questions 10 (pre) and 8 (post), and questions 11(pre) and 18 (post). The post questionnaire had some additional items that were designed to gather information about the tutees’ experiences with the program, and which could not have been answered prior to the program (items 1-5, 7, 10, 12, and 14). Also, Item 7 (Somebody reads with me/ to me in French at home) from the pre-questionnaire was not addressed in the post-questionnaire because, since the program was based on the tutees being read to at school by the tutors, it was assumed that this would not change the amount that anyone was reading to them in French at home. Item 3 (I am confident in my English reading abilities) was also not asked in the post-questionnaire because the study focused
exclusively on determining if students were reading more in French. The reason it was asked in the pre-questionnaire was to gather general information about their reading habits.

**Tutors’ Post-questionnaire**

The post-questionnaire for the tutors had 17 items (see Appendix H). The following is a list of the concepts to be addressed in the questionnaire.

1. **Motivation:** items 5, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
   One of the items (5) was created to reveal if there was any effect on the motivation of the tutors by asking if they would like to participate in a similar program again. The other items were created to see if the tutors had observed a change in motivation of the tutees.

2. **Attitude towards reading:** items 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 17
   These items were created to find out if the tutors observed a change in attitude towards reading for the tutee (items 3, 4 and 17), and also if there was any effect on the tutors, for example, if they thought that they had improved as readers since the beginning (items 5, 8, and 9).

3. **Effect of gender:** items 3, 11, 12, 13
   These items were created to reveal if the tutors felt that having an older male role model rather than a female role model as a tutor was beneficial to the tutees.

4. **Attitude towards reading in French:** items 2, 4, 10, 17
   These items were created to find out if the tutors observed a change in attitude towards reading in French for the tutee (items 4 and 17), and also if there was any effect on the tutors’ (2 and 10) attitudes towards French reading.

5. **Confidence/ self-esteem:** item 1, 4, 7, 8, 9
These items were created to find out if there was any change in the tutors’ confidence or self-esteem after experiencing the role of a mentor.

6. Increase reading at home: item 10
This item was created to find out if the program had an effect on the tutors, i.e. were they now reading more at home in French.

**Tutee’s Interview Questions**

There were 8 interview questions (see Appendix A) which were based on the following categories:

1. Tutees’ perception of the peer tutoring program experience (items 1, 2, 7)
2. What students liked most/least about the program (items 3, 4)
3. Challenges experienced by the tutees (item 5)
4. Would they recommend the program to other students? (item 6)
5. Would the tutees participate again in the future? (item 8)

**Tutors’ Interview Questions**

The interview for the tutees had 10 items (see Appendix B) which were based on the following categories:

1. Tutors’ perception of the peer tutoring program experience (items 1, 2, 7, 8, and 9)
2. What students liked most/least about the program (items 3, 4)
3. Challenges that tutors experienced (item 5)
4. Would they recommend the program to other students? (item 6)
5. Would the tutors participate again in the future? (item 10)

A description of how the data were analysed can be found in the Data section of this chapter.
3.3 Participants

Participants included five male Grade 5 students as tutees, and five male Grade 7 students as tutors. The two-year age difference between Grade 5s and 7s meant that the younger students were naturally drawn to look up to their older, more experienced tutors. Because the French immersion student body is relatively small at the school where this study was carried out (there are only four grade levels of French immersion students at the school: Grades 4-7), tutors and tutees were previously acquainted; however, they did not interact with each other on a consistent basis. The fact that students knew each other at least a little, facilitated initial interaction between them. Other participants included classroom teachers whose students participated in the program, and who suggested suitable mentors and mentees to be involved in the project. Originally, seven tutors volunteered following a short presentation to both Grade 6/7 immersion classes describing the project and the role of the tutor. Due to scheduling conflicts, only 5 tutors were able to commit to the program. A letter of permission which also described the program was sent home to the parents of the tutees and the tutors for parent permission. One copy was kept at home, and the other was returned to the school. The participants were thus selected based on teacher recommendation: the tutees were identified as reluctant readers who were approaching or meeting grade-level reading abilities, whereas the tutors were labelled as capable readers who either fully met or exceeded grade level reading abilities. While teachers could recommend mentors, it was important that the Grade 7 participants were recruited as volunteers to ensure that only those who were motivated students who would be good role models were selected. Learning disabled students were not involved in the program as student mentors do not have the experience or knowledge to work with these students. The peer tutoring sessions were supervised by the school librarian, thus my direct involvement and potential influence were
minimized. The school librarian was able to ensure that students remained on-task through circulating in the area, but she did not otherwise actively interact with the students.

The following is a description of the tutors and tutees (all of the names are pseudonyms):

**Tutee #1** “Mark” was born in Canada and is of First Nations heritage (father is half First Nations). English is his home language. He enjoys eating and loves talking about food. He is very outgoing, polite, enjoys comedy shows and playing Dungeons and Dragons. Mark reads at grade level but becomes frustrated very easily when he does not understand vocabulary.

**Tutee #2** “Alex” was born in Mexico and also has Guatemalan heritage. His home language is Spanish and he speaks English and French. He is a shy, quiet student who enjoys soccer, math, and playing with friends. Alex is a reluctant reader who responds well to one on one help.

**Tutee #3** “Jas” was born in Canada and is of East Indian heritage. His home language is English. He likes hockey, basketball, and video games. Jas is a reluctant reader who sometimes has difficulty focussing on the task when he is reading or writing independently.

**Tutee #4** “Aegel” was born in Canada and is of Philippine heritage. His home language is English, and he speaks some Tagalog. He is kind, polite and very sensitive, and he likes video games, reading, hockey, and basketball. Aegel is eager to please his teachers and always tries his best but gets very easily frustrated when he does not understand material.

**Tutee #5** “Luca” was born in Canada and has Haitian and Honduran heritage. His home languages are Spanish and English. Luca’s father speaks French but does not live with the family; Luca is the youngest of a large family with children from ages 12 -26. He likes drawing, video games, basketball, and running. He is funny, enjoys making people laugh but can also be shy. Luca is a struggling reader who is easily distracted but works well one on one.

**Tutor #1** “Julio” was born in Canada and has Chinese heritage. He is Anglophone and his
parents’ first language is English. Julio is a Ministry designated Gifted student and an excellent athlete. He is the oldest of four siblings. Julio is a talented reader and a great role model for other students.

**Tutor #2** “Dominic” was born in China. He is an ELL student and his first language is Cantonese. He has one younger sister, enjoys sports, and is very shy. He is eager to participate in activities where he can practise his leadership skills.

**Tutor #3** “Paulo” was born in Canada and has East Indian heritage. He is a quiet, polite student who is studious and works well with everyone. Paulo is very mature and can explain material well to peers who may not understand it.

**Tutor #4** “Tyler” was born in Canada and has European heritage. His home language is English and he is an only child to a single mother. He is very boisterous and personable, has a great reading voice, and enjoys helping and getting to know all sorts of people. Tyler is a natural leader and the tutees were very excited about working with him.

**Tutor #5** “Ray” was born in Canada and has Indian and Irish heritage. His home language is English. He is the oldest sibling with two younger sisters. He is a gifted student who is very critical and introspective; he is an excellent reader and writer. Ray is able to explain the content of the reading material to his tutee due to his superior comprehension skills.

Tutees worked with the same tutor for the duration of the program. After consultation with the classroom teacher, efforts were made to pair tutees and tutors who had similar personality traits and it was predicted would work well together. Mark and Julio, Tyler and Luca, Paulo and Aegel, Ray and Alex, Dominic and Jas were paired together. The pairs got along well and there was no need to make any changes.
3.4 Data

Qualitative and quantitative data were obtained through interviews and questionnaires, (see appendices A-H for copies of questionnaire and interview questions). The tutees completed a questionnaire prior to and following the intervention, and the tutors completed a questionnaire following their participation in the program. Both groups were interviewed after their experience with the program. The questionnaire items were based on the four central research questions, with the aim of measuring the following concepts: motivation, attitude towards reading, effect of gender, attitude towards reading in French, confidence/ self-esteem, and home reading. All of the questionnaires were based on a five point Likert scale from 1 to 5, 1 being “strongly disagree.” Upon completion of the questionnaires, all data analyses were performed using SPSS Software version 11 in order to determine the frequency of responses. Parallel questions were then compared between the pre and post questionnaires to determine any differences in the results.

The items in the questionnaires were constructed in advance of the research by breaking down the research questions into the categories which were based on the main research questions. The questions elicit a combination of behavioural (their reading habits) and attitudinal (opinions about reading) information (Dörnyei, 2003). Any factual information (age, race, reading level) was obtained through student records at the school. The questions are simply worded to account for an elementary reading level, and the questionnaires are short (under 20 questions) and took not more than 15 minutes to complete to avoid “fatigue effect” (Dörnyei, 2003). Questionnaires were labelled for identification of the respondents (tutee #1, #2, etc.). There was some overlap between the questions in both data collection instruments which allowed for within-case triangulation of these questions. The results of the questions that were
the same in the questionnaire and the interview were later compared with the results of the interviews to check for inconsistencies; however, not all of the questions were the same.

The qualitative data consisted of structured interviews. I interviewed students individually once at the end of the study. The interviews were approximately 15 – 20 minutes long, and were transcribed word for word by hand, and then typed into a word processing program. As for the questionnaires, the interviews were labelled for identification of the respondents. The purpose of interviewing the students was to obtain qualitative data which would allow the students’ views to be reflected in the final results, as structured questionnaires provide only limited space for more in-depth personal reflections.

The analysis of the interview transcripts was performed through creating the following coding categories, which were in turn created using the interview questions:

1. Tutors’ and tutees’ perception of the peer tutoring program experience (items 1, 2)
2. What students most/ least liked about the program (items 3, 4)
3. Challenges that tutors or tutees experienced (item 5)
4. If they would recommend the program to other students (item 6)
5. If the tutees/ tutors would participate again in the future (item 8)

A table displaying the information with a written summary was then produced for each category. Through organising the qualitative data into tables according to these categories, themes, similarities, differences, and discrepancies between identical items in the questionnaire and the interview were made apparent. Qualitative data in the tables was quantifiable by counting the number of times similar statements occurred that corresponded with a particular category. For example, both tutors and tutees were asked “What was the most challenging thing about the program? Why?” This question corresponds with category #3: challenges that tutors or tutees
experienced. The table below was produced and the answers were quantified as follows:

**Challenges for Both: Interview Question #5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutors</th>
<th>Tutees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low reading level of partner 1/5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting partner to read at first 1/5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping partner focussed and interested 3/5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nothing 4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some books were hard 2/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this table, it is apparent that the issue of keeping the tutees focussed comes up for 3/5 of the tutors, and the data reported here also indicate that 2/5 of the tutees say that some of the reading material was difficult. The interview questions also provided data that complemented the information gathered via the questionnaire since it allowed me to elicit more elaborate responses on specific items, for example, item 1 in the post-program questionnaire is: “I enjoyed the peer reading program” and items 3 and 4 in the post program interview are “What did you like most about the program? Why?” and “What did you like the least about the program? Why?” Students were able to elaborate on questions such as these with specific answers about what they most or least enjoyed, which was not possible with the questionnaire.
4 Results

In the present study, both quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews) data were collected to answer the main research questions. This chapter includes the findings derived from the analyses of these data. A description of the procedures followed and the methods used to obtain the data are found in Chapter Three. The research questions in this study are based around the following five themes: motivation (Question 1), home reading in French, (Question 1a), the tutee’s confidence in their reading abilities (Question 1b), the effect of the tutoring on the tutors (Question 2) and the effect of gender (Question 3). Results are presented in this chapter in that order, following a brief overview of the results of the program. A summary of the general results at the end of this chapter includes: the effects of the reading peer tutoring on reading in French, the tutees’ perceptions on having a male tutor, and on the perception of the reading ability of boys compared to girls, as well as the tutors’ and tutees’ perceptions of the peer tutoring experience. Interview questions and questionnaire items are included in the Appendices. Direct quotes from the interviews have been used in the results to capture the voices of the students and to support the claims made in the results. The data set includes questionnaires and interviews from all participating students.

4.1 Overview of Results

Overall, based on the participants’ self-perceptions, the peer tutoring program produced positive results. The tutees reported an increase in confidence in their French reading abilities as a result of the tutoring program. Prior to participating in the program, four out of the five tutees were “neutral” about their abilities, while after the program, they all expressed confidence in their French reading skills. A less marked improvement was shown in the results of the
questionnaire when asked if the tutees read in French at home (Appendix K). Pre-program, three out of the five tutees said that they did not read in French at home, and the remaining two responded neutrally. After the program, four out of the five were neutral, and one tutee responded positively. The results look more positive in the interview, where all of the tutees stated that they were now reading more in French at home. Possible reasons for the discrepancy between the answers to this item in the questionnaire and the interview will be explored in the Discussion section of Chapter Four.

The results of the tutees’ perceptions on having a male tutor show that after the program there was a slight increase in the preference for male (rather than female) tutors. Prior to the program, two out of the five students said they would prefer a male tutor, while after the program, three out of the five indicated this preference. The main reason given in the interviews for preferring a male tutor was that reading with another boy made them feel more comfortable. These results were consistent with the questionnaire (with three out of the five preferring a male tutor). When asked in the questionnaire if they would prefer a male teacher, the results did not really change; both before and after the program, four out of the five were either “neutral” or “negative”, and only one out of the five had a positive response. It should also be noted that none of the students involved (both tutors and tutees) had ever had a male teacher which, in turn, may have an effect on their opinions.

Based on the questionnaire, both before and after the program, the majority of the tutees (four out of the five) felt that boys are just as good at reading as girls. Since there was no experimental group with female tutees, this observation may likely be based on the tutees’ general school and life experiences (siblings, friends, etc.) with girls’ reading abilities.
Both the tutors and the tutees reported that they enjoyed the tutoring experience. For the tutors, the aspects that they liked the most were: the new selection of books, helping a partner, reading, speaking in French, and interacting with students with whom they wouldn’t normally talk. The tutees also indicated that they appreciated the selection of books and reading; in addition, they thought that the tutoring sessions were fun, and they valued having a partner who explained the books and vocabulary to them. The tutees did not comment on the fact that they were fond of being read out loud to. However, the most common response for both tutors and tutees (five out of the ten tutors and tutees) was that the aspect they valued the most was reading.

When asked what they least enjoyed, one tutor mentioned that it was difficult to get his tutee to read at the beginning of the program, but over time he improved. Additionally, two tutors mentioned problems with discipline and getting the tutee to focus the entire time. Four out of the five tutees could not think of something that they did not like, and one said that they did not like it when it was over.

According to the tutors, challenging aspects of the tutoring experience were the low reading level of their partner, getting them to read initially, and keeping the partner focussed and interested as mentioned above. With regards to the tutees, three out of the five could not think of a challenging moment, and two out of the five indicated that some of the books were hard. When asked in the interview if they would recommend the tutoring program to other boys, all of the tutees responded positively, but one student said, and rightly so, that if a boy already liked reading, he would not need a program like this.

According to the results of the questionnaire, all of the tutors enjoyed the program. Three out of the five responded that they would like to do it again, while two were “neutral” in their responses.
4.2 Results of the Main Research Questions

With regards to the research questions, the results are as follows:

1. What is the effect on Grade 5 boy students’ motivation for reading in a peer tutoring program where the tutors are Grade 7 boys from the same school?

   The tutees’ motivation for reading increased after participating in the program. Amongst all of the items concerning motivation, the biggest increase was the enjoyment of reading in French, which changed from a 20 percent positive response pre-program to an 80 percent positive response post-program (Table 2, Appendix J). The tutees also reported that “reading is less boring/frustrating now,” as 100 percent of the tutees said that it was less boring after the program.

   1. a) Will the tutored Grade 5 boys read more in French at home as a result of the peer tutoring program?

   Despite their enjoyment for French increasing, 80 percent of the tutees reported a “neutral” response when asked if they were reading more in French at home and 20 percent reported that they were now reading more. Prior to the program, 60 percent said that they did not read in French at home and 40 percent were neutral, thus the results do show some increase.

   When asked if they were reading more at home now, 100 percent of the tutees said “yes” in the interview. This was based on a self-report, tutees were not asked to officially keep track of their reading habits at home. In the questionnaires, the majority of the students (three out of the five), responded that they were not reading in French at home before the program, and two out of the five were neutral (Table 3, Appendix K). In the post-program questionnaire, four out of the five responded “neutral”, and one out of the five agreed that they were reading more in French at
home. Students responded more positively in the interview. All of the tutees agreed in the interview that they were reading more in French at home as they never used to read at home in French before, unless it was assigned classroom reading:

“Yes, I am. I enjoyed it [the program], so I tried reading other books at home.” – Mark (interview)

“A little bit because it is more interesting for me now.” – Alex (interview)

“Yes, I do when I take books from school.” – Jas (interview)

“Yes, because the program inspired me to read.” – Aegel (interview)

“Yes, because when I told my mum about it she said it was good and now she is encouraging me to read more French books.” – Luca (interview)

While there is some discrepancy in the results reported in the questionnaire and interview, both data sources show an improvement as compared to prior to participating in the program. Reasons for the discrepancy will be explored in the Discussion section of this chapter.

1. b) Will the tutored Grade 5 boys’ confidence about their reading ability increase as a result of the tutoring?

The tutees reported being more confident in their French reading abilities after the program; they also report getting less nervous reading in French out loud. Three out of the five tutees indicated in the questionnaire that since their participation in the program, they volunteered to read out loud in class, and all of the tutees reported that they were proud of their French reading abilities (Table 4, Appendix L). The majority of the tutees reported an improvement in their level of self confidence in their reading abilities; the tutors also noticed a change in the level of confidence in the reading ability of their tutee, as four out of the five agreed that there was improvement, and only one did not notice a change in their tutee:
“When we kept the books at his reading level there was an increase in confidence, but when we switched to harder novels, it was lower again, he was frustrated with vocabulary.” – Julio (interview)

“A little bit, but he still seemed to prefer to read in his head instead of out loud.” - Dominic (interview)

“Yes, because at first he would read softly, and then he started to read more loudly and clearly.” – Paulo (interview)

“I think so because he enjoyed it more.” – Ray (interview)

2. In what ways, if any, is the peer tutoring program affecting the Grade 7 tutors?

The peer tutoring program affected the tutors in the following ways: the first being their attitude to the program. One tutor mentioned in the interview that they were able to get pleasure out of the program because they liked having influence over the tutee’s learning:

“I enjoyed how much influence I had in helping him to understand vocabulary and idioms. I enjoyed the selection of new books every time, and helping my partner.” – Julio (interview)

Another said that he enjoyed being a teacher, that he could use the tutoring for future experience and that he felt he might want to be a teacher in the future:

“I liked it because it was cool being like a teacher and I could maybe use the experience towards something else in the future.”– Dominic (interview)

Two of the tutors said that the program affected them because they enjoyed helping others:

“...I liked helping someone reading. I liked reading in French with my partner because I got to speak more in French.” - Paulo (interview)

“It [the tutoring] was good. I’ve done it before, but with students who were a lot younger. I liked reading, it got us a chance to interact with other kids in the school that we wouldn’t normally talk to.” – Tyler (interview)

Finally, another said that he liked speaking in French without being formally evaluated, and also being able to interact with different students:
“I liked it because it allowed me to feel like I’ve helped and it makes me feel good. I liked spending time with the kids, getting to know them, and we weren’t being graded.” - Ray (interview)

The tutors were also proud of their accomplishments through helping the tutees; questionnaire results showed that four out of the five said that they were proud of their tutoring work. When asked if they felt that their tutee looked up to them, the majority were neutral, with only one out of the five responding positively (Table 5, Appendix M).

Results indicate that the program may have not had much of an effect on the tutors’ self-confidence, as, when asked if being a mentor increased their self-confidence, only two out of five agreed, and the remainder were “neutral.” However, the tutors also said that they felt proud of what they did, so even if they did not notice and report a change in their confidence, there may have been an effect in this aspect that they were unable to recognise themselves. Based on the self-reports of the tutors, the program does not appear to have affected the reading ability and knowledge of the tutors, as the tutors reported in the questionnaire that they are not reading in French more at home, and they did not feel that they learned a lot about reading from the tutoring, or that they had improved as readers. In this case, a “tutor-learning effect” was not evident, and the tutors seem to have been affected mostly by getting enjoyment out of helping another student, yet they are unable to recognise that they learned anything about reading themselves. Rather, the tutors enjoyed helping/teaching a student, and were proud of the work they had done. While the tutors did not report any significant effect on their reading ability and knowledge, the results were based on self-reports rather than any other source of empirical data. A pre-and-post reading test, or assessment by the teacher, may have indicated changes that the students were not able to recognise.
3. What is the effect of having a male tutor for reading as opposed to a female tutor from the point of view of the tutees and the tutors?

According to the tutees, the majority would prefer a male tutor both before and after the program. However, one student changed after the program and said that he would not prefer a male tutor because he thought that having a boy or a girl was the same:

“I don’t mind having a boy mentor, just the same as a girl.” – Luca (interview)

Among the reasons that the tutees gave for preferring to work with a male was because they felt more comfortable having a boy as a partner:

“Yes, I enjoyed it because it felt more comfortable reading with a boy.” – Mark (interview)

“I enjoyed it because it’s more comfortable for me.” – Alex (interview)

Another reason was that they thought they could talk to males more easily:

“Yes, because I could talk to him easier.” – Jas (interview)

Three out of the five tutees said that they would recommend other boys to have a male reading mentor; however, four out of the five said a girl would be just as helpful as a boy. Similarly, tutees do not believe that boys and girls should have same gender teachers. Based on the students’ opinions, gender does not seem to play a role in the implementation of such a program; in the questionnaire only one out of the five strongly agreed that having a male tutor makes reading more enjoyable (Table 8, Appendix P). However, in the interview, all of the boys said that having a boy tutor was enjoyable. When asked in the pre-program questionnaire if they would learn better with a boy tutor than a girl tutor, two out of the five responded positively and three out of the five were “neutral” (Table 7, Appendix O). After
the program, three out of the five were “neutral”, one tutee responded positively, and one
tutee changed to a negative response for unknown reasons (Table 8, Appendix P). The tutees
reported that boys are just as good at reading as girls, however, after the program, there was a
change in the results – previously four out of the five responded positively that girls were just
as good as reading as boys, and one out of the five was neutral. After the program, four out of
the five still agreed with this statement, however, out of this number, two “strongly agreed”
and the other two simply “agreed”, whereas in the beginning all of this group “strongly
agreed” (Table 6, Appendix N). Also, one tutee changed to a negative response.

In sum, the results of the program were positive in general, as there was some reported
increase in motivation to read in French. Boys enjoyed the social aspect of the program, as
other researchers and educators have observed (Carnell, 2005; Macdonald, 2005). The gender
of the tutor did not appear to be as significant as expected to the tutees; however, this may be
due to the fact that they did not have experience with female tutors to compare it to. This
issue will be explored further in the Discussion section of the concluding chapter.
5  Concluding Chapter

5.1 Discussion

The present study was conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the effect on Grade 5 male students’ motivation for reading as a result of participating in a peer tutoring program with Grade 7 male tutors from the same school?

   a) Will the tutored Grade 5 boys read more at home as a result of the peer tutoring program?

   b) Will the tutored Grade 5 boys’ confidence about their reading ability increase as a result of the tutoring?

2. In what ways, if any, will the peer tutoring program affect the Grade 7 tutors?

3. What is the effect of having a male tutor for reading as opposed to a female tutor from the point of view of the tutees and the tutors?

The peer tutor program was set up to improve boys’ motivation for reading in French immersion through an intervention which involved Grade 5 and 7 boys’ participation in a peer reading program modeled on The Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ for French immersion Schools. The research was designed based on the findings of previous studies that suggest boys need good male role models for reading, and that boys’ motivation for reading improves if it is turned into a social activity. The following is a review and discussion of the main results. It is important to reiterate that this was a small pilot program with a group of 10 students and there was no tutoring group with female tutors to compare the results regarding gender.
The results of the questionnaires and interviews with the tutors and tutees demonstrated that the peer reading program was a positive experience, as reported by the participants, and that the majority of them would participate in such an experience again in the future. Throughout the program, both the tutors and tutees indicated they looked forward to the sessions because they enjoyed spending time with students that they would not normally interact with, and they enjoyed participating in a classroom activity that was not being formally evaluated. Obtaining data through both an interview and a questionnaire proved to be useful, as students were able to elaborate a little more in the interview on specific aspects of the program, such as what aspects they personally found challenging or liked the most about the experience. Both the tutors and the tutees were cooperative and happy to fill out the questionnaires and to be interviewed. Although most of the students could be described as outgoing, they were less verbal during the interviews and tended to provide short answers. This may have impacted the richness of data that I was able to collect because, for some questions, insufficient information, or responses that were not very detailed, were provided. One reason that may account for this relates to the fact that students of this age may have more difficulty reflecting on an experience as they are still developing their critical thinking skills. Another reason may lie in the format of the interview itself, because it was a structured interview, and I did not probe or ask the questions in different ways to elicit a more detailed response; this will be addressed further in the section on limitations of the study.

For some of the questions, a discrepancy between the results of the questionnaire and the interview was noted. For example, when the tutees were asked in the questionnaire if they were reading more at home now, 80% were neutral and 20% reported they were reading more. However, in the interview, 100% of the tutees said they were reading more at home. The reason for this may be the cooperative participant effect: Tutees were trying to please the interviewer in
the interview questions. In the future, a way to avoid this would be by performing the research in a school where I was not a teacher. Another reason could be that the tutees rushed through the questionnaire and did not reflect on the questions because they did not have to provide reasons for their answers, whereas in the interview they took the time to qualify their responses, as shown below, as opposed to simply giving a *yes* or *no* answer:

“Yes, I am. I enjoyed it [the program], so I tried reading other books at home.” - Mark (interview)

“A little bit because it is more interesting for me now.” - Alex (interview)

“Yes, I do when I take books from school.” – Jas (interview)

“Yes, because the program inspired me to read.” – Aegel (interview)

“Yes, because when I told my mum about it she said it was good and now she is encouraging me to read more French books.” – Luca (interview)

As far as the role of gender is concerned, tutors and tutees were fairly neutral as to whether tutees would learn better with a male tutor. Some of the tutors said that one of the challenges of the program was with discipline and maintaining the focus of the tutee the whole time. This may be because tutees are more likely to get distracted or to want to socialise with a boy, whereas they would be more focussed with a girl tutor. It could be supposed that male students may believe that they will focus more with a female because they associate teacher figures with females and they are less likely to be distracted by socialising with a girl at their present age. All of the students in the program have female teachers and have had very limited exposure to male teachers, as every French immersion teacher in the school is female.

According to the research in reading in French immersion, difficulty with reading is one of the main reasons for leaving the program (Noonan, Colleaux, & Yackulic, 1997; Obadia & Thériault, 1997). Yet, as further research has shown, one way of coping with this issue is by
means of early reading interventions (Bournot-Trites, 2004; MacCoubrey, Wade-Woolley, & Kirby, 2005, and Rousseau, 1999, in Genesee & Jared, 2008). Thus, incorporating peer tutoring reading groups into the school culture as early as possible once students start reading (Grade 1 or 2) may help to establish good reading habits for the future and may contribute to create a positive association with reading as something that can be sociable and enjoyable. The present study can also be considered an example of a successful intervention with respect to the motivation aspect, since overall, the results show that the participants’ motivation in reading in French increased after the program.

The French reading habits of the tutored students in this study were typical of French immersion boys whose interest in reading in French tends to decrease around Grade 4, or at the same time as English is introduced in the curriculum in most immersion programs. The students were more confident in their English reading abilities and stated that they were specifically less interested in reading in French than in reading in general. Research supports the idea that boys’ reluctance to read in French may be more associated with a negative attitude and lack of motivation than actual competence in reading. A strategy to increase motivation involves reading French material that is geared for boys, as well as providing male role models (such as the older peer tutors) who have positive attitudes towards reading. In the home, boys may be encouraged to read through exposure to literacy from their parents. This should also be established early on, with the concept of reading for enjoyment being introduced through having parents or caregivers read out-loud to their children from the early stages of life (Beech, 2005; International Reading Association, 1994; Neumann & Neumann, 2009; Roberts, Jürgens & Burchinal, 2005). The tradition of bed time story telling in the Western culture may be losing currency as the demands of having both parents in the workforce eliminates time that can be spent together and as
technology increasingly replaces human contact (Klass, Needlman & Zuckerman, 2003). It is in this context that peer reading becomes significantly relevant. Peer reading groups can help to keep alive the enjoyment of being read to even if this type of routine is not part of the student’s home culture. Thus, peer reading groups may even help to re-establish these traditions as students would at least have the experience of being read to.

Past research has shown that the gender of teachers did not seem to be particularly important to boys and that, instead, their peers (classmates and friends) seem to have a greater influence on them (Bricheno & Thornton, 2007; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Skelton, 2009; Sokal & Katz, 2008; Sokal, Katz, Adkins, et al., 2005). In this study, students were neutral about the gender of teachers, confirming that it does not make a difference to them. The gender of the tutors was less significant than expected as the tutees responded that they thought that a female tutor would be just as helpful as a male tutor. However, some of them expressed a preference for a male tutor by indicating that reading with another boy made them feel more comfortable. Unfortunately, they did not elaborate further on ways in which they felt more comfortable. Overall, this seems to suggest that the gender of the reading teacher or partner is not as important as the actual exposure to reading with peers. However, it is hard to measure the gender difference effect in the present case, as the study did not include a girls’ control group, thus, the tutees’ preference for working with a male student is only based on their experience with male tutors. It would be important to conduct further research which should include a less structured interview which would allow for more elaboration of the answers, and a comparison with female tutors in order to better establish whether the gender of the tutor makes a difference.

With regards to reading confidence, the tutees reported that they were more likely to read out loud in class now, and that they were confident with their French reading abilities, very much
like Topping and Lindsay’s (1992) findings that show peer reading programs provide the scaffolding that some students need in order to eventually feel comfortable reading in the classroom. The peer reading program seemed to impact the tutors less than originally anticipated, as the tutors showed no change in their self-perceptions of their reading ability or knowledge, or the amount that they were reading in French at home. This finding contrasts with the “tutor learning effect” which Roscoe and Chi (2007) observed where “two students benefit simultaneously” (p. 322), since this did not manifest itself in the area of reading ability or knowledge for the tutors. One possible explanation may be that the tutors did not receive intensive training in reading or leadership strategies prior to beginning the program. Another reason could be that reports are based on the tutors’ self-perceptions, and they may have learned more than they realized at the time of data collection. Given that a post-test of reading ability was not completed, this cannot be established. However, the tutors did display empathy for their partners as they got a feeling of satisfaction out of helping others, which they demonstrated when they expressed having pride in the work that they had done as tutors. It would appear that, for the tutors, there was a positive social impact from the program, rather than a cognitive impact. As previous research has evidenced, connecting with a younger peer can help build a sense of community in the school, and also increase empathy for others. In turn, this may lead to fewer problems with bullying and the interaction between younger and older peers in the school environment. These social benefits, which go beyond increasing student pleasure for reading, are identified by Topping, Miller, Thurston, McGavock, and Conlin (2011):

The role of self-esteem here is important. Pupils may gain partially from the effect of extra positive reading practice, but equally so from the enhancement to their self-esteem from working with a partner, particularly (but by no means
exclusively) as a tutor. This emphasises the value of involving lower reading ability pupils as tutors in a cross-age project. (p.8)

Hence, schools that have problems with bullying, or that wish to prevent such issues from occurring may wish to implement similar cross-grade programs which encourage students who would not normally interact to learn more about each other.

The literature also highlights that developing a positive attitude towards reading is one of the factors that should be present in order to increase motivation for reading (Worthy, Moorman & Turner, 1999). Prior to participating in the peer reading program, the majority of the tutees said that they did not read in French at home and that they did not enjoy reading in French. However, through enjoyment of the program, students were able to develop a more positive attitude which in turn led to the increased motivation for reading in French. Part of the reason that students enjoyed the program was the access to “boy-friendly” reading material, in the form of illustrated novels. Where the gender of the teacher or tutor may not be very significant, the availability of reading material that is geared towards boys is important (Alloway, 2007; Cavazos Kottke, 2006; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Kenney, 2007; Sanford & Midall, 2007). A survey of popular materials conducted with the student population can give some insight to teachers and teacher librarians about current preferences, as these can vary depending on the socio-economic and cultural background of the students. And as indicated in Cavazos-Kottke (2005) and Sanford and Midall (2007), freedom of choice of different reading materials is also essential. In this study, this became evident when half way through the peer reading program when an attempt to switch from reading the illustrated novels to more traditional novels was met with disdain, and, after one session, the tutees requested to return to the illustrated novels. Educators need to keep in mind that boys tend to want to explore different types of literacy beyond the traditional genres.
In particular, the current generation seems to enjoy various forms of digital literacy, manuals (for example, for computer games), or non-fiction material (Cavazos-Kottke, 2005; Sanford & Midall, 2007). Thus, any attempts to force them to read one specific type of literacy may render disengaged and unmotivated readers.

5.2 Conclusion

In this small peer reading program, Grade 5 boys’ motivation for reading was found to increase. Exposure to reading and the opportunities for the social interaction aspect that the program provided appeared to be factors that contributed to their increase in motivation. After the program, some tutees said that they were reading more at home in French. However, this result was more substantiated in the interview than in the questionnaire. In either case, there was still an increase in reading in French at home for some of them, most likely due to exposure to reading in the group and the fact that they had discovered some French books that they enjoyed to read (the illustrated novels) because they were less challenging in terms of vocabulary content. Tutees also reported an increase in confidence in their French reading abilities after the program, and said that they were less nervous about reading out loud in class. This is consistent with Topping’s (1992) findings that having the chance to practise in a small group setting with less pressure (for example, from the teacher who is evaluating you), may have helped the tutees to become more comfortable.

As far as the effects on the Grade 7 tutors, these participants pointed out several aspects that they enjoyed about the program, including a supporting aspect and a social aspect; however, they did not demonstrate an increase in their own knowledge about reading or reading abilities perhaps because they were already good readers to start with. The majority of the tutors said that they would like to participate in a similar program in the future because they enjoyed it, and one
student, “Dominic”, even pointed out that he was now interested in becoming a teacher because of the peer reading tutoring experience: “…it is cool being a tutor and I may change my future job to teacher.” Although boys found it easier to work with a male partner, and the perception of the tutors was that their tutees were more comfortable with a male partner, the gender of the participants did not appear to be as significant as expected. Tutees were generally neutral as to whether working with a male partner may have helped them or not, and they thought that a female would have been just as helpful as a male. However, since the boys did not have the chance to compare the experience of having a male tutor and a female tutor, they may not be aware that there would be a difference.

A number of limitations were also identified in this study, including the fact that there were only five pairs. There are fewer boys than girls in French immersion classes, which made it more challenging to attract tutors, as the participants were selected from a pool of volunteers. On the other hand, finding the tutees was easier because many boys in immersion programs have low motivation for reading. A practical challenge that impacted participant recruitment relates to scheduling difficulties among the teachers in the school, which only made it possible to include students from two classes. This means that there were fewer options to choose from. Ideally, larger numbers would be required to provide a better indication of the validity of the results of the program. Another limitation was the length of the study: three months may not be a long enough time period to assess the long term effects of the program, nor to identify any kind of drastic changes. Other programs, such as the Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™ for French Immersion Schools, were yearlong. On the other hand, if the program went on for too long, there is a risk of students getting tired of their partner or the program. A way to avoid this could be through changing partners each term and taking a short break at the end of each term.
One of the challenges about the program that many of the tutors identified was that it was sometimes difficult to maintain their tutee in focus. In the future, to help tutors cope with this situation, part of the training program for the tutors should include tips on how to handle issues regarding discipline with the tutee (for example, they could be sent back to the class, they could move away from the other tutees if they were being distracted, and so on). In addition to more leadership training regarding discipline, it could also have been beneficial for the tutors to receive more intensive training in reading strategies prior to beginning the program. Additional training may have made the tutors more aware of any change in their reading ability in knowledge that may have occurred. Another limitation is that the interview questions were structured and I did not probe for further information, which would have been useful for gathering richer data from some questions. For example, both the tutors and tutees said that it was best for the tutees to have a male tutor because it made them more comfortable, but they did not elaborate on the reasons why it made them more comfortable.

Due to the fact that it was hard to tell whether the gender of the tutor played a role, future studies could include two tutors (one male and one female) in order to compare the effectiveness according to gender. Also, the study could be divided into two parts, with first half of the year spent with a male tutor and the second half of the year with a female tutor. The two experiences could be compared, to find out if gender makes a difference. Other possibilities for further research on the topic of reading and boys and French immersion could include:

- The impact of single-sex language arts classes for French immersion boys
- The effectiveness of the use of technology/ digital literacies to encourage boys to read
• The impact of a weekly school wide (that is, all the French immersion classes) peer reading program for all French immersion students with younger students paired with older students

• The effectiveness of interventions to improve boys’ motivation, such as literary retreats with leaders who are especially selected as role models for boys

• A longitudinal study researching the effects of pairing up students with an on-line reading buddy from Quebec, who could serve as a peer literacy mentor to recommend French language books/magazines/ music which may motivate students to read and help them to develop an appreciation for the language in a real-life context

There are many different ways in which peer reading groups can be organised, including using a combination of boys and girls, different ages and ability levels, and different types of texts. The social and academic benefits make it a worthwhile strategy for educators to use in the French immersion classroom.
References


Williams, M., Burden, R., & Lanvers, U. (2002). ‘French is the language of love and stuff’:

Appendix A

Interview Questions for Tutors (post program)

Title of the project: Peer tutoring reading program for increasing motivation amongst French immersion boys

Researcher: Dr. Monique Bournot-Trites, University of British Columbia, Helen Hodson, Graduate Student, University of British Columbia

1. Briefly describe your experience and your role in the Peer reading program.
2. Did you enjoy being a mentor, why or why not?
3. What did you like most about the program, why?
4. What did you like the least about the program, why?
5. What was the most challenging thing about being a mentor, why?
6. Would you recommend this program to other boys, why or why not?
7. Did your mentee seem to enjoy reading in French more after the program than in the beginning? How can you tell?
8. Did you notice a change in the level of confidence in the reading ability of your mentee?
9. What other differences, if any, did you notice about your mentee since the beginning of the program?
10. Would you like to participate in a program like this again, why or why not?
Appendix B

Interview Questions for Tutees (post program)

Title of the project: Peer tutoring reading program for increasing motivation amongst French immersion boys

Researcher: Dr. Monique Bournot-Trites, University of British Columbia, Helen Hodson, Graduate Student, University of British Columbia

1. Briefly describe how you participated in the peer reading program.
2. Did you enjoy having a male reading mentor, why or why not?
3. What did you like most about the program, why?
4. What did you like the least about the program, why?
5. What was the most challenging thing about the program, why?
6. Would you recommend a reading program like this to other boys, why or why not?
7. Are you reading more in French at home now, why or why not?
8. Would you like to participate in a program like this again, why or why not?
### Appendix C

**Concepts to Analyse in Questionnaire for Tutees (pre program)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts that I want to analyse in questionnaire</th>
<th>Question numbers</th>
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</thead>
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<td>attitude towards reading</td>
<td>1,5,6,7,9</td>
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<tr>
<td>effect of gender</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>attitude towards reading in French</td>
<td>2, 6,8,9</td>
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<tr>
<td>confidence/ self esteem</td>
<td>3,4,10</td>
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<td>increase reading at home?</td>
<td>5,6,7</td>
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Appendix D

Questionnaire for Tutees (pre-program)

Title of the project: Peer tutoring reading program for increasing motivation amongst French immersion boys

Researcher: Dr. Monique Bournot-Trites, University of British Columbia

Note: If the questionnaire is completed and sent back to the person in charge of the tutoring programme in the school, it will be assumed that you have given your consent for your answers to the questions to be used anonymously in the evaluation of the project.

1. I enjoy reading.
   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

2. I enjoy reading in French.
   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

3. I am confident in my English reading abilities.
   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

4. I am confident in my French reading abilities.
   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

5. I read at home.
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6. I read in French at home.

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<td>strongly agree</td>
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7. Somebody reads with me/to me in French at home.

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<td>strongly agree</td>
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<td>neutral</td>
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8. I take French books out of the library on my own.

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9. I get bored/frustrated easily when reading in French.

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10. I get nervous reading in French out loud.

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11. I would rather have a male teacher than a female teacher

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Please write below anything you feel like sharing about the tutoring program:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your participation in this questionnaire!
## Appendix E

### Concepts to Analyse in Questionnaire for Tutees (post program)

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<td>effect of gender</td>
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<td>increase reading at home?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F

Questionnaire for Tutees (post program)

Title of the project: Peer tutoring reading program for increasing motivation amongst French immersion boys

Researcher: Dr. Monique Bournot-Trites, University of British Columbia

Note: If the questionnaire is completed and sent back to the person in charge of the tutoring programme in the school, it will be assumed that you have given your consent for your answers to the questions to be used anonymously in the evaluation of the project.

1. I enjoyed the peer reading program.

   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

2. I am reading more in French at home than before I participated in the peer reading program.

   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

3. I enjoy reading in French more now than before I participated in the peer reading program.

   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

4. I am more confident in my French reading abilities now than before the program.

   5  4  3  2  1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Having a male mentor made reading in French more enjoyable for me.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I take more French books out of the library on my own now.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I would like to get tutoring next year.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I am less nervous about reading out loud in French now.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I think that reading in French is less boring/frustrating now.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I would recommend other boys to have a male reading tutor.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. I would be interested to find out about new French authors and French books in my library.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

12. I do not need to be reminded to read in French at home now.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

13. I have a favourite French book or author.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

14. I volunteer more to read out-loud in class now.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

15. I am proud of my French reading abilities.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

16. I find it easy to work with a male tutor.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree
17. I think that a female tutor would be just as helpful as a male tutor.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

18. Boys should have male teachers and girls should have female teachers.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

Please write below anything you feel like sharing about the tutoring program:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your participation in this questionnaire!
# Appendix G

**Concepts to Analyse in Questionnaire for Tutors (post program)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts that I want to analyse in questionnaire</th>
<th>Question numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>5, 13, 14, 15, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitude towards reading</td>
<td>3, 4, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effect of gender</td>
<td>3, 10, 11, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitude towards reading in French</td>
<td>2, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence/ self esteem</td>
<td>1, 4, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase reading at home?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H

Questionnaire for Tutors (post program)

Title of the project: Peer tutoring reading program for increasing motivation amongst French immersion boys

Researcher: Dr. Monique Bournot-Trites, University of British Columbia

Note: If the questionnaire is completed and sent back to the person in charge of the tutoring programme in the school, it will be assumed that you have given your consent for your answers to the questions to be used anonymously in the evaluation of the project.

1. Being a mentor has increased my self-confidence.

   5 4 3 2 1
   strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree

2. Participating in the program has increased my level of enjoyment for reading in French.

   5 4 3 2 1
   strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree

3. I think that having a male tutor helped my reader.

   5 4 3 2 1
   strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree

4. I noticed an increase in the level of enjoyment of my reader towards French reading.

   5 4 3 2 1
   strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree

5. I would like to participate in a program like this in the future.
6. I learned a lot about reading from the training program.

   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

7. I feel proud of the work that I have done as a tutor.

   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

8. I think that I have improved as a reader since the beginning of the program?

   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

9. I would like to be a tutor again in the future.

   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

10. I am reading more in French at home now.

    5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree

11. I think that it would be just the same to help a female student as a male student.

   5  4  3  2  1
   strongly agree  agree  neutral  disagree  strongly disagree
12. I think that my tutee looked up to me.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   strongly disagree

13. I think that my tutee was more comfortable reading out loud in front of me than he would be with a female tutor.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   strongly disagree

disagree

14. My tutee seems more interested in reading in French now.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   strongly disagree

15. I think that my tutee will read in French on his own now.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   strongly disagree

16. My tutee can discuss books that he enjoys reading in French.

5  4  3  2  1
strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   strongly disagree

17. My tutee demonstrates more enthusiasm towards reading in French than he did at the beginning of the program.

5  4  3  2  1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Please write below anything you feel like sharing about the tutoring program:

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your participation in this questionnaire!
Appendix I

Tables

The following appendix includes the tables that accompany the results in Chapter Three. The tables include results from the questionnaires that the tutees and tutors were administered, and data was analysed using SPSS software.

Table 1

*Overview of Results (data collected from tutors and tutees)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-program frequency</th>
<th>Post-program frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading in French</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am confident in my French reading abilities</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td>Positive 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I read in French at home</td>
<td>Negative 60%</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perception of tutor on having a male tutee</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a male tutor helped my reader</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My tutee was more comfortable reading in front of me than a female tutor</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Pre-program frequency</td>
<td>Post-program frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer male teacher</td>
<td>Negative 40%</td>
<td>Negative 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer a male teacher</td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of tutee on having a male tutor</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rather work with a boy tutor than a girl tutor</td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 40%</td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys and girls reading ability</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys are as good at reading as girls.</td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix J

**Table 2**

*Effect on Tutees’ Motivation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-program frequency</th>
<th>Post-program frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy reading in French.</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I read in French at home.</td>
<td>Negative 60%</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take French books out of the library.</td>
<td>Negative %</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pre) I get bored/ frustrated when reading in French/</td>
<td>Negative 40%</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(post) Reading in French is less boring/ frustrating now</td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td>Positive 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K

Table 3

*Tutees Reading More at Home in French Post-program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-Program</th>
<th>Post-Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you read at home?</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you read in French at home?</td>
<td>Negative 60%</td>
<td>Do you read in French at home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somebody reads to me in French at home</td>
<td>Negative 60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not need to be reminded to read in French at home now</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a favourite French book/ author</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4

*Effect of the Peer Reading Program on Tutees’ Self Confidence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-program frequency</th>
<th>Post-program frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am confident in my French reading abilities</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>I am confident in my French reading abilities now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td>Positive 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get nervous reading in French out loud</td>
<td>Negative 60%</td>
<td>I get less nervous reading in French out loud now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I volunteer to read out loud in class now</td>
<td></td>
<td>I volunteer to read out loud in class now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proud of my French reading abilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>I am proud of my French reading abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 100%</td>
<td>Positive100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix M

Table 5

*Effect on the Grade 7 Tutors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Post-program frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel proud of the work done as a tutor #7</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My tutee looked up to me #12</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a mentor increased my self confidence #1</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned a lot about reading from the tutoring</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have improved as a reader</td>
<td>Negative 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am reading more in French at home now</td>
<td>Negative 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix N

Table 6

*Tutees’ Perception of Gender of Tutor*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-program frequency</th>
<th>Post-program frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer a male tutor</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 40%</td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would learn better with boy tutor (pre)</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would learn better with a girl tutor (post)</td>
<td>Positive 40%</td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys are as good at reading as girls</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

*Tutees’ Perception of Gender of Tutor Pre-Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-program frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would rather have a male teacher than a female teacher</td>
<td>Negative 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rather work with a boy tutor than a girl tutor</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think boys can explain reading better than girls</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix P

### Table 8

*Tutees’ Perception of Gender of Tutor Post-Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Post-program frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having a male mentor makes reading in French more enjoyable</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend other boys to have a male reading tutor</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it easy to work with a male tutor</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Post-program frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A female tutor would be just as helpful as a male tutor</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys should have male teachers and girls should have female teachers</td>
<td>Negative 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think I would have worked better with a female tutor</td>
<td>Negative 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix Q

### Table 9

*Tutors’ Perception of Gender of Tutor*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Post-program frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having a male tutor helped my reader</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be just the same to help a female student as a male student</td>
<td>Negative 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My tutee was more comfortable reading in front of me than a female tutor</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive 80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix R

## Table 10

**French Books/ Series of Interest to French Immersion Boys**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Amos Daragon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chair de poule, Scholastics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Québec Amérique Jeunesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Fiction</td>
<td>Histoires Drôles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction, magazines</td>
<td>Astrapi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wakou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watipi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics and illustrated novels</td>
<td>Astrapi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ti-teuf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix S

Letter of permission from the Vancouver School Board

Vancouver Board of Education
School District No. 39
LEARNING SERVICES
1580 West Broadway
Vancouver, B.C. V6J 5C8
Telephone: 604-713-5000
Fax: 604-713-5244

November 25, 2009

Dear Ms. Hodson,

Thank you for your research proposal “Improving Boys’ Motivation for Reading in French Immersion.” On behalf of the VSB Research Committee please accept this letter as approval for you to complete your research in Vancouver schools conditional upon approval by the UBC Ethics board. You have permission to contact teachers, parents and students at Vancouver schools. We request that you make your initial contact with the principal of the school to inform them of your study and provide them with a copy of this letter. Please note that teachers and administrators are very busy with many obligations and that schools have the right of refusal to participate in any research studies. Also, the Vancouver School District does not find subjects for researchers.

The VSB Research Committee would be very interested in learning of your results and its implications for students. When your research is completed please send us an abstract of the results.

Thank you for focusing your work within the Vancouver School District. I wish you the best of luck as you proceed with your inquiry.

Sincerely,

Dr. Valerie Overgaard, Associate Superintendent
Learning Services