

FRENCH IMMERSION STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS READING IN FRENCH

by

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ABSTRACT

When learning a second language, the ability to read in that language is an important skill as it allows students to become aware of language structures, vocabulary, as well as to promote the culture behind the second language. Research into second language acquisition has shown that vocabulary growth does occur through reading, and that students show improvements in their writing skills through reading activities. However, students in French immersion programs, learning a second language in their daily schooling, are resistant to reading in French. This study investigated the preferences of intermediate French immersion students in regards to reading in French, as well as the reasons behind their attitudes and the titles/genres of French books that they have enjoyed in the past.

A questionnaire using Likert-scale and open-ended questions was developed around questions pertaining to students' perceptions towards reading in French and English, their reasons for reading in one language over the other, and their favourite genres and titles of books. Fifty-two students in grade seven early and late French immersion classrooms responded to the survey. The participants indicated that they preferred reading in English to reading in French and they read very seldomly in French at home. They found that the plots in French books were more difficult to relate to, and that when the language in a French novel was at a level they could understand, the books were often conceptually too simple for them. However, all students were able to share the genres they prefer when reading in French, with fantasy novels the most popular choice of novel, and many students listed the title of one or more French book that they remembered enjoying. Although French immersion students are resistant to reading in French, teachers may use teaching strategies and classroom programs that will promote reading in French, in order to increase student success in the French immersion program.

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Background to the problem

As a practicing French immersion teacher, I have observed my students while they are making choices in their reading habits. I have seen many students carrying around their favourite English books, begging for a chance to read the book they brought from home, or asking the school-librarian to put the next book in a series on hold for them. Students of many different levels of reading ability are finding new books that interest them in English, and are sharing their finds with their friends. At the beginning of the school year, my class of late French immersion grade 7s, alongside the two other English grade seven classes, created a visual presentation that introduced themselves to the rest of the school. They included pictures from their home lives, trophies and certificates they have won, and any other objects that they deemed important to them. After circulating throughout the room, it was easy to notice the large number of students who had piles of books written in English on their tables, with many repeat titles reappearing on several tables. In a time when educators fear that the overwhelming amount of electronics available to students is leaving little time or interest for books, it seems that almost every grade 7 student in our school was able to present one or more of their “favourite books.” This should be reassuring to teachers, who constantly push for students to read more, but as a French immersion teacher, it brought up an underlying concern within my program. These same students, excitedly discussing the newest book to come out in their favourite series, are resisting reading French books. For students in a program that quickly immerses them in a second language, and requires them to learn all their academic subjects in this second language, French reading skills are a necessity for all aspects of their education. If my students’ level of French is ever to approach

“bilingual,” they must be comfortable reading academic texts, as well as fictional texts. In this paper, I’m going to explore the following:

- Whether resistance to reading at the upper intermediate level in French is prevalent across various intermediate French immersion classrooms. If there is a reluctance to read French texts, the reasons for that reluctance; and,
- Titles of French books that might entice students to read in that language.

To answer the above, the following two questions will be addressed in this paper:

1. Do French Immersion students prefer reading in English to reading in French?
2. What types of books do French immersion students prefer to read when reading in French?

It has been found by many researchers that reading is beneficial to vocabulary development in a second language (Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Dupuy & Krashen, 1993; Horst, 2005; Nation, 2001). Although this is an obviously important reason for wanting students to read in French, my desire for students to read in French stems from more than just an academic drive, but from a personal one as well. I completed my schooling in French immersion, and as a child, I too was very resistant to reading in French. I remember discussing with my friends that French books were bad, making such broad statements as “I don’t like reading in French.” Looking back, I’m not sure it was necessarily that I didn’t like reading in the French language, but more that I wasn’t finding books that peaked my interest that were written in French. I have since found that my love of the French language and culture has pushed me to try more books in French, and I have found that, while I still read in English more often than in French, I have found many French books that I enjoy. One of the reasons that I became a French immersion teacher was to

try to instil in children a love of the French language and culture. I want them to not only learn the language, but also to appreciate all that comes along with a language, including reading.

There are many possible reasons that may affect French immersion students' opinions regarding reading in French. One fairly obvious reason is student lack of language ability, that is, students are still learning the language and have not yet acquired a varied enough vocabulary to read books that match their intellectual level. This particular problem is especially evident in late French immersion classrooms, where students begin studying French in grade six, becoming completely immersed in French for the entire year. During this year, as well as in the years to follow, students are very new to the language, yet they are skilled readers in their mother tongue and capable of reading sophisticated texts in that language. Additionally, reading in French may not always be as simple as not understanding a word, but can also stem from idiomatic expressions and turns of phrase that are unfamiliar to them. Facing too many unknown words in a book can be discouraging and lead to frustration. A second possible reason for the negative attitude some French immersion students have towards reading in French is the plot of the book itself. As Francophone authors write the majority of French books, the cultural differences in the books may impact the students' ability to relate to the characters and the story lines. (Bournot-Trites and Séror, 2003) These and other explanations for students' perceptions towards reading in French will be discussed in the literature review chapter of this paper.

Summary of Methodology

The above questions will be answered using a questionnaire format with a representative sample of grade 7 early and late French immersion students, as a questionnaire format best suits the questions being asked in this study. The participants in the study are students in the public

school system of a large Western Canadian city currently enrolled in grade 7 early or late French immersion programs.

Significance of the Study

This study is an important addition to the literature currently available regarding reading in a second language. Other studies have addressed students' attitudes toward reading in a second language but there is virtually nothing in the literature that addresses what French immersion students are reading and enjoying. It is the aim of this study to identify high interest books which might positively impact French Immersion students' attitude towards reading in French. Further, it is the intention of this study to develop an annotated bibliography of French books that will help teachers and teacher librarians to better choose reading material that will appeal to their French Immersion students. It is important to note that, while such a bibliography will be a useful resource for teachers and teacher librarians, what is also needed are:

- Books written specifically with French immersion students in mind (i.e., keeping a level of vocabulary and grammar that matches the language ability of the students); and,
- Changes to curriculum and/or teaching practice in order to create a program that motivates students to read of their own volition (e.g., engaging literacy programs that allow students more choice in their reading material, explicit instruction on how to choose appropriate reading material for each level...)

I hope that this paper will be a stepping-stone for teachers in their quest to create avid readers of French literature, and strongly bilingual students.

In the next section I will look at the literature pertaining to French immersion students'

perceptions towards reading, some of the possible reasons for students' dislike of reading in French, as well as why reading is important in the development of a second language.

SECTION II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the findings of previous studies that are relevant to this study. It is divided into three major parts: the first section describes the nature of the French immersion program in Canada; the second section looks at previous studies on French immersion students' reading preferences and reasons behind these preferences; the final section explores the impact reading has on the language acquisition of a second language learner.

The French Immersion program in Canada

During the 1960s, Anglophone parents in the province of Québec fought for an educational program that would provide their children with the opportunity to learn French in an immersion setting, in order to improve their future career choices in their bilingual province (Doyle, 2008). Since then, the French immersion program has grown substantially and has spread across Canada. Today's parents enrol their children in French immersion programs in the hopes of creating bilingual adults, able to communicate orally and in writing, as well as read, in French. This requires teachers to motivate students to reach a high level of French during their years in the program, focussing not only on the oral component of French, but also the ability to read and write effectively in French. In an elementary school French immersion classroom, students learn the core academic subjects in the French language. The official goal of the program is to create students who are bilingual in Canada's two official languages, creating more career and life opportunities for these students. The British Columbia Ministry of Education's curriculum for French immersion (1999) lists three of its main goals as the following:

- the student will acquire the necessary skills required to communicate effectively in French;
- the student will acquire an appreciation of the French language and its culture; and,
- the student will acquire an understanding and appreciation of French literary works

(pp.1-2)

Two of these goals refer to students' attitudes and opinions towards French. In order to continue to improve upon the French immersion program, teachers must have many routes through which to impact students' perceptions of French culture and literature. If students have negative perceptions of reading in French, this will impact their ability to fully appreciate the French language.

In an early French immersion program (EFRIM), which begins in kindergarten, students receive 50 to 100% of their instruction in French. In a Late French immersion (LFRIM) classroom, which begins in grade 6, students receive 80 to 100% of their instruction in French in the first two years of the program (Lazaruk, 2007). This means that in an EFRIM program, students learn to read in French before they learn to read in English at school. At this point in their education, due to the novelty and excitement of learning to read, and the colourful picture books found in primary classrooms, students are often more willing to interact with French books on a daily basis. As time progresses and students are given the option to read in English at school, the amount of French reading diminishes (Bournot-Trites & Séror, 2003). In his 1996 study, Roy also found that, as the years progress, students become less interested in reading French books (Roy, 1996). In the LFRIM program, students have already learned to read in English, and transfer these skills to their new language of instruction. As these students may already be strong readers in English at this point in their education, the change to French may sometimes bring with it a feeling of frustration as they are initially unable to read books in French that match the level of their English books. This problem of frustration will be addressed in the section on reasons for attitudes towards reading.

Parents of French immersion students have demonstrated concern about the impact learning school subjects in French will have on their children's English language abilities, as well as how the program will better prepare their children for the future. While the main goals of the French immersion program are to create bilingual students and to foster an appreciation for French cultures, studies have shown that students enrolled in French immersion also perform strongly in English language arts assessments as well. A Statistics Canada study in 2004 showed that French immersion high school students matched or outperformed their English program peers in English reading assessments. Lazaruk (2007) found that not only does learning a second language strengthen students' understanding of languages, "learning French enables students to communicate with a wide variety of people, both in Canada and internationally; it fosters respect for different cultures and facilitates access to two worlds of experience" (p.622). It is important that students feel connected to the French language during their time at school, and fostering positive attitudes towards reading in French can only benefit a student's education.

French immersion students' attitudes towards reading in French

A study by Bournot-Trites and Séror (2003) shows that grade 7 French immersion students admit to seldom reading in French. Students indicated that as they became better readers in English, the amount of time spent reading in French decreases (Bournot-Trites & Séror, 2003). This seems contrary to common sense, as students are becoming more comfortable with reading skills that are universal and therefore should affect reading skills in any language. Romney, Romney and Menzies (1995) also found that as students aged, their parents' influence on reading at home diminished, and the various strategies parents used at home to motivate students to read in French were not as effective. Although the majority of the students admitted to not reading in French other than when required to do so by their teacher, many students believed that reading

more in French would improve their vocabulary and their spelling in writing (Bournot-Trites & Séror, 2003). The students perceived that reading in French would benefit their understanding of the spelling and meaning of new words in writing. This may mean that the students perceive reading in French as not for the pleasure of reading but rather for the French language skills it develops. Some students went so far as to say that teachers should “trick” their students into reading everyday in order to improve their vocabulary and familiarity with written French styles, demonstrating the struggle between knowing how to improve in French and the self-motivation to do so (Bournot-Trites & Séror, 2003). Romney, Romney and Menzies (1995) found that students were not only avoiding reading in French outside of school, but “the majority of children did nothing at all in French independently” of their class work (p.480). This included watching French television or reading French comic books.

Reasons for attitudes towards reading

When looking at reasons behind students’ perceptions towards reading in a second language, one obvious difficulty when reading a second language is the language itself. As the majority of these elementary school students have a vocabulary in French that is significantly less developed than their first language vocabulary, there is bound to be a level of confusion as students try to read books that match their age in interest levels, but have a vocabulary that is appropriate for a student with French as a first language. Bournot-Trites and Séror (2003) found this to be true, as many students noted that they preferred reading in English as it was easier, and therefore more enjoyable. Students in Romney et al’s 1995 study perceived vocabulary as being the main difficulty when reading in French. This difficulty in finding suitable material that matches the vocabulary and interest levels is a constant struggle for French immersion teachers, who have limited amounts of resources specifically created for immersion students, and must

make use of French texts that are used in France or Quebec. While these texts will benefit the students in that it exposes them to other aspects of French cultures, and therefore addresses part of the French immersion curriculum as mentioned above, it will also create discrepancies between language level and interest level. A grade 7 student with French as their first language will undoubtedly have a greater French vocabulary than a similarly aged student whose only exposure to French is during limited school hours. One student summed up this discrepancy by saying that she hoped to find “French books that are easy to read but interesting” (Romney et al, 1995, p.487). Unfortunately, finding books that match these criteria is very difficult for teachers and librarians as virtually all French publishers have a francophone audience in mind when choosing books.

Romney et al (1995) identified a second problem related to difficulties with vocabulary in French reading materials, that is, while some students in French immersion programs developed a relatively strong vocabulary in school, their vocabulary was limited to school related topics. As French immersion students typically come from an Anglophone background, the only time that they speak or listen to French is during class time in school. This limits the type of vocabulary that they are introduced to. Romney et al concluded that French immersion teachers should spend more time in class teaching students vocabulary that is typical of everyday life and outside of school activities, in order to better prepare students for the vocabulary found in French books (1995, p.488).

Although students widely agreed that they preferred reading in English rather than French, many were aware that there are benefits to reading in French. A study by Bournot-Trites and Séror (2003) showed that many French immersion students believed that reading in French would improve their writing skills in French, but were still reluctant to read in French. They

provided three explanations for why they chose to read in English over French: the difficulty of the language (vocabulary, idioms, slang...), the cultural differences in the plot between Anglophone and Francophone books, and the more limited selection of reading material that interested them at their reading level (Bournot-Trites & Séror, 2003). Many of the students in this study concluded that they could not find enough French books in their school library that interested them. These students seemed to believe that there are good French books in publication, but they were not available to them (Bournot-Trites & Séror, 2003). This is a very common problem, especially in schools where the number of English program students outnumbers the French immersion students. The variety of French books is limited by the budget allocated to the French immersion program, therefore teacher-librarians, who are in charge of ordering new books, must choose every book carefully. This becomes even more difficult in schools where the teacher-librarian does not speak French, and must rely on write-ups of the books in order to make their choice. Ideally, a teacher-librarian would also have some knowledge of the interests and tastes of the students in order to choose books with a greater appeal to more students (Romney et al, 1995, p.489).

A second common problem associated with students' opinions regarding French books was the use of idioms, slang and expressions in the writing (Bournot-Trites & Séror, 2003). Students found that when faced with expressions that were unfamiliar to them, they were unable to simply use a dictionary to uncover the meaning, as many slang terms are specific to the region where the book was published (ex. Québécois vs. French). This difficulty, while related to the question of vocabulary, is more complex, as a teacher must be aware of the many types of expressions and slang used in different francophone cultures. This becomes even more problematic when the teachers in question are not from a francophone culture themselves, but

have learned French as a second language themselves. This would limit their knowledge of idiomatic expressions and slang that are acquired by growing up in a francophone culture.

Thirdly, students believed that the cultural differences in the plots of the French novels hindered their enjoyment of reading in French (Bournot-Trites & Séror, 2003). Students were unable to find commonalities between their lives and the characters in the books, which affected their ability to use background knowledge when reading. Romney et al. (1995) found that students suggested offering more French translations of English books to entice them to read more often in French. This need to relate to the culture from which the stories originate is demonstrated in Romney et al.'s findings that show more students listing French fairy tales as a preferred genre of books than English fairy tales (1995). As fairy tales transcend cultures, this illustrates the students' comfort level with familiar story lines when reading in French.

While there are major differences between first and second language reading, many of the attitudes towards reading in a second language can be linked to reading in an individual's first language. Van Ours (2008) related that there is a direct correlation between reading skills and time spent reading in any language. If a student does not have sufficient skills to read at a comfortable level, their desire to choose reading as a pastime will undoubtedly decline. Van Ours also found that girls read more fiction books than boys, while boys read more comics than girls (2008). This information fits with the findings in French immersion classrooms, and shows that most genre preferences stay the same across the languages. A strong positive correlation was found between the presence of books in the home and time spent reading, with an opposite correlation between time spent watching television and time spent reading (Van Ours, 2008). These findings could transfer to the second language learner, where the amount and variety of French books at home would positively influence reading habits in the second language. The

main difference in this study is that while watching television in one's first language has a negative impact on language, the opposite is true for second language development, as shown in Romney et al's study (1995). Their study, while supporting the conclusion that watching television in your first language did not positively influence reading, found that watching French television supported reading in French, and was a positive tool in second language acquisition (Romney et al, 1995).

Vocabulary acquisition through reading in a second language

Reading in a second language has been proved to positively affect many aspects of language acquisition. Many different studies have shown that reading is beneficial when acquiring a second language. (Dupuy & Krashen, 1993; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Nation, 2001; Huckin & Coady, 1999; Fraser, 1999) In Bournot-Trites and Séror's 2003 study, students themselves reported a belief that reading in their second language would increase their vocabulary in that language. While students do not retain the meaning of every word that they come across while reading, the positive impact that reading may have on language acquisition paired with a lack of reasons to discourage reading is enough to motivate teachers and parents to want their students to read in both their maternal language, as well as their second language. Pigada and Schmitt report that to many students, reading is often the only way to practice the language on their own outside of class time, as the majority of French immersion students come from homes where French is not spoken by either parent (2006). This is echoed by Nation (2001), who states, "the idea that learners can develop their language knowledge through extensive reading is attractive... [as] it provides the opportunity for learning to occur outside the classroom" (p.150-151). Nation goes on to give other positive reasons for reading as a vocabulary building tool, such as the idea that reading can be done at a level that matches each

individual's ability, as reading is an individual activity and secondly, students are able to choose reading materials that suit their particular interests, therefore providing further incentive to read (2001, p.151).

When discussing the impact of reading in a second language on language acquisition, the terms intensive and extensive reading has been used in previous studies. Nation defines intensive reading as "the close deliberate study of short texts...to understand the text,... the vocabulary, grammar and discourse of the text"(2001, p.149). Extensive reading, on the other hand, uses texts that are more authentic, with a more varied, and often more difficult, vocabulary (Nation, 2001). Studies show that extensive reading is beneficial to academic performance and general language knowledge, although students must encounter words on more than one occasion in order to retain an understanding of the new word (Nation, 2001). Students need to read books that provide a level of difficulty that allows them to learn new vocabulary, whereas "easy" books only allow students to strengthen their understanding of known vocabulary (Nation, 2001). In this study, extensive reading represents the desired outcome of programs that promote reading in French, where students are reading many authentic books of their choice, with strong development of vocabulary through reading, with a small portion of direct vocabulary study in the classroom.

While it can be argued that reading French books, written by francophone writers, is an important method of introducing students to French cultures, reading is far more important to language acquisition than solely to impart cultural information. In a case study by Pigada and Schmitt (2006), it was found that a student learning French as a second language enhanced his vocabulary by reading. Pigada and Schmitt discovered a "relatively widespread vocabulary acquisition" on the weekly tests administered to the subject in their study (2006, p.18). While the

meaning of the word being assessed was not always made clear from the reading alone, there were many other positive interactions between vocabulary and reading. More specifically, a large improvement in spelling was noted, even after brief encounters with a word. This is important when learning languages such as French, “which are considered difficult to spell” (Pigada and Schmitt, 2006, p.18).

Meaning of new vocabulary words can also be acquired through reading, although at a lesser extent than the spelling of the words (Pigada and Schmitt, 2006). It was found that students must have repeat exposure to a word in order to acquire an understanding of the meaning of the word, while spelling ability increased after only one viewing of a word. While this study used extensive reading to improve the student’s word recognition and knowledge, and in many cases improvement was seen, it must be remembered that the findings cannot necessarily be generalized, as there was only one subject, and the texts used were not authentic material. Dupuy and Krashen (1993) created a study to confirm previous findings that vocabulary acquisition can occur due to incidental learning while reading. Their study used three university French classes and required students to watch part of a French film and then read the script from the film. The script that the students read was considered to be very difficult, with many unknown words. In order to achieve this, the third class involved in the study was a higher-level French class, and the students were assessed to determine their familiarity with the vocabulary words. It was found that they were unfamiliar even to a higher-level French student. The two test classes were asked to read the script of a scene from the movie, on which they were told they would write a comprehension test after the reading. Instead of the promised comprehension test, the students were given a vocabulary test. The results of this test support the finding that students can acquire vocabulary incidentally through reading, as the test groups

scored higher on the vocabulary test than the control groups organized by Dupuy and Krashen (Dupuy & Krashen, 1993). They believe that the findings of their study could have shown an even greater incidental vocabulary growth had the students been tested on more vocabulary from the script, and been given a text that was slightly easier.

While many studies point to incidental learning through reading (vocabulary growth strictly through reading for pleasure), few studies look at how or why this occurs. Fraser (1999) pointed out that many people assume that the vocabulary growth is related to inferring meaning from words in the texts and yet many readers ignore unknown words when reading. Fraser believed that there was less incidental learning through reading than was believed by the general public. Using a study on lexical processing strategies, Fraser's results supported the thought that students who read for comprehension incurred incidental vocabulary growth (1999). Students acquired a deep enough understanding of the meaning of new vocabulary through reading to understand the context in the story. Fraser's study concluded that students used inferencing strategies more often than choosing to ignore new words. She believed that second language learners would benefit from direct instruction on reading strategies that included inferencing in order to increase vocabulary acquisition. Coady and Huckin (1999), in their review of incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language, found that students must have a strong enough "sight vocabulary", that is words that are recognized immediately, in order to infer meaning of new words in a sentence. It was also stated in this review that reading programs that included explicit vocabulary instruction, alongside the incidental vocabulary acquisition, showed greater growth in vocabulary (Coady & Huckin, 1999).

Horst, like Fraser, looked beyond the findings that extensive reading created incidental vocabulary acquisition, and looked for a method to measure the percentage of words learned

(2005). She created a system where the reading materials offered to adult French learners were scanned and the vocabulary present in each book was recorded (creating a word bank for each text). With this information, Horst was able to measure the new vocabulary students were learning with each book they chose to read. In this study, the students were able to choose books from the collection at their own rate, and that matched their own interests (although limited to the selection of books provided). Using pre and post-tests to measure students' vocabulary knowledge, Horst found that in the two-month study, students' vocabulary in their second language had grown as a result of incidental learning through reading (2005). She summarized that it is feasible to measure the amount of language acquired through reading, rather than simply state that vocabulary is being acquired. This is important as teachers and researchers search for ways to promote reading in second language classrooms of students of all ages. The obvious drawback to Horst's measuring methods is the time it takes to gather the word banks in each book, especially in settings where graded readers are not being used, but students are choosing books from larger libraries.

Summary

The literature on voluntary reading in French immersion has shown that students are reluctant to read in their second language, unless instructed to do so. Students believe that reading in French would be beneficial to their language development, but do not find this motivation enough to read more often in French. Several reasons were given for the negative view of French literature, including difficulty with vocabulary, cultural differences and idiomatic expressions and slang that render the comprehension more difficult. The literature on second language acquisition and reading has shown that reading in a second language has a positive

influence on vocabulary development, as well as on spelling and structure when writing in the second language.

SECTION 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

In this section, the research methodology, data collection and findings will be presented. The findings of the study will be broken into two parts: 1) Students' opinions towards reading in French and English; and, 2) Students' preferred genres of French books and favoured authors and book titles.

Overview of the methodology

A survey/questionnaire was identified as the appropriate method to answer this study's questions regarding French immersion students' reading preferences. Dörnyei (2003) found that questionnaires were used to collect the largest amount of data in second language research, second only to language proficiency tests. This is because questionnaires "are easy to construct, extremely versatile, and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily processable" (Dörnyei, 2003, p.1). Questionnaires also demand very little financial resources, as the information can be gathered by a small number of researchers, and evaluated in a timely fashion. Although questionnaires can provide the second language researcher with valuable data there is the danger that there will be a poor response rate, which can impact the quality of the findings. Additionally, since participants complete the questionnaire independently of the researcher, it is important that questions be clearly and simply stated. However, *clear and simple* questions may make delving into complex issues difficult and the resulting data may be somewhat superficial. (Dörnyei, 2003).

Since this study was interested in the subject of attitudes and opinions with regard to reading, it was deemed appropriate to develop a Likert scale questionnaire. This tool easily allows participants to self-assess their opinions on a scale of how closely their feelings match the question asked. It assesses subjective and opinion based information collected from individuals.

To delve deeper into students' attitudes and opinions toward reading in French, several open-ended questions were also developed.

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) was developed around two themes: 1) preferences towards reading in French or English; and, 2) favourite genres of books in French. The first eight questions use a Likert scale, which allows students to rate their feelings on a scale of one to five. Each question was formed into a statement (e.g. I like reading in English) and students were asked to circle the number that most closely matches their level of agreement with the statement. The Likert scale was recorded from highest to lowest under each question, with the terms “strongly agree”, “agree”, “neutral”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree”. While some researchers choose to include an even number of options in their Likert scales in order to force the respondent to choose a point of view, studies have shown that including a middle option does not significantly affect the results of the study (Dörnyei 2003). The first four questions assess the student's feelings towards reading in English and in French, allowing them to answer that they enjoy one or the other, as well as both or neither. The following questions measure each student's perceived level of difficulty when reading in either English or French, in order to illustrate one possible reason for their opinions toward reading in either language. Each category of question is asked for both English and French in order to create a better understanding of the student as a reader, no matter the language. After the last of the Likert scale questions, students who answer that they agree with the statement “I find books in English more interesting than in French” are asked to provide any possible reasons they may have for this opinion.

The next question asks students to rate their preference of genres of books when reading in French. They are given a list of genres of books and are told to choose as many options as they want, as well as giving an “other” category, where students can add a genre of writing that they

believe has been missed. Each genre of book has been briefly described beside the choice, in order to maximize students' understanding of the question, and to increase the accuracy of the answers collected. Finally, the questionnaire has three optional open-ended questions, asking students to list any of the French book titles or authors that they have enjoyed and if they have any further comments on reading in French.

An overview of site and participants

The questionnaires were distributed to three schools located in a city in Western Canada. Four classes received the questionnaires, two of which were late French immersion grade 7 classes and two were early French immersion grade 7 classes. Participants were aged between twelve and thirteen years old.

Data collection

The questionnaires were distributed to 109 students in four classes during one distribution period. Of the 109 questionnaires distributed, 52 were returned.

The questionnaires, along with the consent and assent forms, were distributed by the classroom teacher in large envelopes. Every grade 7 student in the class was given a questionnaire. The package included an explanation of the purpose of the study, an approximation of the time required to complete the questionnaire (approximately 30 minutes), information on the confidentiality of all results, and the timeline in which to complete the questionnaire (one week). Students who chose to complete the questionnaire returned it, in the provided envelope, to their classroom teacher, from whom I picked up the returned questionnaires. Students from the researcher's own class did not participate in the study to eliminate any possibility of researcher-participant bias. All questionnaires returned were used in the analysis of the data. The sample returned is respondent self-selected as students chose to

complete the questionnaire on an optional basis, (influenced by their parents' choice on whether or not to consent to their participation in the study). This method of selecting participants best suited my study.

Data Analysis

A tally system was used to calculate the results of each question from the questionnaire.

An example of a tallied question is below:

1. I like to read in English.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
33/52	63%	16/52	31%	2/52	4%	1/52	2%	0/52	0%

The columns on the left represent the number of students, out of a total of 52, who felt this term best matched their feelings. The second column represents this number as a percentage. The ninth question, asking students to share their favourite genres of books, allowed for more than one choice per student, therefore the percentages for each genre could potentially add up to 100% had each student chosen the same genres.

9. My favourite types of books in French are: (check the box of as many choices as you want)

Fantasy novels	31/52	60%
Dramatic novels	22/52	42%
Comedic novels	36/52	69%
Animal novels	6/52	12%
Sports novels	8/52	15%
Comic books	24/52	46%
Magazines	18/52	35%
Information books	10/52	19%
Books Translated from English	18/52	35%
Books with short stories or poems	20/52	38%

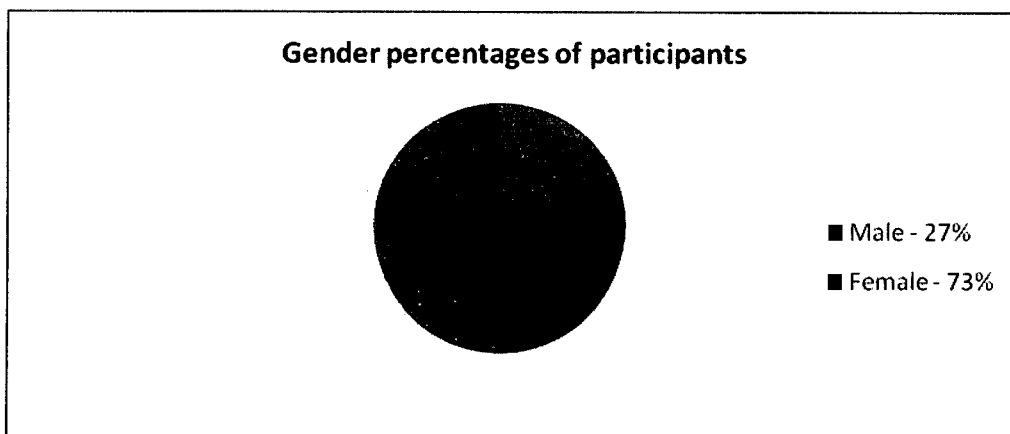
The open-ended questions were also collected and similar themes in the students' responses were grouped together.

SECTION 4: FINDINGS

In this section, I will focus on the findings of the study. I will first discuss the demographics of the participants, more specifically the gender. Secondly, I will discuss the opinions of students towards reading in French and in English. Thirdly, the genres of books that students indicate as their favourites will be examined. Finally, student's reasons for their opinions and preferences in reading will be explored.

Demographics of participants

Figure 1: Gender percentages of participants



At the intermediate level in French immersion programs, the ratio of female to male students is often unequal. According to Statistics Canada, female students outnumber male students in the majority of French immersion classrooms. As is shown in Figure 1, the number of male respondents in this study was significantly lower than the number of female respondents. This reflects the demographics of many upper intermediate French immersion classrooms. When interpreting and drawing conclusions from the data collected, it is important to keep the gender inequality in respondents in mind, especially when generalizing on book preferences, which may be more heavily influenced by the female respondents' opinions.

Opinions and preferences towards reading

In this section, the opinions and preferences of the students towards reading will be investigated. 94% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I like to read in English,” with the majority noting that they strongly agreed, as shown in the table below. When asked the same question of reading in French, only 4% circled “strongly agree,” although 46% did say they agreed with this statement.

I like to read in English.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
33/52	63%	16/52	31%	2/52	4%	1/52	2%	0/52	0%

I like to read in French.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
2/52	4%	24/52	46%	17/52	33%	8/52	15%	1/52	2%

The results of this second question, while seemingly showing that 50% of French immersion students like reading in French, seemed to be countered by the written responses found in the open-ended questions. Many students made comments that reflected the opposite statement, such as “reading in French is not even close to as enjoyable as reading in English” and “there aren’t any good books in French”.

When asked about their reading habits at home, 92% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I read books at home in English,” showing that the students who completed the questionnaire are interested in reading for pleasure, as indicated below.

I read books at home in English.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
27/52	52%	21/52	40%	4/52	8%	0/52	0%	0/52	0%

Alternatively, only 35% of students agreed that they read in French at home, with only 6% choosing “strongly agree”, as the table below demonstrates.

I read books at home in French.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
3/52	6%	15/52	29%	17/52	32%	13/52	25%	4/52	8%

The same number of students who agreed to reading English books at home disagreed with the statement “reading in English is difficult”, with only one student agreeing to difficulties when reading in English.

I think reading in English is difficult.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
1/52	2%	0/52	0%	3/52	6%	19/52	36%	29/52	56%

When asked about the difficulty of the language in French books, students seemed unsure of their feelings, with 44% choosing “neutral”. As shown below, 38% of students disagreed with the statement and a very small number of students agreed. These findings seem to go against the written comments added by students. A large number of students noted that the vocabulary in high interest books was too hard for them, forcing them to read books meant for younger students, or avoiding reading in French.

I think that the language in French books is difficult to understand.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
0/52	0%	5/52	10%	23/52	44%	20/52	38%	4/52	8%

The final two Likert scale questions, listed below, asked students to directly compare their feelings towards English and French books. 76% of students agreed to enjoying English books more than French books, with only 2% in disagreement. Similarly, 61% of students agreed to finding English books more interesting than French books.

I like English books better than French books.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
17/52	32%	23/52	44%	11/52	21%	1/52	2%	0/52	0%

I find books in English more interesting than in French.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
10/52	19%	22/52	42%	16/52	31%	4/52	8%	0/52	0%

Students' favourite book genres

Students were asked to indicate their favourite genres of books when reading in French. Each student was given the option of choosing one or more genres of book. A majority of students indicated that French comedic novels were one of their preferred genres of books. This genre was followed closely by fantasy novels, which 60% of students chose. Comic books, dramatic novels, magazines and books with short stories, poems or translated from English were chosen by a similar number of students. The least favourite genres of books were animal (12%) and sports (15%) novels and information (or non-fiction) books (19%). Some students chose to

add other genres of books that they enjoyed. These additional genres of books added to the list were adventure, romance, mystery, science fiction, history, action, Manga graphic novels (translated to French), true stories and rhyming books.

Reasons for opinions and attitudes towards reading

In the open-ended questions, students were asked to give their reasons explaining why they thought that English books were more interesting than French books. Several students believed that they could “relate to English books better,” stating that the plots in English books were more interesting and relevant to them. On a similar theme, some students wrote that they enjoyed reading in English more as they get more recommendations of good English books from their friends, as well as recommendations from the movies that they see which have been adapted from books.

Another reoccurring theme involved the difficulty of French books, or conversely the ease with which English books are read. The majority of students that responded to this question listed the difficulty of the language in French books as one reason why reading in English was more enjoyable. Students made statements such as “the expressions and language are hard to understand in French” and “the vocabulary [in French books] is too hard in books that interest me”. One student said, “it takes more effort to read in French so I enjoy it less.” Students continued this thought by sharing that they speak English more often, therefore reading in English is easier.

Many students shared their frustration at the inability to find French books that interested them but that matched their ability in the language. One student commented:

[English books] are more my age and I can understand them quite well. French books tend to be too young when we can understand them. Plus, in English there is

more variety than in French.

One final idea shared by the students showed their belief that reading was beneficial to their overall language development. One student linked their reading activities to their speaking and writing abilities, saying, “in English books we can learn words or phrases that we can use in everyday life or in our writing”. Unfortunately, this student did not see that the same would apply to their acquisition of the French language.

The final question asked students to share any additional comments relating to reading in French. Students reiterated their thoughts from above, sharing that French books are less interesting and harder to read than English books. Many students used this question to indicate that they would read more in French if they found suitable and interesting books. One student linked the appearance of French book covers to the likelihood of their choosing that book. “French books all have white covers and are all the same size so you don’t pull any out [of the shelf] because they all look the same.” One student seemed to sum up students thoughts in a humorous statement: “French books are not in English. If they were in English, I’d read all of them!”

The answers found in the open-ended questions, discussing the reasons behind students’ attitudes towards reading in French, were contrary to many of the Likert scale questions. In the Likert scale questions students indicated that while they enjoyed reading more in English, they still enjoyed reading in French. Only when asked about reading at home did students admit to choosing English books over French books. The comments in the open-ended questions may indicate that the students do not have a negative view of reading in French, but are unable to find the motivation to read in French, especially when struggling to find suitable books.

Limitations

The information collected through the questionnaires gives researchers and educators alike a snapshot of grade 7 French immersion students' preferences when reading in French. While the information collected can be a useful tool when building French library collections in schools and when working with students to promote a positive attitude towards reading in French, there are several limitations of the study that must be acknowledged. Firstly, just under half (48%) of the questionnaires were returned. With a relatively small number of respondents, the generalizability of the study is decreased. Although the number of questionnaires does not allow for full generalization of the results, the book titles and genres provided by the students will still allow educators to improve upon book choices in French immersion schools.

Summary

This section presented an overview of the data collection, procedures for data analysis, major findings from the study as well as the limitations of the study. The findings included:

- French immersion students prefer reading in English to reading in French.
- The respondents very seldom read in French at home, while reading often in English
- Very few respondents find reading in English difficult.
- In the Likert scale questions, the majority of the participants did not agree that the language in French books is difficult, yet in the open-ended questions the difficulty of the language in French books was listed as a reason for the dislike of reading in French.
- The majority of participants find reading in English more interesting than reading in French.
- Language difficulty, poor choice of books and cultural differences in plots were given as reasons for disliking reading in French.

SECTION 4: DISCUSSIONS

In this section I will respond to my original two questions, using the literature available and the findings of my questionnaire. The questions are:

1. Do French Immersion students prefer reading in English to reading in French?
2. What types of books do French immersion students prefer to read when reading in French?

Do French Immersion students prefer reading in English to reading in French?

Previous research on the reading preferences of French Immersion students has shown that the majority of students prefer reading in English to reading in French (Bournot-Trites & Seror, 2003; Romney et al, 1995). My research questionnaires returned somewhat similar results, with a few exceptions. When asked their opinion on reading in French, many respondents indicated that they enjoyed reading in French. This finding goes against general results of previous studies exploring the language reading preferences of French Immersion students. However, this finding that emerged from the Likert scale questions was later contradicted by the students' responses to the open-ended questions. In their responses to the open-ended question, the vast majority of students indicated that they found French books harder to understand. They identified vocabulary and idiomatic expressions in the text as impediments to their reading. Additionally, they identified that the plots in Francophone books were less interesting than English language books. Students admitted to very seldom, if ever, reading in French at home. These responses seem to contradict responses to questions on whether or not they like to read in French. That is, those students who agreed that they enjoyed reading in French went on to list many reasons why they did not like reading in French. These contradicting comments could demonstrate that in theory, students do not have a negative perception of reading in French, but

in practice, they have had many negative experiences that have impacted the language of the book they choose to read at school and at home.

While this study's number of respondents does not allow for the results to be overly generalized to the French immersion population, it suggests that teachers should be identifying appropriate novels for their students' French reading level. Finding more appropriate French reading materials may provide students with more positive experiences with French books. Additionally, many respondents identified that they were motivated to read books recommended by friends – these book titles were, generally, English. With that in mind, teachers could put in place book sharing programs. In this way, students may become more aware of French books available to them. Read aloud activities by the teacher could also help students increase their awareness of French reading materials. Teacher-librarians might also invite representatives of French children's/young adult publishing houses to share titles with students to see which titles illicit excitement. In this way, students could participate in the library selection process.

Some of the comments from students on why they preferred reading in English included remarks on the choice of French books. One student said: "English books are more my age and I can understand them quite well. French books tend to be too young when we can understand them, plus in English there is more variety than in French." The problem of difficult language in French books that are at an appropriate interest level for students is one that is not easily fixed. French books are written with a Francophone audience in mind. Even English books that students have enjoyed in English, when translated to French, become too difficult for French immersion students. Although classroom teachers can work on strategies to help students be better readers, (e.g., using all clues in the text to understand new words, and building vocabulary), what French immersion students really need are books written at their lingual

ability. That is, French immersion students need high interest controlled vocabulary French books. Several students made reference to the size of books and what that meant to them: “English books are longer therefore better,” “My English vocabulary is better, so I can read bigger books. Small books are for little kids.” Students also commented on the lack of variety of French books in some school libraries, where the number of books does not allow for enough variety in materials. To counteract this problem, teachers could take their students to public libraries to increase their choice of reading materials.

What types of books do French immersion students prefer to read when reading in French?

When asked to share their favourite genres of French books, almost all respondents were able to check off more than one genre of books from the list provided to them. Comedic and fantasy novels were the most popular genres of novels, with 69% and 60% respectively. The least popular types of books were animal books and information (non-fiction) books. As the number of female respondents was much higher than the number of male respondents, I did a separate analysis of the favourite book genres of male respondents, and found that their preferences were very closely matched to the overall findings of the study, with comedy and fantasy novels the most popular genres of books, and comic books in third place. With these findings in mind, teachers and teacher-librarians can better choose the type of books purchased for libraries and classroom libraries. On top of the ten options of book genres provided to students on the questionnaire, some students added their favourite genres of books. These included: romance novels, adventure or action novels, Manga graphic novels, history books, mystery novels, science fiction novels. To meet the interests of their students, teachers and teacher-librarians should have students’ help when ordering French books for the library,

especially in schools where the teacher-librarian does not speak French. Students might feel more ownership in libraries where they have helped to build the collection, which might increase their inclination to read in French, and might allow for more dialogue between students on their favourite books in the library and therefore more recommendations.

SECTION 5: CONCLUSIONS

The findings summarized here are the result of a study designed to investigate whether French immersion students prefer reading in English to reading in French and what types of books French immersion students prefer reading in French. The study was conducted with four French Immersion classes, two of which were late French immersion grade 7 classes and two were early French immersion grade 7 classes. Participants were aged between twelve- and thirteen-years-of-age. A questionnaire (see Appendix A) was deemed the most appropriate methodology to investigate the questions of the study. Nine of the questions were aimed at identifying students' attitudes so used a Likert scale. The final questions were designed to delve more deeply into students' preferences.

Findings related to question 1: Do French Immersion students prefer reading in English to reading in French?

Although a review of the literature revealed reading in a second language increases students' awareness of grammar rules, sentence structure and vocabulary in their second language (Coady & Huckin, 1999; Fraser, 1999; Horst, 2005) and, additionally, reading in a second language also allows students to increase their understanding of the culture behind the language, the research shows that in French immersion programs, students are often reluctant to read in their second language. The findings from this study also identified that students prefer reading in English over reading in French, and very seldom engage in reading in French at home. Some reasons provided were as follows:

- The difficulty of the language in French books;
- If the vocabulary is at an appropriate level for the French Immersion grade 7 reader, then the book is often conceptually too simple; and,

- Plots of French children's/young adult books often do not appeal to student interest.

Findings related to question 2: What types of books do French immersion students prefer to read when reading in French?

Students identified a broad range of reading preferences. Among their favourites were comedic and fantasy titles with over 60% of students identifying that they enjoyed reading these genres. In addition to the genres included in the questionnaire (which students were asked to comment upon), they identified the following genres as being of particular interest (see Appendix B):

- Rhyming books;
- Adventure;
- Romance;
- Mystery;
- Science Fiction;
- History, Action;
- Manga (translated to French); and,
- True stories.

In short, the responses showed that students have an interest in reading in a broad range of genres and titles (see Appendix C). The difficulty is in finding French texts that meet student interest and have an appropriate level of language.

Pedagogical Implications

A number of implications for teaching arise out of this study:

1. **Identifying appropriately leveled French language reading materials.** When identifying appropriate French language reading materials, teachers should consider:

whether the language/vocabulary is at an appropriate level for their students; what kind of support/strategies they need to provide to French immersion students so that students have strategies to tackle new vocabulary in their reading; and, identifying French books with high interest, low/controlled vocabulary.

2. **French language book selection:** Teachers can develop booklists of French titles enjoyed by their students; this list can then be used by both classroom teachers and teacher-librarians to create their classroom and library French materials collections.
3. **Motivation to read French books:** Using what has been learned about the reading preferences of French immersion students, have students involved in the selection of books for the school library (particularly, if the teacher-librarian is non-French speaking). Such choices might include French language *manga* and comics. Additionally, book clubs where students recommend French titles they have enjoyed.

Conclusions

This study indicates that French immersion students prefer reading English books to French books. However, it is suggested here that with the support of teachers and teacher-librarians there are strategies that might support French immersion students' to engage more successfully with French books. With the careful selection of French books (language and interest level) French immersion students might be more motivated to engage with and enjoy reading in French.

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APPENDIX A

Reading Questionnaire for French Immersion Students

Title of the project: French Immersion students' perceptions towards reading in French

Researcher: Katie McClellan, University of British Columbia

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

Note: If the questionnaire is completed and sent back to the classroom teacher, 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.

School: _____ **Grade:** _____ **Gender:** male ____ female ____

Please send the completed questionnaire back to your teacher.
Please circle the number that best represents your feelings for each statement.

1. I like to read in English.

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

2. I like to read in French.

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

3. I read books at home in English.

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

4. I read books at home in French.

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

5. I think reading in English is difficult.

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

6. I think that the language in French books is difficult to understand.

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

7. I like English books better than French books.

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

8. I find books in English more interesting than in French.

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

If you answer 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to number 8, please explain why:

9. My favourite type of books in French are: (check the box of as many choices as you want)

- ☐ Fantasy novels (books that are in a world unlike our own)
- ☐ Dramatic novels (serious books)
- ☐ Comedic novels (funny books)
- ☐ Animal novels (books about animals)
- ☐ Sports novels (books about sports, or stories that have sports in them)
- ☐ Comic books
- ☐ Magazines
- ☐ Information books (Non Fiction)
- ☐ Books Translated from English
- ☐ Books with short stories or poems
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

10. My favourite books that I've read in French are: (If you don't remember the title of a book, feel free to describe the book the best you can.)

11. My favourite authors of French books are: (If you do not have any, leave this question blank.)

12. Is there anything else you would like to comment on about reading in French?

Thank you for your participation in this questionnaire!

APPENDIX B

Responses: 53

2. I like to read in English.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
33/52	63%	16/52	31%	2/52	4%	1/52	2%	0/52	0%

3. I like to read in French.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
2/52	4%	24/52	46%	17/52	33%	8/52	15%	1/52	2%

4. I read books at home in English.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
27/52	52%	21/52	40%	4/52	8%	0/52	0%	0/52	0%

5. I read books at home in French.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
3/52	6%	15/52	29%	17/52	32%	13/52	25%	4/52	8%

6. I think reading in English is difficult.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
1/52	2%	0/52	0%	3/52	6%	19/52	36%	29/52	56%

7. I think that the language in French books is difficult to understand.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
0/52	0%	5/52	10%	23/52	44%	20/52	38%	4/52	8%

8. I like English books better than French books.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
17/52	32%	23/52	44%	11/52	21%	1/52	2%	0/52	0%

9. I find books in English more interesting than in French.

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
10/52	19%	22/52	42%	16/52	31%	4/52	8%	0/52	0%

10. My favourite types of books in French are: (check the box of as many choices as you want)

Fantasy novels	31/52	60%
Dramatic novels	22/52	42%
Comedic novels	36/52	69%
Animal novels	6/52	12%
Sports novels	8/52	15%
Comic books	24/52	46%
Magazines	18/52	35%
Information books	10/52	19%
Books Translated from English	18/52	35%
Books with short stories or poems	20/52	38%

Other genres of books added by students:

Rhyming books, Adventure, Romance, Mystery, Science Fiction, History, Action, Manga (translated to French), True stories

APPENDIX C

Grade 7 French immersion students' favourite books (as collected from questionnaires): author in brackets

Title (author in brackets)
<p>Novels :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fils de ciel (Kenneth Oppel) 2. Amos Daragon les porteurs des masques (Bryan Perro) 3. L'auberge des animaux (Dolores Mora) 4. Spiderwick (Translated) (Holly Black, Tony Di Terlizzi) 5. Série Alexis (Dominique Demers) 6. La Guerre des Tuques (Danyèle Patenaude et Roger Cantin) 7. Le Trio Rigolo (series) : Ma Première Folie, Ma Plus Grande Peur, Mon Pire Prof, Ma Nuit d'Enfer ... (Johanne Mercier, Reynald Cantin, Hélène Vachon) 8. Mat et le Fantôme (Jocelyne Ouellet) 9. La Quête de Despereaux (Kate Di Camillo) 10. L'Odyssée Miraculeuse d'Edouard Toulaine (Kate Di Camillo) 11. Geronimo Stilton (series) (Geronimo Stilton) 12. Le funeste destin des Baudelaire (Lemony Snicket) 13. Harry Potter (J.K. Rowling) 14. Sauver ma babouche (Gilles Gauthier) 15. Les prisonniers du zoo (Pierre de Hugo) 16. Henriette Palmer au temps de la ruée vers l'or (series) (Barbara Haworth-Attard) 17. Galoche (series) (Yvon Brochu) 18. Le Petit Nicholas (Jean-Jacques Sempré et René Goscinny) 19. Une exposée fatale (Judy Blume) 20. Mon journal full nul (series) (Jim Benton) 21. Lili et Max (series)(Dominique de Saint Mars et Serge Bloch) 22. Le visiteur du soir (Hubert Ben Kemoun) 23. La saison de basket de Fred (Roger Poupart) 24. Pas de chaussons dans mon salon (Gauthier Gilles) 25. Super Sheila (Judy Blume) 26. Un océan nous sépare (Susan Wiggs) 27. Mon pays à feu et à sang (Geneviève Aubuchon) 28. Loup détective (Lili Chartrand) 29. Le prince et la pauvre (Mark Twain) 30. James et la grande pêche, Charlie et la chocolaterie (Roald Dahl) 31. Le petit prince (Antoine de Saint Exupéry) 32. La nouvelle maîtresse (series)(Dominique Demers) 33. La petite fille tatouée (series : Jeff et Juliette) (Raymond Plante) 34. Le rêve de Jessica (Ann M. Martin) 35. Petit boulot d'été (Marie Desplechin) 36. Save qui peut l'amour (Marie-Francine Hébert) 37. Les Mystères romains (series) (Caroline Lawrence)

38. Le magicien d'oz (Lyman-Frank Baum)
39. Indiana Tommy (Louis Desmarais)
40. La Trahison du vampire (Denis Côté)
41. Les otages de la terreur (Denis Côté)
42. Babar en famille (Laurent de Brunhoff)
43. Comment devenir parfait en trois jours (Stephen Manes)

Comic book series :

44. Garfield (Jim Davis)
45. Boule et Bill (Jean Roba)
46. Astérix (René Goscinny et Albert Uderzo)
47. Les Schtroumfs (Alain Jost, Thierry Culliford et Pascal Garray)
48. Tin-tin (Hergé)
49. Capitaine Bobette (Dav Pilkey)

Magazines :

50. Débrouillards

Information books :

51. Cache-cache dinosaures (Rosie Heywood)
52. Mon premier Atlas illustré
53. Encyclopédie Fleurus Junior Mythologies