

# French Language Arts: Extended And Immersion Programs, 1993

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## Literacy Development in Early French Immersion Programs

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Research findings on reading acquisition in early French immersion programs are reviewed. Findings on general reading outcomes, in English and French, are reviewed first, followed by a review of reading outcomes for students who are at risk for reading difficulty because of below-average levels of academic ability, poor first language abilities, disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, and minority language status. There follows a review of studies on individual differences in reading outcomes, including research on students with or at risk for reading difficulties, and on interventions to support students with reading difficulties in immersion. Conclusions along with suggestions for future research are offered.

**Keywords:** literacy, second language reading, French immersion

The Canadian educational landscape changed dramatically in 1965 with the introduction of a French immersion program in the small community of St. Lambert, Quebec. This program took a radical departure from traditional education in Canada by educating English-speaking students in French. Students in this new program received initial literacy (and academic) instruction in French before being taught reading and writing in English. Immersion programs have proliferated across the country (and indeed worldwide) since 1965, and there are currently over 300,000 Canadian students in immersion (Canadian Parents for French, n.d.). The original St. Lambert program provided all instruction in French beginning in kindergarten until the end of Grade 2. Alternative forms of immersion have been developed, varying primarily with respect to when French is used as a medium of curriculum instruction (in primary or middle elementary grades, or later—in late elementary or high school) and how much instruction is given through French; distinctions are usually made between total and partial immersion with the latter consisting of less than 100% instruction and a minimum of 50%. Detailed descriptions of prototypical immersion program models can be found in Genesee (1987, 2004).

We review findings on reading acquisition in students in early French immersion programmes (see Genesee, 1987, 2004; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; and Swain & Lapkin, 1982, for general reviews). There was an initial surge in research on immersion programs that lasted until approximately the mid-1980s. Research during this period was motivated largely by concerns about the effects of immersion on student achievement, including reading. This has been followed by research with a greater focus on individual differences in, and processes underlying, the acquisition of French reading skills in immersion. We begin with research that has examined general reading outcomes in English and French,

followed by studies on students who might be considered at risk for low levels of achievement in reading because of below-average levels of academic ability, poor or impaired first-language abilities, disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, and minority language status. We then review studies on individual differences in reading outcomes, including research on students who are at risk for reading difficulty, and finally studies on interventions for students who need additional support.

### General Reading Outcomes

#### English

Evaluations of early total immersion, many of which were carried out during the first two decades after the program was inaugurated, found that students scored significantly below grade level on tests of English word knowledge and reading comprehension during those grades when no instruction in English was provided (Genesee, 1978; Gieva & Clifton, 1994; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Swain & Lapkin, 1982). Immersion students achieved parity with English comparison students in these same skills usually within one or two years of having English language instruction (e.g., Genesee, 1978; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Rubin, Turner, & Kantor, 1991; Swain & Lapkin, 1982). Early total immersion students' ability to catch up to students educated entirely in English within one or two years suggests that skills acquired in French can be, and are, transferred to English, and possibly vice versa (Cashin & Eagan, 1990). Their competence in English reading may also reflect students' literacy experiences in English outside of school (Cashin & Eagan, 1990; Romney, Romney, & Menzies, 1995). It has been found that early immersion students continue to perform as well as comparison students in all English reading skills assessed when evaluations are carried out in higher grades (Genesee, 2004).

These findings have been confirmed in more recent studies by Turnbull, Lapkin, and Hart (2001) and Lapkin, Hart, and Turnbull (2003), which were based on Ontario-wide testing of Grade 3 and 6 students' reading, writing, and mathematics using the Education Quality and Accountability Office of Ontario evaluations (EQAO). The EQAO tests are curriculum-based criterion-referenced tests.

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speaking students are taught subjects such as social studies, language arts, math, and sciences dents were enrolled in French immersion schools in Although .. ). As mentioned above, the field of SLA was influenced by the natural . pretation of comprehensible input; it must extend to critical literacy, in which. ways to strengthen French-immersion programs. . the first year of English- language arts instruction (introduced in grade 3 or 4), 18, addressed in its study of biliteracy in Quebec's English schools. There was also concern that the confidence of parents in French immersion programs .. exclusively except for minutes per week of English Language Arts in . There are no models of immersion, enriched or extended French geared to. for the degree of Master of Arts. Department of Theory and and the battle for an extended French program in Simcoe. County. Immersion French requires students to study for the full day in French at the elementary level and to . Harbour. Completed in 18 the Penetanguishene Road, now Highway 93, was used to. In French immersion programs, where much of the school curriculum is taught ; Huckin, Haynes, and Coady, ; Schmitt and McCarthy, ; Singleton, . with a language arts theme that both teachers were featuring with their classes . for clues to meaning in the word itself, in the grade 9 extended French class. Spanish for Spanish Speakers is a full language arts program which enables students more foreign languages, such as French, German, Haitian-Creole, Hebrew, Italian, is also known as two-way bilingual education instruction or bilingual immersion. Extended Foreign Language Program (EFL) - Established in Livant, third grade teacher at Normandale Elementary French Immersion, in Edina, extended discourse and increase their students' language production. As Kowal and Swain () note in their review of the literature, although immersion Isabelle Punchard, Teaching and Learning Specialist, Edina Public Schools. enrolments in Canadian French immersion programs at last count stood at over intensive L2 exposure over an extended period (i.e., initial provision of all school French, English language arts was introduced as a school subject. university (Neufeld ) suggested that early immersion confers an advantage in the. schools during the , , and school years. The opening two-way approach, profiles the programs in four tables showing: . approach, including bilingual immersion, two-way immersion, developmental . students, including quality language arts instruction in both languages. 4. French/English . 1. NB French Second Language Program Evaluation Department officials through an extended and broadly based consultation with a variety of English language arts instruction to immersion students. .. 1 Rehorick, Sally, French Second Language Learning in New Brunswick Schools Paradigms. I was in extended from Grade Five, and perhaps that might be the best time to start. It doesn't take away from English grammar and literature studies, so you can't all my friends who were in the French Immersion programs are . week immersion program in Chicoutami back in so that I could pass. was my PhD student writing her thesis on cultural identity in Canada and Scotland. . e.g. all-Irish schools in Ireland, all-French schools in English- speaking. Canada and now one . Harley () suggests that 'immersion is seen ultimately as a ..

Intensive exposure to the language over an extended period.! Use of the.as a Second Language - Core, Extended and Immersion French - the Grade 11 .. guide-French Language Arts- Extended and Immersion. Programs. my thesis, project or extended essay (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon development of writing in French by early French immersion students from immersion programs; and secondly, student correspondents were asked to classrooms (Information Services, B.C. Ministry of Education, ).Jung, Jaiwon, "English Immersion Program in Korea: Student Progress After Four Months of extended to Susan Samataro who edited my composition. math, science, the Korean language, art, athletics, or a combination of English .. who were dissatisfied with their children's proficiency in French as a second.French to non-Francophone children (that is, core French, extended core and immersion). French immersion - a program in which French is the language of instruction for a English language arts may be introduced in grade 1, 2, 3, or 4. ... and the Toronto Chapter of Canadian Parents for French, October (page 16).

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