

**Intensive English in Quebec:
popular attitudes and news media debates**

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Abstract

In the province of Quebec, Canada, linguistic issues are often covered by the French-language news media in a way that vilifies the English language and victimizes the French language. This author considers it necessary that the French-speaking population understand that English instruction need not harm students' school performance in any subject, including French. Individuals need to have access to accurate and diversified information about research on second language instruction. The thesis research reported here investigated how three French-language newspapers in Quebec (*Le Devoir* and *La Presse*, from Montreal, and *Le Soleil*, from Quebec City) framed the debate about the Ministère de l'Éducation, Loisir et Sports's (MELS) announcement of their intention to implement a mandatory intensive English program policy in all Quebec schools (Grade Six) between July 2010 and July 2012. The theoretical framework for this study was frame analysis (Entman, 1993; Goffman, 1974; Hallahan, 2008; McCombs, 2004; Pan, 2008; Scheufele, 2008). The study investigated how positive or gain frames contrast with negative or loss frames, with details of how the publications under study chose to position themselves on the issue. In total, 60 newspaper articles (news, editorials, op-eds and letters) containing the key words 'anglais intensif' ['intensive English'] were studied. The findings show that all three newspapers, but especially *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil*, were mainly against the policy and that most of the arguments were framed as losses or negative attributes of intensive English. The results also show that the extensive scholarly research on intensive English was not well represented in the newspapers. These three publications should therefore give more space for differing views about language issues in their reporting. Moreover, newspaper readers should also question themselves about the objectivity of the reporting.

Résumé

Dans la province du Québec, au Canada, les problèmes linguistiques sont souvent abordés par les médias francophones dans une façon qui diffame la langue anglaise et victimise la langue française. L'auteure du présent rapport considère qu'il serait important que la population francophone comprenne que le fait d'apprendre l'anglais, langue seconde, n'a pas forcément de conséquences sur la performance des étudiants dans d'autres matières, y compris le français. Les individus ont besoin d'avoir accès à de l'information exacte et diversifiée en ce qui concerne les recherches en didactique et apprentissage des langues secondes. Ce mémoire de maîtrise a examiné comment, pendant la période entre juillet 2010 et juillet 2012, trois quotidiens francophones au Québec (*Le Devoir* et *La Presse*, de Montréal ainsi que *Le Soleil*, de la Ville de Québec) ont encadré le débat autour de l'annonce du Ministère de l'Éducation, Loisir et Sports (MELS) de son intention d'implanter un programme d'anglais intensif obligatoire en sixième année. Le cadre théorique de cette étude est la théorie de l'encadrement ('frame analysis') (Entman, 1993; Goffman, 1974; Hallahan, 2008; McCombs, 2004; Pan, 2008; Scheufele, 2008). Nous nous penchons sur la question de comment les cadres positifs, ou de gains, contrastent aux cadres négatifs, ou de pertes, ajoutant des précisions sur la façon dont les quotidiens étudiés ont choisi de se positionner par rapport au sujet. Un total de 60 articles (nouvelles, éditoriaux, 'op-eds' et lettres) contenant le mot de recherche 'anglais intensif' ont été étudiés. Les résultats démontrent que les trois quotidiens, plus particulièrement *Le Devoir* et *Le Soleil*, étaient en grande partie contre la politique et que la plupart de leurs arguments ont été encadrés comme étant des pertes, ou des attributs négatifs, de l'anglais intensif. Les résultats démontrent aussi que les recherches académiques sur le sujet n'ont pas été adéquatement représentées par les quotidiens. Nous concluons que ces trois quotidiens devraient donner plus d'espace aux différents points de vue sur le sujet. De plus, les lecteurs des journaux devraient se questionner d'avantage sur l'objectivité des reportages.

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Acronyms Used

ACJC Association catholique de la jeunesse canadienne-française (Catholic Association of French-Canadian Youth)

CAQ Coalition Avenir Québec ['Future Quebec Coalition']

CEQ Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec ['Quebec Central Teachers' Union']

CSN Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux ['National Confederation of Unions']

FAE Fédération Autonome de l'Enseignement ['Independent Teaching Federation']

FCPQ Fédération des Comités de Parents du Québec ['Quebec Federation of Parents' Committees']

FPJQ Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec ['Professional Federation of Quebec Journalists']

FSE-CSQ Fédération des Syndicats de l'Enseignement - Central des syndicats du Québec ['Teaching Unions Federation - Quebec House of Labor']

FTQ Fédération des travailleurs du Québec ['Quebec Workers Federation']

MELS Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport ['Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports']

PQ Parti Québécois ['Quebecer Party']

SEOM Syndicat de l'Enseignement de l'Ouest de Montréal ['Montreal West Teachers' Union']

SEPI Syndicat de l'Enseignement de la Pointe-de-l'Île ['Pointe-de-l'Île Teachers' Union']

SPEAQ Society for the Promotion of the Teaching of English as a Second Language in Quebec

SSBJ Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste ['Saint John the Baptist Society']

1 Chapter 1 – Introduction

Which language is spoken in Canada? Many outsiders will promptly say it is English, others might say English and French, some might also mention Aboriginal languages, and others may include the languages of the numerous immigrants to the country. Outsiders who know that Canada's official languages are English and French usually have the misconception that all Canadians speak both of these languages. In fact, only 17.5% of Canada's residents reported being able to conduct a conversation in both French and English in the 2011 census (Statistics Canada, 2011a). Most of these individuals were in Quebec, a Canadian province whose official language is French only. Why exactly did Quebec become officially unilingual in French at the same time that it kept the highest rate of bilingualism in Canada? And how do Quebecers regard their bilingualism in French and English? If your first thought is that most of them are fond of this trait, the results of the study reported here may surprise you.

Most European settlers in Canada came from Great Britain and France, starting with the French in 1534, with Jacques Cartier's first voyage of exploration, right through approximately 1867, with the creation of the Canadian Confederation. Until then, Canada was still under British rule (See, 2001). The British outnumbered the French and became more economically and politically powerful (Pilleul, 2008). The French language was disadvantaged from 1763 on, when France ceded New France to the British. Therefore, in the 1960s, French-Canadians demanded more language rights from their provincial and federal governments (Bouchard, 1998; Plourde & Georgeault, 2008). In response to this pressure, Canada became officially bilingual in English and French in 1969 ("Our history, our path," 2008; Haque, 2012), and Quebec, a province with a French-speaking majority, became officially unilingual in French in 1977 (*Charte de la langue française*, 1977).

Quebec has two publicly funded school systems, one in French and one in English. Since 1977, in order to protect and preserve French, legislation in Quebec has kept most children from attending the English school system (MELS - Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2011a), and has prohibited the teaching of school subjects in any language other than French in the French school system, except for ESL (Lightbown & Spada, 1994). Until the 1970s, ESL classes in French schools in Quebec used to be taught for approximately two hours per week in 'drip-feed' fashion, for approximately 30 minutes every day from grade 4 of elementary school until the end of secondary school (MELS - Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2012b; Spada & Lightbown, 1989). In the mid-1970s, students' parents started realizing that they could not count on traditional ESL teaching for their children to learn enough English for their future studies and employment. Many parents who wanted their children's English to improve started a grassroots movement to pressure school boards for the offer of more effective ESL programs (Lightbown & Spada, 1994; Spada & Lightbown, 1989).

Research on second language instruction established, however, that the problem with many second language (L2) programs all over the world was drip-feeding, that is, the teaching of an L2 a few hours per week over the course of many years. Scholars showed that spreading the time dedicated to study an L2 over years weakened motivation and was not effective (Collins & White, 2011; Stern, 1985). Other studies suggested that spending less than one hour per day studying a foreign language without having the opportunity to use it out of school did not work (Weary, 1987).

In a response to parents' pressure, some francophone school boards in Quebec replaced their teaching of ESL for two hours per week with intensive English programs (IE) in which the amount and concentration of hours dedicated to learning English was higher than in the regular program. In IE, 6th-graders would study English during five months in one half of their school year and the other subjects in French during the other half of the year (Lightbown & Spada, 1997). IE started in 1976 and has gained in popularity ever since. In IE, as in all Quebec ESL classes, no academic content from the

required curriculum may be taught or tested¹, as this is illegal under Quebec law (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir e du Sport (MELS), 1988). Instead, the topics of the classes stem from themes of interest to grade 6 students. The focus of IE is to teach oral rather than written communication. The explicit teaching of grammar is also avoided (Lightbown & Spada, 1997). Many years of research have shown that IE students' performance in English is better than that of students in the regular program, including those at an older age who have accumulated the same amount of hours of ESL instruction (Lightbown & Spada, 1989). In IE, students do not become perfectly bilingual, but their English is much more fluent and accurate than that of students undergoing drip feed ESL classes (Lightbown & Spada, 2000). IE is offered in a very small number of schools compared to the number of families who want their children to participate in the program. Many school boards limit access to IE on the basis of grades, learning difficulties and behavior. Only children with high grades are allowed in and children with learning disabilities or behavioural problems are screened out (Lightbown & Spada, 1994). All these criteria have made access to IE extremely difficult.

On February 23, 2011, then-Quebec Premier Jean Charest announced that IE would become mandatory across the province, and would be implemented gradually over a period of five years (Charest, 2011). This announcement created turmoil and much news media coverage, as we see in more detail in Chapter 5, below. The French-language news media in Quebec have always played an important role in the language debate, usually advocating for the promotion and protection of French in the province, as discussed below (chapters 2 and 3). Understanding francophone news media coverage of a specific language issue, namely, the government announcement of IE, helps in the comprehension of ongoing linguistic battles in Quebec.

¹ For example, because Samuel de Champlain's first voyage to "New France" in 1603 is part of the regular history curriculum, it cannot be tested in English in the ESL classroom. However, because James Cook's first voyage to Australia in 1788 is not, it can.

I therefore chose to investigate the following research question: How did the Quebec newspapers *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* frame the debate about the MELS's (Ministère de l'Éducation, Loisir et Sports) mandatory intensive English program policy between July 2010 and July 2012?

French language newspapers in Quebec have framed the debate about Jean Charest's announcement in different ways. While a few articles have supported IE, many have resisted it. I found that newspaper coverage of the vast academic research on IE was scarce. Francophone newspapers spread anxiety about IE based on worries that had already been investigated and found to be groundless by researchers. These newspapers were biased, in that they published many more pages featuring opinions against IE than they did showing ideas in favour of the program.

Most studies on IE in Quebec focus on effectiveness issues, such as whether children's English becomes better than in conventional programs, whether children's performance in other subjects is affected, and whether children with learning disabilities can successfully complete the program. The present study offers a different perspective, focusing instead on journalistic coverage as well as public opinion about the program. Rather than discussing the research evidence, which has been done elsewhere (Collins & White, 2011; Genesee, 2007; Lightbown & Spada, 2000), I chose to discuss the ways the most influential papers among the Quebec francophone press represented or "framed" the announcement that IE would be taught across the board in order to come to tentative conclusions about how their readers were likely to view the policy.

My personal motivations for this study reflect my foreign origins, my passion about multilingualism, and my desire to understand Quebec society. I am an immigrant in Quebec, and my mother tongue is Brazilian Portuguese. As an outsider, I do not feel strongly in favor of either English or French in the debate about bilingualism in Quebec. However, I learned English earlier than French and became an ESL teacher in my home country of Brazil, and then in Quebec. I am in favor of bilingualism, and therefore in

support of IE in the Quebec French school system. I am aware of these values and have been careful in avoiding partiality through constant self-reflection and revision of my data, results and conclusions.

In order to understand the way *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Soleil* covered the debate about IE, it is crucial to understand the historical events that have shaped the linguistic identity of francophone Quebecers as well as the role played by francophone newspapers in several linguistic debates over the course of Quebec history. Chapter 2 therefore offers a context for my study by providing an overview of Quebec's evolution within Canada and gives details about the reasons that have led the province to choose to become an officially unilingual province in French. Chapter 3 explains the importance of francophone newspapers in Quebec in contributing to socio-political change and in debates about language, as well as recounting the history of the three newspapers chosen for this study: *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Soleil*. Chapter 4 presents my research design and the theoretical framework of this study: frame analysis (Entman, 1993; Goffman, 1974; Hallahan, 2008; McCombs, 2004; Pan, 2008; Scheufele, 2008). Chapter 5 presents and discusses the findings of this study. Finally, chapter 6 concludes the study and provides an overview of the implications, limitations and directions for future research.

In the following chapter I recount aspects of the history of Quebec that have defined this province's contemporary linguistic identity.

2 Chapter 2 – Context

2.1 French Canadians' Linguistic Insecurity

European expeditions to North America started in the late 15th century, with Christopher Columbus (Columbus, Casas, Dunn, & Kelley, 1989). Jacques Cartier began the French colonization in what would become Canada in 1534. In 1583, Sir Humphrey Gilbert began British colonization in the same area. Between 1756 and 1763, European countries such as Great Britain, France, Spain, Austria, Germany, Portugal, Russia and Sweden fought over their colonies and trade empires in the Seven Years' War. With Great Britain's victory over France and Spain, the King of France signed the Treaty of Paris in 1763, ceding most of the French territory in North America to the British (Samuel, 1934). Shortly after that, many French settlers went back to France, especially officers who worked for the Crown. There were no new arrivals, so the British outnumbered the French (Pilleul, 2008). As the remaining French Canadians started spreading and occupying more land, the British separated the country into Upper and Lower Canada in 1791 (Tousignant, 2012). The terms Upper and Lower Canada refer to the upper and lower reaches of the St. Lawrence River. Upper Canada, modern-day southeastern Ontario, was positioned near the headstreams of the river. Lower Canada, modern-day Quebec and Labrador, was positioned near the river's estuary (Hall, 2012; Ouellet, 1980; See, 2001).

Though there was some French-speaking colonization and settlement in the Western part of Canada (Asfar & Chodan, 2003), most of the French stayed in the East, and the British spread to the West. Today, Canada outside Quebec is still mostly English-speaking, and Quebec is still mostly French-speaking. In the 2011 Census, 78.1% of the population in Quebec declared that they speak French as their first language, followed by New Brunswick with 31.6%. In other provinces and territories, 0.5% to 4.3% of the population claimed to speak French as a first language (Statistics Canada, 2011b).

Having become a minority in the country, French Canadians started seeing their language lose space and respect. Throughout its history, Quebec went through periods

of linguistic insecurity because of anglicisms and unfavorable comparisons to Parisian French, both of which contributed to criticisms of the French spoken in the province (Bouchard, 1998, 2011). But just what kind of French was spoken by settlers in Quebec and why did it receive so much criticism?

Most of the original French settlers came from Paris and its surroundings, also referred to as l'Île-de-France, and spoke the same variety of French. Others came from farther regions, where Parisian French was not widespread, and thus spoke different French varieties and patois—spoken linguistic varieties of limited regional use (Bouchard, 1998, 2011; Wolf, 2008). Île-de-France French predominated in New France as people who spoke different languages spread and intermarried, causing other varieties of French to disappear (Barbaud, 1984). The settlers were mostly artisans, peasants, soldiers, sailors and the Filles du Roy (orphan young ladies sponsored by the state to marry in New France). The most educated people were members of the clergy. Therefore, the type of French spoken in New France was a popular one, different from the prestigious language used by the aristocracy (Bouchard, 1998). Nevertheless, until the end of the 18th century, travelers from France responded positively to the French spoken in Quebec. They said that French peasants in Canada spoke “well”, “purely” and “without an accent”² (Oakes & Warren, 2007; Wolf, 2008). It was also common to claim that their variety of French came straight from classic French, and that peasants in Quebec spoke better French than peasants in France (Bouchard, 1998; Wolf, 2008).

After France ceded New France to the British in 1763, the connections between the empire and the colony were almost completely cut, as there was not much commerce or new arrivals. From that moment, the French spoken in France and that spoken in Quebec developed completely separate paths. The pronunciation in Quebec

² All translations from the French are by the author.

changed much less than it did in France; the French vocabulary in Canada developed according to the new climatic conditions to name items of flora and fauna that did not exist in France, and French Canadians borrowed some words from aboriginal languages (Pilleul, 2008). Both varieties borrowed words from English, but in Quebec this phenomenon was more intense (Bouchard, 1998, 2011).

With the French Revolution, between 1789 and 1799, the royalty lost power and their prestigious French variety lost its prestige. The bourgeoisie, the new class in power, adopted a variety that differentiated them from the nobility. This new variety became more and more popular in French society, and the variety once held in high esteem came to be considered old-fashioned and ridiculous (Bouchard, 2011). As Quebec and France did not have any contact during this period, the changes in France did not immediately influence the former colony, so the language of the French aristocracy was still in common use in Quebec, especially by priests.

In the mid-19th century, intellectuals, such as Arthur Buies, Louis Fréchette, Jules-Paul Tardivel, and Oscar Dunn, started denouncing the fact that an excessive amount of English words had made their way into French in Quebec, particularly in the cities. A few examples included the use of purely English words such as *barley*, *tumbler*, *brandy*, and *steam*. Others were adaptations of English words and phrases into French such as *patates* (potatoes) and *payer une visite* (to pay a visit). They still praised the French spoken by peasants in Quebec because it was free of anglicisms (Bouchard, 2011).

After the French Revolution in 1799, contact between France and French Canada was gradually re-established. There was some commerce between 1830 and 1840, and the first French ship to visit Quebec after that was *La Capricieuse*, in 1855. In 1891, the first official recovery of contact occurred when Quebec's Premier, Honoré Mercier, visited the president of France, Sadi Carnot (Bouchard, 2013; Meyer, 1980). After that, comparisons between Parisian and Canadian French started becoming more frequent. School teachers such as Thomas Maguire, Jérôme Demers and Michel Bibaud

condemned some traits of the Quebec pronunciation. Their criticism included words like *moi*, which was pronounced [mwa] in Paris and [mwe] in Quebec, and words in which French Canadians pronounced the final *t* like *juillet*, *beset*, *calumet*, *Nicolet*, while Parisians did not. Maguire, Demers, Bibaud and other intellectuals stigmatized the French used in Quebec and constantly encouraged the population there to imitate the prestigious Parisian French by publishing French manuals and writing in newspapers (Bouchard, 2011).

In the mid 19th Century, Americans and anglophones in Canada spread the perception of the *French Canadian Patois* – a derogatory term expressing that French Canadians did not speak “real” French, but a variety characterized by ugly pronunciation and poor vocabulary. This critique spread the idea that the people of Quebec were ignorant and in decline, and separated them from their prestigious origins (Bouchard, 1998; Oakes & Warren, 2007).

The linguistic oppression of French Canadians in one sense stemmed from the position of authority acquired by the English in New France. However, the English agreed to allow French Canadians to practice their religion, which in turn also became a burden on Quebec’s people. Details about the socio-political authority of the English and the Catholic Church in Canada are recounted in the next section.

2.2 Heavy hands: the English and the Catholic Church

From 1763 to 1774, the Royal Proclamation Act “barred French Canadians from holding public office” (McKay, 2011, p. 45). Thus all political power belonged to the British (Hall, 2012). While English Canadians became economically more powerful by creating industries and advancing commerce, French Canadians continued to work in an agrarian economy and maintained a traditional lifestyle. French Canadians believed that their mission was to spread the Catholic faith in America. Priests became a powerful spiritual, intellectual and political influence on the French-speaking people of Quebec, successfully encouraging them to produce large families (Pilleul, 2008). As the British

ruling elite did not force French Canadians to attend Protestant English schools, French-speaking children attended Catholic schools. By 1838, the Catholic Church was in charge of the entire French Canadian education system (Bouchard, 1998, p. 79).

Being opposed to materialism and mercantilism, priests who taught at Catholic schools did not provide proper training for French Canadians to work in industries in metropolitan areas such as Montreal. As a result, the population who migrated to large cities could not compete in the job market with their English Canadian counterparts, who had attended Protestant English schools (Bouchard, 1998). Being obliged to learn English to adapt, many urban French Canadians started using their language only at home. They saw their status change from independent farmers to non-qualified workers (Bouchard, 1998; Oakes & Warren, 2007).

Around 1910, the population in Quebec's cities outnumbered that in the countryside, and because of a workforce surplus, many francophones had to accept the lowest posts of employment (Bouchard, 1998). In large cities, the Catholic Church could not force its values on the population as in rural areas. The clergy tried to convince French Canadians to continue working in the fields and avoid coming to the cities. The discourse was that only the peasants could accomplish the French Canadian mission: reclaim the land and protect themselves from the Anglo-Protestantism of the cities (Bouchard, 1998). This unrealistic idea worsened the image that French Canadians had of themselves and emphasized the fact that they were poor and dominated by the English Canadians and the church. In the past, French Canadians had been proud of their origins. In the 1930s, however, they had nothing else to be proud of *but* their origins. Most were still Catholic, but with the move to the cities the clergy did not have as much influence over them as they had in the past. Rapid urbanization contributed to a lower fertility rate among French Canadians who had moved to the city. At the end of the 19th century, French Canadians accounted for one third of the Canadian population; however, by the 1930s, this number had decreased to 28% (Pilleul, 2008).

Between 1940 and 1960 negative attitudes towards the French language in Quebec reached their peak. During this period, French Canadians continued to live through difficult political and economic times, without much hope of social promotion. This scenario led them to lose their sense of self-worth. Their language became devalued not only among anglophones, but among themselves as well (Oakes & Warren, 2007). Their degraded economic situation transformed their language into a source of discrimination by French-speaking intellectuals, Americans, and English Canadians, and those who chose to escape linguistic discrimination either became assimilated into English or preferred to adhere to Parisian French (Bouchard, 1998). French Canadians were struggling to define themselves and find pride in their culture. They would have to endure this situation for a few more decades before they started to fight the stigma attached to their identity.

2.3 Quebec's "Quiet Revolution"

On September 7, 1959, Quebec premier Maurice Duplessis died. He had been in charge of an ultra-conservative government for eighteen years. The population, particularly the youth, blamed him for keeping Quebec from growing and criticized his connections with the Catholic clergy (Paulin, 2005). When the Liberal Party won the provincial election in 1960, a period of intense changes began in Quebec. For instance, the government created new ministries such as Culture, Natural Resources, and Federal and Provincial Relations. The government also created the Ministry of Education, whose francophone school boards used to be managed entirely by the Catholic Church. Quebec also nationalized hydroelectricity and established a pension plan for its workers (Pilleul, 2008).

The term "Quiet Revolution" was not originally used to describe the socio-political changes in Quebec in the 1960s. Julie Bélanger and Paul Poirier found that the phrase, referring to things other than Quebec, appeared six times in the *Globe and Mail* between 1844 and 1960, and 75 times in the *New York Times* and *The Times* of London, England, between 1848 and 1960 (Bélanger & Poirier, 2007). However, it is considered

impossible to know for sure when the expression was used for the first time to refer to the situation in Quebec. Several authors assert that the phrase appeared in the *Globe and Mail*. None of these authors give an exact date to the article, but some speculate about the year 1962 (Behiels, 1987; Dion, 1973, 1998; Gervais, 1998; McRoberts & Postgate, 1983; Thomson, 1984), while others state that Brian Upton was the one who coined the phrase in 1961 in the *Montreal Star* (Arsenault, 1983; Dion, 1998). However, the first completely documented mention of the term to designate the Quebec case was found in *Maclean's* in December 1961, by Anne MacDermot (MacDermot, 1961).

In the linguistic sphere, a debate in *Le Devoir* in 1959 about the quality of the French spoken by school pupils created turmoil. The director of the newspaper, André Laurendeau, published an article complaining that his children and all the others he knew spoke and wrote *joual*, or poorly (Laurendeau, 1959). The term *joual* came from the fact that the word *cheval* (horse) was pronounced [joual] by the uneducated class (Desbiens, 1962; Lamonde, 1998). Under the pseudonym *Frère Untel*, literally “Brother Anonymous”, the priest and schoolteacher Jean-Paul Desbiens wrote to *Le Devoir* agreeing that students’ language was poor and that he found it discouraging to teach French. In 1962, he published the book *Les insolences du frère Untel* (*The impertinences of Brother Anonymous*), criticizing the school system and saying that children in Quebec could not speak or write properly (Desbiens, 1962). Many readers wrote to *Le Devoir*, mostly to support Desbiens (Bouchard, 1998). This self-criticism and debate over *joual* continued for more than fifteen years, during which time numerous articles published in different types of publications, such as the newspapers *Le Devoir* and *La Patrie*, expressed the negative opinions many people of Quebec had about their own language (Daoust, 1983).

The “joual crisis” differed from the French Canadian Patois myth and other linguistic debates because, for the first time, the population started discussing the socioeconomic and political reasons that made the French language supposedly inferior in Quebec. Over a year after starting the debate about *joual*, Laurendeau wrote in *Le*

Devoir that it was the massive urbanization that made French mix with English in an unbalanced way, since French Canadians had no choice but to learn the language of the governing elite. He defended the idea that French speakers were the victims, and not the ones to blame for their language's "degeneration" (Laurendeau, 1961).

On television, radio and in *feuilletons* (supplements attached to newspapers), an increase in the use of popular language began to emerge. Several playwrights and poets started using *joual* deliberately in their work and they enjoyed much success, despite the fact that critics who defended "good French" only called their efforts to improve the French language "refrancisation" (Bouchard, 1998).

By the 1960s it became clear that the French and anglophone elites would not be successful in pushing Parisian French into the mouths of French Canadians who had become very widespread. Journalists in newspapers such as *Le Devoir* and *La Presse* started publishing articles about *joual* and the anglicization of Quebec, urging the government to act on the linguistic issue in a way to promote good quality French, especially for school children (Bouchard, 1998). Moreover, a separatist movement started taking shape in Quebec due to the initiatives of individuals such as Rene Levesque, Gilles Gregoire, Andre D'Allemagne, Jacques Bellemare and Marcel Chaput, all of whom had helped found political organizations who aimed at making Quebec independent from Canada (Levin & Sylvester, 1973). André Laurendeau played an important role in denouncing linguistic problems through journalism and suggested a commission to investigate bilingualism in Canada (Bouchard, 1998). As a result of this popular pressure, in 1963 Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson established the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, co-chaired by André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton, who was then president of Carleton University in Ottawa (Haque, 2012).

Given the factors already covered, it had become increasingly difficult to be served in French in businesses in Montreal. Therefore, beginning in the early 1970s,

many politicized French Canadians began organizing boycotts against such enterprises (Pilleul, 2008). In the same decade, demanding that their language be respected, French speakers pushed for Quebec to become a unilingual province given that bilingualism was seen to be destroying their linguistic heritage (Bouchard, 1998).

The term *French Canadian* had been widely used until the 1950s, and it reflected the population's ethnic past and their religious and agrarian values. With all the political and social changes happening in the 1960s and 1970s, "French Canadian" was no longer considered an acceptable term for francophones living in Quebec. Instead, around 1965, French speakers in Quebec started to call themselves *Québécois* (Quebecer) (Rioux, 1990). This new adjective signalled territorialisation, and it also allowed Quebecers to see themselves as a majority in their province, despite being a minority in their country (Oakes & Warren, 2007; Rioux, 1990).

At the same time, news audiences began writing to newspapers such as *Le Devoir* expressing their concerns that Quebecers were not French Canadians and that Canada was mostly English, a culture to which French speaking Quebecers could not relate (Bouchard, 1964). In order to avoid assimilation and anglicization, many people felt the need to become independent from the rest of Canada. When the change from *French Canadian* to *Québécois* occurred it was because Quebecers wanted to be defined as sovereign in their own territory, as opposed to being connected to nations that did not represent them properly, namely France and Canada (Rioux, 1990). Even though this implied a distancing from the other francophone communities in Canada, Quebecers found that it was a reasonable compromise, since they considered that these communities were so assimilated into English that not much could be done for them. From 1960, under the Liberal Party, until 1976 when the *Parti Québécois* was elected, numerous pieces of legislation granted Quebec more political autonomy, which contributed to the province seeing itself as a nation, a quasi-state, as opposed to part of merely a territory within Canada (Oakes & Warren, 2007).

At the beginning of the 1960s francophone newspapers in Quebec wrote extensively about the variety of French to adopt in francophone countries for purposes of international communication. Many journalists, for example in *Le Devoir* and *La Presse*, defended the idea that Parisian French was best and should be chosen. However, readers of these publications denounced the fact that the French used too many anglicisms and imposed them on all francophone nations (Bouchard, 1998, 2011). Francophones from all over the world longed for a norm that could be adopted by all of their countries, which they referred to as international or universal French. These countries did not want this norm to be defined by the Parisian French. The idea was to understand that France was not the only home of the French language (Bouchard, 1998). The changes in collective identity that took place in the 1960s in Quebec and all over the world encouraged the establishment of commissions in Quebec and Canada that investigated both the provincial and federal linguistic situations. Consequently, the government of Quebec tabled and adopted several bills that would protect and promote the French language. From these bills, the most important was the Charter of the French Language passed by the PQ government in 1977.

2.4 Quebec Commissions, Bills and the Charter of the French Language

Beginning in 1783, with the first English school, until 1998, the public educational system in Quebec was divided between Catholic (French) and Protestant (English) school boards (MacLeod & Poutanen, 2004). Catholic schools only accepted Catholic students, while Protestant schools accepted anyone. There was also an English-Catholic school system for students of Irish descent, the only English-speaking Catholics. The following excerpt from Bouchard (1998) shows the growth of the English school system at the time:

Until the beginning of the 1930s, immigrant children were distributed almost equally between English and French schools, the latter even having an advantage, but as of 1931, the two English-language networks began to accommodate the

majority of these children. Thirty years later, in 1961, more than 90% of neo-Canadian children opt for English schools. (p. 263)

In 1961, the Quebec Liberal government under Premier Jean Lesage established the Parent Commission, officially named the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Instruction in the Province of Quebec. The goal of the Commission was to examine the structures, contents and methods of the school system already in place in Quebec (Provencher, 1997). The objective was to increase accessibility to schools and to improve education. The Commission judged that the language of francophone textbooks was weak, and that teachers would have to receive better training to model standard French to their students. The commission also recommended the creation of Collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (CÉGEPs) ['General and Vocational Colleges']. These were free pre-university and professional schools created to increase the number of youth attending school. It was hoped that one of the indirect consequences of a higher number of schooled people would be an improvement in the quality of spoken French (Bouchard, 1998).

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism confirmed that Quebecers did not accept the fact that being French speakers necessarily needed to put them in an inferior position compared to anglophones. The francophone population in Quebec was cynical and skeptical about the Commission and thus did not believe it could help the French case in Canada. They believed that it was necessary for Quebec to become officially unilingual in French for its language to survive (Bouchard, 1998; Wardhaugh, 2006).

This is why in 1967, under pressure from a complaining francophone population, the new Quebec Ministry of Education recommended legislative measures to prevent anglicization at schools; however, the Union Nationale government under Daniel Johnson, Sr., ignored them. Reacting to this, in 1968, the Saint Leonard school board decided to make instruction in French mandatory for immigrants, but the board

encountered much protest from anglophones, immigrants in general, and Italians in particular, who mostly lived and attended schools in Saint Leonard (Bouchard, 1998; *Luttes linguistiques (II): Le «bill 63»*, n.d.; Taddeo & Taras, 1987). Still in 1968, Premier Jean-Jacques Bertrand established the Commission of Inquiry on the Situation of the French Language and Linguistic Rights in Quebec, also known as the Gendron Commission (Commission d'enquête sur la situation de la langue française et sur les droits linguistiques au Québec & Gendron, 1972). In 1969, even before the commission tabled its report, the government had adopted Bill 63, which gave the entire Quebec population the option to send their children to either French or English schools. Despite declaring that French was the language of instruction in Quebec and containing measures to improve French teaching, this law perpetuated anglicization in the province as it did not help integrate immigrant students into francophone society. Quebecers in general, and sovereigntists in particular, protested avidly against Bill 63 (*Luttes linguistiques (I): la crise de St-Léonard*, 2004; Saint-Jacques, 1976).

While francophones in Quebec demanded that something be done about the situation of French in their schools, in 1968, Federal Justice Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau declared that Quebecers should improve their 'lousy French' before asking for more linguistic rights ("‘Improve Lousy French’ - Trudeau," 1968). Bouchard (1998) explains how Trudeau's effort to connect political rights and language quality displeased some intellectual Quebecers who expressed their opinions in *Le Devoir*:

Quebecers were deeply shocked by this statement, not so much for the fact that Trudeau called their French lousy (after all, this kind of judgment was common and newspapers had been filled with it for decades), but because this statement explicitly linked Quebecers' political rights to the quality of their language. (p. 278)

As we will see in chapter 3, which discusses the role of the francophone press in influencing the Quebec political landscape, certain newspapers have taken a hand in major debates on highly charged political issues, such as language. For example, at this

point, *Le Devoir* did not accept Trudeau's remarks (Bigras, 1968; Lévesque, 1968). Several articles expressed that Quebecers were tired of being blamed for their socioeconomic situation as they realized that it was a consequence of English domination. The population increased their protests and pressured the federal government to give the Quebec province more autonomy and the ability to make their own political decisions.

After Pierre Elliott Trudeau became Canada's Prime Minister in 1968, he adopted the Official Languages Act in 1969, establishing both French and English as official languages in Canada, and making the offer of federal services bilingual ("Our history, our path," 2008; Haque, 2012). Trudeau rejected the idea of language being associated with culture, as favored by the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission, which argued that "language was the chief vehicle of culture" (Haque, 2012, p. 155). In his view, individuals should be free to choose their language (Oakes & Warren, 2007).

Yet, despite the country's new officially bilingual status, Quebecers would later choose to become unilingual in French, offering official services in the language of the majority in their territory (Bouchard, 1998; Oakes & Warren, 2007; Saint-Jacques, 1976). The previously mentioned Gendron Commission tabled its report about French in Quebec in 1972. In 1974, the following government, led by Liberal Premier Robert Bourassa, adopted Bill 22, which made French the official language of work and instruction in Quebec; this mandate also made signage and labeling in French mandatory (Bouchard, 1998).

Despite all the change that occurred in Quebec under the Liberal government of Jean Lesage between 1960 and 1966, some Quebecers felt the need to go further and separate from Canada. René Levesque played a crucial role in such separatist activism, creating the *Souveraineté-Association* movement in 1968, and founding the *Parti québécois* in 1969 (Pilleul, 2008). Before being elected Quebec's Premier in 1976, Lévesque had promised to change Bill 22, which "went too far for anglophones, and not far enough for francophones" (le Floch, 2010a). However, his Minister of Cultural

Development, Camille Laurin, aimed to create a more complete and strict language charter. Bill 1, which preceded Bill 101, was not approved by the National Assembly of Quebec. The Liberals and even Rene Levesque thought that it was disrespectful of the rights of the anglophone minority.

After several amendments, a more moderate version of the Bill was finally accepted. Thus, in 1977, the provincial government adopted Bill 101, or the Charter of the French Language (Floch, 2010b). The general goals of the Charter were to protect and promote the use of French in Quebec. Bill 101 imposed restrictions on the use of English in several spheres: law and justice; public administration; crown corporations; work; commerce and business; and education. Anglophones in general did not approve of the adoption of the Charter, seeing it as a very coercive measure designed to keep people from using English. For fear of losing their rights and institutions, 126,000 anglophones left Quebec for other Canadian provinces between 1976 and 1981 (le Floch, 2010b). Several measures of Bill 101 were later abrogated or weakened by the governments following Levesque's, based on legal disputes about language of legislation and the courts and on minority language education rights (*Charte de la langue française*, 1977).

Bills 22 and 101 were certainly not welcomed by all Quebecers, but they showed the role that constant pressure of public opinion played in favor of the creation of language policies that could protect French from disappearing in Quebec. After realizing their socioeconomic inferiority and going through a collective crisis, Quebecers had expressed their dissatisfaction and pushed their provincial government to use its power to act on the language issue that was important to their perpetuation as a group.

By the 1960s, speaking Parisian French was no longer the most politicized Quebecers' goal. Instead, they found that French from Paris sounded unnatural and snobbish, rejecting Parisians' anglomania. Bouchard (1998) describes French Quebecers' opinion about anglicisms in France:

French Canadians [...] were shocked at the many words borrowed by the French from the English language. It is by the pejorative term *anglomania* that they described this practice. To their eyes it was a true betrayal from the French, who should defend the purity and prestige of their language. (p. 175)

Quebec, along with other French-speaking countries such as Belgium, Senegal, Luxemburg and Morocco, wanted France to understand that the French language now belonged to *all* francophones in and outside of France; thus, these countries did not want a variety of French imposed on their French speaking population by France alone. Quebec aimed at an international French variety, which could be understood by all francophone nations in the world. In 1967, during the 2nd French Language Biennial, French linguist Alain Guillermou introduced the idea of a Universal French, which he described as a French of quality, written and spoken similarly by all francophones (Bouchard, 1998; Guillermou, 1987). French in Quebec progressively approached standard French, but kept some particular features, as described by the *Office de la langue française*: “The usage must be in accordance to international French, while giving room to the expression of specific North-American realities” (Office de la langue française, 1965).

The laws established in the 1960s and 1970s changed the status of the language in Quebec and consequently Quebecers' self-image and opinions about the French used in the province. Economic and political improvement also played an important role in making Quebecers more powerful in the country. French speakers' level of education and income have significantly improved since the establishment of the Charter of the French Language in Quebec (Floch, Durand, & Abou-Rjeili, 2013).

Bill 101 mandates French as the language in kindergarten, primary, and secondary schools. An adult can choose to go to a French or English CÉGEP or university, but for a child to have the right to attend an anglophone school, he or she must fit into

one of the following categories (*Charte de la langue française*, 1977; MELS - Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2011a):

- Have received most of his or her elementary or secondary education in English in Canada;
- Have a sibling who has received most of his or her elementary or secondary education in English in Canada;
- Have a parent who has received most of his or her elementary education in English in Canada;
- Have a parent who attended school in Quebec after August 26, 1977 and who could have been eligible to attend school in English at that time.

Because of these regulations, most children in Quebec receive their basic education in French and must rely only on English as a Second Language (ESL) classes if they want to improve their skills in reading, writing, and speaking English. In the 1980s and 1990s, ESL instruction started in the fourth grade of primary school; however, between 2001 and Winter 2006, it started in grade 3, and since Fall 2006 it has been taught since grade 1 (MELS - Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2012b).

With French instruction now guaranteed by Quebec's school system, the provincial government started to move towards improving ESL teaching because of parental pressure, as explained in the Introduction, above. In 2011, when making announcements about French and English instruction during his inaugural speech, then-Premier Jean Charest declared that it was possible to master French and learn a second or third language at the same time (Charest, 2011). While Charest's motivation might have been responding to students' parents' wishes, it might also have been a political move. The journalist Bernard Descôteaux, for example, found it difficult to interpret Charest's decision: "It is impossible for the moment to fairly analyze Charest's project. Everything we have is an intention registered in an inaugural speech between several

other ideas by a Premier in low popularity” (Descôteaux, 2011). The columnist François Cardinal, while in favor of IE, admitted that the announcement was surprising: “Premier Charest’s announcement certainly seemed to come out of thin air at the time of his inaugural speech last year” (Cardinal, 2012). Many francophones agree that it is important to promote ESL instruction in Quebec schools; Sarkar (2005), for example, shows that Quebecers are aware that monolingualism in French might contribute for this language to remain alive, but it does not help them when competing in the job market in North America. On the other hand, despite Bill 101’s accomplishments in protecting and promoting French, many francophones still believe that English is still a threat to the French language in Quebec (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012; Dufour, 2008).

2.5 French Maintenance versus English Mastery in Quebec

As noted in the previous sections, maintaining French and mastering English in Quebec has been a source of controversy in the province since the speakers of these two languages started living in close quarters in 1871 (Bouchard, 1998). When francophones started to work for anglophone industry owners, they were forced to learn English (Bouchard, 1998). As we saw previously, linguistic crises in Quebec, including the myth of the French Canadian patois, anglicisms, comparisons to Parisian French, joul, and the fear of losing French fluency contributed to Quebecois pressuring their provincial and federal governments to work on language planning in the direction of valuing French to the end of promoting and preserving this language (Plourde & Georgeault, 2008). Today, Quebecers struggle to find the right balance between French and English in education, work and commerce.

During the 2012 provincial election campaign, the four most voted-for parties addressed language issues in their platforms. *Québec Solidaire* specifically promised to strengthen Bill 101 in labour relations and education. Today, the Charter of the French Language applies to businesses of at least fifty employees, but *Québec Solidaire* proposed to lower this number to ten. This party opposed bridging schools (when a child attends a private English school to acquire the right to attend a public one), and

promised to extinguish this practice (“Plateforme Électorale de Québec Solidaire,” 2012). *Coalition Avenir Québec* (CAQ) promised to reinforce the role and power of the *Office Québécois de la langue française*. The CAQ proposed an increase of the budget destined to improve the reinforcement of French in workplaces and public services, and a bigger investment in teaching French to adult immigrants. *Coalition Avenir Québec* also mentioned changes in the immigration selection criteria related to the mastery of English. It declared in 2012 that if English is not essential for employment, it should not keep applicants from being accepted in Quebec (“C’est assez, faut que ça change,” 2012).

Some of the *Parti Québécois*’ 2012 election promises about language were very similar to *Québec Solidaire*’s: apply Bill 101 to businesses of at least ten employees and forbid bridging schools. Moreover, the PQ platform also sought to apply the law to CÉGEPs, professional training schools, and certain institutions of adult education (“L’Avenir du Québec est entre vos mains – Agir honnêtement, s’affirmer, s’enrichir et s’entraider,” 2012). The *Parti Québécois* ended up tabling a milder bill a few months after being elected in 2012, because, according to PQ Premier Pauline Marois, pushing these changes with a minority government would be too ambitious (“PQ tables weaker-than-planned update to Bill 101,” n.d.).

The *Parti Libéral*’s only mention of language in its platform was that it had reinforced ESL instruction at school (“Pour le Québec – Programme électoral du Parti Libéral du Québec,” 2012). It is important to emphasize that the Liberals had been in power for eight years, so any mention of a need to improve the status of French by this party would have placed it in a position of appearing to criticize its own record while in power.

The status of the French language in Quebec does not concern political parties only. Intellectuals, news media, and other institutions such as *Impératif Français*, the *Mouvement Québec Français* and the *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste* express

preoccupations with, and advocate for changes in, the current linguistic situation in the province. *Impératif Français*, for example, claims that its objectives are to protect Quebec from “cultural and linguistic uniformity, in short, against anglicization and Americanization” (“Notre mission, nos objectifs,” 2013). The *Mouvement Québec Français* argues that Bill 101 has been weakened and suggests changes to make the law stronger in education, labour, and as an institutional and official language (“Plateforme du Mouvement Québec français: Faire du français la seule langue officielle et commune au Québec,” 2006). The *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste*’s language dossier shows numerous entries in which it claims, among other things, that French is in decline in Quebec and that Bill 101 has become too moderate (“Société Saint Jean Baptiste - Langue,” 2009). A good example from news media is an article in the magazine *L’Actualité* that demonstrates concern about anglophones’ lack of empathy with francophones in the defense of French (Lisée & Mercier, 2012). Finally, an example of a francophone intellectual in Quebec disturbed by the linguistic situation is the political scientist Christian Dufour, who defended the idea that French should be the most important language in Quebec, without excluding English. Dufour believes that institutional bilingualism leads to unilingualism in English. For him, Quebecers should be less timid in their defense of the French language (Dufour, 2008).

In conclusion, we have seen several examples in this chapter of articles in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and other periodicals about language matters in Quebec. Currently, one of the most important questions for Quebec’s language situation is whether English still poses a threat to French in Quebec since the establishment of Bill 101 in 1977. The next chapter is dedicated to explaining the historical role played by the francophone media in Quebec, particularly in the debate about linguistic issues.

3 Chapter 3 - The Political Role of Francophone News Media in Quebec

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the importance of francophone newspapers in shaping public opinion about linguistic issues in Quebec. First, I briefly explain the importance of the news media in debates about public policy issues in democratic societies. I then present examples of francophone Quebec newspapers' coverage of language issues beginning in the end of the 19th century until the 1960s, and discuss how these newspapers helped produce the collective idea that the French spoken in Quebec was substandard. Following that, I discuss the role of these media during the "Quiet Revolution", when journalists in newspapers such as *Cité Libre*, *Le Travail*, *La Presse* and *Le Devoir* fought alongside the Quebec people against threats to French Canadian culture. I close by recounting the history of the three newspapers I chose to include in this study: *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*.

The news media are important to consider in any debate having to do with public policy issues about health, education, economy and so forth, especially in democracies. That is why the news media can also influence in debates about language planning, as is the case in Quebec. Elly Alboim suggested that news media "creates awareness of issues and conveys its assessment of the degree of urgency" (Alboim, 2001, p. 2). Journalists tend to consider themselves as watchful guardians acting on behalf of the public. When the news media do decide to use their "bully pulpit" to denounce corrupt or unwise actions from public authorities, their targets have few choices in their response—the most obvious being to simply change public policy (Alboim, 2001).

As discussed in the previous chapter, French Canadians in Quebec have been politically dependent on English Canada since the Royal Proclamation of 1763, when France ceded New France to Great Britain (Hall, 2012). Economic dependence on English Canada started with Anglo Canadians' early industrial development. This phenomenon led to a clear labour division in Quebec between anglophones and francophones – the former owned companies and industries, and the latter were their employees. In this

context of economic subordination, francophone newspapers in Quebec served as a vehicle to seek ways to transcend French Canadians' servitude, and to formulate a sovereign national consciousness, which became one of the most important values in Quebec society (Raboy, 1985).

Christians et al. (2009) classified the basic tasks of the news media outlets in democratic societies as *observing* situations, *informing* their publics, *participating* in a community by commenting, advising, advocating and expressing opinion, and providing a space for their publics to encounter opinions from sources other than news media. The authors also focused on four roles that might be carried out by news media in democracies: monitorial, facilitative, radical and collaborative.

The monitorial role refers to the press's responsibility to simply gather, process, and spread information with a limited space for opinion and analysis. The facilitative role concerns the opportunities created by news outlets for their public to become active in their community through discussions. The radical role refers to the condemnation of social injustices by the press aiming to drastically transform their community. The collaborative role mainly concerns extreme situations in which news outlets are asked to cooperate with the state, for example terrorism, war, natural catastrophes, crime, health and safety crises (Christians et al., 2009).

Canadian sociologist John Porter has asserted that value systems provide societies with cohesion, and that the task of passing on these values is performed by eloquent individuals through powerful institutions such as religious organizations, universities, and the mass media. Because the general public does not often have easy access to expert knowledge, journalists translate this information through the mass media, making it more accessible for the general population. When this supposedly expert knowledge reaches various publics through the media, these publics usually see this information as genuine, thus influencing them to accept the report of the media (Porter, 1965). An example is the relationship between the large amount of American

magazine articles about the Vietnam War during the 1960s and the results of an opinion poll where respondents said that this problem was very important (Funkhouser, 1973). The more the media give prominence to an issue, the more media consumers attach importance to it. Thus, media institutions can set agendas according to their own interests (Weaver, 2008).

In 1972, the Government of Quebec established a survey on the dissemination of information in Quebec, the Sorécom Inc. study. The survey focused on daily newspapers, claiming that they were more important than any other media when Quebecers were looking for information about current issues. The study showed that 97% of the Quebec population watched television, 94% listened to the radio, and 80% read a daily newspaper (Sorécom Inc. & Québec National Assembly, 1972). In 1980, the Royal Commission on Newspapers, also known as the Kent Commission, established that most Canadians believed that newspapers were the best way to obtain “essential and comprehensive” information about “all subjects and in particular of local events” (Kent, Spears, & Picard, 1981, p. 34; Raboy, 1984, p. 36).

With this in mind, the next section discusses the importance of the role of the Quebec francophone press in the debate about French language discussed earlier.

3.1 Media and language issues historically

From the end of the 19th century until the 1960s, the francophone press in Quebec contributed to the debate about three major language themes: anglicisms, the myth of the French Canadian Patois, and joul (bad language) (Bouchard, 1998; Plourde & Georgeault, 2008). As already discussed, by the end of the 19th century, French in Quebec had been very influenced by anglicisms, and thus the image of the language started deteriorating. Between 1867 and 1910, francophone newspapers started publishing regular stories expressing concern about anglicisms, and some of them also featured French lessons (Bouchard, 1998). *Le Devoir* advised its readers against the use of anglicisms (Gagnon, 1916); *L'Électeur* criticized the use of barbarisms in publicity

(Buies, 1888); and *La Patrie* disapproved the fact that the vast majority of French Canadians thought their French was good enough and did not need to improve it (Tardivel, 1880). While defenders of old French thought that the popular language in Quebec was better than the one in France because it was more similar to the variety spoken by the royalty when Quebec was colonized, *La Patrie's* coverage of language issues between 1867 and 1910 contributed to weakening this opinion, labeling it “ridiculous and ignorant” (Fréchette, 1874). Quebec francophone newspapers also began discussing Americans’ and Anglo-Canadians’ opinions that French Canadians did not speak “real French”, like in Paris, and thus contributed to the creation of the French Canadian Patois myth (Tesson, 1893).

Until 1910, French had not been mandatory in written material printed by transportation and public utility companies. In that year, the Quebec government adopted the Lavergne Law, the first linguistic legislation in Quebec, in order to ensure that bills, documents, public utility contracts, transportation contracts and tickets were printed in French and English (*Lavergne Law (1910)*, n.d.). French speakers in Quebec helped ensure that the law was being respected by writing to newspapers about breaches (Bouchard, 1998; Bourassa, 1915). In spite of French Canadians’ linguistic militancy, this law was not enough to improve their feeling of inferiority (Bouchard, 1998).

In the same year, 1910, during the 21st International Eucharistic Congress in Montreal, Monseigneur Francis Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, encouraged the Catholic Church in Canada to become more anglicised in order to spread Catholicism throughout the country (Bourne, 1910; Gagnon, 2008). Henri Bourassa, a politician, journalist and defender of French Canadian rights, gave a speech in reply saying that the French language was the guardian of the faith, and thus could not cease to be used in church (Bourassa, 1910a; Gagnon, 2008). In his then recently founded *Le Devoir*, he often defended French Canadians’ linguistic and religious rights (Nadeau, 2010). In 1915, he gave a speech organized by his anti-imperialist party *Ligue Nationaliste*, in which he

argued that French Canadians had the right to preserve and teach their language and religious traditions. More specifically, he wanted French to become one of the official languages of the Confederation. Moreover, he demanded that French-Canadians receive the right to have their children educated in French in all schools across Canada (Bourassa, 1915).

In the 1930s, a movement to support the local economy in Quebec started growing. The Association catholique de la jeunesse canadienne-française (ACJC) and intellectuals such as Lionel Groulx were examples of institutions and individuals who publicly encouraged Quebecers to buy local products and use French in their professional lives (Bouchard, 1998). Lionel Groulx made a speech published in *Le Devoir* about “refrancization” in which he criticized the cult of the English language, particularly in education (Groulx, 1933). In 1933, *Le Devoir* denounced the situation in the Saint-Pierre-Apôtre Church, in Montreal, where English was being overused (Ferland, 1933).

Between 1940 and 1960 most of what was published in newspapers about the French language in Quebec was negative, pessimistic and full of harsh self-criticism (Bouchard, 1998). *La Patrie* declared that French was dying in Canada (Baillargeon, 1947). *Le Devoir* wrote that people made way too many mistakes when speaking or writing French (Bernier, 1949). *La Presse* accused both the educated and uneducated of speaking poorly and rudely (Morin, 1953). *Le Devoir* affirmed that the French used in Montreal was incorrect, heavy, and offensive (Laurendeau, 1958).

The debate about joul, discussed in the previous chapter, also started in the press. *Le Devoir's* André Laurendeau accused children of speaking and writing in bad French, which he called joul (Laurendeau, 1959). The priest and school teacher Jean-Paul Desbiens answered saying that his students did speak and write joul, and he found the situation hopeless (Frère Untel, 1959). The debate about joul between Laurendeau and Desbiens in *Le Devoir* took place between 1959 and 1960 (Desbiens, 1962; “En bref - Avez-vous encore peur?,” 2010). Many readers agreed that the state of French in

Quebec was precarious and needed to be changed, but others used the opportunity to create art using and valuing joul (Bouchard, 1998). An example of an extremely successful theater play written in joul was Michel Tremblay's *Les Belles-soeurs*, from 1965. Several poets also used joul in their work. Raymond Lévesque's *La Vie* and Gérald Godin's *Énumération* are examples of some of these (Gautrin & Abel, 2008).

Language was not the only subject discussed in Quebec francophone newspapers by the journalists mentioned thus far. The 1960s in Quebec saw changes in so many other areas that the period came to be known as the 'Quiet Revolution'. As seen in Chapter 2, this phrase probably did not originate in Quebec, and it is not possible to identify the exact first time this term was used to designate Quebec's socio-political changes. However, several scholars agree that it was used in the anglophone Canadian press before being translated to French (Bélanger & Poirier, 2007; Dickson, 2009).

3.2 The Press and the 'Quiet Revolution'

After the death of Conservative Premier Maurice Duplessis in 1959 and the subsequent election of the liberal Jean Lesage in 1960, the 'Quiet Revolution' began, but its foundation had been underway since around 1939, with the war economy (Jacobs, 2007). Statistics Canada censuses showed that between 1941 and 1971 Montreal's population--which had mainly consisted of English Canadians--doubled, with rural Quebecers moving to the city. Jane Jacobs explained the "Quiet Revolution" as deep changes and modernization "in the arts, in politics, working life, and education" (p. 227) of the French Canadian society, particularly in Montreal (Jacobs, 2007). Quebecers, who had been practicing Catholics, became more secularized and Montreal's economy grew enormously. Canadian media scholar Marc Raboy documents a reorganization of society to "strengthen the ties between financial and industrial capital and to smooth the transition to State monopoly capitalism" (Raboy, 1984, p. 23). The most important change was the use of Quebec State power to transform the situation in the province.

A journalists' strike at *La Presse* in 1958 marked the starting point of the most agitated period of the history of the Quebec press. From 1958 to 1967, the most important francophone papers in Quebec changed ownership, management, publisher, or editor-in-chief (Raboy, 1984). A particularly Quebec form of media that appeared between 1896 and 1910 was the *journaux de combats*, newspapers of "collective social and political promotion". Most of these papers supported Quebec sovereignty and advocated extensive socio-political reform. The most conservative of these papers was *Le Devoir*. It supported Catholic values and believed in Quebec autonomy within Canada. *Le Devoir* has become the most long-lasting, as the others disappeared completely or were later bought by large communication enterprises such as Québecor Média and Power Corporation of Canada (Raboy, 1985).

Certain journalists and politicians were key figures in expressing the ideals that would inspire the "Quiet Revolution". Through newspapers, these individuals played important roles writing about social change in Quebec, thus contributing to the province's becoming more liberal, economically powerful, urban, modern and secular (Porter, 1965). One of the most important journalists to precede the "Quiet Revolution" was Henri Bourassa, who had previously worked as a politician. He founded *Le Devoir* in 1910. Other journalists, who were activists in their newspapers, later became politicians. For example, Gérard Pelletier was a reporter with *Le Devoir*, editor of *Le Travail* and editor in chief at *La Presse*. He also founded *Cité Libre*, along with Pierre Elliot Trudeau. When Trudeau became Prime Minister of Canada, Pelletier worked as one of his cabinet ministers. Even though their Liberal Party was not in favor of Quebec sovereignty, they had expressed strong opposition to the oppressive provincial government of Maurice Duplessis through *Cité Libre*, which helped create the values of the "Quiet Revolution". René Lévesque hosted *Point de Mire*, a television show about public affairs on Radio-Canada. He was a cabinet minister during Jean Lesage's provincial government. He later became the leader of Parti Québécois and was the first to be elected Quebec Premier on a sovereigntist platform. Claude Ryan was director of

Le Devoir and later became the leader of the Quebec Liberal Party. Even though he did not believe that Quebec needed to separate from Canada, he supported the sovereigntist *Parti Québécois* in the 1976 elections and spoke against the War Measures Act of 1970, when the federal government under then-Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau suspended civil liberties and instituted martial law to fight the violent separatist group Front de Libération du Québec (Raboy, 1985).

Quebec francophone newspapers were also instrumental in helping create an atmosphere conducive to socio-political change in the province during the “Quiet Revolution” period. In order to explore the extent to which these periodicals can influence their government on linguistic issues, and particularly on ESL teaching, I looked at three of the most important newspapers in Quebec. As previously mentioned, my choices are *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*, all of which have a long history of involvement in Quebec politics, particularly on issues of language policy.

3.3 Newspapers in this study

Various reasons justify the selection of *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* for this study. *Le Devoir*’s influence stems from its independence and for being the only *journal de combat* that has survived to the present time (Bissonette, 1990a; Descôteaux, 1999a). *La Presse*’s history includes a period in which it played an important role in political journalism, namely between its journalists’ strike in 1958 and a lock-out in 1964. That period saw *La Presse*’s shifting from superficial coverage of events to deep analyses of their implications (Raboy, 1984). Finally, *Le Soleil*’s political importance comes from its Liberal origins in a time when conservatism was the status quo.

The next subsections recount each of these newspapers’ histories in detail, including information such as when they were founded, and when they changed owners, directors or editors in chief. I describe the type of coverage each newspaper has published throughout its history, paying particular attention to each publication’s roles in shaping public opinion about Quebec’s language struggles.

3.3.1 Le Devoir

In 1910, as we have seen, Quebec journalist and politician Henri Bourassa founded *Le Devoir*. At the time, the newspaper supported the Conservative Party of Quebec, the Official Opposition (largest party not in government). The name *Le Devoir*, literally “duty”, came from Bourassa’s aim to “awaken in people, especially among the ruling classes, a sense of public duty in all its forms: religious duty, national duty, civic duty” (Bourassa, 1910b). Through the paper, Bourassa defended Canada’s freedom from Great Britain, freedom and equality for French-Canadians within the entire Canadian territory, and autonomy for Quebec within the Canadian Confederation. The paper usually stood for the weak, opposed those in power, and expressed concerns about a fairer distribution of resources in Quebec. Catholic values and doctrines were strongly present in the paper (Bissonette, 1990a; Ryan, 1970a). *Le Devoir* has never had an owner. In 1928, Bourassa placed *Le Devoir* in a trust property system, and became the paper’s fiduciary (Ryan, 1970b). From then on, each new director became the paper’s trustee (Descôteaux, 1999a).

In 1932, Bourassa left *Le Devoir* and journalists Georges Pelletier and Omer Héroux began directing the paper. In 1947, when Pelletier died, Gérard Filion, who had been editor in chief at *La Terre de Chez Nous*, a magazine about agriculture in Quebec, became the director, and journalist André Laurendeau became editor in chief. In this period, the paper emphasized French Canadians’ right to use their language in the public spheres as they did at home, and it argued that Quebec had the duty to help French Canadians living in other provinces (Filion, 1947a).

During a period in which the Catholic Church exerted much power in Quebec society, Filion was proud to label the paper Catholic. *Le Devoir* collaborated with the diocesan authority and was completely submissive to the Church, although independent (Filion, 1947f). *Le Devoir* journalists refrained from defining the paper as leftist or rightist, but preferred to claim that they advocated for truth, social justice, charity, and defense of the weak and oppressed (Filion, 1947b). Other religious views expressed in

the paper included the defense of “traditional family virtues”, namely “fidelity, fecundity and authority” (Filion, 1947c), and the claim that “official atheism” was to blame for wars, cruelty, misery, and disorder. In Filion’s opinion, it was crucial to accept the Pope as the only “impartial judge” in order for the world to be peaceful (Filion, 1947e). Ignoring the country’s Anglo-Protestants, Filion wrote in the same editorial that Canada was Catholic and should name an ambassador to the Vatican. Besides being loyal to the Church, *Le Devoir* was also dependant on France. Filion claimed that Quebec needed France to nurture its culture and that before the province made more progress in arts, literature and sciences, it would be necessary to import more than to export (Filion, 1947d). All the examples above show that the rupture between society and the Catholic Church would happen later in Quebec than it had in France, which became secular after the French Revolution, at the end of the 18th century.

Filion left *Le Devoir* in 1963 and was at first replaced by a committee composed of André Laurendeau, Claude Ryan and Paul Sauriol. Ryan took charge alone in the following year. *Le Devoir* still supported linguistic equality, Quebec’s autonomy and popular promotion movements such as credit unions, labour unions and agricultural unions, affordable housing, free education, Medicare, and democratic education. In the 1960s, *Le Devoir* dedicated a section to Quebec culture, realizing that it was impossible to promote French without advancing the province’s cultural production. Politics and Quebec culture became the most important subjects discussed in the paper (Descôteaux, 2010).

As time passed, *Le Devoir* began to shed its religious character and it became more secular and ecumenical. Ryan argued that the paper had started welcoming a variety of points of view that sometimes differed from the paper’s perspective (Ryan, 1970a). The director also made it clear that even though the paper had supported unionism and cooperatives when these movements were going through difficult times, these institutions should not expect unconditional support now that they had become more powerful organizations (Ryan, 1970b).

In 1978, when Ryan left to be the leader of the Quebec Liberal Party, journalist Michel Roy became the interim editor in chief. In 1980, Jean-Louis Roy, a history professor at McGill University, took over the direction. In this period, after Canada had become officially bilingual and Quebec officially unilingual, *Le Devoir* supported the rights of francophones outside Quebec, for example to the control of their schools and other institutions, rights the anglophone minority had in Quebec (Roy, 1981a). Submission to Catholicism no longer reflected the paper's conviction, even though *Le Devoir* still respected the place of the Church in society (Roy, 1981b).

Jean-Louis Roy left in 1986 and was replaced by Benoit Lauzière, who had worked as a general director at CÉGEP de Maisonneuve and Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf ("Benoît Lauzière," 2013). At the end of the 1980s, *Le Devoir* suffered serious financial difficulty. Some even thought that lack of financial resources would threaten its independence and that it would have to be sold (Bissonette, 1990a, 1990b; Raboy, 1992). In 1990, former editor in chief Lise Bissonette, first female director at *Le Devoir*, came back to the paper with a recovery plan. At this point, the publication had become secular, along with the entire Quebec society, but many of its values were still fundamentally Christian (Bissonette, 1990a). Bissonette was the first director of *Le Devoir* to clearly declare that the paper had shifted from a fidelity to Catholicism to secularization. A study revealed that in 1991, *Le Devoir* was publishing fewer religious articles than all the other four daily newspapers in Quebec. Out of 421 religious articles in a period of three months, 44% were featured in *La Presse*, 23% in *Le Journal de Montréal*, 20% in *Le Soleil* and 13% in *Le Devoir* (Boudreault, 1991). The most religious daily newspaper in Quebec had become, by the 1990s, the most secular (Proulx, 1994). Until the end of the 1970s, when Claude Ryan was *Le Devoir's* director, the paper defended Quebec's autonomy, but not necessarily through complete separation from Canada, as the editors had believed that this liberty could happen within a more flexible Canadian federation (Ryan, 1970a). By the 1990s, however, *Le Devoir* had begun favouring Quebec sovereignty (Bissonette, 1998; Descôteaux, 1999b).

In 1998, Lise Bissonette left *Le Devoir* to become the general director of the Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec [‘Quebec Library and National Archives’]. She was replaced by Bernard Descôteaux in 1999. Before becoming *Le Devoir*’s director, Descôteaux had worked for the paper as a parliamentary correspondent in Quebec City, from 1982 to 1983 and in Ottawa, in the Canadian Parliamentary Press Gallery, from 1984 to 1987 (Paré, 2002; Saint-Pierre, 1994).

Le Devoir has always been a paper of small circulation and publicity revenue (Paré, 2002; Porter, 1965; Ryan, 1970b). The paper’s “high standard of journalism” (Porter, 1965, p. 488) does not appeal to a public that prefers sensationalist news (Porter, 1965; Ryan, 1970b); in fact, Bourassa had avowed that *Le Devoir* would not be a paper of “large circulation and small images”, but promised it would be pleasant and useful (Bourassa, 1910b).

In 1999, Canada had approximately 105 daily newspapers, of which more than half belonged to the same newspaper group. Only five of these publications were independent, *Le Devoir* being one of them (Descôteaux, 1999a). *Le Devoir*’s current director, Bernard Descôteaux, has claimed that the paper’s primary goal is not to make profit, but to inform the public. He argues that money is important only to ensure the paper’s autonomy, independence and development (Descôteaux, 2010). In fact, the paper’s financial situation has always been precarious and its debts pose a threat to its autonomy (Raboy, 1992). In spite of its small circulation and financial struggles, *Le Devoir* remained one of the most influential French-language newspaper in Canada, particularly amongst the most educated people in Quebec (Porter, 1965; Rocher, 1994).

In 2012, *Le Devoir* registered an average total circulation of 32,115 for its weekly issue, and 51,648 for its Saturday issue (Alliance for Audited Media, 2013a). *Le Devoir*’s current director is Bernard Descôteaux, as mentioned above, and Josée Boileau is the editor in chief (“Le Devoir - direction et rédaction,” 2013).

3.3.2 La Presse

Conservative Party member William-Edmond Blumhart founded *La Presse* in 1884. Trefflé Berthiaume became *La Presse*'s manager in 1889 and then owner in 1904. One of Blumhart's conditions for selling the paper to Berthiaume was that he support the Conservative party. Journalist Cyrille Felteau documented that the paper was distributed in Canada to districts defined according to the railways: "North, East, West, Pacific, Grand Trunk, etc" (Felteau, 1983a, p. 132).

La Presse cost one cent when it was founded. Its low price allowed more people to have access to daily newspapers, which used to be much more expensive. *La Minerve*, for example, sold for 25 cents at the time *La Presse* was founded (Felteau, 1983a). In an editorial in *La Presse*, an anonymous writer emphasizes the importance of inexpensive newspapers, and encourages "the spreading of popular education through *La Presse*" (Felteau, 1983a, p. 114). There is suggestion of some rivalry between *La Presse* and nationalist newspapers. Felteau criticized *Le Devoir*'s "contests for young poets" and its "excerpts of essays on the (probable) sex of angels". He called *Le Devoir*'s readers "les bourgeois bien assis", which could be interpreted either as 'comfortable as they are' or 'closed-minded', and accused the paper of being intransigent and ultra-nationalist (Felteau, 1983a, p. 370). On the other hand Bourassa allegedly disliked *La Presse* and several times called its readers imbeciles. *The Nationalist* supposedly insulted *La Presse* with terms such as "Chinese newspaper" and "sheets of convenience". Moreover, *La Presse* was also criticized for its leniency towards the Liberals and its editors' poor language quality (Felteau, 1983a).

After Berthiaume's death, his son Arthur Berthiaume took over the paper's presidency, in 1915 (Felteau, 1983a). In 1932, Trefflé Berthiaume's son-in-law, Pamphile DuTremblay, became the president. After DuTremblay's death in 1955, his wife, Angeline DuTremblay, became the president. Angeline DuTremblay resigned in 1961 because of disagreement with some of her nephews on the board of directors and launched *Le Nouveau Journal* along with Jean-Louis Gagnon, but this project only lasted

nine months. In the same year, Gérard Pelletier, who had worked at *Cité Libre* and *Le Travail*, became editor-in-chief at *La Presse* (Felteau, 1983a). The paper pioneered political journalism during Pelletier's early years there. It started to analyze political events' implications, instead of just reporting on the events themselves. Journalists had more independence than before and wrote extensively about revolution, socialism and sovereignty, and often criticized financial and political power. In 1964 Jean Lesage's government pressured the directors of the paper to control criticism. Gérard Pelletier refused to censor the paper's content and the directors ordered a lock-out that lasted seven months. The unemployed journalists founded their own paper called *La P... libre*, in which they continued to criticize and analyze politics. After the resolution of this controversial battle to the disadvantage of the journalists, Pelletier was fired (Raboy, 1984).

The most important consequence of the clash was the end of the collaboration between the government and social movements, which evidenced the end of the 'Quiet Revolution' (Raboy, 1984). In 1967 the Trans-Canada Corporation, now known as Power Corporation of Canada, bought *La Presse* ("La Presse: 125 years of news," 2009). In 1968, Paul Desmarais became CEO of Power Corporation holding more than 30% of its shares. Media monopoly became the rule in Quebec (Raboy, 1984).

La Presse's 2011 readership profile was mostly composed of males, home owners, managers and professionals, university graduates, with above average household incomes (La Presse, 2011). *La Presse* is currently known for supporting federalism; in both Quebec referenda in 1980 and 1995, *La Presse's* editorials were mostly against Quebec's sovereignty ("La Presse (Canadian newspaper)," 2013).

In 2012, *La Presse* registered an average total circulation of 213,719 of its weekly issue, and 260,556 of its Saturday issue (Alliance for Audited Media, 2013b). *La Presse's* current president is Guy Crevier and the editor-in-chief is Mario Girard.

3.3.3 Le Soleil

In 1880 Ernest Pacaud, Wilfrid Laurier and other moderate liberals founded the newspaper *L'Électeur* in Quebec City as the official paper of the Liberal Party of Quebec and of the Liberal Party of Canada. Pacaud published many editorials criticizing the Catholic Church, particularly over its interference in votes, so the Catholic clergy prohibited parishioners from reading the paper (Donneur, Beylerian, & Potter, 2012a). In 1896, the newspaper's name was changed to *Le Soleil*. In 1936, with conservative Maurice Duplessis's election for Premier, *L'Électeur*'s directors abandoned the paper's liberal-partisan position, and concentrated on news coverage only. Oscar Gilbert bought the paper, and in 1957 *Le Soleil* completely cut its ties to the Liberal Party of Canada.

In October 1964, following the lock-out at *La Presse*, *Le Soleil* and other dailies officially prohibited their journalists from writing about the increasing sovereigntist movement in the province (Raboy, 1984).

In 1973 several groups, including Paul Desmarais' Power Corporation of Canada, demonstrated interest in buying the paper. If Desmarais bought it, his company would own 70 per cent of the daily newspaper industry in Quebec. In response to protests of unions CEQ, CSN, FPJQ, FTQ, and the Quebec Press Council, Premier Robert Bourassa vetoed the purchase and Jacques Francoeur, owner of UniMédia, bought *Le Soleil* in 1974 (Raboy, 1984). In 1987 Hollinger Inc., a media company that belonged to Conrad Black, bought the paper and eventually sold it to Gesca Limitée, a subsidiary of the Power Corporation of Canada, and *Le Soleil* ended up in Desmarais' hands after all. The paper used to be distributed across Canada, but because of local competition, namely with Quebec City paper *Le Journal de Québec*, it became a regional daily and changed format from broadsheet to tabloid. Because *Le Soleil* and *La Presse* belong to the same group, much of these papers' reporting is the same. Today Power Corporation owns *La Presse*, *Le Soleil* and five other newspapers in Quebec through Gesca Limitée, having become the largest press owner in Quebec and one of the largest businesses in Canada ("List of largest public companies in Canada by profit," 2013)

Media corporations in Quebec are businesses concentrated in a few wealthy corporate enterprises (Porter, 1965). Other examples of urban and industrial societies where concentration of media ownership occur are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Czech Republic, Chile, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States and Uruguay (Winseck & Jin, 2011). The Kent Commission of 1980-1981 showed that the communications industry was one of the most lucrative in Canada (Kent et al., 1981; Raboy, 1984). The fact that news media businesses are becoming increasingly concentrated in a few large corporations poses conflicts of interest, especially in Quebec, where this phenomenon is more evident than in the rest of Canada. The Kent Commission concluded that the press industry is the only in Canada where “the profit rate is clearly in an inverse proportion to the quality of the product” (Raboy, 1984, p. 38). Considering the importance of the press and the need to have communication vehicles that can express dissident opinions, there is a clear need for change of the concentration ownership of media in Quebec (Raboy, 1984). Carlton University Professor, Dwayne Winseck, claimed that concerns about media concentration are still important for “consumer choice, freedom of expression and democracy” and illustrated this point arguing that only a third of the current newspapers in Canada still publish original content everyday (Winseck, 2012). In an interview about media concentration, he asserted:

We want to ensure that there is a maximum range of voices and maximum access to different points of view... Those who own the medium should not also own the message because those who own the medium are typically four to ten times the size of the people who produce messages and they basically use message producers to drive their transmission businesses. (“Lang & O’Leary Exchange,” 2012)

The fact that *La Presse*, *Le Soleil* and other newspapers in Quebec are owned by the same group limits news media’s consumers’ choices and gives space for these long-standing institutions to keep on influencing their public.

In 2012, *Le Soleil* registered an average total circulation of 75,299 for its weekly issue; 99,155 for its Saturday issue and 80,941 for its Sunday issue (Alliance for Audited Media, 2013c). *Le Soleil*'s current president and editor is Claude Gagnon.

Because of their history and importance, *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* are key to understanding the political context in which Quebec language education policy is situated. Due to their different histories and choices, each of these newspapers may report the same event in various ways. The volume of articles by the press about one topic makes people attach a proportional importance to it. The type of press coverage given to a particular issue also influences people's opinions about it. These two aspects of media are documented under the theories of Agenda-Setting Effects and Framing, which I discuss in the next chapter.

4 Chapter 4 – Research Design

4.1 Rationale for the Study

Considering the history of francophones' linguistic insecurity resulting in the establishment of commissions of inquiry about, and the enactment of laws about, language policy in Quebec education and commerce, it is understandable that language is an issue of contention in this province. The rationale for this study comes from the ambivalence regarding bilingualism in Quebec: while some people think that English can be a threat to the existence of French, others believe that it is perfectly possible to learn and maintain both languages (Oakes, 2010). On February 23, 2011, claiming that there is no opposition between the total mastery of French and the knowledge of another language, then-Quebec premier Jean Charest announced that all students in grade 6 would devote half of their school year to learning English (Charest, 2011). He specified that the approach would be implemented progressively over a period of five years.

The francophone media played a role, sometimes promoting, but most of the time disputing, this agenda. This is not surprising given the role these media have played in previous debates about linguistic policies in Quebec. An example is a study of media about the previously discussed *joual* crisis. Approximately three newspaper articles were published per week between 1959 and 1975 about this topic, most of them criticizing the quality of French used by the popular class (Daoust, 1983). A more recent example that was extensively covered by the media was the case of bridging schools. In 2010, the Quebec government made it legal for francophone and allophone³ students to attend the public English school system after having gone to a non-subsidized English school for at least three years (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012). The reason motivating the current study is the lack of research connecting the field of media analysis in Quebec to linguistic policies, despite the demonstrated importance of the news media in Quebec.

³ Someone in Canada whose native language is neither English nor French ("Allophone (Quebec)," 2013).

The objectives of this study were to investigate the patterns of representation used by the francophone press in the debate about the new intensive ESL policy, and the nature of the arguments used in this debate. The research question guided the design of the project, which is a qualitative study consisting of a thematic analysis of the articles collected from the newspapers. I describe the design in the following sections, starting with the theoretical framework.

I investigated the following research question:

How did the three key Quebec Francophone newspapers *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* frame the debate about the Ministère de l'Éducation, Loisir et Sports's (MELS) mandatory intensive English policy between July 2010 and July 2012?

4.2 Theoretical Framework: Media Agenda-Setting and Framing

In this section I explain the history and use of Media Agenda-Setting, which theorizes that the quantity of news coverage of a certain issue can define what news media's consumers believe to be important. My focus is on Framing, one of the levels of Media Agenda-Setting, which theorizes that communicators choose to present debates in different ways, depending on their points of view and intentions.

4.2.1 Media Agenda-Setting

Media Agenda-Setting studies in the field of media and communication studies have concluded that the more media outlets cover a certain issue, the more their consumers attach importance to it. McCombs and Shaw coined the term "Agenda-Setting" when they investigated whether the mass media were able to influence voters in the American 1968 presidential campaign (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Voters listed what they thought were the key issues of the campaign and their responses were compared to the political content covered by various media during that period. The study suggested that the broadcasters, newspapers and magazines most consumed by the participants (*New York Times*, *Durham Morning Herald*, CBS and NBC) determined the essential topics (foreign policy, law and order, fiscal policy, public welfare and civil

rights), thus “setting” the campaign’s agenda. Hence, “agenda-setting” in media theory suggests that news media can determine what media audiences think *about*, even if they are not necessarily dictating *how* they think (Cohen, 1963). Although most studies on agenda-setting have been conducted on news media, nothing suggests that the theory cannot apply to entertainment media as well (Weaver, 2008). The amount of news media coverage of linguistic issues in Quebec offers a good opportunity to apply agenda-setting theory. In previous chapters I have described how the quantity of media stories about language has contributed to Quebecers’ ability to develop strong feelings about linguistic issues and give them a significant weight.

According to David H. Weaver, a journalism Professor at Indiana University, there are two levels of agenda-setting theory. The first is an *object* and the second level is this object’s *attributes* (Weaver, 2008). For example, when reporting a story about an *object* such as a politician, an economic crisis, or a natural disaster, the news media describe this object mentioning and emphasizing certain of its attributes while ignoring others. Some scholars consider the second level of agenda-setting, the emphasis of certain attributes, the same as *framing* (McCombs, 2004). Framing refers to the numerous ways to tell a story, to the “selection of certain aspects of an issue” (Feinberg, 2009). Palmeri illustrates frame theory by describing three different versions of the same story of a baby bitten by rats. The first story might focus on the fact that the baby’s mother left him alone; the second one might feature the dirtiness in the building where the baby lived, and the third story might focus on the problem of a rat epidemic plague in the neighborhood (Palmeri, 2001). Thus, framing means to tell a story as one sees it and wants it to be seen by others (Lakoff, 2006).

For the purposes of this study, I chose to focus my analysis on how (as opposed to how much) the francophone press in Quebec, specifically *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*, depicted then-Quebec Premier Jean Charest’s announcement in 2011 of the province’s new intensive English (IE) policy. It is possible to listen, watch and read about language issues in Quebec news media almost every day. Most residents in Quebec

would not be surprised with a study proving that linguistic issues take up much space in both francophone and anglophone news media in the province. For this reason, instead of counting how many times IE was covered in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*, I chose to look at the content of the IE coverage and at how this coverage was framed.

4.2.2 Framing

Framing analysis originated in the work of Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman. In his book, *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*, Goffman explained how a person's understanding of society is organized by conceptual frames (Goffman, 1974). In his theory, the undifferentiated mass of sensory data individuals receive must be sorted and organized, so they "classify and interpret" life in their own way (Scheufele, 2008). Goffman illustrated this idea with a picture frame, the picture being an individual's context and the frame being the structure used to hold the picture ("Erving Goffman," 2013; Goffman, 1974; Treviño, 2003). Joe Brewer claims that everyone uses frames either consciously or not:

Frames are everywhere around us. They are the *conceptual models* that allow us to make sense of the world. We cannot have a coherent thought without them. There is no such thing as "choosing" to use frames, only a matter of consciously selecting frames or blindly using them without knowing it. (Brewer, 2010)

In news media theory, the primary goal of framing is to simplify news stories in order for news audiences to understand them without their having previous knowledge of the topic (Scheufele, 2008). To frame a story, journalists choose a particular feature of an object and make it more prominent (Entman, 1993). Journalists choose how to portray events, and their choices depend on those aspects *they* find essential to the comprehension of the story. These selections are not neutral; journalists make these choices based on their ideologies and political interests (Pan, 2008). By choosing which attributes to emphasize or exclude from a piece of news,

media outlets are able to shape public understanding of a particular topic (Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss, & Ghanem, 1991).

Research on news framing generally follows one of two directions. The first involves the identification of frames and framing devices through content or textual analysis. An example is an analysis of media in Montreal, QC and Toronto, ON on the 1980 Quebec referendum on sovereignty. The study concluded that the Toronto media favored the committee against Quebec separation from Canada, while Montreal media treated both sides in a balanced fashion (Halford, Hoven, Romanow, & Soderlund, 1983).

The second involves examination of framing effects through experiments in laboratories or surveys (Pan, 2008). An example is a study that investigated how news frames can influence audience members. Participants read one of four randomly assigned versions of a story about reductions in state funding of their university. All the versions contained the same information, but had different beginnings and endings. The study concluded that news frames affected respondents' focus, evaluations and decision making (Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997).

Scholarship on framing has also featured several ways to differentiate and classify frames. *Gain vs. losses* frames, also referred to as *positive vs. negative* frames, refer to an individual's preference to avoid risk when a possibility is offered in terms of gains, and to seek risk when a possibility is offered in terms of losses. For example, people tend to accept paying more when using a credit card than when using cash if the price difference is labeled as a "cash discount" instead of as a "credit card surcharge" (Thaler, 1980). Another study suggested that doctors and patients' choices of hypothetical cancer treatments depended on the labeling of the possibilities as death or survival. Fewer individuals chose surgery over radiation therapy because the former was construed emphasizing death risks (McNeil, Pauker, Sox, & Tversky, 1982).

Another way to differentiate frames is by *thematic vs episodic* themes, sometimes called *societal vs individual* frames. Both distinguish news that is framed in general topics from news that shows a singular event or case. For example, Shanto Iyengar found that news about poverty was almost always episodic. One of the consequences of this choice by journalists was that media consumers tended to blame poverty on the poor rather than on government or society as a whole (“Framing (social sciences),” 2013; Iyengar, 1991; Shah, Kwak, Schmierbach, & Zubric, 2004). A third way to classify frames is by value. *Value* frames are “central organizing ideas” that help readers comprehend important events. These frames describe what generates the controversy or concern about a particular problem. Gamson (1988) exemplifies the value added-process with automobile production:

Each stage - the mining of iron ore, smelting, tempering, shaping, assembling, painting, delivering, selling - adds its value to the final product. Further, these stages may be thought of as determinants that, in combination, specify the final outcome. In this sense, they “explain” or account for whatever it is that is finally produced. (p. 166)

As previously mentioned, framing is used to help news media audiences understand a story without needing to have background on the topic. Framing may or may not be done strategically to manipulate an outlet’s audience interpretation of messages (Scheufele, 2008). When using strategic framing, communicators aim to call audiences’ attention to certain parts of a topic to obtain a favorable response from their public (Hallahan, 2008). The FrameWorks institute, an organization that educates the non-profit sector on strategic framing, gives an example of the need for this type of framing with a hypothetical situation: An organization presents a report about the benefits of out-of-school activities for children during a press conference. Instead of depicting the need of such activities for the entire community, the newspapers headlines interpreted the initiative as a solution for troubled youth only or for those who did not have a place to go when their parents were at work (Feinberg, 2009).

Several models of strategic framing have been identified in the literature. Some examples include *attributes*, *risks*, *actions* and *responsibility* framing.

In framing *attributes*, communicators often choose to enhance a specific characteristic of a topic in a way that favors their view. As previously mentioned, some researchers consider that the framing of attributes and the second level of agenda-setting are the same practice (McCombs, 2004).

In framing *risk*, communicators focus on the gains or losses that might result if a certain possibility becomes real. Professors Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky confirmed that most people preferred to be “risk averse in the domain of gains and risk seeking in the domain of losses” (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984, p. 343). Their following excerpt illustrates the point:

Consider, for example, a situation in which an individual is forced to choose between an 85% chance to lose \$1,000 (with a 15% chance to lose nothing) and a sure loss of \$800. A large majority of people express a preference for the gamble over the sure loss. This is a risk seeking choice because the expectation of the gamble (—\$850) is inferior to the expectation of the sure loss (—\$800). (p. 342).

Framing *actions* is similar to framing attributes or risks, but it focuses on “how to best propose actions to achieve compliance with a desired goal” (Hallahan, 2008). When framing actions, communicators must know the audience in order to choose the best way to prompt a desired action in response to their message. For example, a price difference in tuition fee for students who pay until a certain date can be framed in terms of a “discount” or a “penalty” (Hallahan, 2008).

Framing of *responsibility* relates to how people assign reasons to problems. One can choose to take credit for success, avoid culpability for failure and attribute responsibility to other individuals or factors (Kelley, 1967).

Several of the types of frames described thus far could be found in the articles about IE in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*. For the purposes of this study, I chose to focus on *gain vs. losses* frames and on framing of attributes, because I found them to be the most common in the data.

4.2.3 Francophone News Framing of Intensive English Policy in Quebec

I have chosen to look for *gain vs. loss* frames in several specific genres of articles about IE in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* because we can clearly identify two sides of the newspaper coverage about this policy: one in favour, which mostly presents the gains of the policy; and one against, which mostly describes the policy's weaknesses. I have also chosen to search for newspapers' emphasis of particular *attributes* of IE. I have classified my data (described in the Methodology section that follows) into four types of news coverage about IE: news, in which journalists are expected to be objective, and editorials, op-eds and letters to the editor, in which newspapers' columnists, guest writers not affiliated to the newspapers and newspapers' readers can freely express their opinions about IE.

Studying how francophone newspapers in Quebec framed IE helps us understand what might motivate francophone newspaper audiences in Quebec to support or reject this educational policy.

4.3 Methodology

Using Agenda Setting and Framing theory as a theoretical framework guiding my study, I hypothesized that the salience of the losses and negative attributes related to the IE policy has the intent of leading the public into rejecting it. In the next sections, I discuss in more detail how Agenda-Setting and Framing theories have helped me analyze coverage of the IE policy in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* from July, 2010 and July 2012.

4.3.1 Data collection

For the purposes of my study, and as my research question already shows, all newspapers included in the data are francophone. I made this choice because Quebec's IE policy only affects the French school system. I chose the oldest and most influential francophone newspapers from the largest cities in the province, namely Montreal and Quebec City. The founding dates of these media companies were also taken into consideration because older publications have influenced their readership over a longer period of time. I am interested in learning about the framing of well established ideas as opposed to new trends because, as seen in the previous chapters, linguistic issues have been important in Quebec since 1763, when the British started ruling over the French in Canada. In order to ensure that the content analyzed was produced by the newspapers in the study, it was essential that these publications not rely heavily on wire services. They also show different political views and appeal to different readerships, as I have demonstrated above. Finally, a large circulation was important, but not imperative. As seen in the previous chapter, *Le Devoir* has a small circulation, but much influence. Also, some other newspapers in Quebec have a larger circulation than the chosen three, but they do not meet the other criteria. Thus, my choices were narrowed to three publications: *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*. Because of time constraints, I chose not to include broadcast journalism (radio and TV) or internet sources in my study.

Le Devoir is published in Montreal and distributed throughout Quebec and Canada. It was founded in 1910, and it has always been an independent publication. *Le Devoir* is well known for favouring Quebec sovereignty and being aimed at an intellectual readership. Even though its circulation is small, it has always been "very influential within the narrow educated middle and upper classes of French Canada", especially as "the most eloquent voice of French-Canadian nationalism" (Porter, 1965, pp. 198-489). Canadian sociologist John Porter's most important work was the book *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*. In this book, he challenged the idea that Canada was a classless society and discussed the "quality of

opportunity and the exercise of power by elites in Canada” (“John Porter (sociologist),” 2013; Porter, 1965).

Seven newspapers circulating in Quebec belong to Gesca Limitée, a subsidiary of the media conglomerate Power Corporation of Canada (“Gesca Limitée,” 2013). I have included two of them in my data: *La Presse*, from Montreal, founded in 1884 and *Le Soleil*, from Quebec City, founded in 1896 (Donneur et al., 2012a; Donneur, Beylerian, & Potter, 2012b). The others circulate in smaller regions, specifically Ottawa, Sherbrooke, Mauricie and Saguenay. These newspapers are known for their federalist views, even though some of their columnists might not support it (Felteau, 1983b). *La Presse* has a high circulation in Montreal, but *Le Soleil* has seen declines in sales (“La Presse (Canadian newspaper),” 2013, “Le Soleil,” 2013). Much of the material published in these two newspapers overlaps.

The tabloids *Le Journal de Montréal*, from 1964, and its sister paper *Le Journal de Québec*, from 1967, have the largest circulation amongst less sophisticated audiences in their cities. They are known for being sensationalist, populist and nationalist (“Le Journal de Montréal,” 2013). The free papers *24h* and *Metro* have a wide circulation, but they are relatively new, not originally from Quebec, and depend mostly on wire services; for these reasons, they were left out of the study (“24 Hours (newspaper),” 2013, “Metro International,” 2013).

I collected data using Neswscan.com, also known as Eureka.cc, a publication database that includes Canadian French language news. This database has most of the articles from my data in PDF format, which facilitated analysis because the pages can be seen as they were originally published in the print versions. Databases’ search engines do not show advertisements in their results. I learned about a series of paid announcements against the IE program in *Le Devoir*, but only knew the month and year of publication. To find the advertisements, I used the database by looking at the entire PDF files of the issues published in that month.

When looking for articles in *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*, I noticed that several were repeated, and that there were articles on La Presse’s website, *Cyberpresse*, that were

not published in the print versions. I decided to exclude those which appeared only online because I wanted to ensure a larger number of readers had access to them.

From the late 1970s to the 1990s, when IE programs were introduced in Quebec, these programs used to be called *bain linguistique*, which translates as ‘language bath’ (Lightbown & Spada, 1994). Later, such programs began to be referred to as *anglais intensif*, literally, intensive English, so I chose to use the most recent phrase as my key words in the database search. It is also the term most commonly used in the research literature (Watts & Snow, 1993).

As previously mentioned, Charest’s announcement about the new IE policy in Quebec was made on February 23, 2011. Thus, I looked for news coverage (news articles, editorials, op-eds and letters to the editor) about the topic published between July 2010 and July 2012. I wanted to find out if there had been any discussion or public consultation before the government made the decision. Also, I chose a longer date range after the announcement to learn if the program was being successfully implemented in the 2011-2012 school year. In the following section, I discuss how I proceeded in the data analysis.

4.3.2 Data analysis: organization and coding

The theories of framing discussed in section 4.3, above, helped me create a method for identifying how three key francophone newspapers represented news and opinions about Quebec’s new IE policy. In each article (news articles, editorials, op-eds and letters to the editor) I looked for the most salient aspects of the discussion, and for gain (positive) framing as well as loss (negative) framing. I determined “positive framing” when I observed arguments in favor of the IE policy. I determined “negative framing” when I observed arguments against the IE policy. I decided ahead of time that the following content would constitute positive frames: arguments in favor of IE supported by featured individuals’ personal opinions or by research on IE, comparisons between traditional ESL teaching and IE favoring the program, and responses to

arguments against IE. I decided ahead of time that the following content would constitute negative frames: criticism of IE supported by featured individuals' personal opinions or by research on IE and responses to arguments in favor of IE.

My first goal was to determine the general impression given by each story by looking for the arguments used to support or reject the IE policy. After several passes through the data, I made an Excel spreadsheet for each newspaper. The rows listed the articles in chronological order, and the columns listed other relevant information about each article, namely: type of 'article' (news articles, editorials, op-eds and letters to the editor); title; writer's name and official title; section as identified by the newspaper; people, studies or cases mentioned; and most importantly, their reasoning. After that, I also researched each journalist, to learn how his or her background might have affected their news writing. Additionally, in order to create a comprehensive view of the sources used by each newspaper, I constructed a separate table, summarizing the people, research and cases mentioned in each story. In the appendices, I include these tables and in the next chapter, I interpret their results.

After having collected the justifications for the different points of view from the stories, I divided the articles into three categories: 1) in favor of IE 2) against IE or 3) balanced (having a similar amount of arguments against or in favour of IE).

My next step was to find out which attributes had been excluded from the articles; that is, which information was missing from the articles. For example, consider an article mentioning the possibility of at-risk students' being harmed by IE, but not including statistics or research about students with learning difficulties in intensive language programs. This missing information was considered an excluded attribute. To do this, I compared the findings of previous research about intensive language programs such as French immersion, intensive English or intensive French particularly in Canada to the arguments presented in my data. For example, I consulted a study that shows how

students with academic difficulty succeeded in the IE program and were less likely to quit school (Raymond & Bonneville, 1995).

In the next chapter, I draw on such literature to shed light on some of the most frequent themes listed above. In the next section, below, I discuss how I have dealt with validity threats.

4.4 Validity Concerns

In order to ensure the accuracy and credibility of my description, interpretation and theory, I had to take certain steps. Regarding descriptive validity, I tried to avoid data inaccuracy or incompleteness by comparing the search results of Newscan.com to the search results of other databases, as it would not be possible to consult all print versions of the newspapers. To guarantee interpretive validity, I have avoided imposing my own opinion and meaning to the voices expressed through the articles. I have tried to put myself in the place of those expressing concerns about IE to understand their points of view. I have also included and paid special attention to articles that seemed discrepant. In this study, articles in favour of the IE policy were the minority, but they were carefully detailed nonetheless.

While I conducted this study, I tried to constantly remind myself of my expectations and values. Self-reflection and revision of my notes and memos helped me to identify my biases. As I have previously discussed, I am aware that being an English teacher and an advocate for bilingualism might interfere with my interpretation of the data. However, thinking about my mother tongue (Brazilian Portuguese) makes it easier for me to put myself in the place of those who want to defend their language. I have tried hard to take all these biases and values into account when analyzing the data.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, I explained that the rationale for this study emerged out of the conflicted and controversial way in which English-French bilingualism is viewed in Quebec and the role that specific media institutions play in vilifying the English language

in Quebec. The fundamental reason to conduct the study was to find out why Quebecers tend to favor, or not, the new IE policy announced by Charest in 2011. In addition, I discussed why it is important to examine carefully how the francophone media in Quebec cover language policy. I also restated my research question and objectives, and introduced the theoretical framework for the study: Agenda-Setting and Framing.

When there is a large amount of news coverage of a certain issue, the public tends to give it greater importance. Also, the *type* of news coverage influences public opinion about that issue. In this chapter I have explained why and how I collected four types of articles that were published between July 2010 and July 2012 in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* using the words *anglais intensif*. I have also discussed my data analysis methods, explaining that I sorted the articles into three types (news, editorials and letters) and then into three categories of framing (for, balanced about, and against the intensive English policy). At the end, I explained how I addressed validity concerns. In the next chapter, I discuss the results of the data analysis.

5 Chapter 5 – Findings and discussion

5.1 Introduction

All three newspapers in this study, *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*, were mainly against the IE program policy as proposed by Quebec Premier Jean Charest in February, 2011. In all types of articles I researched, i.e., news, editorials, op-eds, letters to the editor and advertisements, negative frames were given more space than positive frames, in all three newspapers. As stated earlier, negative frames are ones that include arguments against the IE program. In contrast, positive frames are ones that include arguments in favour of the IE program.

Across all article types, negative frames were espoused by two main voices: professionals of education and French language advocates. Negative frames defended by education professionals advanced arguments such as the supposed inability of students with difficulties to undergo IE; the priority of other subjects like French and Mathematics; and the shortage of ESL teachers in Quebec. The president of a teachers' union asked, for example, "le nécessaire soutien pour les élèves en difficulté, va-t-il être là?" ['will the necessary support for struggling students be there?'] (Gervais, 2012a). A newspaper reader accused the Charest government of "sacrifier les apprentissages des autres matières et un saine cheminement scolaire chez bon nombre de jeunes Québécois" ['sacrificing other subjects and a healthy academic progress among many young Quebecers'] (Martel, 2012). A news article reported that a teachers' union "craignent aussi que les écoles manquent de professeurs d'anglais, qui sont déjà rares" ['also fear that schools lack teachers of English, which are scarce'] (Allard, 2011b).

Negative frames defended by French language advocates consisted of claims that the IE program would pose a threat to French in Quebec and that Quebecers' French needs to improve *before* they learn another language. Examples of these frames include the following title of a news article "une menace pour notre identité" ['a menace to our identity'], and the complaints of a teacher that "le vrai problème, c'est le français... Je

donne des cours à la maîtrise et le niveau des étudiants est lamentable” [‘the real problem is French... I teach MA students and their level is pitiful’] (Malboeuf, 2011a).

Positive frames, advanced mostly by scholars in the fields of language and education and by parents, consisted of opinions about the high quality of the IE program, and students’ parents being in favour of the policy. An ESL teaching specialist claimed that IE “s’agit d’une des meilleures façons de maîtriser l’anglais sur les bancs d’école. C’est la méthode la plus efficace” [‘is one of the best ways to master English in the classroom. It is the most effective method’] (Dions-Viens, 2011a). A news article, reporting about the success of the IE program amongst parents, recounted that a student “et ses parents sont prêts à braver tous les bouchons pour qu’elle profite du programme d’anglais intensif” [‘and her parents are willing to go through all the roadblocks for her to benefit from the intensive English program’] (Malboeuf, 2011b).

In the following sections, I discuss more examples of the negative frames, followed by the positive frames, found in the articles about the IE program in the three newspapers. Section 5.4 then discusses the most relevant research on IE related to the frames found in the articles, and it presents a reflection about the lack of space dedicated to these studies in the three newspapers.

5.2 Negative frames

Le Devoir, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* in all types of articles researched (news, editorials, op-eds, letters, and advertisements) were in the main against the IE program (63% of the pieces in my database). Appendices A (p. 126), B (p. 126), C (p. 135) and D (p. 140) contain detailed findings from my analysis of negative coverage of the IE program.

Negative framing of the policy consisted principally of opinions about the alleged harm posed by the program on students’ general academic performance; this framing was voiced by professionals of education. Teachers’ unions refused to participate in discussions about the implementation of the IE policy because the program would

allegedly harm students with learning difficulties: “Inquiètes des conséquences de ce programme ‘mur à mur’ sur les élèves en difficulté d’apprentissage, les deux principaux syndicats d’enseignants ont quitté la table de travail sur l’implantation du projet” [‘Concerned about the impact of this “wall to wall” program on students with learning difficulties, the two main teachers’ unions have left the table of discussion about the project implementation’] (La Presse Canadienne, 2012b). A grade 6 teacher complained that teachers of subjects other than English would be disadvantaged if the program took place: “Comment recevront-ils l’écoute et l’aide nécessaires alors que leur enseignant est plus que surchargé et préoccupé par les notions à transmettre avec la moitié moins de temps?” [‘How will they (students) be heard and receive the necessary help while their teacher is more than overworked and worried about the content to be taught in half of the time?’] (Côté, 2012).

Fear-mongering about a supposed threat to the French language was also very common throughout the reporting; this framing was voiced by French language advocates. For example, political scientist Christian Dufour claimed that “la généralisation accélérée du bilinguisme individuel aura des conséquences collectives jouant inéluctablement contre la prédominance du français sans exclusion de l’anglais dans notre société” [‘the accelerated generalization of individual bilingualism will have collective consequences inevitably playing against the predominance of French, without excluding English, in our society’] (Dufour, 2011).

The framing of IE as a loss for children’s education and for grade 6 teachers was the most common in the articles about IE in the three publications. This framing was adopted by teachers, teachers’ unions and school boards. This frame presented IE as harmful for children with learning and behavioural difficulties, arguing that the program would be an unnecessary burden for these students, worsening their performance in the other subjects. Proponents of this framing also claimed that IE would rob teachers and students of the time dedicated to other subjects, particularly of French, a subject and language many of these proponents regarded as more important than English.

Teachers' unions and school boards also argued that there is a shortage of ESL teachers in Quebec, making it impossible to implement IE. School teachers were against IE also for fear of losing part of their shifts to ESL teachers or having to do the same amount of work in less time. In a news article, the then-PQ language critic Pierre Curzi declared the following about the IE program: "une telle mesure est inapplicable, notamment parce que cela exigerait des enseignants *"parfaitement bilingues"* dans toutes les regions du Québec" ['such an action is unenforceable, especially because that would require "perfectly bilingual" teachers in all regions of Quebec'] (Robitaille, 2011).

The framing of IE as a threat for French in Quebec was sponsored by French language advocates. In this framing IE represented a danger not only to the maintenance of the French language, but also to Quebec's culture, identity and cultural products. Political scientist Christian Dufour claimed that "il est irresponsable de vouloir "bilinguiser" rapidement l'ensemble de la population, sans tenir compte des conséquences que cela aura forcément... sur le marché pour des produits culturels en français à la limite de la rentabilité" ['it is irresponsible to want to quickly make the entire population bilingual, without taking into account the consequences that this will inevitably have... in the market for cultural products in French which already barely break even'] (Dufour, 2011). Individuals defending this frame argued that French should be prioritized over English because young Quebecers are supposedly very bilingual already and should improve their French, which according to them is very poor. In this framing, mere contact with English speakers and the use of informal resources, such as the Internet, would be enough for an individual to learn English. According to them, IE would be unnecessary. A newspaper reader wrote that "apprendre l'anglais découle avant tout de la volonté et des efforts de pratique de chacun... Franchement, il faut presque le faire exprès de nos jours pour ne pas apprendre l'anglais par osmose!" ['Learning English depends above all on one's commitment and practical efforts... Frankly, not learning English by osmosis nowadays would almost have to be done on purpose!'] (Piuze, 2011).

The publication that framed the IE policy most negatively was *Le Devoir*, followed by *Le Soleil* and then *La Presse*. All of *Le Devoir*'s and almost all of *Le Soleil*'s opinion pieces were against the policy. *Le Devoir* was against IE in 81% of its articles about the policy. This number does not include its advertisements, since it was the only paper with that category. This series of seven advertisements against the intensive English policy, published from January 10 to January 26, 2012,⁴ distinguished *Le Devoir* from the other two newspapers, making it even more against the program than *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*. This publicity campaign was endorsed and paid for by three teachers' unions out of seven teachers' unions mentioned in the newspaper articles: the Alliance des professeures et professeurs de Montréal ['Montreal teachers' alliance'], Syndicat de l'Enseignement de l'Ouest de Montréal (SEOM) and Syndicat de l'Enseignement de la Pointe-de-l'Île (SEPI). These advertisements expressed concern about children's performance in other subjects, particularly in French, and resisted IE's mandatory aspect. For example: "Parler anglais, c'est un plus... à la condition qu'on sache déjà bien parler et lire en français" ['Speaking English is a plus... as long as we can already speak and read well in French'] (Alliance des professeures et professeurs de Montréal, SEOM - Syndicat de l'Enseignement de l'Ouest de Montréal, & SEPI - Syndicat de l'enseignement de la Pointe-de-l'Île, 2012a).

Le Devoir was somewhat negative even when featuring Gerard Bouchard, an individual totally in favour of the IE program according to the newspaper. For example, Lisa-Marie Gervais, the journalist who wrote most about the program and who reported an interview with Bouchard stated: "la mondialisation représente une menace sans précédent pour le fait français au Québec" ['globalization represents an unprecedented

⁴ For a complete list of the advertisements in *Le Devoir*, see Appendix B, table 5 on page 134.

threat to French in Quebec'] and "bilinguisme imposé" ['imposed bilingualism'] (Gervais, 2011a).

By virtue of the number of negatively vs. positively framed articles, it can be concluded that *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil* were mostly against IE. *La Presse* had almost the same amount of articles in favour and against IE, with a slight dominance of pieces against the policy. The majority of the ideas about IE expressed in these three publications were against the policy. Below are more examples of typical negative frames that appeared in news, editorials, op-eds, letters and advertisements in the three publications, in order of most to least frequent.

The most common negative framing of the IE program was that children with learning difficulties would be at a disadvantage if IE were implemented. School teachers (grade 6 and French teachers in particular), school boards, and teachers' unions were the main proponents of this idea. This framing appeared mostly in *Le Devoir*, but many times also in *Le Soleil*.⁵

Typical negative frames supporting this argument included advertisements in *Le Devoir* (see Appendix B, table 5 on page 134) and criticism from unions' leaders such as the following by Pierre St-Germain, the president of the Fédération Autonome de l'enseignement (FAE):

Nous avons déjà des élèves qui sont en retard d'apprentissage, qui ont des difficultés à faire leur cours en 10 mois, et là, on va leur demander de le faire en cinq mois. C'est de mettre ces élèves-là dans une situation d'échec encore plus grande.

⁵ Alliance des professeures et professeurs de Montréal, Fédération Autonome de l'Enseignement (FAE), Fédération des Syndicats de l'Enseignement - Central des syndicats du Québec (FSE-CSQ), Fédération québécoise des directions d'établissements d'enseignement, Syndicat de l'Enseignement de l'Ouest de Montréal (SEOM) and Syndicat de l'Enseignement de la Pointe-de-l'Île (SEPI)

[‘We already have students with learning delays, who have difficulties doing their courses in 10 months, and then we’ll ask these students to do these courses in five months. This means putting these pupils in a position of even greater failure’] (La Presse Canadienne, 2012a).

School boards such as Découvreurs and Montreal, as well as teachers from Marguerite-d’Youville School in Cap-Rouge and Beausoleil School in Beauport were also featured in articles about the disadvantage of children with learning difficulties in the IE program. An excerpt from a letter written by a grade 6 teacher to the minister of education exemplifies this framing by professionals of education:

Le sort des élèves faibles et moyens nous alarme. Ces élèves, qui constituent les trois quarts de nos classes, ont déjà peine à se sortir la tête de l’eau. Qu’en serait-il dans un contexte où ils doivent acquérir tous leurs apprentissages dans les matières de base avec la moitié moins de temps, soit en 5 mois au lieu de 10, alors qu’il est déjà difficile, actuellement, “de boucler nos boucles”?

[‘The fate of the weak and average students alarms us. These students, who are three quarters of our classes, already struggle to get their heads above water. What will happen in a context where they must acquire all their learning in core subjects in half of the time, 5 months instead of 10, if it’s currently difficult “to join up the ends”?’] (Côté, 2012).

Besides promoting the opinions of education professionals that would be directly affected by IE, the articles also showed the support of other individuals or institutions. Political parties such as the Parti Québécois (PQ) and Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) also supported the belief that IE was not for students with learning difficulties. However, such claims were not accompanied by any mention of academic studies justifying these concerns.

The second most common negative framing of the IE program was that half a school year would not be enough time for students to learn all the content in subjects other than English. This framing, made primarily by school teachers, school boards and teachers' unions, appeared mostly in *Le Soleil*, adding that teachers of other subjects would be disadvantaged. Another related idea defended by these proponents was that succeeding in the core subjects should take priority. This framing appeared mostly in *Le Soleil*, but several times in *Le Devoir* as well.

An example is the reporting about a letter from teachers who were unhappy about at-risk pupils in IE: "Elle remet notamment en cause la pertinence de l'anglais intensif pour les élèves en difficulté, qui auront aussi la moitié moins de temps pour apprendre les autres matières, dont le français" ['It questions the relevance of IE for students with difficulties, who will have half as much time to learn the other subjects, including French'] (Allard, 2011a).

Some of the individuals expressing apprehensions about the time dedicated and attention paid to subjects other than English were in favour of the IE program, but they nuanced the debate with some criticism of the way IE was being implemented by the government. An example was an ESL teacher at Louis-Colin School in Montreal, who admitted that grade 6 teachers in the IE program teaching subjects other than English would have a challenging job because of the large amount of work and the time reduction. Professor Zita de Koninck, while openly in favour of an intensive second language program for children, was concerned about the role of grade 6 teachers in IE: "Que vont faire les profs pour amener leurs élèves à bien réussir? Ils vont compresser leurs matières? On dirait que la ministre évite de répondre à cette question-là" ['What will teachers do for their students to succeed? Will they condense their subjects? It seems that the minister does not want to answer this question'] (Gervais, 2012b). De Koninck expressed preference for French immersion (FI) to IE, because in FI students learn the other subjects through the second language, so there is no need to shorten the content. As discussed previously, this kind of immersion is prohibited by law for

English in the Quebec francophone school system, although very common for French in the anglophone school system.

Another very common framing of the IE program made mostly by school boards and teachers unions was that there was a shortage of ESL teachers in Quebec, and therefore it would be impossible to find enough competent English teachers to work in IE. This argument appeared mostly in *Le Soleil*, but significantly in *La Presse* as well. The following extract illustrates this framing:

Une question se pose donc: qui pourra enseigner l'anglais intensif dans toutes les écoles de la province? «C'est clair qu'on n'a pas assez de profs spécialistes (de l'anglais) pour répondre à la demande. Même si on se tourne vers nos collègues de la commission scolaire anglophone, ils sont trop peu nombreux pour satisfaire à la demande », soutient le porte-parole de l'Alliance des professeurs de Montréal, Yves Parenteau.

[‘A question arises: who can teach intensive English in all schools in the province? "It is clear that there are not enough specialist (English) teachers to meet the demand. Even if we turn to our colleagues in the English school board, they are too few to meet the demand" says a spokesman for the Alliance of teachers of Montreal, Yves Parenteau’] (Lacoursière & Malboeuf, 2011).

Former education ministers Line Beauchamp and Michelle Courchesne also confirmed that it would be a challenge to find ESL teachers to fill all the positions if IE were to be implemented. Beauchamp was the education minister when IE was announced by the Liberals. She had this portfolio from 2010 to 2012, when she resigned during the spring 2012 Quebec university students’ strike (“2012 Quebec student protests,” 2013). Beauchamp was replaced by Courchesne, who occupied this position until the Liberal government was defeated by the PQ in September 2012.

In fact, since 2006, when ESL began to be taught at grade 1 instead of grade 3, there has been an ESL teachers' shortage in Quebec (MEQ - Ministère de l'éducation du Québec, 2004). In order to find teachers, the MELS proposed to hire English-speaking teachers from anglophone school boards in Quebec, and to look for ESL teachers in Ontario. The problems with these solutions, according to the present author, would be that anglophone school boards are much smaller than the francophone ones in Quebec, and therefore have no teacher surplus. Also, because these teachers are trained to teach content in English as a first language, they are not necessarily qualified to teach ESL. Moreover, there might be more teachers available in Ontario because of how much faster it is to acquire teacher certification in that province than in Quebec, which makes it unfair for Quebec residents willing to teach in the primary and secondary school systems.

Another common negative framing was that the IE program should not be mandatory, as proposed by the government. Adherents of this framing included school teachers, political parties such as the Parti Québécois (PQ) and Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ), teachers' unions and sovereigntist organizations such as Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste (SSJB) and Mouvement Montréal Français (MMF). This framing was most frequent in *Le Soleil* and in *Le Devoir*. The reasons used by the individuals and organizations above to justify their position against IE's mandatory aspect varied considerably. An example can be found in a news piece in *La Presse* which featured Mario Beaulieu, the president of the independentist organization Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste:

Il est exagéré de l'imposer à tous les élèves, explique Mario Beaulieu, car certains n'ont pas la bosse des langues. Et certains autres pourraient préférer miser sur l'espagnol, langue également fort utile dans les Amériques... Il faut laisser le choix aux gens... Sinon, je ne vois pas pourquoi les élèves anglophones ne seraient pas pareillement obligés de faire la moitié de leur 6e année en français.

[‘It is unreasonable to impose (IE) on all students, explains Mario Beaulieu, because some do not have a head for languages. And some others might prefer to study Spanish, a language that is also very useful in the Americas... We must leave the choice to the people... Otherwise, I do not see why English students are not similarly required to do half of their sixth year in French’] (Malboeuf, 2011a).

By claiming that IE should be optional for the above reasons, Beaulieu failed to recognize that all school subjects are mandatory, even when children are not good at them, and that other languages cannot be compared to English in its status of global *lingua franca*.

A frequent negative framing of the IE program not directly related to education was the idea that English already is or could soon become a threat to the French language, culture and identity in Quebec. Typical proponents of this reasoning included French language advocates, and newspapers’ columnists and readers. It is interesting to note that, unlike with the negative frames discussed thus far, no teacher or teachers’ union defended the idea that IE could be a linguistic or cultural threat in Quebec. In other words, teachers do not seem to believe that students’ English knowledge could threaten their French. This framing was shown mostly in *Le Devoir*.

One of the individuals condemned by the proponents of this framing was Jean Charest - accused by the political scientist Christian Dufour in *La Presse* and in *Le Soleil* of changing his opinion about IE. Some articles mentioned that in 2008, Charest refused the program on the grounds that it could pose a threat to French in Quebec:

Il y a deux ans et demi, Jean Charest lui-même en convenait, rappelle M. Dufour. Sous prétexte que le français à l’école était une chose sacrée, le premier ministre avait alors rejeté une proposition des jeunes libéraux, qui voulaient justement instaurer une 6e année bilingue.

[‘Two and a half years ago, Jean Charest himself agreed, said Mr. Dufour. Under the pretext that French at school was sacred, the Premier had then rejected a proposition by young Liberals, who wanted to create a bilingual grade 6’] (Malboeuf, 2011a).

The detailed frames in the articles supporting the idea that IE would threaten French in Quebec stemmed from anxiety about what happened in the province’s history prior to the enactment of Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language, in 1977. Individuals afraid of IE expressed dissatisfaction about problems that Quebecers had already faced, namely being a fragile society, identity crisis, French language decline, bilingualism leading to unilingualism, lack of immigrants’ motivation to learn French, not being able to live in French, absence of laws to protect and promote French and fight for language and culture. One reader’s letter in particular illustrates this viewpoint quite clearly: “Si nous ne faisons pas les bons choix en matière de langue, c’est notre culture même qui sera menacé de disparition au XXI^e siècle” [‘If we do not make the right choices regarding language, it is our very culture that will be endangered in the 21st century’] (Piuze, 2011). Another reader’s letter foments the image of Quebec as an allegedly frail society: “Ce qui est ironique, c’est de constater l’acharnement de ce gouvernement — censé représenter le seul peuple francophone d’Amérique du Nord — à imposer l’anglais à toute la jeunesse, alors qu’il est si frileux à agir pour défendre et imposer la langue française” [‘What is ironic is to see the determination of this government - intended to represent the only French-speaking people in North America - to impose English to all youth, when it is so hesitant to act to defend and impose the French language’](Martel, 2012).

More recent concerns put forward to supposedly justify the fear that IE would threaten French were: English allegedly being a priority in the education system, IE’s possible negative impact on students’ culture and identity, public promotion of English instead of French, English from grade 1 likely leading to anglicization, bilingual individuals’ lack of interest for cultural products in French, and IE possibly preceding the

anglicization of Quebec. When using the word “anglicization”, writers seemed to be expressing fear of English replacing French completely: “ce gouvernement continue d’aller de l’avant avec son désir d’angliciser la jeunesse québécoise... Pour ce gouvernement, c’est carrément l’anglais *all the way*” [‘this government continues to go ahead with its desire to anglicize the Quebec youth... For this government, it's downright English *all the way* [“all the way” written in English]’] (Martel, 2012).

Frames against the policy included accusations of the IE program making English, instead of French, the priority in the Quebec education system. The individuals advancing these claims were also the main proponents of the idea that Quebecers’ or students’ French quality is poor, and who assumed that IE would therefore worsen the quality of students’ French, because they would supposedly spend less time on French. These two ideas appeared for the most part in *Le Devoir* and were defended by parents, teachers, teachers’ unions, school boards’ representatives, politicians, columnists, and readers.

Former PQ language critic Pierre Curzi is an example of an individual who emphasized the importance of French over English: “ce qu’on ne dit plus et ce qu’on devrait redire, c’est que ce qui est prioritaire au Québec, c’est une très solide maîtrise du français” [‘what we do not say anymore and what we should repeat is that the priority in Quebec is a very solid mastery of French’] (Robitaille, 2011).

French language advocates advanced frames about English as a threat and about the supposedly poor quality of French. There is a difference between the framing about English as a threat to language, culture and identity, as opposed to the framing about the quality of French. The teachers defending French priority and quality thought that by giving more time to English, students would not have enough time for French. In the frames about English as a threat to language, culture and identity, the proponents thought that by learning English, students would stop using French. In other words,

teachers and other French language advocates did not claim to be against bilingualism per se, but emphasized the importance of French over English.

The teachers, parents, columnists and other individuals concerned about French priority and quality put forward three arguments to support their belief that IE would play a part in worsening French language quality in Quebec: first, children should master French before learning English: “Parler anglais, c'est un plus...à la condition qu'on sache déjà bien parler et lire en français” [‘Speaking English is a plus...as long as we can already speak and read well in French’] (Alliance des professeures et professeurs de Montréal et al., 2012a). Second, students’ French is currently not good enough anyway: “L'anglais intensif en 6e année? Avec une moyenne générale en français de 65% en fin de 5e année, Joëlle ne peut pas se le permettre” [‘Intensive English in grade 6? With an average of 65% in French at the end of grade 5, Joëlle can’t afford it’] (Alliance des professeures et professeurs de Montréal, SEOM - Syndicat de l’Enseignement de l’Ouest de Montréal, & SEPI - Syndicat de l’enseignement de la Pointe-de-l’Île, 2012b). Third, the five months dedicated to IE would be a big loss for French instruction:

C’est le français des francophones québécois qui est malade, pas leur anglais. La qualité générale du français parlé et écrit actuel est très préoccupante... Ce semestre d’anglais intensif en sixième année, annoncé par le premier ministre, nous en avons désespérément besoin... pour le français! Et ce, afin de nous assurer que les élèves ne quitteront pas le primaire sans avoir saisi et intégré les règles de l’accord du participe passé, ou encore la distinction entre “ces” ou “ses” ...

[‘It is the French of Quebec francophones which is sick, not their English. The overall quality of French spoken and written today is very worrying ... We desperately need this semester of intensive English in grade 6 announced by the Premier... for French! And this, to ensure that students do not leave elementary school without understanding and mastering the rules of past participle

agreement, or the distinction between "ces" ['these'] or "ses" ['his']...' (Piuze, 2011)

There is a clear connection between the historical language debates in Quebec discussed in Chapter 2 and the ideas that, 1) French language quality in Quebec is declining, and, 2) French ought to be the priority in francophone schools. The myth of the French Canadian Patois, comparisons of Quebecer and Parisian French and debates about joul in Chapter 2 are some key examples of francophones' linguistic insecurity. Newspapers' helping spread the idea that Quebecers' French is poor shows that Quebecers' linguistic insecurity has not completely disappeared. Moreover, their historical fear of anglicization explains their framing that French needs to be a priority.

Another frequent framing of the IE program was that bilingualism in English and French is already strong enough in Quebec, so bilingual students would be wasting their time in IE. Teachers' unions, political parties, and sovereigntist individuals were the main proponents of this idea. This idea appeared almost equally in *La Presse* and in *Le Devoir*.

Typical negative frames in articles opposing IE because of a high bilingualism rate supported their point with statistics. *Le Devoir* columnist Christian Rioux claimed that 61% of 21-year-old Quebecers that had attended francophone schools were bilingual, without explaining what he meant by "bilingual":

Nous sommes déjà l'un des peuples les plus bilingues du monde. À l'étranger, on envie généralement notre maîtrise de l'anglais, dont presque tous les Québécois ont au moins une connaissance passive. Selon une enquête de Statistique Canada réalisée en 2006, 61% des Québécois de 21 ans qui ont fréquenté l'école française étaient bilingues. Chose certaine, le nombre de Québécois bilingues dépasse de très loin le nombre d'emplois qui exigent une connaissance de l'anglais. Toutes les enquêtes montrent enfin que, à cause de notre immersion

dans un environnement anglophone, le bilinguisme progresse de façon régulière au Québec sans même que nous ayons à lever le petit doigt.

[‘We are already one of the most bilingual people in the the world. Abroad, people usually envy us our mastery of English, of which almost all Quebecers have at least a passive knowledge. According to a Statistics Canada survey conducted in 2006, 61% of Canadians of 21 years of age who attended French schools were bilingual. Certainly, the number of bilingual Quebecers far exceeds the number of jobs that require knowledge of English. All surveys finally show that, because of our immersion in an English environment, bilingualism is progressing steadily in Quebec without our having to lift our little finger’] (Rioux, 2011).

SSBJ president Mario Beaulieu claimed in an interview for *La Presse* that “Il y a présentement au Québec suffisamment de jeunes bilingues pour répondre à la demande du marché du travail” [‘There is currently in Quebec enough bilingual youth to respond to the needs of the job market’]. Beaulieu also declared that 85% of the francophone youth evaluated their English aptitude as functional to excellent (Simard, 2011). Both Rioux and Beaulieu indicated that their source was a study by Statistics Canada from 2006.

While some articles claimed that the population in Quebec in general is bilingual, others said so about youth only, or about students in areas such as Montreal, Outaouais, and Shannon. These areas are indeed significantly more bilingual than the rest of Quebec. Montreal is the largest city in Quebec and the one with the most anglophones and allophone immigrants as well. Outaouais is near the border with the anglophone province of Ontario, and very near Canada’s capital, Ottawa, where business and government affairs are conducted in both French and English. Shannon is a small town near Quebec City containing a high proportion of English speakers because it was founded by individuals of Irish descent after the mass emigration at the time of the

Great Famine in Ireland between 1845 and 1852 (“Great Famine (Ireland),” 2013, “Shannon, Quebec,” 2013).

Other individuals criticized the fact that students do not use French in anglicized areas. This framing appeared in *La Presse* and in *Le Soleil*. According to it, the IE program is regarded as harmful because students would replace French with English. Here’s an example by the president of the Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec (FCSQ) Josée Bouchard: “À Montréal, le défi est plutôt de franciser les élèves. La même situation se déroule en Outaouais. Les jeunes sont souvent bilingues et parlent anglais à l’école” [‘In Montreal, the challenge is, rather, to frenchify the students. The same situation occurs in Outaouais. Children are often bilingual and speak English at school’](Lacoursière & Malboeuf, 2011).

The assertion that IE was unnecessary was also part of the negative framing of the IE program. Politicians, columnists, newspaper readers, and sovereigntists defended this framing, which appeared mostly in *Le Devoir*.

Several of these articles claimed that Quebec’s anglophone environment by itself was enough to make its inhabitants bilingual; PQ language critic Pierre Curzi and political scientist Christian Dufour for example, specified that this would be the case in the Montreal area only: “Le bilinguisme s’acquiert ‘assez facilement’ au Québec, surtout dans la région de Montréal” [‘Bilingualism is acquired easily enough in Quebec, especially in the Montreal area’] (Robitaille, 2011). Some articles mentioned that with education, willingness and practical efforts, one could manage to learn English in Quebec. Moreover, some readers suggested decreasing the number of students per class in the current ESL program and making other revisions and improvements to it, instead of implementing a new program.

The alleged lack of flexibility of the IE program was another prevalent argument in the negative framing of the policy. Teachers’ unions, political parties and parents were the main proponents of this idea that appeared most of the time in *La Presse*.

When discussing flexibility, individuals referred to the model of IE that would be adopted by each school. CAQ education spokesperson Eric Caire's declaration exemplifies the conventional framing of this argument: "imposer un modèle mur à mur comme le fait le gouvernement risque de causer des problèmes dans certaines écoles" ['imposing a wall-to-wall model as the government is doing may cause problems in some schools'] (Chouinard, 2012a). FSE-CSQ president Manon Bernard criticized the fact that the government did not discuss various IE program models: "L'application du programme devait laisser place à la souplesse... Or, à la table de travail, le gouvernement mettait toujours de l'avant le même modèle, soit cinq mois d'anglais intensif et cinq mois pour enseigner toutes les autres matières" ['The implementation of the program should allow for flexibility ... However, at the working table, the government always put forward the same model, five months of intensive English and five months to teach all other subjects'] (P. Breton, 2012). In response to these complaints, Line Beauchamp and Jean Charest were featured in some of these articles promising that IE would be flexible:

La ministre de l'Éducation, Line Beauchamp, assure que chaque école ou commission scolaire pourra définir son propre programme d'enseignement intensif de l'anglais en 6e année... Mme Beauchamp a affirmé hier que le gouvernement est "très ouvert à ce que les écoles et les commissions scolaires puissent choisir différents modèles"

['The Education Minister Line Beauchamp ensures that each school or school board may determine its own intensive English teaching program in 6th grade... Ms. Beauchamp said yesterday that the government is "very open to schools and school boards choosing different styles"'] (Chouinard, 2012b).

School directors, teachers' unions, columnists and French advocates indicated that allophone students should not attend the IE program. For them, allophone students

would not have enough time nor interest to learn French if IE were implemented. This negative framing appeared mostly in *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil*.

One of the reasons used to support the framing that the IE program was not appropriate for speakers of languages other than French was that recently arrived allophone students would be exposed to a third language too quickly after attending a welcoming class--an academic year of mainly intensive French, Mathematics and Physical Education that newly arrived students take before being mainstreamed to the regular program. In other words, their French would not be good enough for them to start learning English.

Pour Marie-Hélène Blouin, directrice de l'école Louis-Colin, on ne pourra rendre obligatoire l'anglais intensif pour tous les élèves de 6e année sans tenir compte du fait que, pour plusieurs d'entre eux, récemment immigrés, la langue de Shakespeare sera leur troisième langue. "Dans certains milieu où il y a plusieurs familles allophones, les enfants sont allés en classe d'accueil en français. C'est une langue qu'ils ne maîtrisent pas et leur troisième langue [l'anglais] viendra assez vite", a dit Mme Blouin.

[‘For Marie-Helene Blouin, director of the school Louis Colin, we cannot make intensive English mandatory for all grade 6 students without considering that for many of them who are recent immigrants, the language of Shakespeare will be their third language. "In some areas where there are several allophone families, children go to welcoming classes in French. It is a language they do not understand and their third language [English] will come fast enough" said Blouin’] (Gervais, 2011b).

Other views against allophone students in the IE program were that five months of IE would take away time that could be used for them to improve their French, and that IE would diminish immigrants’ motivation to learn French.

Considering that the IE program started after a parents' grassroots movement, as explained in chapter 1, it is ironic to observe that several articles criticized the top-down approach of the IE policy. This negative frame was defended by teachers' unions, school boards, teachers, parents, and columnists; and it was featured in *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil*. These individuals expressed frustration about the fact that parents and teachers were not consulted before the government made its decision about IE. Some of them claimed that the idea should come from schools or school boards and not the other way around. The following excerpt from *Le Devoir* exemplifies the opinion of a teachers' union about the top-down character of the decision: "La Fédération autonome de l'enseignement souligne pour sa part que la mesure est venue d'en haut, sans «qu'aucune consultation préalable n'ait été menée auprès des acteurs de l'éducation»" [The Autonomous Federation of Teachers said for its part that the measure came from above, without "any prior consultation conducted with professionals of education"] (Gervais, 2012a). The same union expressed similar concerns when interviewed by *Le Soleil*: "la «frustration» des enseignants de l'école Marguerite-d'Youville tient, entre autres, au fait qu'ils n'ont pas pu participer au débat sur l'implantation de l'anglais intensif. «Parce qu'il n'y a pas eu de débat»" [the "frustration" of teachers at Marguerite d'Youville school stems, among other things, from the fact that they could not participate in the debate on the implementation of intensive English. "Because there was no debate"] (Allard, 2011a).

In summary, the negative frames identified in the articles about the IE program in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* dominated the discourse about the policy because they were found not only in articles that were mainly against the program, but also in articles that mentioned negative and positive aspects of the policy. The excerpts quoted above show the predominant type of opinions and language used by the three newspapers, but particularly by *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil*, to convey negative ideas about the IE program.

5.3 Positive frames

All three newspapers showed little positive support for the IE program, despite the variety of types of articles I researched, i.e., news, editorials, op-eds, letters to the editor and advertisements. Positive framing of the IE program consisted mostly of arguments about students' parents' wishes being for it, and the quality of the program being good. Appendices A (p. 126), B (p. 126), C (p. 135) and D (p. 140) provide detailed findings from my analysis of positive coverage of the IE program.

Positive framing of the IE program, defended mostly by researchers on second language education and by English teaching professionals not only in Quebec or Canada, but around the world, claimed that the policy would respond to parents' wishes and that IE is more effective than conventional drip-feeding language teaching. Moreover, this framing opposed some of the points raised by professionals of education and French language advocates, who were afraid that IE could pose a threat to students' education and to the vitality of French in Quebec. For proponents of the IE policy, the program would not harm at-risk students; it would not interfere with students' performance in other subjects; and it would not pose a threat to French quality or maintenance. (Research evidence supporting these claims includes Genesee, 2007; Lightbown & Spada, 2000; Lightbown, 1984).

The publication that framed the IE policy most positively was *La Presse*, followed by *Le Soleil* and then *Le Devoir*. The three newspapers had some positive news coverage of the IE program, but the same was not true of their opinion pieces. All of *La Presse's* editorials and op-eds were in favour of the IE program, but *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil* had no editorials, op-eds or letters in favour of the policy. In addition, while *La Presse* was still mostly against the IE program, the discrepancy between its quantity of articles for and against IE was not as large as that of *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil* (see appendix A on page 126). The absolute number of articles about IE in *La Presse* was significantly lower than in the other two newspapers, so the results might have been different if *La Presse* had published more pieces about IE. Perhaps *La Presse* had fewer pieces about IE because it

did not receive any letters about the topic, or because it chose not to publish letters it did receive. It was outside the scope of this research to interview the paper editors, but future research might explore this as an option. Another possibility for explaining why *La Presse's* opinion articles were in favour of the IE program is that maybe *La Presse's* staff and readership feel less threatened by English than the other two newspapers' journalists and readers.

Most articles that presented positive frames about the IE program also mentioned the existence of studies about it, but these articles rarely named the researchers involved in these studies. Researchers mentioned by the three newspapers included Fred Genesee, a McGill professor specializing in bilingualism, and Égide Royer, a professor at University of Laval specializing in students with difficulties. *La Presse* was the publication that featured the highest number of second language education specialists in favour of the IE program. Below are examples of typical positive frames that appeared in news, editorials, op-eds, letters and advertisements in the three publications, in order of most to least frequent.

The most common positive framing of the IE program was that it would respond to a real desire of Quebecers and students' parents. This idea was almost equally featured in all three newspapers. Several articles claimed that parents were mostly in favour of IE by showing survey results. Gaston Rioux, the president of the Fédération des Comités de Parents du Québec (FCPQ), claimed that most of the representatives of his federation voted in favour of the policy: "Réunis en conseil general... les délégués ont voté à 87 % pour l'implantation de l'anglais intensif" ['Meeting in general council ... 87% of the delegates voted for the implementation of intensive English'] (Allard, 2012). Parents in a school in the Lac-Saint-Jean area, where IE is already offered in most schools, were in favour of the program's continuation: "À l'école Mgr-Victor, 87% des parents se sont dits en faveur du maintien du programme d'anglais intensif" ['At Monseigneur Victor school, 87% of the parents were in favor of maintaining the intensive English program'] (Dions-Viens, 2011b). Lac-Saint-Jean is a region in Quebec

far from Montreal and other anglicized areas. English is not seen as a threat there, and this probably made it easy for that school board to implement the IE program for almost all students. In 2005 approximately 80% of students in the Lac-Saint-Jean area started to have access to the program (Commission scolaire du Lac-Saint-Jean, 2011). Finally, Quebecers in general, and not only students' parents, were in favour of the policy: "Sondés l'hiver dernier par Léger Marketing-*Le Devoir*, 69 % des Québécois se disaient également en faveur de l'initiative du premier ministre" ['Surveyed last winter by Leger Marketing-*Le Devoir*, 69% of Quebecers were also in favor of the initiative of the Premier'] (B. Breton, 2012). Other articles featured students' parents saying they were in support of IE or simply mentioned that they were, without giving details about how they got to that conclusion.

A response to the preoccupation about at-risk students was another common positive framing of the IE program. Scholars and individuals acquainted with the research on IE claimed that below-average students would not be harmed by the IE policy. Instead, students with difficulties would have the same general academic performance in IE as if they were in a regular program, but with the advantage of learning English. This frame appeared mostly in *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*. Education scholars such as Égide Royer and Fred Genesee were either quoted or mentioned in these articles. Royer is a Laval University professor specializing in students with learning difficulties. According to him, "il n'existe pas de contre-indication au programme intensif, pas même pour les élèves en difficulté ou atteints de troubles du comportement" ['there is no contraindication to the intensive program, not even for students with difficulties or behavioral problems'] (Cardinal, 2012). Fred Genesee is a McGill University psychology professor well-known for his research on language acquisition and bilingualism, especially in French immersion classrooms. Genesee linked his research in French immersion to IE: "Dans les écoles anglophones du Québec, les enfants ayant des troubles d'apprentissage qui se retrouvent en immersion n'ont pas plus de problèmes, selon Fred Genesee. 'Leurs notes ne s'améliorent pas, mais ne

baissent pas” [‘In English schools in Quebec, children with learning disabilities who find themselves in (French) immersion do not have more problems, according to Fred Genesee. “Their scores do not improve, but do not decrease either”] (Perreault, 2012). The Lac-Saint-Jean school board case of at-risk pupils succeeding in IE was mentioned in several articles as well: “On a fait plusieurs études, on a regardé les résultats scolaires et on peut affirmer que l’anglais intensif n’a pas d’effets pervers sur les autres matières. Un élève faible restera faible, mais il ne sera pas moins bon” [‘We have done several studies, we have looked at the academic performance and we can say that intensive English has no adverse effects on other subjects. A weak student will remain weak, but he will not be worse’] (Dions-Viens, 2011c).

Comparisons between the IE program and conventional ESL teaching, along with comments about the effectiveness of the IE program, appeared frequently in the positive framing of the policy, mostly in *Le Soleil* and in *La Presse*. Comparisons and comments to the advantage of the IE program were usually advanced by scholars, TESL professionals, and columnists acquainted with the research on IE.

One of the individuals that was often featured defending the idea that IE was better than drip-feeding was Gérald Larose. In 2001, Larose tabled the report of the Estates-General on the Situation and Future of the French Language in Quebec. One of the recommendations in the report was that ESL be taught intensively and concentrating the hours of instruction in a short time (Commission des États généraux sur la situation et l’avenir de la langue française au Québec, 2001). Several articles mentioned the commission chaired by Larose:

M. Larose recommandait justement d’enseigner l’anglais langue seconde de façon intensive à la fin du primaire... “Concentrer l’anglais dans une demi-année, en 6e année du primaire, c’est ce que nous proposons à l’époque”, il y a 10 ans, a confirmé en entrevue hier M. Larose.

[‘Mr. Larose recommended teaching English as a second language intensively at the end of primary school... “Concentrating English in half of the year, in the sixth grade, this is what we proposed at the time” 10 years ago, Mr. Larose confirmed in an interview yesterday’] (La Presse Canadienne, 2011).

Pierre Calvé, a retired linguistics professor at the University of Ottawa, confirmed the superiority of the IE program compared to traditional ESL instruction:

Étudier (une langue) sans arriver à la maîtriser convenablement est une perte de temps. Or l’histoire nous a appris, et de nombreuses expériences sur le terrain l’ont confirmé, qu’enseigner une langue de façon intensive, et avant l’adolescence, est infiniment plus efficace que l’enseignement traditionnel à raison de quelques minutes par jour, étalées sur plusieurs années.

[‘Studying (a language) without learning it properly is a waste of time. History has taught us, and many experiments on the ground have confirmed, that teaching a language intensively, and before adolescence, is infinitely more effective than traditional teaching; a few minutes per day spread out over several years’] (Calvé, 2011).

La Presse columnists Rima Elkouri and François Cardinal did not mention any specialists in language education by name, but they knew that many studies had been done on IE or similar programs which suggested that IE was more efficient than conventional drip-feeding: “De nombreuses études ont déjà montré que le saupoudrage de quelques heures de cours sur une longue période de temps est inefficace. La meilleure façon d’apprendre passe nécessairement par un mode intensif” [‘Numerous studies have already shown that the sprinkling of a few hours over a long period of time is inefficient. The best way to learn necessarily involves an intensive mode’] (Elkouri, 2011). Cardinal explained that the recommendations of the Larose Commission were supported by language teaching researchers: “les spécialistes affirmaient... que l’enseignement d’une langue à petite dose est totalement inefficace...

que la voie à suivre était plutôt l'apprentissage intensif dans un court laps de temps" ['experts asserted... that teaching a language in small doses is completely ineffective ... that the way forward was intensive learning over a short lapse of time'] (Cardinal, 2012).

Another positive framing of the policy was that IE would not harm students' general school performance. This opinion appeared most frequently in *Le Soleil*. English teaching professionals such as Micheline Schink and René Simard were frequent proponents of this idea. Schink is the president of the Society for the Promotion of the Teaching of English as a Second Language in Quebec (SPEAQ), the professional association for ESL teachers in Quebec, and René Simard represents the Lac-Saint-Jean School Board, where IE is offered to almost all students. The Fédération des Comités de Parents du Québec (FCPQ) asserted that "les études démontrent que l'anglais intensif ne compromet pas la réussite des élèves dans les autres matières" ['studies show that intensive English does not compromise students' success in other subjects'] (Allard, 2012); and *La Presse* columnist François Cardinal affirmed that studies on IE suggest that "l'immersion... ne nuit pas au rendement scolaire" ['immersion... does not negatively affect school performance'] (Cardinal, 2012).

In response to French language advocates who feared that the IE policy could be a threat in francophone schools, one of the positive frames of the IE program was that English would not pose a threat to French in Quebec. This opinion appeared in all opinion pieces about the IE program in *La Presse*. The most important supporting arguments for this idea were that English instruction need not be to the detriment of French instruction, that IE would have no negative effect on students' French, and that bilingualism would not lead to unilingualism if speakers still had opportunities to use their L1. Some of these articles mentioned the importance of Bill 101 in protecting and promoting French, despite their sympathy for IE. *La Presse* columnists François Cardinal and Rima Elkouri condemned the idea that IE would pose a threat to French in Quebec. Cardinal claimed that IE "consolide la seconde langue sans effet sur la première"

['consolidates the second language without effect on the first'], but Elkouri was more adamant in her criticism:

On aurait tort de sous-estimer... l'importance d'apprendre l'anglais. Cet apprentissage... n'a pas à se faire au détriment du Français... La défense de la langue française... ne doit pas servir de prétexte pour porter des œillères... l'apprentissage de l'anglais n'est pas une menace, bien au contraire. L'ignorance est beaucoup plus menaçante.

['It would be wrong to underestimate... the importance of learning English. This learning... need not be at the expense of French... The defense of the French language... should not be an excuse to wear blinders... learning English is not a threat, quite the contrary. Ignorance is far more threatening'] (Elkouri, 2011).

Similarly to Elkouri and Cardinal, Calvé criticized the framing of IE as a loss to children's education and as a threat to French language in Quebec:

On ne perd pas sa langue maternelle parce qu'on est bilingue... Les francophones ne se mettront pas à parler anglais entre eux parce qu'ils sont bilingues... Il ne faut... pas succomber à la tentation de la protection à outrance... Ce n'est pas un semestre d'anglais intensif qui va accentuer les faiblesses des élèves en français ou nous empêcher d'y remédier.

['We do not lose our native language because we are bilingual... French speakers will not start to speak English with each other because they are bilingual... We should not succumb to the temptation of excessive protection... One sole semester of intensive English will not accentuate the weaknesses of students in French or prevent us from fixing them'] (Calvé, 2011).

In reaction to the opinion that the IE program could worsen students' French mastery, proponents of the policy claimed that IE would make no difference in students' French quality. Typical framing of this argument is exemplified by a scholar's opinion

about the issue featured in *Le Devoir*. Laval University professor Zita De Koninck, a specialist in language acquisition and teaching, exploded the myth that the IE program might hinder pupils' French mastery:

L'ouverture à une autre langue et le fait que l'enfant réfléchit sur le choix des mots, sur ses caractéristiques est plutôt bénéfique, a dit Mme De Koninck, en évoquant les travaux de recherche de Fred Genesee, de l'Université McGill. Ils ont permis de conclure que l'immersion française n'avait aucun effet nocif sur le développement de la langue anglaise, y compris chez les élèves qui éprouvent des difficultés en langue maternelle.

[‘Opening up to another language and the fact that the child reflects on the choice of words, on its characteristics, is rather beneficial, said Dr. De Koninck, citing studies by Fred Genesee, of McGill University. They make it possible to conclude that French immersion had no adverse effect on the development of the English language, including among students who experience difficulties in their mother tongue’] (Gervais, 2012b).

Much of the criticism of the IE policy stemmed from its mandatory nature. In response to individuals who claimed that the program should be optional, some scholars and columnists advanced the framing that IE could be mandatory, or that all students should have the opportunity to learn English in the public system. Linguistic specialist Pierre Calvé was one of the proponents of the mandatory aspect of the IE program. To justify his opinion, he argued that schools all around the world teach a second language, usually English: “L’enseignement d’au moins une langue seconde est partie intégrante de tous les programmes scolaires du monde... la langue seconde la plus enseignée dans le monde est l’anglais, dont l’utilité, en tant que *lingua franca*, n’est plus à démontrer...” [‘The teaching of at least one second language is an integral part of all school curricula in the world... the most widely taught second language in the world is English, whose usefulness as a *lingua franca* is well recognized...’] (Calvé, 2011).

As seen previously, Calvé also claimed that studying a second language without success is a waste of time. The articles criticizing the mandatory aspect of IE did not condemn English instruction altogether. However, by agreeing with English classes happening only a few hours per week, schools make teachers and students use their time without adequate return. If we take Calvé's argument to its logical conclusion, it follows that if IE should not be mandatory, traditional English classes should not either.

Frames of the opinion that students should have the chance to learn English in public schools were advanced by *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* columnists. According to this frame, the IE program should at least be available for all, if not mandatory. Brigitte Breton claimed that "les voyages d'immersion et les camps d'été anglophones n'étant pas accessibles à tous, l'école a le devoir de mieux enseigner la langue seconde" ['since immersion trips and English Summer Camps are not accessible to all, the school has a duty to better teach the second language'] (B. Breton, 2012). Rima Elkouri points out that the IE program would be a step towards improving public ESL instruction:

En ce moment, l'apprentissage de l'anglais reste malheureusement un luxe que la majorité des enfants ne peuvent s'offrir. Bien que déjà implantés dans certaines écoles, les programmes d'apprentissage intensif de l'anglais demeurent rares. Toutes les familles n'ont pas les moyens d'envoyer leurs enfants dans des camps d'été en anglais ou de leur payer des cours privés. Le programme annoncé avant-hier par Jean Charest, s'il ne règle pas l'ensemble des problèmes du système d'éducation, viendrait tout de même corriger cette inéquité.

[At this point, learning English is unfortunately a luxury that most children cannot afford. Although already established in some schools, intensive English programs remain rare. Not all families can afford to send their children to English summer camps or pay for private lessons. The program announced the day

before yesterday by Jean Charest, does not solve all the problems of the education system, but would all the same correct this inequity’] (Elkouri, 2011).

The following subsections present some of the studies on IE that dealt with the issues presented in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* and discusses the extent to which this research was featured in the three newspapers. This discussion is followed by a conclusion, which summarizes the findings of this study.

5.4 Research

As mentioned previously, besides having looked at the negative and positive frames in the coverage of the IE program in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*, I also observed how much space these newspapers dedicated to the academic research that has investigated the issues raised in the articles. In general, the three publications mentioned the problems many more times than they mentioned the findings and solutions proposed by the studies about IE and similar intensive language programs.

Many of the concerns expressed by schoolteachers discussed in the section about negative frames are legitimate. It is understandable that they showed preoccupation about issues such as at-risk students or the time dedicated to the core content, for, after all, these are problems with which they deal frequently. However, it is alarming that the newspaper articles analyzed for this study had very few mentions of the existing academic research related to the issues raised by these professionals of education. Following is a discussion of what scholars in the field of education have had to say about the issues raised in the coverage of the IE program, as well as a conclusion of whether and how the three publications could have featured more academic research.

As seen in the negative frames section, the most featured idea against IE had to do with the appropriateness of intensive language courses for students with difficulties.

Studies on French immersion (FI), intensive English (IE) and intensive French⁶ (IF) show that students with difficulties would not be harmed by programs such as IE (Collins & White, 2011; Genesee, 2007; Germain, Lightbown, Netten, & Spada, 2004). Information about such studies was made available by the Ministère de l'Éducation, Loisir et Sports (MELS) after the February 23, 2011 announcement about IE, on a website containing a compilation of studies done on IE, IF and FI (MELS - Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2011b). These references included research suggesting that at-risk students in intensive and immersion language classrooms maintained or improved their average grade in the core subjects on top of learning a second language. In other words, these special language programs did not make their general school performance worse than in regular programs, but, if anything, the reverse (Bayan, 1996; Billy, 1980; Genesee, 1987; Germain et al., 2004; Germain & Netten, 2005; Raymond & Bonneville, 1995).

Regardless of at-risk students' success in FI, one study recommended giving them support measures (Genesee, 1987). The MELS compilation was not written in academic language as it addressed the general public interested in learning about the policy. Therefore, it could easily be accessed by journalists, students' parents, and teachers. It was clear that not only parents, but especially journalists and teachers featured in these articles, knew about the research on IE and FI, because the studies were mentioned many times, even if not specifically by researcher and date. Thus, it seems that the newspapers deliberately chose not to give more space to the findings of these studies.

Parents and teachers' preoccupation about at-risk students in IE is understandable, so much so that it inspired the research mentioned above. The same concerns were felt about French immersion and they gave rise to decades of studies (Genesee, 2007; Lapkin, Swain, Argue, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, & Canadian Parents for French, 1983). Scholars have investigated if FI suited students who

⁶ In French Immersion, students learn content through French. In Intensive French, students learn French as a Second Language (Germain & Netten, 2004)

usually got lower than average grades; had difficulty with language; came from underprivileged backgrounds or from minority groups. Even though these studies gave numerous recommendations about the type of support these students would need in FI, they showed that the idea of excluding at-risk pupils from this program was groundless (Bruck, 1982; Genesee, 1976; Holobow, Genesee, Lambert, Gastright, & Met, 1987; Trites & Price, 1978). Thus what is problematic is not the concern about at-risk students in IE per se, but the fact that *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* mentioned the concerns much more frequently than they mentioned the research that addressed these concerns, clearly not equally featuring both sides of the debate.

Newspapers' fomenting of anxiety about students with learning difficulties in IE based on worries that have already been proven unnecessary is arguably biased and an abrogation of their journalistic duty to impartiality.

Another popular concern about the IE program amongst professionals of education was the reduced time to cover subjects other than the L2. It would be perfectly logical to think that it is not possible to teach and learn in five months the content that is usually taught and learned in ten months. Yet, research on French immersion (FI), intensive English (IE) and intensive French (IF) suggests that students' participation in these language programs does not have any negative impact on their development in other subjects. This research shows that, even when pupils were not pre-selected to be part of the program based on higher than average marks, they managed to maintain or improve their performance in reading, writing, L1, mathematics and other subjects (Bayan, 1996; Billy, 1980; Commission scolaire de l'Eau-Vive, 1997; Germain et al., 2004; Germain & Netten, 2005; Lazaruk, 2007; Leblanc, Duplantie, & Monette, 1981; Mady, 2007). The widely cited case of IE at the Lac-Saint-Jean School Board was an example of IE students' success in other subjects (Commission scolaire du Lac-Saint-Jean, 2011).

The negative ideas about IE regarding the reduced time for subjects other than English presented in the newspapers had more space than their counterarguments. The ideas that there would not be enough time for the other subjects in IE, and that these

subjects should be prioritized over English, appeared significantly more than the opposing view that IE would not interfere with students' general school development. *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* failed to feature the research that could help allay the concerns about IE students' success in subjects other than English.

When discussing the difficulties involved in teaching the content in less time than usual, teachers of subjects other than English were concerned about being at a disadvantage. There was a complete absence of arguments refuting this idea. One of the possibilities to explain this is that the articles mostly featured grade 6 teachers in the regular program, who were understandably troubled by the idea of negative changes such as having more work, less time or losing half of their jobs. In fact, grade 6 teachers in the Lac-Saint-Jean School Board study did report being dissatisfied about the change of groups, lack of time, stress, and an excessive amount of correction, planning, management, tests and students per class (Commission scolaire du Lac-Saint-Jean, 2011). However, no grade 6 teachers in IE of subjects other than English⁷ were featured in the articles, so it is impossible for the newspapers' readers to know their opinions about the impact of the program on their workload or job security. Moreover, while teachers' working conditions is an important issue, it is only tangentially related, in the opinion of the present author, to students' access to the best possible education. Is the most important goal of the education system to offer teachers optimal working conditions or to give students access to high quality instruction?

One of the most common frames against the IE program voiced by French language advocates was their preoccupation with the language quality of French. Although Quebecers seem to be especially concerned about their language standards in these articles, the concern with language decline is not exclusive to Quebec. Research on sociolinguistics has shown that several nations, especially colonized countries that

⁷ The other half of the year is devoted to all the other subjects besides ESL, so those teachers are also in IE, in the sense that they are teaching in the program and must be supportive for the program to succeed.

adopted the language of their empires, express similar worries. In their book *Do you speak American?* Robert MacNeil and William Cran discuss, amongst other topics, the idea that American English is in decline (MacNeil & Cran, 2005). John Algeo also discusses the myth of language “ruin” in the USA, concluding with the sarcastic remark: “So is America ruining the English language? Certainly, if you believe that extending the language to new uses and new speakers ruins it. Certainly, if you believe that change is ruin” (Algeo, 1998, p. 182). Marcos Bagno discusses the myths that “Brazilians do not know Portuguese” and that “Only in Portugal is Portuguese well spoken”⁸ (Bagno, 1999, p. 36). Finally, other nations also sometimes spread the myth that “children can’t speak or write properly any more” as documented by James Milroy in the case of British school children (Milroy, 1998, p. 58).

If studies on sociolinguistics are not enough to show that it is unnecessary to be concerned about mother tongue quality in Quebec, the MELS’s compilation of studies on IE, IF and FI presented some research suggesting that IE has no negative effect on French language quality. Some of these studies overlap with the ones about students with learning difficulties and about subjects other than English because many of them tested students’ L1 performance to ensure that IE did no harm. Some studies observed that after undergoing IE, IF or FI, students’ L1 development had remained the same as in the regular program (Bayan, 1996; Commission scolaire de l’Eau-Vive, 1997; Genesee, 1987, 2007) or had improved (Commission scolaire des Affluents, 2000; Germain et al., 2004; Germain & Netten, 2005; Lazaruk, 2007; Leblanc et al., 1981). One study suggested that learning an L2 would only threaten performance in an L1 if this instruction started at a very early age and if the L1 had no support at home, school or in society in general, as is the case for minority-language children from immigrant backgrounds, who are in a very different situation from Quebec francophone children

⁸ Translation from Portuguese by the author.

(Lightbown, 1991). In grade 6, students are approximately 11 years old, therefore old enough to have mastered their L1. Moreover, the Quebec context gives plenty of support to French: students use French at school during most of the time; and a majority use French at home and in other activities. Their French is therefore not threatened.

Quebecers' concern about their French quality might possibly arise from their low linguistic self-esteem, discussed previously, but this does not justify unnecessary worries being featured more than research showing that IE does not interfere with students' French. *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil* were especially biased since they published more articles spreading the fear than articles communicating research results to their readers.

Several professionals of education and French language advocates argued that the IE program was either useless or harmful because of a supposedly high bilingualism rate in Quebec. It is true that some areas in Quebec are more bilingual than others. In addition, anglophones willing to enroll their children in francophone schools are allowed to do so. Thus, the concern about bilingual students wasting their time in IE is legitimate. While such students should not attend IE, the program could still be offered to those who are not yet bilingual. Nevertheless, by the statistics presented in the articles about bilingualism in Quebec, it is impossible to establish if most school-aged children in the province are indeed bilingual enough not to benefit from IE. If they were, why would their parents support the program so much, as discussed previously? *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* all emphasized the problem of offering IE to students who do not need it, but were deficient in discussing the case of students who could benefit from IE, proving themselves to be biased once again.

Many professionals of education complained about the MELS's lack of flexibility in the IE program implementation, mostly referring to the model proposed by the government. The oldest and most common model that has been implemented since the beginning of the program in the 1970s is the 5 months/5 months model. In this model students are in IE for five months and study the other subjects in French for the other 5

months; the order does not matter (Watts & Snow, 1993). A 10-month model also exists “where students receive approximately 8 hours a week of English throughout the year, with regular academic subjects in French taught in the remaining school hours”(Collins, Halter, Lightbown, & Spada, 1999). Research comparing the 5 months/5 months and the 10-month models showed that students attending both programs had positive results, but that the 5 months/5 months model was nevertheless superior (Collins et al., 1999; Collins & White, 2011). A document explaining several other models that could be chosen by each school was made available in the MELS website about IE. In general, the MELS required the addition of 300 to 400 hours of ESL in grade 6, but how these hours were to be spread over the school year would be each school’s decision (MELS - Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2012a). It is not possible to conclude that newspapers could have given more space to the idea that IE was flexible, because the MELS did not make it clear from the beginning that schools would be allowed to choose the model they preferred.

Another common issue discussed by proponents against the IE program was the concern about allophone students' ability to learn English as a third language without interfering with their learning process of French or other subjects. There does not seem to be any study on IE that concentrated on evaluating allophone students’ performance. However, a study on FI in Ontario showed that allophone students performed as well as or better than other students in mathematics and English, which suggested that intensive language programs would not be harmful for students learning their third language (Mady, 2007). While it is understandable that allophone students find linguistic difficulty at school when they arrive in Quebec, they are usually mainstreamed when they know enough French to study other subjects (MELS - Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2006). Therefore, nothing suggests that they would not be ready to learn a third language. While these students would probably not have the same support as francophone children at home in order to maintain their French, they would still have it at school. None of the newspapers featured articles arguing that allophones’ French would not suffer if they participated in IE. They could have featured

common cases of multilingual immigrants whose children quickly learn to master new languages. In fact, these families need to struggle in order for their children not to lose their *first* language. Learning French and English for them is not usually a problem. Once more, *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* failed to show the other side of the discussion.

One last frame against the IE program that had been mentioned in the academic research was the origin of the idea for the program. While many professionals of education were featured in the articles claiming that the measure had come from the government, chapter 1 discussed how IE was actually originally a response to a parents' grassroots activist movement working for improved ESL instruction for their children. It is interesting to notice the contrast between the origins of IE and the more recent complaints about the policy's top-down approach. The three newspapers featured opinions that access to IE has been requested by parents since its creation. However, there were no articles featuring teachers or their representatives asking for IE in their schools. It is understandable that teachers of subjects other than English would not be extremely enthusiastic about IE for the reasons discussed previously. *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* could have featured more ESL teachers' opinions, but these teachers would likely be in favour of the program, and thus their opinions would probably be seen as biased. Even if the IE program is popular, its success depends on teachers' cooperation, which does not come easily if they have no choice about the program.

It can be concluded that many of the concerns about IE presented in the newspaper articles had already been covered by academic research long before the Charest government decided to implement the program provincially across the board. However, only a minority of the articles featured scholars and their suggestions about the issues raised by professionals of education and French language advocates, even though academic research could be easily accessed through the MELS website, not only by journalists, but by the general public as well. By choosing to present more problems than solutions, newspapers demonstrated bias and influenced their readers to distrust the IE policy. Undoubtedly, the three newspapers, but especially *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil*, should and could have been more balanced in their coverage of the IE program policy

announcement by showing both sides of the debate and by giving more space to the academic studies about language and education available in Quebec and all over the world.

5.5 Conclusion

As seen in the previous sections, most of the frames found in the articles about the IE program between July 2010 and July 2012 in all three newspapers were negative. These frames consisted of arguments against the policy and were defended by two main voices: education professionals and French language advocates. *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil* were significantly more negative about the IE program than *La Presse*, which had almost the same amount of articles for and against IE. In conclusion, the three publications, but especially *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil*, could have given more space to feature the vast research previously done on intensive language programs. By choosing to discuss problems more than to present solutions, and by giving more space to negative frames, these three Quebec newspapers contributed for their readers to form a biased opinion about IE.

6 Chapter 6 – Conclusions

In this chapter I summarize my study and set out conclusions, implications, limitations and recommendations for future research.

This study was an investigation of the ways three francophone newspapers in Quebec framed the debate about an intensive English program policy announced by the Quebec government in February 2011. The theoretical framework of this study was frame analysis (Brewer, 2010; Entman, 1993; Goffman, 1974; Hallahan, 2008; McCombs, 2004; Palmeri, 2001; Pan, 2008; Scheufele, 2008). Amongst the different ways of classifying frames explained in Chapter 3, I chose to look for frames of gain, loss and framing of attributes. In the articles about intensive English (IE) in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* I looked for arguments in favour of and against IE and classified them as gains, losses, positive attributes or negative attributes of IE. My research question was the following:

How did the newspapers *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* frame the debate about the Ministère de l'Éducation, Loisir et Sports's (MELS) mandatory intensive English program policy between July 2010 and July 2012?

The findings show that *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*'s reporting on the announcement about IE was almost always negative. The arguments featured in the articles were most of the time framed as negative attributes of IE and as possible losses that could occur if IE were implemented.

Among the three publications, *Le Devoir* was the one with the highest number of articles against IE. When reporting news, *Le Devoir* was sometimes balanced, but in its opinion pieces it was always against the program. *Le Devoir*'s opinion pieces were the majority of its articles on the policy, and within this group, most of the texts were readers' letters phrased in very negative terms. Another aspect that differentiated *Le Devoir* from the other two newspapers was that it published a series of advertisements against IE paid for by three teachers' unions. The fact that *Le Devoir* is an independent newspaper probably gives it more freedom to feature any kind of publicity, especially if

it is in accordance with its editorial point of view. The opinions against IE fostered by *Le Devoir* in its articles were indeed in agreement with those advertisements. These findings are not surprising if we take into account *Le Devoir's* history of French language advocacy, discussed in Chapter 3.

La Presse was also mostly against IE, but it had more articles in favor of the policy than the other two newspapers. Contrary to *Le Devoir*, *La Presse's* opinion articles were all in favor of the policy, but it is important to notice that they were few, as *La Presse* published no readers' letters about IE during the period covered by this study. *Le Soleil* was in the main against IE as well, but not as much as *Le Devoir*. *Le Soleil* was the most balanced of the three publications. As seen in Chapter 3, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* belong to a powerful media group and have a very large circulation. Although they were both mainly against IE, being too radical about it might not please some of their readers.

Most of the proponents of the arguments against IE were teachers and teachers' unions; most of the time, the teachers represented had never worked in IE, but were afraid of the negative changes that the program could inflict on them. These individuals aired concerns such as students with learning difficulties struggling in IE and the decrease of the time dedicated to other subjects. Time and again newspapers featured the same arguments against IE, asking manipulative rhetorical questions and frequently ignoring research that could answer individuals' anxieties. For example, "L'anglais intensif ajoutera aux difficultés des jeunes qui souffrent déjà de troubles d'apprentissage, ajoute M. St-Germain. Et notre priorité, ça devrait être de les aider..." ['Intensive English adds difficulty for children who already suffer from learning disabilities, says St-Germain. And our priority should be to help them...'] (Journet, 2012).

Teachers did not explicitly claim to be against ESL instruction in francophone schools, but another category of individuals did. This argument was put forward by individuals known for their radical defense of French in Quebec. Some examples include sovereigntist PQ members, separatists such as Mario Beaulieu of the Société Saint-Jean-

Baptiste (SSBJ), and political scientist Christian Dufour. As seen in chapter 5, Beaulieu defended the idea that Quebec is already very bilingual and that the priority in the province should be French, not English. Dufour's opinions were similar to Beaulieu's, but Dufour used strong words against IE such as "dangereuse, excessive, aberrant, irresponsable" ['dangerous, excessive, aberrant, irresponsible']. He also criticized Quebecers' wishes to become bilingual:

Joue également une idéologie du bilinguisme qui, indépendamment de la réalité québécoise et des contraintes de notre environnement nord-américain, veut imposer une nouvelle norme: désormais TOUS les Québécois doivent être bilingues par principe sous peine de ne pas être mondialisés, modernes et ouverts. Ne parler que le français devient la marque d'un statut inférieur.

[‘There is also an ideology of bilingualism at play, which, regardless of the Quebec reality and the constraints of our North American environment, seeks to impose a new standard: now ALL Quebecers must be bilingual on principle, under penalty of not being globalized, modern and open. Speaking only French becomes the mark of a lower status’] (Dufour, 2011).

Beaulieu and Dufour's point of view is explained by Quebec's history of linguistic insecurity, discussed in Chapter 2. While the 1977 implementation of Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language, significantly advanced the protection and promotion of French in Quebec, those who spread the idea that English still threatens French in the province are not satisfied with the language law currently in place.

The side of the discussion in favour of IE was very weakly represented in the newspapers. Students' parents and a few scholars in the field of education such as Pierre Calvé were the main proponents of arguments in favor of IE. Many of the arguments against the policy were myths that had already been debunked by language education scholars, but this research had only a small space in the articles about IE in *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*. Calvé, who wrote an op-ed in *La Presse*, was one of the

scholars who investigated at-risk students with learning disabilities and below average grades in immersion (Calvé, 1991). In his op-ed he encouraged IE because it is effective in improving English while being harmless to French:

On ne perd pas sa langue maternelle parce qu'on est bilingue... Les francophones ne se mettront pas à parler anglais entre eux parce qu'ils sont bilingues... Ce n'est pas un semestre d'anglais intensif qui va accentuer les faiblesses des élèves en français.

['...We do not lose our native language because we are bilingual... Francophones will not start to speak English with each other because they are bilingual... One sole semester of intensive English will not accentuate students' weaknesses in French']. (Calvé, 2011)

It is clearly seen in the results of this study that *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* favoured opinions against IE in their articles. These three newspapers instigated much apprehension about IE based on myths that have already been proven wrong by research on language education and based on problems that have already been solved by linguistic legislation in Quebec. As newspaper readers, we must then always doubt these outlets' impartiality and constantly look for more diverse sources of information.

This study is limited in that only the press was included, out of all possible media in Quebec, and only three of the several provincial newspapers were included. Also, only these publications' printed material was analyzed, as pieces that appeared only on their websites were not included in the data sample. Another limitation was the fact that this study investigated the frames in the content of the newspaper articles, but did not investigate how this content and these frames influenced readers' opinions on IE. Readers' arguments were accessed through their published letters only, which certainly limits conclusions about how these newspapers' readers interpreted the debate.

Future research on content framing of news media should include other francophone newspapers and perhaps comparisons with anglophone Quebec newspapers as well. Different types of media outlets such as radio and TV should also be investigated. When attempting to establish how news media influence their consumers, researchers should also interview news media audiences and analyze comments written on these outlets' websites.

The future of IE in Quebec does not seem very promising at the moment. On March 7, 2013, two years after Liberal premier Jean Charest announced a policy change making IE mandatory for the Grade Six year in all Quebec schools, the new PQ education minister Marie Malavoy declared that the program was being put on hold (Saint-Laurent, 2013). Schools can now implement IE if they want to, but are not required to do so. In other words, we are back to where we were before Jean Charest's Liberal government started to think about implementing IE across the board in all Grade Six classrooms. Schools and school boards have always had the choice about implementing IE among any number of other innovative programs (Lightbown & Spada, 1994). Malavoy justified the PQ's decision explaining that it would be impossible for all schools in Quebec to implement IE by 2015. In addition, the minister of education declared that the impact of the program was unknown in three main areas: students with learning difficulties, students' ability to learn the other subjects in five months, and students' French.

After a close look at the most frequent arguments promulgated by the newspapers analyzed for this study, the minister's insistence on these concerns is not surprising. Moreover, PQ representatives were featured in the articles criticizing IE, so the party's position against the program is known to everyone. Former PQ language critic Pierre Curzi claimed that IE was unnecessary because people in Quebec are already very bilingual: "Québec est déjà une des populations les plus bilingues et trilingues en Amérique" ['Quebec is already one of the most bilingual and trilingual populations in America']. He declared that the policy could not remain firm: "elle ne tient pas debout" ['it cannot stand']. He also guaranteed that the PQ would not impose

bilingualism if it were elected: “Il n’est pas question... qu’on impose à tous les élèves de devenir ‘parfaitement bilingues’” [‘There is no way... we (PQ) will require all students to become ‘perfectly bilingual’]. Finally, Curzi proposed a different type of English instruction: “Le PQ préfère une autre formule, qui exclurait l’anglais du primaire pour concentrer son apprentissage dans les trois premières années du secondaire” [‘The PQ prefers another formula, which would exclude English from primary school to concentrate ESL in the first three years of secondary school’] (Robitaille, 2011).

PQ education spokesperson Sylvain Gaudreault was also featured in the articles, criticizing then-education minister Line Beauchamp for “ne pas avoir toutes les réponses sur les impacts de l’anglais intensif sur la réussite des élèves” [‘not having all the answers about the impact of intensive English on students’ success’] (La Presse Canadienne, 2012b). Curzi and Gaudreault left no question about the PQ’s intentions towards IE.

Malavoy declared that the École National d’Administration Publique (ENAP) would direct a study on the impact of IE on students’ school development. Bernard Saint-Laurent, the journalist interviewing her, mentioned that many studies had already been conducted on IE, but the minister simply said that it would be ENAP’s responsibility to look at that research. One of ENAP’s researchers is Christian Dufour, one of the loudest voices against IE in the articles analyzed in this study. As a political scientist and not an applied linguist, in what way can Dufour be considered qualified to conduct a study about the impact of a language program on students’ education? Moreover, Dufour has a well-known, already declared agenda against IE. If Dufour is involved in the study suggested by Malavoy, how objective can Quebecers expect this report to be? And if the PQ concentrates ESL teaching in the first three years of secondary school, how would *Le Devoir*, *La Presse* and *Le Soleil* cover this issue? That remains to be seen.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Articles for, against or balanced about the Intensive English program policy

	Le Devoir					La Presse					Le Soleil					Total
	News	Editorials	Op-eds	Letters	Total (%)	News	Editorials	Op-eds	Letters	Total (%)	News	Editorials	Op-eds	Letters	Total (%)	
F	1	-	-	-	1 (4.55%)	2	2	1	-	5 (35.71%)	3	-	-	-	3 (12.5%)	9 (15%)
A	5	5	1	7	18 (81.82%)	6	-	-	-	6 (42.86%)	10	-	1	3	14 (58.33%)	38 (63.33%)
B	3	-	-	-	3 (13.63%)	3	-	-	-	3 (21.43%)	6	1	-	-	7 (29.17%)	13 (21.67%)
T	9	5	1	7	22 (100%)	11	2	1	-	14 (100%)	19	1	1	3	24 (100%)	60 (100%)

(F = For, A = Against, B = Balanced, T = Total)

Appendix B – *Le Devoir*

Table 1 - *Le Devoir* – news

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Fev-28-11	Intensive English: Beauchamp defends Charest's approach, Lisa-Marie Gervais (education issues)	Balanced	Anglophone schools have French immersion. Making it mandatory does not harm students' success. (Intensive English) could be an important source of motivation to students, even to those with learning difficulties.	The mandatory character of intensive English in grade 6 will not apply reciprocally to anglophone school students with French. Hiring bilingual personnel, for example, can cause problems in the countryside.
Mar-02-11	Giving one's back to English would be 'criminal', Lisa-Marie	For	Turning one's back to English would be inappropriate, criminal. (G�rard Bouchard) does not believe that Premier Jean Charest's decision to make intensive English mandatory represents an identity	

	Gervais (education issues)		threat. We should not do like Christian Dufour, say 'no' to English and blame the youth who are learning it.	
Mar-04-11	PQ proposes concentrating English instruction in secondary 1, 2 and 3, Antoine Robitaille (editorialist responsible for the page "Idées" ['Ideas'])	Against	It is legitimate to give a good base of English as a second language.	Quebec is already one of the most bilingual and trilingual populations in America. There is no need to worry. Bilingualism is easily acquired in Quebec. The priority in Quebec is a solid mastery of French. Jean Charest's proposition (intensive English) does not make sense. The PQ prefers to exclude English from elementary school to concentrate its instruction in secondary 1, 2 and 3. (Intensive English) is an inapplicable measure, especially because it would require perfectly bilingual teachers in all Quebec regions. We should not impose becoming perfectly bilingual on all students.
Jun-10-11	Teaching bilingualism, Lisa-Marie Gervais (education issues)	Against	At least, the advantage (in secondary school) is that students can put their energy elsewhere other than in English during four years.	(The MELS) will have problems in implementing (intensive English) everywhere, starting with personnel recruitment. It is an enormous work for the teacher of French and math the rest of the time. For many recently immigrated (students) (English) will be their third language, which will happen too fast.
Feb-09-12	Teachers oppose intensive English in grade 6: Quebec's program is judged improvised, Lisa-Marie Gervais (education issues)	Against	It is not the idea of having a second or third language, or the fact that this instruction is concentrated that concerns the teachers. Learning a second language responds to a social demand.	The measure came from high, without any prior consultation of education professionals. What will be done with already bilingual students? How can we hire enough English teachers? Will there be support for students with difficulties?

Feb-14-12	Intensive English: Parents agree, but under certain conditions, Lisa-Marie Gervais (education issues)	Balanced	Parents agree with the implementation of intensive English. Each school's needs should be considered. The program shouldn't be uniform. Parents would like more flexibility and clarity. Line Beauchamp heard parents' demands about flexibility and clarity. 87% (of FCSQ members) voted in favor of a project of second language instruction.	Parents do not want a uniform intensive English program. It will have to be molded according to each school's needs, take students with difficulties into account.
Feb-27-12	Without specialized teachers, intensive English will be a failure, Lisa-Marie Gervais (education issues)	Balanced	There is something to demystify: the idea that children with difficulties will be disadvantaged. There are no studies that showed that children with difficulties will be penalized. French immersion has no negative effect on the development of English, not even in children with difficulty in their mother tongue. It even has a positive impact on general school performance.	I am afraid when I think that during five months, the children will only play games to learn English. This age is very important for the child's development. What if we hire teachers that cannot speak English well or that cannot teach it? How can all grade 6 students succeed if the program demands the condensation of all the other subjects in half a year?
Mar-03-12	Intensive English in grade 6: Parents want a moratorium, Lisa-Marie Gervais (education issues)	Against	Parents say they are not against English per se. English is important, but... It seems that there is a social consensus about the fact that (intensive English) will have no impact on students with difficulties.	Parents from several Quebec regions said they were apprehensive and disappointed that a deeper debate about (intensive English) did not happen. English is becoming the priority in our education system. We cannot understand that there were no studies about this program's impact on culture and language. (FQSC) cannot ensure that it has consulted all its members before voting (for or against intensive English). (MELS) is ready to add 400 hours of English, but nobody thought of adding 400 hours of French. (Students with difficulties) will not have access to specialized programs in arts and music, for example. But they say it is OK to skip half of the year for English. I totally oppose this measure, at least its current version.

Jun-23-12	English? The royal road!, Marie-Andrée Chouinard (general and metropolitan issues)	Against		Our students have the best grades in English in Quebec, it is difficult to make them use French at school, parents already see English as an essential language and French as an accessory, and now they want to impose intensive English six months per year? What kind of message does it send to immigrants? That English, in Quebec, is the royal way! Francophones (at CSDM) are immersed in an English universe, what makes them use this franglais that hurts my ear. 82% of the parents agree with (intensive English). Only 26% of the parents say they are apprehensive about a possible negative impact of this program, in particular those that have learning difficulty and whose mother tongue is French. English is not indispensable at work. We are responding to a need that does not exist.
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Table 2 - Le Devoir – editorials

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Feb-28-11	Smiley face, Marie-Andrée Chouinard (general and metropolitan issues)	Against		Jean Charest prefers a school where students are 'full bilingual', with the imposition of intensive English everywhere on everyone. Easy recipes - English for all - hide the observation of failure and impotence.
Mar-03-11	English instruction: Re-read Larose, Bernard Descôteaux (director)	Against		It is impossible for the moment to analyse Charest's project (intensive English). What is the goal? Make Quebecers bilingual at the end of secondary school or allow them to acquire a functional knowledge of English? Premier Charest would have been more convincing if his proposition about English instruction had been accompanied with a

				commitment to reintroduce measures to strengthen Bill 101.
Mar-04-11	You know what I mean!, Christian Rioux (columnist)	Against		Bilingualism has become a real obsession in Quebec, even if we are one of the most bilingual people in the world. In 2006 61% of 21-year-old Quebecers that had attended French schools were bilingual. The number of bilingual Quebecers far exceeds the number of jobs that require knowledge of English. Bilingualism is progressing regularly in Quebec without our having to lift a finger. We will never speak enough for Pierre Trudeau's disciples. Here, bilingualism is not enough. We must be 'perfectly bilingual'. Only teachers are concerned about the disappearance of five months of French, mathematics and History instruction. Bilingualism obsession is the manifestation of French decline in Quebec. Correct French is a fictional language. French in Quebec is under threat of not being able to draw strength from itself.
Feb-04-12	French: The tired language, Marie-Andrée Chouinard (general and metropolitan issues)	Against		Intensive English will soon be mandatory, even if the French basis is unsteady.
Feb-13-12	Intensive English in elementary school: all or nothing, Marie-Andrée Chouinard (general and metropolitan issues)	Against	Parents are still in favor of (Intensive English).	There are so many disparities: Montreal and its allophone students, the countryside having difficulty in hiring teachers who master English, disadvantaged environments, where succeeding in the core subjects is a miracle. Some (students) cannot afford to study a year's content in five months. The Larose report focuses on effective French learning first and

				then English, without drip-feeding and with intensity. Critical and objective analyses are missing to find out if intensive English wall-to-wall will collide with the (MELS's) targets of success.
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Table 3 - Le Devoir - op-eds

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Jan-31-12	Intensive English instruction in elementary school: A pretty mirage for parents, Luc Papineau (teacher and co-author of <i>Grand mensonge de l'éducation</i> ['The big lie about education'])	Against	Parents are obsessed by this mirage of bilingual children.	I ask myself about my future students' knowledge and competences in French, but also in other subjects, if we cut off half of their last year in elementary school to devote it to English. During grade six, a student will have two teachers. Aren't they the same parents that complain about the lack of stability of the teaching personnel? (Classes doing intensive English in the winter) will be clearly disadvantaged (in exams at the end of the year). There is a shortage of English teachers in Quebec. How will certain parents react to the stress lived by their children? If you are the parent of a child with a learning difficulty, how would you ensure that his/her learning rhythm is respected? (Cutting off half year) will have a negative impact on the fragile clientele or with difficulty. Is it a good formula to impose intensive English on certain children that have no interest in this subject? Should this measure be absolutely mandatory? Which teacher would like to prepare students for exams in half of the time? Which teacher would like to have two different groups in the same year?

Table 4 - Le Devoir – letters

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Mar-08-11	Can we still live in French in Quebec?, Sophie David	Against		Is anglicization a project that carries pride for a fragile society like ours, which has fought for the survival of its language and culture for generations? Francophone Quebecers are already part of the most bilingual people in the planet. Isn't it enough?
Mar-08-11	Do we love our language?, Jean Piuze	Against		In spite of (living in) a very francophone environment, at 20, my brother and I spoke good English. It is spurious to say that in order to speak English well it is necessary to cram elementary or secondary school with this language. Learning English depends on each person's willingness and practical efforts. The Quebec government is doing little to improve, promote and protect French, but it is announcing an important educational measure to intensify English instruction in elementary school. It is francophone Quebecers' French that is sick, not their English. Spoken and written French quality is preoccupying. We desperately need this semester of intensive English...for French. We must dedicate the necessary time (to French). We need this half school year in French. It is our culture that will be threatened in the 21st century.
Mar-10-11	Intensive French in grade 6, Francine Allard (parent)	Against		Intensive English is offered even before children get to French. How about intensive French?
Feb-10-12	Anglicizing the youth!, Stéphane Martel	Against		(This government) wants to anglicize the Quebecer youth. It added English instruction since grade 1 to all francophones in Quebec, and it is sacrificing the learning of other subjects. It is

				imposing English to all the youth.
Feb-28-12	Before intensive English in elementary school, some suggestions, Marie Poulin-Asselin	Against		Why not decrease the number of students per group, before imposing the task of learning in half a year the content of one year on students who already have many difficulties? Maybe we do not need this intensive English project.
Apr-11-12	Why 400 hours of English in grade 6?, Jean-François Vallée	Against		By observing and listening to our teenagers, we could swear that they are already bilingual! Where is the need to add 400 hours? Do we want to eliminate the accent as if it were a shame not to have been born an anglophone? There are other languages and subjects to learn.
Jun-27-12	My students, I am proud of you, André Cournoyer (grade 6 teacher)	Against		In three years, with the implementation of intensive English, (students) will only be in my class for five months, one of them doing exams. There will only be four months left to get to know them and teach them everything they will have to learn. We will have no time. I have three years to enjoy what I do before changing grades, as many other grade 6 teachers are thinking of doing. New grade 6 teachers will be disillusioned and exhausted about wanting to teach in four or five months what is currently done in ten.

Table 5 - Le Devoir – advertisements

Date	Advertisements
January-10-12	Speaking English is a plus...as long as we can already speak and read well in French.

January-12-12	Learning English is nice, but the urgency is to know how to write in French.
January-14-12	Intensive English for all grade 6 students; it's 5 months less to prepare for secondary. Can all students afford it?
January-17-12	Intensive English in grade 6? With an average of 65% in French at the end of grade 5, Joëlle can't afford it.
January-19-12	Intensive English in grade 6? Given his reading difficulty, Dimitri can't afford it.
January-24-12	Intensive English in grade 6, it's 5 months less to master the entire elementary school program. Martin can't afford it.
January-26-12	Intensive English for all grade 6 students, we can't afford it. Do something about it, Mr. Charest!"

Appendix C – La Presse

Table 6 - La Presse – news

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Feb-25-11	Intensive English in grade 6: Gérald Larose had suggested it in 2001, La Presse Canadienne	For	(The Larose Commission) recommended the teaching of intensive English at the end of elementary school. He (wishes) the measure is correctly implemented this time.	
Feb-25-11	English immersion in grade 6: Teachers question the terms, Ariane Lacoursière (education, health and elderly issues) and Marie-Claude Malbeouf	Against		While many (teachers) ask themselves who will be able to teach intensive English at French schools, others think that children with difficulties will be disadvantaged. There are not enough English teachers in the anglophone schools. Where will they find teachers? Who will be able to teach intensive English in all schools in the province? It's clear that there are not enough specialized teachers to respond to this demand. Minister Beauchamp confirms that currently there are not enough teachers. In Montreal the challenge is to make students use French. In Outaouais, the youth are often

				<p>bilingual and speaks English at school. Students with difficulties will not be able to learn all the content in half a year. Teachers who need to show the core content in half a year face many difficulties.</p>
Feb-28-11	<p>Intensive English in grade 6: Not a luxury, a necessity, Marie-Claude Malbeouf</p>	Balanced	<p>Intensive English programs are very popular amongst parents. Nowadays Antoine, a student who took intensive English, has conversations in English without a problem. In the job market, being bilingual is not a luxury anymore, it is a necessity. Speaking English gives an opportunity to aim high, to have direction positions. Two school boards in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean offer intensive English to almost all their grade 6 students and the results are excellent.</p>	<p>Parents of students with learning difficulty are less happy. It is already difficult to cover all the content of several subjects. The problem will worsen if the time of other subjects is given to English. The youth has to learn the other subjects twice as fast.</p>
Feb-28-11	<p>Intensive English in grade 6: A threat to our identity, Marie-Claude Malbeouf</p>	Against		<p>Quebecers are already becoming more and more bilingual. If all Quebecers become very bilingual, they will buy CDs, newspapers and books in English. This will diminish their interest in our cultural products. If all francophones speak English, what will motivate immigrants and anglophones to learn French? It is an identity regression. Intensive English is unnecessary; with the Internet we are more and more embedded in English. The real problem is French. Students' level is lamentable. Certain (students) do not like to learn languages. Others might prefer to focus on Spanish. People should be free to choose.</p>

Mar-07-11	Quebec youngsters bilingual enough judges the SSBJ president, Valérie Simard (journalist and editor at <i>Cyberpresse</i>)	Against		Quebec youngsters are bilingual enough. There are currently in Quebec enough bilingual youngsters to respond to the demands of the job market. 85% of the francophone youth evaluated their English aptitude from functional to excellent. Companies ask for English even for jobs in the countryside entirely in French. Intensive English is unnecessary, particularly in Montreal. A mandatory immersion in English in grade 6 might precede Quebec's anglicization.
May-10-11	Incompatible, intensive English and students' success? - A school in Laval abandons its program, Marie-Claude Malbeouf	Balanced	Most parents have demanded that intensive English continues. We are far from being against intensive English. In Montreal these programs are extremely popular.	Maintaining intensive English is incompatible with the new graduation target. To give more hours to learning English, they (students) must see the other subjects in less time, which requires more effort. There is a shortage of English teachers. The priority should be students' achievement in subjects such as French and Mathematics. Some parents were outraged or worried with the place reserved to French. Teachers asked themselves how they would succeed in teaching the core subjects in half of the time.
Feb-09-12	Intensive English in grade 6: Teachers demand that Quebec back away, Paul Journet (parliamentary correspondent)	Against	(Intensive English) could be interesting in certain cases.	There are thousands of students with learning difficulties already and they want to impose a new obstacle on them? There would be less time for other subjects. There is a lack of teachers to implement the program everywhere. We oppose the generalized implementation of intensive English. Some students already speak English very well. Some schools in the countryside have multi-graded classes, which complicates the implementation of the program. Intensive English will add a difficulty to students who already suffer from learning problems. Recently arrived children do not master French well and their time to learn it will be reduced.

Feb-14-12	CAQ denounces the governments' wall-to-wall, Tommy Chouinard (parliamentary correspondent)	Against		Each school should be allowed to define its program. Students with learning difficulties could be condemned to failure. In Shannon, half of the students are already bilingual. Each environment should be allowed to determine the most appropriate formula.
Feb-15-12	Intensive English: Different possible models, Tommy Chouinard (parliamentary correspondent)	Balanced	Each school or school board will be allowed to define its own intensive English program in grade 6.	The CSQ wants the government to give up (on intensive English).
Feb-18-12	Education: immersion around the world, Matthieu Perreault (science and religion issues)	For	Because of the law, in francophone schools in Quebec, only English can be taught in English. Then, immersion is limited to a few months of intensive English during which the other subjects are not taught. All students can do immersion, as long as there are enough resources and teachers. Children with learning problems in immersion do not have more problems. Their grades do not get better, but do not get worse either. After secondary school, 70% of anglophones will have attended immersion.	
Jun-18-12	Intensive English teaching: Hesitations in Quebec, recruiting in Ontario, Pascale Bréton (education issues)	Against		(Intensive English) is a source of contestation and concern. Parents are concerned. Teachers asked many questions, and did not get any answers yet. School boards are cautious. In Quebec there is a shortage of specialists in English. The implementation of the program should give space to flexibility. Teachers of other subjects could lose their jobs, since half of their tasks will be assigned to the English teacher.

Table 7 - La Presse – editorials

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Feb-25-11	Yes but..., Rima Elkouri (columnist)	For	(Intensive English) is a good idea as long as it is put into practice correctly. (Learning English) does not have to be in detriment of French. Intensive English programs are rare. Not every family has the money to pay for English camps or private courses. This program would correct this inequality. Many studies have shown that a few hours of courses during a long period of time is ineffective. The best way to learn is necessarily intensive. Nothing suggests that (this program) has a negative impact on students with difficulties. This idea responds to a legitimate wish from many parents who want their children to be bilingual. Learning English is not a threat.	There is a shortage of English teachers in Quebec. Where will they find qualified teachers? Do you really think they will be able to hire enough qualified teachers? Should this program really be mandatory? Will all students be able to follow it?
Feb-11-12	For intensive English, François Cardinal (columnist)	For	If there is a school program that was studied in Quebec, if there is one that was tested and proved, it is the intensive learning of a second language at the end of elementary school. (One cannot forget) the Larose commission report, many studies about this topic carried out since the 70s and the success of the intensive English program in Lac-Saint-Jean. Teaching a language through drip-feeding is totally ineffective. The way to go is intensive learning in a short period of time. All (parents in Alma) wanted their children to have access to this immersion. Productivity in French did not change, while achievement in English leaped, as well as grades in mathematics. Immersion is much better than drip feed; it boosts the second language without effects on the first; and it does not harm school productivity. There is no contraindication to the intensive program, not even to students with difficulties or with behavioral problems. (Intensive English) is a pertinent measure, desired by most parents.	

Table 8 - La Presse - op-eds

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Mar-11-11	A very effective method - learning English intensively before adolescence is preferable to sporadic teaching in several years, Pierre Calvé (former Linguistics professor at University of Ottawa)	For	The teaching of at least one second language is part of all schools programs in the world. The most taught second language in the world is English. English is the lingua franca. Bilingual people are less ethnocentric, less xenophobic and have more cognitive advantages. Teaching a language intensively is infinitely more effective than traditional teaching, a few minutes per day spread in several years. One does not lose his mother tongue by being bilingual or using foreign words. Francophones will not speak English amongst themselves because they are bilingual. One semester in English will not make a difference in students' French quality.	

Appendix D – Le Soleil

Table 9 - Le Soleil – news

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Feb-24-11	Inauguration speech - Four ideas for education, Daphnée Dion-Viens (education issues)	For	(Intensive English) is one of the best ways to master English at school. It's one of the most effective methods. Studies show that there are two important factors in learning a language: the number of hours given to it and the concentration of these hours. Research shows that even for students with difficulty or with learning problems, there are no negative effects. Quite the opposite, it is often a plus, even for them.	At the moment it is difficult to say if the Premier's schedule is realistic, since there will be hundreds of positions to fill in few years.

Feb-25-11	Intensive English in grade 6: Ontarian teachers in reinforcement?, Daphnée Dion-Viens (education issues) / The Canadian Press	Against	CSQ do not oppose intensive English in grade 6, but...	Recruiting teachers represents an important issue. In certain areas of Quebec, English teachers represent a rare commodity. In 2008, he (Jean Charest) judged that (intensive English) could threaten French in Quebec. French language is a holy thing in Quebec, mainly at school.
Feb-26-11	Lac-Saint-Jean school board: Intensive English for all, Daphnée Dion-Viens (education issues)	For	(Intensive English) is the best way to learn a language at school. Le Soleil could discuss in English with the students that had just finished the program. At Mgr-Victor school, 87% of the parents claimed to be in favour of the intensive English program maintenance.	
Feb-26-11	What risk for students with difficulty?, Daphnée Dion-Viens (education issues)	For	There are no negative effects on students' achievement: intensive English has no negative effects on the other subjects. A weak student will remain weak, but he will not get worse. A student (in intensive English) said: 'Everyone is like me, nobody understands!' After five months, Simon (the student) got to like it and did not want to go back to the regular class anymore. In general, the program boosts students' motivation and self-esteem.	We do not have enough time as is to allow students to master the bases to succeed in secondary school. What we toil to do in 10 months, we will have to do in 5.
Mar-20-11	An illusion: New education measures denounced by French teachers, Daphnée Dion-Viens (education issues)	Against		Why not ensure that students master French well first?
May-10-11	Teachers shortage on the horizon, Daphnée Dion-Viens (education issues)	Balanced		Five years from now, the school network will have to find 1235 English teachers.
May-11-11	Teachers shortage: Minister Beauchamp is	Balanced		1235 new teachers will have to be recruited within five years

	reassuring, Daphnée Dion-Viens (education issues)			to teach intensive English to all students in grade 6.
Dec-09-11	Teachers protest: Cap-Rouge teachers denounce the intensive English implementation in elementary school, Marc Allard	Against	We (Marguerite-d'Youville School teachers) are not against English instruction. Certain school boards decided on an earlier date. The school board gave itself three years to implement intensive English. Most (schools) seem to be willing to do it earlier than later.	(Marguerite-d'Youville School teachers) criticize Jean Charest's decision to oblige all grade 6 students to dedicate half of their school year to English. The (teachers') letter challenges the pertinence of intensive English for students with difficulty. French quality is already criticized. Our children cannot write in their mother tongue. When will there be intensive French? (Grade 6 teachers) will have to be responsible for two classes instead of one to make up for the loss of half of their work. We have students with difficulty in our groups and they have no choice but to do the intensive English program. Teachers' frustration is because they could not participate in the debate about the intensive English implementation because there was none. It's a ministerial demand.
Dec-12-11	"Utopian", according to teachers: The Teaching Unions Federation opposes mandatory intensive English, Marc Allard	Against	The government gave schools four years to implement intensive English, but certain schools gave themselves earlier deadlines. Many schools plan to start the program next year.	Jean Charest's decision puts students' achievements at risk, especially those with difficulties. What we denounce is the mandatory character of intensive English implementation. These students need all the time we can give them for French, mathematics and sciences. Intensive English implementation will cut off 400 hours in grade 6. The changes in schedule and number of students per teacher entailed by intensive English are part of the concerns. Schools lack English teachers, who are already rare. It is about time the government heard teachers. As teachers, we should be heard.

Dec-13-11	Intensive English: Jean Charest promises to listen, Simon Boivin	Balanced	(Jean Charest) promises not to do a wall-to-wall (of intensive English). We are going to respect the rhythm of each environment and their adaptation ability. (Intensive English) was generally well received because Quebecers want their children to be able to communicate in a second or third language.	(Intensive English) puts students' achievement at risk. Intensive English will cut off 400 hours per year of the regular program.
Jan-17-12	Opposition to intensive English grows, Marc Allard	Against	We are not against English. (Jean Charest) promised not to do a wall-to-wall (of intensive English). We are going to respect the rhythm of each environment and their adaptation ability.	Teachers fear that intensive English hinders students' achievement, undermines the learning of other subjects and gives students too much homework. The intensive English program will impose the teaching of the grade 6 content in five months, while they already lack time to teach it in ten months. So far the debate about intensive English has discussed students with difficulties, but an accelerated grade 6 will also have consequences on average students. Parents will also have much more difficulty to follow the rhythm, especially in French and math, if their children have too much homework. The government should instead enrich the current English program. Quebec teachers are increasingly opposing the intensive English program publicly. Intensive English implementation will cut off 400 hours per year of other subjects in the grade 6 program.
Jan-19-12	Four years ahead: Many schools in the area will implement intensive English from fall, Marc Allard	Against	Quebec City and South Shore school boards still have four years to implement intensive English in grade 6 classes, but they have no intention to delay.	Teachers fear that intensive English implementation will happen to the detriment of other subjects. Students with difficulty will be in even more trouble if they have to learn the content in half a year, particularly in French.

Jan-20-12	Intensive English: Deltell wants clear answers from the government, Marc Allard	Balanced	ADQ had launched, in 2010, the idea of introducing intensive English in grades 5 or 6. The party considered that the bilingualism rate of francophones was too weak (35,8% in 2006) and they wanted to improve this proportion with intensive English. English is the lingua franca of the 21st century and our children need to know it.	G�rard Deltell asks the government to give clear answers to concerned teachers about intensive English in grade 6. School boards are in a hurry to implement intensive English, because they fear lacking English teachers.
Feb-08-12	Capitale school board: Intensive English frozen for a year, Marc Allard	Against	(Jean Charest) had told Le Soleil that he would not to do a wall-to-wall (of intensive English) and had promised to respect the rhythm of each environment and their adaptation ability.	Teachers maintain that they already have difficulty to cover the core content. According to the FSE, grade 6 students will sacrifice 400 hours in other subjects because of English, which will just make things worse. This measure (intensive English) risks jeopardizing students' success in other subjects.
Feb-09-12	Intensive English in grade 6: Unions slam the door, The Canadian Press	Against	We are conscious that the learning of a second language is desirable. Stopping is not the solution. The solution is to respond to Quebecers' aspirations.	(FAE and FSE-CSQ) oppose a complete implementation (of intensive English). It is the measure's (intensive English) generalized character that poses the problem. There are populations of students for whom this measure is not desirable. We already have students who have difficulty in taking the course in 10 months, and now, we will ask them to do it in 5 months. There are children from non francophone environments, immigrants that have difficulty to speak French, and we will deprive them of a certain time to learn French. Many students already master English well.
Feb-10-12	English in grade 6: PQ wants the program's suspension, The Canadian Press	Against		(Unions) are concerned about the consequences of this wall-to-wall program on students with learning difficulty. Minister Beauchamp does not have all answers about the impact of intensive English on students' achievement.
Feb-14-12	Timid parents' support to intensive English, Marc Allard	Balanced	Most parents are in favor of intensive English in grade 6. (FCPQ) delegates voted 87% for the implementation of intensive English. Studies demonstrate that intensive English does not jeopardize students' success in other subjects. Jean Charest had told Le Soleil	(Parents) want the government to be more flexible and give schools the choice of how they will implement the program. FCPQ want children with difficulty to obtain the necessary support to go through intensive English. (FAE) considers that

			that he would not do a wall-to-wall (of intensive English) and had promised to respect the rhythm of each environment and their adaptation ability.	the government should not impose intensive English on all students, especially on those who have difficulty achieving.
Jun-18-12	Bitter assessment to intensive English courses in elementary school, La Presse	Against		(Intensive English) is a source of contestation and concern. Parents are concerned. Teachers asked many questions, and did not get any answers yet. Schools boards are cautious. In Quebec there is a shortage of specialists in English. The implementation of the program should give space to flexibility. Teachers of other subjects could lose their jobs, since half of their tasks will be assigned to the English teacher.
Jun-30-12	English with different rules, Marc Allard	Balanced	(MELS) now lets schools choose (the intensive English model) that is more convenient for them.	Teachers fear that (intensive English) implementation is done to the detriment of other subjects. What happens with students with difficulty? How can the entire program of other subjects be taught? What will be done about multi-graded classes and the teachers' shortage?

Table 10 - Le Soleil – editorials

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Jan-19-12	English of misfortune, Brigitte Breton (health, education and social issues columnist)	Balanced	It is recognized that intensive English is preferable to teaching a few hours in several years. Lac-Saint-Jean school board has tried it in many of its schools with success. (Intensive English) was also advocated by the Larose commission. 69% of Quebecers claimed to be in favor of the Premier's initiative. Most parents want their children to leave school with a better knowledge of English. Because immersion trips and anglophone summer camps are not accessible to all, schools must teach the second language better. Teachers say they do not oppose	Teachers were not consulted. The Liberal leader spoke against this approach (intensive English) in 2008, estimating that French would be threatened. Are there enough ESL teachers? Are grade 6 teachers ready and trained to teach their subjects in five months instead of ten? Will students who already have learning difficulty suffer?

			intensive English.	
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Table 11 - Le Soleil - op-eds

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Mar-05-11	Intensive English: A dangerous measure, Christian Dufour (political scientist at ENAP)	Against	There is an evident thirst for English. It is necessary to respond to a legitimate thirst for English.	All Quebecers must be bilingual; otherwise they would not be globalized, modern and open. Speaking nothing more than French becomes the sign of an inferior status. Thousands of young francophones are often already bilingual and their linguistic challenge is over all to live in French. In Montreal, young immigrants learn French to some extent because of the lack of native French speakers. In the metropolitan region, learning English happens naturally with contact with anglophones. Francophone Quebecers are already one of the most bilingual populations in the planet. It is irresponsible to make the entire population bilingual too quickly. (There will be) consequences on the immigrants' motivation to learn French as well as on the market for cultural products in French. He (Jean Charest) had insisted that we needed to protect French before all. Where are the measures for a better French instruction - a clearly more serious problem than English? The accelerated generalization of individual bilingualism will have collective consequences against French predominance.

Table 12 - Le Soleil – letters

Date	Title and author	Opinion	Key points in favour of intensive English	Key points against intensive English
Feb-26-11	The court of miracles?, Mélanie Rioux (grade 6 teacher)	Against	I welcome your desire to see our grade 6 students learn English and open up to the world.	We do not have enough time as is to allow students to master the bases to succeed in secondary school. What we toil to do in 10 months, we will have to do in 5. (Intensive English) is the best way for them (students) to get to secondary school unprepared.
Dec-19-11	400 hours cut off for English, Denis Simard (teacher and CSQ president)	Against		To put this measure (intensive English) forward, an amputation of 400 hours, in subjects such as French and Mathematics, is needed. Does it put students' achievement at risk to reduce by half the time for other subjects? Teachers ask you, Mr. Charest, to prioritize students' success.
Jan-17-12	Intensive English: concerns and discontent, Marie Hélène-Coté (grade 6 teacher)	Against	We are not against English teaching.	We are against the intensive and mandatory character (of intensive English) in grade 6. The fate of weak and average students alarms us. They need to learn the core subjects in five months instead of ten. Teachers will be overloaded and preoccupied by teaching the content in half of the time. Many parents already have difficulty when helping their children with homework. What will happen when the quantity doubles or triples? Would it not be better to revise and improve the current (ESL) program?

Appendix E – Most common framings in favour of and against the Intensive English program policy

Table 13 - Total in favour of intensive English

	Le Devoir	La Presse	Le Soleil	Total

Themes	news	editorials	op-eds	letters	ads	news	editorials	op-eds	news	editorials	op-eds	letters	
Intensive English would respond to Quebecers'/parents' wishes.	3	1	1			2	2		4	1	1		15
Nothing suggests that children with learning difficulties are disadvantaged.	2					1	2		3				8
Intensive teaching is better than drip-feeding.		1				1	2	1		1			6
Intensive English would not harm/might improve students' general school performance.	1						1		3				5
Intensive English is effective.						1	1		2	1			5
English is not a threat to Quebec identity/French language.							2	1					3
Intensive English would make no difference on students' French quality.	1						1	1					3
It is necessary to be bilingual.						1			1				2
English should be taught to all (not only to those who have money).							1			1			2
People should not be given a choice about studying English.								1					1
Being bilingual is better than being unilingual.								1					1
Quebecers are not bilingual enough.									1				1

Intensive English increases motivation/self-esteem.									1				1
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Table 14 - Total against intensive English

	Le Devoir					La Presse			Le Soleil				Total
Themes	news	editorials	op-eds	letters	ads	news	editorials	op-eds	news	editorials	op-eds	letters	
Children with learning difficulties might/would be disadvantaged.	3	1	1	1	4	4	1		7	1		1	24
There would not be enough time for other subjects.	1		1	2	2	3			7	1		3	20
There is a shortage of ESL teachers.	3	1				4	1		8	1			18
Intensive English should not be mandatory.		1	1	2	1	2			5			1	13
Teachers of other subjects would be disadvantaged.	1		1	1		3			4	1		2	13
English could be/is a threat to French language/culture/identity/cultural products.	2	2		4		2			1	1	1		13
French should be the priority.	3	2		2	3	1			2				13
Succeeding in the core subjects should be the priority.		2		1	2	1			5			1	12

Quebecers/students in Montreal/Quebec youth/some students are already bilingual.	1	1		2		5			1		1		11
Quebecers'/students' French quality is weak.		2		2	3	1			2		1		11
Intensive English might be/is unnecessary to learn English.	1	1		3							1	1	7
Intensive English should be/will be flexible.	2					3			2				7
Recently arrived allophone students would not have enough time to learn French/do not learn French properly.	1	1				1			1		1		5
Intensive English policy has a top-down approach.	2								2	1			5
Students do not use French in anglicized areas.						1					1		2
Multi-graded classes would pose a problem.						1			1				2
Average students would be disadvantaged.									1			1	2
There would be too much homework.									1			1	2
Intensive English is not challenging.	1												1

Intensive English would not respond to parents' wishes.	1												1
Children with difficulty would not have time for arts or music.	1												1
Students would be stressed out.			1										1