Breaking solitudes and claiming the right to speak: Agency in a group of

adult language learners

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Abstract

Cummins (2009) used the term 'two solitudes' to describe a monolingual approach, which he viewed as outmoded and obsolete and lamented its continued dominance in the field of second language education. This study takes on this model both in the aforementioned meaning and in its historical derivation: the linguistic landscape of Montreal. In this qualitative, classroom-based research project, two groups of adult language learners (one English and one French speaking) are brought together in one L2 learning environment. Over the course of six 3-hour sessions, participants first attended an input session with collaborating teachers in their separate linguistic groups and than came together for a reciprocal session where they engaged in peer corrective feedback. Having been trained in the provision of corrective feedback as prescribed by Sato and Lyster (2012) and using the taxonomy of corrective feedback outlined by Lyster and Ranta (1997), participants engaged in content-driven tasks using 'real world' business themes. Data were collected using questionnaires, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, observer field notes, and a specially designed 'uptake sheet' with the aim of documenting interactions of this group of Montreal-area professionals as they embarked on a unique language learning experience. The focus of this study is the group's expressed impressions vis-à-vis the concept of agency; this is examined from the multiple perspectives of individual learner agency, collective agency, and the agency of space. Also included is a collective appraisal of the program compiled from the commentary of all who participated.

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Résumé

Cummins (2009) a employé l'expression « les deux solitudes » pour décrire une approche monolingue. Il la percevait démodée et désuète et il se plaignait de sa dominance constante dans le domaine de l'éducation d'une langue seconde. La présente étude entreprend d'aborder ce modèle à la fois selon la signification énoncée plus tôt et selon sa dérivation historique : le paysage linguistique de Montréal. Dans le cadre de ce projet de recherche qualitative fondée sur une classe, deux groupes d'apprenants adultes (un francophone et un anglophone) ont été réunis dans un environnement d'apprentissage d'une langue seconde. Au cours de six séances de trois heures, les participants ont d'abord assisté à une séance d'information avec chaque professeur de leur groupe linguistique, puis ils ont retrouvé le groupe pour une séance réciproque au cours de laquelle ils ont participé à une rétroaction corrective par les pairs. Après avoir reçu une formation en matière de rétroaction corrective, comme l'indiquent Sato et Lyster (2012), et d'emploi de la taxonomie de rétroaction corrective, comme le définissent Lyster et Ranta (1997), les participants ont réalisé des tâches axées sur le contenu à l'aide de thèmes fondés sur le « vrai monde des affaires ». Les méthodes de collecte de données comprennent des questionnaires, des groupes de discussion, des entrevues semi-structurées, des notes d'observateur sur le terrain et une feuille de suivi conçue particulièrement dans le but de documenter les interactions au sein de ce groupe de professionnels de la région de Montréal alors qu'ils participent à cette expérience d'apprentissage linguistique unique. Cette étude met l'accent sur les impressions du groupe en ce qui a trait au concept de capacité d'agir. Elles sont examinées selon divers points de vue : apprenant individuel, groupe et espace. Elle comprend également une évaluation collective du programme fondée sur les commentaires émis par les participants.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The development of fluency in a second language is perhaps one of the most daunting and challenging tasks one can undertake in adult life. This is particularly true when done for the purpose of enriching one's career prospects, as opposed to reasons of a more personal nature. Montreal, a medium-sized French and English-speaking metropolis in Canada's province of Québec is home to a population for whom second language acquisition (SLA) is a perennially pressing issue. Montreal's linguistic landscape creates a situation where many possess resources others in their midst lack, whilst seeking the attainment of assets these same others have to share. Among the players in this real-life drama, three groups emerge: Francophones with the desire to improve their English; Anglophones pursuing better French fluency; and a third group, primarily people not native to Québec or Canada, who have neither French nor English as their first language but possess expert proficiency of one with need of improving the other. If we were to give this story a name, perhaps *Three Solitudes* would serve best, a reference to Hugh MacLennan's (1945) book of a similar title.

For reasons that will be made clear, the rationale of the current research cannot be conveyed without a discussion regarding the setting in which the experiences of my participants took place. While there is no intention of giving expression to political points of view, the historical politicization of language, in Montreal in particular, cannot be excluded from this narrative. It could be expected that participants brought a certain amount of sociolinguistic 'baggage' with them into this study; however, it would seem that the extent to which this was <u>not</u> an observed factor is an interesting feature of the resulting narrative. Again, the sociopolitical forces that may have influenced the participants of this study are not the basis of any specific focus of analysis in the current research, but are significant enough to warrant a brief description.

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A great deal has changed in terms of Montreal's linguistic character since the 'Quiet Revolution' of the late 1960's and early 1970's. In 1969, the Canadian Federal Government embarked on a journey through this tumultuous era with the adoption of the Official Languages Act (OLA), a critical moment in the history of Canada and Québec (Gaspard, 2014). The city's linguistic balance of power was fundamentally affected by changes that touched virtually every institution including schools, private corporations, public administration, and social service agencies (Levine, 1990). Along with these changes from within Montreal and the Province of Québec, forces from without have proven to be equally transformative. A growing multicultural reality coupled with the drive among Montreal's burgeoning French-speaking business class to expand their city's presence in the global markets continues to further influence the city's trajectory. Levine points to demographic studies conducted over the decades preceding the Quiet Revolution showing a marked disproportion between the numbers of Montreal residents whose first language is neither French nor English (primarily of recent immigrant communities) who 'transferred' to one of the city's dominant languages, 70% opting for English over French. The resulting situation is one where the assimilating force of English, a globally dominant language, vigorously persists in a city where linguistic politics and demography have made a sharp shift in favor of French. If one sees this reality from a street-level perspective, a picture arises of a community of language learners where individuals navigate a complex linguistic landscape, Anglophones striving to master French, Francophones with comparable designs on English fluency, and a third group, likely fluent in one of the two dominant languages with a mind to master the other. Levine presents current data showing an increasing number of Montreal residents who can converse in English, French and a third or fourth language, prompting many to speculate a beginning of the end of the 'two solitudes' that have long characterized Montreal.

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Levine relates a poignant statement made by Alfred Rouleau, former president of the Fédération du Québec des Caisses Populaires Desjardins, that there is "…a new mentality in Montreal. When we speak together we understand each other better than when we stayed apart." (Levine, 1990, p. 215)

The position I personally occupy within the current research is that of a teacher and a learner, making this subject of particular resonance in relation to my experience. I have been teaching English, primarily to Francophone adult professionals, since 2003, and I have been a learner of the French language all of my life. I can say without hesitation that the feeling of a capacity to act towards the attainment of personal goals has played a pivotal role in my successes (and failures) as both a teacher and learner of language. My view of language learning and teaching in Montreal is that it inhabits a learner community of immense untapped potential. Considering that Québec is the birthplace of language immersion programs, it is reasonable to expect that adaptations of this innovative methodology would be used to its fullest potential. In my experience working with adult L2 learners, there is room for an exploration of learning methodologies that goes beyond the teacher-centered, monolingual model. The key ingredients exist to make this possible: firstly, the existence of a diverse linguistic community consisting of learners with the need and desire to improve their L2s, and secondly, the fruits of extensive research into novel educational methods, such as collaborative learning and corrective feedback, done over the past several decades.

Collaborative learning is such an inherently social enterprise, because when people are engaged in social talk for the purpose of language learning a strong social relationship is created (Larsen-Freeman, 2007). Cultural divides may become less defined as people assist each other in attaining something they desire on a deep and complex level. As it stands today, the common

solution for adult professionals lacking skills in one of Montreal's two most spoken languages, after having exhausted other avenues, is to take a language class. English and French classes are widely available at institutions of higher learning and at a variety of private language schools. In these classrooms, often right next to one another, diligent learners, with brows furrowed, strain to absorb new opportunity-providing knowledge. Their teachers press the limits of their training and creativity to provide the most effective, interactive and meaningful experience possible for their students. Imagine if by the sheer force of the combined pressures the wall between them were to fall away, allowing all involved to coalesce and intermingle. The present study does not propose to suggest that the creation of a bilingual learning environment is as simple as breaking down some physical barrier. The purpose of this research is to demonstrate, with tools provided by past research, one way in which the solitudes might be broken, allowing a different kind of language learning environment to emerge. Whether or not the revealed model achieves this, while also having the potential of pedagogical merit, will be determined entirely by interpreting the views of those who participated in this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The monolingual instructional approach

The monolingual approach is based on assumptions that are not only arguably outmoded and obsolete, but which continue to dominate the field of second language (L2) education (Cummins, 2009). Three basic assumptions underlying the monolingual approach are outlined by Cummins: firstly, that the target language should be used exclusively without any lapse into the student's first language (L1); secondly, that there is no place for translation between languages; and thirdly, that within immersion programs languages should remain separate and in rigid isolation from each other. Cummins posits that these suppositions are in conflict with our current understanding of how people learn language; furthermore, they receive minimal support from current research in both linguistics and cognitive psychology. Auerbach also took this position in her criticism of what she characterizes as a perennial insistence on monolingual instruction, which although criticized from some circles continues in its momentum (Auerbach, 1993). According to Auerbach, the rationale behind the monolingual ideological perspective is not based on sound pedagogical evidence, but rather serves to reinforce inequities in a greater social perspective. Auerbach goes on to say that the entire notion of expertise in adult language teaching needs to be re-worked in order to give legitimacy to experts from the teaching and learning community with an inclination to look beyond the monolingual approach.

The implications of the monolingual approach, and the arguably outmoded ideas associated with it, have negative implications for the application of dual or two-way bilingual immersion programs. Martin-Beltrán (2010) cites recent studies documenting the challenges to dual immersion, which tends to foster 'parallel monolingualism' rather than bilingualism. Her

findings, in contrast, indicate that the interactions of students across multiple languages provide significant opportunities for meaningful learning.

2.2 Multilingual Reciprocal Language Learning

Creese and Blackledge build on the work of Cummins (2009) to critique the 'two solitudes' assumption whereby languages should be isolated from one another (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Creese and Blackledge maintain that, according to their research, there are many reasons for language education planners and teachers to embrace the idea of a bilingual or multilingual approach. The authors employ the concepts 'tranlanguaging' and 'heteroglossia' to describe a learning environment where teachers and students use any and all linguistic resources available to form bonds with one another in the pursuit of learning. Quoting Bailey (2007) Creese and Blackledge call for an approach whereby bilingual learners "encompass socially meaningful forms in both bilingual and monolingual talk" (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 112)

2.3 Towards a sociocultural approach

In her essay *SLA for the 21st Century*, Ortega (2013) begins with a reference to an article in the 50th anniversary edition of *Language Learning,* written in the 20th Century, in which Wolfgang Klein (1998) gave a rather dismissive assessment of achievements in the field of SLA. Klein's criticisms reflected his belief that SLA researchers had not contributed to the understanding of the human language faculty in a meaningful way. Ortega, writing in the 21st century, wishes a happy 40th birthday to the field and points to the successes it can proudly claim. These are described in terms of a shift towards the Vygotskian sociocultural theory of cognition, a usage-based ontology steeped in several dynamic theories, new research methodologies, and a broadening of the focus on context in gaining insight into SLA.

Larsen-Freeman (2007) similarly recounts a pivotal moment in SLA: at the 1996 Congress of the International Association of Applied Linguistics in Finland, she was within earshot of Firth and Wagner's direct challenge to the cognitivist school of SLA in favor of the social school, thus precipitating what has come to be known as the 'social turn'. The social turn is characterized by a divergence from the view that acquisition of language is independent of context or identity, an entirely mental construct measurable by means of the learner's performance alone, and having an end state. The sociocultural approach, in contrast, views SLA as deeply influenced by social context, directed by purpose of talk, navigated by the learner's identity, and having no end state.

2.4 Adult two-way or dual immersion and multilingual reciprocal learning

The theoretical framework of two-way or dual immersion stems from Vygotskian sociocultural theory, which posits that social interaction between novice and expert users of language allows learners to replicate the teaching/learning process, and thus operate within a 'zone of proximal development' (Gort, 2008). Using this method, with its emphasis on learner interaction, a communicative environment is created in which novice speakers are provided exposure to expert speakers as they shape their language in order to be understood. Ultimately, the desired result is a collaborative and reciprocal learning opportunity.

The educational value of reciprocal learning is reiterated by Ballinger (2013), who conducted a 7-week study with two third grade classrooms near Montreal. The study emphasizes the collaboration between members of a learning community containing both French and English dominant learners. Ballinger's conclusion points to a great potential for success that hinges on the future support and acceptance of the approach on the part of teachers and administrators. Gort conducted a study analyzing the nature of impromptu multilingual peer interactions in an

English/Spanish collaborative learning context. This study also takes into consideration the roles played by the Spanish-dominant and English-dominant learners and their implications for the successful design and implementation of cross-linguistic learning between learners from majority and minority language backgrounds. Her finding, through the use of bilingual literacy practices, was that learners' bilingualism and biculturalism were transformed into significant intellectual, social, and cultural resources.

In presenting the basic goals and rationale of two-way bilingual immersion (TWBI), Van Booven (2011) lists bilingualism, biliteracy, and academic achievement as the primary goals. However, as a fourth motivation he lists the potential for promoting 'positive cross-cultural attitudes'. Van Booven points out that in contrast to traditional bilingual programs, which separate the two languages as a matter of course, TWBI brings two linguistic cultures together and promotes rich, ongoing interaction from the onset. In the case of Van Booven's research in Los Angeles on interaction between majority English speakers and minority Spanish speakers this added advantage becomes very valuable indeed.

Martin-Beltrán (2010) acknowledges in the conclusion of her article on reciprocal learning experiences that language learning did not occur every time her participants were brought together to speak with one another. She does, however, stress that with each encounter students would further strengthen their dedication to learning and social understanding. In view of the work I have conducted with Anglophone and Francophone learners in the context of Montreal in general and the current research in particular, such insights involving these dynamics are of great importance.

2.5 Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development: Scaffolding

Storch (2002) considers the nature of dyadic interaction between pairs of adult English learners in a longitudinal, classroom based study. The finding of particular significance of this study is in Stork's observation that in determining the value of pair work as a facilitator of L2 development, the nature of the 'dyadic relationship' might be of more significance than the degree to which learners are paired on the basis of L2 proficiency. Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development features prominently in accounting for Storch's results. Vygotsky's theory that socialization precipitates the internalization of knowledge offers a foundation for understanding learners' interactions. Socialization in the context of Vygotsky's work typically refers to the interaction of a child (novice) and adult (expert), which results in the process of 'scaffolding'. Scaffolding, a term coined by Jerome Bruner (Wood, Bruner & Ross 1976), is a process that "…enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts." (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90). Storch constructs a key expansion on Bruner's model arguing that it applies not only to children but to adult learners as well, and beyond the confines of a novice/expert situation to interactions between learners of equal competence. This elaboration is critical and is reiterated in other works on the topic of peer interaction (e.g., Dobao, 2014; Foster, 2005; Guk & Kellogg, 2007; Rahimi, 2013; Sato & Ballinger, 2016; Sato & Viveros, 2016).

2.6 Collective scaffolding

Donato (1994) uses the term 'collective scaffolding 'to describe the mechanisms involved in peer corrective feedback (CF). Before proceeding with a description of the adapted metaphor, Donato makes sure we are clear on the implied meaning of the original. Donato (1994, p. 41) cites six features of scaffolding:

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1. Eliciting interest in the task.

2. Explaining the task using simplified terms.

3. Maintaining focus.

4. Making critical distinctions between what is produced and what is desired.

5. Minimizing frustration during problem solving.

6. Modeling the desired output.

Donato's study is based on a series of protocols taken from a larger study involving a group of students studying French at an American university and working collaboratively on different group projects. Donato concludes that learners are capable of providing helpful guidance to their peers that is in keeping with the key features of scaffolding, and in so doing expand their own L2 knowledge as well as that of their peers. Donato also argues that by redefining the role of the student in the L2 classroom, interaction can be taken beyond the mere interactive treatment of the given linguistic feature to become a real catalyst for collective L2 acquisition. Sato and Viveros (2016) employ Donato's concept in their study of the relationship between interactional moves and collaboration between peers and the combined effect on L2 acquisition, with proficiency serving as the independent variable. Sato and Viveros find that while proficiency of learners is certainly a factor in L2 development, it is in fact a lesser mediating factor than a collaborative mindset. The authors also stress that their study does not propose to downplay the role of teacher in the classroom in favor of peer collaboration, but that teachers should work towards fostering a collaborative learning environment, and should provide focused guidance during collaborative group work activities.

2.7 Social interdependence theory

Sato and Viveros effectively identify a gap in what is known about the extent to which learners' collaborative mindset affects L2 development. They borrow social interdependence theory from the field of psychology as a possible means of remedying this dearth of understanding. It is hoped that this theory can provide a means of understanding and quantifying the relationship between patterns of interaction among peers, their collaborative mindset, and L2 development. This involves taking into account the dynamics between what is occurring within the group, as well as what is going on inside the minds of individual participants as they take part in group tasks. The authors assert their belief in social interdependence theory as an important key in developing new knowledge about the effectiveness of peer CF and new methodologies in optimizing its potential. Citing findings from other fields related to learning, a clear connection is made between positive behavioral phenomena, such as creativity, critical thinking, memory and uptake, and learning situations where cohesive solidarity is realized.

2.8 Interaction and noticing

Mackey (2006) provides a comprehensive explanation of both the interaction and noticing hypotheses in a multi-method study investigating the correlations related to feedback given to non-native speakers (NNS) by native speakers (NS) during interactions, and their resulting effects on L2 development. Drawing on the work of Long (1983, 1996, 2006), Mackey explains the interaction hypothesis as one proposing the connecting role interaction plays in linking input as it is processed relative to learners' ability, and output in the form of production. In defining interaction, Mackey discusses the processes of 'negotiation of meaning', 'corrective feedback' and 'modified output'. Noticing is defined by Mackey as the process by which learners' attention is drawn towards a new word or grammar point through interaction,

subsequently providing an opportunity for new learning through productive output. Conscious

noticing, Mackey stresses, is crucial for meaningful L2 development to occur. The learner must

notice given features of input in order for them to be internalized.

As we have seen with Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development, one originally

presented with a specific context (novice/expert) in mind. This context, along with the principles

of interaction and noticing, maintain their relevance in respect to the subject of peer CF. Pica,

Lincoln-Porter, Paninos & Linnell (1996) facilitate this adaptation in their study, the aim of

which is to address the gap existing in what is (or was) known about the nature of interaction

between L2 speakers. Pica et al. point to the fact that for many L2 English learners,

opportunities for extensive and meaningful interaction with native speakers are not frequent

enough, or are not even possible in some cases. Even when there is a possibility for interaction

with native speakers, they add, through interactive activities, learners frequently end up

interacting more with each other. With this consideration of practicality in mind the authors

investigate the extent to which learners' interactions with each other influence their L2

development. The study effectively compares interactions during learner-to-learner negotiation

to those during learner-to-native speaker negotiation. The foci of comparison are the quality of

input, corrective feedback, and output/production with the goal of determining whether learners

can do for one another what has been shown to be beneficial to L2 development. Pica et al.

ultimately produce findings generally showing 'less quantitatively rich' data from learner-to-

learner interactions compared to the learner-to-native speaker ones. However, the results were

not one-sided in favor of learner-to-native interactions in all respects, one notable exception

being in the provision of corrective feedback. Let us now imagine if the study of Pica et al. had

included a third group: participants assisting each other on a learner-to-learner and learner-to-

native basis simultaneously. In the following sections of this thesis there will be an attempt to reveal, through the data, a situation where participants have taken on the multiple roles of collaborating learner, novice, and expert.

A study by Long and Porter (1985) approaches the contrasts between learner-to-learner and learner-to-native from another perspective. Comparing interactions between L2 learners and those between learners and native speakers, their findings show a marked improvement in motivation, initiative, and decreased anxiety associated with their L2 learning. In addition to this, learners were found to produce not only more language but also language featuring richer content and displaying a wider variety of pragmatic forms. Long and Porter stress that it is not their intention to paint the monolingual classroom as unconducive to successful group interactions, but rather that the experience seems to be "slightly better" with groups where languages are mixed (Long & Porter, 1985, p. 224)

2.9 Focus on form vs. form-focused instruction

Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001) define focus on form as the drawing of learners' attention to various linguistic features during the process of a meaning-oriented communicative activity. The significance of this principle as it relates to L2 development, Ellis et al. assert, rests on the establishment of three important maxims of L2 acquisition: first, L2 learners develop the use of new forms in language in situations where the context or meaning is the key feature, rather than the form itself; second, due to limitations of information-processing capabilities it can be difficult for learners to be aware of L2 forms while engaged in communication; third, opportunities to have their attention actively drawn towards form are beneficial to linguistic development. The authors present this as being in stark contrast to form-focused instruction (FFI), where learners are typically removed from the communicative activity and engaged in

purposeful awareness of the given form in isolation. These notions have wide implications for the role of the teacher and learners within an ESL classroom. Elis et al. demonstrate this in their study showing that a significant amount of focus on form within language related episodes (LRE's) can result from purposefully designed communicative activities involving motivated learners.

Spada and Lightbown (2008), however, do not agree with definitions of FFI that estimate its benefits as minimal or even non-existent, describing it as a crucial part of language learning where learners benefit from the learning of features of the target language that may not occur otherwise. A distinction is made between *isolated* and *integrated* FFI, isolated being where the given language feature is taught intentionally and explicitly, while integrated is when brief explanations and feedback are provided for the language feature in a learning situation where meaning is the primary focus. Spada and Lightbown cite studies and theories making a clear case for an important role for integrated FFI. In this case showing its effectiveness as a tool the implementation of communicative language teaching (CLT) content-based instruction (CBI), which are generally considered to be valuable meaning-focused language teaching approaches.

2.10 Comprehensible input, negotiation of meaning, and modified output

Foster and Ohta (2005) consider the significance of negotiation for meaning, as a means of isolating the most beneficial types of interactive activities for L2 development, from both a cognitive and sociocultural standpoint. A main concern of this study was to explore the criteria typically used in determining whether interactive moves between learners fall under the desired category of meaning negotiation rather than mere communication breakdown, their opinion being that such measures (quantitative ones in particular) fall short of revealing the true extent of peer CF's utility in directing learners towards focus on form. In the process of this discussion

the principles of comprehensible input, negotiation of meaning, and modified output are reviewed. Krashen's (1981, 1982, 1985) concept of comprehensible input is cited, and described as critical to L2 development based on Krashen's 'i +1' level, whereby input is provided at a level slightly beyond learners' capacity, but accompanied by other familiar input thus understood and subsequently added to learners' repertoire. Swain (1985) is also cited to account for the process of modified output. Swain's theories on modified output clarify how the learner is pushed to modify output in order to make it closer, upon receiving evidence of errors, to the desired target language and therefore more comprehensible. Foster and Ohta find a clear discrepancy between their assessments of the interactions recorded in their data and that which would be attained using other more quantitatively conceived methods. Their conclusion is that there is little evidence of an interruption of the 'flow' of conversation in the peer interactions, which they characterize as collaborative and indicative of supportive peer interaction. This conclusion is evocative of Lyster and Ranta (1997), who similarly find that teachers' provision of CF, particularly that which pushed learners towards modified output, does not break the flow of communication.

2.11 The benefits of corrective feedback

Lyster and Ranta (1997) approach the subject of corrective feedback in a study designed to demystify a subject that, in their estimation had not been researched adequately for the purposes of classroom L2 teachers. The authors list questions about CF, such as the question of whether learners' erroneous utterance should be corrected at all, maintaining that previous research falls short of answering such "deceptively simple" questions (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p.38). Another key issue of this study comes from revelations made following many studies of immersion programs revealing deficiencies in the ability of these programs to yield the desired

results in terms of grammatical accuracy and lexical complexity. The authors argue that these deficits can be explained by a general tendency among language educators in not providing enough opportunities for learners to engage in extensive output, and in focusing too much on subject matter, resulting in the neglect of much needed focus on the essential features of the language in which learners are being immersed. The objectives of the study were, firstly, to establish a working taxonomy of CF types, and secondly, to employ this classification system in observing how often and how consistently different types of CF are provided between teacher and learner. The independent variable is uptake, and is defined by Lyster and Ranta as the linguistic move learners make in response to the teacher's CF. This is a departure from other models of uptake that refer to what the learner reports to have learned from the CF. A third goal of this study is to determine which combination of the various CF types in conjunction with learners' uptake can be strictly considered to be negotiation of form.

Using their classification system consisting of six types (explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition) Lyster and Ranta find in their observations that among the six types recasts are used more than 50% of the time. Furthermore, recasts, the teacher's correct reformulation of the learner's erroneous utterance, were one of the least likely (along with explicit correction) to result in learner uptake, whereas the other four forms (referred to as 'prompts') were shown to be more conducive to L2 development as they encouraged practice through pushed output. Ellis et al. (2001) add, in their study of CF, the suggestion that there is no need for teachers to purposefully avoid recasts, arguing that dedicated, particularly adult, learners will still benefit from their provision. Lyster and Ranta also stress that it is important for teachers to employ a wide selection of CF types available to them, and so do not discourage recasts outright. Lyster and Ranta's study is

essential to the discussion of peer corrective CF because it establishes some essential understandings about the nature of a phenomenon hitherto a largely unexplored phenomenon in the classroom, thereby dispelling some erroneous assumptions and clearing a path for its continued development as a powerful teaching tool.

2.12 The benefits of peer corrective feedback

Sato and Ballinger (2016) begin their synopsis of the existing research on peer CF with the assertion that there is a much smaller body of work in this area compared to, for example, interactions between learners and native speakers. Sato and Ballinger maintain that while many researchers have openly recognized the special role that peer CF has in the panoply of approaches to L2 interaction, much work is needed in understanding peer CF, evaluating its effectiveness, and employing it to its fullest potential. The authors also echo the concerns expressed by Foster and Ohta (2005) in their call for peer CF to be scrutinized using measures beyond those traditionally relied upon (i.e. negotiation for meaning, corrective feedback, and language-related episodes) and towards a line of inquiry that puts more emphasis on the nature of learner interactions themselves as the main driver of its efficacy as a pedagogical tool. Sato and Ballinger refer to Pica et al. (1996) as an example of the type of research they favor for peer CF. Pica et al produced findings showing that interactions between learners were of higher quality than interactions between leaners and native speakers, especially in the provision of feedback. Sato and Lyster's (2007) study is also cited by Sato and Ballinger (2016) for its findings drawn from a comparison of interactions between Japanese L2 learners of English and those between learners and native speakers. The interactions between L2 learners contained a greater number of instances of feedback, consisting of more elicitation than reformulation types, meaning that the L2 learner feedback was likely of greater value. Added to this argument for the benefit of

peer CF are the findings of Sato and Lyster and others showing that peer interaction leads to a greater amount of modified output, compared to that of learners and native speakers.

2.13 Learners' perceptions of peer corrective feedback

Donato's (1994) principle of collective scaffolding is useful for understanding the importance of peer CF. However, as is usually the case certain other mitigating factors arise to present complications. Storch (2002) points out in her literature review, that just because a teacher has put learners in pairs or groups does not automatically translate into L2 development having occurred. Yoshida (2008) approaches the factor of learners' perception of CF provided during interactive pair work activities and presents the conundrum created by certain behavioral patterns related to peer interaction. That is, we cannot assume that the learners are not engaged because they do not respond to peer CF, and similarly, we cannot assume that the presence of a response necessarily means noticing has occurred. Dabao (2016) explores a similar type of behavioral phenomenon referred to as the 'silent learner': this is a member within a learning group who is passive and silent, and hence seemingly not actively engaged in the interactive activity. In this study, which features groups of L2 learners working on a problem-solving writing task involving vocabulary, the results indicated that the silent learners benefited as much as the more active members of the group. This revelation dispels the possible assumption that just because a learner takes on a passive role within a group, he or she is not actively benefitting from the interaction.

Sato and Ballinger (2012) make an unexpected discovery in their study of peer CF dispelling an assumption regarding the links between collaborative patterns and L2 awareness. In this case it was found that the learners who provided the greatest amount of CF were the least engaged in the task, an unexpected result as they had speculated the opposite would be the case.

They interpreted this as the intensive CF-providing learner not having confidence in his or her partner's ability to take on the role of interactive language resource and instead seeing the partner as an incompetent in need of constant correction. The partner, consequently, did not provide a great deal of CF as learners were made to feel that their efforts would be in vain.

Fujii and Mackey (2009) broach the subject of learners' perceptions of peer interaction and provision of CF from a specific cultural perspective. Here the authors are referring to English as a foreign language (EFL) settings where learners typically share their L1, are taught by non-native instructors, and where collaborative classrooms are less common. The authors cite surveys of L2 learners that reveal an overall specified preference for more traditional teacher-centered classrooms where the practice of skills, such as pronunciation and translation, are valued over student interaction. The authors also refer to a study where EFL students openly expressed concerns about the lack of explicit focus on grammar points in their task-based, communication-oriented L2 program. Such revelations, the authors explain, do much to explain the challenges and special considerations required when attempting to implement interactive learning and peer CF in, for example, an EFL classroom.

Storch (2002) provides a systematic approach to discerning the influence of learners' perception on the efficacy of peer interaction by proposing four patterns of interaction: collaborative, dominant/dominant, dominant/passive, and expert/novice. Storch's scheme, resulting from extensive dyadic analysis within an ESL classroom, lays the ground work for research that can take a wide range of behavioral patterns into account by acknowledging that some learners do not work collaboratively within a group, and that collaborative scaffolding will more likely occur in situations where learners are working in either a collaborative or expert/novice pattern. Based on a review of research and results from his own study, Sato (2013)

argues that training learners to give each other CF can improve learners' ability to engage in collaborative interaction.

2.14 The benefits of training learners in providing peer feedback

Having reviewed a portion of the literature relevant to the subject of peer CF, a picture emerges of a technique for L2 development with the potential to forever change the way language is learned and taught, while also outlining some ingrained challenges to the success of its use. Sato and Lyster (2012) recognize the problems of learners' perceptions of peer CF, in addition to the lack of focus on linguistic form and of the general quality of CF provided. As a way of countering these shortfalls of peer CF in practice, the authors propose a study where learners are trained in the provision of peer CF over the course of an L2 program. The study focuses on four groups of adult L2 learners of English in a university in Japan. Each group underwent a different type of treatment: one group with training in the use of prompts; one in the use of recasts; one with no training in peer CF; and a fourth playing the role of control. The goal of the study was to observe the different effects of interaction between peers, peer CF between learners, and the use of different CF types (i.e. prompts and recasts). The results of the study show not only that peer CF has a positive influence on accuracy development, but also that learners can be trained to give each other CF that leads to focus on form.

Enabling learners to turn their attention to form while engaging in meaningful interaction and peer CF is a main goal of Sato and Ballinger's (2012) article. Consisting of two studies, one in a Japanese university and the other in a Canadian elementary French emersion program, the retrospective employs both quantitative and qualitative methods. The research questions reflect the authors' belief in combining methods of inquiry as they seek to both assess how language

awareness achieved in peer interaction promotes L2 development, and the significance of a collaborative environment in fostering this desired outcome.

Fujii, Ziegler and Mackey (2016) present a study, building on the work of Sato and Lyster (2012), with the express purpose of determining whether L2 learners can be trained in an explicit way to become more effective collaborators and providers of peer CF. The authors main concern with the effectiveness of peer CF, reiterating those of many other researchers, is that learners often fail to negotiate for meaning when faced with non-target-like utterances, subsequently not benefiting from the opportunity to achieve pedagogically meaningful interaction resulting from focus on form. The resulting study details a well laid out program of metacognitive instruction, similar to that of Sato and Lyster, designed to determine the effect of peer CF training on the frequency of meaningful interactional moves, and also to determine learners' perceptions of peer CF in relation to having received the instruction. The metacognitive instruction session was delivered in four parts, and entitled "How to be an active learner: Feedback, negotiation, and noticing." The first part consisted of an explanation of the key features and benefits of communicative L2 learning. As the participants came from a more traditional language learning context they needed to be sold to a certain degree on its value; similarly, they had to be made aware of its advantages and disadvantages. The second part provided a video presentation where examples of positive interactions were showcased, and participants were provided with a transcript of the video clips highlighting the negotiation process. In part three, participants were provided with useful phrases that could be used to provide different types of feedback, and part four engaged participants in a practice session, guided by the instructor, where they were given a task and put to work in pairs practicing what they had learned. The results of the study show that the students had quantitatively benefitted

from peer CF training in terms of their increased use of effective interactional strategies. In terms of qualitative results, participants indicated that they understood the value of the exercise and enjoyed the experience, adding that they would be open to the prospect of this type of instruction becoming a regular feature in their L2 classroom. These results mirror those of Sato and Lyster in many ways, who argue their study has "strong ecological validity" (Sato & Lyster, 2012, p. 617) as it shows the effectiveness and feasibility of training L2 learners in peer CF provision, adding that this technique is especially valuable in EFL situations where learners have limited opportunities to interact in the L2, and similarly receive limited corrective feedback.

2.15 Collaborative teaching

One unique feature of the language program serving as the principal focus of the current research is the presence of two teachers, working in tandem throughout. For the participants this use of collaborative or 'team' teaching in a language learning context was a new experience. In the case of the current research, there are two teachers; an English teacher (myself) and a French teacher, Marie-Claude Deschambault, a fellow MA student in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University. There are some considerations to take into account in applying a collaborative approach that were important to this program's success. Firstly, there must be a sense of consistency and continuity between the English and French portions of the program; secondly, there must not be any conflict arising from differences in teaching style that might exist; and thirdly (and perhaps most importantly) there must be no feeling among the students that there is any kind of hierarchy given to one teacher over the other, or for that matter, one language over the other. A review of the related literature in the proposal stage of this study provided some insight into these matters so that potential pitfalls could be anticipated and averted, I outline them here.

Letterman and Dugan (2004) posit substantial benefits to students and teachers in the collaborative approach, citing sources showing a substantial improvement in teacher-student relationships. Benjamin (2000) reports greater achievement levels, greater retention, and a generally better learning environment where students displayed improved interpersonal skills while being collaboratively taught. Furthermore, collaboratively taught classes promote diversity when they include team members of different genders or ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds. Hinton and Downing (1998) report that institutions benefit from an elevated commitment to the recognition and appreciation of diversity on campus through supporting diverse teaching teams, a beneficial consequence for both teachers and students. Letterman and Dugan also discuss problems with a collaborative teaching approach, saying that it is often more time consuming and energy intensive than a traditional approach, and that hierarchical leadership roles can emerge causing tensions between teachers. Potential solutions to such problems center on communication; being well acquainted with the style of one's collaborator, effective joint planning, and adopting strategies to deal with power and conflict.

Tajino and Tajino (2000) offer insights from the context of Japanese English language programs where collaborative teaching has become a common feature in EFL classrooms. In this case the teaching teams are typically composed of a native-speaking and a non-native speaking EFL teacher. An effective analogy is made where collaborative teaching is compared to a performance of two musicians, perhaps a singer and pianist, performing at a concert. The question is whether one would expect to hear them both play separately or together in a harmonious duet. Tajino and Tajino argue that the more harmonious type of collaborative teaching should be viewed as the 'real' or 'strong' form, while the solo type is the 'weak' form (Tajino & Tajino, 2000, p. 6). Tajino and Tajino conclude that collaborative or 'team' teaching

should be re-interpreted as 'team-learning'. Team-learning is defined as that which encourages all participants, teachers and students, to interact with one another by creating more opportunities to exchange cultural values and ideas and learn from other team members.

Having explored some of the literature relating to the three major components of the proposed research — multilingual reciprocal language learning, peer corrective feedback, and collaborative teaching — common themes can be clearly detected. Reciprocity and collaboration in an environment fostering equality and respect are integral to what the treatments of this research have been designed to achieve.

2.16 Learner agency

The subject of learner agency plays a dominant role in the results of the current research. My approach to data collection and analysis was entirely mediated by the perceptions and beliefs of a group of adults endeavoring to achieve linguistic development. A participant's sense of agency as such regarding language learning is thus inextricably implicated. In the subsequent results chapter, I will attempt to show how individual participants, the group as a whole, and the space created by the program itself each exerted a type of agency. It is therefore crucial to clearly define how the concept of agency will be employed as an interpretive device.

2.16.1 Defining agency

Ahearn (2001) in her effort to provide a working definition of agency cites Jean and John Comaroff who referred to the term as "that abstraction greatly underspecified, often misused, much fetishized these days by social scientists" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1997, p. 37) In this review, Ahearn draws on the work of several theorists, namely Bourdieu (1977, 1991), de Certeau (1984), Giddens (1979, 1984), Ortner (1984, 1989, 1996, 2001) and Sahlins (1981), in order to determine how the concept of agency has been employed, particularly in respect to

language. Before defining agency Ahearn offers the term 'agentive', an adjectival form of the word which she suggests as preferable to other possibilities, such as 'agential' or 'agentic'. The provisional definition Ahearn proposes for agency is "the socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). Ahearn concedes that her definition leaves out much in the way of specifics, but then poses questions aimed at filling in these conceptual gaps. Is agency, Ahearn asks, a function limited to humans? Can machines or animals or textual representation (such as street signs) exert agency? Is agency limited to individuals? Or can it be supraindividual — manifesting itself beyond the complexity of the individual? Can agency be expressed on a subindividual level — when someone acts while experiencing internal conflict? All of these questions prompt us to contemplate the many implications of this seemingly abstract term, while also providing solid conceptual supports on which this thesis can rest.

Ahearn (2001) echoes Messer-Davidow's (1995) question "Why agency now?" Citing Ortner's (1984) examination of trends since the 1960's in the field of anthropology, Ahearn describes the process by which numerous scholars have begun to pay closer attention to the influence of human agency on social structures. This recent 'agentive turn' (Ahearn,2001, p. 110) can be best understood when considered in relation to the social movements of the 1960's and 1970's, and subsequent events in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1980's and 1990's. Ahearn argues that contemporary political and theoretical debates have been deeply affected by our collective witnessing of the power individuals and collectives have in transforming society. Miller (2012) expands on Ahearn's description of the agentive turn through reference to more recent events, such as the Arab Spring phenomenon of 2010-2012. If human agency in the context of world events demonstrates the influencing power human action can direct towards altering prevailing social structures, then what can it reveal about the struggles of L2 learners?

2.16.2 Agency and SLA

Mercer (2011) lists two developments that have resulted in an increased interest in learner agency among SLA researchers. The first development concerns the emergence of the concept of student-centered learning and the viewed importance of learner autonomy. The second development relates to the previously discussed 'social turn' in SLA, whereby learners take on active roles in establishing the parameters of their own learning. Van Lier (2008), while conceding that learner agency can be difficult to define or locate, argues that it should be viewed as a 'central construct' in the L2 learning process (Van Lier, 2008, p. 179). Drawing from Pavlenko (2002), Pennycook (2001), and Miller (2012), Mercer further highlights the importance for SLA researchers in considering learner agency, arguing that if we are to reject the notion of L2 learning as a singularly individual and cognitive process then we must view learner agency as foundational in the establishment of viable alternatives.

Mercer (2012) compares learner agency to other constructs, such as intelligence or motivation, in stating that it is 'hypothetical' in nature. Referring to Ahearn's (2001) definition, Mercer questions the notion of a 'capacity to act' arguing that in the case of an L2 learner this underlying capacity is rife with complexity. Miller (2010) echoes this view, paraphrasing Ahearn she defines agency as "inherently unstable and as a discursively mobilized capacity to act" (Miller, 2010, p. 465). Expanding on an earlier article (Mercer, 2011), Mercer makes the case for learner agency being a "complex dynamic system" (Mercer, 2012, p. 44): firstly, there is the agency of an individual learner, exerted in both a general sense and in relation to a given learning situation. Secondly, there is the extent to which the learner's behavior reflects agentive choices in the form of active participation, or conversely through non-participation. Ros i Solé (2007) also wrote on the complexity of learner agency, defining it in terms of the extent to which

a learner is capable of exercising control and choice over his/her actions. This definition becomes more complex, however, as it denies learner agency of being strictly a feature of the individual learner, but also co-constructed with other learners, and further mediated by features of the given learning context.

2.16.3 The agentive language learner

Miller (2012) analyzed the personal narratives of adult immigrant small-business owners in the United States to determine how they constructed themselves as agents (or non-agents) of their L2 learning. A key insight Miller shares is in her finding that agency is "not a uniformly shaped capacity of all humans" (Miller, 2012, p. 442), but rather one which is mediated both by the nature of the given interactional situation and also by histories of experience. Histories of experience can be interpreted as meaning the particular background an L2 learner has in learning the target language. Drawing from Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998), Mercer explains the notion of 'history in person'. This refers to the individual's unique self that has been shaped by the experience of having interacted with the various constructs of social and cultural life. Mercer (2012) uses the term 'affordances' to explain the complex interaction occurring between contextual factors of the L2 learning context, the learner's perception of them, and the potential for L2 development resulting from this interaction. Affordances are possibilities for action existing in the environment, which Mercer stresses represent a latent potential until the L2 learner perceives their use and uses them in personally relevant and meaningful ways. The individual agency of the L2 learner is thus not defined by a given reaction to a learning context, but also an awareness of one's own agency and a belief in one's ability to exercise it. Mercer points to an 'intra-learner' process occurring whereby the learner perceives of and engages with contexts and displays the power to influence and change them. It is here

concluded that in order to locate the origin of individual learner agency, researchers must understand the complex relationship between this intra-learner process and contextual affordances.

Ruohotie-Lyhty and Moate (2014) conducted a study of the biographical accounts of 12 Finnish student teachers engaged in a teacher-training program with English as its language of instruction. The purpose of the study was to examine 'life-course agency' and its implications for the training of language teachers. Life-course agency refers to a learner's previous experiences, and the manner in which they have shaped beliefs and feelings about learning. Ruohotie-Lyhty and Moate's study was motivated by their conviction that effective and meaningful educational practices should create opportunities for learners to exert agency. Furthermore, they assert, these opportunities should offer more than the repetition of pre-determined content, but rather, should encourage the learner to critically evaluate their past and present reality in ways that allow them to be active agents in determining their future. This implies that L2 learners can enrich their 'agentic system' through reflection on past learning experiences, current beliefs, and future aspirations.

Ros i Solé (2007), examining a corpus of 20 L2 learners' interviews, establishes connections between L2 learner agency and learner identity. The question of how L2 learners' social identities influence L2 development, Ros i Solé explains, is one which has increasingly attracted the interest of applied linguistics and SLA researchers. The work of these scholars (e.g. Belz, 2002; Kramsch, 2000; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2000; Norton, 1997, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2001, 2002; Pavlenko, 2001, 2002, 2003) prompt us to investigate the individual L2 learner's essential self, how this self fits into the surrounding social world, and the behavioral roles taken within the L2 learning context. Ros i Solé argues that regardless of the nature of the learner's

established identity, achieving one's L2 goals is dependent on taking a position of power and exercising agency. She adds that an L2 learner's membership in the target language community is not an automatic certainty, but must be attained through a struggle. Citing Bourdieu (1977) and Miller (2004), Ros i Solé stresses that the L2 learner must always negotiate and struggle for his or her 'right to speak', and thus strive to achieve 'audibility'. Learner identity is the perceived ability of the L2 learner to look like, sound like and be recognized and legitimized as a user of the target language, having established a space within the corresponding community of practice. Miller (2010) citing Poynton and Lee (2000) refers to this ability as one allowing L2 learners to "speak themselves into being" (Miller, 2010, p. 446), and one which is effectively driven by an internal and external agentive struggle.

In terms of how the above notions relate to the current research, I will attempt to show instances where participants exerted agency; however, equal attention must be paid to the beliefs, thoughts, and feelings contributing to the individual participant's sense of agency. The researchers mentioned above are all quite explicit in their belief that one must consider multiple dimensions in the search for learner agency. With this in mind, I will endeavor to locate the similar processes that participants feel allowed them to actively create opportunities to achieve L2 development, and in so doing, initiate a process precipitating the establishment of a desired learner identity.

2.16.4 The agentive group of language learners

Ahearn (2001) explores the notion of agency that is non-individualistic in nature. Drawing on Vygotsky (1978) and Wertsch, Tulviste and Hagstrom (1993), Ahearn outlines an argument that agency "extends beyond the skin" (Ahearn, 2001, p. 113). The suggestion here is that learner agency is often a property of groups rather than individuals, and is the result of

negotiation or 'mediation' between learners using language and other technical tools. Outlining their concept of a 'sociocultural' approach to agency, Wertsch et al. provide the interesting analogy of L2 development occurring through multiple, simultaneous, and interdependent agentive moves of the learner. This is better represented, they argue, as learners climbing a branching tree together, rather than a solitary individual scaling a ladder. Bandura (2000) argues that seldom is it that individuals achieve goals without support through interaction with others, adding that a crucial element of collective agency rests on the confidence the group has in itself and the tools and resources it employs in producing the desired results.

Wertsch et al. (1993) draw on Hutchins (1991) who provides an instructive example of Vygotsky's conception of agency extending beyond the skin. Hutchins' study analyzed the collective behavior of U.S. Navy crews as they safely and efficiently guided vessels into harbor. A primary finding of this study showed how cognition among individuals was 'socially distributed' as the group negotiated complex communications, organizational structures, and calculation methods. Hutchins used the resulting data to argue that the socially distributed cognition of the entire group was significantly greater than the sum of the individual processes contributing to the group effort. The study was able to quantitatively show a type of agency originating from the group as a whole rather than its constituent individuals, and one which could not be reduced to a mere summation of its parts. Wertsch et al. stress that Hutchins' findings do not work to negate the importance of individual agency, but rather help to explain how the individual's cognition can only be understood when considered in the social context in which it is manifested. With the this in mind, I will attempt to present instances where the participant group displayed collective agency resulting from the same sort of socially distributed processes that Hutchins described. Just as Hutchins' sailors extended their action beyond their own skin to

ensure the swift and secure docking of massive naval ships, I believe it can be shown that my participants experienced a similar capacity to act in the pursuit of L2 development.

2.16.5 The agentive language learning environment

Revisiting Ahearn's (2001) definition of agency as the socioculturally mediated capacity to act, we are reminded of her contemplation of whether this decidedly human faculty must be considered as strictly human. Miller (2012) uses the concept of 'agency of spaces' to explain how L2 learners' agentive capacity as expressed by their interactive behavior is altered or influenced by the space they occupy. Miller relates the common experience of her adult immigrant participants as they acted on their desire to learn English upon their arrival in the United States. The agentive choices made in relation to L2 learning, Miller argues, originated from the pressures of social expectations and survival demands, and were also mediated by active participation in social/interactional practices, such as private tutoring and language classes. In addition, Miller discusses a different type of agentive capacity, one that is exerted by the learning environment itself through 'constitutive effects' that deeply influence the nature of linguistics acts. Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck (2005) provide insights into the agency of space in their article aimed at deconstructing prevailing notions of multilingualism in the context of a globalized urban diaspora. Through contemplating the extent to which linguistic interaction is affected by a change in contextual environment, the question arises "can space be seen as constitutive and agentive in organizing patterns of multilingualism?" (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 198). Space, they argue, is not a 'passive décor', but rather a property of linguistic interaction that is active and agentive. It is furthermore argued that space is a significant part of what we consider as context, and context "does something to people when it comes to communicating" (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 203). Conversely, Blommaert et al. suggest that agentive L2

learners, as they deploy their linguistic resources, create and modify space. Multilingualism, they conclude, is not merely what is possessed by the L2 learner in terms of linguistic resources, but rather that which the environment permits or prohibits him or her of deploying. In the following sections of this thesis a case will be made for an agentive space having been established, one providing opportunities for learners to deploy their linguistic resources in such a way that L2 development was facilitated.

2.17 The broader context

The language program and subsequent study presented in the following chapters draw their conceptual integrity from all of the subjects explored in this literature review. The overarching purpose of what follows is an attempt to present a model of an adult language program that goes beyond the 'traditional'. By traditional I imply monolingual teaching and learning with traditional roles of one teacher who teaches and a group of students whose principal focus is the input provided by the teacher. There are many points of departure from the traditional that this program seeks to establish, and they can all be defined by one unifying characteristic: the alternative use of existing resources within the learning environment. This can be seen in the way the learner's L1 resources are used; in how the expert-novice dynamic becomes a naturally emerging instrument of reciprocal learning; in how meaning and form in language are inextricably connected in the learning process; in the potential of corrective feedback as a multi-dimensional tool facilitating collective scaffolding; in how collaborative teaching partnerships can foster collaborative learning; and finally, how learner agency in its individual, collective, and contextual dimensions, once recognized and understood as key resources, can be channeled in such a way that something extraordinary might emerge. By way of summarizing the treatment of these concepts, which are central to the current research, Pierce

(1995) perhaps says it best in a synoptic description of her own views on the matter. Referring to Bourdieu (1977), Pierce states her belief that a definition of L2 competency should include attention to what Bourdieu calls 'the power to impose reception'. This gets to the very heart of what is required for meaningful communication to occur between parties where: "…those who speak regard those who listen as worthy to listen and that those who listen regard those who speak as worthy to speak" (Peirce, 1995, p.18).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

In this L2 learning program, a group of adult participants were brought together to participate in an experience incorporating three key principles: collaborative teaching, peer corrective feedback, and multilingual reciprocal language learning. After detailed analysis of the resulting data, some key themes emerged, the emergent themes inform the questions this research proposes to address:

3.1 Research Questions

1. To what extent did individual participants exert agency towards the goal of L2 development?

2. To what extent did the participant group collectively exert agency towards the collective goal of L2 development?

3. To what extent did 'agency of space' exist, and how did it contribute to the individual and collective goal of L2 development?

4. What is the participant group's overall appraisal of bilingual instruction with collaborative teaching and reciprocal learning?

3.2 Topic of Exploration

On the evenings of January 13th, 20th, 27th and February 3rd, 10th, and 17th of 2016 an experimental adult language program was conducted from 5:30pm to 8:30pm in classrooms of the Faculty of Education building of McGill University. Each of the six program sessions (see Appendix E) was divided into two parts, an input session and a reciprocal session. In the input session participants were separated into two groups: French speakers learning English (FL1) and English speakers learning French (EL1). The two groups were assigned to different classrooms where they participated in a monolingual language class for 85 minutes. After a 10-minute break

participants were brought together into one classroom for the reciprocal session for the remaining 85 minutes.

3.3 Input Session

As mentioned, the input session was intended to be a traditional type of language class, meaning that the traditional roles of student and teacher were in place and that only the target language was spoken. Despite being traditional, these sessions were designed to be highly interactive and communicative. Each input session lesson plan was built according to the counterbalanced approach, as described by Lyster (2007). The counterbalanced approach consists of four stages: noticing, where learners' attention is drawn to a given language feature; awareness, where learners are given explicit instruction on meaning, form and pronunciation; guided practice, where learners engage in activities intended to give them practice in using the language feature; and autonomous practice, where learners are given the opportunity to freely produce language in a communicative group activity. Another important feature of the counterbalanced approach is that it is highly meaning-driven, in that all four stages are linked together by a common thematic thread. In the case of the current research, business themes such as job interviews, conflict resolution, problem solving, and marketing and advertising were the main drivers of the input sessions. The language features for both the French and English input sessions were chosen on the basis of their suitability as a match for the business themes. For example, in the second session the theme was human resources, the guided and autonomous practice stages focusing on the job interview. For this theme the main language feature was the simple past tense versus the present perfect tense for English and the passé composé and imparfait for French. Thus, the various language features highlighting the input stage served as

Breaking solitudes and claiming the right to speak

platforms to give support to interactions occurring not only in the practice stages but also those resulting from the subsequent reciprocal tasks.

3.4 Reciprocal Session

Each reciprocal session was divided into two reciprocal tasks, which mirrored the guided and autonomous stages of the corresponding input session. To use the second session once again as an example, the guided practice activity was a list of typical interview questions learners practiced asking and answering, while the autonomous practice activity was a case study scenario involving a company recruiting an employee. The two tasks of the reciprocal session mirrored the input session practice activities with participants working in bilingual pairs and small groups, engaging in the activities and taking turns in their respective target languages while giving and receiving CF.

In the opening session of the program, participants were given a training session in corrective feedback. The training consisted of a bilingual PowerPoint presentation in which the six corrective feedback types (explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition) outlined by Lyster and Ranta (1997) were explained and modeled. Participants were each given a peer CF guide (see Appendix G) as an aid in recording (on the uptake sheet) the type of feedback used in given language related episodes.

3.5 Participants

The selection of participants in this project was based on various criteria: a minimum age of 18, and preferably between the ages of 25 and 55; employed or job-seeking professionals, preferably in an area of business where communication/linguistic skills are required; with a desire to improve L2 skills based on reasons of job attainment, retention or advancement; with a good base in the L2 but lacking confidence when communicating, falling into the general L2

proficiency category of 'intermediate'; and perhaps having expressed mixed feelings as to the effectiveness of formal language training. Some of these features were more guidelines than strict criteria. The determining of the proficiency levels of potential recruits, for example, was done rather informally over the telephone, without the use of a level evaluation grid. A principal goal was to find people interested in trying something different. An advertising flyer (see Appendix H) was produced and published on Craigslist and Kijiji, two widely-known classified advertisement websites. Copies of the flyer were also strategically placed in high-traffic areas of Montreal's downtown. The flyer was designed with the objective of informing the potential participant of the unique features of the program, those being the business content, the presence of English and French learners in one classroom, the use of peer corrective feedback and, of course, that it would be for research purposes and free of charge. The response was in itself very validating: Over 50 people responded to the advertisement and on the first evening 43 participants (22 English and 21 French) were in attendance. Due to circumstances beyond our control, and typical when giving evening courses to busy adults, the number of participants eventually dropped to 20 (9 English and 11 French). This drop in numbers was initially viewed by us with some disappointment, but it became evident by the end of the program that those who had chosen to stay were part of a dedicated group who were very much engaged in the process. It was decided that data would only be kept from those participants who attended a minimum of 4 out of 6 sessions, and this constituted the 20 (see Appendix D) mentioned above. A desired outcome vis-à-vis the recruitment of participants was that they represent a cross-section of the linguistic landscape of Montreal, that is, a mix of 'old stock Anglos', 'Québécois de souche' and a third group consisting of those whose L1 was neither French nor English, commonly referred to as 'Allophone'.

3.6 Ethical considerations

     Prior to commencement of the language program, the McGill Review Ethics Board

examined my research proposal and provided a certificate of ethical acceptability of research

involving humans. This document set parameters for the recruitment methods I would use to

acquire my participants and all of the data collection methods I would use throughout the study.

As far as the participants were concerned, at the beginning of the first session they were given a

document of informed consent to sign (see Appendix B). In the document of informed consent,

participants were given a basic description of all of the data they would be asked to provide. In

addition, they were given the assurance that none of their identifying information would be

included in any version of the final report. Throughout the results chapter of this report

participants are never referred to by name but rather by an assigned code-name. Furthermore,

participants were informed of their right to decline responding to questions or to stop taking part

in the project altogether. At any time during or after the completion of the project participants

would also be free to withdraw any data related to their participation.

<p style="text-align:center;">3.7 Methodology and research design</p>

     Immediately following the completion of the language program and leading up to the

commencement of data analysis, significant changes in direction took place in the orientation of

my approach. While the overall research design remained unchanged (with the exception of an

added follow-up questionnaire) marked changes occurred in the analysis and interpretation of the

resulting data. Originally, I had planned to use a convergent parallel design model. The main

characteristic of the convergent parallel design is that both qualitative and quantitative data are

collected simultaneously and then merged into an overall interpretation (Cresswell & Clark,

2011). My original scheme of analysis had been to use the Constant Comparison Method, which

is generally associated with grounded theory. The Constant Comparison Method can be defined as a process of comparing and contrasting that begins from the outset of the research. Categories are formed with clear boundaries established, the objective being to discern conceptual similarities and differences, and through constant refining of categories to find patterns or themes (Boeije 2002). Upon careful reflection I realized that while the generation of themes was certainly interesting when considering the data set, the comparison aspect did not really serve my purpose as it now stood. A major reason for this change in direction was that my research questions themselves had changed in focus. In the proposal stage I had posed questions with direct links to the features of the treatment itself (bilingual-reciprocal learning, collaborative teaching, and peer corrective feedback). Well after the language program had concluded my research question underwent changes rendering them much more driven by the theme of learner agency. In my opinion, this shift in focus only serves to add rigor to the study. The fact that the themes and sub-themes related to learner agency emerged only after the experimental stage of the study had concluded creates conditions whereby participants were not prompted or influenced to form their responses directly on their basis.

3.7.1 Applied thematic analysis

Upon intensive reading and re-reading of the data it became clear that Applied Thematic Analysis (ATA) would better serve the purpose of understanding and interpreting what had occurred during this 6-week program. This became particularly apparent as various themes and sub-themes began to emerge. Inspired by a wide variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives, ATA is defined by Guest et al. (2012) as a "set of procedures designed to identify and examine themes from textual data in a way that is transparent and credible." (p.15) The

ultimate goal here is to create a narrative that serves to address specific research questions through the faithful and comprehensive use of expressed views on the part of participants.

3.7.2 Data collection methods: questionnaires

Participants were asked to complete three different questionnaires, all of which were tabulated using SurveyGizmo, a free on-line survey software:

(1) The opening questionnaire was administered before the program began and consisted of two parts:

     a. 15 Likert-type scale questions (see Appendix C)

     b. One open-ended short essay question (see Appendix C)

(2) The closing questionnaire was sent to participants to complete after the program had concluded and was an exact repetition of the opening questionnaire.

(3) The follow-up questionnaire, completed one month after the program had concluded, consisted of three open-ended questions relating to the main features of the program (see Appendix J)

As previously explained, significant changes occurred in terms of how the data set would be analyzed. Consequently, the role and purpose of the data collection methods also underwent varying degrees of transformation. Originally, the opening and closing questionnaires were intended to serve as the quantitative portion of a convergent parallel design model. With the shift in favor of thematic analysis these questionnaires were not discarded outright, but rather, took on a different conceptual weight.

During the recruitment stage, in order for candidates to be added to the final list of participants they had to complete the opening questionnaire. This questionnaire was instrumental in mentally preparing participants for the various principles under which they would be working

throughout the program. The closing questionnaire served as an instrument of reflection, allowing participants to once again consider their views. The follow-up questionnaire allowed participants to provide responses based on more long-term reflection. The result of this shift in purpose of the opening and closing questionnaire data was that the open-ended portion (part B) ended up being considered more than the Likert scale portion (part A). The data resulting from the Likert scale questions was initially intended to show a before-and-after effect that would have been more interesting as a quantitative measure but had less importance in the context of thematic analysis. Nevertheless, the resulting data have been processed and expressed in the form of histograms (see Appendix A), and are referred to at various points in the results chapter.

3.7.3 Data collection methods: semi-structured interview

Once the six-week program was concluded, I conducted a 15-25-minute semi-structured interview with each participant. A semi-structured interview is one with a series of pre-determined questions but with an open range of possible answers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). To achieve a sufficient degree of standardization each participant was asked the same questions (see Appendix I), in the same order, and with approximately the same amount of time given to respond. The interviews were carried out in person and over the telephone. They were recorded using a digital recorder and were later transcribed in their entirety. All participants were interviewed in the language corresponding to the group (EL-1 or FL-1) they had associated with throughout the program, that is, in their L1 or the additional language they were more comfortable using.

3.7.4 Data collection methods: focus group

The focus group occurred on the evening of the fifth out of six sessions. It lasted approximately 45 minutes, was audio-recorded, and was transcribed in its entirety. This event

was conducted by me in French and English, with Marie-Claude listening, observing and participating. The questions asked were essentially the same as those of the semi-structured interview, the main difference being that this exchange was much more open to digression and free expression.

The intention of the focus group was for participants to answer similar questions to the semi-structured interview, but in their peer groups and as a complete group. To achieve this, participants were kept in the working groups they had formed and were given a written version of the questions to be covered. They were then asked to discuss the questions in their groups for about 15 minutes. After the 15 minutes were up, the group then came together with the chairs arranged in a horseshoe formation. The desired result was for participants to provide a more collective response, and perhaps one more critical than that in a one-on-one semi-structured interview.

3.7.5 Data collection methods: co-investigator interview

Shortly after the end of the language program, Marie-Claude and I sat down for an interview between primary investigator and co-investigator. This interview did not have a set list of questions. Rather, Marie-Claude was asked to provide an in-depth reflection on her experience participating in a collaborative teaching partnership with me. The interview lasted approximately 35 minutes, was recorded with a digital voice recorder and fully transcribed.

3.7.6 Data collection methods: investigator field notes and post-session conference

During each reciprocal session of the program, Marie-Claude and I took on multi-faceted roles in the classroom. On one hand, we were there as teachers with the task of facilitating the activities of the session. In this role we gave instructions and explanations, in both languages, for the upcoming activities and acted as a language-teaching resource to assist participants with

form-related queries as they gave and received peer CF. We were also tasked with keeping

participants engaged in the process and with making sure they were fulfilling all of their duties

vis-à-vis peer CF.   One the other hand, we were investigators engaged in the act of observing the

entire group. Here, it was up to us to keep detailed notes on what we were witnessing. A

template was used (see Appendix K) so that we could both agree on the nature and scope of our

observations. At the end of each session, Marie-Claude and I sat down for a post-session

conference where we would review our notes and discuss them. These conferences were

recorded using a digital voice recorder; they were not transcribed word-for-word but rather

reviewed and transformed into note form. The end result was a substantive document consisting

of individual and shared observations with extra insights extracted from the post-session

conference.

3.7.7 Data collection methods: uptake sheet

One aspect of data collection that is largely missing in this study is a recording of

interactions between participants, as there were no video cameras or voice recorders capturing

every exchange in minute detail. The uptake sheet was a device designed to provide an in-the-

moment document of events, as they occurred. The design of the uptake sheet took on different

forms as the program progressed (see Appendix F). As with the opening and closing

questionnaires, the purpose of the uptake sheet was altered with the changing of the principal

method of data analysis from the convergent parallel design model to ATA. The uptake sheet

consisted of two parts: a section where instances of peer CF (whether given or received) were

tabulated in the spaces provided, and a second part where individuals or groups could write

reflections on the experience of giving and receiving peer CF. Similar to the case of the

questionnaires, the data that ended up being included in the results chapter came entirely from the second reflection-oriented part.

Completing the uptake sheet was, from the opening session, viewed as a rather cumbersome and laborious task, and one which, according to participants, impeded on the natural flow of communication. Marie-Claude and I did not acquiesce to these protestations, but instead adapted and adjusted the document (in response to suggestions of participants) to make it more user-friendly. This was also made necessary by the added complexity of the reciprocal sessions having changed from one-on-one interactions to those of small groups. The result was that the first part of the uptake sheet contained data that was quite basic and nondescript, while the second part yielded data of a richer and richer quality as the program progressed. Perhaps if the program had been longer we could have developed a better working model for the uptake sheet that could have effectively recorded instances of peer CF, and in a less obtrusive and arduous manner. In retrospect, the uptake sheet did end up performing a very important function: it encouraged participants to be consistently mindful of the process of peer CF and contributed to the cultivation of a depth of response when it came to this important feature of the study. Furthermore, if this experimental program were to be implemented in a 'real world' situation there would most likely be a need to include some sort of recording document for the use of instructors to monitor the use of peer CF and to plan future input sessions. In this respect, the uptake sheet maintained an element of realism while also keeping participants' minds focused on the feedback they were giving and receiving.

3.7.8 Analyses: Interpretation of data

All of the data collected from the methods described were extensively reviewed in their transcribed form and processed using strategies prescribed by ATA. ATA instructs the

investigator to locate "meaning in the data" (Guest et al., 2012, p. 49). Guest uses the analogy of a traveler who ventures into an unknown territory without having made any preparations compared to another explorer who has prepared for the journey. Although the unprepared traveler may return home from this strange new world with interesting experiences to recount, the better-equipped expedition is more likely to result in a deep and substantive understanding.

As far as equipment was concerned, I did consider using a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. While these tools can be very useful in sorting and organizing data, as Hatch (2002) points out, this software is not and never can be a substitute for the mental process of analyzing and interpreting data. Accordingly, I decided to approach this by no means overwhelming data set using a more low-tech approach. This consisted of copy-pasting lines of text from the transcription to different text files representing the emergent themes, and then repeating the process with different files for each sub-theme. The result was an iterative refining process which allowed me to immerse myself in the the data and get my hands dirty, so to speak. Having initiated this process, I set about first establishing my major themes and sub-themes and then assigning lines of text to their corresponding themes, the process commonly known as coding.

It was here that I encountered the 'lumper-splitter' issue, which as Guest et al. explain, is a commonly encountered issue in coding or any task where groups are categorized. Considerable reflection went into the process of establishing codes that would facilitate a deep insight into the data, while not rendering the process unmanageable by having too many. The result of this effort was the creation of the following themes and sub-themes, which were then adapted to comprise the results chapter of this thesis. The result is a presentation of the interpreted data in the form of a first-person narrative, juxtaposed with lines of transcribed text

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from the data set. The results chapter consists of four thematic sections, each presenting a major theme and festooned with sections based on sub-themes:

1. Participants' individual sense of agency

      a) I have the capacity to act

      b) I have the opportunity to speak

      c) My past and present reality emboldens my capacity to act

2. The participant group's sense of agency

      a) We have the capacity to act

      b) We see the potential for L2 development

      c) We are gaining valuable practice

      d) We are giving and receiving valuable feedback

3. The program's achievement of agency of space

      a) This space allows the capacity to act

      b) This space allows us to interact using 'real world' situations.

4. The Participant group's overall appraisal of the program

      a) Peer corrective feedback

      b) Bilingual-reciprocal learning

      c) Program design

      d) Collaborative teaching

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Participants' individual sense of agency

In order to locate agency in the individual participant I will employ Mercer's (2011) concept of agency as a complex dynamic system. In employing this framework, I will interpret the individual participant's agentic system as composed of three components: firstly, those which arise from the participant's feelings, such as confidence and comfort level; secondly, the participant's beliefs about contextual factors and affordances, specifically, the participant having had meaningful opportunities to use the target language; and thirdly, the extent to which the learning context stands in comparison to participants' basic beliefs about L2 learning, as constructed by personal histories of learning the L2.

4.1.1 Sub-theme #1: I have the capacity to act.

The first session of the language program presented built-in stressors that perhaps would not be encountered in a more traditional evening language class. As this class was being offered for the purposes of research and was free of charge, participants were not really certain what to expect. Moreover, in the recruitment stage participants had been made aware of the various unique features of the program. On the first evening session the group was quite large, 43 participants in total; this number did, however, drop to 20 over the course of the six weeks. Most attrition occurred after the first session and for various expressed reasons: some were concerned about the level being too high or too low; some decided they were not comfortable with the parameters of the study; and some simply could not continue due to scheduling conflicts. Marie-Claude and I tried not to be discouraged by the drop in numbers, even at session #4 when only 11 participants showed up due to bad weather conditions. Both of us had had enough experience

running these kinds of classes to know that spotty attendance and some degree of attrition was normal.

After completing some administrative tasks at the opening session, such as the reading and signing of the participant consent document, and with the group sitting in a rather awkward silence for several minutes, Marie-Claude and I launched into detailed description of our plans for the next six weeks. We did this in a back-and-forth fashion, myself speaking in English and Marie-Claude providing a translation in French. Having completed the overview of the course, we then began our bilingual presentation/training session on methods of providing peer corrective feedback. At this point an interesting thing happened: much of the anxiety and uncertainty that could be felt in the room was superseded by an atmosphere of engaged interest. As Marie-Claude and I modeled the different types of CF, as described by Lyster and Ranta (1997), we both later noted in our field notes that these people were very receptive to these ideas. There was a general feeling of enthusiasm in the room as we split the group into its two parts for the input session, the group of learners of English (FL-1) following me into another room.

It was during this first input session that anxiety once again reared its head, more so for Marie-Claude and her group of French learners (EL-1). It became evident to both the teacher and the EL-1 group that there was a noticeable discrepancy in the levels of French proficiency among the group. As Marie-Claude attempted to adapt to this situation she was buffeted with questions from the group ranging from expressed concerns about how the course would be delivered to specific language-related queries. When I returned with my group to the room for the reciprocal portion of the session Marie-Claude and her students were noticeably flustered. This anxiety was not present to the same degree among the FL-1 group. During our post-session conference, Marie-Claude and I agreed that since I (an intermediate speaker of French) had been

responsible for recruiting all of the participants, the resulting proficiency levels had been more homogeneous on the FL-1 side than the EL-1. Marie-Claude and I scratched our heads at this development but quickly began the process of initiating the reciprocal session. Here again we witnessed, to our delight, this almost immediate disintegration of anxiety as participants arranged themselves in pairs, FL-1 on EL-1, and began their first reciprocal task.

Teachers and students alike did not dwell on this initial rough start to the opening session; it is only referred to briefly by participants:

> I didn't feel very comfortable at the beginning as I had expected the class to be more interactive. But then the reciprocal stage came, and this was very enjoyable and practical.
> (Uptake sheet session 1, EL1-9RM)

> Ça s'est toujours fait dans le respect mutuel, je pense qu'au début on était tous gênés mais éventuellement on était tous mutuellement respectueux.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-3QUE)

Another participant expressed initial uncertainty in regards to the concept of peer CF:

> At first I was skeptical when you asked, "Would you feel comfortable with your peers giving you feedback?", but it was good. I'm sure it is doable and beneficial. People who speak French and others who speak English.
> (Semi-structured interview: EL1-3MN)

This sentiment was largely shared by the group, as can be seen to some degree in the questionnaire results for questions 13, 14 and 15 (see appendix A). For these questions participants stated their degree of agreement or disagreement regarding CF in general and peer CF in particular. A comparison of the histograms shows a general shift in the perceptions of the group towards being more comfortable with the idea of peer CF.

As the program progressed, the teachers and participants became more and more comfortable with the transition between the input and reciprocal sessions. This can be seen throughout the data set as all involved expressed an increased level of comfort and confidence:

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> J'ai adoré cette expérience, ceci permet de s'exprimer plus facilement dans des
> discussions de petits groupes et beaucoup moins gênant.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, Fl1-3QUE)

> I find it very refreshing to learn new expressions in French without feeling the pressure of
> being judged by an expert.
> (Uptake sheet session 3, El1-4ANG)

4.1.2 Sub-theme #3: I have the opportunity to speak

In the literature review chapter, various notions relating to the participant's opportunity to

speak were discussed. Among these were such things as the achieving of 'audibility', the

struggle to 'claim the right to speak', and the ability to 'speak oneself into being'. As the task of

locating agency in the individual participant continues, these aspects take on central importance.

For participants themselves, this feature of the program seems to have been crucial in supporting

their agentive systems. This can be seen throughout the data set:

> (The program) Allowed more time for speech, for dialogue – for real life dialogue.
> Engaging with people across the table, then you feel more energy, you are more
> motivated to have yourself understood and to understand rather than sitting in the class
> looking at a teacher at the front of the class.
> (Closing questionnaire, EL1-4ANG)

> I have been living here for less than a year and I never learned French language before,
> and for me just to be able to speak more and to be less shy and be more open to just speak
> the language. Just the fear of someone judging you, here you have someone in front of
> you who is also struggling with their second language. So, you're both kind of in the
> same boat.
> (Focus group, EL1-3MN)

During the focus-group, which occurred during the sixth and final session, I asked the

group if in their experiences with more traditional, monolingual language classes every student

would typically get a chance to receive feedback from the teacher? Participant EL1-5UKR

responded that not every student would typically get a chance to speak the target language in

such circumstances, let alone receive feedback. This statement was immediately understood and

corroborated by everyone in the group.   Participant EL1-3MN added the following statement:

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> And maybe it's also about being less shy to ask, because you're not afraid to ask 10 times if you want. I would be shy to ask a teacher a question ten times. I think my biggest accomplishment from the classes is being more open to speak and read and try, even if I'm a beginner. And that was easy to do with peers.
> (Focus group, EL1-3MN)

4.1.3 Sub-theme #4: My past and present reality emboldens my capacity to act

In the literature review there was a discussion of the L2 learner's agentive system being directed to a significant degree by what was referred to as 'life-course' agency. Following this notion, a search of the data set will be conducted for instances where participants discussed their views about effective L2 learning, and where these views were discussed in relation to their own history in person. A good place within the data set to begin is the long-answer (part B) portion of the opening and closing questionnaires (see Appendix C). Here, participants are asked to describe what, in their opinion, comprise the essential ingredients of a high-quality language class:

> Des gens motivés à apprendre, collaborer et y mettre l'effort. Un professeur disponible et patient qui fournit différents exercices pour stimuler les élèves.
> (Closing questionnaire, FL1-4QUE)

> A lot of opportunity to speak, listen, read, write, instead of worksheets or fill-in-the-blanks and the kind of memorization work that usually is involved - more practical and realistic, and more immersion-based.
> (Opening questionnaire, EL1-8ANG)

> I think that the class should teach the vocab and grammar using mostly oral participation, rather than worksheets and fill in the blanks, another thing I've seen in a lot of classes. That way it feels like you are actually involved in the learning, not just problem solving and trying to get the "right answer".
> (Closing questionnaire, EL1-7ANG)

> Un cours de langue devrait avant tout être interactif. Le professeur doit faire parler constamment les étudiants afin qu'ils pratiquent leurs capacités orales le plus possible. La grammaire et le vocabulaire sont également importants, mais dans un cours avancé, c'est la conversation qui compte le plus. Aussi, je crois que les étudiants doivent se corriger entre eux, la critique n'est donc pas négative, mais bien constructive. Le co-développement doit donc être priorisé.
> (Opening questionnaire, FL1-1SP)

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> Receiving the corrective feedback right away. Besides grammar, vocabulary etc. practicing material for real life situations. Receiving feedback from both teachers and other classmates. Dynamic, interactive classes… Besides individual training, work in pairs and groups.
> (Closing questionnaire, EL1-3MN)

> Dans un cours de haute qualité, le professeur devrait s'assurer d'aborder des sujets d'intérêts, pertinent et concret pour les étudiants. Ex: Monde des affaires, ressources humaines, markéting, logistique, finance...
> (Opening questionnaire, FL1-9QUE)

In many parts of the data set there can be found references to previous experiences participants had learning an L2 in a formal classroom environment. The following shows how expectations of participants were molded by personal historical narratives involving experiences where the quality of instruction had not conformed to their views and expectations:

> Beaucoup d'élèves sortent de l'école en ne sachant pas parler la langue malgré plusieurs années d'enseignement.
> (Closing questionnaire, FL1-11FR)

> I had the experience of going to a French school where everyone was English-speaking, and my French deteriorated… despite the fact that every one of my teachers spoke to me in French. We spoke to each other in English, my whole environment… my whole way of thought was English.
> (Focus group, EL1-1ANG)

> Pour des années j'ai appris l'anglais en France, et on faisait conjugaison, grammaire et après 10 ans je ne sais pas parler anglais. J'ai appris à parler en voyagent etc. Je crois pour un bon cours anglais, il est important de faire une partie théorique le plus court possible et après, la seconde partie, on échange on parle et rentre en discussion. C'est plus ou moins ce qu'on a fait ensemble dans les dernières séances. Pour moi, c'est une bonne formule.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-11FR)

> C'est ça qui manque au cours traditionnel, c'est qu'il n'y a pas le côté 'real life'. On va faire un voyage scolaire et c'est tout. En France même les films sont jamais en anglais. On est vraiment plongés en français tout le temps et on n'a jamais la chance de parler, d'être dans le côté vrai vie. C'est que comme ça qu'on apprend, face à quelqu'un qui est juste anglais, dans un environnement où on n'a pas le choix. Ces cours permettent de parler à quelqu'un qui est juste anglais.
> (Focus group, FL1-7FR)

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The expectations of participants, both before and after partaking in the program seem quite clear: a motivated group of learners; teachers focused on meaningful interaction between learners; classroom activities favoring communication over memorization and repetitive worksheets; corrective feedback from both teachers and fellow students; and the inclusion of subjects of interest to learners. With this, we can form discernments in respect to what participants expected to receive and what they reported to have actually gotten:

> THIS gives you context, you immerse yourself in the context, you try to think in the other language… it's fantastic in that way, it's the real advantage to this method.
> (Focus group, EL1-1ANG)

> I like working with my team, we work very hard together. Everyone is super motivated. The time passes too quickly!
> (Uptake Session 3, EL1-1ANG)

> Très bonne dynamique de groupe. C'était très palpitant. Nous avons eu plus de peur échanger dans les deux langues. Les exercices étaient très créatifs, cela a favorisé les discussions.
> (Uptake Session 4, FL1-8CR)

> I usually look for conversation classes. Usually in language class the others don't speak the second language all that well. Having people in the group speaking their first language improved all that.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-7ANG)

> I didn't come to learn grammatical rules, it was more for conversation and the pronunciation. For me it was excellent.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-2SP)

> J'ai adoré le fait qu'on me corrige tout de suite mon erreur. Je pouvais rectifier sur le champs mon erreur et formuler de la bonne façon ma phrase.
> (Follow-up questionnaire, FL1-3QUE)

> J'ai beaucoup aimé me faire expliquer les expressions anglaises par les anglophones.
> (Uptake sheet session 4, FL1-6FR)

> J'ai trouvé les activités très intéressantes. Cela a permis d'échanger beaucoup. J'ai aimé me faire corriger pour ne pas répéter les erreurs.
> (Uptake sheets session 4, FL1-8CR)

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In concluding this sub-theme, a statement from participant EL1-4(ANG) aptly expresses how the experience of this program allowed learners to critically reflect on their own reality in a way that enriched the capacity to act in achieving linguistic goals for themselves, and for others close to them:

> I had been thinking, previously, of effective ways for my children to learn languages. I mentioned to you that I have a young son who has recently become friends with a little boy who is completely French. My son's French has improved 110%, it's been so good for him to have that one-on-one practice with a peer, what he's gotten in the past couple of months with this little French child is more than he's gotten in the classroom. So, I'm completely sold, I would like to see them take some initiative like this in the school. I think the public system should try something like this.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-4ANG)

4.2 The participant group's sense of agency

In the literature review, an analogy employed by Wertsch et al. (1993) in describing a sociocultural conceptualization of learner agency provides images of a particularly elucidatory nature. If asked to encapsulate my own views, I would perhaps say that L2 development, rather than resembling an individual ascending rung after rung up a straight ladder, is better seen as a group offering each other boosts and hands up as they negotiate the best way to the top, through intertwining and connecting branches, of a magnificent and imposing tree.

4.2.1 Sub-theme #1: We have the capacity to act

In the early planning stages of this study, my vision of how the reciprocal stages would play out differed from what actually occurred. My original idea had been that FL1 and EL1 learners would work together in pairs and that each session participants would have a new pre-selected partner. I had based this plan on the following preconceptions: firstly, that peer CF would be more easily administered if it were directed with one-on-one interactions thereby reducing the risk of distraction that might result within larger groups; secondly, that the

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formation of fixed pairs staying together throughout the program should be avoided in order to

create a changing environment and avoid stagnation. By the conclusion of the first session

Marie-Claude and I not only realized that continuing under these assumptions would be

impractical, but that the participants would not allow it. It also became clear to us that our

participants were not going to take a passive role in this process. By the beginning of the third

session, small groups of 4-5 participants had formed within this cohort of engaged and motivated

learners.

> Tonight was really good! Working in a small group was much better than one-on-one,
> the feedback was very high quality. We really got to know each other on a deep level
> and were able to focus on language in a really deep way at the same time.
> (Uptake sheet session 3, EL1-9RM)
>
> Cette semaine je trouve c'est meilleur que les dernières fois, pour moi, parce que je me
> trouve avec les gars au même niveau dans les deux langues.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, FL1-6FR)

Each of these participants seemed focused on benefitting individually from this opportunity, but

also proved dedicated to making the program work for everyone.

> We were committed to helping each other.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-3MN)
>
> You don't feel like you're imposing on the person because you can turn around and do
> the exact same for them.
> Uptake sheets session 2, EL1-6SP)

As mentioned earlier, the dramatic level of engagement occurring with the transition

from the input to reciprocal stages was a noteworthy development, and a signal to all involved

that something exceptional was taking place. Participants were working hard in their close-knit

groups. Marie-Claude noted during the opening session that interactions between participants

were rich and that there were very few moments of silence: they really were using every possible

opportunity to practice speaking the L2. We agreed that this was different from experiences we

had had in our past monolingual classrooms. We reflected that often when a pair or group was given an activity they would often rush to get through it and then wait in silence because they were 'finished'. This rarely happened, if ever, during the reciprocal sessions. On the contrary, we often had to interrupt groups from their lively discussions in order to give instructions or move on to the next task. The following quote expressed this sentiment:

> It's also different in that instead of being a passive receptor of information, you immediately try to use what you have been practicing what has been preached to you. (Semi-structured interview, EL1-1ANG)

These emerging groups were demonstrating the ability to self-regulate in different ways. While they were appreciative of the materials and activities we provided, they were intent from the beginning on adding their own touches to them. As one participant commented:

> You really get the chance to use the personalities in the group to shape your experience, and at the same time have access to tools that make learning happen. (Semi-structured interview, EL1-8ANG)

Marie-Claude and I both observed that entire groups would frequently shift entirely to one language and then back to the other in what seemed to be mindfully coordinated turns. This observation is reflected in this participant's comment:

> C'est une nouvelle méthode de s'approprier la langue. Une méthode qui est basée sur le fait qu'on ne parle pas que la langue qu'on va apprendre mais on a cette liberté de parler notre langue maternelle. La langue maternelle dans ce cas était juste pour aider l'autre à mieux se communiquer, dans une autre perspective de compréhension et d'échange. (Semi-structured interview, FL1-6FR)

Another assumption I had made in the planning stages of the program was that there would be a need to time participant turns and control the transitions from one language to another; again, this proved to be both unnecessary and impractical. Participants demonstrated the ability to effectively determine how and at what frequency language turns would occur. This is represented in the following comment:

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> At the beginning it was difficult to ask in one language and be answered in the other, it got easier and ended up being very interesting. We decided to talk about our background, it brought up more interesting errors on both sides than the questions we were given.
> (Uptake sheet: Session 1, EL1-4ANG)

> Le groupe a été crée parce que nous on les aidait et ils nous aident alors c'est valorisant pour tout le monde. C'est vrai dans une classe traditionnelle on a moins de choses à apporter aux autres étudiants et eux aussi. Étant un groupe comme ça, une chimie a été crée qui ne se crée pas quand tout le monde apprend la même langue.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-5FR)

> It was dynamic. It was forever flowing. New concepts were being brought in. If the students recommended something we would try it. It was definitely a learning and a growing situation.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-4ANG)

As the sessions progressed, teachers and students alike began to settle into a comfortable routine. By the third session the input portions were working much better and participants were entering the reciprocal stage full of enthusiasm and ideas. In our field notes and post-session conference for the third session we both reported having observed an increase in instances where participants were interrupting each other to provide feedback. We interpreted this as the development of a process by which participants were adapting and establishing tacit rules for the giving and receiving of CF. We also noticed a greater presence of highly nuanced feedback containing explanations about Quebec versus France French usage, formal versus informal language, English and French expressions and slang usage. Group dynamics were playing a big role in the nature of interactions between participants and practice was becoming more and more autonomous. Marie-Claude noted her impression that participants were increasingly becoming aware of the benefits of peer CF. In her field notes for the sixth session she commented that observing this group had given her "the feeling of a community of learners" (Field notes session 6, Marie-Claude Deschambault).

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As previously mentioned, from very early on in the program Marie-Claude and I

observed what we considered to be a remarkable level of engagement among participants, this

was particularly the case where peer CF was involved:

> I find peer feedback very motivating, particularly when I can contribute in English as
> much as I receive guidance in French. This give-and-take situation beats anything you
> could get from a regular classroom, learning from one teacher.
> (Uptake sheets session 2, EL1-8ANG)

> J'aime quand les autres me corrigent pour ne pas répéter l'erreur surtout pour les temps
> de verbe et la prononciation. Ils me font répéter pour améliorer ma prononciation. Ils
> m'ont corrigé pour me donner un autre mot à dire. Je l'apprécie beaucoup.
> (Uptake sheets session 2, FL1-2QUE)

We also observed a high level of collaboration among participants that yielded very positive and

meaningful interactions, particularly in the reciprocal stages:

> Our personalities clicked. We worked well together. Good energy. Good experience.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-9RM)

> (FL1 writing in English) I find the experience very interesting and interactive. In (sic) the
> same time, I am improving my English in an informal context, not stressful situations.
> (Uptake sheet session 4, FL1-9QUE)

The histograms derived from the opening and closing questionnaires (see Appendix A) include

results for a question (question #3) that asked participants to respond to the statement 'I am a

motivated language learner.' The histograms show values remaining quite constant in this

respect. One development Marie-Claude and I observed and that also came out in the data set

was an expressed intention among participants to form connections outside of class and to

remain in contact after the class had finished. This was something that emerged quite

independently among the group, and prompted the addition of a seventh question for the semi-

structured interview (see Appendix I) to address it. During our post-session conference

following the fifth session, we both remarked on how we had both never seen classmates so

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eager to form relationships outside of a language class. This was expressed by participants

themselves in the following ways:

> Oui en ce moment j'ai des courriels des deux autres filles, et c'est sûr que je vais les
> recontacter pour faire des rencontres pour pouvoir continuer de se parler en anglais, et
> d'apprendre le français.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-2QUE)

> We exchanged emails, and there is definitely a prospect of getting together.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-8ANG)

> Oui, effectivement une fois par mois au minimum, a parti du mois d'avril, on va
> s'organiser pour aller souper ensemble pour au moins garder une soirée pour pouvoir
> pratiquer notre conversation.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-3QUE)

> A classmate and I talked about meeting for coffee and chatting and talk in the other
> language. It won't be easy to organize but we will try.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-3MN)

Many participants mentioned that they had already made connections with classmates on the

social network site Facebook:

> Je trouve qu'il y avait une bonne dynamique dans notre groupe de 5. La communication
> est de plus en plus fluide de cours en cours. On se sent à l'aise avec les corrections.
> Aucun jugement. Très convivial. Nous avons même créé un groupe Facebook pour notre
> petit groupe.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-7FR)

> I am working with my Group. I organized a Facebook group and we are watching clips
> together.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-9RM)

> Oui, on va peut-être se rencontrer mais il va falloir s'écrire sur Facebook pour savoir,
> mais oui on voulait se rencontrer. Par exemple, sur le group Facebook j'ai écrit des
> 'tongue twisters' et puis eux ils m'en ont mis en anglais alors on se communique
> beaucoup par Facebook. Mais oui on va peut-être se rencontrer encore bientôt pour parler
> et prendre un café. Je n'ai pas beaucoup d'amis qui parlent juste anglais. Mes seuls amis
> qui parlent anglais parlent français aussi alors on se parle toujours en français. Avec le
> groupe, ça serait bien pour qu'on se pratiques.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-1SP)

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My general impression of L2 teachers is that there exists among them a strong impetus to provide learning environments that are both collaborative and respectful. Regardless of whether a program is traditional/monolingual or not, the extent to which it works under these parameters is critical for the fostering of positive learner identities. Marie-Claude and I agreed in our very first planning meeting that a culture of respect between participants, particularly while engaged in reciprocal learning, would be continually reinforced. In all of our post-session conferences we both mentioned the ease with which these groups formed very positive working relationships. The following statement echoes this sentiment:

> It was a lot less, like I said before, intimidating. A lot less stressful. The atmosphere was just very amicable, it was nice, it was light, it was friendly. As opposed to a traditional class where you're there with the teacher being to do this, do that and do this.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-8ANG)

Through the various data collection tools used in this study, participants were asked to contemplate the extent to which their experiences had been different from those of more traditional monolingual language classes. The data set reveals a general consensus among participants regarding the learning environment Marie-Claude and I were able to provide. Participants showed a high level of appreciation for the connection they were able to make with their classmates. Through this relationship, several reported being able to practice their target language comfortably and confidently:

> My feeling is that in a peer-on-peer relationship, for lack of a better word, it takes off a lot of pressure… you're less shy, you're less intimidated, by the professor, you know what I mean? You're not always being put on the spot.
> (Focus group, EL1-8)

> Ce programme m'a permis de constater qu'autant les francophones et anglophones ont parfois de la difficulté à s'exprimer à cause de la gêne. De plus, selon les opinions face à moi des personnes anglophones j'ai acquis une meilleure confiance en moi lorsque je désire m'exprimer en anglais.
> (Follow-up questionnaire, FL1-3QUE)

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> People are patient and don't interrupt, they give good explanations when I make
> mistakes.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, EL1-1ANG)

> The people in my group corrected me with respect and took the time to provide an
> appropriate way to explain my errors.
> (Uptake sheet session 3, EL1-4ANG)

> I think it creates a really good relationship with other people in the classroom. You know,
> when you help someone and someone helps you, it's not just someone who's there in
> your class. If you're doing it the right way you need to be respectful, respectful is a big
> word but you are respectful if someone is struggling with the word and you do your best
> effort to help him and the other person does the same thing. It must mean something for
> the relationship between the students, it's really nice.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-7ANG)

> Je suis moins gênée de parler en anglais et aussi maintenant, en présence d'un
> anglophone, je lui dis sans hésitation qu'il peut me corriger sans gêne. Je prends la
> critique de manière plus constructive car je sais que c'est la meilleure manière
> d'apprendre. Il ne faut pas avoir peur.
> (Follow-up questionnaire, FL1-2QUE)

> We had fun together, we learned from each other together, we were not ashamed to make
> a mistake. That was my particular case, I use French but I am always thinking of what the
> other person is thinking about me. In these groups I can say what I want and I know
> someone will correct me if I need it. For me it worked!
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-6SP)

This culture of collaboration and respect reportedly manifested itself in terms of cultural

understanding. Although I must say, this was by no means a salient feature of the commentary

generated by participants. Perhaps this was due to the program having been too brief for these

sentiments to be expressed to their fullest extent. Nevertheless, the experience of having

connected on a cross-cultural level was reported by some participants:

> L'échange entre les francophones et Anglophones c'était bien pour les corrections et tout,
> mais c'était aussi bien du côté culturel. On a beau être au Québec mais les Anglophones
> et les Québécois francophones c'est quand même une culture diffèrent alors c'était bien
> d'avoir cet échange-là, c'était enrichissant.
> (Focus group, FL1-9QUE)

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> Ça pourrait être bien de parler des différences es culturelles entre anglais et français et parler de chaque culture. Par exemple, le 'mac and cheese' n'est pas très commun dans les familles franco.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-2QUE)

The following statement, I feel, sums up what I am trying to interpret in the way of collective learner agency. In the introduction chapter I formed an analogy in an attempt to express my vision of the purpose of this thesis. The image was of walls being breached and solitudes between French and English learners being broken. The words of participant EL1-5UKR reflect this vison quite well:

> What I do feel has stayed with me is more of a realization that most people in Montreal don't feel totally confident in both languages, which gives me more confidence using my French with strangers who are francophone, and reminding myself that when people switch to English to speak with me it isn't necessarily because they don't understand my French but because they are also trying to practice their second language.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-5UKR)

4.2.2 Sub-theme #2: We see the potential for L2 development

The following section seeks to describe the potential for L2 development that can be attributed to the language program in question. Before embarking on this aspect of data analysis it is necessary to explain the overall goal. One cannot attempt to assess the effectiveness of an individual language program without touching on the more global implications that such an assessment entails. The role of instruction in SLA, as understood by participants, was addressed to some degree in the previous section as opinions relating to best practices in L2 teaching were explored. Ellis (1985) describes the role of instruction in SLA as a "controversial issue subject to much speculation" (p. 16) Ellis's work strikes at the very heart of the study of SLA as he ponders firstly, whether formal instruction aids L2 development, and if so, what types are the most effective in this respect. Ellis considers methods of formal instruction to be exceedingly wide-ranging. Citing his earlier work he lists some of the dimensions of this variance such as the

explicitness or intensity with which a language feature is presented, or the nature of the language feature itself. He then stresses that perhaps more important than other dimensions are that of the learner's perspective. Ellis concludes that we will never be closer to answering the essential questions about SLA until more qualitative studies are done to investigate learner discourse in formal classroom settings and the L2 development associated with such discourse. I think this thesis can claim instrumentality in at least one of these respects, as the goal is to assess the program's potential for L2 development solely from the perspective of the participants involved.

Ortega (2013) reminds us that many aspects are to be considered when attempting to define exactly what is required in order for formal instruction to result in L2 development. Here, she refers to implied standards put into place by the insights gleaned from the social turn of SLA, such as Pierce's (1995) notion of the learner's ability to 'claim the right to speak'. I would stress that this study does not have the necessary tools to effectively measure L2 development, nor was it expansive enough to even contemplate such an end. Despite these limitations, let us allow thematic analysis to uncover what it can.

In our field notes and post-session conference for the fifth session, both Marie-Claude and I reported having observed indications that participants were retaining and using what they had learned in previous sessions. This information came in the form of discussions we had directly with groups and individuals, and can be found within the data set:

> It was great! When we were interacting we focused on points in French that I don't think would ever come up in a regular French class.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, EL1-8ANG)

> Mes partenaires d'anglophone me disent qu'ils me comprennent quand je parle. J'utilise des mots anglais et des expressions que je n'ai jamais utilisées.
> (Uptake sheet session 5, FL1-7FR)

> (FL1 speaking English) Yes I think so, because I know that they correct me on some mistakes and I remember those mistakes. Like for example 'cause' and 'because', I was

> told to say 'because instead of 'cause' and I will remember this correction, it's very useful.
> (Focus group, FL1-9QUE)
>
> J'ai appris une expression dont je n'avais jamais entendu, je vais l'utiliser maintenant.
> (Uptake sheet session 1, FL1-8CR)
>
> I think it worked, I think it's really interesting to have multiple people's different corrections when you speak, as opposed to just a teacher, because you listen more and remember more. It seems like maybe the corrections stick more.
> (Focus group, EL1-8ANG)

One participant on the EL1 side (EL1-3MN) demonstrated particularly encouraging progress in French that is worth highlighting. EL1-3MN, an immigrant from Montenegro, came to the group with quite basic skills in French. This participant was very reluctant to continue the program after the first session as it was evident that her proficiency level was lower than the rest of the EL1 group. We encouraged her to remain in the study and she ended up attending all six sessions. Over the course of the program we all watched her progress from speaking very little French to actively participating in discussion, and then finally delivering a presentation in her L2. During the focus group in final session, EL1-3MN was singled out by the entire group as one who had gone a particularly great distance in terms of her L2 development, and in a relatively short period. The following are her comments regarding her progress:

> I agree that the model works. I remember we were discussing it last week and we said that when we did the questionnaire and when I saw the question about whether I would be comfortable receiving feedback from other people, other than the teacher, I think I said 'no'. In my mind, I couldn't imagine a situation if it was not a teacher. Maybe also because my level of French is still very low, I'm at the basic level, but still I wasn't quite sure it could work. But it really worked for me personally.
> (Focus group, EL1-3MN)

A positive view of the program's effectiveness potential can also be seen from the perspective of the learner as expert assisting a novice:

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> Tonight I really saw a positive result with one of my group members, she was making a similar verb tense error and I corrected her using the different methods we discussed. By the end of the exercise she was able to correct herself. She seemed very happy with this result.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, EL1-4ANG)

> Elle a très bien parlé, quelques erreurs mais elle a parlé plus longtemps que d'habitude. Elle est plus à l'aise de parler en français.
> (Uptake sheet session 3, FL1-2QUE)

A reported experience that emerged from the data was that of having gained awareness of one's

L1. This effect had not been anticipated in the planning of this study, and was a subject of

similar surprise for participants:

> There were times where I was only able to explain that some things are just said a certain way, but not why. And that is why this experience was beneficial to people in their first language. It broadened or made them aware of their knowledge, or lack of knowledge of their own language.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-7ANG)

> That was one of the unexpected benefits of this class for me… is that I felt I gained a better understanding of my own language… that I really hadn't expected to have happen.
> (Focus group, EL1-1ANG)

As it turned out, this reported occurrence pointed to a foundational element of how a bilingual-

reciprocal program should be conceived and designed. This is particularly true in light of the

fact that some participants had neither French nor English as their L1. The issue of L1

awareness is central in terms of how participants provided and accepted peer CF:

> Oui, c'est vraiment intéressant de voir les erreurs de l'autre dans notre propre langue, de voir les erreurs qu'on peut faire et ça nous apprend des choses dans d'autre sens.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-10FR)

> Very different. It is the first time I went to a bilingual group. We really had to use our best language to teach the other person. So it is a dual experience. We had to be careful in our language but also we are being corrected in the other language. I had to be conscious of using English correctly even though my first language is Spanish. I got more awareness in English.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-6SP)

In the fourth section of this chapter entitled *The Participant group's overall appraisal the program*, this aspect of L1 awareness will be dealt with from a more critical perspective. While it could be construed as a bonus feature of bilingual-reciprocal learning, it also points to issues to be addressed.

4.2.3 Sub-theme #3: We are gaining valuable practice

In his book *Learning and teaching languages through content: A counterbalanced approach*, Lyster (2007) speaks of the 'alleged reluctance' with which applied linguists approach the notion of practice as an indispensable aspect of L2 teaching and learning. Lyster refers to DeKeyser's (1998, 2001, 2007) work relating to the notion of what is meant by valuable practice. The debate surrounding the definition of practice in SLA consists of two perspectives: one viewing practice as a purposeful and specific focus on previously-learned material for the purpose of optimizing the learner's current skills; and another which can be best articulated with a quote Lyster borrows from DeKeyser defining practice as "engaging in an activity with the goal of becoming better at it" (Lyster, 2007, p. 79) As we have already seen in the second sub-theme of this section, participants expressed some open disdain for "worksheets or fill-in-the-blanks and the kind of memorization work that usually is involved." (Opening questionnaire, EL1-8ANG). For this reason, I think it makes more sense to give precedence to DeKeyser's broader definition:

> The best part about this program is that it has given me the opportunity to speak lots of French, more than in any other class I have taken.
> (Uptake sheet, EL1-7ANG)

> Il est primordial de pouvoir pratiquer la conversation mais il est également important de recevoir de l'information concernant la grammaire et autres informations pertinentes. Selon moi, 30 minutes de formation et par la suite de la discussion sur un thème imposé est extrêmement intéressant. Suite à l'expérience vécue avec le projet, je peux affirmer, sans hésitation, que cette façon d'enseigner a été très bénéfique pour moi.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-3QUE)

4.2.4 Sub-theme #4: We are giving and receiving valuable feedback

One of many important findings (and relevant to this thesis in particular) of Sato and

Lyster's (2012) study on peer interaction and corrective feedback is framed in its final sentence.

Here it is proposed that future research focus on peer CF as a main feature of learner interaction.

Peer CF, Sato and Lyster argue, gives learners opportunities to attend to language form in ways

that promote the development of fluency and accuracy. Marie-Claude and I observed and

reported that participants became increasingly aware of the value of peer CF as the program

progressed, and this was stated by some of the participants themselves:

> Je pense que la correction immédiate est plus efficace, parce qu'elle permet
> immédiatement de vérifier si dans un autre contexte, il faudrait aussi corriger. On peut
> alors comprendre sur quel périmètre elle s'applique.
> (Uptake sheets session, FL1-4QUE)

> Since I struggle with pronunciation and grammar the 'recast' method works best for me,
> but being aware of different ways of correcting makes the entire process more effective
> and meaningful.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, EL1-9RM)

Participants were also becoming very mindful of the types of CF they were giving and receiving.

We observed that they were paying more attention to the corrective feedback guide we had

provided (see appendix G) and were beginning to consider the different CF types in terms of

situations where one was more appropriate than another:

> You had to know when to step in and when to wait but by the end I kind of got the hang
> of listening for a mistake that was made over and over again and trying to correct those
> things more.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-7ANG)

> We used a lot of explicit correction, but also repetition and clarification. This process
> works really well when you mix up the different types of feedback you are using.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, EL1-2SP)

> I definitely tried to give better feedback, having them correct it themselves, asking
> questions about how they could better say the sentence, but again, I fell into some of my

> old habits of just correcting them… which was well-taken… but I just don't know how beneficial that is to the receiver. And, I have to say… before taking this class this was something I might not have even considered.
> (Focus group, EL1-8ANG)

In the end, there was a general feeling that although there were still some aspects of peer CF that required further exploration, it was a valuable method:

> Je crois que l'apprentissage réciproque est l'idéal car c'est du donnant-donnant. Chaque personne reçoit un bénéfice, donc ça nous encourage encore plus à donner des commentaires et corrections aux autres. Ça crée aussi des liens plus forts car c'est bidirectionnel et non unidirectionnel.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-8CR)

> I think corrective feedback is very effective in that it brings theory into practice immediately. I think the best way to learn is to do. However, there is a learning curve, so while this method can be the most effective it is initially challenging, but the pay-off is huge! Our conversations were stimulating and we all learned a lot!
> (Uptake sheets session 2, EL1-1ANG)

4.3 The program's design features and learner agency

The locating of positive influences towards learner agency, as achieved by the treatments and procedures of this program, will be examined from two perspectives: firstly, from the point-of-view of the individual participant; and secondly, from that of the entire group.

4.3.1 Sub-theme #1: This learning environment allows me the capacity to act

Blommaert et al (2016) argue that multilingualism "is not what individuals have or lack, but what the environment, as structured determination and interactional emergence, enables and disables them to deploy" (Blommaert et al., 2016, p. 213) Following this line of reasoning, we can find multiple examples of participants reporting to have experienced this sense of freedom in deploying their L2 resources. Participant EL1-3MN revealed in the focus group that she had considered her level of French to be basic, and that she had never actively learned to speak the language before. Her initial attitude was that she would not be able to participate in or contribute

towards the program. This changed dramatically by the end of the six weeks as she (and her

fellow learners) marveled at her progress, which she attributed to not only having had the

opportunity to speak French but also having done so in a place free of judgment, as everyone was

"in the same boat." Several other participants reiterated this feeling of being free from judgment,

of feeling less self-conscious, shy, or inhibited in a situation where reciprocal learning prevailed.

Similarly, there was a shared feeling that the give-and-take nature of a reciprocal learning

environment provided a sort of legitimacy that the learner might not have otherwise had.

Morita (2004) in her study of the L2 learner's negotiation of participation and

membership within language classrooms in Canadian universities, mentions L2 teachers as

having "emancipatory authority" (Morita, 2004, p. 599). This, she explains, is the responsibility

that L2 teachers have in assisting learners as they struggle to attain legitimacy and membership

in the classroom. In view of this, it would seem that a significant determining factor in achieving

positive learner agency lies in the approach of the L2 teacher him or herself, or in this case,

themselves. Morita adds that this responsibility relates to many aspects of the teachers'

approach, from how learner participation is directed to how materials and activities are planned

and executed. In the case of this program, with its bilingual/reciprocal structure and the presence

of two teachers working collaboratively, it can be argued that this emancipatory authority was

exerted in a unique fashion. This can be reflected on to a greater degree in the fourth section of

this chapter, where the subject of collaborative teaching will be dealt with in depth.

4.3.2 Sub-theme #2: This learning environment allows us to interact using 'real world'

situations.

I return once again to a previously mentioned analogy, the one given legs to by Hutchins'

(1991) study involving a group effort on the part of U.S. Navy sailors swiftly and safely guiding

large ships into their mooring. The primary finding was that the group's capacity in carrying out this technically complex task was not determined by a sum total of the constituent individuals' aptitudes and efforts, but rather that of the group as a whole. One could also say that the environment where Hutchins' study took place also had a great deal to do with the success or failure of this precarious undertaking. One can easily imagine the immense amount of technical training and equipment, the strict protocols and regulations, and other necessary sociocultural and technical tools. To conduct the program, Marie-Claude and I needed the obvious furnishings (classroom, chairs, whiteboard, etc.); in addition to this we required certain other parameters and resources in order to provide the desired agentive environment for our participants. As for the parameters, these were provided by the reciprocal/bilingual model itself, interactions in both English and French being an authentic feature of Montreal's professional reality. The resources were the materials (for program description see Appendix E; to view a selected activity see Appendix L) that Marie-Claude and I developed and adapted with the purpose of creating the effect of realism.

Pierce (1995) describes the language learner as having 'multiple desires' in relation to an investment being made in the target language and in one's own learner identity. Pierce maintains that an important role of the language teacher is to help language learners "claim the right to speak outside of the classroom" (Pierce, 1995, p. 26) In order to achieve this, Pierce adds, the real lived experiences and social identities of learners must be allowed to enter the learning environment. Throughout the data set there can be found references to participants having been able (or even compelled) to interact with their fellow learners in an environment that seemed more authentic and natural:

> Ça rend les choses plus naturelles entre les étudiants plutôt que juste avec un professeur.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-9QUE)

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> I'm a very social person, so it's good to learn French but also to get to know other people, learning about other people and their experiences. So it was a fun way to not only benefit from language learning, but also get to know other people.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-8ANG)

> I spoke French, I had no choice!
> (Uptake sheets session 1, EL1-6SP)

Marie-Claude and I similarly reflected on how as we circulated around the room we got the sense

of the environment having taken on a quality that was very un-classroom like. We were both

very impressed with the ease with which participants were able to immerse themselves in the

materials we had prepared for them. The following comment illustrates this feeling particularly

well:

> The student sense of engagement is exponentially higher. From that perspective, the buy-in and the willingness of the students to truly embrace learning, in the moment, all the time… is amazing.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-1ANG)

Participants of this study interacted with each other across two languages while performing roles

and tasks that had been designed to simulate an authentic cross-linguistic situation. Another

feature which helped create this sense of 'real life' was that fact that within these groups 'real'

language was being spoken. Participants came together in the reciprocal stage of each session

having been exposed to form-focused instruction in the input stage. However, they now had the

opportunity to teach and learn their native and target languages as they were spoken in the real

world, as suggested by this participant:

> I felt like I retained more, especially since we were discussing a subject matter in a real life context. Hearing corrections from someone who you know uses the language everyday instead of a teacher when you are not sure if the correction was to common usage or the official rule.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-7ANG)

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Question #11 of the opening and closing questionnaire, as expressed by histograms (see Appendix A), shows an unambiguous belief among participants that the most important feature of a language class is the opportunity to practice speaking in a realistic social context. We have discussed Pierce's notions of how realism in instructional content is crucial for assisting learners in attaining their 'right to speak' with members of the target language community. Lyster (2007) explores the theoretical perspectives, supporting what participants believed to be true, from a socio-cognitive point of view. With the support of Bruner's (1971) notions of the "growth of mind" (Lyster, 2007, p.18), Lyster describes Anderson's (1983, 1985) concepts of declarative knowledge (what one knows) and procedural knowledge (what one knows how to do). The resulting overarching idea is one which these participants seem to have understood on a deep level; that in terms of L2 development, the most reliable bridge between declarative and procedural knowledge is the interconnection of linguistic form and meaning:

> It's a fantastic teaching method for contextual language, and using an abstract form of grammar or vocabulary in real-world application.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-1ANG)
>
> Moi je crois que c'était des très bons thèmes qui pouvaient toucher quand même toutes les catégories de gens. Donc ça pouvait intéresser tout le monde, ça venait nous chercher. On avait le potentiel de discuter ensemble, les anglophones et les francophones.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-3QUE)
>
> Whether it was business or something else I feel that I definitely learn better when there is a real life context. That was something I found different from most language classes which I have taken before, which was better. I find that I remember what I learn better if it is taught in a way that seems applicable. I liked that.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-7ANG)
>
> Ce n'est pas les mêmes règles de grammaire scolaire et souvent c'est ça qui es difficile quand on apprend une langue, les règles à retenir et non appris dans l'usage comme vraiment ça s'utilise.
> (Focus group, FL1-7FR)

> Yes. It's like being thrown into another country, which is my experience, not knowing the language, not being able to communicate. This is the program where its the closest that I've seen to having learnt outside of the classroom.
> (Focus group, EL1-5UKR)

A feeling that has often been expressed to me by students over the years, and one I can relate to as a learner of French, is that of reluctance to engage members of the target language community. This tendency among L2 learners is mentioned by Pierce (1995) in her opinions relating to the distinction between learner motivation and investment. Pierce argues that the notion of investment can help us to understand why there is often an incongruity between a learner's motivation to learn a language and "their sometimes ambivalent desire to speak it." (p. 19). Mercer (2012) makes a similar point in arguing that a learner can exert agency through direct action and participation or through deliberate or non-participation or non-action. In my function as an English teacher I have often asked my students about opportunities they have in their everyday lives to practice with native speakers of English. A common response is that there does not exist any opportunity, but this is often accompanied by a confession of intentional avoidance of situations where speaking English is involved. Given that this ambivalence is probably not uncommon, it can be assumed that it inhabited the minds of participants to varying degrees. Thus, the following statements can be interpreted as a positive effect of the environment created by this program on participants' capacity to act towards and participate in meaningful interactions with members of the target language community:

> I feel like I will be better prepared to speak French in the future. I found it very encouraging.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-8ANG)

> Du même coup, je suis beaucoup moins mal à l'aise de m'exprimer en anglais. Honnêtement, ce programme m'a donné le goût d'aller plus loin et de continuer à utiliser l'anglais au travail avec plusieurs collègues anglophones afin de maintenir une certaine facilité à m'exprimer.

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> (Follow-up questionnaire, FL1-3QUE)

> Vous avez démontré que l'apprentissage des langues pouvait être fun et dynamique. C'est aussi un bon moyen d'élargir son cercle de connaissances.
> (Follow-up questionnaire, FL1-10FR)

> Maintenant je suis plus à l'aise de parler avec des gens qui parlent en anglais. J'écoute des émissions en anglais afin de poursuivre mon apprentissage. J'ai acheté un logiciel pour continuer mon apprentissage en anglais.
> (Follow-up questionnaire, FL1-7FR)

Participants may not have invested financially in this program, but they certainly seem to have invested in other ways. Judging by the responses given, there appears to be a general consensus of having received good return on investment.   In terms of having had an experience meeting general expectations, of having felt engaged, and having achieved meaningful access to the target language community, the investment seems to have been worthwhile. The perceived value of this participant group's cultural capital has reportedly been enriched:

> Cette expérience m'a donné davantage de confiance en moi pour me remettre à apprendre l'anglais. J'ai repris des cours privés et j'ai pu trouver un autre emploi.
> (Follow-up questionnaire, FL1-10FR)

> Allowed more time for speech, for dialogue – for real life dialogue. Engaging with people across the table, then you feel more energy, you are more motivated to have yourself understood and to understand rather than sitting in the class looking at a teacher at the front of the class.
> (Closing questionnaire, EL1-4ANG)

> Oui, je n'aurais pas imaginé ça avant. Ça m'a redonné l'envie d'apprendre l'anglais et puis devenir maitre. Ça m'a redonné la confiance à l'apprentissage d'une langue même à un âge plus avancé. On dit, c'est peut-être juste que si on n'a pas la maitrise actuellement, que c'est peut-être un problème de méthode et de confiance en soi. Tout le monde finalement, peu importe ses capacités, peut apprendre une langue, c'est la volonté et les bonnes méthodes.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-7FR)

> As per real life, I learnt most of my French on the job, and this has been very similar. The one-on-one interaction with people outside of my language... That's how you learn.
> (Focus group, EL1-5UKR)

4.4 The Participant group's overall appraisal the program

The preceding sections of this chapter have presented the data set through the lens of themes related to SLA. Up to this point, participants' transcribed words have been largely used in ways that show a positive view of the program. The overarching objective of this thesis is, after all, to present this program model as potentially effective and ultimately feasible. Nothing, however, is perfect, particularly when it is tried for the first time. Throughout this thesis, I have noted instances where both participants and investigators of this study were engaged at a high level. All of us took on a degree of ownership of the process we were undertaking and none of us took a passive approach. By the end of the six weeks there was a sense that we were all participants and investigators alike. The result of this high level of engagement was an unanimously elevated appraisal of the model itself and the manner in which it was put into practice. By that same token, at the conclusion of the program and in the subsequent collected data, some opinions of a critical nature emerged.

This section will give voice to more critical sentiments by examining each of the main features (peer CF, bilingual-reciprocal learning, the program's design, and collaborative teaching) separately. Besides being very engaged in this program, the participant group consisted of two experienced language teachers as well as individuals who had experience learning several languages, not just French and English, some of whom spoke several languages. Marie-Claude, besides being an experienced L2 teacher was also a DISE master's student and very familiar with the concepts we were working with. As principal investigator in this study I considered Marie-Claude both as co-investigator and a participant. As such, she provided insights of great value in relation to all aspects of the program, particularly that of collaborative teaching.

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4.4.1 Sub-theme #1: Peer corrective feedback

As was mentioned in the Chapter 3, because of changes in the overall approach to data interpretation there was a change in how the data from the uptake sheet would be included. In spite of this, Marie-Claude and I had continued to require that participants collect this information. This process of identifying the feedback type and recording on the uptake sheet became a rather cumbersome activity and not well-received:

> It is difficult to follow up with the conversation and at the same time record the feedback.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, EL1-7ANG)

> Je pense que c'est difficile de parler en français, faire les corrections en anglais et prendre le temps pour écrire toutes les fautes et les méthodes de corrections en même temps.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, FL1-4QUE)

This annoyance with the process of filling out the uptake sheet diminished as participants grew accustomed to the task; this was also due to our having made an easier-to-use version (see Appendix F) with categories that could be ticked off rather than having to write the information in. Despite our having made this change, the portion of the uptake sheet for recording CF types didn't end up yielding any useful data. In our field notes, however, Marie-Claude and I both observed that participants had reached a state of awareness of the benefits of peer CF. Participants also reported having appreciated the training they received in peer CF, as well as our efforts to re-enforce its use:

> If not for the training and the cheat sheet (peer CF guide) you provided I would have just used recasts the entire time.
> (Focus group, EL1-1ANG)

> Oui je pense au début si ça ne prend pas forcement trop de temps, il faut un peu de théorique qui explique les différentes façons de donner la rétroaction sans interrompre la parole. Et à la fois il faut que les élèves gardent en tête ça régulièrement, donc c'est bien qu'il y a des profs qui leur rappelle : « n'oublie pas de le corriger ». En élèves on n'est pas toujours dans l'état d'esprit de penser à corriger les autres.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-6FR)

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There were reports, however, despite our efforts to monitor the use of peer CF, that many participants were not following our guidelines. In the training session we had tried to communicate the idea that they should try to use as many different feedback types as possible, and that recasts in particular need not be avoided but should not be relied on exclusively.

> Nous on les a utilisées, même tantôt on l'utilisait encore comme : 'Quoi? qu'est ce-que t'as dit? Je ne comprends pas ! » Plus les cours avançaient plus les corrections étaient plus directes, action systématique (seulement un mot).
> (Focus group, FL1-9QUE)

> I thought that it was very easy to fall back to automatically correcting the person. I found it hard to try and remember all the different types of feedback or ways of giving feedback.
> (Focus group, EL1-8ANG)

> Je l'ai fait le premier cours mais après je n'ai pas vraiment utilise la méthode.
> (Focus group, FL1-6FR)

Some found the process of giving peer CF to be frustrating and difficult:

> I think I was good in helping people with English. English is not my first language so even though I have a good level of knowledge, I'm always very humble when I can help with it.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-3MN)

> Parfois on pouvait ne se sentir pas un peu, pas coupable, mais on voudrait expliquer mais on sait pas vraiment c'est quoi la bonne approche, ce qui serait le plus utile pour toi.
> (Focus group, FL1-10FR)

Some participants were more critical of peer CF and of the way it had been applied in this program. If we look at the data generated by the opening and closing questionnaires, for questions 12-15 in particular, it appears that many but not all participants had a favorable view of peer CF. This sentiment can be seen in other parts of the data set as well:

> Très intéressant mais tout de même difficile à faire au niveau du français car plusieurs mots sont utilisés par les personnes de la langue française mais ce n'est pas toujours du bon français, exemple : Je suis allée au magasin pis j'ai rencontré une très bonne amie - PIS, ce n'est pas correcte mais très utilisé.
> (Follow up questionnaire, FL1-6FR)

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> A lot of the feedback I received was not reliable. There was a tremendous sense of supporting each other, but some of the feedback might not have been accurate. I would want more feedback from teacher to make sure the feedback is correct.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-9RM)

> le correcteur doit être un professeur, ou un élève natif et bien formé à corriger sans trop interrompre le débit, ou un élève de niveau moins avancé, mais qui saura ne corriger que s'il est certain de sa correction.
> (Follow up questionnaire, FL1-6FR)

Another critique of the use of peer CF in this program came from a development that Marie-Claude and I had also observed and noted. As the meaning-based (business themes) and language feature-based components of the program became more complex, so did the discussions. As a result, the nature of peer CF also became more complex. By the third session we began to notice a much higher incidence of feedback containing in-depth and lengthy metalinguistic discussions. These discussions would often prompt Marie-Claude and me to intervene and get participants back on task:

> And on the reciprocal feedback side, it's prone to digression and conversation. Often this was learning-oriented digression, such as why does this exist, and then you try to explain it to the other language learner. And then maybe it takes two of you and the teacher to realize where this rule fits in. But that can turn a 2 or 3-minute correction into a 15-minute conversation.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-1ANG)

This type of comment relates to the practical application of peer CF, but also to how peer CF can be used in a bilingual-reciprocal learning environment. Because of this, the influence of the nature of the task will be further explored in the following sections.

4.4.2 Sub-theme #2: Bilingual-reciprocal learning

The challenges that Marie-Claude and I encountered were mediated by factors inherent to the nature of bilingual-reciprocal learning. How these difficulties manifested themselves in the delivery of the program were also mediated by our own strengths and weaknesses as language

teachers. A problem that was noticeable from the outset was a general imbalance of proficiency

levels, particularly on the EL1 side. One participant said the following:

> And I do agree that the level of languages… take me for example, my level of French is
> lower than the level of English of some of the Francophones, so I know that sometimes it
> not be very interesting to them, maybe… they often need to give explicit correction or
> clear vocabulary correction, because… I don't know the word. I don't know what their
> experience is, but sometimes I feel a little bit guilty because the level of language is not
> the same as theirs.
> (Focus group, EL1-3MN)

This discrepancy in levels caused difficulties in the input sessions, but also in the reciprocal

sessions as it affected the degree to which both groups were able to come together having

received a comparable amount of input:

> I would say that in general the French spoke better English than the English spoke
> French. So that could be reflected in how fast we moved through the classes when we
> were separate.
> (Focus group, EL1-1ANG)

> The other group did seem to have more information and covered more material.
> (Focus group, EL1-8ANG)

A significant cause of imbalance between the FL1 and EL1 groups came from what were viewed

by participants as inherent differences between the French and English languages:

> Parce que le français est assez complexe comme langue donc c'est sûr que moi je suis pas
> un prof de français et le français est ma langue première oui, mais je n'excelle pas dans
> cette langue. Donc c'était peut-être difficile parfois mais avec l'aide des autres on arrive
> toujours à bien s'en sortir.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-10FR)

> À mon avis il est plus difficile de corriger quelqu'un quand ils parlent le français parce
> qu'il y a plus de règles et nous les prenons pour acquis.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, FL1-1SP)

> Il n'est pas facile de corriger le français, mais je suis sûr que nous pouvons réussir.
> Parfois j'étais sélectif dans mes corrections parce que je ne veux pas les décourager.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, FL1-8CR)

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Marie-Claude and I were both aware that there were marked dissimilarities in the approach to teaching the two languages that would have to be accounted for in our planning. For English, there is a vast range of business related books available that are specifically designed for highly communicative, business-related courses. In the weeks leading up to the beginning of the program I scoured the internet and local book shops in search of appropriate French-language materials. My search never yielded anything that I considered as a good match to the English materials I already had. I think the main reason for this absence of French materials in the genre I was looking for is that the tradition of teaching English for the specific purpose of re-enforcing business-related skills has a longer tradition in English than in French. I would also point to the possibility that teaching approaches generally associated with English tend to be more collaborative and communicative in nature. The resulting situation was that materials had to be created from scratch. Typically, I would conceive and create a text in English and then Marie-Claude would adapt and translate it into French. This required more planning work on both our parts, but resulted in our being able to offer materials that were more specific to the context of doing business in Montreal in French and English. One particularly popular activity was *Lafayette Hotels Inc.* (see Appendix L).

The role of the teacher within a bilingual-reciprocal learning environment was something Marie-Claude and I grappled with throughout the program. In the context of this having been an experimental program for the purposes of research our roles as collaborating teachers and observers of behavior often overlapped. Participants were receptive to the fact that we were having some difficulty in establishing our roles as facilitators and as managers within the classroom, particularly in the reciprocal sessions. This subject was brought up during the focus group, and resulted in some valuable critical commentary:

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> In my group it was brought up in our discussion that in the course of let's say over the course of a year or semester long class, that this method would benefit from greater structure. Everyone in this class is very motivated and excited by this new way of learning, but people in my group as we were talking, felt that motivation might lag and structure might be needed to hold it together for a while.
> (Focus group, EL1-1ANG)

Participant EL1-9RM, and experienced language teacher, added further comment:

> This is the language teacher in me talking here. The teacher should really keep the control of the class, so you want to make sure that there is structure, that there is input interesting enough for the people to stay motivated for a longer period of time. Also you need to remind them of what they are there for, because sometime we would go into a tangent. I've been teaching a lot in high school so to me it was very daunting working with adults. 'Do I tell them to stop saying this... do I tell them to stop talking... How do I control it...? Do I let them decide how much time they're going to spend on it? and I realize that people like structure… The other thing is that as you're talking with your peers it's not comfortable for you to interrupt your peers but as a teacher you can take it back on track... re-direct, take it where it should go.
> (Focus group, EL1-9RM)

One of the features of this program Marie-Claude and found particularly remarkable was the degree to which participants took an active role in the process; we agreed that in this way it was a unique experience. However, perhaps in allowing participants to take on such an autonomous position we lost sight of our functions as figures of authority:

> For sure... An authoritative figure (collective agreement). The teacher has that assumed position, so it's a lot easier to have your teacher come up and say: "Okay guys, get back on track... Stop talking about this, it's unrelated" ...
> (Focus group, EL1-1ANG)

In addition, participants commented that this lack of definition in the role of the teacher had resulted in a feeling that the general objectives were not absolutely clear:

> Peut-être en donnant des objectifs clairs, exemple quand on faisait les objets qu'il fallait vendre et décrire... Au lieu de dire : 'faites-vous-en le plus que vous pouvez', peut-être dire : ' okay, vous en avez fait au moins 5 d'ici les 30 prochaines minutes', donc ça serait peut-être bien. Peut-être demander un output écrit en restant quand même simple, un petit résume. En même temps ça l'aiderait la rédaction (pour rédiger dans l'autre langue).
> (Focus group, FL1-7FR)

Another element of interaction between participants that proved to be problematic was in the ability to effectively complete tasks they were being given. This was reported by a participant in his comment that the complexity of certain tasks and their associated language features could "Turn a 2 or 3-minute correction into a 15-minute conversation" (Semi-structured interview, EL1-1ANG). There was also the concern that these lengthy discussions were cutting into time that could be better spent attending to form:

> I always wish for more time and find myself making lists of subjects I need further clarity on. Weird thought: The activities may be a little too interesting/challenging in that the mind is split between performing them, using a second language and providing constructive/corrective feedback. This may be solved by having more time & practice with corrective feedback.
> (Uptake sheet session 5, EL1-5UKR)

4.4.3 Sub-theme #3: Program design

An aspect of this program that could be considered as novel was in its design. The transition from input session to reciprocal session was a feature that elicited a positive response from participants. The intention for this design was that it would serve as an extension of the progression of Lyster's (2007) counterbalanced approach. The four stages (noticing, awareness, guided practice, and autonomous practice) of the counterbalanced instructional model thus received an added reciprocal component. Consisting of two reciprocal tasks, the reciprocal session was intended to mirror the guided and autonomous practice portions of the input session. To participants, this progression seemed logical and practical. However, there is reason to believe that the reciprocal session should have contained elements of noticing and awareness. This would have allowed the reciprocal session to be, to some extent, a reflection of the entire four-stage sequence of the input session. This possibility was suggested by participants:

> I liked the two segments, they were both a good length. But I wonder if going back and forth a bit more would be a good idea. I noticed some things in the group session and it might have been better to have some more theory afterwards.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-7ANG)

> Oui moi j'ai trouvé ça bien. Peut-être un peu plus d'input avant, un peu plus de cours pour que ça soit un peu plus précis sur le sujet, plus travaillé, pour qu'on soit plus cadré au niveau du sujet et de ce qu'on peut utiliser dans l'échange. Peut-être que ça dure moitié/moitié, parce que ça reste très important l'échange comme ça reste très important de travailler la grammaire le vocabulaire et les sujets à utiliser.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-10FR)

There were also ideas about how the recording of feedback could be used to follow learners'

progress and incorporate the resulting information into planning:

> I could see a situation where we could keep track of language areas that need more practice and do more follow up and plan our feedback more.
> (Uptake sheet session 5, EL1-9RM)

One particular suggestion that was acted on immediately after it was heard was that all of the

materials for each linguistic group should be made available to the entire group so that CF

providers could review the materials of their interlocutors prior to each session:

> Having access to all of the materials, French and English, before class is very important. I can provide much better feedback when I have had the chance to review the materials from the other member's input session, and it works both ways.
> (Uptake sheet session 2, EL1-7ANG)

Some participants though the input session was too long, and that more time should have been

given to the reciprocal session:

> Oui, c'est bien construit. Par contre des fois je trouvais que la première partie était un peu longue. Mais ça dépend des cours, j'aurais aimé avoir plus de temps pour pratiquer encore... Mais j'imagine.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-1SP)

> I wish there had been more on the feedback side, more of the reciprocal part. I thought that was where I did most of my language and vocabulary and such. But, it was good to have something to go into the second part with, some subjects and language theory.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-8ANG)

> Oui c'était bien construit. Moi je préférais la deuxième partie avec les anglophones, parce qu'on avait plus facilement la rétroaction. Si j'avais à proposer une évolution ça serait d'avoir un petit peu moins de temps dans la première partie et un petit peu plus dans la deuxième.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-6(FR)

Many participants expressed that much more time should have been given to peer CF training:

> Yes. However, I think it could have been more… I know there was a time crunch… but I think we could have benefitted from a bit more training, because towards the end everyone was essentially doing corrective feedback (recasts) instead of the other four or five examples you showed us. I think we tend to fall back on correcting the other person's mistakes. Which is fine, but I think I would prefer to have the other kind of feedback where the answer is not given and I have to think about it… instead of just being automatically corrected.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-8ANG)

One sentiment that was absolutely unanimous, and one that Marie-Claude and I did not take as

negative criticism, was that the program had simply been too short:

> I think this model requires more time… to mature. There was a learning curve over the course of our classes, as we figured out how to both receive and give corrective feedback. I think with more intensive classes this could have a lot of value. In a short term manner in which we did it, I would say 40% of the time was taken just adapting to the manner in which we were doing it.
> (Focus group, EL1-1ANG)

> Moi personnellement, six semaines ça m'a donné la curiosité de continuer et ce qui est malheureux parce que ça arrêtait.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-3QUE)

> I would say the one problem was time limitations, because the program was very brief… As far as the corrective feedback went I found that once we got into something, it was over… we didn't have the time to spend on it because we only had six weeks.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-5UKR)

> Je trouvais que l'intention de faire 2 parties complémentaires de la séance, une partie input et l'autre partie de rétroaction étais assez bonne. Peut-être que ça aurait pu être plus efficace pour nous, plus pertinent dans notre apprentissage de la langue si c'était 4 heures de temps ou 2 fois par semaine ou continuant toute la session.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-6FR)

4.4.4 Sub-theme #4: Collaborative teaching

The presence in the classroom of two well-trained and experienced language teachers was of indispensable importance to the success of this program. Marie-Claude and I collaborated very closely, not only in the delivery of the six sessions, but also in all of the planning stages. This type of arrangement was a new experience for all of the learners and teachers alike. Questions 6 and 7 of the opening and closing questionnaires (see Appendix A) provide some definitive information in regards to participants' attitudes towards the presence of two teachers, and two languages in one classroom. The histograms for both of these questions show a shift towards a favorable attitude in both respects. This sentiment is expressed in the following comment:

> Je pense que l'enseignement collaboratif bilingue est une bonne chose car il permet à tous de bien comprendre les instructions pendant les cours, et surtout, cela augmente la disponibilité de chaque professeur pour les élèves. Il est difficile, à mon sens, de gérer et d'accompagner, seul, un groupe d'une trentaine de personnes
> (Follow-up questionnaire, FL1-2QUE)

Collaborative planning, we both came to realize, was a time-consuming and labor-intensive exercise. One shared realization was that the process of developing and adapting materials for a bilingual class had required at least twice the effort and time of a monolingual class.

Our main task was to choose business-related themes and match them with language features in French and English, and then make sure that every exercise and activity translated coherently between the two languages. As I took on the role of conceiving the themes and deciding on the nature of materials that would be used, it became Marie-Claude's job to translate everything into French, while also making sure that everything made sense from the perspective of a French language teacher. The weeks leading up to the opening session were very busy and consisted of a lot of back-and-forth communication between us as we prepared for the opening

session. Upon reflection, one thing is certain; if Marie-Claude and I had not worked well

together, if there had been conflicts or imbalances in our energies, this program would not have

worked as well as it did. It was mentioned before that Marie-Claude's role in this study was that

of co-investigator and collaborator, but also as participant. For this reason, this section will

focus primarily on her experience.

A few weeks after the program had concluded, Marie-Claude participated in an interview.

For this interview there were no pre-determined questions; it was an opportunity for her to

provide an in-depth reflection of her experience. The resulting transcript of the interview can be

boiled down to six main areas that Marie-Claude cited as being particularly significant, in her

opinion, to successful collaborative teaching. As has been done in previous sections, I will rely

on the words of the participant in order to communicate these ideas.

1. Two teachers teaching together, not just two teachers in the room.

It's not just added value if there is another person, you have to be on the same
wavelength and leaning together towards the same direction. Like the analogy of two
musicians playing a song together, you're working together… not just one part and
another part.
(Co-investigator interview, Marie-Claude Deschambault)

2. Communication.

Not just to keep track of what we're doing, but to avoid tension. Being able to
communicate effectively with each other is really important.
(Co-investigator interview, Marie-Claude Deschambault)

3. Motivation

You need the teachers to believe in the value of this process. This is really important
because they need to be motivated and committed. Both teachers have to understand the
value of collaborative teaching, and this has to be done before all of the effort is put in. I
think it does have a lot of value, and if you do it over and over it becomes easier and
easier. If we were to re-do this, it would be so much easier… and better. We know each
other really well now; how we work, our teaching styles. This would allow us to be
much more productive.
(Co-investigator interview, Marie-Claude Deschambault)

4. Effective shared planning

To avoid wasting time while planning, a system needs to be developed that takes your expectations and objectives into account and allows for a work plan to emerge. (Co-investigator interview, Marie-Claude Deschambault)

5. For collaborative learning, a highly collaborative approach

Because this program was so collaborative in its design, you have to teach in a way that naturally inspires collaboration. You have to work together in the same way that you want your students to learn. This really comes out in the planning, if you want students to interact in a reciprocal fashion, your planning has to be a reflection of this.
(Co-investigator interview, Marie-Claude Deschambault)

6. Heightened awareness and interpersonal acuity.

There was an extremely big interpersonal aspect to this project. Between the students when they were giving feedback there was this personality thing, and then there was this personality thing between you and I. And there is the same thing going on between myself and the students and you and the students. All of these interactions affect perspectives and you have to be aware of the dynamics. Also because of the nature of this program, students took on a much more active role in decision-making and expressing their opinions. All of these things made the interactional dynamics in the room much different, compared to a regular class with one teacher.
(Co-investigator interview, Marie-Claude Deschambault)

When asked to list advantages and disadvantages of collaborative teaching, Marie-Claude listed among the advantages that it was an extremely positive learning opportunity for students as well as being a unique and rewarding teaching experience. She also mentioned a motivational aspect that seemed to raise the intensity, thus increasing learner and teacher motivation. She mentioned that her entire teaching approach had been pushed and challenged in ways she had never experienced before. Speaking of disadvantages, Marie-Claude's only points were that collaborative teaching is difficult, time-consuming, and requiring a great deal of motivation, mutual trust, respect, interpersonal competence, and an overall belief in the value of the process.

In reviewing Marie-Claude's thoughts about collaborative teaching it is easy to envisage all of the things that can go wrong. To explain the successes we experienced in our collaborative

delivery of this program I can say that luck played a large role. In this particular case energy,

teaching styles, and personalities of the two collaborating teachers were well-matched enough to

provide the resources and support our learners required. This is expressed in the following

comments:

> I found the teachers very very supportive. For example, Marie Claude was very patient
> with me and that made me feel much better with my group. As much as the concept is
> good or the process is innovative and helpful, when it comes to learning a language it
> comes back so much to the teacher, in my opinion.
> (Follow-up questionnaire, EL1-5UKR)
>
> Vous avez l'air d'avoir une belle complicité, de travailler bien ensemble.
> (Semi-structured interview, FL1-1SP)
>
> I felt they not only were in-sync in terms of what material they were presenting, but they
> both had to have the ability to be adaptable. Not only week to week, but in the class
> itself. If a method seemed to be needing some tweaking, they were able to almost
> uniformly change directions together.
> (Semi-structured interview, EL1-1ANG)

During my interview with Marie-Claude, where I asked her to provide reflections on all

of the work we had done together, she made a comment with which I strongly agreed. She

speculated that if we were to repeat this program, with a new group of participants, that the

undertaking would be a great deal easier due to us having laid a solid foundation on which to

build. In the following chapter I will initiate the process of building from this foundation, by

addressing the results associated with the program's principal facets separately.   The ultimate

goal of the ensuing discussion is the transporting of this model from the experimental classroom

to that of the real world. With this goal in mind, I hope this discussion will be one extending

well beyond the pages of this thesis.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Having explored the collective experience of this group through the lens of applied thematic analysis, many conclusions can be derived.   As to the overall potential and feasibility of future programs of this kind, the results of this thesis have provided some important insights. The analysis of participants' transcribed words and thoughts have responded to the research questions in a thorough and broad fashion: learner agency from an individual and collective perspective, and appreciably supported by design features of the program, was reported to have been reinforced in such a way that learners gained the capacity to act; and a generally positive but critical assessment was given to a bilingual-reciprocal model of language learning. One particularly valuable outcome of the data set was the honest and constructive appraisal of the program given by participants. This appraisal reflected their deep sense of ownership and involvement and provided information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the program design, and how it was delivered. I interpret that as being indicative of a powerful emergent agentive system on the part of participants, as they sought to actively influence and alter their contextual surroundings.

Of parallel importance to this concluding chapter is in the reconsidering of the reviewed literature. The following will be a treatment of each of the main features and themes of this thesis through a combined perspective of the supporting literature and the participant group's experience. The ultimate goal here will be to provide a synthesis that addresses the research questions of this thesis while providing guidelines for future practitioners.

5.1 Peer corrective feedback

The application of peer CF in this program was largely inspired by Sato and Lyster's (2012) study on peer interaction and corrective feedback. While Sato and Lyster's quasi-

experimental study was focused on very specific correlations between peer CF and L2

development, reflections of their findings can be found in this thesis. As was asserted by Sato

and Lyster, this study can also claim 'Strong ecological validity'. Their study shows through its

design a positive influence of peer interaction and CF on L2 development; this study shows a

similar correlation according to the beliefs and perceptions of participants. Their study showed

peer CF to be particularly beneficial in situations where learners do not have ample opportunities

to interact in the target language or receive CF; participants in this study have concurred here as

well. In addition, Sato and Lyster demonstrated the direct benefit of training learners in the

provision of peer CF; this benefit can be seen in the beliefs and perceptions expressed in the data

set.

The training of peer CF is one aspect warranting further discussion, particularly when

making comparisons to Sato and Lyster's study. In Sato and Lyster's study, the procedure for

CF training was broken into three stages: modelling, practice, and use-in-context. Because the

present study was only six weeks in length there was not enough time to cover these stages in as

much depth as Sato and Lyster. Regardless of time constraints, the fact that peer CF training was

given only once at the first session was a significant flaw in the design of the program and

prevented participants from receiving the full benefit of the technique. In retrospect, more time

should have been given throughout the six sessions in order to complete the stages of peer CF

training.

Just as peer CF training was shown to be of great importance in a bilingual-reciprocal

learning environment, other knowledge gaps that could have been addressed with training,

became apparent. One distinctive feature of this study was that not only were participants giving

peer CF in two languages, but there were many participants for whom neither French nor English

was their L1. Even for those whose L1 was their interlocutor's target language there was an expressed desire to have had more in the way of support and resources to aid them in fulfilling their roles as language experts. Marie-Claude and I were able to provide for these needs with our own presence as L2 teachers, and by distributing text-based materials relating to specific language features.

One subject of commentary that emerged among participants was that of a lack of absolute confidence in the quality of the CF participants were giving and receiving. Sato and Ballinger (2012) address this issue in their study, which involves the notion of combining L2 learning and learning for better collaborative skills. A major finding of their study is that in order for peer CF to be effective in promoting L2 development, it must be practiced within an environment with a prevailing collaborative mindset. One of the factors Sato and Ballinger included as having a negative impact on the establishment of a collaborative environment was uncertainty about the accuracy of CF. In the case of this program, where some participants were providing CF in a language that was not their L1, there is the potential for the collective mindset to be negatively affected in this way.

The uptake sheet was not only very important as a data recording device in this research but also represented what would be a necessary document in a 'real-world' running of this program. If this program were to be run over the course of a semester or full year it would be necessary for planners to have access to information relating to the giving and receiving of peer CF. As this type of document could quickly become unmanageable for teachers and cumbersome for learners, an efficient system would have to be devised. There would also be the need for an uptake sheet type document to be designed in such a way (perhaps using web-based tools) that it could adapt to different types of learning situations.

Having considered the application of peer CF from the perspective of participants, and with the reviewed research in mind, the following guidelines are proposed:

1. The training for peer corrective feedback should be re-enforced throughout the program, and in such a way that the three stages (modelling, practice, and use-in-context) are adequately presented to learners.

2. Participants should be given ample training, resources and support to assist them with gaps in their L1 awareness. This could consist of a brief refresher course in grammar, some technique for teaching language features, and more direct attention and intervention from the teachers.

3. Devices for recording instances of feedback (given and received) should be designed according to the given reciprocal task at hand, should contain clear objectives, and should be designed with the user considerations of teacher/planner and learner in mind.

4. Because the nature of peer CF is influenced by the nature of the reciprocal task, strategies for time management and specific objectives of feedback should be considered during planning.

5.2 Bilingual reciprocal learning

In order to reflect on the application of bilingual-reciprocal learning in this program I will refer to Susan Ballinger's (2013) study, which provided the initial inspiration for this thesis. Ballinger's study consisted of a 7-week intervention with English and French third grade classes in Montreal. The scope of Ballinger's study was different from the present study in that it relied on focused qualitative and quantitative data to isolate correlations between specific teaching strategies and the collaborative nature and scope of learners' reciprocal learning. The aspect of Ballinger's study having particular relevance to the current subject of discussion is in its

limitations, which she considers to have contributed to its "lack of sustainability" (Ballinger, 2013, p. 145). Of her study's main weaknesses, she refers to a general absence of collaborative effort among her participant groups, the existence of a 'task effect', and a lack of involvement on the part of the teachers involved, in planning and implementing the strategic instruction.

While Marie-Claude and I did not have exactly the same challenges as Ballinger, there are definite similarities in our experience. In regards to collaborative teaching, we did not encounter the same degree of disparity between teachers in terms of attitude towards key concepts or involvement in the process. However, our basic roles as teachers were affected by the nature of the environment in ways that compromised, to some degree, our ability to exert the authority that was needed in keeping learners on task at all times. This may have been partially due to the complexity of our roles as teachers and observers, but was nonetheless a factor that could have been addressed in the planning stages and perhaps avoided.

The 'task effect' manifested itself in our program in two main ways. Firstly, because of elemental differences between the two target languages of the program, the transition between input and reciprocal sessions was affected in such a way that incongruences emerged. This was reported to have been more of an issue among FL1 participants as they gave CF to their EL1 counterparts. There is mention of the French language being complex and replete with rules making peer CF more challenging. This is an issue that could be remedied with enhanced support and training from the collaborating teachers in terms of concrete methodologies in assisting their interlocutors with linguistic form. Secondly, due to the increasing complexity of the tasks themselves and the resulting influence on interactions, the efficiency of peer CF was compromised.   One participant remarked that the reciprocal portions of the program were "prone to digression and conversation" (Semi-structured interview, EL1-1ANG). This became

particularly evident in the third session when the subject matter was generally more complex than in the two previous ones. One could consider this to be a problematic outcome of bilingual/reciprocal learning, but I believe it is one that can be remedied both in the planning stages and in the basic strategies of instruction.

Finally, as mentioned by Ballinger in the limitations of her study, there was the problem of differences in proficiency in the target language among participants. These differences were more noticeable in the FL1 one group than the EL1 and did cause difficulties in the interactions occurring within bilingual groups. This was by no means a fatal flaw in the program and in many cases is possible to avoid, but does require added consideration in various areas of planning.

The above discussion prompts the following guidelines:

1. While it is not always possible to have uniformity of proficiency levels in a group of language learners, such imbalances must be accounted for in the planning and delivery of course materials. This factor must also be taken into account in the formation of reciprocal session groups and in the level of support provided by the teachers.

2. Inherent differences between the two target languages are a significant factor for consideration in the planning and delivery of course materials; furthermore, support and training should be given with the aim of assisting learners in their roles as pedagogues.

3. While bilingual-reciprocal learning seems to encourage a high degree of autonomous interaction, proactive teacher roles must nonetheless be established and re-enforced.

4. As more complex tasks and language features may result in discussions of a more meta-linguistic nature, strategies to avoid excessive digression should be included in the planning and delivery of materials.

5.3 Program design

From the point of view of the participants it was the design of the program, with its input and reciprocal sessions, that really set it apart from their previous experiences in language classrooms. The transition from receiving input in a monolingual classroom situation to the coming together of the FL1 and EL1groups is what seems to have given other main features greater definition. With the use of Lyster's counterbalanced approach as a foundational template for the staging of each session, the result was that opportunities to practice the target language were consistently available to learners.

Having had the opportunity to analyze the data set and reflect on the entire experience, it has become clear that the counterbalanced approach has extremely wide implications in the context of a bilingual-reciprocal language program. While language was the main thing being learned, it was not the only thing being learned: participants were learning how to provide CF, teachers and learners were learning how to become better collaborators, and all were learning how to become better language teachers. For this reason, I now view it as a guiding principle for future development of this model that all of these learning points be simultaneously fed through the counterbalanced process. The result would be the emergence of a uniform fabric, comprised of all of the reinforced skills the learner is expected to develop.

5.4 Collaborative teaching

As with the design of the program discussed in the previous section, the presence of two collaborating teachers in this program was essential in allowing all of the other parts to fall into place. An interesting result of collaborative teaching is the complexity of relationships it creates: between teachers, between linguistic groups and their respective and non-respective input teachers, and between the entire group and the teaching team. As Marie-Claude described in her

interview and field notes, this dynamic creates a very unique teaching experience, or as she terms it, "A feeling of a community of learners."

I can attest that collaborative teaching has many advantages, but they come at a price. The price is approximately twice the regular time spent planning, the demands of intensive communication with your co-teacher, and having to take on a role requiring an elevated sense of social awareness. We have mostly spoken of agency as an attribute of the learner; it could be argued that in a collaborative teaching partnership, teacher agency is affected to a similar degree. The teacher is no longer operating in isolation, thus there exists a sociocultural aspect of collaborative teaching. I can say from my own experience, and in confidence that Marie-Claude would concur, that collaborative teaching in this particular context greatly enhanced the capacity to act towards achieving the goal of delivering the best possible learning environment.

5.5 Learner agency

In the introduction chapter I expressed my views on the challenge adults face as they pursue the goal of L2 development. When considering what is involved, notions such as motivation, investment, diligence and dedication come to mind. It seems that often the onus is put on the individual learner to possess these attributes, and lack of success is simply the result of not having had them in sufficient amounts. In this thesis I have chosen to approach the subject of adult L2 development using methodologies I consider to be more beneficial. By that same token, I feel that if I am to meaningfully interpret the experiences of my participants, this must be done using a lens of analysis that can view the adult L2 learner's struggle from multiple dimensions. Interpreting the nature of the learner's agentive system in all of its complexity and multi-dimensionality has allowed me to comprehend with greater clarity the source of a bilingual/reciprocal learning model's potential. Van Lier (2008) argues for agency being

foundational in the process of L2 development, implying that this is, in fact, what is required for an L2 learner to find success.

Picture the life of a woman, for example, juggling the rigors of single parenthood and a demanding profession, feeling ambition and encouragement at the prospect of a possible future, but ever aware of barriers put in place by her lacking linguistic competence. Once or twice a week, she attends an evening language course at the local university. After a long work day, and distracted by everyday life concerns, she struggles against fatigue and boredom to benefit as much as possible from the lessons and activities of the class. After the fourth or fifth session she begins to skip classes and eventually stops going altogether, her money wasted and all inspiration dashed. Is it fair for us to write this person off as lacking in motivation or dedication? Is it possible that certain features of the language class were to blame for her not having experienced the capacity to engage her motivational energy in ways that could have led to the achievement of her desired goals?

In the introduction chapter I expressed my belief that much could be done towards improving the effectiveness of adult language education by putting to use what we have learned through research over the past several decades. The design and delivery of this program progressed with this belief in mind. Having had time to reflect on this experience, I believe that what happened was more than just an innovative model of instruction. What Marie-Claude and I witnessed was a group of learners who not only felt a sense of agency towards their own learning but also that of each other's. The words of participant EL1-3MN have repeatedly come to mind throughout the process of interpreting the data set. This was the participant who had resolved to drop out of the study after the first session because of her feeling that her French level was too low. After being convinced to continue, she attended every session and was able to deliver a

presentation in French. In her interview, EL1-3MN mentions herself and her fellow learners as having been "committed to helping each other." This type of sentiment, expressed by other participants in similar ways, has contributed a great deal towards addressing the initial questions posed by this thesis. On an individual level, participants reported an almost immediate sense of agency as they began to reciprocate with peers and exchange CF, their agentive systems engaged in such a way that the essential self was able to influence and shape the process, thus allowing them ample opportunities to speak the L2. On a collective level, the group (including the collaborating teachers) displayed a remarkable ability to support each other, and to use the various tools and resources at their disposal to work towards a common goal. In terms of pedagogical design, the parameters of the program with its inclusion of bilingual/reciprocal learning, peer CF, collaborative teaching, with meaningful content delivered using a counterbalanced approach, contributed to an environment conducive to an enriched sense of learner agency. Finally, the constructive criticism offered by participants displays a sort of deference and ownership that is not the mark of a passive group lacking in the capacity to act.

5.6 Limitations

A major limitation of this study was time; each three-hour session seemed to fly by at lightning speed. Participants and teachers alike remarked how quickly the six weeks passed, and how just at the point where we had figured out how things worked, it was over. As mentioned in the previous section, there were more than just L2 skills that needed to be developed, and 18 hours was not nearly enough time to achieve this end.

Another limitation was the lack of more reliable recordings of interactions between participants. While the uptake sheet did generate some valuable data pertaining to interactions, it was no replacement for the accuracy of an electronic device. If video or audio recordings had

been made of interactions the resulting data could have provided a more objective component within the data set. Guest et al. (2012), in describing the foundations of Applied Thematic Analysis (ATA), position it as a methodology with the prime focus of presenting the stories and experiences of participants. The authors do, however, stress that ATA also has the capacity to borrow the most useful techniques from each methodological and theoretical school of thought. The main limitation of ATA is considered by Guest et al. to be that it may "miss some of the more nuanced data" (Guest et al., 2012, p.17). This possibility could have been minimized by the presence of more recordings of participants interacting with each other.

5.7 Classroom implications

My opinion is that the participants of this study have contributed a great deal to what could become a valuable alternative among choices currently available to language learners in Montreal, and elsewhere. I believe that this model should be repeated and perfected. Marie-Claude and our students were able to isolate a number of areas for future improvement in our running of this program. With time constraints being a major limitation, it could be said that participants really only got a small taste of bilingual-reciprocal language learning, but that they liked what they tasted. I am confident that future efforts could unearth solutions to the problems we encountered and further adaptations to the features we developed. As far as Montreal and the province of Québec are concerned, some version of the model described in this thesis is, in my opinion, the course that every level of our education system should take. Québec could become a shining example of a truly bilingual (or multilingual) society if were to assist each other in breaking the solitudes and claiming the right to speak.

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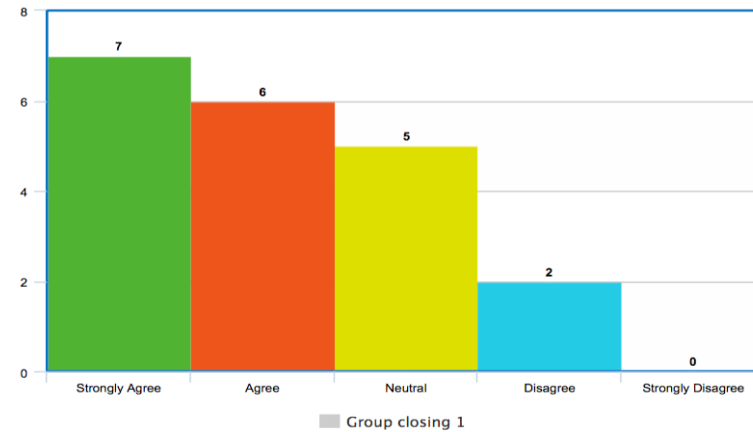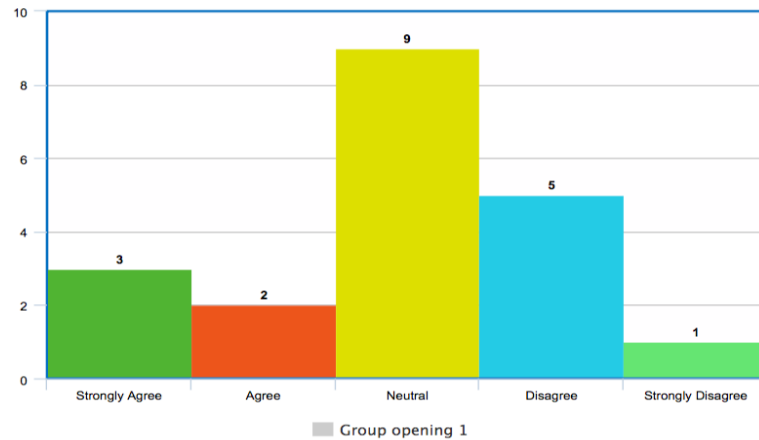
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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

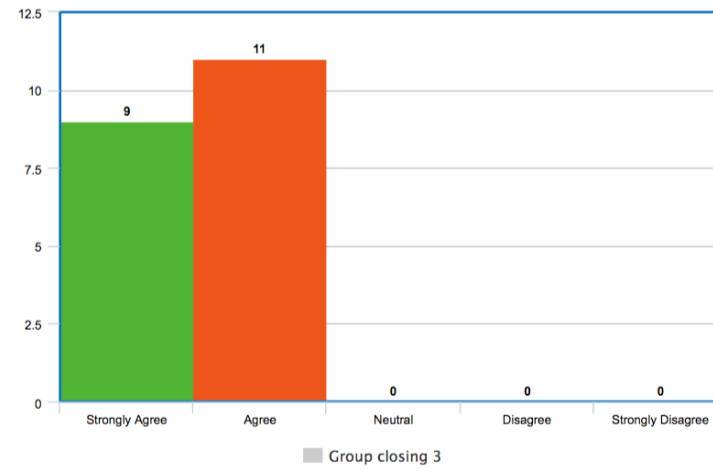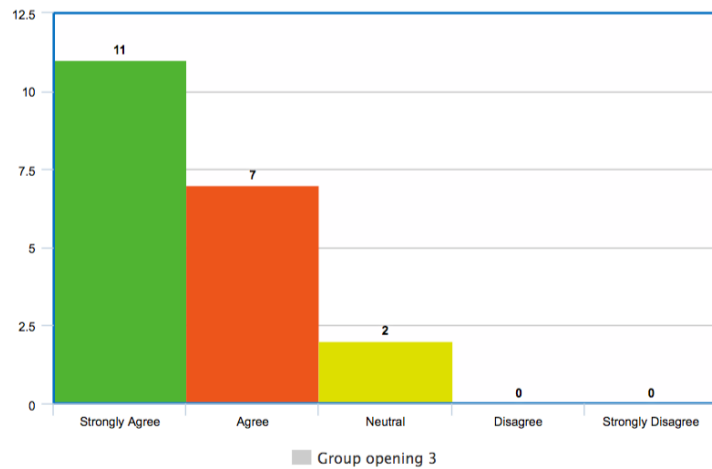1. The instruction I received in French before participating in this program was effective and satisfied my needs.

Group opening 1

Group closing 1

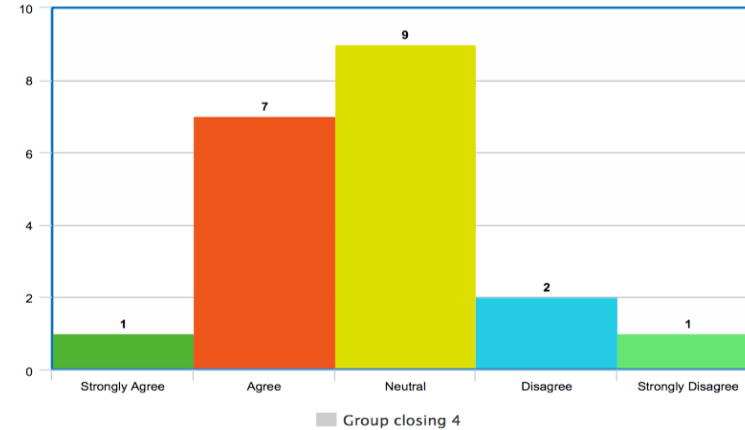2. I am a good at learning languages.

Group opening 2

Group closing 2
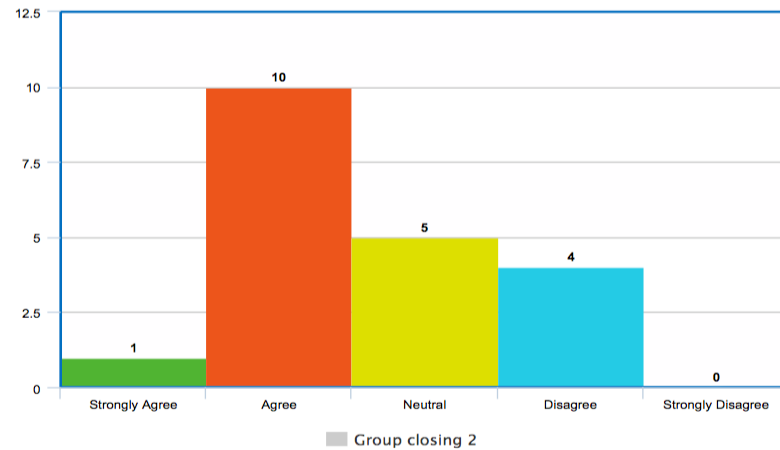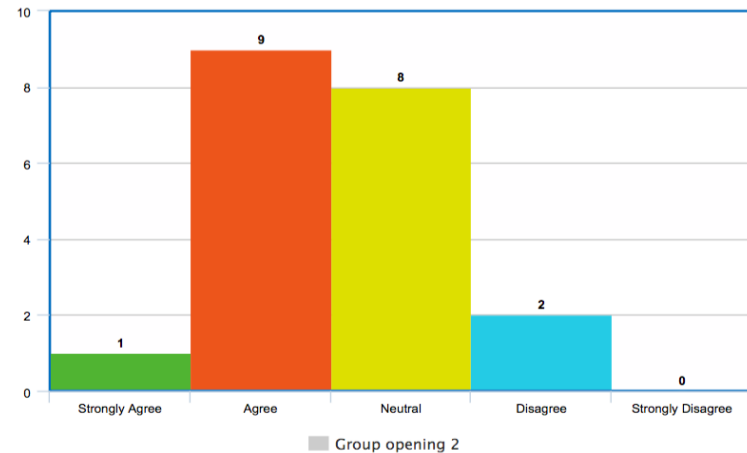
Breaking solitudes and claiming the right to speak
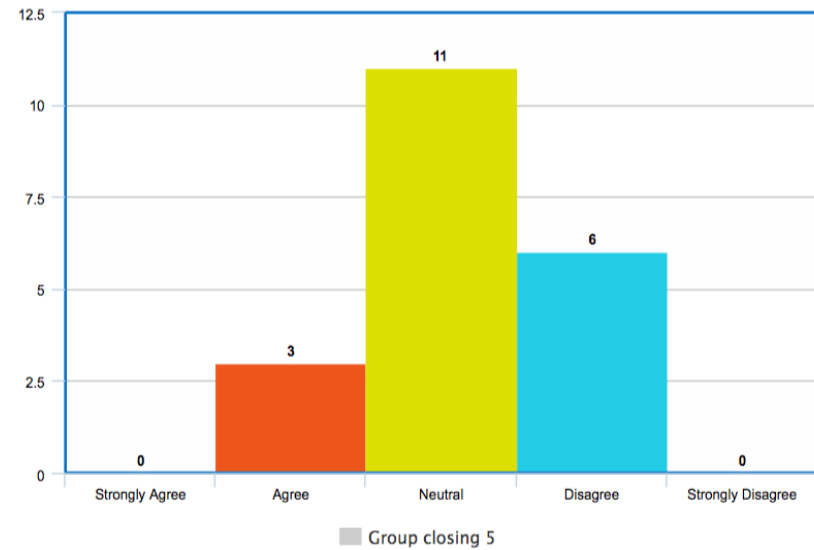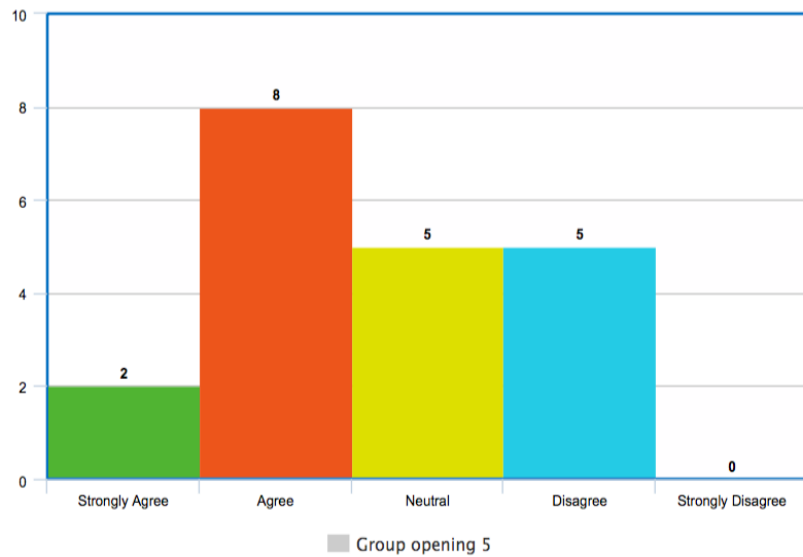
3. I am a motivated language learner

Group opening 3

Group closing 3

4. A classroom setting is where a second language is most effectively taught and learned.
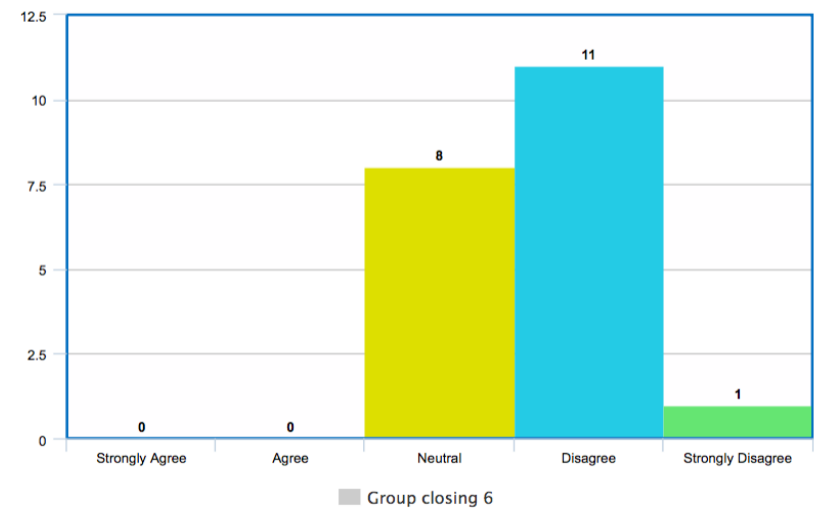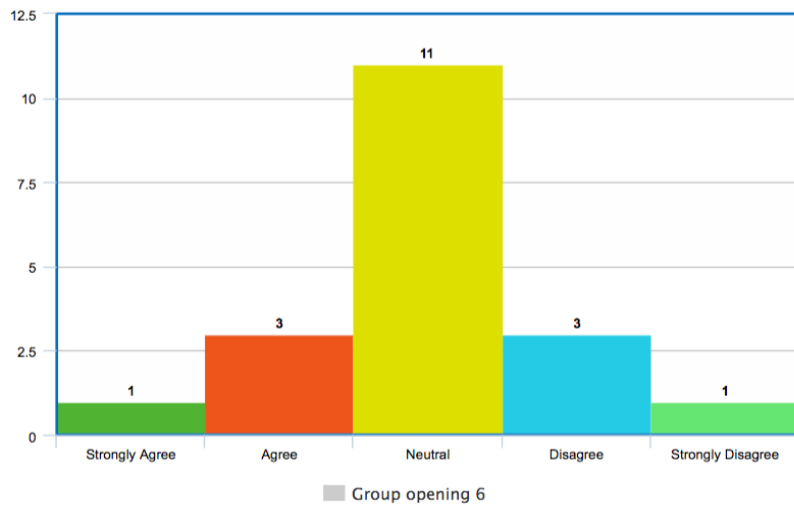

Group opening 4

Group closing 4
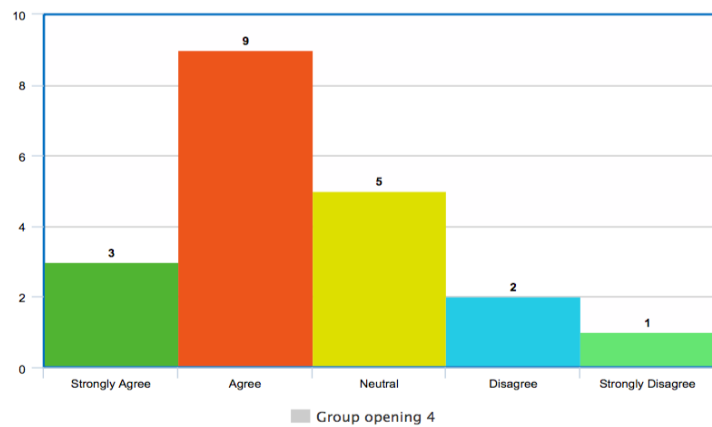
Breaking solitudes and claiming the right to speak

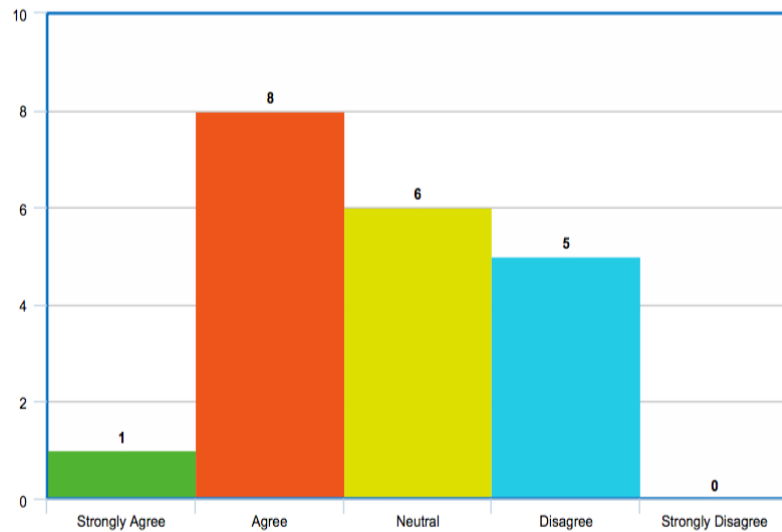5. A language class should have well-defined roles: the teacher teaches and the students learn.

Group opening 5

Group closing 5

6. A language class should be composed of only one teacher.

Group opening 6

Group closing 6

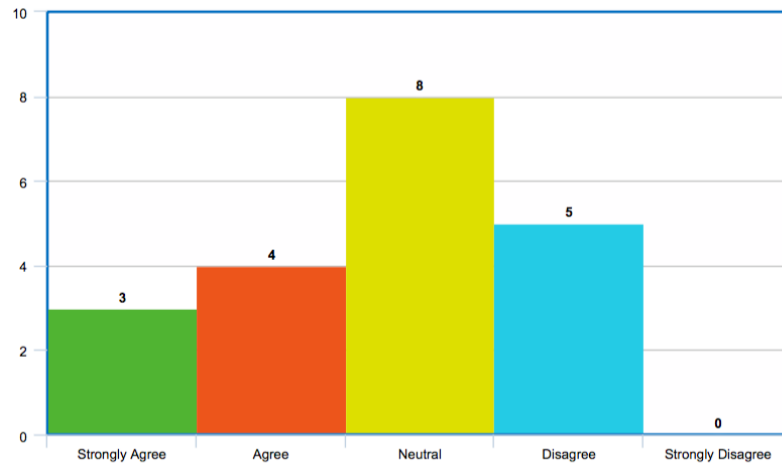7. In a language class, only one language should be taught.
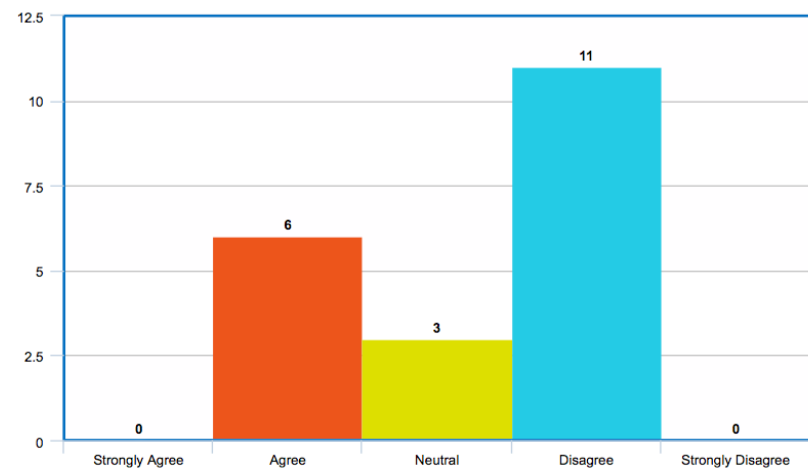

Group opening 7
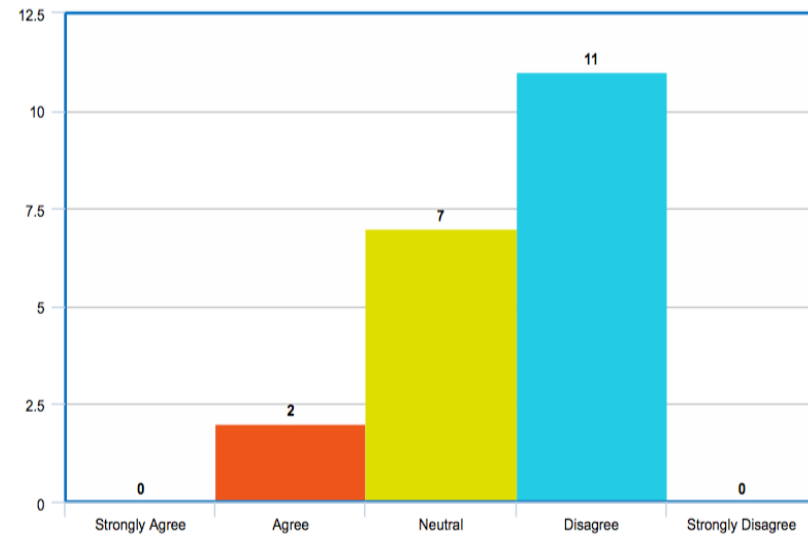
Group closing 7

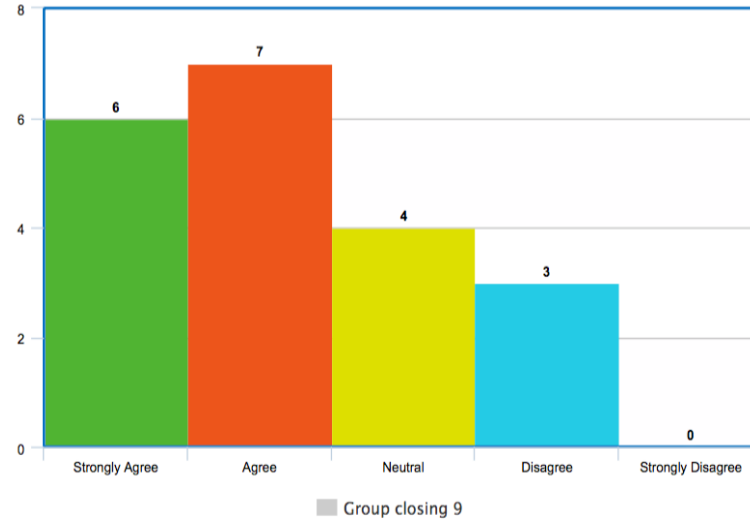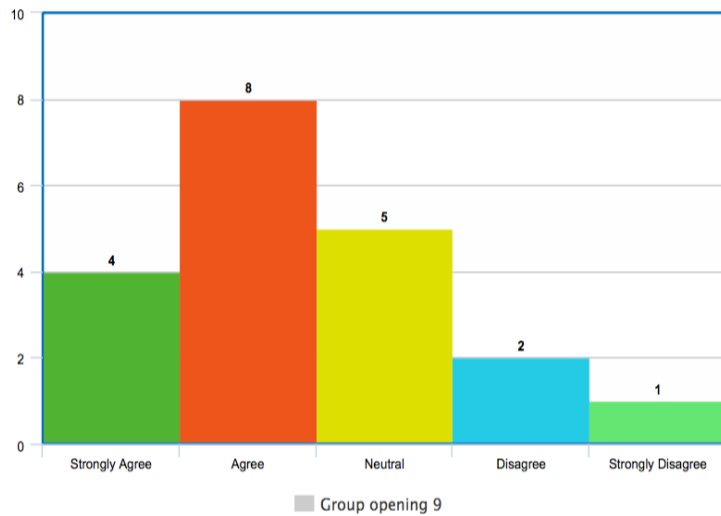8. In a language class, use of the students' first language should be strictly forbidden.

Group opening 8

Group closing 8

9. Real second language learning happens when the learner is exposed to the language in 'real life', outside of the classroom.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Group opening 9	4	8	5	2	1

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Group closing 9	6	7	4	3	0

10. The most important feature of a language class is the learning of grammar, vocabulary and other language related skills.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Group opening 10	1	10	8	1	0

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Group closing 10	4	5	8	3	0
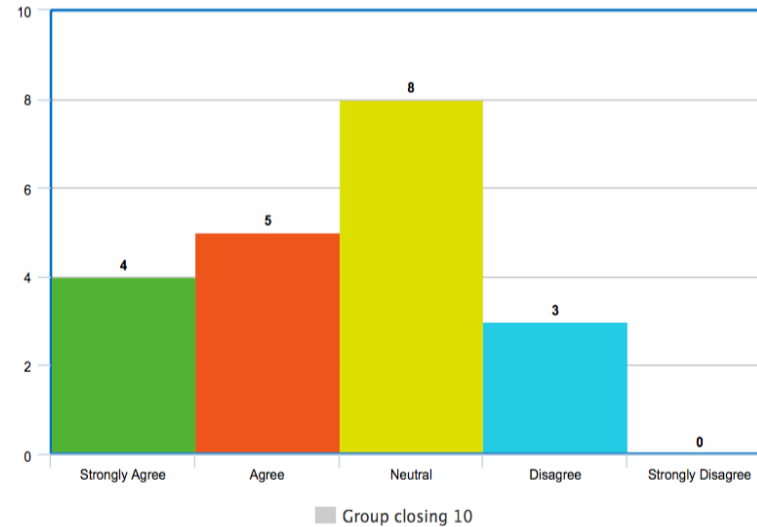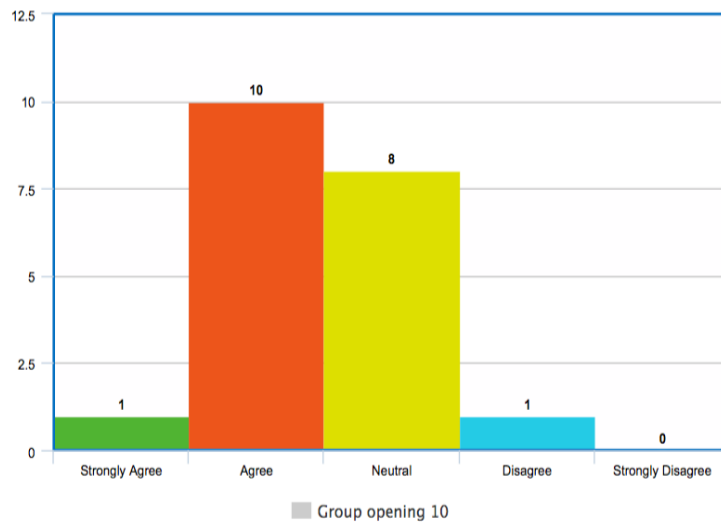
11. The most important feature of a language class is the opportunity to practice speaking in a realistic social context.
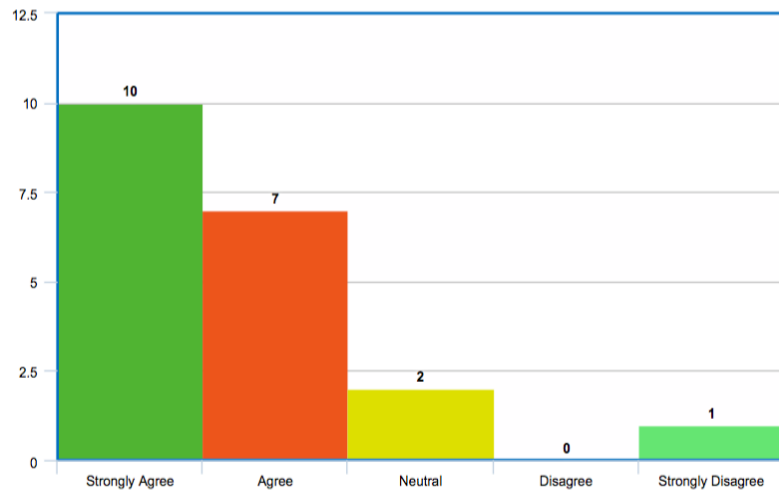
Group opening 11
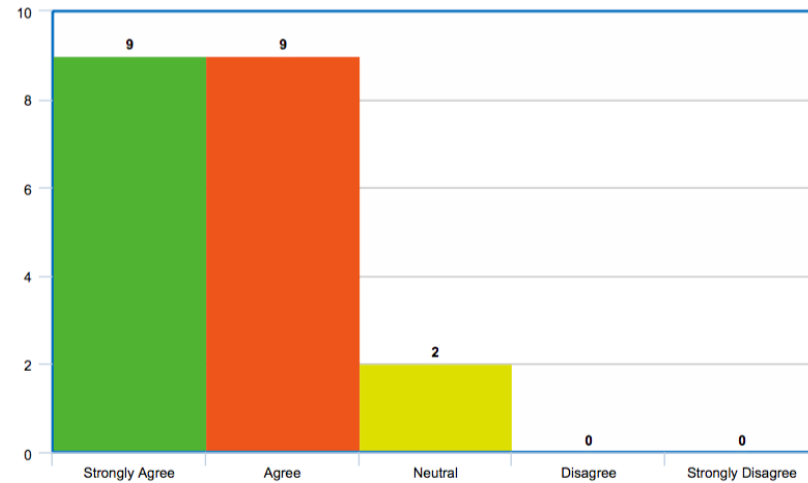
Group closing 11

12. Receiving immediate corrective feedback on errors is important for language learning.
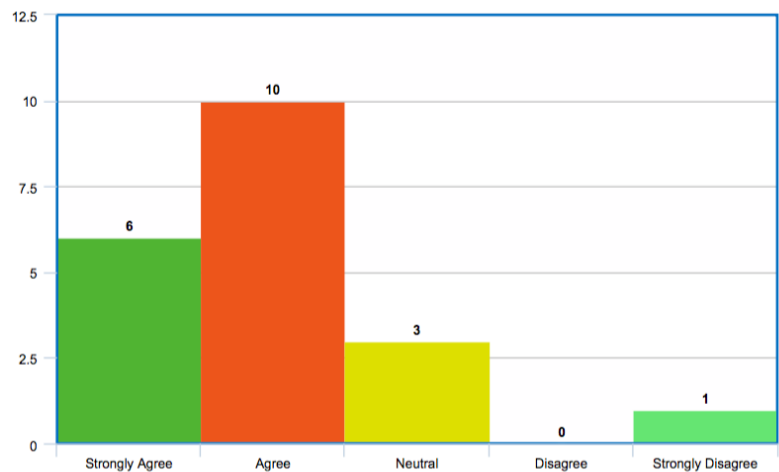
Group opening 12
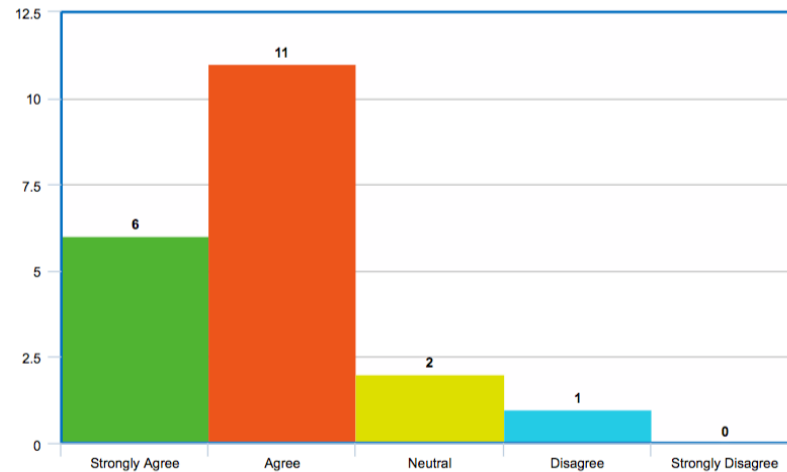
Group closing 12

13. Corrective feedback should only be provided by a trained language teacher.
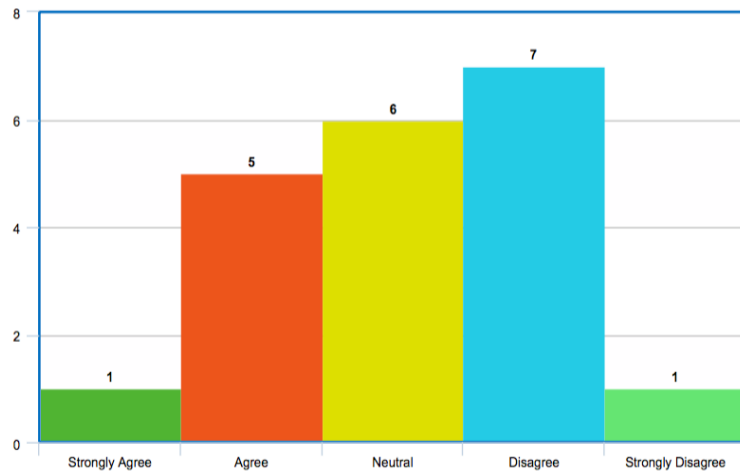
Group opening 13
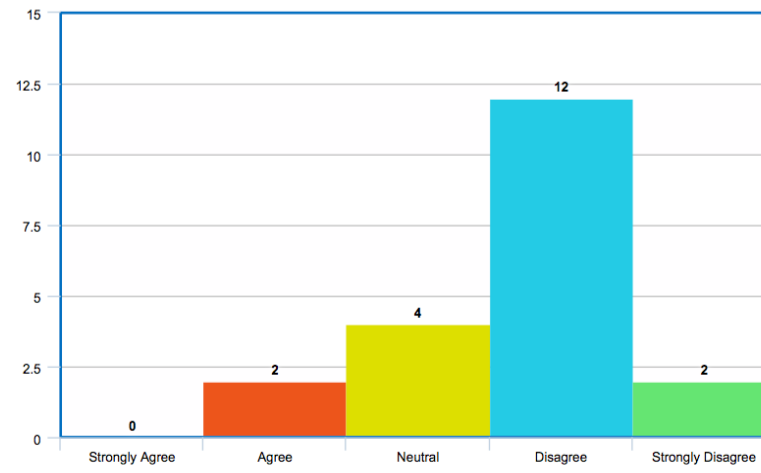
Group closing 13

14. I would feel uncomfortable giving corrective feedback to a fellow student.
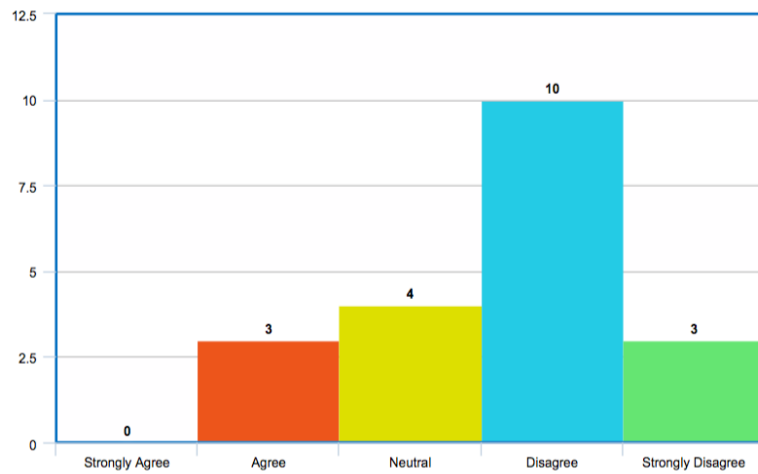
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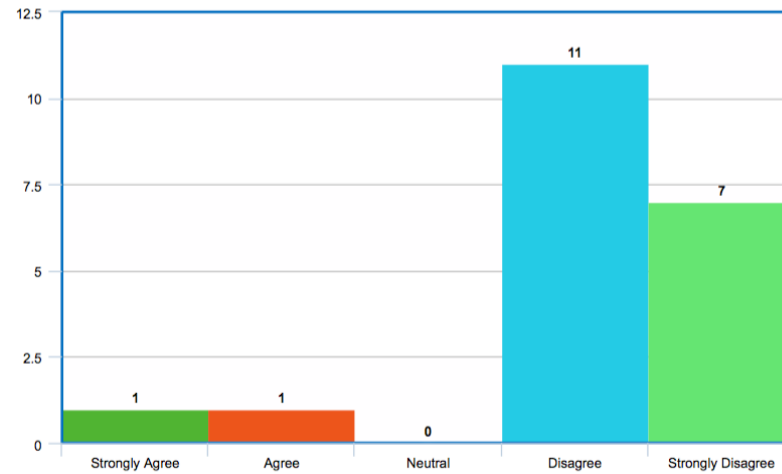
Group closing 14

15. I would feel uncomfortable receiving corrective feedback from a fellow student.

Group opening 15

Group closing 15
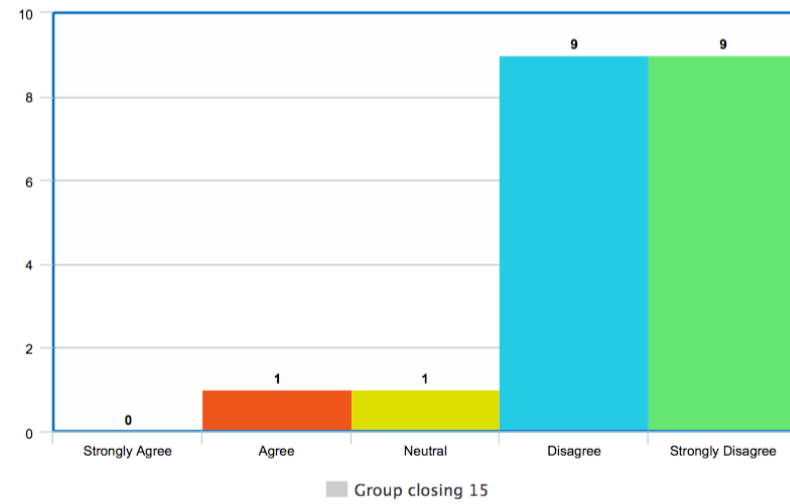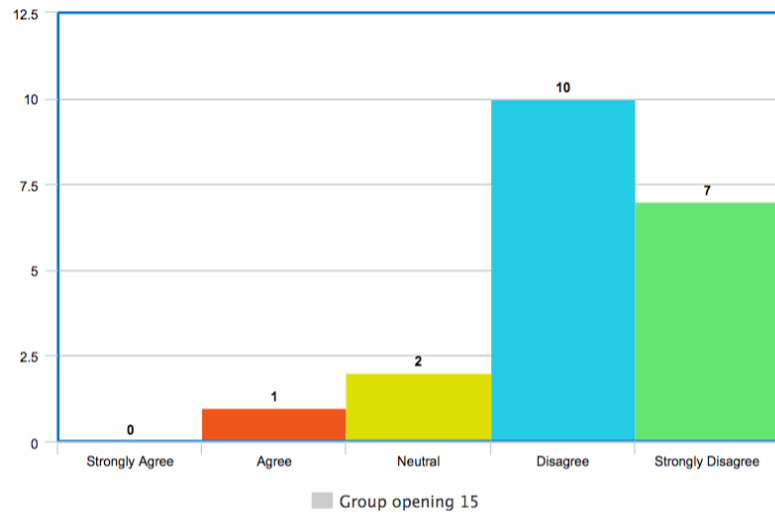
APPENDIX B: LETTER OF CONSENT

Project Title: Peer corrective feedback in a collaboratively taught, bilingual, content–based, reciprocal language-learning environment: tracking the perceptions and beliefs of a group of adult learners.

REB# 217-1115

Dear student participant:

Thank you for your interest in participating in this course and thereby in my MA research. The purpose of this document is to describe the project and to seek your consent so that I can use data from this project in my research.

As a participant in this research study you will be asked to attend six 3-hour sessions over the course of 6 consecutive weeks (**from 5:30pm to 8:30pm on January 13th, 20th and 27th and February 3rd, 10th and 17th , 2016**). During these sessions you will be asked to provide data in the following ways: questionnaires, uptake sheets, focus groups, and structured one-on one interviews.

The following is a description of each data collection method

Questionnaires: You will be asked to respond to 2 different questionnaires, one at the start of the program and one at the end. The purpose of the questions is to record information about your perceptions and beliefs relating to the research.

Uptake sheets: During the program you will be asked to provide data relating to your experiences. The purpose of this document is to record your thoughts and reflections on the program as it is occurring.

Focus groups: On the last day of the program you will be asked to take part in a group discussion with your fellow participants. This focus group will be audio taped and later transcribed into text.

Structured one-on one interviews: At the conclusion of the program you will be asked to give a 15 to 20-minute interview. During the interview you will be asked a series of pre-determined questions about your experiences during the program. This interview will be audio taped and later transcribed into text.

Additional observation methods: The only form of observation, besides the methods described above, will be the compiling of field notes by the student responsible and the co-investigator. There will not be any additional audio or video recording or any recording method identifying you as a participant in this research.

Breaking solitudes and claiming the right to speak

Confidentiality: The data collected during this program will be used by the student responsible (Michael Dawson) to complete a Master's thesis. The text of this thesis may at some point be published and may also be distributed by means of paper-based, multi-media presentations and electronic media. However, names of the participants of this research will **not** be included in any version of the finished product. Any audio recordings produced during this research will be used for transcription purposes only, furthermore, they will not be distributed or made public in any way. Access to any and all data generated in this study will only be obtained by the student responsible (Michael Dawson), the co-investigator (Marie-Claude Deschambault), and the faculty supervisor (Roy Lyster).

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can decline to answer any questions and are free to stop taking part in the project at any time. You are also free to withdraw any data related to your participation in this research at any time during or after the completion of the project. All data will be securely stored for a period of seven (7) years, during this time you can request that no further use be made of your data set, or that it be destroyed. Similarly, you can request that portions (i.e. audio recordings) or specific comments be withdrawn from your data set.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights or welfare as a participant in this research study, please contact the McGill Ethics Manager at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca'.

CONSENT

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your own records.
I HAVE READ THE DESCRIPTION. I UNDERSTAND WHAT MY PARTICIPATION INVOLVES AND I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE.

_____
Participant's Name *(please print)*

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Date

APPENDIX C: OPENING (AND CLOSING) QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS

1. The instruction I received in French before participating in this program was effective and satisfied my needs.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

2. I am a good at learning languages.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

3. I am a motivated language learner.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

4. A classroom setting is where a second language is most effectively taught and learned.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

5. A language class should have well-defined roles: the teacher teaches and the students learn.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

6. A language class should be composed of only one teacher.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

7. In a language class, only one language should be used.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

8. In a language class, use of the students' first language should be strictly forbidden.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

9. Real second language learning happens when the learner is exposed to the language in 'real life', outside of the classroom.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

10. The most important feature of a language class is the learning of grammar, vocabulary and other language related skills.

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       Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

11. The most important feature of a language class is the opportunity to practice speaking in a realistic social context.

       Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

12. Receiving immediate correction on errors is important for language learning

       Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

13. Error correction should only be provided by a trained language teacher.

       Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

14. I would feel uncomfortable giving corrective feedback to a fellow student.

       Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

15. I would feel uncomfortable receiving corrective feedback from a fellow student.

Strongly agree   agree   neutral   disagree   Strongly disagree

Part B
Please expand on your responses to the above questions by providing a brief description of your perceptions and beliefs. What are the essential ingredients of a high-quality language class?

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT LIST WITH CODES AND PROFILES

Code	Gender	Profile
EL1-1(ANG)	Male	Anglo-Canadian, native English speaker, born and raised in Montreal, intermediate French skills.
EL1-2(SP)	Male	Immigrant from Mexico. Spanish L1, 10-year resident of Montreal, very good spoken English.
EL1-3(MN)	Female	Recent Immigrant from Montenegro. Montenegrin L1, very good spoken English, basic French skills.
EL1-4(ANG)	Female	Anglo-Canadian, native English speaker, born and raised in Montreal, high-intermediate French skills.
EL1-5(UK)	Female	Family immigrated from Ukraine when a child, speaks five languages: Ukrainian, Russian, Israeli, English and French. Excellent spoken English, high-intermediate French skills.
EL1-6(SP)	Female	Family immigrated from Spain, excellent spoken English, works as a teacher of Spanish as a second language, intermediate French skills.
EL1-7(ANG)	Female	Anglo-Canadian, native English speaker, born and raised in Montreal, intermediate French skills.
EL1-8(ANG)	Female	Anglo-Canadian, native English speaker, born and raised in Montreal, high-intermediate French skills.
EL1-9(RM)	Female	Rumanian immigrant, long-time Montreal resident, excellent English, teaches English as a second language, intermediate French skills.
FL1-1(SP)	Female	Family immigrated from Mexico, grew up in rural Quebec, excellent spoken French, intermediate English skills.
FL1-2(QUE)	Female	French Canadian, native French speaker, intermediate English skills.
FL1-3(QUE)	Female	French Canadian, native French speaker, intermediate English skills.
FL1-4(QUE)	Female	French Canadian, native French speaker, intermediate English skills.
FL1-5(FR)	Male	Recent immigrant from France, native French speaker, intermediate English skills. Note: Recently started a new job in Montreal
FL1-6(FR)	Female	French Canadian, native French speaker, intermediate English skills.
FL1-7(FR)	Female	Immigrant from France, native French speaker, intermediate English skills
FL1-8(CR)	Female	Immigrant from Haiti, native Creole speaker, Excellent French, Intermediate English skills. Note: actively seeking employment.
FL1-9(QUE)	Female	French Canadian, native French speaker, intermediate English skills.
FL1-10(FR)	Female	Immigrant from France, native French speaker, intermediate English skills.
FL1-11(FR)	Male	Immigrant from France, native French speaker, intermediate English skills.

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APPENDIX E: PROGRAM PLAN

	SESSION 1		SESSION 2	
	FSL Les presentations	ESL Introductions	FSL	ESL
INTRODUCTION	Administration (consent forms) Explanation of research Peer CF training		Milieu de travail & entrevues	workplace & interviews
INPUT	• Salutations • Présentations • Indicatif présent pour avoir et être. • Pratique guidée : • Questions pour faire connaissance.	• Informal, formal and slang greetings • Presenting yourself • Asking questions • Simple present • Present continuous	• Entrevues Passé composé & imparfait. Pratique guidée : • Répondre à des questions d'entrevue	Video and discussion Input: • Interview questions and answers. • Simple past Vs. present perfect Guided practice: • simulation of a job interview • Case study: Choosing a candidate for a position.
RECIPROCAL	Reciprocal task: Exchanging greeting and Exchanging personal information		Reciprocal task #1: Answering interview questions Reciprocal task #2: Group activity: **Scenario** – Groups act as an HR team looking to fill a specific position (description provided) from a list of candidates with resumes. Groups must discuss the characteristics of each candidate for the position and choose the best candidate.	

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	SESSION 3		SESSION 4	
	FSL Consolidation d'équipe	ESL Team building	FSL Résolution de problème	ESL Problem solving
INPUT	• Dictée à la course (des conseils pour une vie plus saine) o Formulations pour offrir des conseils/ suggestions. • Pratique guidée • Vidéo sur la gratitude & formuler des suggestions afin d'incorporer plus de gratitude dans nos vies.	Input: • Giving advice • Expressing obligation/prohibition Guided practice: • Giving and receiving instructions • Scenario: resolving a workplace conflict	Participants work together in their reciprocal groups for the entire session. Five different communicative problem-solving & brainstorming activities: - Warm-up: scategories - Rorschach brainstorm - Law breaker - Proverbs - "It's like…"	
RECIPROCAL	Reciprocal task #1: Share content of respective videos. Reciprocal task #2: Discussing conflicts - Groups are given a list of workplace situations and must discuss suggestions on how to deal with these difficult scenarios.			

Breaking solitudes and claiming the right to speak

	SESSION 5		SESSION 6	
	FSL Publicité & markéting	ESL Marketing & advertising	FSL Présentations & réflexion	ESL Presentations & reflection
INPUT	• Faire la promotion d'un Object/service o Adjectifs pour aider à décrire • Pratique guidée : • Charades : décrire un objet afin de le faire deviner. • II. Prend un Object anodin, décries le afin de le vendre à ton partenaire.	Input: Adjectives and adverbs • Participle adjectives (ing, ed) • Adverbs Related vocabulary Guided practice: • Product/service review • Design an advertising campaign	**Use what you have learned!** • Focus group discussion & reflection on the bilingual course • Group work on final presentation • Group presentations: Dragon's Den pitch • Peer corrective feedback • Closing (cupcakes)	
RECIPROCAL	Using the right words to describe a product or service. Reciprocal task #1: Discuss product/service review Reciprocal task #2: Present advertising campaign			

APPENDIX F: UPTAKE SHEET

Uptake sheet (new)

Your name	You are observing
	FL1 EL1

Session #   **1   2   3   4   5   6**   (circle the appropriate number)

Date_____

*Please indicate whether the corrective feedback was received or given by circling R (received) or G (given)

What was the language error when you **received or gave** corrective feedback?		How did your partner provide corrective feedback? **OR** How did your partner respond to the corrective feedback?	Did you feel the corrective feedback **(received or given)** was helpful? Why or why not?
R **G**	Grammar Pronunciation Vocabulary Usage	• **Explicit Correction** • **Recasts** • **Clarification requests** • **Elicitation** • **Metalinguistic feedback** • **Repetition**	
R **G**	Grammar Pronunciation Vocabulary Usage	• **Explicit Correction** • **Recasts** • **Clarification requests** • **Elicitation** • **Metalinguistic feedback** • **Repetition**	
R **G**	Grammar Pronunciation Vocabulary Usage	• **Explicit Correction** • **Recasts** • **Clarification requests** • **Elicitation** • **Metalinguistic feedback** • **Repetition**	

PLEASE PROVIDE SOME BRIEF NOTES OF ANY ADDITIONAL FEELINGS, REFLECTIONS, QUESTIONS, CONCERNS OR COMMENTS YOU HAVE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROGRAM.

APPENDIX G: PEER CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK GUIDE

Explicit Correction
The teacher indicates in a direct manner that an error has been made and provides the correct form.
Example:
My sister is always crying. She's very sensible.
Oh, I think you mean she's very sensitive.

Recasts
The teacher reformulates all or part of what the student has said, with the error corrected.
Example
My sister is very sensible. She cries a lot.
Your sister is very sensitive.

Clarification requests
The teacher indicates that he or she has not understood what the student has said and that reformulation is required.
Example:
I am very interesting in business.
Excuse me, could you repeat that?
Oh, I am interested in business.

Elicitation - can be done in 3 ways:
1. The teacher allows the student to correct their own error by pausing so that the student can 'fill in the blank'.
   Yesterday I go to the store to buy milk.
   Yesterday I….
2. Teacher uses questions to elicit the correct form.
   Yesterday I go to the store to buy milk.
   Was that in the present or in the past?

3. The teacher can ask the student to reformulate what they have said.
   Yesterday I go to the store to buy milk.
   Sorry, can you repeat that.

Metalinguistic feedback
Without providing the correct form the teacher gives hints in the form of comments, information or questions relating to the error.
Example:
My sister really like Star Wars.
Hmm… there is an error in there. It's the third person so is there something missing?
Oh, she likes Star Wars.

Repetition
The teacher repeats the student's error in isolation, sometimes in the form of a question.
Example:
My mother sold his house when we moved to Montreal.
You mother sold HIS house?

APPENDIX H: RECRUITMENT FLYER

McGill

FREE BUSINESS FRENCH COURSE
Offered as part of a research project at McGill University

Take advantage of this rare opportunity to benefit from a
FREE business French program while contributing to valuable
second language acquisition research!

Participants will take part in an **18-hour** program
**5:30pm to 8:30pm on January 13th, 20th and 27th and
February 3rd, 10th and 17th, 2016**
During this program you will work alongside English learners in
a highly interactive language learning environment.
Participants will be exposed to cutting edge language teaching
and learning methods including…
- Collaborative teaching
- Peer corrective feedback
- Reciprocal bilingual teaching and learning

Participants must be 18 years or older

**To volunteer as a participant in this research study, please
contact Michael Dawson at** michael.dawson@mail.mcgill.ca
under the supervision of Roy Lyster roy.lyster@mcgill.ca

APPENDIX I: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW (AND FOCUS GROUP) QUESTIONS

1. What is your general impression of this idea of French and English learners working together and teaching each other?

    a. Does it work, in your opinion?

    b. How is it different from a more traditional language class?

2. What is your general impression of peer corrective feedback?

    a. Was it beneficial to receive training in peer corrective feedback?

    b. Did you feel you were able to provide good feedback to your classmates?

3. What is your general impression of the idea of two teachers working together?

    a. Did the two teachers work well together?

    b. Did you find that equal importance was given to both languages?

4. What is your general impression of the way the program was designed?

    a. Did the content complement the language points of the input session?

    b. Were the business themes interesting and pertinent?

    c. Was the program (input + reciprocal session) well-constructed?

5. Has this experience changed your opinion of what constitutes an effective language program?

6. Would you take a course like this one again?

7. Do you have any plans to meet up with people from the group, now that the program is over?

APPENDIX J: FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

Please review and answer the questions below.

1. Please reflect on **one or all** of the following principles featured in the study you

   participated in:

   a. Peer corrective feedback

   b. Collaborative teaching (two teachers in one classroom)

   c. Reciprocal language learning (students teaching each other)

2. Now that the program has been over for several weeks, can you discuss benefits (if any)

   that have stayed with you? Here are some **possible** themes:

   a. Something you learned from one of your classmates during the program.

   b. Something you taught to a classmate.

   c. Your feelings about your own language learning.

   d. Your feelings about language learning in general.

3. Are there any other features of the program not listed above that you would like to reflect

   on?

APPENDIX #K: FIELD NOTES TEMPLATE

Session# 1 2 3 4 5 6   Investigator   MD   MC

Observations: In addition to documenting events and informal conversations, note people's body language, moods, or attitudes; the general environment; interactions among participants; ambiance; and other information that could be relevant.

_____
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Key words and phrases that will trigger your memory when you expand your notes:

Reflections:

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Emerging questions/analyses:

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_____

Future action:

_____
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_____

APPENDIX L: EXAMPLE ACTIVITY 'LAFEYETTE HOTELS INC.'

Lafayette Hotels Inc.
GENERAL MANAGER
Required for our operations in the Quebec region
Salary negotiable! Excellent benefits package!

The job
- **Leading, coordinating and motivating our staff**
- **Increasing profits in our Quebec hotels**
- **Exploiting new business opportunities**
- **Supporting and motivating our team of hotel managers and their staff**
- **Working with our marketing team to plan strategy**

The Person
- **Dynamic, flexible, enthusiastic**
- **A strong interest in the hotel industry**
- **Excellent references from previous employers**
- **The ability to work with people from different cultural backgrounds**
- **Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills**
- **Fluency in French and English**
- **Excellent organizational skills**
- **Creative and open to new ideas**

Do you think you're the right person for this amazing challenge?
Apply today!

Send your CV to LafayetteHotelsInc.com

Background

Lafayette Hotels Inc. is a chain of small to medium size luxury hotels operating in cities across North America. The company **owns** six hotels in Quebec (three in Montreal, two in Quebec City and one in Sherbrooke), the clientele is primarily important business people and wealthy tourists. **Recently, profits have been falling in four of the six Quebec hotels**. Analysis shows that this decrease in revenue is due to two primary factors: the expansion of a major competitor into the Quebec market and poor management in some of the hotels resulting in below-standard service and high staff turnover.

Breaking solitudes and claiming the right to speak

Task

You are a group of human resources consultants with Lafayette Hotels Inc. After an extensive search for applicants **you have made** a short list of four candidates. All four candidates have excellent CVs, making it difficult to choose the right one for the job. **You have decided** to focus on their previous job performance to find out more about each candidate's personal characteristics. You approached the candidate's most recent direct supervisor and **asked** them to discuss their main strengths and weaknesses. The following are excerpts from those discussions.

> **Susan came** to work for our hotel six years ago, before working for us she **was** a costume designer for Cirque du Soleil. We **hired** her because we **wanted** someone creative, and we **were** not disappointed! Susan **made** a very strong contribution to our marketing team and **helped** us to improve our service to our customers. Her biggest strength, besides here creativity is her ability to work in a team. She **was** very popular within our organization and **inspired** other to perform better just with her presence and energy. Her customer service skills are excellent. Her main weakness? I don't really see Susan as a manager or leader. She has the ability to inspire and motivate people, but she doesn't really have any experience with the more difficult aspects of managing people day-to-day.

> **Robert started** working for our hotel when he **was** still a student. His first job **was** washing dishes in the kitchen, and in less than ten years he **became** manager of the entire hotel. **I have never seen** an employee work as hard as Robert, he is like a machine. He is the kind of person who likes to be in control of everything, and the result is that he knows everything there is to know about running a successful hotel. He is extremely courteous with our clients. I would say his main weakness is his personality, Robert is very productive but not popular with many of our staff. Sometimes he pushes people a bit too hard, he is very direct and some employees don't react well to his management style. Sometimes I worry about Robert because he doesn't seem to have a life outside of his work, but he seems content… in his own way. Certainly if you're looking for results, Robert is your man.

> **Gilles** is the definition of the term 'people person'! His ability to motivate the people around him is exceptional. He **came** to our organization just two years ago, and with no experience in the hotel industry. Gilles **became** a valuable member of our staff because of his energy and personality but also because of his impressive ability to learn the job. I don't think there is a single job that **he hasn't learned** to do. On one occasion one of our accountants had to take a leave of absence, Gilles **taught** himself accounting and was able to fill the position until the person returned. Gilles main weakness is his lack of experience. He is quite young and I don't think he has ever worked on a marketing campaign before. But he is extremely ambitious and has the natural ability to lead people. I think he would be able to learn very quickly to do all of the tasks you require. Oh… one more thing, Gilles doesn't speak English very well. But **he has started** taking classes.

Nathalie has all of the necessary ingredients of a highly effective sales and marketing manager. She has been working in this capacity for B&G investments for several years now. Her main strength is in her managerial style. She knows when to be tough and decisive and when to open up and listen to the ideas of her staff. Her strongest skill is in delegating tasks, a very important aspect of management. Her people are well-trained and know exactly what is expected of them. The result **has been** that her department performs at a very high level. Her main weakness, I think, is her suitability to the job you are advertising. Frankly, I was surprised when I **learned** she was applying for a hotel management job, her main experience has been working in an office environment, not out with the public. But, I suppose management is management, and I don't think you could find a better manager than Nathalie.

Discuss the different characteristics of each candidate, and decide which one is the best fit.

MISE EN SITUATION :

Les Hôtels Lafayette Inc, est une chaine d'hôtels de luxe d'Amérique du Nord. La compagnie possède six hôtels dans la province de Québec (trois à Montréal, deux dans la ville de Québec et un à Sherbrooke). La clientèle est composée surtout de gens d'affaires et de touristes.

Depuis quelque temps, les profits sont à la baisse dans les hôtels du Québec. Les analyses démontrent que cette baisse est due à deux facteurs importants : l'arrivé d'un compétiteur au Québec ET une mauvaise gestion dans certains hôtels.

PUBLICITÉE POUR TROUVER LE CANDIDAT:

LES HÔTELS LAFAYETTE INC.
DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL
DEMANDÉ POUR NOS OPÉRATIONS DANS LA RÉGION DE QUÉBEC
SALAIRE NÉGOCIABLE! AVANTAGES SOCIAUX EXCELLENTS !

DESCRIPTION DE L'EMPLOI :
- DIRIGER, COORDONNER ET MOTIVER LES EMPLOYÉS
- AUGMENTER LES PROFITS DES HÔTELS
- TROUVER DE NOUVELLES OPPORTUNITÉS D'AFFAIRES
- ENCOURAGER ET MOTIVER NOTRE ÉQUIPE DE GÉRANTS ET D'EMPLOYÉS
- TRAVAILLER AVEC L'ÉQUIPE DE 'MARKETING'

DESCRIPTION DU CANDIDAT :
- EST DYNAMIQUE, FLEXIBLE ET ENTHOUSIASTE
- A UN INTÉRÊT POUR LES HÔTELS
- A D'EXCELLENTES RÉFÉRENCES D'ANCIENS EMPLOYEURS
- A DE TRÈS BONNES CAPACITÉS POUR COMMUNIQUER ET A DES COMPÉTENCES SOCIALES EXCEPTIONNELLES
- PARLE BIEN LE FRANÇAIS ET L'ANGLAIS

- Excellentes capacités d'organisation
- Démontre de la créativité et de l'ouverture d'esprit

Pensez-vous être la bonne personne pour ce défi?
Appliquez aujourd'hui!

Envoyez votre CV à leshotelslafayetteinc.com

ACTIVITÉ – QUEL CANDIDAT EST LE MEILLEUR POUR L'EMPLOI

Vous êtes un groupe de consultants en ressources humaines des Hôtels Lafayette Inc. Après une recherche de candidature, vous **avez fait** une liste de quatre candidats. Les quatre candidats ont d'excellents Curriculum Vitae. Donc, vous **avez demandé** aux anciens superviseurs des candidats de les décrire. Voici les descriptions des anciens superviseurs des quatre candidats.

Instructions : Discutez des différentes caractéristiques de chaque candidat et décider lequel est le meilleur candidat pour l'emploi.

*SUZANNE a travaillé pour notre hôtel il y a 6 ans. Avant de travailler à notre hôtel, elle était designer de costumes pour le Cirque du Soleil. Nous l'**avons choisie** car elle **était** créative et nous **avons étés** impressionnés! Suzanne a fait beaucoup de contributions à notre équipe de 'marketing'. Aussi, elle **a aidé** à améliorer notre service à la clientèle. Sa plus grande force **était** son habileté à travailler en équipe. Elle **était** très populaire dans notre organisation parce qu'avec son énergie elle **motivait** les employés à travailler plus fort. Elle **avait** de très bonnes compétences sociales car elle **offrait** un excellent service à la clientèle. Sa plus grande faiblesse ? Je ne vois pas Suzanne comme une gérante ou une 'leader'. Elle **motivait** les employés mais elle **avait** de la difficulté avec la gestion des employés au jour-le-jour.

*ROBERT a commencé à travailler pour notre hôtel quand il **était** étudiant. Son premier emploi **était** de laver la vaisselle dans la cuisine et un an plus tard, il **est devenu** gérant de l'hôtel. Je n'**ai** jamais **vu** quelqu'un travailler aussi fort que Robert ! Il **était** une machine. Il **aimait** contrôler tout et le donc il **a tout appris** sur la bonne gestion d'un hôtel. Il **était** très poli avec la clientèle. Sa plus grande faiblesse est sa personnalité. Robert **était** très productif mais il n'était pas populaire auprès des autres employés. Il **était** très direct et les employés n'**appréciaient** pas tous son style de gestion. Cependant, si vous voulez avoir des résultats, Robert est votre homme !

*GILLES est la définition du terme « personne sociable »! Son habileté à motiver les personnes autour de lui est exceptionnelle ! Il **est venu** travailler pour notre compagnie il y a deux ans. Il n'**avait** pas d'expérience dans les hôtels mais il **est devenu** un membre important car il **avait** beaucoup d'énergie et une habileté à apprendre. Je crois qu'il **a appris** à faire tous les postes de travail dans l'hôtel ! Par exemple, un jour un des

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comptables **a été** malade et Gilles l'**a remplacé** pour le temps de son absence ! La plus grande faiblesse de Gilles **était** son manque d'expérience. Il **était** jeune et n'**avait** jamais travaillé sur un plan de 'marketing'. Cependant, il est très ambitieux donc il apprend vite. Oh…aussi, Gilles ne parle pas très bien anglais, mais il prend des cours !

*NATHALIE a tous les ingrédients d'une gérante efficace en ventes et 'marketing'! Elle **a travaillé** plusieurs années comme gérante des investissements B&G Inc. Sa plus grande force est son style de gestion. Elle **savait** être dure et mais elle **savait** aussi être patiente avec les employés. Elle **savait** aussi donner du travail à faire aux employés, un important aspect de bonne gestion. Ses employés **étaient** bien formés et **connaissaient** bien leur travail. Les performances de son département **étaient** excellentes. Sa plus grande faiblesse est son manque d'expérience dans le domaine d'hôtellerie. J'**étais** surpris d'apprendre qu'elle **donnait** sa candidature pour un emploi dans un hôtel parce que son expérience **a été** dans le domaine des finances. Mais elle **était** une excellente gérante !

Quel candidat est le meilleur pour l'emploi ? Discutez !