THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING PREFERENCE IN FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL: A COMPARISON BETWEEN A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AND A TEACHER-CONTROLLED APPROACH

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

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The Relationship Between Achievement and Learning Preference in French as a Second Language Classes at The University Level: A Comparison Between a Collaborative Learning and a Teacher-Controlled Approach

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ABSTRACT

This case study was conducted in two French as a second language (FSL) classes (n=54) at a small, bilingual liberal arts college. The goal, using Action Research, was to study the benefits of Group Investigation (GI), a collaborative learning technique, by comparing students' linguistic achievement, taking into account their learning preference.

The research questions were based on the findings that collaborative learning enhances students' motivation to learn (Slavin, 1990; Sharan & Sharan, 1992), and that students' participation in pair and small-group work following collaborative learning principles facilitates second language acquisition along with subject-matter mastery (McGroarty, 1991; Swain, 1988).

The investigator was the instructor in both classes and taught them concurrently using the GI technique with one group and the teacher-controlled approach (TC) with the other. GI involved self-directed student groups researching and presenting topics.

The underlying teaching strategy of the courses was communicative and used a content-based instructional approach in the sense that it used content (the country of Morocco) to develop French language proficiency.
Qualitative and quantitative data were gathered through several instruments measuring students' linguistic achievement, their learning preferences, and their responses to teaching approaches used. The Learning Preference Scale developed by Owens and Straton (1980) was used. The students' linguistic achievement was analyzed by oral and written testing of their use of French interrogatives both at the beginning and at the end of the course. The students' and the instructor's reflections were analyzed through journals, interviews and course evaluations.

Based on comparing the scores obtained at the beginning of the course with those of the end of the course, both groups showed a significant gain in their use of oral yes-no questions, and yes-no and wh-questions combined. The TC group showed also a significant gain in their use of written yes-no questions. Overall, neither group improved more than the other, linguistically.

According to the instructor's observations, the collaborative learning approach was effective in FSL classes at the university level, and the GI group gained skills that the TC group did not, specifically with respect to working together.

The students' views revealed their strong motivation relative to the content of the course, yet, they generally did not recognize their linguistic improvement.

Based on the findings, it was recommended that university FSL courses should integrate both the collaborative learning and the teacher-controlled approaches to benefit all students.
I dedicate this thesis to my husband Wayne.

His unconditional love made the completion of this project possible.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The teaching of French as a Second Language (FSL) at the university level is an exciting task because the students who choose to pursue the learning of French past the high school diploma typically have high intrinsic motivation. Yet one challenge is to maintain such motivation. Often students become disillusioned and uninterested after only one year of post-secondary French studies. I believe that this phenomenon is due partly to the content of the language courses offered at many universities and also to the teaching approaches that are used. Professors within French Departments have made attempts in the last few years to modernize their teaching approaches. This effort arose in response to the changing needs of students who came from French immersion programs or from high schools that have been using communicative approaches to teach FSL. Yet changes at the university in general seem to occur slowly. This is, in my opinion, at least partially due to administrative decisions and to uncontrollable circumstances.

Research can facilitate and guide change. To promote change at the university level, I conducted the research reported in this thesis in my own classrooms at Glendon College, York University, at which I taught two FSL second-year courses. I changed the program of the course from a grammar-oriented instructional program to a content-based instructional program.
I used a “teacher-controlled” approach with one group and a collaborative learning approach with the other. In this study, I looked at (1) students' linguistic achievement, taking into account their personal learning preferences as well as the teaching approach used in their class, (2) the instructors' and the students' opinions regarding the students' achievement, their learning preference and the teaching approach, and (3) the benefits of using a collaborative learning approach at the university level.

It is important to understand the context of Glendon College, York University to appreciate this study. In the next section a description of the context is provided.

1.2 CONTEXT

Glendon College, York University is a small bilingual liberal arts college, which offers language training in French and English as well as discipline courses in both languages. The York University Calendar of 1993-94 states, "Students shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of the Bilingual Program when they have successfully completed a course at the 2000 level in their second language" (p. 275). The French Department of Glendon College offered such a course in FRSL 2510. Over the years, instructors who have taught this course have debated the following questions: What is the typical profile of students in this course? What has been accomplished linguistically? Are the students improving their French in this course? Are we fulfilling the objectives set by the bilingual requirements? In order to answer these questions, in the fall of 1993, a committee was established to study the entire program of the French Department. For the purpose of this study, only the course FRSL 2510 and its successors 2512, 2515 will be considered.
The report concerning the language program, submitted in February 1993 revealed many points about students in FRSL 2510, the last French course taken by students who do not major in French (Language Committee Report, 1993). These points include the following: when enrolled in this course, the students did not regard it as an academic priority, they lacked motivation, they often skipped class, many seemed to be satisfied with the minimum passing grade, and they often complained about the workload. The recommendations of the committee regarding course FRSL 2510 were that the course should be theme-based, should better answer the needs and interests of the learners, should try to motivate learners to develop their language competencies, should expose them to information about Francophone communities, should find pedagogical approaches to remedy the problem of the heterogeneity of students' language competence, and should give the students the tools to become autonomous learners (p. 65).

Based on these recommendations, it was decided that course FRSL 2510 would be changed to make it into two half courses FRSL 2512 and FRSL 2515. This new format, which was implemented in the fall session of 1994, would give students more choices and variations of content, and would allow them to take FRSL 2512 one year and FRSL 2515 the next if they so desired and if it better fit their timetable.

In hopes of fulfilling the above recommendations as well as studying and researching new and potentially successful pedagogical approaches, I decided to be one of the first instructors to teach the new course (FRSL 2512). My intentions were to study the effectiveness of the Group Investigation technique (Sharan & Sharan, 1992), a collaborative learning technique, combined with content-based instruction. In the fall of 1994, I taught the first FRSL 2512 course in which the theme was Morocco, Africa.
Using collaborative techniques for the first time in this course raised issues that had to be taken into consideration when planning for this study. Some of the central issues that needed to be dealt with were: Will most students benefit from the course and improve their linguistic competence? In a collaborative type classroom, will most students, regardless of their learning preference, be as motivated as if they were in teacher-controlled class? Will they improve their linguistic skills?

In an attempt to answer these issues, the following are my research questions.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Is there a difference in linguistic achievement for the Group Investigation and the Teacher-Controlled groups?

2. Are there differences in linguistic achievement by group (GI and TC) and learner type (Collaborative, Competitive, Individualist)?

3. Are there differences in student perception of their own achievement according to:
   a. groups (GI versus TC), and
   b. learner's type

4. How successful was FRSL 2512 overall in the view of
   a. the instructor
   b. the students

5. Is the collaborative learning approach generally effective in these French as a Second Language (FSL) class at the university level?

1.4 SUMMARY

In order to answer my research questions, I chose an action-type research approach. I taught two sections of the same course FRSL 2512. A collaborative learning approach was used with one group and a teacher-controlled approach with the other group. In both, the teaching was content-based. The data collected from the two groups were analyzed and compared.
The thesis is organized as follows. In Chapter 2, I review the literature related to each aspect of this study, namely the communicative approach, content-based instruction, collaborative learning, group investigation, learning preference and French interrogatives. Chapter 3 is devoted to the description of the methodology, the research orientation, the description of the study, the data collection and the analyses performed.

Three major analyses were conducted. Chapter 4 is a quantitative analysis of the students' achievement in the use of French interrogatives. Chapter 5 is an analysis of the instructor's views on issues such as the students' linguistic achievement, their motivation, their learning preference, compatibility with the teaching approach, and the teaching strategies. Finally, Chapter 6 is an analysis of the students' perceptions of the following: their own achievement, the teaching approach used in the class in which they were enrolled, their motivation to learn French, and their learning preference related to the teaching approach.

A summary of findings and a discussion on selected issues constitute Chapter 7. Finally, Chapter 8 discusses the limitations, the pedagogical and research implications and concludes with general remarks.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The following selective literature review will provide a rationale for the choices I made with respect to teaching approaches, teaching strategies, and instruments used in this study to address the research questions. The first section of this chapter deals with the communicative approach as used in a second language classroom. The second section gives an account of findings concerning the use of content-based instruction at the university level. The third section describes the collaborative learning approach, with emphasis on various techniques, and more specifically the Group Investigation technique and its relevance in an FSL university course. The fourth section is devoted to the literature on learning preferences and questionnaires. Finally, the last section reviews studies of French interrogatives.

2.1.1 The Communicative Approach

"Language is ... fundamentally and primarily a social instrument. Language is the device for communication, it is a tool through which one individual comes to share the ideas and feelings of others" (cited in McDermot, 1973, pp. 449-450). This quotation from Dewey's essay, "Experience is Pedagogical" summarizes well the basis of the communicative approach.
The communicative approach is based on the assumption that language is a tool that allows communication and social interaction and that learning the language is an active process (Germain, 1991, 1993; Germain & Leblanc, 1982; Littlewood, 1981, 1984; McGroarty, 1984). Because one of the goals of many of today's generation of second language (L2) learners is to be able to communicate and to function in the target language (Trottier & Greer, 1992), interaction among students has become an important strategy used by second language (L2) teachers (Rivers, 1987). Consequently, in the classroom, the focus has been on helping learners to develop communicative functions such as how to ask questions, how to greet someone, how to argue a point of view, and how to negotiate rather than to teach them grammatical points in a traditional manner.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the main focus of the teaching profession was the teaching method, the "how to". Towards the end of the 1970s, the focus started to shift, and the objectives and the content of what was to be taught, in other words, the "why" and the "what" to teach, became more important (Leblanc, 1990). Today, teachers are mainly concerned with the "use" as well as the "usage" of the language (Leblanc, 1990, p. 21) and tend to put students in situations where they will have to use the language for a purpose (Germain, 1991; Leblanc, 1990). Janet Salt (1985) concludes in her article that, "actuellement, on considère la compétence de communication comme primordiale dans l'apprentissage des langues" (p.11). She reminds us that a well known communicative approach is the total immersion where students are immersed in the second language all day.

The teaching of a particular subject matter using the second language as the language of instruction is a good example of a communicative approach. It has been researched and applied also at the university level (Edwards, Wesche, Krashen, Clément, & Kruidenier, 1984). Having mentioned this example, I will further discuss content-based instruction in the following section.
2.2 CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION

2.2.1 Content-Based Instruction: A Definition

In the introduction of the edited book, *Language Learning and Content*, Krueger and Ryan (1993) summarized the objectives and underlying theory of what *content-based instruction*, also referred to as *discipline-based instruction*, mean for them:

The fundamental premise of discipline-based approaches to language study holds that students can successfully learn the content of an academic discipline and improve their foreign language proficiency at the same time. (p. 9)

A considerable amount has been written on the objectives and the efficiency of content-based language instruction at the university level. Content-based, discipline-based, theme-based, foreign language across the curriculum, and sheltered courses are the labels given to different programs of the same nature that have been experimented with in university foreign language programs in North America (Wesche, 1993; Crandall, 1993).

2.2.2 Krashen’s Hypotheses and Content-Based Instruction

For the purpose of this thesis, two of Krashen's hypotheses on "input" are of interest. The first one is that "second language acquisition results from comprehensible input provided in sufficient quantity within a real communication" (Edwards et al., 1984, p. 269). The second is that "subject-matter teaching in a second language, when it is comprehensible, is language teaching, because it provides comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1992, p. 30). These hypotheses provide a basis for the assertion that L2 proficiency can improve by learning content through the target language.
Edwards et al. (1984) conducted a study at the University of Ottawa to find out whether students can gain second language proficiency in the context of an introduction to psychology course offered in the target language with only L2 learners. This model was called the "Sheltered model" (Wesche, 1993). The course did not include formal, language instruction, and the target language was the medium of instruction throughout. The results of this research confirmed that students did acquire second language knowledge as well as content knowledge in this "Sheltered model" program.

Wesche (1993), in a research review of discipline-based second/foreign language approaches, suggested that much of the research conducted on the simultaneous learning of second languages and content comes from Canadian French immersion programs (e.g., Swain, 1991). After reviewing a number of investigations at the university level, she concluded that the results of these studies tend to corroborate theories such as Krashen's "comprehensible input" (p. 67) and support the use of content-based curriculum models as described by Brinton, Snow, and Wesche (1989).

The content-based instruction models described by Brinton et al. (1989) seem to be the appropriate choice for a language course at the university level if discipline-based courses are not an option. In a content-based instruction model, the students study language and subject matter simultaneously. The choice of content reflects the interest and the needs of the learner which makes second language learning meaningful, relevant, and efficient. This approach builds on the learner's past learning experience and knowledge. The content-based instruction model allows a focus on use as well as on usage and exposes the learner to meaningful language in use (Brinton et al., 1989; Germain, 1991, 1993; Kunstman, 1989; Leblanc, 1990; Melvin & Stout, 1987; Rivers, 1987).
2.2.3 The Use of Authentic Material in Content-Based Instruction

The use of authentic material in the L2 classroom has been thoroughly studied in connection with the communicative approach and content-based instruction. An authentic document is one that has not been fabricated by the teacher for a specific level of target language learners; rather, it has been produced by a native speaker of the L2 studied, one that represents its people, its way of thinking, and its customs (Alvarez, 1986; Brinton et al., 1989; Melvin & Stout, 1987; Rivers 1987).

There is much research evidence that the use of authentic material in an L2 classroom is desirable, making the experience of the L2 learner relevant and communicating culture and language in a natural way. The research suggests that using authentic material provides motivation to learn and encourages interaction among students (Brinton et al., 1989; Germain, 1991, 1993; Kunstmann, 1989, 1991; Melvin & Stout, 1987; Rivers, 1987).

The use of content-based instruction as described in the previous section is compatible with any teaching approach. In a teacher-controlled class, the instructor would select the material to read and would structure the class as he or she would see fit. In a collaborative learning class, the students would be involved in a more active way with the content of the course. The following section is a literature review of the use of collaborative learning in L2 classes.

2.3 COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Collaborative learning (hereafter, "CL") is a structured form of group learning. It is a teaching approach which consists of organizing class activities using small groups where learners work together towards a common academic goal. In the small groups, learners are encouraged to share ideas, help each other by putting their resources together, sharing and explaining their
findings, justifying their points of view, and commenting on one other's findings and points of view. Through CL, students develop group interdependence, individual responsibilities, and social skills. Stenvahn, Bennett and Rolheiser (1995) summarize the five basic principles of collaborative learning:

- **Positive interdependence.** In a group situation, the students depend on each other to be able to complete the activity.
- **Personal accountability.** They are accountable for their own work.
- **Face to face interaction.** They have to interact with the rest of the group and share their findings.
- **Social skills.** They acquire social and collaborative skills.
- **Analysis of process.** They analyse and evaluate the process they used to complete the work.

In an L2 classroom, working in groups, having students jointly write up a dialogue, doing exercises in pairs, and researching for a project have been common practices at all levels; primary, secondary and post-secondary. Group work and CL are distinguished by the fact that CL "has developed a set of principles and methods intended for use over extended periods as major elements of classroom organization and instruction" (Slavin, 1990, p. xi). Group work is less structured and more short-term.

In a collaborative L2 classroom, content is used to encourage the students to use the language in a meaningful way (e.g., Sharan & Sharan, 1992). The planning of group activities encourages interaction among students (e.g., Bejarano, 1987), and collaborative exercises promote cooperation among the learners, negotiation of meaning and create opportunities for frequent meaningful language production (e.g., Swain, 1994).

In the last two decades, research that has been conducted in CL has been conducted mostly at the primary and secondary levels, but not in L2 classrooms. The findings show that there are positive pedagogical reasons for using CL in the classroom. In comparison with the whole-class
method, there is evidence, reviewed in the subsection following, that the use of CL creates higher-level achievement for most students, positive social relations with other learners, and higher-level student motivation to learn (Sharan, 1990; Sharan & Shachar, 1988; Sharan & Sharan, 1976; Slavin, 1990; Trottier & Greer, 1992).

When considering collaborative learning as a second language teaching tool at any level, the instructor must consider some potential disadvantages of this method including

- noise level in the class,
- students who believe they work better independently,
- non-motivated students,
- lack of time to complete the activity,
- absenteeism,
- use of first language in the groups.

2.3.1 Outcomes of the Collaborative Learning Approach

2.3.1.1 Achievement

Slavin (1990, 1993) conducted a literature review of classroom research on the effects of CL on achievement. He specifically looked at practical applications of cooperative learning methods in elementary and secondary schools. He found that 68 studies met the stringent research requirements he had set for his review, and 72% of those studies showed a positive effect of cooperative learning on achievement; 12% favoured control groups (Slavin, 1990, p. 18). One aspect of his findings is that CL methods vary widely in achievement effects. For example, there is good evidence that STAD (Student Team-Achievement Division), TGT (Teams-Games-Tournaments), TAI (Team Assisted Individualization), and CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) are effective techniques for increasing student achievement. Group Investigation
(Slavin, 1990, p. 26) has not been researched sufficiently to compare the findings with other techniques, but as Slavin points out, its potential positive effects cannot be discounted.

2.3.1.2 Positive Interdependence

Other benefits for the learners have been found in using CL in the classroom. For example, in a small group activity, because students work toward one common goal, they have a vested interest in working together. They find ways to complete the work to the best of their ability, and within time limits by using each other's expertise. This phenomenon, called positive interdependence, becomes crucial for the success of the group (Gagné, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Slavin, 1990). Johnson and Johnson (1994) thoroughly analyzed the question of positive interdependence and CL. They concluded that, although the question of whether positive interdependence is crucial needs to be further researched, few studies show some positive interdependence is necessary to attain high achievement within a small group. Those working in CL need to structure tasks so that positive interdependence occurs without being set as a conscious goal.

2.3.1.3 Individual Accountability

Ultimately each student is asked by the instructor to display the knowledge acquired from the group activity. This knowledge is tested through the performance of oral presentations or through individual evaluation. This individual accountability for one's own achievement instills in each student a personal sense of responsibility (e.g., Slavin, 1990).
2.3.2 Collaborative Learning and Bilingual Education

The values of using CL in the classroom have been considered in bilingual education settings (Calderon & Carreon, 1994; Holt, 1993) as well as in second language classrooms (Coelho, 1994; Long & Porter, 1985; McGroarty, 1993; Sakakini, 1994). As early as 1980, Gunderson and Johnson found that CL promotes positive attitudes toward language learning. These findings were corroborated by other researchers, among them, Bejarano (1987) who concluded that CL benefitted students in terms of their language achievement, and McGroarty (1989) whose findings were as follows: CL in a second language classroom facilitates the functional use of the second language; CL does not slow the mastery of that language; it allows for integration of language skills and content areas; and it gives teachers and students experience with new roles that enhance social climate as well as linguistic skills (p. 140).

The CL approach is compatible with the principles of second language acquisition and the communicative approach; some of which are as follows:

1. Plentiful and appropriate input, which provides multiple exposures to language forms and uses in a natural context;
2. Frequent opportunities for interaction related to real communicative needs, including demands that meaning be negotiated between speakers to assure mutual comprehension;
3. An environment that puts learners at ease and so encourages efforts to communicate. (Kagan & McGroarty, 1993, p. 48)

Many other researchers have studied these principles and have found evidence for the suitability of CL in an L2 classroom (Ford, 1991; Gagné, 1992; Sharan & Sharan, 1992; Swain, 1993; 1994; Trottier & Greer, 1992). Small group activities are desirable in an L2 classroom because students are exposed to a large quantity of "comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1982). The small group arrangement creates an increase of language practice opportunities; it also enhances interaction in the target language by encouraging expression of meaningful content (McGroarty,
The learners' discourse will likely involve the negotiation of meaning and form, providing learners the opportunity to increase the comprehensibility of their input and the accuracy of their output (Swain, 1993).

2.3.3 Collaborative Learning at the University Level

As discussed earlier, collaborative learning has been researched primarily at the primary and secondary levels. However, Johnson and Johnson (1993) reviewed the studies examining individual learning in collaborative settings at the university level; these studies did not include second-language learning. The authors found that "over 120 studies have compared the relative efficacy of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic learning on individual achievement" (p. 17). The findings provide good evidence that CL promotes greater individual achievement than do competitive or individualist efforts (p. 17). The authors gave five reasons related to the research on CL at the university level:

1) CL has a rich history of theory, research, and practice. 2) The research on CL has validity and generalizability rarely found in the education literature. 3) CL affects many different instructional outcomes simultaneously. 4) Quite a bit is known about the essential components that make it work, and 5) CL creates learning opportunities that do not exist when students work competitively or individually. (p. 18)

The spring 1993 issue of the Magazine for Cooperation in Education was devoted to the applications of CL in higher education. Some articles dealt with competition or cooperation, cooperative learning and teacher education. Volume 14 (1994) of the same magazine selected Cooperative Learning & Language Learning as the main theme for that issue. Bilingual education and English as a Second Language (ESL) are some of the topics discussed in that issue; however, articles on French as a Second Language (FSL) are not included. To date, I have not come across
any research done in an FSL classroom at the university level using collaborative learning techniques.

2.3.4 Collaborative Learning Techniques

Many small group techniques have been developed for use in the classroom. Common small-group techniques include Co-op Co-op, Jigsaw I and II, SC (Scripted Cooperation), STAD (Student Teams-Achievement Divisions), TGT (Teams-Games-Tournaments), TAI (Team Assisted Individualization), CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition), "Le cerveau collectif", DG (Discussion Group), and Group Investigation (Bejarano, 1987; Bossert, 1988; Ford, 1991; Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Sharan & Sharan, 1992; Slavin, 1990). Some of these techniques are effective for use during a few minutes in the classroom, some require a full period, and others require as long as a whole semester.

Jigsaw 1, Co-op Co-op, Scripted Cooperation (SC) and Group Investigation (GI) are the four techniques I considered for assessment before selecting GI for my study because they seemed most easily adapted for a university setting.

2.3.4.1 Jigsaw 1 and 2

Jigsaw 1 (Clarke, 1994) was originally developed by Aronson in 1978, later adapted by Slavin in 1986 and referred to as Jigsaw 2. The technique is used as follows: "all students read the same material, but each team member is assigned a topic on which to become an expert. Expert groups meet to discuss their topics, then students return to their groups to teach the topic to their team-mates. Scores on individual quizzes are used to compute an improvement-based team score, and the highest scoring teams and students are acknowledged in a class newsletter" (Bossert, 1988, p. 231; Coelho, 1991).
2.3.4.2 Co-op Co-op

Co-op Co-op, a cooperative technique developed by Kagan during the 1970s, originated as a way to increase involvement of university students in a discipline course. The main goal of the technique is to allow the students to explore in-depth topics of interest to them. In class, students share their interest with each other. Groups are formed, and members learn how to work together. The students select the topics their group will study and divide each topic into minitopics for each student to undertake individually. After investigating their minitopic, each student makes a presentation to their group, and, then, together, the students prepare a team presentation. Following the presentation, there is an evaluation process (Kagan, 1985; Slavin, 1990).

2.3.4.3 Scripted Cooperation

Scripted Cooperation is a technique that Dansereau, O’Donnell, and Lambiotte developed in 1988. The technique resulted from a need to analyze cooperative learning in a more controlled situation. The following prototypical script (O'Donnell & Dansereau, 1992, p. 122) describes very clearly the steps of this technique:

- Both partners read the first section of the text.
- Partner A reiterates the information without looking at the text.
- Partner B provides feedback, without looking at the text.
- Both partners elaborate on the information (e.g., develop images, relate the information to prior knowledge).
- Both partners read the second section of the text.
- Partners A and B switch roles for the second section.
- A and B continue in this manner until they have completed the passage.

2.3.4.4 Group Investigation

Sharan and Sharan developed Group Investigation throughout the 1970s and the 1980s. This technique, similar to Co-op Co-op, has been researched at all educational levels, mostly in Israel. The main objective of this technique is to help students learn by allowing them to work in
small groups, to investigate a topic of their choice, and to organize their own work roles (Bossett, 1988; Sharan & Sharan, 1989-90, 1992, 1994; Slavin, 1990).

As discussed in the previous section, Jigsaw and Scripted Cooperation are two techniques that can be useful and effective in L2 classrooms at the university level. In the case of Jigsaw, the technique allows the reading of a text in small groups with the opportunity to become experts in the topic. In the case of Scripted Cooperation, the technique gives an instant confirmation of comprehension. In both cases there are opportunities to interact and discuss useful content. Yet they cannot constitute a whole course.

Co-op Co-op and GI have similar objectives and steps of implementation. They both fit well with the content-based instruction approach. I have chosen to use GI for my study rather than Co-op Co-op because the effectiveness of GI has been evaluated over 12 years in a series of 10 large-scale experiments and the evidence seems good (Sharan & Sharan, 1989-90). Because the findings of research in one educational context cannot necessarily be applied to another, further studies of the use of GI in an FSL classroom at the university level are required.

2.4 GROUP INVESTIGATION

Group Investigation (GI) is a collaborative learning technique. It is an approach to classroom instruction which puts students in small groups to work collaboratively to choose, experience, investigate and understand a topic of study.

2.4.1 The Philosophy of the Group Investigation Technique

GI has been influenced by John Dewey's basic philosophy of education according to which the process of learning is a series of social, emotional and intellectual experiences. Sharan and
Sharan (1992) have summarized some of Dewey's views: "Dewey viewed education as the process of helping cultivate an enlightened society in which people live together in a democratic fashion. Hence Dewey's emphasis on cooperation and the absence of ... competition to ignite students' motivation to excel. Cooperation binds people together, it serves as the cement of social groups. Competition rips groups apart ... "(p. 5). The objectives of Group Investigation are to create a situation in the classroom which will encourage students to collaborate with their peers, identify problems, organize, plan, investigate, and prepare a report collaboratively and present it to the rest of the class. Fathman and Kessler (1993) clearly summarized the Group Investigation technique designed by Sharan and Sharan (1992):

The Group Investigative Method assumes that knowledge develops as a result of collective effort. Groups study different aspects of a specific topic over a period of time. Each group does planning, carries out its study, and reports back to the entire class. Studies of this method suggest that student achievement is enhanced when emphasis is on the active search for information which is discovered, examined, discussed, interpreted, and summarised by students. (p. 129)

The technique incorporates four components that occur simultaneously in an integrated fashion: investigation, interaction, interpretation and intrinsic motivation.

The school of Group Dynamics has also contributed to the development of GI. In Sharan's words, Kurt Lewin created "methods for designing relationships within groups and for improving the effectiveness with which people in groups relate to one another and perform their tasks" (1992, p. 7). According to Sharan and Sharan, Hebert Thelen was the third contributor to the development of GI with his philosophy of group management, problem solving and decision making in a democratic fashion. Finally, GI was based on the constructivist cognitive psychology of Jean Piaget, summarized by Sharan and Sharan as based on the principle that "individuals
actively build or construct their own notions of reality out of their experience" (Sharan & Sharan, 1992, p. 10).

Based on the philosophies which influenced GI, the technique can be summarized as a set of guidelines that place students in a social, emotional and intellectual experiences to help them learn. The students have to learn social and group management strategies to be able to work collaboratively with their peers. The relationship that develops in the groups among the students creates a motivation to learn and to perform.

2.4.2 Group Investigation and Research

Sharan and Sharan (1992) have done the most research in GI classrooms. They have developed the GI method and studied its effects on academic achievement, its intrinsic motivation and social interaction among different ethnic groups. They (1992) reported large-scale experiments conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of GI. Moreover, Slavin (1990), who reviewed the research on the application of CL methods in elementary and secondary schools reserved a section on GI and related methods. A table that summarizes these studies (1990, p. 19) shows that five studies had been conducted on Group Investigation and related methods (i.e., Hertz-Lazarowitch, 1993, Hertz-Lazarowitch, Sharan & Sherman, 1980; Sharan, Hertz-Lazarowitch & Acherman, 1980). The subjects included English as a second language (ESL) literature, Arabic language and culture, geography and history, biology, and reading. Three out of these studies were conducted in Israel, one in Ohio, and the fifth in Elgin, Illinois.

Sharan (1990), and Sharan and Sharan (1989-90) reported that the results of research comparing GI classes to whole-class teaching show higher academic achievement, more motivation to learn and more interaction in GI classes. It was also found that small-group activity provides
students with more opportunity to use the language than a traditional whole-class method (McGroarty, 1993; Sharan & Sharan, 1992). McGroarty has also found evidence that working in pairs or in small groups facilitates second language acquisition and, more importantly, mastery of the subject matter (Bejarano, 1987; McGroarty, 1991).

Sharan and Shachar (1988) conducted research to analyze students' spoken language. They formed three groups of six students each. The students were randomly chosen from grade eight classes. The groups included students from Western and Middle Eastern backgrounds. These groups were asked to conduct discussions of fifteen minutes each on two occasions; one on a geography topic and the second on a history topic. The discussions were videotaped and analyzed by trained judges. The results showed that in comparison to the students who studied in classes that used whole-class methods, students who studied in GI classes used more words per turn of speech. The results also revealed more interaction between the two ethnic groups among students who studied in classes that used GI than among students who studied in classes using whole-class methods.

Sharan and Sharan (1992), clearly influenced by the thinking of Dewey on intrinsic motivation stated,

Individuals consider the goal or activity they wish to pursue as their own, not imposed upon them from without, and they actively pursue ways of reaching the goal or of pursuing the activity. 2. When we [active learners] are motivated by our own interests, we not only relate and attend to the task at hand; we actually go out to find ways of engaging in the kind of task or activity in which we are interested. We create the opportunities to experience that activity and to work at it rather than just waiting until they come along. (p. 16)

Motivation to learn is an issue that has been a major focus of writings and research about CL (Johnson & Johnson, 1985; Sharan & Shaulov, 1990; Slavin, 1990). For example, Sharan and
Shaulov (1990) carried out research that compared students' outcomes from classes that use whole-class instruction with those that use GI methods. The objectives were to assess motivation as well as academic achievement. Their findings were summarized as follows: "the group investigation approach to cooperative learning affects students' achievement, motivation to learn, and social relations more positively than does whole-class instruction" (p. 191).

2.5 LEARNING PREFERENCES

Dewey (1938) argued that the curriculum would change if educators had a deeper insight into the actual ways children learn. Given that insight and knowledge of the children's needs and potentialities, the children would learn better (p. 468).

It is true that individuals learn differently, and this is the case for second language learning. Some students may be shy, analytically oriented, learning best by studying grammar drills and by analyzing sentences. In contrast, other students may be sociable, extroverted, wishing to avoid grammar drills and being quite content to understand the meaning of a sentence without knowing the meaning of every word. It is valuable to discover the learning style of a student in order to better understand cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the student (Oxford & Ehrman, 1990).

2.5.1 Learning Preferences and Second Language Research

Recent research (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Crookall, 1989; Oxford & Ehrman, 1990) suggests that learning styles have a significant influence on students' choice of learning strategies and that both styles and strategies affect learning outcomes. Furthermore, certain learning strategies chosen by the learners may enhance language acquisition (Oxford, 1990).
There have been many attempts over the last two decades to understand how second language learners learn, and what the characteristics of the "good" language learner are (Besnard, 1995; Butler, 1984; Kolb, 1985; Naiman et al., 1978; Oxford, 1990; Reiss, 1985; Rubin & Thompson, 1982; Skehan, 1989). According to Ehrman and Oxford (1990) and Oxford (1993), at least 20 different dimensions of learning styles have been identified (p. 311). However, when one looks at the studies done in collaborative classes as compared to teacher-controlled classes, the three styles that are most commonly measured and compared are the collaborative, the competitive and the individualistic types as defined, for example in Johnson and Norem-Hebeisen (1979), Okebukola (1986), Owens and Barnes (1982), Reid (1987), and Sherman (1988).

None of the research I have come across simultaneously addresses cooperative learning (Group Investigation), learning preferences and second language learning. However, one notes that interaction between GI and learning preferences has been investigated in other subject areas. For example, in Nigeria, Okebukola (1986) looked at the influence of Learning Preferences on Group Investigation in Science classrooms. His intention "was to examine the effects of an eco-cultural factor-the environmental influence-on habitual behaviour patterns of students' achievement in science under cooperative and competitive learning conditions" (pp. 510-511). The research was conducted at the elementary level. His sample consisted of 493 level three biology students. It compared academic achievement of students placed in classes using the GI approach and students placed in a class using a whole-class instruction approach; it took into consideration the learning preference of the students. The students' learning preferences, namely individualist, competitive or collaborative, were determined by the Learning Preference Scale (Barnes & Owens, 1980). His first result was that students in the rural district showed preference for cooperative work and students in the urban district for competitive work (p. 515). Another of his finding was that
students do equally well in cooperative and competitive conditions as long as they are placed in the learning setting which matches their preferences (p. 516). Other aspects of this study will be discussed later in this thesis.

Sherman (1988) also examined academic achievement in individualistic, competitive, and cooperatively reward-structured environments in two high-school biology classrooms. She compared the academic achievement between students learning in a Group Investigation cooperative setting with those in an individually competitive classroom. Even though she did not find a significant difference in academic achievement between the two groups, she asserted that they both "obtained significantly higher post-test than pretest scores, indicating that both pedagogical strategies have positive effects on academic achievement" (p. 62). In summary, it is clear that the effect of Group Investigation on academic achievement, motivation to learn and social interaction have been well researched at the elementary and secondary levels; generally the findings are positive. If Group Investigation as described by Sharan and Sharan (1990) has been used at the university level in second language classroom, its effectiveness has not been reported in publications, based on extensive electronic searches by the author.

It seems desirable to create an L2 course considering the different learning styles of students. In trying to understand the learners and their learning styles, many questionnaires and inventories have been developed (Butler, 1984, Kolb, 1985; Naiman, Frolich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978; Oxford, 1990; Reiss, 1985), and ones of special relevance to this investigation are described in the next chapter (see section 3.2.4.1 b).
2.5.2 Learning Preference Inventories, Scales and Questionnaires

Choosing an appropriate instrument to investigate the characteristics of a learner is crucial. The research conducted for this thesis examines two teaching approaches, namely cooperative and teacher-fronted and their relation to achievement. In this context, it seems important to discover whether each student has a cooperative, a competitive or an individualistic style of learning.

I considered many questionnaires, inventories and scales as potential instruments to use in my study. Most were discarded. For example, three instruments for adult learners were considered. The Learning-Style Inventory developed by Kolb (1985), the Gregorc Style Delineator (1985), and the questionnaire developed by Willing (1988) were eliminated because they all offered more categories of learners than the three types that were the focus of the present research.

Johnson and Norem-Hebeisen (1979) developed a measure of cooperative, competitive, and individualist attitudes. This scale was created to provide a research tool for social scientists interested in social interdependence (p. 253). This instrument was eliminated because it was not elaborate enough, and it did not ask many specific questions.

Reiss (1985), Naiman et al. (1978), and Oxford (1990) developed questionnaires to find out the learning preferences specifically for second language learners. Reiss (1985) and Naiman et al.'s (1978) questionnaires aimed at discovering whether the students were good second language learners. Oxford (1990) used an inventory to find out what strategies second language learners use to learn the second language. Whether a given student is a good language learner and which learning strategies that student uses are undoubtedly important and should be kept in mind but, for the proposed research, it was considered more important to determine the type of learner a student is: collaborative, competitive or individualistic.
The "Learning Preference Scale-Students" (LPSS), developed by Owens and Straton (1980) in Australia, determines whether students have a cooperative, competitive, or individualized learning preference. The instrument was pilot-tested, administered, and validated using approximately 1600 elementary and secondary students (Owens & Straton, 1980). Reliability statistics were also calculated. The instrument has since been used in studies conducted by Okebukola (1986) and Owens and Barnes (1982). The inventory contains 42 items. Each item is a statement about learning through cooperation with others, competing with others, or working alone. Students filling out the questionnaire have to respond to each item using a four-point answer scale to indicate how 'true' or 'false' the statement is for them (p. 150). The LPS thus was judged the most appropriate instrument for the present research.

2.6 FRENCH INTERROGATIVES

Students' achievement is one issue that will be considered in this study. The particular grammatical aspect that has been chosen for that purpose is French interrogatives. This grammatical aspect has been selected rather than others because I was aware that the students would want to ask many questions during the course. This explains the need to review some of the studies that have been conducted using French interrogatives as the corpus.

---

1 "Both internal consistency and stability coefficients were determined for each LPSS sub-scale. The Cronbach \( \alpha \) coefficients calculated on both the main testing data and retest data indicate a substantial degree of homogeneity for each of the sub-scales. These coefficients vary from 0.64 to 0.81. The test-retest coefficients, on the other hand, indicate only a modest degree of stability over the two-month interval between testings. It appears from these results that between 21 and 45 per cent of the variation in scores on the retest can be accounted for by variation in the scores on the initial test. While it is possible that this apparent lack of congruence between the two sets of coefficients is due to sample differences, this is unlikely given the way the retest sample was chosen. What is more likely is that these preferences are somewhat unstable and may vary in relation to time of testing within a single school year, a possibility which is being investigated in more detail in current studies using the LPSS. Interestingly, there are no clear year level or sub-scale differences among the internal consistency or stability coefficients, except that preferences for the cooperative learning mode appear to become more stable with an increase in age" (Owens & Straton, 1980. p. 152).
In the past 25 years, several studies have been conducted on French interrogatives, and they have had various foci. For example, McCool (1994) dealt with the teaching of the formation of French questions. Terry (1970) investigated the frequency of spoken usage of interrogatives by native speakers. Lyster (1996) studied the sociostylistic variation in interrogatives used by eight adolescent, native French speakers. Finally, Di Vito (1997) did an empirical study on the interaction among interrogative forms, functions, and genres.

Terry (1970) undertook to study the oral usage of the French interrogatives, "langage usuel de nos jours" (p. 21) of France. He used French plays as his corpus and did a frequency count in order to identify the most common forms and to determine the context and registers of speech of the different forms (p. 19). He divided his data into yes-no and information-eliciting questions (Wh-questions). It was found that out of 4364 French interrogatives that appeared in the selected plays, 3016 (69%) were yes-no questions and 1349 (31%) were wh-questions. His findings on oral usage of different forms of yes-no and wh-questions are summarized here as percentages in Table 2.1. As shown in Table 2.1 yes-no questions in this corpus were generally signaled by intonation, while inversion was used to form most Wh-questions.

Lyster's findings (1996) which involved simulated role-plays with peers and adults, documented the interrogative patterns of middle-class monolingual adolescent Francophones in a school in Quebec City. Lyster concluded, for his sample, that "yes-no questions with simple inversion and Est-ce que are equally often used by the adolescents in overall oral production" (p. 175) and that there is "a minimal use of uninverted questions with rising intonation and considerable use of inversion in spoken French" (p. 175). Table 2.2 shows that the learners favored the use of Est-ce que questions (50%) and intonation questions (31.2%) in Wh-question production. These findings are inconsistent with those of other studies,
Table 2.1


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Question</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes-No Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intonation</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Est-ce que</em></td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inversion</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh- Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intonation</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Est-ce que</em></td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inversion</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intonation</td>
<td>62.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Est-ce que</em></td>
<td>13.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inversion</td>
<td>23.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

which indicate that inverted questions occur infrequently in spoken French and that uninverted forms with rising intonation and *Est-ce que* forms clearly predominate, at least in informal speech (e.g., Coveney, 1990; Grevisse, 1986; McCool, 1994). This could be due to the fact that studies involved different samples (see Table 2.2).

For written production, Lyster (1996) found that out of 8 yes-no questions, 5 were *Est-ce que*, 3 were inverted and none made use of declarative word order. Out of 3 wh- questions, none were *Est-ce que*, 2 were inverted and 1 used declarative word order.

To categorize the use of oral and written interrogatives by Francophones in France, Chevalier (1969) concluded, based on linguistic and sociolinguistic data, that the most frequently used oral form is one with rising intonation, followed by the *Est-ce que* form, and finally inversion. He found that inversion is the most commonly used form in written
production. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of McCool (1994) and with the description of French interrogatives in Grevisse (1986).

Table 2.2


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Question</th>
<th>ORAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes-No Questions</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intonation</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Est-ce que</em></td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inversion</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-tu suffix</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wh- Questions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intonation</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Est-ce que</em></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inversion</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-tu suffix</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Questions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intonation</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Est-ce que</em></td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inversion</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-tu suffix</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

McCool, whose purpose was to summarize and evaluate the treatment of interrogatives in French (FSL) textbooks used for teaching at the university level in North America, noted that in the textbooks "the replacement of inversion and to a lesser extent, of *Est-ce que*, in the formation of yes-no questions by the use of rising intonation is also extended to information questions" (p. 57). McCool stated his personal opinion on the teaching of French interrogatives: that inversion should be the last interrogative form presented to the FSL learner.
O'Connor Di Vito (1997) devotes an entire chapter to the frequency and the functions of syntactic patterns in spoken and written French interrogatives, based on data from many different genres. For the spoken data, she used interviews (both interviewer and interviewee speech), conversations, news broadcasts, and conferences. The written data include 18th, 19th, and 20th century theater, folklore and fairy tales, detective novels, 18th, 19th and 20th century prose, magazines, official correspondence, and travel guides. She concluded that native speakers’ choice of interrogative depends on several factors: spoken or written mode, discourse type, question type, and the nature of the subject and verb in question (p. 110).

The studies discussed in this section revealed that French interrogatives are analyzed by being divided into oral and written use, and into types of questions: intonation, est-ce que, inversion and tu–suffix when appropriate as in Lyster’s study (1996). The preferences found by each study vary depending on different factors such as the participants, their age, the type of corpus, and whether the questions are yes-no or wh-questions.

An electronic search has revealed no published research on the acquisition of French interrogatives for FSL learners at the university levels; therefore, when analyzing the French interrogatives in this study, similar categories as those discussed in this section as well as those described in section 4.2 will be taken into account.

The literature review done in this chapter has revealed the gaps which the proposed study addresses so as to contribute to second language acquisition theory and pedagogy. The next Chapter describes the design and the pilot project of the present study, the data collection and the analysis procedures.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As explained in the introduction, through this study I aimed to discover if there was a relationship between achievement, learning preferences and teaching approaches in my university level French as a Second Language course. Achievement was examined through tests involving the interrogative. To measure learning preferences, I used the Learning Preference Scales, a standardized questionnaire elaborated by Owens and Straton (1980). The selected teaching approaches were the Collaborative Learning and the Teacher-controlled approaches.

This chapter is divided into five sections. First, I will present the reasons I chose to engage in an action research study and I will give a general overview of the study. Secondly, I will describe the pilot study I carried out and then elaborate on what I learned from the experience and what I changed to improve the main study. Thirdly, I will explain in detail the design of the main study: the participants, the content of the course, and the two different teaching approaches used. Fourthly, I will discuss and justify each instrument used to collect data. Finally, I will conclude by explaining in detail the methods used to quantitatively and qualitatively analyze the data collected.
3.2 DESIGN

3.2.1 Research Orientation

3.2.1.1 Case study

The choice of research design for this study depended upon the objectives I wanted to attain. I chose to conduct a case study because (1) my main purpose was to do an inquiry about teaching strategies in a specific context, this research was carried out in courses offered by the French Department of Glendon College, York University; (2) I was guided by research questions (see Chapter 1); and (3) a case study “does not claim any particular methods for data collection or data analysis” (Merriam, 1990, p.10), allowing me to formulate my methodology to suit the purpose of my study, and to use instruments which yielded data that could be analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively (Merriam, 1990; Johnson, 1992).

3.2.1.2 Action research

Once the decision to conduct a case study was taken, I was left with another decision related to the researcher. I opted for the teacher involvement in my own research which is called action research in the field of second language acquisition and teaching (Johnson, 1992), and referred to by some writers as a movement (e.g., Crookes, 1993).

Cohen and Manion (1989) and Johnson (1992) supplied a rationale for action research or teacher-research: "scholars have suggested that teacher involvement in research is an effective way to bridge the gaps between theory and practice and contribute to knowledge" (p. 212). This idea was addressed by Stenhouse (1975): "if significant and lasting improvements in classroom second language learning are to be achieved, this can best be done by teachers and learners doing their own research in their own classrooms" (p. 174).
The role of the practitioner, collaboration and bringing about change are the three characteristics that are commonly mentioned for action research. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) (cited in Nunan, 1992) argued that:

the three defining characteristics of action research are that it is carried out by practitioners (for our purposes, classroom teachers) rather than outside researchers; secondly, that it is collaborative; and thirdly, that it is aimed at changing things. (p. 17)

Kelly (1985) has described Rapaport's simultaneous-integrated action research as follows: "[it] aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework" (p. 132).

In the case of the present study, two of the three characteristics fit Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) description. I was the practitioner that conducted the research, and my aim was to bring about change in my courses and in the French Department.

The third characteristic, collaboration, was not fulfilled. However, as Nunan (1992) explained, the lack of collaboration in the study does not necessarily exclude it from action research:

While collaboration is highly desirable, I do not believe that it should be seen as a defining characteristic of action research. Many teachers who are interested in exploring processes of teaching and learning in their own context are either unable, for practical reasons, or unwilling, for personal reasons to do collaborative research. The work that such people carry out should not necessarily be excluded as action research. ... A descriptive case study of a particular classroom, group of learners, or even a single learner counts as action research if it is initiated by a question, is supported by data and interpretation, and is carried out by a practitioner investigating aspects of his or her own context and situation. (p. 18)
3.2.1.3 Teacher-researcher

Throughout this study, I played a dual role in the classroom. I was at once an instructor and a researcher. As the instructor, I designed the course and taught it. As the researcher, I designed my study, collected data from my students, and observed.

Patton (1980), in a chapter on evaluation through observation describes the variation in observer involvement. The observer can be a complete participant, a participant as observer, an observer as participant or a complete observer. Merriam (1990) adds another category for case study researchers; researcher participant: "who participates in a social situation but is personally only partially involved, so that he can function as a researcher. Although the ideal in qualitative case studies is to get inside the perspective of the participants, full participation is not always possible" (p. 93). In this present study, I acted as researcher participant.

I chose to record my observations in a spontaneous manner by taping my comments because it best suited the way I organized my study.

3.2.2 The Participants

The study was conducted at Glendon College, the bilingual campus of York University, in Toronto, Ontario. The students participating in this study were primarily Anglophones who had not chosen French as their major. They were students who, after the completion of their French OAC,\(^2\) were categorized at an intermediate level of proficiency on the placement test of the French Department at Glendon College. By the time they were ready to enrol in course FRSL 2512, these persons had all successfully completed at least one first-year university French course, which included about 105 hours of French instruction. Their general proficiency level was intermediate;

\(^2\) OAC stands for Ontario Academic Credit which are high school courses required for university admission.
their aural comprehension was usually stronger than the other three language skills (oral production, written comprehension and written production); and the skill that seemed to need the most work was writing, particularly grammatical accuracy.

At Glendon College, in order to graduate, students are required to take a full second-year course taught in French. This course can be taken in the French Department or any other department. Courses FRSL 2512 and FRSL 2515 are the two half courses offered by the French Department that fulfil this College requirement. Although students have some choice on how to fulfil their language requirement, most of them enrol in FRSL 2512 and 2515.

3.2.3 The Course/The Context

The study was conducted in FRSL 2512. FRSL 2512 is a second-year university FSL half course. The underlying pedagogical strategy of this course is a communicative, content-based approach that uses content to develop French language proficiency. The content I chose to teach in this course was Morocco, its historical, geographical, cultural and linguistic characteristics. During the piloting of the GI group, seven other sections of FRSL 2512 were being taught by other instructors. Each instructor chose a subject for his or her course. *Le rire dans le roman* and *la civilisation franco-canadienne* are two examples of content chosen by other instructors. The use of content-based instruction was chosen because it fulfils the general objectives of this course as described in the report (Language Committee Report, 1993) written for the restructuring of FRSL 2512 at Glendon College.

I selected "Morocco, the country" as the content for both groups. The reasons for this choice are numerous. I believed that learners would be interested and motivated to learn about Morocco and related topics. Further, it could expose them to information about a specific
Francophone community in Toronto. I also have personal reasons. I was born in Morocco and I know the country and the culture well. It is interesting to know the Francophone aspects of that country and the reasons for the French presence there. I have access to authentic material, and I am able to arrange authentic contacts with Moroccans. The fact that about 7,000 Moroccans live in Toronto alone and about 30,000 in Quebec warrants the study and recognition of this ethnic group and its French background and culture.

3.2.4 Instruments

Teachers who conduct their own research to build an understanding of their students, their own teaching strategies, their programs and other such aspects commonly use qualitative methods rather than quantitative methods for data collection (Johnson, 1992). Many experts encourage researchers to use both methods. Sherman (1988) asserted that the integration of both approaches is desirable. Eisner and Peshkin (1990) have argued that both methods are complementary. Salomon, (1991) who refers to this mixture as a rapprochement, concluded, "as with the case of quantitative and qualitative research in education, cohabitation is not a luxury, it is a necessity if any fruitful outcomes are ever expected to emerge" (p. 17). In this study, both methods were used and a variety of instruments reflecting both the quantitative and the qualitative methods were chosen.

My study requires that I collect data regarding the students, their learning preferences, their linguistic competence, their perception of their achievement and their compatibility with the teaching approach to which they were exposed. Quantitative data were collected from:

- Personal and academic questionnaire,
- The Learning Preference Scale,
- Linguistic tests,
- Course evaluation (section a).
Qualitative data were collected from:

- Student journals,
- Interviews,
- Instructor’s personal account,
- Course evaluation (section b).

The term “document” in some case studies refers to materials other than interviews and observations from which data are obtained. It includes any material that was not written for the purpose of the study; in the present case, an example would be school records. Such documents are “a ready-made source of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator” (Merriam, 1990, p. 104). In this study, the Language Committee Report (1993) falls in this category of documents.

The data mentioned above represent a different document type (Merriam, 1990). They are generated by the researcher or the students. Some are a “type of document prepared by the researcher for the specific purpose of learning more about the situation, person, or event being investigated. The researcher might request that someone keep a diary or log of activities during the course of the investigation” (p. 114). The students’ journals, the instructor’s journal are two examples that would fall into this category, and “Quantitative data produced by the investigator…. Projective tests, attitudinal measures, content examinations, statistical data from surveys on any number of topics - all can be treated as documents in support of a case study investigation.” (p. 114). The linguistic tests, the course evaluation, the personal and academic questionnaire, and the Learning Preference Scale all fall into this category of documents.

Those who write about content analysis agree that the data obtained from the documents are “objective, systematic, and quantifiable analysis” (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Hitchcock and Hughes describe content analysis in the following manner:
Content analysis attempts to provide a quantitative solution to elucidating meaning by rigorous enumeration of the frequency by which textual items (words, phrases, concepts) appear in a text. Put another way, frequency equals significance. The problem which faces the researcher using content analysis is that frequency does not, in fact, necessarily mean significance and that a striking word or phrase may turn out to be more important in determining meaning. This suggests that a more qualitative approach may be better suited to analyzing these materials. (p. 226)

The following is a description of the instruments I chose to use in this study, and a rationale for their use.

3.2.4.1 Quantitative Instruments

a. Personal and Academic Questionnaire

I created a questionnaire for my students to complete in order to find out who they were, why they enrolled in my course, what French background they brought with them, and how motivated they were (see Appendix A). The format of the questionnaire was decided after reviewing several questionnaires in second language studies. For example, Hart, Lapkin and Swain (1987), to evaluate attitudes and achievement of second language learners, used questions that required the students to check the appropriate response. They also used open-type questions that allowed the students to answer in their own words. Reiss (1985), in an effort to take another look at the Good Language Learner, used a format that required the students to circle the appropriate answer.

For my questionnaire, I chose to include a mixture of both types of questions; some questions such as age and gender were multiple-choice and required circling; other questions were open-ended. For example, questions regarding students’ exposure to French in a Francophone environment required a detailed description.
The final version of my questionnaire included three sections. The first section asks questions about the personal background of the student: name, age group, gender and first language. The second section includes 12 questions about the student's academic background: courses taken in French at the university level, grades obtained, high school information, reasons for having enrolled in my course. The last section deals with frequency of French use outside the classroom.

b. The Learning Preference Scale

The Learning Preference Scale was the instrument used to determine the learning style of any given student (see Appendix B). The questionnaire created and standardized by Barnes and Straton (1980) was used also in my study because it suited one of my purposes of my study which was to discover whether my students preferred to work in groups or individually. The questionnaire was originally developed for school grades and, subsequently, a version was developed for the university level. The latter version was used for this study.

The statements deal with different aspects of the students' preferences in terms of their learning styles. The test includes 36 statements with a four-point scale to which respondents answer by determining whether the statement is clearly true, clearly false, sort of true or sort of false for them; for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># 2</th>
<th>Working in a group leads to a poor result</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># 15</td>
<td>I do better work by myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 21</td>
<td>other people do well when they try to be</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>better than I am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.1: Samples taken from the Learning Preference Scale
The scale was used to determine whether a given student is more a collaborative-, competitive- or individualist-type learner. Collaborative learners are described as students who prefer working with others, in pairs or in groups. These learners feel that students help one another in a group situation in order to accomplish a task. Competitive learners compare themselves to others, and are motivated by the results they get in comparison with their peers. Individualists prefer working alone. They believe that they accomplish tasks faster than if they worked in groups. They feel that they have control over their time and the finished product of their work.

c. Linguistic tests

In my case study, it was necessary to assess my students' linguistic knowledge when they enrolled in my class and at the end of the course to determine whether they, in fact, had advanced in their second language learning (see Appendices C1, C2, C3, and C4). Tests are the most commonly used form of data collection to analyze achievement. In my case, I created pre-and posttests that include oral and written components.

With respect to the content of the test, I chose to narrow the focus to only one grammatical aspect of the target language because it would have been difficult to look at improvement in all aspects of the language. I chose to evaluate the learning of interrogatives for two reasons: (1) because the content of the course was new to the students, they would naturally want to or need to ask questions; (2) interrogatives have been well described.

I opted for a relatively open-ended test that would allow students to use the various interrogative forms that they had already acquired. This reasoning was applied to both the oral and the written tests.
i. *The content of the oral tests.* The oral part of the test was done at the language laboratory at Glendon College. For the pretest students were presented with a map of Canada and asked to create as many questions as they could think of, varying as much as possible the interrogative forms (*i.e.*, *qui, que, qu'est-ce que, qu'est-ce qui, pourquoi, comment, quel*) (see Appendix C1). For the posttest, the same format and instructions were given with a different map, that of North Africa. Both groups were tested in the same manner (see Appendix C2).

ii. *The content of the written tests.* The written part of the test included contextualized situations which required students to ask a series of questions. On the pretest, the content was Canada, a subject well known to them. The content of the posttest was Morocco, which was the basis of the content of the course. In the pretest, the students were instructed to write ten questions and in the posttest, 20 questions. The discrepancy between the number of questions to write in the pre and the posttest was an error on my part (see Appendices C3 and C4). I had not anticipated the difficulties and the potential repercussions of having asked a different number of questions in the pre and the posttest.

The following are the written pretest and the posttest.

### Pretest

*Un(e) de vos amis(e)s veut venir au Canada. Il/elle vous demande de vous renseigner auprès d'une agence de voyage pour obtenir le plus de renseignements possibles concernant les endroits à voir, les villes à visiter, les hôtels disponibles, les prix etc..... Avant de téléphoner, préparez une liste de toutes les questions auxquelles vous pensez.*

Figure 3.2: Pretest: Written
Un(e) de vos ami(e)s a l'intention d'aller au Maroc. Comme vous avez suivi un cours sur le Maroc, il/elle vous demande de vous renseigner auprès d'une agence de voyage pour obtenir le plus de renseignements possibles concernant les endroits à voir, les villes à visiter, les hôtels disponibles, les prix etc...

Avant de téléphoner, préparez une liste de toutes les questions auxquelles vous pensez.

Figure 3.3: Posttest: Written

3.2.4.2 Qualitative data

a. Content Analyses

i. Student Journals

Besides observing the students, I gathered from the students themselves information regarding their attitudes, their motivations, their development, their language learning, their ups and downs throughout the course, their level of satisfaction with the course, their reactions to the course content and the teaching approach. This information was obtained through the use of journals. Nunan (1989) gives a clear definition of a journal and its use in research: "It is a first-person account of a language learning or teaching experience, documented through regular, candid entries in a personal journal and then analyzed for recurring patterns or salient events" (p. 55).

There are many advantages to using journals for research purposes. These advantages are discussed by Nunan (1989) based on Hopkins' (1985) views. Journals are simple to keep and there is no outsider needed. They usually provide an accurate on-going record which can provide good continuity. The first-hand information they provide can be studied conveniently on the researcher's own time. They can act as an aide-mémoire. They provide qualitative data that can enrich a case...
study, and because they can be highly subjective, when combined with data from other sources, they can foster a deeper understanding of students.

The disadvantages were also considered and solved in some cases. For example, one of the problems is that writing a journal is time-consuming. To remedy this problem, I allocated 10% of the final grade to journal writing. The students would therefore receive about 1.7 points per journal they wrote. To justify this "gift," I asked the students to write their entries in French. This would allow them to practice their written language as well as help me in my research. The compromise was well accepted by the students. In order to gain my students' confidence, I included in the consent letter the following paragraph:

To reassure students that the content of the journals will have NO influence on the grade, I would like to suggest that all journals be kept by a designated student, in a sealed envelope to be read by me only after the final grades have been assigned.  
(Appendix D)

b. Interviews

Patton (1980) has stated:

The purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind. We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe...we cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective. (p. 196)

This quotation provides the reasons I chose to interview my students.

There are three main types of interviews: unstructured, semi-structured and structured, although the terminology tends to differ from one researcher to another (see Merriam, 1990; Patton, 1980). The unstructured type interview "relies entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction." (Patton, 1980; p.198) The semi-structured interview is "guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, but neither the exact wording
nor the order of questions is determined ahead of time.” (Merriam, 1990; p.74) The structured type interview consists of:

A set of questions carefully worded and arranged with the intention of asking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same word. (Patton, 1980; p.198)

Because my goal was to find out students’ opinions on specific matters, a spontaneous interaction may not have answered the questions I was interested in, consequently, I eliminated the unstructured interview. As I needed the students and the interviewer to elaborate on items that came up in the interview and were relevant for my study, and not restrict them with structured questions, I eliminated the possibility of doing a structured interview. A semi-structured interview allowed me and the interviewer, whom I had hired as a research assistant, to list the categories that were to be explored with each student, and would allow the interviewer to ask more detailed questions if appropriate and relevant.

The categories determined were as follows:

- **Achievement:** perception of the students’ improvement in their oral skills, oral and written comprehension, vocabulary learning, writing skills, and content;

- **Methodology:** their perception of the structure of the course, the advantages and disadvantages of group work, the necessity of grammar in an L2 class, the role of the instructor;

- **Learning Styles:** their perception of their own learning style, the compatibility of the learning style with the teaching approach to which they were exposed;

- **Motivation:** their motivation related to their own motivation to learn, to the content of the course and the teaching approach.

Ideally, all students of both groups should have been interviewed twice; once in the middle and once at the end of the course; in the middle of the course to find out "How things were going."
and at the end to find out "How things had gone." It would have given me more insight on whether change of opinions and perception had occurred during the course.

c. Instructor's personal account

For the same reasons as the writing of students' journal, I thought it would be useful for me to keep a record of my experiences. Thus, I kept a journal of my feelings, perceptions, and observations about the course and its content, and about the students. I dealt with the disadvantage of the time-consuming nature of journal writing by taping my reflections after each class rather than writing them.

d. Course evaluation

The use of a course evaluation questionnaire has proven helpful to me in the past. Through questionnaires, students are given the opportunity to express their feelings regarding the course, its content, its structure, and the teaching strategies used. The instructor is able to make appropriate changes to improve the courses based on the students' opinions. Usually the questionnaire is anonymous. In the case of this study, students were asked to sign because the data obtained had to be matched with data of other instruments for the purposes of analysis.

Because of the different teaching treatments, it was necessary to create questionnaires with different questions appropriate to each group (see Appendices E1 and E2). Both questionnaires contain two sections. The first section includes statements to which students offer their opinion by circling the numbers from 1 to 5, 1 being the least favourable. The questions related to the instructor's teaching strategies were similar for both groups. An important difference between the questionnaires is that the questions on group work were posed to the GI group where questions related to the reading of texts were asked of the TC group.
The second section includes four open-ended statements and questions concerning the content of the course, the students’ perception of their oral, written and social skills. These questions ask students to comment on what they liked the most about the course, what they liked the least about the course, what they could suggest to improve the course, and any additional comments they had. The course evaluation is usually read after the final grades are handed in.

The following section deals with the teaching approaches used in both classes; the Group Investigation and the teacher-controlled.

3.2.5 Teaching Approaches

The two approaches that were used were the Group Investigation technique and the teacher-controlled. The following is a description of these two approaches.

3.2.5.1 The group investigation technique

In a Group Investigation class, groups of students investigate a topic of their choice and present the results of their research to the whole class in the form of an oral presentation. The instructor has a role of a consultant, a facilitator, and a resource person.

The reasons that led me to choose this technique over others were based on the hypotheses of McGroarty (1991) that collaborative learning facilitates L2 acquisition along with subject matter mastery. The advantages of using a collaborative approach are numerous: for example, the students learn about their own topic and also become knowledgeable about the topics presented by their peers; they interact with each other; they help one another and they develop social, collaborative and personal skills. The following is a brief paraphrased description of the ways in which the recommendations made by the committee of the French Department (section 1.1) were incorporated in planning the course in which I used a collaborative learning approach.
a) **Use of theme-based approach:** I chose Morocco as the main theme of the course. Morocco was a French protectorate for 50 years; the historic and ongoing French influence in the country lends itself to further study.

b) **Expose students to information about Francophone communities:** The French Moroccan community counts approximately 7,000 in Toronto alone and approximately 30,000 in Quebec. This provides ample opportunity to expose the students to that community, and to find authentic reading material.

c) **Answer needs and interests of the learners:** Although the students of the GI group did not choose the main theme of the course, Morocco, they had the opportunity to study a sub-theme of their choice based on their personal interest.

d) **Motivate learners to develop their language competencies:** Research suggests that (1) content-based instruction, and (2) collaborative learning motivate learners to develop their language competencies because they are interested in the topics they choose, and to learn the language without being completely conscious of it (McGroarty, 1993).

e) **Find pedagogical approaches to remedy the problem of heterogeneity of students’ language competency:** Although of similar profiles, students within a given group had reached different levels of language skills and competencies. For example, some students were stronger orally, others had a better knowledge of grammar. By choosing to use a collaborative learning approach, heterogeneity of the students’ language competency can be better addressed. Students of different level of competence ended up in the same groups to work on a common project. This situation allows the stronger students to help the others and to communicate their knowledge to them. Weaker students can benefit from the knowledge of the stronger members of the groups, and can contribute by offering what they can to the rest of the group. It also
allows students to share their personal strengths with fellow students by choosing roles in which they are strongest.

f) **Give students tools to become autonomous learners:** One of the main objectives of collaborative learning is that students become autonomous learners (Slavin, 1990). In the GI class, students were given directions to follow in order to become better researchers. What they learn from this experience could be applied to any other research the students may want to pursue.

At the beginning of the course, the GI students chose a sub-topic of Morocco to investigate. Groups of four or five were formed according to personal interest. The group investigation technique is a well-structured technique and the students in their respective groups followed the six prescribed stages which took 7 weeks to complete:

1. Identifying the topic and organizing students into groups;
2. Planning the tasks within each group;
3. Carrying out the investigation;
4. Planning the presentation;
5. Presenting;

The details of the implementation of these stages are described in section 3.4.2.2 ii of this chapter.

3.2.5.2 **Teacher-controlled approach**

The teacher-controlled approach is a more traditional approach. The teaching that occurs in the classroom is based on the teacher’s decisions. The teacher determines the content of the course, chooses the topics to be studied, and the readings to be done. Although group work is one of many strategies that can be used in a teacher-controlled type class, the work is done most of the
time with the whole class. The students depend on the teacher more than in the collaborative type classroom (Germain, 1993).

The detail of the implementation of the TC group is described in section 3.4.2.

3.3 THE PILOT STUDY

Piloting was a crucial step in the study process. Course FRSL 2512 was a new French course at Glendon which, consequently, I was teaching for the first time. The curriculum of the course was to be decided and designed by the instructor. Furthermore, my study involved three main components: the students' learning preference, their ability to ask questions and the relationships of these two aspects with two different teaching approaches. It was necessary to experiment with these various components.

I had to design two different course outlines for two different teaching approaches, as well as to design instruments to collect data and incorporate them into the syllabus. I was also concerned with synchronizing data collection in the two groups while, at the same time, making it seem non-obtrusive for the students.

My reasons for piloting the study were numerous:

- I had never taught using the Group Investigation technique and needed to become familiar with the steps and stages prescribed by Sharan and Sharan (1992) and to integrate these into the course in an organized fashion.
- Because in the main study, I would be teaching the groups during the same term, I needed to be thoroughly organized. Preparing a teacher-controlled syllabus that coincided as much as possible with the group investigation syllabus was an important consideration.
- It was important to experience the teaching of both approaches to be sure that the course was valid in terms of content, achievement, and linguistic competence.

- Gaining experience in teaching both approaches would help me work out how to fit the data collection into the course without burdening the students.

- Up to the present, most of the studies done on GI involved elementary students. Whether this technique would work with university students in FSL courses was unexplored territory.

- I had designed instruments, which needed to be validated. The Learning Preference Scale had been validated in Australia but had never been used in Canada in this type of setting.

- Asking students to write a journal is not a common procedure in university FSL courses. I did not know whether the students would be willing to produce a journal that did not get feedback nor generate a response from the instructor, or if they would be honest and truthful about how they felt.

For timetabling reasons, I was unable to pilot both groups at the same time. In retrospect, I am pleased because I realize that I had too much to learn and too many difficulties that had to be sorted out concerning the teaching strategies, the implementation of the GI technique, as well as the organization of the study, before beginning the main study.

In the following section, I will provide a brief overview of the pilot study conducted in the group investigation class and the teacher-controlled class by describing the participants, the course and its content, and the instruments used to collect data. I will end this section with a discussion of what I learned from the experiences. Finally, I will explain the changes I chose to make in order to improve the study.
3.3.1 Description of the Pilot Study

I piloted two classes using two different approaches, namely the group investigation technique and the teacher-controlled approach.

3.3.1.1 Group investigation technique

In September 1994, I piloted the group investigation technique in a section of course FRSL 2512. The group included 27 students who met three hours a week for a period of 13 weeks, from September 1994 to December 1994. At the beginning of the course, I explained to my students that I was piloting, not only the teaching strategy but also the instruments that I was going to be using when I collected the data for my thesis. The students were receptive, and they all agreed to sign consent letters which gave me the authorization to collect and use the data obtained.

Besides implementing the group investigation technique, I piloted several instruments: the personal and academic questionnaire, the pre-oral and written linguistic tests, and the Learning Preference Scale. My students wrote in their personal journals every two weeks for a total of six entries, and I taped my personal reflections on the course once a week.

3.3.1.2 Teacher-controlled approach

I piloted the Teacher-controlled approach (TC) with another group which I taught in May and June of 1995.

The group included 30 students and it lasted six weeks, which constituted the same number of hours of instruction as for the GI group. We met twice a week for three hours each time. The fact that one group met twice a week for a total of six hours, and the other three hours per week, necessitated adjustments in the structure of the course. Yet, I had no choice but to teach under these circumstances if I wanted to be ready to collect my data the following September. My main
objective was to teach the same content using a different approach while ensuring that the students benefited from the course as did the students of the GI group. At the beginning of the course, I explained my study to my students and the fact that I was using this group to pilot my teaching strategies. They all graciously agreed to participate in this project and they signed the consent letters. In a teacher-controlled class, the instructor decides the content of each class and prepares all materials for the students to learn, to read, and to memorize. In the case of this course, the overall content of Morocco was the same as the GI class, however some of the topics were different. The topics I chose were based on the experience of the pilot study. For example, the history of Morocco, the religions present in the country and the role of women were topics covered. The teacher-controlled approach was familiar to me because I had been using it for many years. Consequently, I organized the course much as I had done in the past.

Group work was also used as a teaching strategy to vary the pace of the class and because it is a technique that has advantages in the Second Language class. The types of techniques I chose to use were not necessarily collaborative techniques, but rather group work. Collaborative learning techniques are distinguished by the fact that CL “has developed a set of principles and methods intended for use over extended periods as major elements of classroom organization and instruction” (Slavin, 1990, p.xi). Group work is less structured and more short-term. (See Chapter 2 and Chapter 6).

3.3.2 What I Learned and What I Changed

3.3.2.1 Teacher-controlled

I did not pilot the instruments in the Teacher-Controlled group because I felt that the feedback I had received from the GI group was sufficient for me to improve the instruments. The
content of the instruments did not pertain to one specific teaching approach, rather, it required information about the students, their background, their linguistic skills prior to enrolling in this course, and their learning preference. What I considered important was to be able to organize the TC course so as to ensure that the instruments would be administered during the same week as they would for the GI group and that the administration would not consume too much of the course time.

In my opinion, the teaching strategies, the implementation and the organization of the course went smoothly. The time I allotted for each topic seemed to be sufficient. The students had plenty of time to communicate in class and to participate with their peers. The students themselves expressed positive feedback on the course, and their attendance was high. I felt confident in the way the course transpired and did not make any major changes in the syllabus of the main study.

The experience with this group was rewarding and satisfying as with the GI group. Students knew very little about Morocco at the beginning of the course. Learning about this country was obviously new to them, and it seemed to motivate them. This motivation was expressed in a desire on the part of a number of students to visit the country, now that they knew more about it.

In terms of the organization of the TC course, it was obvious that the instructor had to be well organized. I, as the instructor, felt more confident because this approach was more familiar to me than that of the GI technique. The course evaluation completed by the students indicated the success of the course. For example, the students appreciated the amount of content they learned; they appreciated the opportunities they had to speak about topics in French.

As with the GI group, I feel that 30 students in a language class is not an ideal situation, and it is not conducive to sufficient student to student interaction during class time. In the TC
group, in contrast to the GI group, I felt that 13 weeks were enough to complete and teach the prepared and relevant content.

3.3.2.2 Group investigation

The piloting of the technique and the instruments proved necessary and useful. Because this represented my first experience using GI, the new experiences led me to make changes in the data collection for the main study, and to make changes in some of my teaching.

The following section describes what I learned from the pilot study. I will discuss each instrument that required changes for the main study, as well as changes required for the syllabus and for my teaching.

a) Personal and Academic Questionnaire. Johnson (1992, p. 123) has suggested that constructing a questionnaire is not as simple as it may appear. It is necessary to review it, pilot it and revise it for formal use. After piloting the personal and academic questionnaire I had constructed, I found that it required a few changes in content as well as in presentation. For example, I combined questions that gave me the same information. The section on use of French outside the classroom which had required comments needed additional options; these became "never," "occasionally," "often" and "daily." The original questionnaire included a section on attitudes and motivation, a questionnaire adapted from Gardner (1985). The answers did not reveal information on motivation that would be useful for my study. Since I would be collecting other data that better dealt with this issue, I eliminated the section on motivation.

b) Learning Preference Scale. I used the version of the Learning Preference Scale that was designed for secondary students (Owens and Straton; 1980). Some of my students had a negative reaction to the wording of some questions. For example, the students were referred to as
boys and girls; the name of the institution was referred to as school. Hence, I contacted the author himself, Dr. Owens, in Australia and he gladly shared with me the recently completed version for university level, which I subsequently used. I did not feel I had to pilot this version because the content was the same as the original except for a few wording changes.

c) Linguistic tests. The linguistic oral pretest, administered in the language laboratory at Glendon College, caused a few difficulties during piloting. Because the laboratory can only accommodate 20 students at one time, the technician added some tape recorders on tables. This solution was inadequate, and knowing that I was going to have up to 30 students in my next group, this problem had to be resolved. For the content of the test, there were no difficulties. The students understood the instructions and performed as expected. No change was necessary in the content. However, I made changes in how the test was administered: students were brought to the language laboratory ten at a time.

d) Journal Writing. Even though the students' journals counted as 10% of the final grade, not all students wrote all six journals. I found the content to be revealing. All students wrote in French; I did not penalize them for their mistakes. The instructions seemed to be clear enough. I did not change the format of this instrument.

e) Presentations. Concerning the teaching strategies, the implementation and the organization of the course, I also ran into some difficulties which needed improvement. For example, I decided to allot more time for each group presentation to allow more interaction and discussion among the students. In the pilot group, students were only given one hour per presentation. I found that when four students presented, there was not enough time for the other
students to ask questions, to communicate and to interact with the presenters; the way I had organized the course did not allow much flexibility. The schedule was so tight that every minute was accounted for. I left a few hours in various weeks unaccounted for during the main study.

i) Written assignment. One of the assignments given in preparation for the group presentation required the presenters to choose and submit two articles written in French. The articles had to be directly related to the topic they were investigating. Furthermore, they had to compose comprehension questions which their peers would answer after the presentation. I had explained to the students the time constraints once they handed in the assignment; I needed to correct their work, retype it and make photocopies for the whole class a week prior to the presentation so that all the students would have time to read the articles. I found that the students were not serious enough in handing in the articles and, too often, I had to distribute them to the class on the day of the presentation, which was pedagogically unacceptable. In planning for the main study, I took note of this difficulty and decided to give each group a date to submit the articles.

ii) Oral Assignment. The students in both groups were asked to interview a person who originally came from Morocco. The assignment included preparing questions, taping the interview, transcribing the questions, and summarizing the answers. I found this exercise to be difficult to co-ordinate because not many students know Moroccans in Toronto to interview. This situation meant that students tended to interview the same people at Glendon, some professors, staff and students. The professors complained to me that they were too busy to be interviewed so often by different students. I knew that if I asked them to repeat the favour the following year with twice the number of students, they might refuse. Consequently, I chose to eliminate this exercise from the main study.
f) **Evaluation.** During the pilot study, I noted that once a group of students completed their presentation, they did not always attend the presentations of other groups. This situation would defeat the goals of the GI technique. For the main study, to remedy this difficulty I encouraged the students to attend their peers' presentation, and I decided to include a quiz that would count towards the final grade. The content of the quizzes were related to the content of the presentations. A quiz would be given every third presentation, which meant that there would be two quizzes.

g) **Discussion.** Piloting the GI technique was revealing. I found the experience to be rewarding and satisfying. Most students knew very little about Morocco at the beginning of the course. At the end, they were experts on one specific topic and knowledgeable on six to eight others. I believe that the objectives of this course as discussed in section 1.2 were fulfilled. The course is theme-based; it answers the interests of the learners in that the learners in my GI class chose their own topics of interest to investigate. They were exposed to information about a Francophone ethnic group and GI proved to be a technique that could, through guidance and structure, lead students to be autonomous learners.

The experience of using GI in a language class confirmed for me that (1) the instructor must be very well organized before the beginning of the course, (2) the instructor has to have an exceptionally good relationship with the students, and (3) the role of the instructor is different from his or her role in a more teacher controlled method of teaching. The instructor is more of a resource person, a guide, a confidant, and a problem-solver than a typical teacher who tells the students what things they need to know, according to the teacher's assessment.
After the course ended, I read the students' journals. Their comments corroborated my observations in that they made positive remarks regarding course content, and their level of interest in the topic of Morocco. They also discussed their work in groups, their frustration either because they did not find enough information, because the group did not seem to work well together, or because there was always at least one student who didn't know what to do. However, contrary to my expectations, they all felt that their presentations went well. Most students spoke positively of the experience. A few students felt that they had not practised their French enough in the course.

Although the experience was positive on the whole, there are a few difficulties that appear unalterable. The total of 27 students in a second language classroom setting is too many students for the teaching technique used. If there are 27 students, it means minimum of six group presentations, since the course has only 13 weeks, including one reading week. When one considers that the first and last hours of the course are devoted to other items such as the course introduction, the writing of the course evaluation, it becomes clear that 3 hours a week for 13-weeks is too short to accomplish all of the objectives set for this course. One solution would have been to extend the length of the course, a change over which I have no control.

3.4 THE MAIN STUDY

3.4.1 Study Design

The data of the main study were collected during the fall term of 1995, from September to December. There were seven sections of FRSL 2512 offered during the fall term, of which I taught two. These two sections were offered during the same term. Both groups met on the same two days, Wednesdays and Fridays for a total of three hours per week. The course lasted 12
weeks plus one reading week, which was scheduled during the seventh week of the term. In this study, the group that received the group investigation treatment will be referred to as the GI group, and the comparison group that received the teacher-controlled treatment will be referred to as the TC group.

3.4.1.1 The participants

There were 25 students enrolled in the GI group and 29 in the TC group. The students did not know that a study was going to be carried out in their class when they enrolled, nor did they know about the different teaching strategies that would be used. On the first day of class, I explained my study and asked for their participation. Every student in both groups agreed to participate, and signed the consent letters (Appendices F1 and F2). It was necessary to have the whole class consent to participate because I did not know at that point which students would be selected for analysis. The students’ participation in this study entailed that they agree to fill out questionnaires, write journals, and be aware that I, as the instructor and the researcher would not only teach the course, correct their work but also observe them and use the data collected for the purpose of a study. They had to accept also some differences from past experiences such as writing a journal every two weeks, not be corrected and yet receive a grade for the effort only, not the quality of the journals they handed in.

It is important to understand that when students are admitted to Glendon College, they are given a second-language placement test. The results of this test determine the French course in which they should enrol during their first year. There are four levels of courses at the first year level, namely FRSL 0400, FRSL 1500, FRSL 1510, and FRSL 1512. Only students who have completed FRSL 1510 and FRSL 1512 are eligible to enrol in FRSL 2512. This means that
students who are placed in FRSL 0400 in the first year would reach the level of FRSL 2512 during their fourth year of study. Those who are placed in 1500 reach FRSL 2512 during their third year of study; for the others, FRSL 1510 and FRSL 1520 can be taken during their second year of study. This explains why there were students at all years of study in both classes.

a) The GI group. All 25 students completed the course successfully. All were between the ages of 18 and 25. Except for one student who was in the first year of study and one in the fourth year of study, the other 23 were second- and third-year students. There were five males in this group of 23. The first language of 22 of the 25 students was English. The first language of the other 3 were Tagalog, Tamil, and Portuguese. The students were, in general, of middle class socioeconomic status. Most students stated in their questionnaire, that their reason for taking FRSL 2512 was primarily because of the prerequisite imposed by the University. Their reason for enrolling in my section was, for most of them, in the interests of their timetable.

In terms of FSL schooling background, 6 students attended an immersion program before coming to university. Out of all of the students, eight had up to five years of French, 11 up to ten years and six up to 15 years; 22 students of the 25 students had taken course FRSL 1510. The others had taken FRSL 1512. The grades the students received in those courses varied between A and C. Not all students used French outside the classroom. About one third of them claimed that they used French occasionally with family and friends, at Glendon and at work.

b) The TC group. The 29 students enrolled in this section of FRSL 2512 completed the course successfully. All students were between the ages of 18 and 25. There were 8 students in their second year of study, 13 in their third year and 7 in their fourth year. Of the 29 students, 8 were males. 23 students stated that their first language was English. The first language of the
other six varied. As with the GI group, the majority of students took this course for prerequisite reasons and my specific section for timetabling reasons. Nine students attended an immersion program before coming to university. The backgrounds of study were as follows: 6 students had up to 5 years of French at school, 10 had up to 10 years, 11 up to 15 years and one had more than 15 years of French. 24 of the 29 students had taken FRSL 1510, of which 5 had been placed in FRSL 0400 in their first year of study, and 5 students came from FRSL 1520. Regarding the use of French outside the classroom, most of the students stated that they occasionally used it at home, with family and friends, at work, and watching television or listening to the radio. Two of the 29 students answered that they used their French every day.

A comparison of the student profiles for the two groups yields a few differences that might explain why one group achieved higher linguistic competence than the other.

- In the TC class, there were more third-year students than in the GI class, and there were 7 students in their fourth year of study.
- There were more students with an immersion background in the TC class.
- Only in the TC class did some students claim to use French every day outside the classroom.

3.4.2 Implementation of the Course

3.4.2.1 Similarities

a) Structure of the course. As explained earlier, the Teacher-Controlled (TC) group was my comparison group, and the collaborative learning group, which I refer to as the GI group, was my experimental group. The classes met twice a week for a total of three hours per week.
The TC group met on Wednesdays for one hour and Fridays for two hours, and the GI group met on Wednesdays for two hours and Fridays for one hour.

b) Content of the course. The content of the course was the same for the two groups. Morocco, Africa was the general theme of the course for both groups. It was not possible to know prior to the commencement of the course the exact topics within the main subject that would be of special interest to the students. Because I knew that my students' knowledge of this country was minimal, I gave a one-hour lecture about Morocco as an introduction to the roster of topics I had selected to study throughout the course. The students would, thus, acquaint themselves with as many sources of information as possible, and would learn about the Moroccan resources available in Toronto including libraries, museums, restaurants, community groups and clubs. I brought material from different sources to class to assist the students. I introduced the topic to the students in what I hoped was a stimulating way, with many unanswered questions, in an attempt to pique their curiosity. This strategy motivated the students to select a topic of investigation and presentation for the GI group and a topic for presentation in the TC group.

c) Grammar. Grammar was addressed, as the need arose, in the context of the texts studied by both groups. After I gave the oral and written pretest, I devoted a period of two hours at the beginning of the course to review the use of the French interrogatives. My students were required to ask many varied questions using such structures as Qu'est-ce que, qui est-ce que, qui, que, quoi, comment, est-ce que, and inversion. Later in the session, to encourage students of the TC group to use varied questioning patterns, I asked students to prepare questions for a potential interview with a Moroccan guest, and I always included comprehension questions following assigned reading articles. The GI students were asked to produce questions based on articles they
had found and chosen for their presentations, and they were also asked to prepare questions to ask their peers during their presentations. I estimate that about 6 hours out of 36 total class hours, in each class, were devoted to interrogatives.

d) Culture. One of the important objectives of the course was to expose students to different Francophone cultures. All students were exposed to the French Moroccan culture through the texts we were reading and the investigations that were done. I shared with them stories of my personal life and brought to class, as often as possible, pictures, authentic objects, videos and any other material to give the students as much feel for the culture of Morocco as possible. Using the readings, I also helped my students recognize the cultural differences between Morocco and Canada or other countries of origin of my students.

e) Evaluation. The students of both groups were evaluated through many different means. Participation in class is crucial in a content-based course, and the students were graded for it. Students were asked to write a journal, and 10% of their final mark was allocated to six journal entries. Part of the final grade also included quizzes and tests; these included reading and comprehension tests, quizzes on vocabulary, and written tests on the use of interrogatives. Finally, although different in length and depth, the students were asked to make a presentation. Only the presentations will be discussed in this thesis.
3.4.2.2 Differences

a) Structure of the Course

i) Teacher-controlled class. In this class the two-hour periods (Fridays) were reserved for studying newspaper and journal articles and completing exercises attached to these articles. One of these two hours was set aside for students’ presentations. The one-hour period (Wednesdays) was used for other aspects of the course, including grammar, tests, correction of tests, discussions of issues not pertaining directly to course material, and introduction of a new topic.

Based on the interest the students showed in the course I piloted, I chose six topics to be studied. These were:

- *le tourisme*,
- *la religion musulmane*,
- *les juifs au Maroc et hors du Maroc*,
- *la femme du Maroc*,
- *l’art, l’architecture et la musique*,
- *la cuisine marocaine; la nourriture et les coutumes*.

I allotted approximately two weeks per topic to the reading of articles by the students. Each article was followed by comprehension questions, discussions, and lexical and grammatical exercises. As is typical in a teacher-controlled class, the students read the articles aloud and their pronunciation was corrected. As well, I identified unfamiliar vocabulary to the students, explained word meaning, and asked students to find synonyms and antonyms, and to form sentences with the new words. Grammatical points were explained whenever I deemed necessary, or whenever the students asked.
Most of the time, the comprehension of the texts was dealt with in a structured manner. For example, questions were asked and the students were expected to answer them orally or in writing. However, at times, I decided to have the students do the work in groups. The students were asked to read together, to answer questions together, to summarize paragraphs of articles, and to correct one another's homework. In incorporating group work in the teacher-controlled class, there was no attempt to create a team spirit, or to create personal accountability among classmates. The assigned activities did not require interdependence among team members. Rather, the main objectives were that the students interact with one another to give them more opportunity to use the second language.

ii) Group Investigation Class (Appendix G1). Before one starts the Group Investigation technique, it is important to conduct activities to create a positive climate, or what Sharan and Sharan refer to as "developing the co-operative classroom" (1992, p. 21). Activities that play the role of class-building and team-building are useful (Evans-Harvey, 1993; Kagan, 1990; Sharan & Sharan, 1992). Developing group skills such as discussion skills, sharing, and planning are also important. In order to create a positive climate, I used activities such as group discussions, sharing of opinions and jeu d'interaction during which students learned about one another by interacting with each other. It is useful now to discuss the structure of this technique and its six stages in relation to the chosen topic, Morocco.

b) The stages

Weeks 1 and 2. The first two weeks were devoted to getting to know the students, doing activities to enhance a positive collaborative climate in the class, and to introducing the topic (see, for example, Evans-Harvey, 1993). The students were
linguistically tested and they answered the Learning Preference Scale (Owens & Straton, 1980).

**Week 3.** During week three, we were able to start stage one of the GI structure and to progress to stage two. These stages are described in the following:

**Stage 1: Identifying the topic and organizing students into groups**

In the third week, I made a presentation about Morocco during which many aspects of the country were introduced, including the role of women in Morocco, the role of the King, the political climate, tourism, and the history. The students were asked to write three questions or statements about Morocco which were of interest to them. I classified their questions and statements to discover which topics were of interest and to how many students. I retained the most popular categories. Individual students were asked to choose one of the categories based upon their interest and to form groups with others who had chosen the same category. A given topic could not be selected by more than one group. Because the enrolment was 25 students, my objective was to have a maximum of six groups of about four or five students each. It is important to clarify that the group composition was based on interest and that every group ended up being linguistically heterogeneous. Students were either in 2nd, 3rd, or 4th year of their study, and they had a varied academic background in French (see section 3.4.1.1 a and b). It was inevitable that some topics were more popular than others among the students. This meant that there had to be some negotiating among the students so as not to exceed five students per group. Once all the students had chosen their topic and their groups, each student in the class was asked to write five questions on each topic chosen by their peers. This exercise helped each group to identify the aspects of their respective topic that were of interest to the rest of the class.
My role as the teacher during this stage was (1) to assist with information gathering by recommending sources, and by providing some reading I had accumulated myself, and (2) to facilitate organization by inquiring about the planning of each group's activities.

**Stage 2: Planning the Learning Task (in groups)**

Based on their own interest and on the questions asked by their peers, the group members were asked to determine together the limitations of their topic, and the direction they wished to take. In order to inform me and the rest of the class of their decisions, each group wrote a paragraph describing their topic and their orientation which I typed and distributed to the class. This step avoided replication and repetition and allowed for the sharing of information among groups.

A form (see Appendix H) was provided to each group to help its members to organize their thoughts and ideas. During this stage, the group also had to make decisions as to the role each student wanted to play according to their individual learning preferences. They had the choice of being

- the resource person,
- the researcher,
- the steering committee representative,
- the co-ordinator,
- any other role the group found necessary to create.

The resource person would have the responsibility of keeping all records of written, audio and visual material used for the investigation. This person would also organize and plan the presentation. The researcher had the responsibility of finding appropriate articles and books to read. The steering committee representative was the person responsible to report to the instructor the activities of the group, and arrange meetings with the instructor. The co-ordinator's
responsibilities were to remind the members of the group of their deadlines, making sure that each member accomplished their part of the work. The co-ordinator also had to gather all documents that constituted the final paper to hand in. My role as the teacher was to help the groups to formulate their orientation and plan accordingly. As the students worked in their respective groups, I went from group to group asking questions related to their intentions in the division of tasks and the assignment of roles.

_Weeks 4 and 5._ Stage 3 required two weeks of class time.

**Stage 3: Carrying out the Investigation**

The students were expected during this stage to prepare for the presentation by gathering information, analysing the data and reaching conclusions. This stage was to be carried out both during and outside of class hours. The group members were asked to exchange, discuss, clarify and synthesise ideas. Students were also given some specific assignments such as choosing two articles written in French related to the topic they were investigating and preparing a list of ten new words and questions for each article.

Students were expected, during this stage, to do in-depth research of their topic by reading appropriate materials, watching movies, interviewing or using any means they found necessary to become well-versed in their topic. They did so, among other ways, by going to the library. The amount of time each group spent doing their research outside class time varied, and was mostly out of my control. I do not have any data on this aspect.

My role during this stage was to facilitate research and study skills to help find appropriate resources. For example, I referred the students to a specific resource that dealt with their topic.
Week 6.

Stage 4: Planning of Presentation

Prior to beginning Stage 4, each group was expected to arrange a one hour meeting with me outside of class hours to present their findings and to answer my questions on the topic they had selected. They were also expected to have chosen the two articles, have a list of vocabulary, and a few comprehension questions.

During the sixth week of the course, following our meeting, the students were ready to plan in detail the "What" and the "How" of their presentations. To help the students plan their presentation, I provided them with guidelines (included in Appendix H).

Week 7 was reading week.

Weeks 8 to 12. I am including Stages 5 and 6 of the technique in the same section because they were carried out simultaneously.

Stage 5: Presentations

To accommodate the six groups formed in this course, five weeks (15 hours) had been put aside for group presentations, feedback from peers, and discussions. The students of each group were responsible for setting up the classroom and ordering audio-visual equipment if their presentation so required. Students were allotted two hours during which they were expected to present their topic, ask questions about the articles, lead an activity, encourage questioning on the part of the other students and initiate discussions. Four of the six groups presented during the 2-hour session and the two other groups presented one hour on Wednesday and one hour on Friday.
My role during this stage was to coordinate the presentations and help if necessary in the conduct of the discussions. For example, during the presentation on the Muslim religion, the students did not ask many questions. For this reason, I asked questions which required the students in the class to participate.

**Stage 6: Teacher and Students’ Evaluation of the Projects**

To fulfill the requirements of the French Department, I had opted to evaluate the students in many different situations, from different assignments, individually and in groups, linguistically, and for their contribution to the group. Evaluation was done by peers and by the teacher. Other than the actual presentation made by each group, the students were graded on their participation in class, on quizzes, homework, the writing of their journal and on tests. Table 3.1 shows how the presentation was evaluated; by the instructor, by peers, by the presenters themselves, as a group, and individually. The students were evaluated for their written work as well as their oral presentation.

c) **Evaluation.** The students of the TC group were also asked to give a presentation. However, there were fundamental differences between the GI and TC groups. The presentation given by the GI students has just been described. The TC group was organized differently. I provided the students with articles on the topic of their choice. Each student was expected to present the article to the class by summarizing it and giving some insight on the topic. This presentation lasted a maximum of 15 minutes per student, including the question period. For each topic, there were approximately six different presentations of 15 minutes each. The organization of the presentation deserves to be mentioned because it differed from the other group and from any strategy I had ever used in my classes. Rather than having each student present once to the whole
class of 29, and have only ten minutes for all students to ask questions and participate, I decided to divide the class into three groups during the hour devoted to the presentations. Each group was placed in a different classroom, and each student presented the same topic three times for groups of eight or nine students. I listened to each presentation once. The reason I changed the format for the TC group was to give as many students as possible the opportunity to interact with the presenter. This would be possible with small groups of about 8 to 10 students rather than the whole class of 29 students.

3.4.3 Role of the Instructor

As expected in a teacher-controlled type class, the role of the instructor was to provide most of the material to be studied and to ensure that the students learned from the material presented. Decisions regarding all aspects of the course were made by the instructor. Classes were prepared by the instructor and often the instructor would stand in front of the class and present direct questions, and inform students of what they were to do next. In a collaborative learning class, the role of the instructor is different: she is, depending upon the students' needs, a facilitator, a consultant, and a research assistant.

I have observed that implementing the Group Investigation technique requires more detailed, thorough planning than the teacher-controlled approach. With the latter, there was room for changes and reorganizing if the need arose during the course. For the GI group, the schedule was so full and every hour so fully accounted for that there was no flexibility to reorganize or to change during the course.
ÉVALUATION DE LA PRÉSENTATION

SUJET: NOM DES ÉTUDIANTS:

TRAVAIL ECRIT: (note de groupe)
- Par la professeure /10

PRESENTATION ORALE
Note de groupe - Par la professeure (opinion globale) /5
- par la classe (moyenne) /2.5
Auto-évaluation (moyenne) /2.5
Note individuelle - Par la professeure
Clarté de la présentation /2
Originalité de la présentation /2
Précision de la recherche /2
Organisation de la présentation /2
Qualité du français /2

NOTE FINALE /30

Figure 3.4: Student evaluation form: GI group

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

I used six instruments to collect data for my study. These instruments have been described above in the Pilot Study Section 3.2.2.1. In the following section, I will provide information as to the point in the course the following instruments were administered:

- academic and personal questionnaire,
- pre and post-oral and written linguistic tests,
- learning preference scale questionnaire,
- students’ journals,
- interview of students,
- course evaluation.
3.5.1 Personal and Academic Questionnaire

During the first week of the course, all students of both groups were asked to complete the questionnaire that included personal questions as well as questions about their background in French studies. They were given 15 minutes of class time to complete the questionnaire. This questionnaire enabled me to better acquaint myself with the students and to choose accurately, for my study, students with similar profiles, and similar academic backgrounds (see Appendix A).

3.5.2 Learning Preference Scale

The Learning Preference Scale, standardized by Owens and Straton (1980), a questionnaire, was given to the students of both groups to complete during the first week of the course. As suggested by the authors of this scale, the students were told that it was important that they answer all questions. They were given approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

3.5.3 Pre and Post Linguistic Tests

The written pretest was administered during the first week of the course in both classes and the oral pretest during the second week. The students in both groups took the oral posttest during the 11th week and they wrote the written part during the last week of the course, the 13th week.

Because of the experience I had during the pilot project, I did not take the whole class to the language laboratory at the same time. Rather, I took ten students at one time for a period of about 15 minutes each. The other students were given an assignment during my absence. Each group of students was given ten minutes to ask all the questions that came to their minds. The whole exercise took one hour of class time.
3.5.4 Students' Journals

During the first week of class, the students of both groups received explanations of the raison d'être of the journals, and were asked to follow the instructions given in class:

- to write the journal in French,
- to hand in an entry every two weeks, for a total of six entries,
- to determine, for themselves, the length of each entry,
- to discuss issues such as their personal feelings and opinions about the course, its content, the structure, the teaching approach used by the instructor, their motivation level, and anything else related to the course.

They were also told that the 6 entries would count as 10% of the final grade. One representative of each group volunteered to collect the journals every two weeks and keep them until I had assigned final grades.

3.5.5 Interviews

Students of both groups were interviewed once towards the end of the course. The interviews were conducted in English. I assumed that they would be able to remember how they felt a few weeks prior to the interview. In order to get the students' "true" thoughts and reflections, a research assistant conducted the interviews on my behalf. A few days were set aside for the students to choose a convenient time to be interviewed.

All interviews were taped, and lasted approximately 15 minutes each. The students were told at the beginning of the interview that the professor would not be listening to the tape until after she handed in the final grades, and they were told that their truthfulness was crucial for the study. A sample of the questions is provided in Appendix M.
3.5.6 Instructor's Personal Account

As planned, I taped my personal opinions, my own recommendations, and my feelings after each class. The comments I made were spontaneous and dealt, among other things, with course content, opinions about my own teaching approaches, about how it was going, and about the students' performance, motivation, and reactions.

3.5.7 Course Evaluation

The Course Evaluation questionnaire was administered to all students in both groups in the final class. It is common practice to do this because it gives students a fair opportunity to write their feelings and opinions about the course and their experiences. The students were given approximately 15 minutes to fill out the questionnaire. As promised to the students, I read the course evaluation only after the final grades of both groups had been submitted to the French Department.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

As intended, to honor the anonymity of the participants, they were given a student number. #1 to #25 represents the students from the GI group and from #26 to #51 the students of the TC group. The data from all students who did both the oral and the written pre- and posttests were used for the achievement analysis (Chapter 4) which I chose to do quantitatively. For the oral testing, there were 16 students from the GI group and 18 from the TC group. For the written testing, there were 21 students from the GI group and 27 from the TC group.

Of the students who filled out all the instruments used in this study, I selected 9 students per treatment group whose data I used for quantitative and qualitative analysis. They were selected
according to the highest Learning Preference Scale scores. The three students who scored the highest of each treatment group, as respectively cooperative type learners, competitive type learners, and individualist type learners constituted the group of students selected. This selection was done similarly in both groups.

3.6.1 Quantitative Analysis

3.6.1.1 Learning Preference Scale

The scoring of this questionnaire was done manually. Owens and Barnes (1992) clearly explain the scoring:

Each item is scored so that a high preference receives a score of 4 and a low preference receives a score of 1. For most items, responses from 'True' through 'Sort of true' and 'Sort of false' to 'False' are scores 4-3-2-1 in that order. (p. 9)

As recommended by the authors, in the case of missing values, a value of 2.5 was substituted. In the case of my students, this substitution occurred only twice, an acceptable number for the total of participants.

For each student, the scores of all questions were added to get what is referred to as the "raw score." This raw score was converted into a percentile score using the percentile tables provided by Owens and Barnes (1992). These tables are provided separately for boys and girls, for primary and secondary levels. A table for University is not available, however, it was suggested that it is "necessary to choose the reference group which corresponds most closely to the group being considered" (p.13). For my groups I chose the table on page 42 for Secondary Boys and Girls, United States, 1981 (see Appendix I). Owens and Barnes (1992) explained.
By selecting an appropriate comparison group it is possible to convert a raw score for an individual into a percentile rating, indicating that the obtained score is equal to or greater than that of a certain percentage of that comparison group. (p. 13)

Appendix J lists all percentile scores obtained for the 51 students of the two groups.

3.6.1.2 Personal and Academic Questionnaire

The questions asked in this questionnaire required open and closed type answers. Each question was coded as a variable. Each variable was given as many categories as the number of different answers. A similar method was used for the open-ended questions. For example, in the section on use of French outside the classroom, to question #16 (whether they had lived or visited a place where French was the language of communication), students answered but gave a description of that experience. I was able to code each different answer for a total of 9 variables. The data collected through this questionnaire revealed the students’ profiles (age, background in French, academic background, etc.), their motivation, and their interest in the French language.

3.6.1.3 Linguistic oral and written tests

SPSS was used as the statistical program to analyze the data collected from the linguistic tests. The coding grid was elaborated based on three sources: (1) Grevisse (1969) in *Le bon usage* gave a complete description of French interrogatives, (2) Ollivier’s (1978) grammar textbook prepared for University French language courses, and (3) Hawkins and Towell’s (1996) descriptive grammar of French which includes the different types of interrogatives in French for second language learners.
For the purpose of this study, I summarized and simplified the different interrogatives in order to include all the different categories in my grid. The following is the result of this exercise:

- "yes-no" questions to which a "yes" or a "no" is required as an answer;
- "wh" questions which require informational answers. These questions can also be asked with an adjective (quel, quelle etc.), an adverb (e.g., oui, quand, and combien), or a pronoun (qui, que, etc.).

In both cases, different forms can be used: rising intonation/declarative word order, est-ce que or inversion; simple and complex. The order in which I listed these forms below also represents the order of complexity of French interrogatives. This order of complexity is described in detail in section 4.3.1.

The following are some examples of the abovementioned types of interrogatives taken from the students' tests.

"Yes-no" questions

- Rising intonation/Declarative word order:
  \[ \text{La population du Maroc et la population de l'Algérie, c'est la même?} \]
  (#29, oral posttest)
- Est-ce que:
  \[ \text{Est-ce que le voyage coûte cher?} \]
  (#3, written pretest)
- Simple inversion:
  \[ \text{Pourrons-nous voir beaucoup de choses dans 1 jour?} \]
  (#5, written posttest)
- Complex inversion:
  \[ \text{Le Président, a-t-il beaucoup de protection?} \]
  (#34, written posttest)
"Wh" questions

- Rising intonation/Declarative word order:
  Il y a combien de territoires au Canada?
  (#24, oral pretest)

- Est-ce que:
  Où est-ce que le Sahara est situé?
  (#42, oral posttest)

- Simple inversion:
  Quelles villes recommandez-vous que mon amie visite quand elle est au Canada?
  (#33, written pretest)

- Complex inversion:
  Où les touristes aiment-ils voyager?
  (#14, written posttest)

I created 2 grids that included all of the different types of interrogatives used by students in my course (see Appendix K1). When the interrogative form was accurate, I checked the appropriate boxes in one grid. For example, a question such as Combien de kilomètres est-ce qu'il y a entre Toronto et Montréal? was coded by checking the box labelled adverb with the est-ce que form and the structure of the interrogative was correct. Once all the questions were entered, I added the number of similar questions and entered them in the second grid (see Appendix K2). Inaccurate questions were also coded for the purpose of frequency analyses. Some examples are provided in Appendix O.

Because students did not write or tape the same number of questions, to be able to compare means, the numeric count of each type of interrogative form was transformed into a percentage based on the number of questions used by the student. Some sentences had to be eliminated. For example, in the oral posttest of student #12, the student said: "Décrivez le gouvernement de Maroc." And student #6 elicited in the oral pretest a sentence which also could not be categorized: "Pourquoi je pense que c'est les Territoires du Nord Ouest, parce que c'est trop froid." These were not questions per se and could not be categorized. Some phrases that did
not make sense were also eliminated. For example, in the oral posttest student #42 elicited the following words: "Quelle sorte... souvent Algérie." These words could not be categorized because they did not constitute a question.

To score the tests, three questions were considered:

1. Is the word order of the interrogatives accurate or not?
2. Is it a "yes-no" or a "wh" question?
3. Did the student use the intonation/declarative word order, the est-ce que or the inversion form?

The scoring was done in three stages. First, each test; pre-, post-, oral and written were corrected. Each question was reported as being accurate or inaccurate, and the type of each question was recorded. The second stage was recorded in a grid showing how many of each type of question were accurate and how many were inaccurate. Finally, I combined types of questions to create 8 different categories; yes-no and "wh" questions for which I created separate categories for (1) the rising intonation/declarative word order, (2) the est-ce que, (3) the simple inversion, and (4) the complex inversion. Figure 3.5 is the final form that was used for the analyses.

a) Interrater reliability. In order to provide evidence of reliability and consistency in the scoring of the linguistic tests, it was important to perform an interrater reliability check. Trenholm (1986) explained that consistency means "equivalence" and that "Equivalence of testing procedures means a particular person's scores on a specific measurement instrument should be the same no matter who administers or scores the test" (p. 246).

For this study, 10 students were chosen randomly to be double-scored, once by me and once by a research assistant. Each student had taken four linguistic tests; the pre and post oral and written tests. This translated into 40 different tests that were scored by a research assistant and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic Test</th>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Correct Questions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Oral</td>
<td>Post-Oral</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yes-No Question</strong></td>
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<td>Stage 1 (Rising into/Declarative)</td>
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<td>Stage 2 (Est-ce que)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 3 (Simple Inversion)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 4 (Complex Inversion)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WH – Questions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 1 (Rising into/Declarative)</td>
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<td>Stage 2 (Est-ce que)</td>
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<td>Stage 4 (Complex Inversion)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.5: Final grid for the number of correct questions

myself. The tests were scored according to the grid described above (Figure 3.5). Of the 893 questions scored for the 10 students, 20 were scored differently by the two markers, this means there was agreement on 97.8% of the questions.

3.6.2 Qualitative Analysis

3.6.2.1 Students' journals

Because the students' journal was an open-ended exercise, there was a need for an interrater reliability check concerning the categorization of the data.

a. Inter rater reliability. To provide evidence that the data were categorized reliably, I involved a research assistant who categorized the same data as I. This is referred to as interrater reliability (Johnson, 1992). The data of four students were selected randomly. Because each student had written six entries, there were 24 entries to code. I presented the research assistant
with the pre-determined schema, which consisted of the same categories used in the interview, namely achievement, methodology, learning preference and motivation (see Appendix L). In the journals I highlighted the sections which I thought were relevant to my study and asked the research assistant to match each highlighted section to a category. Of the 24 journal entries, there were 98 comments to be coded. Between the assistant and myself, there were discrepancies in categorizing seven entries. Thus agreement existed between us in 93% of the entries.3

Once the interrater reliability check was done, I coded the rest of the journals in the same manner. The data entered included students of the two treatment groups; these data were then separated into learning style groups. These data are the basis for discussion of the students' views in Chapter 6.

3.6.2.2 Students' interviews

The interviews of the 18 selected participants were transcribed. The interviews were coded according to the pre-determined questions used during the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix M): (1) Achievement, (2) Methodology of the course, (3) Students' learning style, and (4) Motivation (section 3.2.2.5). These categories are the same as those that were used to code the student journals.

There was no need for an interrater reliability check because I used the same categories as those of the journal. The questions asked were similar for all students, and their answers fit in the categories used for the journals. These data were used to understand the students' views of the

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3 Mary McGroarty (personal communication) has brought the following point to my attention: "Some current scholarship suggests that percentage agreement regularly overestimates true agreement because it includes no correction for chance agreement" (see Hayes & Hach, 1999).
three aspects being studied namely achievement, compatibility of learning styles and teaching approaches.

3.6.2.3 Instructor's account

The content of my account was not transcribed word for word, as were the journals and the interviews. Instead, based on the coding categories used for the interviews and the journals, a summary of my comments was entered in the appropriate categories. These data were used (1) to relate the findings about the teaching approaches and my personal feelings throughout the course; and (2) to compare the students' perceptions with mine in regard to the course content, the course structure, the teaching strategies, and the students' learning preference.

3.6.2.4 Course evaluation

The first section of the course evaluation which required circling a number as a response, was recorded in SPSS. Each question represented a separate variable. The circled numbers by the students were recorded to be used for future analysis and to compare means between the treatment groups. The qualitative responses on each of four questions, namely what the students liked most about the course, what they liked least about the course, suggestions for improvement and personal comments were coded and analyzed separately. These data are the basis for the discussion in Chapter 6 regarding the students' motivation, their views and opinions on the course, their learning preference and their views about the teaching strategies.

3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter has detailed the reasons action research was chosen as the research orientation for this study and the instruments administered to collect data. It has described the pilot study, and
explained the adjustments implemented for the main study. Also discussed were the study design, the participants and the implementation of both approaches used, the collaborative and the teacher-controlled, which were detailed in terms of the content, the objectives of the course, and the teaching strategies used in each treatment group. After describing how the data were collected, the methods of data analysis were explained.

In subsequent chapters, the results and findings of the analyses will be presented and discussed. Chapter 4 will discuss the quantitative analysis of achievement; Chapter 5 will be devoted to the qualitative analysis of the instructor’s account; and Chapter 6 will examine the qualitative analysis of the students’ views.

The next chapter will deal with the linguistic achievement analyses that were performed in order to determine (1) if both groups improved linguistically during this course, (2) if one group improved more than the other, and (3) if there is a relationship between achievement, learning preference, and teaching treatment.
CHAPTER 4

ACHIEVEMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main linguistic objectives of course FRSL 2512, as mentioned in Chapter 3 are: (1) to improve the students' oral and written skills, and (2) to bring them to a level of oral and written proficiency which would allow them to attend university content courses in which French is the language of instruction. The content of the course, as described in Chapter 3, section 3.4.2, was organized to meet these objectives and included oral and written activities.

Because FRSL 2512 is a course of 13 weeks that met only 3 hours per week, the time allotted to grammatical study was limited to French interrogatives, their forms and use. This grammatical aspect was selected for several reasons. First, knowing how to ask questions accurately is a socially useful skill. I had anticipated that most of my students would know little about Morocco, which meant that they would have ample opportunities to ask questions. Second, the grammatical and syntactic rules for forming French interrogatives are clear, lending themselves to straightforward analysis.

Oral and written pre and posttests were developed specifically for this study. They were administered at the beginning and at the end of the course in both the GI and TC groups (Chapter 3, section 3.2.4.3).
The specific objectives of these tests were to determine

- whether one type of question was used accurately more frequently than another;
- whether students improved significantly in their use of interrogatives during the course;
- whether one of the two groups improved more than the other;
- whether there was a relationship between the students' achievement, their learning preference, and the teaching approach used in their class.

The results of the tests were analyzed to compare the use of interrogatives in the TC and GI groups. Three types of analyses were performed on the oral and written pre and posttests:

- An analysis of the frequency of accurate use of different question types (Do students accurately use one type of question more frequently than another?)
- An analysis of the gains in accuracy overtime and a comparison between groups (Do students improve in terms of accuracy in their use of yes-no and wh- questions? Does one group improve more than the other?)
- An analysis of linguistic achievement taking into account students' learning preferences and teaching approach.

In this chapter, a brief literature review of selected reference grammars and textbooks will provide a basis for the criteria used in correcting the linguistic tests, and for determining different types of questions. The three analyses mentioned above will be discussed in the relevant sections. The next section will set out the findings about the achievement of the GI students (16 for the oral and 21 for the written), and the TC students (18 for the oral and 27 for the written). In the final section, an analysis relating achievement and learning preference will be presented.

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4 Only students who took both the pre and posttests were retained for analysis. From the GI group 16 out of 25 students took the oral pre and posttest and 21 took the written pre and posttests. From the TC group 18 out of 29 students took the oral pre and posttest and 27 took the written pre and posttest.
4.2 DESCRIPTIONS OF FRENCH INTERROGATIVES

In order to understand and analyze student achievement with respect to French interrogatives for the purpose of this study, many textbooks and reference grammars were consulted, among them: Grevisse (1969), Hawkins and Towell (1996), Jones (1996), Judge and Healey (1985), and Ollivier (1978). I selected three grammar books containing descriptions of questions. The first grammar book, Grevisse, *Le bon usage* (1969) was chosen because it is designed for Francophones, and is a useful reference book for accurate usage. It is not intended for the teaching of FSL. The second book was *La grammaire française* by Jacqueline Ollivier (1978), chosen because it has been used for many years at Glendon College with first-year university students; it is intended specifically for teaching FSL at the university level. The third book, *French Grammar and Usage*, by Hawkins and Towell (1996) was selected because it is a recent reference grammar intended for adult second-language learners.

Based on the sources provided above, two categories of questions were noted. Yes-no questions are those which call for either 'yes' or 'no' answers; wh-questions in contrast require informational responses (Hawkins & Towell, 1996, p. 336; Judge & Healey, 1985, p. 419). Within each of these categories, there are three types of question formation: (1) rising intonation with declarative word order, (2) *Est-ce que*, and (3) inversion. (see Hawkins & Towell, 1996; Ollivier, 1978).

McCool (1994) provided an inventory of French as a second language university grammar textbooks. In this article, he cites the finding of Walz (1989) who studied many first-year textbooks, and found that out of the 22 textbooks examined, only 7 stated explicitly that the use of inversion was more formal than the use of rising intonation. McCool further
noted that 15 of the 22 textbooks made no distinction concerning frequency of use among intonation, inversion, and the use of *Est-ce que*. In Ollivier's textbook, in the yes-no question section, she gives four options in the following order:

1. *en plaçant 'Est-ce que' devant la phrase sans changer l'ordre des mots,*
2. *en utilisant l'inversion:*
   1a. *quand le sujet du verbe est un pronom et*
   1b. *quand le sujet du verbe est un nom,*
3. *en ajoutant 'n'est-ce pas' à la fin de la phrase déclarative*
4. *avec un ton de voix interrogatif.* (p. 292)

For wh- questions, Ollivier's (1978) presentation was divided into interrogative adverbs, adjectives and pronouns. Within each of the categories, there is no pattern as to which form is presented first. However, Ollivier added notes that are relevant for the present study, for example:

*Laperm avec 'Est-ce que' est plus courante dans la langue parlée parce qu'elle est plus simple à employer que l'inversion. Dans la langue écrite, au contraire, il est préférable d'employer l'inversion, plus élégante et moins lourde que la forme avec 'Est-ce que.'* (p. 294)

Hawkins and Towell (1996) present yes-no and wh- questions separately with a different order of presentation than Ollivier (1985). They first introduce questions formed with rising intonation, then with *Est-ce que*, and finally, by inverting the verb and subject (p. 336). After each section, they point out when the form discussed is more commonly used. For example: "Yes-no questions formed with inversion are typically used in more formal spoken and in written French" (p. 338).

Based on: (1) personal experience in teaching interrogatives at the university level; (2) the findings of O'Connor Di Vito; (3) the findings of Lyster (1996) whose studies were done with Francophone adolescents; (4) the findings of Terry (1970) from a corpus of adult
francophones' productions; and (5) the description in Ollivier (1985) and Hawkins and Towell (1996), I adopted the following categories as the basis for both oral and written production, analyzed in the present study.

- Rising intonation with a declarative word order  
  *Les personnes du Maroc pratiquent beaucoup d'agriculture?* (#33, TC, oral posttest)
- "Est-ce que"  
  *Est-ce que les hôtels sont très chers?* (#46, written posttest)
- Simple inversion  
  *Peut-on amener des animaux du Canada au Maroc?* (#34, written posttest)
- Complex inversion  
  *Le Président du Maroc a-t-il beaucoup de protection?* (#34, written posttest)

In the following section, the three analyses will be discussed: the first, based on frequency, the second, on accuracy, and the third on relationships between achievement and learning preferences.

### 4.3 ANALYSIS

The objective of this section is to perform analyses that will help answer question 1 of the research questions (p.4) of the present thesis. To address this question which asks whether there is a difference in linguistic achievement for the GI and the TC groups, three main analyses were performed: frequency of accurate questions, accuracy of questions formulated, and achievement, taking students' learning preferences into account.

Only accurate questions were retained for the analyses. Accuracy was determined according to the following criteria (examples are furnished):

1. Only the main clause was considered.

2. The word order of the interrogative form had to be accurate. For example: *"Il y-a-t-il?"* is not accurate.
3. The interrogative form had to be contextually appropriate. "Qu'\'est-ce que c'est?" is the accurate interrogative form to use in some contexts, however, in the following context, it is not: "Qu'\'est-ce que c'est la capitale du Maroc?" (Student #27, TC)

4. The sentence/utterance had to be grammatically well formed. For example, "Combien de restaurants au Maroc?" was considered inaccurate because the verb is missing.

5. Sentences that were not interpretable were not considered accurate, such as that produced by the following student (#48): "Est-ce qu'il y a Canada très divisé avec du Province?" (Question #19).

6. Errors of agreement, gender, tense, and personal pronouns were ignored. The following are some examples that were considered accurate.

   - Student #26 wrote, "Beaucoup de personnes parlent-ils Anglais?" Instead of the personal pronoun elles, the student used ils.
   - Student #28 said, "Quel est le nom de tous les provinces du Canada?" Tous agrees with the noun province which is feminine, and so should be toutes instead of tous.

Appendix O provides examples of questions that were marked inaccurate.

For all analyses in this chapter, the accurate questions were categorized as either yes-no or wh-questions and then further divided into four question types, namely: (1) intonation/declarative word order, (2) Est-ce que, (3) simple inversion, and (4) complex inversion. Figure 4.1 provides examples of these interrogative types of questions.
YES-NO QUESTIONS

- Intonation/Declarative Word Order
  Les personnes du Maroc pratiquent beaucoup d'agriculture? (#33, oral posttest)

- Est-ce que
  Est-ce que les hôtels sont très chers? (#46, written posttest)

- Simple Inversion
  Peut-on amener des animaux du Canada au Maroc? (#34, written posttest)

- Complex Inversion
  Le Président du Maroc, a-t-il beaucoup de protection? (#34, written posttest)

WH- QUESTIONS

- Intonation/Declarative Word Order including Adverbs, Pronouns, Adjectives, and Prepositions
  Quelle sorte de vêtements je dois porter? (#3, written posttest)

- Est-ce que including Adjectives, Pronouns, Adverbs, and Prepositions
  Quelles sortes de sports est-ce que les personnes jouent au Maroc? (#8, oral posttest)
  Dans quel continent est-ce qu'il y a Algérie et Tunisie? (#48, oral posttest)
  À qui est-ce que je parle si j'ai un problème pendant mon voyage? (#42, oral posttest)

- Simple Inversion including Adjectives, Pronouns, Adverbs, and Prepositions
  Quelle langue parle-t-on en Tunisie? (#42, oral posttest)
  Qui est le roi du Maroc? (#17, written posttest)

- Complex Inversion including Adjectives, Pronouns, Adverbs, and Prepositions
  Où les touristes aiment-ils voyager au Maroc? (#14, written posttest)

Figure 4.1: Examples of French interrogatives taken from the data

In this figure, no distinction is made between oral and written language.

Some of the students used the fronted preposition (e.g., À qui) to ask wh- questions as indicated in Figure 4.1. In the analyses performed in this chapter, such questions have been included in intonation, est-ce que, or inversion question types because too few students produced accurate questions using the preposition to warrant a separate analysis. To
illustrate, a question with a fronted preposition such as À qui est-ce que je dois parler? was categorized as a wh-question using est-ce que question type.

As explained in Chapter 3 (section 3.6), I used the data from all students who took both the oral and the written pre and posttests. For the oral testing, there were 16 students from the GI group and 18 from the TC group. For the written testing, there were 21 students from the GI group and 27 from the TC group.

The way in which the calculations were done for each analysis is explained in the relevant sections, namely section 4.3.1 for the analysis of frequency, and section 4.3.2 for the analysis of accuracy.

The analyses will be dealt with in the following order. First, the analysis of the frequency of accurate use of different question types (section 4.3.1) will be considered separately in oral and written use. Section 4.3.2 will deal with the analyses of accuracy. This section includes an analysis of accuracy of oral gains combining yes-no and wh-questions, an analysis of accuracy of oral gains of yes-no and wh-questions considered separately, and an analysis of accuracy of written gains combining yes-no and wh-questions as well as an analysis of accuracy of written gains of yes-no and wh-questions considered separately. Finally, in section 4.3.3 an analysis of linguistic achievement in oral and written productions will be conducted, taking into account the students’ learning preference and the teaching approach.

4.3.1 Analyses of Frequency

The objective of this section is to analyze the frequency with which the students accurately used different interrogative forms in order to find out if in general one type of
question was more frequently used than the others, and if the GI and TC groups differed in the frequency of their use of question types. A summary of accurate use is provided in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. They include data from both the GI and the TC groups and from the pre and posttests. The frequency of use of yes-no, wh-questions and both combined is also included in these tables in numbers and percentages.

Calculations were done separately for each group, the GI and the TC group, for the pre and post written and oral tests. Averages of accurate use of each question type (intonation/declarative, est-ce que, simple inversion, and complex inversion) were calculated firstly based on all accurate yes-no and wh-questions combined, secondly based on accurate yes-no questions alone, and thirdly based on accurate wh-questions alone. To illustrate; the GI group produced 175 accurate oral wh-questions in the pretest. These questions represent 100% of the accurate wh-oral questions produced. Of these 175 questions, 31 or 17.7% were of the intonation/declarative type, 52 or 29.7% of the est-ce que type, 92 or 52.6% of the simple inversion type and none of the complex type (see Table 4.1).

The analysis of frequency will be dealt with in two parts: oral and written. Each part will include a summary table of interrogative use and a discussion of what the numbers indicate. No statistical analyses were performed as only general trends are being examined in order to make comparisons with other data provided in the published literature.

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5 Some of the literature on cooperative learning in certain subject areas (see, for example, Webb, 1989) suggests that, for some students on some tasks, asking questions of others or of oneself is associated with higher learning. This would argue that looking at questions attempted as well as questions achieved might be worthwhile. This was examined in the current data, but the differences were small.
4.3.1.1 Oral

Table 4.1 gives an overview of the number of accurately formed questions by type produced orally by students of both groups. The percentages are provided along with the number of questions. The table also presents the mean and the standard deviation for each type of question type.

Table 4.1 reveals that when the oral yes-no and the wh-questions are combined, the Est-ce que and the Simple Inversion types are highly favored. In the pretest, Est-ce que and Simple Inversion type questions represent 84.2% of all combined accurate questions the GI group used and 78.9% for the TC group. As for the posttest, they represent 96.6% of all accurate questions used by the GI group and 94.6% by the TC group. Est-ce que questions seem to be a more frequent choice in yes-no questions (GI, pretest 86.1%, posttest 93.2%; TC, pretest 72.9%, posttest: 89.3%) and Simple Inversion with wh-questions (GI, pretest 52.6%, posttest: 74.1%; TC, pretest 64.7%, posttest 80%, TC). An explanation for the frequent use of inverted wh-questions may be that the students favored the structure Quel+être+noun, resulting in questions such as Quelle est la capitale du Maroc?

The next section applies the same type of analysis to the frequency of written questions.

4.3.1.2 Written

Table 4.2 shows the frequency of accurate use of written French interrogatives by students of both the GI and the TC groups. It includes the same categories as those in Table 4.1, and the calculations were done in the same manner.
Table 4.1
Summary of Accurate Frequency of Use Per Group, Per Test, Per Type of Question: Oral

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<tr>
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<th></th>
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<th>Posttest</th>
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<td>TC</td>
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<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>156</td>
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Table 4.2
Summary of Accurate Frequency of Use Per Group, Per Test, Per Type of Question: Written

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<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<td>11 8.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex Inversion</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 .05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>0 2</td>
<td>.8 .07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As in the oral data presented in Table 4.1, the Est-ce que and Simple Inversion type questions are a more frequent choice for yes-no and wh- questions combined. This observation is true for both groups in the pre and posttests.

When separating the yes-no from the wh-questions, the analysis revealed that in the written tests, students of both groups tended to use the est-ce que form most frequently with yes-no questions (GI, pretest 65.7%, posttest 60.4%; TC, pretest 73%, posttest 66.9%) whereas both groups used the simple inversion form most frequently with wh-questions (GI, pretest 64%, posttest 66.2%; TC, pretest 81.5%, posttest 69.6%). These results parallel those of the oral tests. As was the case in the oral tests, both groups made considerable use of Quel+être+ noun type questions.

The TC students used fewer accurate simple inversion wh- question types in the posttest (69.6%) compared to the pretest (81.5); however, they used more est-ce que question type (pretest, 10.4%; posttest, 27.1%). There is no obvious explanation for this fact.

4.3.1.3 Summary and Discussion

The frequency analysis can be summarized as follows. When yes-no were combined with wh-questions, students accurately used most frequently the est-ce que and the simple inversion questions types. Students of both groups most frequently used the est-ce que form with yes-no questions and the simple inversion form with wh-questions.

The studies described in section 4.2.1 indicate that discourse mode (oral or written) is a factor in the types of interrogatives chosen. According to Coveney (1995), Grevisse (1969), and McCool (1994), inverted questions occur infrequently in spoken French; uninverted forms with rising intonation and est-ce que forms clearly predominate. O'Connor Di Vito (1997) went further and concluded:
patterns in spoken and written French have demonstrated that native-speaker choice of interrogative syntax in French depends not only on the speech mode (spoken or written) but, more importantly, on the discourse type, question type, and nature of the subject and verb in question (p. 110).

The present frequency analysis revealed patterns inconsistent with those reported, for example, by Coveney (1995) and McCool (1994). However, in seeking to explain why the results of my data do not differ between oral and written, I would posit that even though students were given a written and an oral test, the written test had an oral objective in the sense that students were asked to write a list of questions that would be used orally (see Appendices C3 and C4).

Students of both groups more frequently used inverted-type questions with wh-questions. This is the case for both oral and written questions. Because of the nature of the exercise the students were asked to do, questions using the inverted type with Quel and Qui, such as *Quelle est la capitale du Maroc? Qui est le roi du Maroc?* were commonly used. O'Connor Di Vito (1997) also found that “in the conversations, seven of the eight VS (verb-subject) interrogatives with nominal subjects are of the type *Quel + être + Nouns*” (p. 108).

4.3.2 Analyses of Accuracy

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, an analysis of accuracy will determine if students showed linguistic gains in their accurate use of yes-no and wh-questions during the period of the course.

Students produced a different number of questions for each test. For the analysis of accuracy, a percentage of accurate questions in each category was calculated for each student based on the total number of questions produced by that student. These calculations were
done for the oral and the written questions. Then an average percent was calculated for each
group on both pre and posttests. These percentages were entered in SPSS, which was used
for all the analyses to compare the groups.

4.3.2.1 Analyses Performed

The results of the analyses will be reported in this section. A repeated measures one-
way analysis of variance (ANOVA) using the average scores obtained from the pre and
posttests compared these scores and showed whether there were statistical gains in both the
GI and TC groups. As well, an analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA) showed which group
made greater gains when initial pretest results were considered.

a. Oral

Analysis of accuracy: Yes-no and wh- questions combined. In an initial analysis,
all oral accurate questions, yes-no and wh- were combined. Two analyses were performed
using the percentage of well-formed questions obtained in the pre and post linguistic tests:
(1) An ANOVA comparing the pre and posttest average scores for each group; (2) an
ANCOVA comparing the two groups using the pretest as covariate and the posttest as the
dependent variable. Tables 4.3 and 4.4, and Figure 4.2 summarize the results obtained.

Table 4.3 displays the average of accurate oral yes-no and wh- questions combined, as
a percentage of all oral yes-no and wh- questions, as well as the gain scores obtained by each
group, subtracting the pretest results from those of the posttest. This information is illustrated
in Figure 4.2.
The ANOVA results as in Table 4.3 indicate that when average scores of the pre and posttest were compared, both groups showed statistical gains (p < .000) at the end of the course compared to the beginning. The GI group obtained a gain score of 26.8%, and the TC group of 28.9%.

The scores obtained at the beginning of the course were different for the two groups. The TC group obtained an average score of 41.6% compared to 52.2% in the GI group. For this reason, an ANCOVA was performed. Table 4.4 shows the results obtained from the ANCOVA; it gives the average of accurate oral yes-no and wh- questions as well as the adjusted means.

The ANCOVA shows that, taking into account the results of the pretest of both groups, there is no statistical significant difference between the groups (p = .51).

Table 4.3
Mean Percentage of Accurate Yes-No and Wh- Questions Combined: Oral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
<th>Gain Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI n=16</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=18</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4
Mean Percentage of Accurate Yes-No and Wh- questions and Adjusted Means: Oral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Adjusted Means</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GI n=16</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=18</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of accuracy: Yes-no questions. Table 4.5 presents results of the ANOVA performed using the average scores obtained from the oral yes-no linguistic tests administered at the beginning and the end of the course. The gain scores are also reported; they were calculated by comparing the scores obtained on the pre and posttests. This information is illustrated in Figure 4.3.

Table 4.5
Mean Percentage of Accurate Yes-No Questions: Oral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th></th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th></th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
<th>Gain Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI n=16</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=18</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in Table 4.5 indicate that both the GI and the TC groups showed a statistical gain ($p < .001$) from pre to posttest. The gain scores for both groups are similar. As seen in Table 4.6, the ANCOVA shows that when taking into account the scores obtained in the pretest, no group improved significantly more than the other ($p = .907$).

![Figure 4.3: Mean percentage of accurate yes-no questions: Oral](image)

Table 4.6
Mean Percentage of Oral Yes-No Questions as well as Adjusted Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Adjusted Means</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GI n=16</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=18</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.907</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Accuracy: Wh-questions. The following section will compare the average scores of the pretest and posttest obtained in the students' use of accurate oral wh-
questions. Table 4.7 shows the results of the ANOVA performed with the accurate oral wh-questions, comparing pre and posttests. Figure 4.4 illustrates this information.

The results of the ANOVA show that for the oral wh-questions the gain is not statistically significant for either group (GI, $p = .208$; TC, $p = .105$). In addition, the results of the ANCOVA shown in Table 4.8 indicate no statistical difference between the 2 groups ($p = .977$).

Table 4.7
Mean Percentage of Accurate Wh-Questions: Oral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
<th>Gain Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI n=16</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>17.14</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=18</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.4: Mean percentage of accurate wh-questions: Oral
Table 4.8
Mean Percentage of Oral Wh- Questions as well as Adjusted Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Adjusted Means</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GI n=16</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=18</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>.977</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Written

Analysis of accuracy: Yes-no and wh-questions combined. Table 4.9 shows the results of the ANOVA and the means in percentage of accurate yes-no and wh-questions combined for the written pre and posttests. This table also includes the gain scores obtained for both groups. Figure 4.5 is an illustration of the information provided in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9
Mean Percentage of Accurate Yes-No and Wh-Questions Combined: Written

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
<th>Gain Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI n=21</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=27</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9 reveals that both groups produced more written accurate French interrogatives at the end of the course compared to the beginning. The ANOVA results indicate that only the TC group showed a statistical gain in the use of written yes-no and wh-questions combined. (p < .000).
The level of competency at the beginning of the course was different for both groups. The GI group showed an average score of 81.1% accurate questions, and the TC group, 69.8%. For this reason, an ANCOVA was performed. The results shown in Table 4.10 indicate that one group did not improve significantly more than the other ($p = .063$).

Table 4.10
Mean Percentage of Written Yes-No and Wh-Questions Combined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Adjusted Means</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GI n=21</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=27</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of accuracy: Yes-No questions. Table 4.11 shows results in percentage scores of the ANOVA performed using the average scores obtained from the written yes-no linguistic tests administered at the beginning and the end of the course. The gain scores are also reported for each group. Figure 4.6 is a visual summary of the information provided in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11
Mean Percentage of Accurate Yes-No Questions: Written

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
<th>Gain Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI n=21</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ANOVA revealed a statistical gain only for the TC group (p < .001) in the use of accurate written yes-no questions. This result as well as the difference in scores obtained in the pretests indicated a need to perform an ANCOVA.

The results of the ANCOVA, as shown in Table 4.12 revealed no statistical significance (p = .271) between the two groups.

Table 4.12
Mean Percentage of Accurate Yes-No Questions and Adjusted Means: Written

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Adjusted Means</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GI n=21</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>.271</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.6:  Mean percentage of accurate yes-no questions: Written

*Analysis of accuracy: Wh-questions.* Table 4.13 shows the results of the ANOVA comparing the pre and posttest for both groups in their use of accurate written wh-questions. The mean percentage of accurate wh-questions, as well as the gain scores are reported for each group for the pre and posttests. Figure 4.7 is an illustration of the information provided in Table 4.13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.13</th>
<th>Mean Percentage of Accurate Wh-Questions: Written</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pretest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI n=21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=27</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the ANOVA showed no statistical gain for either the GI or the TC group. The ANCOVA's results, as shown in Table 4.14 also do not reveal a statistically significant difference between the two groups when the initial pretests results are considered ($p = .715$).

Figure 4.7: Mean percentage of accurate wh-questions: Written

Table 4.14
Mean Percentage of Accurate Written Wh-Question as well as Adjusted Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Adjusted Means</th>
<th>Sig of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GI n=21</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC n=27</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>.715</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.2.2 Summary of results

Comparing the average scores obtained in the pretests with those of the posttests, the analysis of accuracy may be summarized as follows:

- Both groups showed a significant gain in their accurate use of oral yes-no and wh-questions combined (Table 4.3).
- Both groups showed a significant gain in their accurate use of oral yes-no questions (Table 4.5).
- Neither group showed a significant gain in their accurate use of oral wh- questions (Table 4.7).
- The TC group showed a significant gain in its accurate use of written yes-no and wh-questions combined (Table 4.9).
- The TC group showed a statistical gain in the accurate use of written yes-no questions (Table 4.11).
- Neither group showed a statistical gain in their accurate use of written wh- questions (Table 4.13).

In comparing the posttest scores of the GI group with those of the TC group, the ANCOVA analyses showed no statistical difference between the groups in either the oral or the written use of French interrogatives.

In summary, the results of the above analyses provide evidence related to two of the questions posed in the introduction of this chapter: (1) whether students improved significantly in their use of interrogatives during the period of this course, and (2) whether one group showed more improvement than the other. For the first question, the analyses of accuracy clearly indicated that both groups improved in their use of oral yes-no and
wh- questions combined, and in their use of oral yes-no questions. Neither group improved their use of oral wh- questions when comparing the beginning average scores obtained to those at the end of the course. The TC group showed a statistical gain in their use of accurate written yes-no and wh- questions combined, and written yes-no questions whereas the GI students showed no improvement in their accurate written use of French interrogatives. Regarding the second question, statistics indicate that neither group showed more improvement than the other.

4.3.3 Analysis of Achievement by Learning Preference

One focus of this thesis is the relationship between learning preference and linguistic achievement, taking into account the respective teaching approaches to which the groups were exposed, specifically the collaborative learning approach and the teacher-controlled approach. In order to investigate this focus, the linguistic achievements of students of different learning preferences—collaborative, competitive and individualist—were analyzed.

As discussed in chapter 3, nine participants from each treatment group were selected, three per learning preference, namely, cooperative, competitive, and individualist. This selection is based on the scores of the Learning Preference Scale (Owens, 1980) administered to all students at the beginning of the course.

4.3.3.1 Analyses

Accuracy was the focus of these analyses. The number of students selected was insufficient to allow statistical analysis. However, the data for each student selected was examined based on the percentage of well-formed questions relative to all questions collected from the pre and post linguistic tests. The data were then analysed to find out if any of the
categories of learners -collaborative, competitive and individualist- showed higher linguistic gains than the others when comparing the pretest scores in percentage with those of the posttests. The results obtained, although not statistically analyzed because of the small number of students, were further compared between groups. Oral and written gains were looked at separately.

4.3.3.2 Findings

When combining yes-no and wh- questions, the analyses revealed no clear patterns among groups, or among students in the same group. To illustrate the lack of consistency in the findings, I propose to summarize the linguistic achievements based on overall (yes-no and wh- gains combined) gains obtained by those of each learning preference and group.

Figure 4.8 summarizes the findings and indicates which group revealed the highest gains. The sign "+" is used to show which category of learners showed a greater gain of accurate questions (yes-no and wh- questions combined) in the posttest relative to the pretest. The oral and written results are presented separately.

Figure 4.8 does not reveal a clear pattern. It shows, for example, that the collaborative learners of the TC group show greater gains in the use of accurate oral questions than the collaborative learners of the GI group. For the use of accurate written questions, collaborative and competitive learners of the TC group show greater gains than the collaborative and competitive learners of the GI group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GI</th>
<th>TC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative n=3</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive n=3</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualist n=3</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative n=3</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive n=3</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualist n=3</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.8: Gains in Accuracy by learning preferences and by group: Yes-no and wh-questions combined

Similar analyses were carried out separating oral and written yes-no and wh-questions; these analyses did not reveal any observable patterns. For example, the collaborative learners of the GI group showed greater linguistic gains than the TC group in their use of accurate oral yes-no questions. For the yes-no written questions, the three categories of learners of the GI group showed greater linguistic gains than the three categories of the TC group.

4.3.3.3 Conclusion

The results do not show that collaborative learners achieved greater linguistic gains than other types of learners in the collaborative learning class, nor do they show that competitive learners achieved higher linguistic gains than other types of learners in a teacher-controlled class. Furthermore, individualist learners did not achieve higher linguistic gains than other types of learners in a TC class. Consequently, I conclude that this study found no evidence of a relationship between learning preference, achievement and teaching approach; but the numbers of students are too small to draw any definitive conclusion.
4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, three analyses were performed: an analysis of the frequency of accurate use of different question types, an analysis of the gains in accuracy overtime and a comparison between groups of their final level of linguistic achievement, and an analysis of linguistic achievement taking into account the students' learning preference and the teaching approach.

It was concluded in the frequency analysis that students in both the GI and TC groups showed a preference for using *est-ce que* and simple inversion type questions overall in both discourse modes, oral and written. When producing yes-no questions, the preference was to use the *est-ce que* type, and when producing wh-questions, the simple inversion type was favored.

For the analysis of the gains in accuracy, ANOVAs and ANCOVAs were performed using mean percentage scores obtained from oral and written pre and post proficiency tests. It was concluded that during the period of this course students of both groups improved significantly in their accurate use of oral yes-no and wh- questions combined and in their use of oral yes-no questions alone. The TC students also improved in the accurate use of written yes-no and wh-questions combined and in the accurate use of written yes-no questions alone. Neither group gained significantly in their accurate use of wh- oral and written questions. The analyses showed no statistical difference between the posttests taking account of the initial pretest differences of the two groups in either the accurate use of oral or written use of French interroogatives.

In the analysis of the linguistic achievement by learning preference by teaching approach, no evidence of a relationship between learning preference, achievement, and teaching approach was found.
In the next chapter, a qualitative analysis of the instructor's views regarding the students' achievement, the compatibility of their learning preference, the course, and the teaching strategies will be performed.
CHAPTER 5

INSTRUCTOR’S VIEWS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapter, I presented the findings of the students’ linguistic achievement, comparing the students of the GI group with those of the TC group; here, I will present my views based on my personal observations, regarding the students’ achievement, the course, and the teaching approaches.

In this chapter, I will begin by giving my background as the instructor and by describing my role in each of the classes. I will then summarize and give examples from the data I collected, most these examples are drawn from my instructor’s journal, to offer my views on (1) the student’s motivation, (2) their achievement, (3) the course; giving special attention to collaborative learning, and (4) the use of the TC versus the CL approach in an FSL course at the university level.

5.2 THE INSTRUCTOR

I have been teaching French as a Second Language (FSL) at the university level since 1970. Through my teaching, I have experienced many changes in second-language teaching strategies and approaches; the audio-visual, the audio-lingual, and the communicative
approaches are some examples (Germain, 1991, 1993; Germain & Leblanc, 1982). The teaching approaches required that I change and experiment in my classes with my students.

Students have also changed as a result of these pedagogical approaches. In the 1960s, because they had been exposed to traditional teaching methods during their primary and secondary schooling, such as grammar-translation, first-year university students were more competent in their written language skills than in their oral language skills. However, in the 1980s, because the emphasis was placed on communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), the needs of the students enrolling in university changed in that their oral comprehension and production was superior to that of students from the previous decade. As the instructor, it became necessary for me to change and adapt to accommodate to the changing needs of students.

In my role as a second-language instructor I initially acted as a communicator of knowledge. I would teach my students grammar in a traditional manner by explaining the rules and expecting students to apply them in exercises pertaining to the lesson taught. For example, grammar exercises included a list of sentences, out of context, in which students had to apply the new rule learned. Other traditional exercises required that the students fill in the blanks with the appropriate vocabulary or grammatical phrases. Approximately ten years ago, in an attempt to respond to the changing needs of students, and help them succeed as language learners, I started to employ new teaching strategies such as group work. After using group-work techniques in my classes, I observed that (1) my students seemed to be having more fun in my class while learning, (2) the quality of the written and oral work they were producing was better than I was used to obtaining at their level, and (3) the students were communicating with one other and were helpful to one other. As a result of these
observations, I did some research in the area of group work in second-language learning and its outcomes. This interest led me to read about the collaborative learning approach which, after reflection, not only seemed compatible with my personality, but also appeared to make sense for a second language class. Although the studies I consulted relating to second-language contexts did not include university settings, I believed that second-language programs at the university level could benefit from this approach. In order to contribute to second language teaching and learning at the university level, I chose new teaching strategies, applied them in my classroom, and observed the process and outcomes from my point of view as well as from the students’ perspective. The following section deals with my personal observations in both classes.

5.3 ANALYSIS

After describing the method used to analyze the data taken from my personal journal, I will compare the TC and the GI groups by giving my views, as the instructor, on (1) students’ motivation, their attitudes toward the course, their linguistic achievement, and their learning preferences, (2) the structure of the course, the evaluation aspect, and the group work aspect, (3) teaching strategies used in both groups, including the roles the instructor takes in both situations.

5.3.1 The Data

As mentioned in section 3.2.4.6, during my instruction of the FRSL 2512 classes, instead of writing my observations, I opted to tape-record them. After each class, I summarized what I had done in class with each group, and I reflected on my teaching, my
students, and the approaches I used. My journal was revealing even to me. Listening to the tapes helped me to relive moments of satisfaction, of frustration, and of confusion, which I will elaborate in the remainder of this chapter. I did not transcribe every word of my journal. Instead, I used the same categories as I used for the students' journals and their interviews (appendices L). As I listened to the tapes, I slotted my personal views and opinions into the appropriate categories.

5.3.2 Students

5.3.2.1 Motivation and attitude

From the beginning of the course, I repeatedly made comments in my journal about how receptive and motivated the TC students seemed to be compared to the GI students. They asked questions, they attended class, and during the introductory presentation I made, they showed interest. One of the first comments I made in my journal referred to the lack of student motivation in the GI group which was based on the lack of enthusiasm shown by the group during my introductory presentation about Morocco. I did not feel they showed much interest. They were passive and asked few questions.

In order to create a sense of community in the class at the beginning of a course, I usually use an activity which I call Jeu d’interaction. The students are given a list of statements or questions which they can only answer by talking to the students in the class. For example: Donnez le nom des étudiants dans la classe qui habitent en résidence. Qui dans la classe n’est pas de Toronto? The students need to mingle and talk with many peers to be able to answer the questions. This exercise turned out to be a positive experience with the TC group. The students could not stop talking to one another. I had to ask them more
than once to go back to their seats. This exercise helped students meet one another which, in turn, created a better sense of community in the class and ultimately created motivation. However, with the GI students, when I used the Jeu d’interaction, some students left their seats but did not mingle, and others just remained seated. Was that an indication of the group’s lack of compatibility with one another? Were the students going to collaborate with one another? Those issues concerned me from the beginning of the course.

TC students often went beyond my expectations and did research at the library, and on the internet on the topic dealt with in their article. When the students presented, I noted that their peers were attentive, and when asked questions by the presenters, they were able to answer, which indicates that they were interested in the topics of their peers. Their participation in the activities and the games following the presentations was also an indication of their motivation and positive attitude. It is important to note that the presentations were given on Friday afternoon. The attendance of the students revealed, as well, a definite interest and a positive attitude toward the course. For the GI students, even after a couple of weeks, I reiterated in my tape that the students’ motivation and attitude had not changed; they were still passive. I made the comment that the passivity could be due to the fact that they were uncertain about the instructional approach. They may not have felt comfortable with this new teaching method and may have felt insecure. I expressed my concern on the tape, especially when I recalled that my pilot group had not reacted in the same manner; they got involved immediately with the project. My concerns did not materialize because the students’ attitude and motivation became more positive. I noted in my journal that the change occurred shortly after I explained, in detail, what was expected of them in the class. This explanation was done at the beginning of the third week. The six groups ended up working hard to complete the
work they were expected to accomplish. Students met in class and at other times. They made superb presentations that were thoughtfully prepared and well researched.

5.3.2.2 Students' achievement

a) Content. Much of the content introduced in this course was new to the students in both groups. The students learned about Morocco and many aspects of the country. It became apparent on the first day of class that some students of both groups could not locate Morocco on a map, and they certainly did not understand why we were studying this North African country in a French course. After my introductory presentation, it became more obvious to them, and by the end of the course, they had learned so much that one student even commented, during her interview, that she now felt she knew more about Morocco than about Canada (student #8). The amount of content learned is the category in which the students improved the most. Most of them started with no knowledge and by the end of the course, they had a very good knowledge of many different features of the country.

b) Linguistic achievement. In my journal, I frequently mentioned the many aspects of the linguistic competency of my students. I made comments about the vocabulary they learned, and the oral and written exposure they had. However, I questioned whether their grammar improved during the course.

i) Vocabulary. As the topic of Morocco was so new and unfamiliar to the students, much of the vocabulary related to the country was new to them as well. Both groups were exposed in the same part of the semester to the new vocabulary I introduced in my initial presentation. Later, as the students were reading in the TC groups, they learned new vocabulary related to more specific topics. For example, I had selected a text on the
Sahara, its people, and its political difficulties. Names of cities and people also were new. For the presentations, the TC students were exposed to new vocabulary in the texts I provided them. As well, the students learned Arabic words that are used in the French language because the equivalencies do not exist in French. *La djellabah* and *les babouches* are two examples. The GI students experienced the same learning, however they discovered the new vocabulary on their own. Regularly, the students would come to me to ask what a word meant because they could not find it in the dictionary. For example, they did not know the meaning of *tajine*. Because of the nature of the topic, the students of both groups learned vocabulary that was also conceptually new to them. The types of spices that are commonly used in Moroccan food, and the names of the steam bath *hammam* that Moroccans visit at least once a week, are some of the examples I noted in my journal.

Undoubtedly, the students learned new vocabulary. However, I mentioned in my journal that it was often the type of vocabulary that created specialized knowledge for the students more than useful, everyday vocabulary. Student #14 alluded to this during the interview, saying that her vocabulary had improved but that the terms were specific, not the kind of language she would need to speak French in Canada.

ii) *Four skills.* The objective of any language course in the context of the French Department at Glendon College is to improve the students’ four skills, namely oral comprehension, oral expression, written comprehension, and written expression. In the case of course FRSL 2512, I attempted to fulfil this objective by including activities to allow the students to improve all linguistic skills.

The observations in my taped journal revealed that for the oral component, the students of the TC group listened to me present, ask questions, answer questions, and tell
stories more often than students of the GI group. However, the students of the GI group were given more opportunity than the TC students to express themselves, to practice their oral French by asking questions, by presenting, and by communicating with their peers in a group situation. In terms of their written language, I noted both similarities and differences. Both groups were exposed to the same grammatical review of French Interrogatives and students submitted written compositions and journals. The TC students were more exposed to French articles because I chose articles for them to read. The GI students read what they found related to their topics. As mentioned in Chapter 3, students often read information about their topics in English because information in French was not available. In summary, I would say that the TC group was more exposed to oral and written language, and that GI group made more use of spoken French.

**iii) Grammar.** As explained earlier in section 3.4.2.1c, I had decided that only the grammar of interrogatives would be formally addressed in detail in both classes. Other grammar points were discussed only when necessary to clarify usage or to answer students’ questions. I commented in my taped journal that this approach was acceptable since the students had been exposed to grammar for many years and had had the same rules explained to them more than once (Calvé, 1989, 1994). I thought that students of this level needed grammar review in context rather than through traditional teaching of each point followed by exercises. My perception of grammar instruction differed from that of students, who seemed to gauge their written improvement by the amount of traditional grammar studied in class. No student in either group requested additional grammar study during the course. However, in interviews with the students, and in their journals they revealed that they would have preferred an instructional approach that included regular grammar review (sections
6.2.1.2 and 6.2.2.3). This point will be elaborated later in this chapter. The structure of the GI course afforded fewer opportunities than in the TC class to explain grammatical points in articles since the articles were a component of the presentations. No grammar clarifications were ever requested by any of the students during presentations.

iv) Use of French in group work. I found that the students in the TC class were usually prepared for class activities. They spoke French in group activities, they learned considerable content, and their presentations were of high quality. Students were often given articles to read and comprehension questions to answer, as well as other exercises. In order to vary my teaching techniques and to keep the students interested, I directed them to work in groups. The activities I asked them to perform included exercises such as fill-in-the-blanks, reading an article aloud, and answering questions. After doing the work in groups, answers would be corrected and compared among the whole class. The activities were highly structured, the students had limited time to complete the exercises, and the instructions were given in French.

My journal entries reflect my feelings of frustration with the GI students because they needed to be reminded to speak French while they were discussing their topic in class. This situation was of concern to me because the students met outside of class, during the weekend or at the library. I knew the students were speaking English while they were working on the project, but I did not know how to remedy this difficulty.

c) Autonomous learning. One of the main objectives of our education system is that students learn to take charge of their own learning and become autonomous learners (section 1.2). It would appear that the use of the GI technique helped the students move toward this objective. Asking the students to investigate a topic led them to make decisions
about process, collaboration, and research. In other words, this exercise taught them how to organize themselves, how to find and use resources on an unknown topic, and to use techniques to share the knowledge they had acquired with others. I witnessed students take over the planning of the presentation because the other members were not sufficiently organized. I noted in my taped journal that student #3 of the group working on *la nourriture marocaine* had made it clear that she was concerned that the mark she would obtain might reflect the disorganization of others in her group. She told me that she had to take matters into her own hands; she typed everything, made arrangements with the restaurant the group was going to visit, and told the others what to do. I made no comments in my journal related to autonomous learning in the TC group. Nevertheless, I did comment on the fact that I determined what would be learned, read, and studied in the class. I even gave them the article to read for their presentation. The students had no opportunity to learn skills to become autonomous learners.

*d) Learning preference.* In my journal, I often noted that I tried to observe the compatibility of my students' learning preference with the teaching approach used in their class. Since I had tabulated their scores on the Learning Preference Scale constructed by Owens and Straton (1980), I knew where each student's learning style fell on the scale, and, therefore, was able to observe the students. My observations led me to realize that, even students who were classified as collaborative learners, often expected and wanted to work alone in an FSL class when doing exercises pertaining to an article or to grammar exercises. In the GI group, some students expressed their preference to work alone. Regardless of their learning preferences on the scale, all students in the GI group participated in a collaborative experience. Furthermore, after examining the LPS results, I noted that in the GI group, out of
the 26 students, 10 were more collaborative learners than competitive and individualist types and, 12 were more individualist than competitive and collaborative. This means that almost half of the students in the GI class were more individualist learners than collaborative (Appendix J). This situation created some difficulties in the groups when some individualist learners complained that the collaborative learning process was taking too long, they preferred to do the work alone, and they did not like to feel dependent on others.

5.3.3 The Course

5.3.3.1 Structure

The TC course was designed to address a new topic every two weeks. During each class, articles were read and then discussed in small groups or as a class.

The structure of the GI course was new to the students. For this reason, on the first day of class, I explained in detail the organizational plan for the course, the structure of the Group Investigation technique, and academic requirements. As the questionnaire revealed, the students did not really have the option of leaving this course because their course schedule did not permit any changes. It is difficult to know the number of students that would have changed course sections had it been possible.

The students appeared reluctant to follow the guideline that after the third week of the course, they had to sit with the other members of their group during class time. They tended to wait for me to arrive in class before forming their groups.

5.3.3.2 Evaluation

There were seven sections of FRSL 2512 taught concurrently during the semester. As explained in section 3.3.1.2 of Chapter 3, common tests, compositions and quizzes were
necessary to measure achievement of all students regardless of the section in which they were enrolled. In the TC group, evaluation was done in a traditional manner. In addition to the common compositions and tests, they were assigned homework, and asked to make a five-minute presentation. I graded them as objectively as possible and gave feedback on their linguistic competency. Students in the GI group also wrote compositions, tests and quizzes. The students were evaluated on their presentation based on a number of criteria, such as oral delivery, quality of written material, relevance of content, and use of audio-visual support. They were also evaluated by their peers and asked to do a self-evaluation.

\[a)\] Presentations. The objective of the GI presentation was for each group to present the topic they had investigated. The final grades of these students were similar to those for the presentations of other sections of FRSL 2512 with a range of grades from A to D. No student failed.

The daily work of the group was laborious at times, but the presentations were, in general, superb. They were well researched. The students had gone to the library, museums, restaurants, and anywhere else they deemed necessary. They even interviewed Moroccans from Glendon College and from elsewhere when appropriate for their presentations. Students went to great lengths to obtain the necessary information for their research projects.

I noted in my taped reflections that many of the presentations were original and creative. In the introduction to their presentation, one group showed a series of slides to a background of Moroccan music; it proved very effective. Another group created a video about various wars in Morocco, in which the students assumed acting roles. The videos also featured a re-enactment of explosions and killings using real movie footage. Another group made a video in which they created a cartoon illustrating the way in which Islamic men pray.
These are just some of the many examples of creativity the students exhibited. All groups prepared visual materials. One group used bristol board on which they glued pictures of "hands." This depicted the significance of the "hand," a piece of Moroccan jewellery, and the superstitions Moroccans attach to it.

The students of course FRSL 2512 are generally at an intermediate level of French language proficiency. Although they had thoroughly researched information to communicate to the rest of the class, the level of linguistic competency varied among students and sometimes proved quite weak. I am referring specifically to language structure, syntax, and pronunciation. Furthermore, shyness and nervousness prevented some from speaking sufficiently loudly and clearly. In summary, the quality of work and achievement of the groups were impressive and unique for an FSL course, yet some students were weak in certain areas of linguistic competence.

Recall that in the TC group, each student presented the same material three times for a 5-minute period each time (see section 3.4.2.2 c). I felt that this reorganization was positive, and students conveyed the same feeling to me on an informal basis. By repeating the same presentation three times, the students became more precise, their presentations were clearer and some altered the content, having judged it to be too long in previous presentations, or because some parts were not as interesting to the audience as presenters had expected. One student even came to thank me for having introduced this presentation structure (student #26, TC). She explained to me that because she was shy, the repetition of her presentation helped her to be more comfortable and to improve her speech. She became more familiar with the content of her presentation and could anticipate the questions of the students. She felt less nervous speaking to smaller groups than to the whole class. As well, on one occasion,
because we had visitors, I had to ask the presenters scheduled on that day to present to the whole class. Although all complied, one student expressed her disappointment with this in her journal (student #44, TC).

TC students were always well prepared for presentations. Most did more research than was expected of them. The quality of the content of their presentations was impressive and they often prepared audio-visual materials to complement subject matter. Some presentations were not as linguistically competent as others. Some students became nervous when they had to present in front of the whole class.

5.3.3.3 Group work/Collaborative learning

I sometimes used group work with the TC students. During the group work activities, I observed that the students usually reacted positively to the change of strategy from the TC techniques and made no positive or negative comments during class related to the technique. The students participated actively during individual-oriented exercises and then switched easily to the next exercise which was usually done with the whole class. Conversely, the work done with GI students was the main focus of my comments because the whole course was based on the collaborative learning approach which emphasizes group work. For this reason, I am devoting this section to my observations of the GI group.

The students of the GI group were asked to work with the same group of students for the entire course. They were required to work together to produce a two-hour presentation on a topic initially unknown to everyone. In order to accomplish their task, it was imperative that they cooperate, share their findings, and accept one another's opinions. This technique was designed to create positive interdependence (Johnson & Johnson, 1994), to instill in each member a sense of personal responsibility; and to develop social and personal skills.
Other skills that students must acquire to work effectively in groups were strengthened in GI students who had more time and the context to develop them than the TC students did. Some of these skills include listening to other members, taking turns in participating, negotiating meaning, and compromising.

a) Advantages. There are a number of positive outcomes that surfaced during the course, besides the expected improvements in oral and written proficiency. From my taped reflections, I have selected four of these instances to illustrate that even at the university level, collaborative learning has positive outcomes.

- **Positive Interdependence:** In a group situation, students choose the role they want to play in the context of their presentation. The following account illustrates this basic element of collaborative learning: After meeting a couple of times, one of the groups allocated the position of researcher to a group member who did not take his role seriously, and failed to attend classes. This prevented the group from advancing in their work. The incident led the students in the group to explain to the negligent member how each student in the group was needed to complete the assignment, and the problem was resolved. From that point on, all the members were present at all group meetings.

- **Personal Responsibility:** It became obvious that the students in the groups felt responsible for the rest of the group as well as for themselves when, at about the midpoint of the course, one student came to see me to admit that she had not done her part of the work and did not want the group to be penalized because of her. She finished the conversation by telling me that she felt responsible for the rest of the group and she was going to start working on her part of the project.
• **Social, Personal and Collaborative Skills:** Around the middle of the investigation, another student asked to meet with me privately. She was a little embarrassed about seeing me to complain about the rest of her group. She felt she was doing all the work and the others were relying on her. She complained that they were supposed to hand in articles to me and that the person in her group who was responsible for this task had not done it when she last had spoken to her. What she did not know was that I had already received the articles. She felt somewhat uncomfortable but explained that she was an individualist learner. Although she liked people, she found it easier to work on her own terms at her own speed. She reflected on this experience and realized by the end of our conversation, the importance of working with people and dealing with the difficulties encountered therein. The group-oriented course was a learning experience for this student. She even discussed what she learned from this experience in her journal, a point elaborated in Chapter 6. This student learned that she should do her part as well as possible, communicate with other group members, but refrain from assuming all the responsibility. She also learned to respect and trust her peers.

• **Evaluation:** I feel that the presentations were fairly evaluated. The students were asked to evaluate their own presentation. Additionally, each group was judged by their peers, and by the members of their own group for quality of presentation and content. I graded them on oral as well as written components of their presentation. I gave group and individual marks. No student complained about the method of evaluation. Students were evaluated on a number of criteria by everyone in the class.

  b) **Problems.** My observations regarding collaborative work are generally positive. However, some difficulties arose that should be acknowledged. Absenteeism,
use of English in groups, research done in English, interest level, students' frustration, and passivity are some of the issues I would like to discuss.

- Absenteeism is a serious problem at the university level. Students are not obliged to attend classes. However, when working in groups, the members of the group depend on one another to advance in their work. Students tend to exchange phone numbers but, despite this, absenteeism occurs. In Chapter 6, this issue will be discussed further.

- I noticed that students spoke English when working in their respective groups. As soon as I arrived to consult with them, they would often switch to French. It was fair to assume that if they did not speak French during class, they would not speak it outside the confines of the classroom. Unfortunately, I could not determine a strategy that would change this pattern.

- Because of the subject matter the students were studying, I knew that most of the books and resources the students would use were written in English. I gave each group a folder that contained authentic material in French about their specific topic. I purposely gave them just enough material to encourage them to do some research on their own. They soon discovered useful material in encyclopaedias, history books, and tourism brochures primarily written in English. I consider this to be a problem worth resolving if my students are to be exposed to more French.

- The use of the Group Investigation technique in a 13-week course created many difficulties. I had only one class in which I could introduce the general content of the course to give the students ideas about what they might research for this project. Within one week, the students had to choose the topic of their investigation. This time proved insufficient because students made choices without knowing whether there were enough
resources available. To my surprise, the group that studied *la politique du Maroc* did not find enough material to describe the political system in Morocco and what they did find was in English. This situation caused frustration and ultimately the students lost interest in their topic.

- I observed that a few students experienced frustration while working in groups. Students felt frustrated because (1) they did not have clear objectives at the beginning of their investigation; (2) some felt that they were doing all the work; (3) meetings outside of class were not consistently attended; (4) they were learning about the content but did not feel they were improving their linguistic skills. For example, there was one student who, out of loyalty for his co-members, covered up the difficulties they were having in working together such as absenteeism, and the lack of seriousness on the part of one member. I noted in my journal that I knew that one student had taken on the responsibility and done much of the work but did not tell me. In my journal, I raised many questions. What is the instructor supposed to do in such a case? Should it affect the group grade even though the students did not reveal the truth? Should the instructor even get involved?

- During their presentation, groups expected to have the participation of their peers in raising questions after the presentation. Most of the time the rest of the class was quite passive, and did not question the presenters. This observation disturbed some group members to the point that they met with me privately to express their disapproval. Actually, student #3 (GI) even commented that she had discovered how difficult it must be for a French teacher to get students to participate.

- Students are not teachers. By asking them to present for a period of two hours, by reserving five weeks out of 13 for presentations, I was essentially asking them to teach
the course. In a course where the language of instruction is their first language, the only concern is content. However, in the case of a second-language class that uses content-based instruction, content is important but so is linguistic competence. The linguistic competency at the level of course FRSL 2512 is not adequate for some students to explain clearly and accurately some aspects of their topic. In two presentations, namely *Le rôle de la femme au Maroc* and *La religion Musulmane*, I played the role of interpreter, reformulating what the students had tried to say. I reflected that perhaps this was an unfair situation for the students presenting and for the ones listening.

5.3.4 Teaching Strategies

5.3.4.1 Teacher-controlled

As I have been using the teacher-controlled approach for many years, I felt relaxed and confident with the TC class. I was able to "ad lib" if necessary. The following story, taken from my journal, will illustrate my high level of confidence in this class. I had invited a Glendon student to speak to my group about the Islamic religion. Five minutes before class started, I was notified that the guest speaker was sick and unable to present. There was no alternative but for me to present on the subject. I admitted to my students my limited knowledge about this topic and I asked students who I knew were of the Muslim faith to help me with the presentation. One of them was quite knowledgeable about the religion in general and shared that knowledge with the rest of the class. Another was a woman who wore the traditional veil of Islamic women. She discussed this aspect of her religion from a female perspective. The third student, a woman who had converted to Islam, explained why she liked this religion. Besides these three Islamic students, another student revealed that he had lived
in an Arabic country and had learned the Arabic alphabet. He went to the blackboard and gave a demonstration by writing some letters and offering explanations.

This unanticipated experience turned into an excellent communicative class. I presented what I knew. The students compensated for what I did not know. I think that the participation of the students created a closer bond among students; two of the four student participants were reserved and shy and this experience helped them to become more relaxed and boosted their self-esteem. The students were enthusiastic about being asked to talk about themselves. The rest of the class reacted positively and asked many questions. This class lasted one hour longer than I had planned.

I was interested in and motivated by this incident. I chose authentic material and talked about my personal experiences and myself. I made a number of comments in my journal about how pleasant it was to communicate my knowledge, and share my motivation and interest with my students. As we will see in Chapter 6, the students appreciated my motivation and my "personal stories."

5.3.4.2 Group investigation

Using the group investigation technique in a second-language class at the university level was a challenge. Would the students accept this new technique? Would they benefit from it? Would they learn content as well as achieve higher linguistic competence? How would I react if some students refused to work in groups? These are some of the fears I expressed and the questions I asked when planning this course.

As mentioned above, I felt more confident using the TC approach. I had only taught once using the GI technique as part of the pilot study. I found the challenge to be positive. I found the results I obtained were fascinating. On some occasions I learned new content from
my students' presentations. I enjoyed their teaching strategies. The different roles I played in class made my experience more enjoyable.

5.3.4.3 Roles

I made comments in my reflections about the roles I assumed in the GI class compared to those in the TC class. In the former, I did not stand in front of the class giving lectures, posing and answering questions. On the contrary, I took on many different roles in the GI class. Sometimes I was the facilitator, guiding my students through their investigations. Other times I was the consultant, offering advice on the content of their presentation. As the organizer, I ensured that all pieces of my course fit together. Finally, as the research assistant, I provided some material to students. Essentially, I assumed any role that was necessary to help my students. Taking on the role of an interpreter is one example of an unexpected role an instructor might need to play.

I had to adjust my teaching strategies and the roles I played when using collaborative learning activities. It is important to note that despite all of the new roles I assumed, I remained ultimately responsible for ensuring that the students had benefited from the course. I was also still responsible for giving an objective, final grade to each student.

To carry out these duties, it was sometimes necessary to make adjustments in my thinking. The following incident is just one example of the adjustments I made. After the groups were formed and they had started their investigation, students would come to class but often only to let me know that they were going to the library to do some research, or that they would be meeting off-campus. For approximately three weeks, during which research was in progress, there were classes in which I was either by myself or with one group. I felt a loss of control over my course. I knew where my students were and what they were doing, but I was
not seeing the learning unfold. This was a different and rather frightening feeling which, when I saw the content of the presentations, now appears unjustified. This experience suggests that my students took charge of their own learning; they were as autonomous as I could expect them to be.

To conclude, I reiterate the fact that taking on different roles made my experience in the GI group richer and more interesting than in the TC group. I needed to consider my students’ personalities, wishes, ways of working, and learning styles and I respected them by not imposing my ways. It was a real learning experience for me.

5.4 SUMMARY

To conclude this chapter, I will focus on questions 1, 4 and 5 of the research questions (p.4) that apply to this chapter, answering them with my perception, as the instructor, the observer, and the researcher.

**Question 1:** Is there a difference in linguistic achievement for the Group Investigation and the Teacher-Controlled groups?

Based on my observations, I am able to comment on achievement related to content, vocabulary, and grammar.

Concerning content, my perception is that both groups learned a great deal of new content; the TC group learned some things about many topics and the GI group learned a significant amount about one area and a few things about other topics. That is, the TC group had more breadth in their learning whereas the GI group had more depth in theirs.

Regarding vocabulary, I would say that the TC students seem to have learned vocabulary in a more organized and structured way. The articles they were given to read
included new vocabulary that they studied and used to answer questions in class. On the other hand, the GI students were reading their own articles, not all of which were in French. It was therefore more difficult for me to judge the vocabulary learning of the GI students. My conclusion would be that the TC students showed that they learned more vocabulary than the GI students did.

In terms of grammar, during the course I questioned the improvement of students of both groups given the lack of grammar teaching. I found it difficult to perceive the specific improvement reported in Chapter 4.

**Question 4:** How successful was FRSL 2512 overall in the view of the instructor?

I will answer this question by summarizing the data regarding my personal views on the learning experience for both groups. Following is a review of each objective of course FRSL 2512 as described in section 1.2; and as follows:

- **Use of theme-based approach:** See comments in question 1 on content since they apply to this objective.

- **Expose students to information about Francophone communities:** By giving the students in the GI group the responsibility of researching their own topic, some of the students chose to contact the Moroccan community to obtain information by going to restaurants and even to the Moroccan Consulate. Although the TC group was less directly exposed to the Moroccan community, cultural aspects of that community were reflected in the texts selected to be studied in their class.

- **Answer needs and interests of the learners:** In the GI group, the ability to choose their own topics to research led to a higher level of motivation and resulted in strong
presentations, and positive feedback from the students on the instructional approach. In the TC group, even though I chose the topics, the students demonstrated a great deal of interest.

- **Motivate learners to develop their language competencies:** In the analysis of my personal views, I have established that in both groups the students were interested and motivated to learn about their topic. This attitude naturally led students to improve their linguistic skills because they were enthusiastic about learning new vocabulary and expressing information with proper French usage. This was exhibited during their presentations.

- **Find pedagogical approaches to remedy the problem of heterogeneity of students’ language competency:** The TC approach did not solve the problem of the heterogeneity of students’ language competency because the strategies used were no different from those employed in previous FSL courses the students had taken. On the contrary, in the GI group, students’ profiles and preferences were accommodated because each student chose the role they wished to play in their group, and because all members of the group worked together to produce their final assignment.

- **Give students tools to become autonomous learners:** In the TC group, the structure of the course did not support this goal. However, the students in the GI group were given tools to become autonomous learners and proved able to use those tools. Here I am referring to instructions given to both groups, and suggestions about research, organization, and time management.

In conclusion, the GI approach fulfilled more of the objectives set by the French Department than did the TC approach. Both groups learned considerable new content, and were motivated to learn. However, the GI students were more exposed to the Francophone
Community; they had more opportunities to fulfill their needs and interests; the GI approach proved to help students at different linguistic competency level work together and help one another; and finally, the GI students were given more tools and greater opportunities to become autonomous learners.

**Question 5:** Is the collaborative learning approach effective in FSL classes at the university level?

In my view, the collaborative learning approach is effective in FSL classes at the university level. My observations led me to conclude that the GI approach had advantages that were not seen with the TC group: positive interdependence; personal responsibility; and enhanced social, personal and collaborative skills are some of the benefits I noted in my journal.

The next chapter gives an in-depth analysis of the students' views, and their opinions and perception of their own learning in the context of course FRSL 2512.
CHAPTER 6
STUDENTS' VIEWS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the two previous chapters, the teaching approaches used in both classes have been described, the students’ linguistic achievement analyzed, and the instructor’s observations noted. Students’ opinions and their perceptions of their own learning in the class are the final aspects of this study to be considered.

Throughout the course, the GI students’ opinions were solicited to determine their perceptions of the GI technique of collaborative learning in the context of an FSL course at the university level, and to see whether they felt they had improved their linguistic skills more than in a teacher-controlled class. I ultimately used these findings to design and implement change in FSL courses in the French Department at Glendon College.

6.1.1 The Students

The students have been discussed in various sections of this thesis. In section 3.4.1.1, the students’ profile of each class was described generally based on responses obtained from the questionnaire. The preferences of the subset of 18 learners with the most marked learning preference form the basis of reporting for this chapter. Out of the 18 students selected, all
students were between the ages of 18 and 25. All but two students were females. In the whole group of students, 15 out of 18 stated that their first language was English. There were 10 students in their second year of study, 5 in third year and 3 in fourth year. All but two students took the same course last year, namely FRSL 1510. The two other students took FRSL 1520. Both of these students received a low grade in 1520 (D and C+). For the other participants, their grades in FRSL 1510 ranged from C+ to A. Table 6.1 summarizes the student numbers of those who were selected per treatment group.

Table 6.1:
Selected Students by Learning Preference; Treatment Group Retained for Qualitative Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Type</th>
<th>GI Student #</th>
<th>TC Student #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative learners</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive learners</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualist learners</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In section 6.1.2, I will describe how each instrument was coded, categorized and analyzed. SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was the statistical program chosen to analyze the quantitative data. In chapter 3 (section 3.6), the way the nine participants from each group were selected for further analysis was described based on the results of the Learning Preference Scale. Table 6.2 details the learning type of each student selected. These are the same students considered in this chapter:

*Predominantly cooperative learners:*
  Students #8, 14, and 18 from the GI group.
  Students #27, 29, and 48 from the TC group.
Predominantly competitive learners:
Students #3, 5, and 6 from the GI group
Students #33, 42, and 46 from the TC group

Predominantly individualist learners:
Students #12, 17, and 27 from the GI group
Students #34, 44, and 51 from the TC group

Learners are not usually totally of one particular learning style. As seen in my samples, each student has some collaborative, competitive, and individualist characteristics. What makes a learner type different from another is the higher score for one style over another. For example, student #8 scored in percentile 83 as a cooperative type learner, 76 as a competitive type learner, and 28 as an individualist type learner. This means that this student, according to self-report, is more of a cooperative type learner than competitive or individualist. It is interesting to note, however, that this student appears to be almost as competitive as collaborative. The difference is seen in the low percentile in his or her preference as an individualist learner.

As explained above, for the purpose of this study, from each treatment group three predominantly cooperative participants, three predominantly competitive and three individualists were considered in the data analyses concerning learning preference and achievement. The scores of students of both groups were compared. Those students were matched based on the similarity of their learning preference scores. This enabled me to compare achievement of students of similar learning preference. Table 6.2 details the scores of the selected students.
Table 6.2:  
Selected Students by Learning Preference and by Treatment Group with their Scores in Percentile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Cooperative</th>
<th>Competitive</th>
<th>Individual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TC</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>TC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Learners</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Learners</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualist Learners</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1.2 The Data

The data collection instruments relevant to this chapter are the academic and personal questionnaires, the learning preference scale, the students’ interviews and journals, and the course evaluation. Each of these instruments has been described in terms of its content, the way in which it was administered, and the way in which it was analyzed in sections 3.2.4, 3.5, and 3.6.

These instruments brought different information to this study. The Academic and Personal Questionnaire revealed each student’s profile as well as their academic background. The results of the Learning Preference Scale measured the learning styles, based on self-report of the selected students. The interviews probed the students’ opinions about their second-
language learning. The journals documented students’ more personal views on various aspects of the course. Finally, the course evaluation summarized and confirmed the students’ opinions of the experience.

Based on the data collected through the students’ interviews and journals, a qualitative analysis was performed to reflect: (1) the students’ perceptions of their own achievements; (2) the compatibility of their learning preference with the teaching approach used in their class; (3) their motivation; and (4) the students’ personal opinions on the course structure and the teaching approaches. The findings will be discussed and compared for each group (nine students per group), for the GI and the TC groups, and by learning preference groups. A separate section will be devoted to the data obtained from the course evaluation. A summary of these analyses with a focus on the objectives of the course will conclude this chapter.

6.2 ANALYSIS

6.2.1 Interviews

My research assistant interviewed the students in English for approximately 15 minutes toward the end of the course. The semi-structured interview included questions regarding the students’ perceptions of their oral and written achievement, the structure of the course, including the teaching strategies used in their particular class; their learning preference compatibility with the teaching strategies; and their motivation to learn (Appendix L).

6.2.1.1 Oral skills achievement

When asked about their achievement in oral skills, the students of the GI group provided varied responses. Some judged that their oral skills had improved (#18, TC), and
others thought that they had improved only "a bit" (#3, TC). Many more saw no improvement in their oral skills.

- "I don’t really think I improved my oral skills" (#14, TC)
- "not improved at all" (#24, TC)
- "not very much" (#17, TC)

Although some students recognized that there were opportunities to speak French within their groups, all of the above students attributed their lack of improvement to the tendency to speak English when working in groups. Student #14 (TC) stated that in her group, they spoke English "when outside of class." Student #17 (TC) echoed these sentiments: "we were in groups and we spoke English."

When students were asked more specific questions relating to their achievement in oral comprehension, most recognized an improvement which they attributed to the many opportunities throughout the course to listen to their classmates' presentations (#14 and 24, GI). Many students mentioned that they had learned a significant amount of new vocabulary related primarily to the topic they investigated (#3, 5, 12, and 24, GI). However, one student (#14, GI) questioned the relevance of these words for daily use. She said when speaking about her vocabulary improvement: "I have improved some but they were specific terms, not the kind of language I would need to speak French."

Most students of the TC group indicated, when asked, that they had improved their oral skills, their level of comprehension, and their range of vocabulary. Student #44 (TC) attributed the improvement to having been encouraged to speak a lot in class. Contrary to students #14, 17, and 24 of the GI group, student #46 thought that her oral skills had improved through activities done in groups. Students of both groups commented in the
interview that preparing for the presentations contributed to the acquisition of new vocabulary.

The divergent views between the GI and the TC students on their oral achievement will be discussed in a subsequent section.

6.2.1.2 Writing skills achievement

Students had differing opinions regarding their improvement in writing skills but students from both groups commented on the fact that writing journal entries led to improvement in their writing skills:

- "My writing improved also because of the writing of the journals." (#8, GI)
- "I think I have improved because of the journals." (#14, GI)
- "The journals helped because we had to write them in French." (#3, GI)
- "There is an opportunity to do a lot of writing ....the journals." (#27, TC)

Other students from both groups though, felt they had not progressed and associated this with the lack of grammar taught in the course:

- "I improved somewhat but not as much as if there was grammar." (#18, GI)
- "No, it didn’t improve. It got worse. We didn’t do any grammar to refresh my memory." (#24, GI)
- "Not really, we didn’t do a lot of grammar. If we had, it would have been helpful." (#44, TC)
- "Not as much because we haven’t done vocabulary and grammar." (#46, TC)
- "Need more help in verb review." (#48, TC)

Not all students made negative comments regarding the lack of formal grammar instruction. Journal comments revealed that some students were pleased at the absence of grammar:

- "I knew that the course didn’t have an emphasis on grammar so, it didn’t bother me too much." (#8, GI)
- "I like that fact that we didn’t do grammar. French has always been grammar." (#14, GI)
• "I learned a lot last year so I didn’t need it this year and I didn’t miss it." (#51, TC)

Others missed it:

• "I am worried because grammar helps me remember what I am supposed to do to improve my written French." (#24, GI)
• "I don’t like grammar but there was a need for review of tenses." (#48, TC)
• "I am happy not to have grammar but I would have benefited personally." (#42, TC)

I noted that students of both groups felt that they had improved their writing skills mostly because of the compositions and the journals they were required to write in French for the course. About half of the students in both groups seemed to be pleased not to have had formal grammar instruction because they had learned a lot the previous year, or because it was a change for them. Others were displeased because they felt they would have benefited from grammar instruction, and that they needed the review.

6.2.1.3 Content achievement

Students of both the GI and the TC groups clearly recognized the amount of new content they learned. Most students made similar comments:

• "I knew nothing about Morocco. I didn’t even know where it was in the world, let alone about culture, religions etc. I learned an incredible amount." (#12, GI)
• "Yes, we did history, culture, political, entertainment….social. I really enjoyed learning about Morocco. I wasn’t bored. It created motivation." (#44, TC)
• "I learned a fair amount. I had no clue where Morocco was. I learned a lot about the people and their culture." (#29, TC)

Not only did students recognize the fact that they had limited knowledge of Morocco prior to the course, but they made other comments such as: "It is an interesting place" (#18,
GI), "fascinating country" (#8, GI), and "It's a very interesting place, I'd like to go there some day" (#29, TC).

However, comments from students of the GI group were distinguished from TC students' comments in that they mentioned a lack of French language achievement. The following are two examples:

- "I learned a lot of history but not French." (#17, GI)
- "I learned more about Morocco and the culture but not French really." (#14, GI)

These comments reveal students' opinions concerning the Group Investigation technique. Obviously, some GI students did not believe that they were learning language through content.

6.2.1.4 Structure of the course

This section is divided into three parts: (1) general opinions on the structure of the course, (2) opinions on the content-based instruction, and (3) specific comments about group work. Both the GI and the TC students expressed satisfaction related to the structure of the course in general. Positive comments were made by students from both groups.

- "This class is different from what I am used to. To me classes are very structured with questions, grammar etc.... This class is very open, very free like." (#8, GI)
- "I really like the structure of the course. It is a nice change from any other course taken." (#12, GI)
- "The methodology was good. I liked the idea of the presentation. It helped me learn content." (#29, TC)

In general, the comments on course structure were positive. The students liked the organization of the course, presentations, the content-based learning approach, group work, and reading the articles.
The comments related to the content-based instruction revealed that many students of both groups realized that they were learning the language through content and expressed their satisfaction:

- "I liked the way it was set up. Learn about something. For this type of course, content-based group work is good." (#8, GI)
- "I like the fact that you are still learning French but in a different way. It's more like a course." (#27, TC)
- "This was like the whole language concept. The professor is having us read, write, speak, learning through doing a lot about language." (#48, TC)

In terms of group work, the GI students were generally positive. Some were skeptical at first, but, in the end felt that it turned out for the best (#5, GI). Most students felt that the group design was a worthwhile experience and listed many advantages to this method. Among them were:

- "I was friends outside of class with the rest of the group.... I knew they'd come through for me." (#12, GI)
- "It turned out for the better, we became friends." (#5, GI)
- "Working in groups helped me learn because we are 4 to research the work which was divided into topics. If I had worked alone, I would have picked only one topic." (#24, GI)

Some disadvantages were also reported:

- "I thought I would enjoy group work but it is difficult at that university because students have established a working style that suits their needs." (#14, GI)
- "We got irritated with each other." (#5, GI)
- "Some students were more serious than others. Some wanted to do the work, others no. That was the downfall of the group work." (#3, GI)

Another disadvantage mentioned by a few students was the difficulty in organizing meetings outside of class time. Student #14 (GI) said it clearly:

- "Students have different commitments outside school. Everyone lives far away.... It is difficult to meet outside class... it was difficult to arrange meetings."
Many students discussed and complained about the lack of use of French while working in groups. Seven of the nine GI students (#3, 5, 8, 14, 17, 18, and 24, GI) mentioned the fact that English was spoken in the group when the instructor was not present, however, only one TC student (#48) spoke of this. I attribute this to the fact that group work done in the TC group was an organized activity done in class, with clear objectives and a specific amount of time to complete the activity, and teacher supervision.

As group work was not the main component of the TC group, not all students of the group elaborated on the topic. The students who commented on this aspect thought that group work had advantages.

- "It lets you see other people’s opinions on things, things you had not thought of." (#33, TC)
- "Group work helps you be more independent." (#42, TC)

Only one negative comment surfaced: that students didn’t know what they were supposed to do in a group (#48, TC).

6.2.1.5 Other skills

As already established in section 2.3.1, collaborative learning research shows that collaborative activities can help students to improve skills other than linguistic skills. In their personal comments, students of the GI group recalled how they felt while working in groups. For the purpose of this study, I have combined these comments in three categories: personal and social skills, study skills, and collaborative skills. The following are some of the comments made by students concerning these skills:

**Personal and Social:**

- "I became more considerate of others." (#5, GI)
- "I learned how to communicate in a correct manner." (#3, GI)
- "I got to know other people." (#5, GI)
- "I learned survival skills." (#14, GI)
Study: "I learned research skills." (#12, GI)

Collaborative: "I learned how to work in groups." (?)

These comments support the claims made in the research literature regarding potential advantages of collaborative learning (section 2.3). Most of the research has been conducted at the primary and secondary levels. There is evidence that one can expect similar outcomes at the university level, in appropriately structured settings.

6.2.1.6 Perception of their own learning style and compatibility

Students were aware of how they learned best. For example, student #24 of the GI group said: "Individually, I can do work well at my own pace and own schedule. In groups, I learn more and can concentrate more in chosen areas." The Learning Preference Scale score for that student was 24 collaborative, 33 competitive and 49 individualist (percentile rating). These numbers show that this student is somewhat more individualist than competitive or collaborative but still has tendencies in the three categories. Most students' perceptions matched their Learning Preference scores.

From the TC group, student #29 said that she learned "more in groups because others could help if you do not know something." This student scored a percentile of 83 as a collaborative learner on the Learning Preference Scale. Student #51 (TC) claimed that working alone is what is best for her. This student scored a percentile of 95 as an individualist learner on the Learning Preference Scale. Because students were of all types of Learning Preference, their comments related to this issue focussed on the compatibility of the teaching approach with their learning preference.
When asked about the compatibility of the teaching approach and their learning preference, some students gave straightforward and clear answers such as "yes" (#5, GI) or "no, I am an individualistic worker" (#17, GI). For others, such as student #3 of the GI group, it was not as clear because she "likes the taste of both worlds, traditional and collaborative." In the GI group, the individualist students recognized that the way the course was organized was not compatible with their learning style but most of the time made the effort to do the best they could under the circumstances. Most TC students answered "yes" to compatibility even though their learning styles varied. My explanation for this finding is that, in the TC class, teaching strategies varied from teacher-centered activities to group work, so that most students were compatible with one or another activity.

6.2.1.7 Motivation

Questions related to motivation produced a variety of responses in both groups. Some students admitted to being motivated by marks (#14, GI), many by subject or content (i.e., #8, GI; #44 and #51, TC), and others by the high quality of their peers' presentations (#12, GI) which inspired them to work harder to create a comparable presentation. Doing one's own research was motivating for one student (#17, GI). However, some students admitted to a lack of motivation "because the other course load was heavy. This course wasn't a priority" (#33, TC).

At the university level, attendance is generally not compulsory as it is in high school. Students are not penalized if they do not attend classes. Class attendance is certainly recommended, and students who are serious, conscientious and motivated do have a strong, steady attendance record, whereas the attendance of less serious students tends to be sporadic. For this reason, when students #18 (GI) and 44 (TC) said they rarely missed any
classes, I recognized a strong sense of motivation. Of the nine students who answered the question about taking the same course again, one GI student said that he/she would not take the course again, 6 GI and 3 TC answered that if given the opportunity, they would take the course again. In my opinion, this is the best testimony of student motivation in the course.

In general, the opinions and views of both groups of students expressed satisfaction. The students in the GI group devoted a lot of their comments to group work which was the main focus of the teaching approach used in their class. They found that, in general, the experience of working in groups was positive and provided a good way to learn content and become motivated. However, they typically did not recognize linguistic improvement. More TC students were positive about the course and its structure than GI students were. Their comments focused on the learning of content because the structure of the course and the teaching approach were familiar to them. It seems that they recognized linguistic improvement more than the GI students did.

Table 6.3 summarizes the number of comments made by the students on each of the categories analyzed in the previous section. The number of comments made and the number of positive comments per treatment group, expressed as a percentage, is reported. This table gives an overview of the students' views and opinions as they were expressed during the interviews. In the next section, a similar analysis to the one in Table 6.3 is done with the journal.
Table 6.3:
Summary of Comments Made During the Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACHIEVEMENT</th>
<th>GI # students who made comments</th>
<th># students who made positive comments</th>
<th>TC # students who made comments</th>
<th># students who made positive comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral skills</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 (100%)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5 (62%)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4 (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODOLOGY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure of the course</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5 (83%)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7 (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advantages to group work</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantages</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of instructor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of French in group work</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of group</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other skills</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHING STYLE</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT'S LEARNING STYLE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3 (50%)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8 (88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTIVATION</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 (85%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Not Applicable (NA) in this case because the comments the students made are statements more than positive or negative comments.

6.2.2 Journals

The students in both groups were asked to write a journal entry once every two weeks for a total of six journals per student. Journals were written in French and constituted 10% of the students’ final grade.
Not all students handed in the 6 journal entries. The following is a table (6.4) of the number of entries that were completed per treatment group.

Table 6.4:
Number of Journals Completed by Treatment Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Journals Completed</th>
<th>Number of GI students</th>
<th>Number of TC students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student #27 of the TC group seems to have misunderstood the objective of the journal writing. She wrote in her journal about many things, but not about the course; she talked about her brother, his car and other things of the sort. Her entries were not considered, so there were only 8 students analyzed from the TC group. Of the 18 students in the subsample, all but 4 handed in 6 journal entries. In the case of these 4 students, they only missed handing in one or two entries.

Whereas specific questions were posed to students in interviews, journal entries could address anything the students felt related to the course, its content, structure, organization, or the students. Although similar to the interviews in many ways, there were more personal comments expressed in journals than in the interviews, for example, names of group members were mentioned, opinions on different aspects were also expressed, such as comments about the present investigator "Je comprends Mme Lewin très bien" (#6, GI), opinions on what
happened on a specific day: "Aujourd'hui, nous avons discuté nos thèmes propres pour la présentation" (#5, GI).

Some categories mentioned in interviews were either not discussed or received only brief mention in journals, such as students’ oral and written achievement.

Using the same categories used in the interviews, the following summarizes the opinions of the students of both groups based on their journals. Since the journals were written in French, the examples will be provided in French with corrections made by me. Translations of the quotations are provided in Appendix N.

6.2.2.1 Oral and written skills achievement

The following comments are the only mention of linguistic achievement by students:

- "J'ai parlé avec beaucoup d'autres étudiants dans la classe, et nous sommes d'accord que nous n'apprenons rien, ou très peu jusqu'à maintenant." (#24, GI, p5)
- "...nous parlons en anglais, et notre français ne s'améliore pas depuis septembre." (#24, GI, p5)
- "Je pense que les présentations orales sont une bonne façon pour les étudiants d'étudier le Maroc, et, en même temps, acquérir les habiletés orales et de recherche." (#12, GI, p1)

6.2.2.2 Content

The issue of content was mentioned in the students’ journals in both groups. Content-based learning was obviously new to most students and seemed to have captured their attention. The students of both groups claimed to have enjoyed learning about Morocco, and commented repeatedly that they had known nothing about this subject at the beginning of the course. Most students made positive observations on the aspects of the topic studied—the history, the culture, the diversity, the customs, the religions, and the people of Morocco. The following comments reflect the interests of the students:
"J'ai appris beaucoup sur le Maroc, plus que ça aurait été possible si la professeure avait essayé d'enseigner tout elle-même." (#24, GI, p10)

"Deux semaines de classe sont finies. Je suis dans la classe de français 2512, le Maroc. Je pense que ce sujet est très intéressant." (#8, GI, p1)

"J'ai trouvé les discussions en classe très intéressantes et instructives. J'étais particulièrement intéressée aux sujets sur la religion et sur la femme." (#33, GI, p1)

"Je pense que la culture et la diversité de ce pays sont incroyables et j'espère que nous apprendrons plus sur les habitants du Maroc." (#29, TC, p1)

The most revealing comments on the issue of content are those of students #8 (GI), and #12 (GI) who said:

- "Je sais beaucoup de choses sur le pays du Maroc maintenant. Plus que le Canada je pense!" (p6)
- "En rétrospective, je l'ai aimé (le cours). Aussi j'ai appris beaucoup au sujet du Maroc. Quand j'ai commencé ce cours, je ne savais même pas que le Maroc était en Afrique." (p7)

6.2.2.3 Structure of the course

Throughout their journals, the students of both groups made general comments regarding the structure of the course relating how pleased they were with the course despite initial apprehension:

- "...maintenant je suis contente d'avoir choisi cette section. Je suis contente de l'horaire, du programme aussi." (#17, GI, p1)
- "La classe a écrit des questions pour chaque groupe l'autre jour. J'ai pensé que ça c'était une bonne idée." (#8, GI, p2)
- "Il y a beaucoup de liberté dans cette classe de français et j'aime ça." (#3, GI, p2)
- "Je pense que je me souviendrai plus du contenu de ce cours dans cinq ans d'ici que je me souviendrai des règles de grammaire, par exemple. Pourquoi? Parce que c'est facile de se souvenir des choses qui sont intéressantes. C'est pour ça que j'aime le format du cours." (#51, TC, p2)
- "Je trouve que c'est une bonne idée de faire plusieurs petits travaux divers, comme des compositions, des résumés de travaux fait en classe. Ces travaux qu'on remet au professeure lui indique ce qu'on a appris, et pour nous si on ne réussit pas un tel devoir, ce n'est jamais un grand échec." (#51, TC, p5)
One student in the GI group communicated negative comments on the structure of the course and another questioned the relevance of the content in one test. She stated:

- "Je n'aime pas le format de la classe. Le travail en groupes est peu réaliste." (#14, GI, p5)
- "J'avais un petit problème avec le test des présentations. C'était trop difficile et un peu injuste. Pourquoi est-ce que c'était nécessaire pour nous de connaître les cinq piliers?" (p8, GI)
- "Cette classe est une classe de français, pas de recherche, mais j'ai passé tout mon temps à faire de la recherche." (#14, GI, p4)

The last comment confirms that this student did not grasp the fact that through researching a topic, she was also learning, practicing and becoming exposed to different French language skills. Students of the GI group did not mention content-based learning. They spoke mostly about group work, their topics and their presentations.

Students of the TC group better recognized the benefits of the content-based instruction. Some students confirmed this in their journals:

- "J'ai aimé que le cours ait un sujet. Tous les cours de français que j'ai suivi c'était sur le français: les verbes, la grammaire, les temps. Mais, dans ce cours, nous avons appris les choses quand nous avons appris sur le sujet "Le Maroc." C'était très intéressant." (#48, TC, p6)
- "J'aime l'idée que le cours est basé sur quelque chose, le Maroc et pas à propos de beaucoup de choses. Il y a un but." (#44, TC, p1)

Students of the GI group devoted large sections of their journal writing to the presentations. From their comments, I concluded that despite the difficulties encountered while working in groups, they enjoyed their presentations. Even student #14 (GI), who disliked the format of the course, said in her fifth journal: "Ah! Notre présentation est finie. Je pense que le résultat final était très bon." (p8). Some students commented on the quality of the presentations of their peers.
• "Cette semaine le premier groupe a présenté: L'Islam. Ce groupe était bien organisé et ils ont présenté beaucoup d'information. Ils m'ont enseigné beaucoup de choses." (#3, GI, p4)
• "C'était le jour de la première présentation. Ils ont fait très très bien! Ils ont utilisé beaucoup d'aides visuelles. Ils étaient bien organisés." (#24, GI, p7)

Certain groups were not as clear in their presentations as others and students commented that it was difficult to understand their peers while they were presenting (#24, GI, p17).

Although the presentations were not as important in the curriculum of the course in the TC group as to the GI class, the students still devoted a significant amount of time to discussing presentations. They liked the idea of having presentations and found them interesting, informative, and a great source of learning. Many of the students made positive comments about presenting three times to the three small groups:

• "A propos des présentations, je pense qu'elles sont une bonne idée." (#51, TC, p3)
• "J'aime que nous devons faire des présentations. Je pense que c'est une bonne idée que nous allons dans les trois groupes." (#48, TC, p2)
• "Je crois que les présentations par les autres membres de la classe étaient très intéressantes. J'aime les petits groupes pour ça. Ça nous donne la chance de parler plus, et de demander plus de questions. Aussi les petits groupes créent une atmosphère relaxante qui permet aux personnes qui font les présentations d'être plus calmes." (#33, TC, p2)

However, the fact that grammar was not an integral part of the course and that it was not taught in a traditional manner affected some students in both groups, and they expressed it in their journals:

• "Le cours m'inquiète un peu parce qu'il n'a pas beaucoup de grammaire. Est-ce que nous sommes assez compétents en grammaire française?" (#17, GI, p1)
• "J'espère que nous ferons plus de grammaire..." (#6, GI, p4)
• "...mais comme tu peux voir, ma grammaire, et les choses comme ça, ont besoin d'aide. Je pense que ça aurait été mieux si il y avait eu quelques examens de grammaire spécifiques, chaque semaine." (#48, TC, p7)
• "Je suis contente avec le cours mais, je trouve que nous avons besoin de faire du travail sur la grammaire." (#44, TC, p3)
6.2.2.4 Group work

The students of the GI group repeatedly mentioned group work in their journals. Their comments were often related to the other members of the group, irrespective of whether they liked them or not, and whether they were working well together or not (i.e., #5, #6, and #8, GI). Issues such as the difficulties of meeting outside of class time (#6 and #18, GI), the frustration from others making a minimal contribution (#8, #24, GI) and the fact that English was spoken in groups when the instructor was not present (#5, #6, GI) were often the basis of their discussions. Many students expressed frustration, but some students recognized some of the other skills to be developed when put in a collaborative situation. For example, student #3 said: "Cette situation m'a enseigné: Il y a des personnes qui sont paresseuses et des personnes qui sont perfectionnistes. On doit traiter les problèmes au lieu de se battre parce que, c'est la vie!" (p. 5).

Although group work occupied a small portion of the classes in the TC group, students discussed it in their journals. Opinions were divided. Some felt that group work was good for pronunciation and vocabulary (#34, TC), as it allowed more opportunities to speak and pose questions, and created a relaxed atmosphere (#33, TC and #48, TC). Others felt that it was a "waste of time" because it was difficult to understand a text using a group approach (#51, TC and #46, TC).

6.2.2.5 Learning styles

Inadvertently, the students revealed their learning style in their journal entries. This observation is common to both groups.

- "Je suis un peu frustrée. J'ai trouvé que je préfère le travail individuel et pas le travail en groupes." (#14, GI, p2)
- "Je trouve que le travail en groupes est une perte de temps." (#51, TC, p4).
6.2.2.6 Motivation

The issue of motivation was expressed more explicitly in the journal than in the interviews. It seems that students in GI were motivated by:

- "J'aime travailler dans des groupes" (#3, GI, p3)
- "Honnêtement, quand j’appris que la plupart du travail allait être fait en groupe, je n’étais pas très contente; pour moi, j’ai toujours préféré travailler indépendamment." (#24, GI, p1)

However, no comments were made related to the compatibility of students’ learning preferences with the teaching approach used in their respective classes.

As can be observed, not all students found the GI experience compatible with their learning style. However, at the end of the course, some students of the GI group claimed that they had benefited from group work even though they were individualist learners. For example, student #24 (GI) wrote in the first journal:

- "Honnêtement, quand j’ai appris que la plupart du travail allait être fait en groupe, je n’étais pas très contente. Pour moi, j’ai toujours préféré travailler indépendamment alors j’ai eu des réserves. Mais maintenant que j’ai mon sujet, le Judaïsme (un sujet qui m’intéresse beaucoup), et que j’ai rencontré les membres de mon groupe je suis curieuse de voir ce qui se passera. Après notre première rencontre, nous avons déjà discuté comment nous allons faire une présentation très intéressante et créative."

In the second journal, she wrote:

- "Nous travaillons bien ensemble."

Finally in her last journal, she wrote:

- "J’ai appris beaucoup sur le Maroc, plus qu’il aurait été possible si la professeure avait essayé d’enseigner tout elle-même."

This is, in my view a testimony to the fact that students at the university level are able to adapt and even benefit from a teaching approach that is not compatible with their learning style.
(1) the freedom to learn:
- "Ça c'est incroyable! Nous pouvons discuter les choses qui nous intéressent. Le professeur prend la décision finale, mais nous avons la liberté de rechercher ce que nous voulons apprendre. Je pense que je vais apprendre beaucoup de nouvelles choses dans cette classe parce qu'elle ne va pas être ennuyeuse." (#3, GI, p2);

(2) the quality of the presentations:
- "Depuis mon dernier journal, j'ai vu les présentations du groupe 2 "Les Juifs du Maroc" et du groupe 3 "La politique." J'ai été très impressionnée par l'organisation et la créativité." (#12, GI, p6);

(3) the interest in content:
- "J'aime apprendre les cultures différentes et le Maroc est un pays avec beaucoup d'histoire et c'est très exotique." (#8, GI, p1)
- "Après le premier jour, j'étais convaincue que j'avais choisi un bon cours.... J'étais anxieuse d'apprendre!" (#24, GI, p1);

(4) the teaching style:
- "J'aime beaucoup l'atmosphère dans la classe. C'est très calme et aimable." (#12, GI, p1)

None of the GI students mentioned grades as a motivating factor, but the TC group differed from the GI group in that receiving good grades (#29 and #42, TC) seems to have driven some students to work hard, while others expressed their motivation to learn in the following manner:
- "Je pense que j'ai besoin de pratiquer mon français, peut être je peux parler plus fort à la maison ou quelque chose comme ça." (#29, TC, p3)
- "Mon abilité d'écrire l'information dans une classe de français n'est pas très bonne. Cela est une chose que je voudrais améliorer." (#34, TC, p5)
- "Je veux améliorer ma capacité de lire, parler et comprendre le français. Déjà pendant le cours, j'ai eu la chance de faire tout cela." (#48, TC, p1)
- "Pour moi, c'est une bonne idée de m'habituer lentement à parler aux groupes, car n'importe quel emploi nous mettra dans cette situation!" (#51, TC, p3)
The following comments are a strong testimonial of motivation:

- "J'aime beaucoup ce cours et je ne veux pas le finir." (#29, TC, p5)
- "Ce cours était intéressant et j'attends avec impatience celui du Maghreb." (#44, TC, p9)

In summary, it seems clear that the opinions of the students of both groups on the content, structure, and teaching strategies of the course were generally positive. Negative comments were usually directly related to the lack of compatibility between the students' learning style and the teaching approach. As a means of summary, I have compiled the comments the students made in their journal in Table 6.5. I have recorded per treatment group (1) the number of students that made comments in each of the categories used for analysis, (2) the number of those students that made positive comments, and (3) translated these numbers into percentages.

6.2.3 Course Evaluation

At the end of the term, students of both groups were asked to complete the course evaluation designed especially for their group. As previously described in section 3.2.4.7, the questionnaire was divided into two parts, one required circling numbers from one to five (one being the least favorable), and the second asked for written opinions from the students. In this section, I will analyze each of the parts of the questionnaire separately by summarizing the responses obtained.
Table 6.5
Summary of Comments Made in Student Journals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GI</th>
<th></th>
<th>TC</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># students who made comments</td>
<td># students who made positive comments</td>
<td># students who made comments</td>
<td># students who made positive comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACHIEVEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral skills</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 (66%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 (66%)</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 (100%)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>METHODOLOGY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure of the course</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3 (75%)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 (87%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advantages to group work</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantages</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of instructor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of French in group work</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of group</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other skills</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 (85%)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEACHING STYLE</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 (100%)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STUDENT'S LEARNING STYLE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2 (28%)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4 (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOTIVATION</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 (100%)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1These comments are negative because they describe disadvantages.

6.2.3.1 Summaries of quantitative responses

Table 6.6 summarizes the means obtained for each category, and group. The content of the questions was categorized into four sections: achievement, the course and its structure, students' motivation, and group work. There were 25 GI students and 26 TC students who filled out the questionnaire. The scale was from 1 to 5. No data from the second part of the questionnaire which consisted of open-ended questions was included in the table. From the first part, I calculated each question separately by adding the number each student gave for
each individual question and dividing the total obtained by the number of students in each group. The number obtained was then expressed as a percentage.

This table shows that:

- In terms of content achievement, the two groups held similar views. They both felt that they had become more knowledgeable about Morocco.
- The GI students' perception of their achievement was lower than the TC students' perception of it.
- The GI students perceived their achievement of social skills to be higher than the TC students did.
- Related to the teaching approach, and the structure of the course, even though the TC students did not always enjoy the articles chosen and the exercises that accompanied them, they still seemed to have liked the structure of the course more than the GI group.
- Questions related to group work were included only in the questionnaire given to the GI students. The scores varied from an average of 3.4 to 4.2 which is not exceptionally high.

In summary, the course evaluation revealed the general satisfaction of both groups. However, TC students seem to have enjoyed the structure of the course more than the GI students.
Table 6.6: Summary of Means per Group and per Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>GI (n = 25)</th>
<th>TC (n = 26)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question #</td>
<td>GI mean (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>1 (content)</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (content)</td>
<td>87.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (oral skills)</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 (written skills)</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (social skills)</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>7 (strategies)¹</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 (attendance)</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>13 (recommend)</td>
<td>74.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 (enjoyed course)</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Work</td>
<td>6 (enjoyed)</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 (work well in groups)</td>
<td>74.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 (enjoyed presentations)</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 (devoted time to presentation)</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 (enjoyed research)</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Question #7 dealt with strategies in the course evaluation for the GI group. For the TC group, question #6 did.
²Scale is 1 to 5, 5 being the most positive.

6.2.3.2 Summaries of qualitative responses

The second part of the questionnaire included four questions. The responses to these questions will be summarized separately.

a) What students liked most about the course. Students of both groups emphasized their satisfaction with the content-based instruction and more specifically with the topic, Morocco (i.e., #6 and #8, GI; #33 and #44, TC). Some students of the GI group recognized, as a positive outcome of this course, the social skills they learned from working in
groups (i.e., #5 and #14, GI). The instructor seemed to have played a crucial role in student satisfaction with the course.

b) What students liked least about the course. It was interesting to note that there were fewer comments made in response to this question than for the previous one. In general, the elements of the course that the GI students liked the least can be summarized as follows: group work took too much class time (#3, #5, #8, and #17, GI); oral skills did not improve in their perception (#14, #5, and #6, GI); it was difficult to find information in French (#14, GI); and there was not enough emphasis on grammar (#24, GI).

The comments from the TC students varied and contradicted one another. One student (#27, TC) complained that there was not enough group work in this course, and student #51 (TC) did not like the group work activities done after reading articles. Additional comment were made on the topics of compositions, and on the difficulty of some articles and tests. Aside from the complaint concerning the lack of grammar, it was difficult to find commonalties between the comments made by both groups.

c) Suggestions for improvement. The most revealing outcome of this section is the fact that the GI students suggested they would have preferred more individual and teacher-controlled activities (#3, #6, and #8, GI), and the TC students would have liked more group work (#27, #29, and #33, TC). In fact, student #3 from the GI group recommended that the course be divided evenly between group and individual work. Students of both groups would like to have participated in more class discussions (#46, TC, #5 and #8, GI) and more grammar review (#24, GI, #34, #44 and #48, TC).

d) Other comments. Only three students from the TC group provided comments in this section. Two of these comments were related to the instructor and were mentioned
above in section 6.2.3.2 a. Additional comments made by the GI students were a repetition of what had already been said regarding the enjoyable course content, lack of grammar, and the overall benefits of the course.

6.2.3.3 Discussion

The analysis of the course evaluation was revealing in that the students' answers supported the conclusions drawn in previous sections in this chapter and in Chapter 5 which dealt with the instructors' views and perceptions. Further, students made suggestions to improve the course that were similar to the instructor's: to mix both GI and the TC approaches in order to meet the needs of all students, and include more grammar instruction.

6.2.4 Conclusion

I will discuss some issues which arose in the students' interviews, journals, and course evaluations. These issues include: achievement, grammar teaching, advantages and disadvantages of group work, presentations, content-based learning and teaching style. The order in which the issues are discussed does not reflect their relative importance of the issues.

6.2.4.1 Achievement

The students from the two groups did not seem to recognize the progress they had made during the course (see section 6.2.1.2). Although they acknowledged the amount of content and vocabulary they had acquired, when asked if their oral and written skills had improved, they hesitated before answering. In my opinion, the students did not recognize their linguistic achievement because of the limited duration of the course (13 weeks); the large amount of time devoted to group work in the GI group and reading articles in the TC group;
and the new pedagogical approaches, such as the integration of content and grammar. The other possibility is that the students may have depended on the instructor’s evaluation rather than advancing their own judgement.

6.2.4.2 Teaching grammar

Although grammar is reputedly unpopular among students, they seem to relate their improvement in French to the learning of grammar. Many students from both groups revealed in the interview that they did not improve their writing skills because there was no grammar taught in the course. After an average of ten years of French studies, where grammar was at the center of the programs, students still did not seem ready to replace traditional grammar instruction with learning through context. Students seem to think that doing pattern drills is learning grammar and may be the best way to improve their written skills. It is unfortunate that there was not enough time in the course to show the students the advantages of some of the new pedagogical approaches which include the learning of grammar in context.

6.2.4.3 Group work

This discussion will focus on the GI group. At first, students had some reservations, fears, and skepticism. As the weeks passed, they experienced frustration, anxiety about their final grades, and a loss of control over their work. However, when it came time to do their presentations, it all seemed to come together, and the students were amazed at how much information they had collected and how well prepared they all were. After the presentation, they felt relieved, proud, and satisfied.

Students recognized and expressed some of the advantages of working collaboratively. In addition to the linguistic advantages, students realized how much they had learned about
how to work using this approach. They expressed the positive interdependence they felt, and mentioned the personal and social skills they had used and learned during the course. It was also obvious, based on the comments the students made after their presentations, that they had analyzed the process carefully.

Two disadvantages repeatedly mentioned by students were (1) how difficult it is for university students to meet outside of class; and (2) the fact that English was spoken when the students met. Most student groups had difficulty finding common times to meet outside of class. University students hold part time jobs in addition to taking courses and often their hours are irregular. Many students do not live close to the university campus, and students are enrolled in different classes from one another. All of these factors pose difficulties for group work at the university level.

The tendency for students to speak English when they met outside class defeats the purpose of an FSL course and renders useless the Group Investigation approach for second language learning. One student made a recommendation to remedy this difficulty: the instructor could ask the groups to tape a one- or two-hour meeting held outside of class. It is, in my opinion, an excellent pedagogical suggestion. This is a good indicator of the student’s motivation to learn French.

6.2.4.4 Presentations

The presentations were an important component of the course for both groups of students. Students in the TC group, although their presentations constituted only 5% of the final grade, still put considerable effort into them. For the GI students, the presentations were the main component of the course. The students expressed their amazement about the quality
of the presentations by their peers. They often admitted that others’ presentations were their motivation for doing well and not being embarrassed in front of the class.

6.2.4.5 Content-based learning

If there is an aspect of the course about which there was no controversy, it is that content-based learning was motivating, interesting and captivating for the students of both groups, regardless of learning preference or the teaching approach.

6.2.4.6 Teaching style

The instructor’s teaching style seems to have played an important role in the students’ views of the course. Indeed, the instructor is instrumental in establishing the ambience of the class. Students said that the class was relaxed, there was a good atmosphere, they felt comfortable, and they liked the personal stories told by the instructor. Given that the same instructor taught both groups, her influence cannot explain the differences of outcome or achievement between the groups.

6.3 CONCLUSION

In the following, I will review answers for questions 3, 4, and 5, of the research questions presented in section 1.2.

Question 3: Are there differences in student perceptions of their own achievement according to (1) group (GI versus TC) and (2) learner’s type?

Based on the data presented in this chapter, I would conclude that students of the GI group perceive themselves as not having improved their oral and written skills. The TC
students seemed to perceive their achievement in more positive terms. Both groups perceived high achievement in terms of learning content.

In terms of the students' learning preference, the conclusion I would put forth is that in the TC group the students felt that their learning style was more compatible with the teaching approach than did the GI group. A number of GI students made comments about not liking to work in groups. Nevertheless, at the end of the course, they said that they benefitted from the course and from working in groups.

To conclude, the TC group had a more positive perception of their achievement compared to the GI group and they felt that their learning style was more compatible than the GI students felt in their group.

**Question 4:** How successful was FRSL 2512 overall in the view of the students?

Each objective of course FRSL 2512 as described in section 1.2 is discussed using the data presented in this chapter.

- **Use of theme-based approach:** Students of both groups expressed their satisfaction with the theme-based nature of this course. It was new to most of them. Nevertheless, they found the concept to be absorbing.

- **Answer needs and interest of the learners:** Students of both groups discussed how interested they were in the topic of the course. The GI students were happy to have been able to choose their own topic for their presentation and the TC students often mentioned how interesting the articles were. Although some students expressed that some of their needs were not met, for example: lack of grammar review, insufficient vocabulary development (#34, TC), and insufficient whole-class activities, in general, they felt positive
about the course. Based on the statistical analysis of their linguistic achievement, it appears that students' perception of their improvement does not reflect the progress they actually made.

- **Motivate learners to develop their language competencies:** Some students clearly stated their motivation to learn the language. Others expressed their motivation in different ways, by aiming to make a very good presentation, and by complaining that French was not spoken enough in group work. The fact that some students made suggestions for improvement is testimony that this objective was met for some students.

- **Expose students to information about Francophone communities:** All students from both groups were surprised by the fact that Moroccans speak French. They were even more surprised to discover that there was a large Moroccan community in Toronto. Finally, a few students from both groups, who either interviewed a Moroccan, visited a Moroccan restaurant, or obtained information from the Moroccan Embassy, were exposed directly or indirectly to Moroccan community members and they expressed their satisfaction with this experience.

- **Find pedagogical approaches to remedy the problem of heterogeneity of students' language competency:** Only a few students recognized that the pedagogical approaches of group work and collaborative learning were used to deal with heterogeneity of the students' language competency.

- **Give students tools to become autonomous learners:** Students of the GI group often wrote about what they had done to accomplish their work. The fact that they reflected on the process of the work they did indicates that the students were becoming autonomous learners. Comments of the students in the TC group did not reflect this aspect of learning.
In this chapter, it has been shown that except for linguistic achievement and heterogeneity of student's language competency, students felt that the objectives of this course were met.

**Question 5:** Is the collaborative learning approach effective in these French as a Second Language (FSL) classes at the university level?

The answer to this question was discussed in depth in this Chapter. In the interviews, journals and course evaluation, the GI students expressed their satisfaction with the use of the GI technique. Even though they had doubts at the beginning of the course, they seem to have recognized the advantages and benefits of such an approach. Many students did not feel they improved their written or oral skills. Chapter 4 proves them mistaken. On the other hand, they recognize that they learned a lot of content, a great deal of vocabulary, and they enjoyed and learned from the presentations.

The following chapter will summarize the findings and discuss the pedagogical and research implications the findings of this study have on the teaching of French as a Second Language at the university level. It will also discuss the contributions it makes to second-language acquisition and to second-language pedagogy.
CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part summarizes the results according to data sources, and the second part is a discussion of selected issues.

7.2 SUMMARY

This section deals with the summary of findings by data source: (1) linguistic tests, (2) observation data from the Instructor, and (3) student data. The second part will deal with summaries of four issues (1) methods-triangulation, (2) collaborative learning and group work, (3) learning preference, and (4) achievement and second language acquisition.

7.2.1 Summary by Data Source

7.2.1.1 Linguistic Tests

In Chapter 4, the students' linguistic achievement based on data from the linguistic tests was analyzed; conclusions were as follows:
The frequency analysis revealed that when yes-no and wh-questions are combined, students of both groups favored the use of est-ce que and inverted questions in both the oral and the written questions produced. When yes-no questions are considered separately, students of both groups tend to favor the use of Est-ce que questions in both the oral and written mode, and when wh-questions are considered separately, students of both groups tend to favor the use of simple inversion type questions in both the oral and written mode.

In their use of oral French interrogatives, both groups improved significantly in their accurate use of yes-no and wh-questions combined, and in their use of yes-no questions. Neither of the two groups showed a significant gain in their accurate use of wh-questions. As for the use of written interrogatives, only the TC group showed a significant gain in their accurate use of yes-no and wh-questions combined and in their accurate use of yes-no questions. There was no significant difference between the groups in their accurate use of either oral or written questions.

When learning preferences were taken into consideration, the analyses did not reveal evidence of relationships between students' achievement and their learning preference in the context of the course they were enrolled in.

7.2.1.2 Observation data from the instructor

Chapter 5 was based on observation data from the instructor: her taped journal, her perception of the students' linguistic achievement, their learning style compatibility with the teaching approach used in their class. Chapter 5 also discussed the benefits of using the Collaborative Learning approach in FSL classes at the university level.

As the instructor, I made the following summary observations:

- Both groups learned a great deal of new content; however, I would add that the TC group had more breadth in their learning whereas the GI group had more depth.

- The TC students seem to have learned vocabulary in a more organized and structured way. The articles they were given to read included new vocabulary that they had to study and use to answer questions in class. However, the GI students were reading articles of their choice, and not always in French. It was difficult to judge the extent of their vocabulary learning as clearly as with the TC students. My conclusion was that the TC students showed that they learned more vocabulary than the GI students did.

- Because there was no formal grammar instruction, the students were not given any grammar tests other than the pre and post linguistic tests that were designed for the
present study. For this reason, I found it difficult to measure the students' improvement as it was found and described in Chapter 4.

- After reviewing each objective of course FRSL 2512, as described in section 1.2, I concluded that the GI approach showed evidence of having fulfilled more of the objectives set by the French Department than the TC approach.

- Although both groups learned considerable new content, and were motivated to learn,
  - the GI students were more exposed to the Francophone community;
  - they had more opportunities to fulfill their needs and interests;
  - the GI approach encouraged students to work together and help one another;
  - the GI students were given more tools and greater opportunities to become autonomous learners.

The collaborative learning approach showed evidence of being effective in FSL classes at the university level. Students developed nonlinguistic skills such as positive interdependence, personal responsibility, as well as social, personal, and collaborative skills.

7.2.1.3 Student Data

Chapter 6 was based on student data: interviews, journals, and course evaluations; their perceptions of their own learning, the compatibility of their learning style with the teaching approach used in their class, and their views on other aspects such as the teaching approach, benefits of collaborative learning, and structure of the course.

My conclusions were as follows:

- Students of the GI group perceived themselves as not having achieved higher competence in written and oral skills at the end of the course. The TC students had a more positive perception of their achievement.

- Both groups said that their content learning was very high.

- More students of the TC group felt that their learning style was compatible with the teaching approach than did the GI students.
Concerning the objectives of the course,

- students of both groups expressed their satisfaction with the theme-based nature of this course.

- students of both groups discussed in the journals and interviews how interested they were in the topic of the course. The GI students were happy to have been able to choose their own topic for their presentation, and the TC students often mentioned how interesting the articles were.

Although some students stated that some of their needs were not met including grammar review, vocabulary development (#34, TC), and work as a whole class, in general, they still felt positive about the course. Based on the statistical analysis of their linguistic achievement, it appears that students' perception of their improvement does not reflect the progress they actually made.

- Some students clearly stated their motivation to learn the language. Others expressed their motivation in different ways, by aiming to make a very good presentation, and by complaining that French was not spoken enough in group work. The fact that some students made suggestions for improvement is testimony that this objective was met for some students.

- All students from both groups were exposed directly or indirectly to Moroccan community members and expressed their satisfaction with this experience.

- Only a few students recognized that the pedagogical approaches of group work and collaborative learning were used to address the heterogeneity of the students' language competency.

- Students of the GI group often wrote about what they had done to accomplish their work. The fact that they reflected on the process of the work they had to do shows a tendency toward becoming autonomous learners. Comments of the students in the TC group did not reflect this aspect.

In the interviews, in the journals, and in the course evaluation, the GI students expressed their satisfaction with the use of the GI technique. Even though they had doubts at
the beginning of the course, they appear to have recognized the advantages and the benefits of such an approach.

In the following section of this chapter, I will discuss selected issues.

7.3 SELECTED ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

I will discuss my findings under four main topic areas: (1) methods-triangulation, (2) collaborative learning and group work, (3) learning preference, and (4) achievement and second language acquisition.

7.3.1 Methods - Triangulation

It had been determined early in designing my research that multiple-instrument sources of data were going to be used, and that it was desirable to do so in case studies such as the present one in order to arrive at the same results (hopefully) by at least three different independent approaches (Johnson, 1992).

It appears to have been fruitful to use qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data because otherwise I would have had incomplete findings, and I would have doubted the results found. I may have relied on what the students felt, what the students said, what the students’ impressions were, or even on my observations. Johnson (1992) cites Goetz and LeCompte (1984) regarding this issues when she says that triangulation “helps correct for observer biases, and it enhances the development of valid constructs during the study (p.90).

An instance in the present study occurred that illustrates the necessity of triangulation. When the students of both groups were interviewed and asked to comment on their perception as to whether they had improved their oral and written skills during this course, most students
replied that they felt they hadn't improved and explained why. Had I only used this data source, I would have concluded that the students did not improve their oral and written skills. However, I used an instrument, the linguistic tests, to measure and quantify the oral and written achievement. The results of the linguistic tests revealed different results than the ones obtained from the students' interviews. For example, according to the quantitative data obtained, the students of both groups showed a significant linguistic gain in their accurate use of yes-no and wh-questions in their use of oral French interrogatives. This example showed that the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in this case study proved complementary and necessary, as argued by, for example Sherman (1988), Eisner and Peshkin (1990), and Salomon (1991).

There were many other examples where triangulation proved fruitful in this case study. For example, from the interviews, the journals, the instructors' account similar findings were recorded regarding motivation, benefits of CL, learner's compatibility with teaching approaches, benefits of content-based instruction, and advantages of group work. Such findings appear to corroborate one another.

7.3.2 Collaborative Learning and Group Work

One of my research questions is whether the use of the collaborative learning approach is effective with regard to gaining proficiency in French in a French as a Second Language class at the university level. The literature on collaborative learning, as discussed in Chapter 2 of this study (section 2.3) includes reports of benefits of using collaborative learning at the elementary school level, some of which are as follows: (1) the development of positive interdependence (e.g., Gagné, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1988; Slavin, 1990), (2) personal
accountability (e.g., Slavin, 1990), and (3) the acquisition of social, personal and collaborative skills (e.g., Sharan & Sharan, 1992; Stenvahn, Bennett and Rolheiser, 1995)). In this section, I will discuss whether these benefits were evident in the present study at the university level.

In Chapter 5 (section 5.3.3.3) in my personal account, I observed that the students of the GI group had developed what is referred to as positive interdependence in the sense that students depended on each other in the groups to accomplish the final task which was a presentation. Students themselves recognized this phenomenon and expressed it in their journals and in the interviews by saying that they had worked better and more seriously not to disappoint the other members of the group. This finding confirms what previous investigators had found; positive interdependence was crucial for the success of the group because students use one another’s expertise to complete work on time and as well as possible (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 1988; Slavin, 1990).

It was also found in this present study that students developed individual accountability. The GI students had, not only to present with the group but they were also graded for their individual contribution. This situation made them feel accountable for their own work and accomplishment. This finding is consistent with Slavin’s (1990) who found that individual accountability remains important because students have to show the knowledge they have acquired to earn good grades.

The third category of skills students acquired is the social, personal and collaborative skills. As Bejarano (1987) claimed, activities done in groups encourage students to interact among themselves. In the case of this study, the students of the GI group interacted throughout the course, while investigating their topic. They had to plan the investigation, research it, plan the oral presentation, and plan the written assignment that accompanied the
presentation. This interaction that occurred in the groups was recognized by the students and by the instructor and is consistent with the findings of Sharan (1990) and Sharan and Sharan (1989-1990). Even though the interaction in this study often happened in the students' first language, the students still developed social, personal and collaborative skills for having to deal with each other, solve problems within the group, and organize and present together.

The GI approach to cooperative learning has been reported to affect student achievement, motivation to learn, and social relations (Sharan & Shaulov, 1998). As discussed in Chapter 6, through the interviews, the journals, and the course evaluation, the students of both groups reported being motivated in this course.

Johnson and Johnson (1985), Sharan and Sharan (1990) and Slavin (1990) are among the researchers who have dealt with the issue of motivation and the collaborative learning approach. They found evidence for their samples of students that the use of collaborative learning enhances motivation to learn. In the present study, the students of the GI group expressed their motivation in different ways; they seem to have been motivated by marks, they were motivated to do as well or better than others in the class, some were motivated because they were given the choice to investigate a topic they were personally interested in (see Chapter 6, section 6.2.1.7). Still others were motivated by the content of the course. Although research in collaborative learning suggests that when put in group situations, students are more motivated to learn (i.e., Sharan & Shashar, 1988), in this study, GI students did not report specifically, in their journals nor in the interviews, on their motivation to improve their French.

In reviewing the TC journals and the interviews related to motivation, I discovered similar comments to those of the GI students related to grades, presentations, content, and
teaching style. As contrasted to the GI students, the TC students made comments in their journals relating to their motivation to learn French, wanting to improve their French skills.

The fact that the GI students did not comment on their motivation to learn French could be due to the fact that for most of them, the CL approach was a new experience. It is possible that they were more preoccupied with the content, the investigation, and the presentation than they were with their learning of French. However, TC students, who received a teaching treatment they were familiar with, were more concerned and aware of their language learning, as students in second language classes usually are.

Judging by the statements made about motivation, students of both groups showed evidence of being motivated. The aspect that has motivated them the most appears to be the content of the course. Although researchers claim that the GI approach enhances motivation (Sharan & Sharan, 1992), the present study found no evidence that the GI students were more motivated than the TC students were.

Based on both my observations and the students' views, I conclude that collaborative learning appears to have provided a positive learning environment for this FSL class at the university level.

7.3.3 Learning Preference

On the Learning Preference Scales (Owens & Barnes, 1982), the present participants did not always show predominant preference for one specific type of learning (see section 3.6.1.1). Some students exhibited complex or combined modes of the three preferences: collaborative, competitive and individualist. Thus in the TC class, in which varied activities are done in class—answering questions in a whole-class context, doing work in small groups,
preparing a presentation individually—it appears that each student probably tended to find one activity or another that corresponded to his or her learning preference.

According to Owens (1980), an important variable in the effectiveness of learning is the preference of the student for a mode of learning. Based on the findings already summarized, I conclude that because university level students are able to adapt, they apparently benefit from different teaching approaches not necessarily designed primarily to cater to a specific learning preference. Since no evidence was found for a determinative role of learning preference in the present circumstances, I suggest that it is probably inappropriate for an instructor to plan a course solely based on one teaching approach as was done in this study with the GI group. Rather, a second language course should include a variety of activities and strategies, taken from different approaches, to suit all types of learners.

As noted in section 2.5.2 of this thesis Okebukola (1986) conducted a study using Barnes and Owen’s (1982) Learning Preference Scale, exposing two science classes at the elementary level to two different approaches, including Group Investigation and Teacher-Fronted. He found that there was a relationship between achievement, the learning style of the students, and the teaching approach used in their classroom. The present study, however, despite similarity in research design, in fact found no evidence of a relationship between learning preference, achievement and teaching approach. The difference in findings between the two studies may be attributed to the difference in age group: In Nigeria, the students were elementary students, compared to participants in this study who were at the university level. The difference in findings could also be due to the difference of subject matter: science versus a second language. Also, the small number of students considered in my study makes any conclusion drawn tentative at best.
Sherman (1988) who also examined academic achievement in individualistic, competitive and cooperative type students in two high-school biology classrooms using the Group Investigation technique reported similar findings to those of this present study. The conclusions of Sherman’s study and the present study indicate that both pedagogical strategies have positive effects on academic achievement. Such similarities may be explained by the fact that the students used in Sherman’s study were closer in age to those of this study. However, the subject-matter is more like that used in Okebukola’s study (1986).

Further research is needed to explicate the role of differences in settings, in subject-matter, instructional methods and age of the learners with respect to the issues of learning preference, teaching strategies and student outcomes. It should not be assumed that similar approaches will prove equally useful regardless of subject-matter; hence there is a special role for FSL research.

7.3.4 Achievement and Second Language Acquisition

It was pointed out in section 2.4.2 that student participation in small-group work facilitates second language acquisition (McGroarty, 1991; Slavin, 1990). Hence oral and written achievement were examined. According to the conclusions in Chapter 4, (section 4.4), both groups improved significantly at the end of the term compared to the beginning of the term in their use of oral interrogatives. The TC group improved significantly in their use of written yes-no and wh-questions combined and of yes-no questions. But neither group improved more than the other.

The research conducted at the elementary and secondary school level that has examined achievement in a classroom where CL techniques have been used, (e.g., Slavin,
1990, Chapter 2, section 2.3.4) concluded that the effects of collaborative learning on achievement were positive. Based on the findings of the present study (Chapter 4, section 4.4), there is some evidence that would support the same conclusion for the university level.

It was reported by GI students in the interviews and journals, and reiterated in my account in Chapter 5 (section 5.3.2.2, iv) that mostly they spoke English while working in groups. Students explained that only when working in class did they feel they had to speak French. The rest of the time, to save time, to make sure they understood each other correctly, they spoke English. Perhaps because of this, the GI students felt that they had not improved their oral skills in French. The findings of the linguistic tests revealed conflicting evidence.

A similar point could be made regarding the written achievement. It was reported in Chapter 6, in the interview data, that students of both groups who said that they did not improve their written skills during this course often cited the lack of formal grammar instruction as the reason (#18 and #24, GI; #44, #46, and #48, TC). Similar to the oral findings, objective test-result data for the written skills contradicts the TC students' perception but not the GI students' perception. The TC group improved significantly in their accurate use of written yes-no and wh- questions combined and of yes-no questions alone, but not in wh- questions alone. The TC group had more opportunities to read and write in the French class than did the GI students; they also were given more special attention and feedback on written exercises they had to do related to the articles (see section 3.4.2).

The conclusions that can be drawn from this discussion are that (1) students' perceptions of their achievement are not always correct, (2) even though students of the GI group spoke English in their groups they still improved their oral skills in French, and (3)
students of the TC group improved significantly their accurate use yes-no and wh- questions combined and of yes-no questions alone despite the fact that no formal grammar was taught.

The final chapter of this thesis is a conclusion. It will deal with the limitations of this research, the pedagogical and research implications, and will end with concluding remarks.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In this concluding chapter, I will set out the main limitations of the study; I will then discuss the pedagogical implications, followed by the research implications. I will end by making some concluding remarks with respect to the contributions this thesis might make to second language acquisition and pedagogy.

8.2 LIMITATIONS

It is now appropriate to discuss limitations with respect to the following issues: the design and suitability of action research, the length of the research, the appropriateness of the instruments; and the participants.

8.2.1 Design

Using action research to conduct my study has not been without difficulties. Being the instructor of both groups simultaneously, using two different approaches for the same content, keeping a journal, administering the instruments during class time, and planning for the two courses were some of the challenges I faced while conducting the study. There was a need for
precision and minute organization of the course, and of the data collection. Having one instructor for both courses made the results more valid because the same person observed both groups, and students were exposed to the same instructor.

Nonetheless, the present study is not immune to observational bias. Since the researcher was the instructor and data collector, I may have been biased to an unknown degree toward positive or negative results. This possibility is especially noted where there are no objective test data.

8.2.2 Length

For a study of such complexity, involving two groups, two teaching approaches, three analyses, all done by one instructor who was also the researcher turned out to be difficult in many aspects, specially with respect to the length of the study. The fact that the whole course was only 13 weeks long did not allow much flexibility within the course and with data collection, imposing on the instructor very strict deadlines with few options for change. The achievement measures were not used again in a delayed posttest. The lasting nature of gains in achievement, for all students, and in comparing groups, remains to be demonstrated.

8.2.3 Measures

Oral and written linguistic achievement was measured by testing the students on their use and knowledge of French interrogatives at the beginning and end of the course. However, measuring achievement on one grammatical point may not represent the full picture. Students claimed to have acquired, for example, considerable vocabulary in oral and written comprehension, but this aspect was not measured or analyzed.
Ideally, more than one aspect of the language should be tested for achievement. Because content-based instruction was used and because students stated that they had learned a significant amount of content and vocabulary, if this study were to be replicated, acquisition of new content and vocabulary should be included in the study design.

8.2.4 Participants

The study design was such that different numbers of participants were used for different analyses. The small number of students in the study and their location on one campus suggest caution with respect to generalization to other Canadian FSL students or students of second language, generally. Should this study be replicated, I would recommend that more students from several campuses be chosen to participate in the study in order to be able to apply statistical procedures to the learning preference data.

8.3 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In summary, if I were to teach course FRSL 2512 again, I would retain the content-based instruction using a mixture of both the TC and the CL approaches. Some teacher-centered activities with the whole class, as well as collaborative activities in groups, would be included. Oral presentations would be reduced in length. Finally, the instruction of grammar would be more elaborate and would include more review than in the original program.

The changes recommended would be difficult to apply in the course the way it is presently planned. Some limitations have become obvious. A 13-week course that uses the GI technique in connection with the TC approach would be too short. If the course had to remain at 13 weeks, in order to apply the recommendations made above, the GI technique
would have to be replaced with other collaborative activities such as the original and the expert Jigsaw (Chapter 2, section 2.3.4.1), and the two-hour presentation would have to be reduced to one hour.

All pedagogical issues raised in this section suggest a common conclusion that using the GI technique exclusively in a second-language course at the university level is likely not as satisfying to all students as using a mixture of TC and CL techniques. A combination of more than one teaching approach appears to be worth serious consideration.

8.4 RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

As mentioned, this study is a first in using the Group Investigation technique in an FSL class at the university level. This study has contributed to second-language acquisition theory and pedagogy in several ways by adding to our understanding of issues such as: (1) grammar teaching versus collaborative learning approach, (2) students' perception of their own learning, (3) integration of different teaching approaches, (4) benefits of the use of CL at the university level, and (5) student adaptation to new teaching approaches.

It would be fitting to recommend that further research be conducted in each and every aspect mentioned in the previous section. However, I have selected to elaborate on three research areas that would enhance our understanding of second language acquisition and help improve FSL courses at the university level.

1. Since I suggested the integration of the CL approach with the TC approach (section 7.2.8), this recommendation should be further tested. I therefore would suggest replicating this present study, replacing the GI approach with the GI+TC approaches as the experimental group and a TC class as the comparison group. The findings of such a
study would give further data regarding the relationship between students' learning preferences and teaching approaches.

2. The present study revealed that university students seem to be able to adapt to new teaching approaches and benefit from them (section 6.2.2.5). The individualist learners who were enrolled in the GI class expressed their discontent at the fact that they were going to have to work in groups during the whole course. Yet, at the end of the course it was established that the same students recognized their higher achievement in spite of having been exposed to a new approach that was not compatible with their learning style. This finding should be pursued further. I would propose that a qualitative study be conducted whereby two groups of students in the same class, one group composed of predominantly individualist learners, and the other group of predominantly collaborative learners, be selected as participants. Through questionnaires, interviews, journal keeping and instructor's observations, the researcher would find out how these students perceive their achievement and their adaptability to learning activities contrary to their learning preference.

3. This study is the first one to have conducted analyses of the use of different question types of French interrogatives in an FSL course at the university level (Chapter 4). There was evidence of improvement; however, in-depth analyses were not conducted. For this reason, I would recommend a long-term qualitative and quantitative research study in which a limited number of first-year students who are taking French courses are followed for the duration of their university studies. The knowledge of these students related to the use of French interrogatives would be tested at the beginning of their studies and would be repeatedly tested at the end of every year thereafter until the end of their studies.
Analyses of their acquisition of French interrogatives would be the main objective of the study.

The results of such a study would contribute further to understanding second language acquisition and would benefit the coordinators of university French programs, the instructors of FSL classes, and the textbook writers of FSL university-level courses.

8.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The use of Collaborative Learning at the university level in French as Second Language classes has not been extensively researched. This study, although a case study, which does not allow generalizations furthers understanding of aspects of second language pedagogy and second language acquisition. Much remains to be done.

One of the reasons action research was used in the classroom was to narrow the gap that exists between theory and practice. This study, it is hoped, will narrow the gap in that its findings regarding achievement and formal grammar instruction, the use of a mixture of teaching strategies, the benefits of collaborative learning at the university level in FSL classes, help on the one hand, to further understand second language acquisition, and on the other hand, to allow change in French as a Second Language classes in universities.

The use of content-based instruction at the university level has been frequently researched, however, the CL approach in a content-based instruction FSL class has not been adequately researched. Studies like the present one will bring further understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of content-based teaching and learning at the university level. This case study has discussed aspects of linguistic achievement when using content for the purpose of learning a language. Many questions have been raised regarding linguistic
achievement and the formal teaching of grammar, and definite answers to them will depend on future research.

Research done at the primary and secondary levels has demonstrated positive outcomes with respect to the use of CL in FSL classes. The present study has allowed the evaluation of outcomes when using the CL approach at the university level. These outcomes include, among others, positive interdependence, personal accountability, social, personal and collaborative skills and show that university level students can also benefit from these outcomes when exposed to CL approaches.

Post-secondary education has changed in the last decade. Students expect and demand that university programs prepare them for productive professional lives; they look for programs with clear applications to jobs in their areas of interest, programs that will teach them a variety of skills required. Universities, aware of the changing needs of the students, want to maintain programs that stimulate the intellectual growth needed, but simultaneously prepare their students for the new requirements of society in the information age. To match the requirements of society, future citizens need first, to develop personal, social, and collaborative skills. Second, all persons need to acquire higher degrees of autonomy in their learning. This study has opened discussion about using Collaborative learning techniques in the university classroom; it has begun investigation into ways to teach students the skills they need: to learn collaboratively, and function autonomously. As such courses and programs are further developed, the university will be better able to help its students become life-long learners as well as productive citizens, the ultimate goals of education.
REFERENCES


York University Calendar. (1993-1994). Undergraduate programmes (Glendon College Section).
APPENDIX A

PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

1. Name ______________________________ 2. Date ______
3. Age Group 18-25 ____ 26-35 ____ over 35 ____
4. Male ____ Female ______
5. Mother tongue __________________________

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Please answer the following questions. We urge you to be accurate as the success of the research depends on it.

6. What year University are you? ______________
7. How many French courses have you taken at Glendon? Which ones?

8. Which French course(s) did you take last year? What grade did you get?

9. How many years of French did you take before you came to university?

10. Did you attend an Immersion School? If yes, give details about how long and which grades.

11. For what reason(s) did you enrol in course 2512? You may check more than one.

* Personal interest ________
* Pre-requisite for graduation ________
* other (explain) __________________
12. For what reason(s) did you enrol in this section? You may check more than one.

* Interest in the topic
* Time-tabling
* The professor
* other (explain)

13. Are you taking other French courses this year? Which one(s)? For what reason?

14. Do you intend to take other French courses next year? Explain.

15. Is there any additional information you may want to elaborate regarding your personal or academic background?

USE OF FRENCH OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Please answer the following questions. Details will be greatly appreciated.

16. Have you ever lived in or visited a place where French was the language used for everyday activities? Explain.

17. Elaborate on how often you use French in the following situations:

AT HOME: never occasionally often every day

Explain

AT GLEN Don: never occasionally often every day

Explain:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AT WORK:</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>occasionally</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>every day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explain:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHER: (television, radio, newspaper, theatre, movie, friends, in the car etc......)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHER COMMENTS:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEARNING PREFERENCE SCALE

University students' form

Jennifer Barnes/ Lee Owens/ Ann Rotter
Department of Education
University of Sydney
1980

DIRECTIONS

If the statement is clearly true for you, darken the circle at the true end of the answer line. It is clearly false for you, darken the circle at the false end of the answer line. It's a bit more true than false ("sort of true"), darken the inner circle at the true end; if it's a bit more false than true, darken the "sort of false" circle. For a number of statements it may be possible to say "well, it all depends". Please push yourself past that reaction to a generalization that seems true for you most of the time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like people to know that my part of a job has been well done.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Working in group leads to a poor result.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A lecturer or tutor can help most by working with students in groups.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I prefer to work by myself so I can go as fast as I like.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is helpful to put together everyone's ideas when making a decision.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When a group or class needs something important done, I can help most by working it out on my own.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Working in a group daunts me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I do not like working by myself.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I would like to be the best at something.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. In a group discussion we never get on to important things.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. I like to work in a group at university.

12. I like to be able to use the ideas of other people as well as my own.

13. If I work by myself most of the time, I become lonely and unhappy.

14. We get the work done faster if we all work together.

15. I do better work by myself.

16. I like to help other people do well in a group.

17. I learn faster if I'm trying to do better than the others.

18. I do not mind if I get the lowest marks.

19. If I work by myself now I will manage better later.

20. I work badly when I know I have to do it all by myself.

21. Other people do well when they try to be better than I am.

22. I like my work best if I do it by myself without anyone's help.

23. Other students don't need to know what I do at university.

24. A lecturer or tutor can help most by seeing which students are doing better than others.

25. Working in a group now helps me work with other people later.

26. Trying to be better than others makes me work well.

27. I like to keep my ideas to myself.

28. A lecturer or tutor can help most by choosing work that is right for each student.

29. I like to try to be better than other students.

30. Other students like to help me learn.
31. I like to work on my own without paying attention to other people.
32. My work is not so good when I'm thinking mostly about doing better than other people.
33. Students like to see who is best and who is worst in exams at university.
34. I do not like always trying to be better than someone else.
35. I do not like working with other people.
36. Trying to be better than others in university work helps me be successful later.
Aventure au Canada
Mon pays

Le Canada est le deuxième plus grand pays du monde. Il est divisé en dix provinces et deux territoires.

"l'édital" indique que c'est le gouvernement de la fédération des provinces et des territoires. Cette fédération forme le pays du Canada.

Moi, je suis énorme!

le drapeau canadien
APPENDIX C2
POSTTEST ORAL

Les pays du Maghreb

Océan Atlantique

ALGÉRIE

TUNISIE

MAROC

Capitale : Alger
Superficie : 2381741 km²

Capitale : Rabat
Superficie : 710850 km²

TUNISIE

Capitale : Tunis
Superficie : 164150 km²
Un(e) de vos ami(e)s veut venir au Canada. Il/elle vous demande de vous renseigner auprès d'une agence de voyage pour obtenir le plus de renseignements possibles concernant les endroits à voir, les villes à visiter, les hôtels disponibles, les prix etc.....

Avant de téléphoner, préparez une liste de toutes les questions auxquelles vous pensez.
POST-TEST

I Un(e) de vos ami(e)s a l'intention d'aller au Maroc. Comme vous avez suivi un cours sur le Maroc, il/elle vous demande de vous renseigner auprès d'une agence de voyage pour obtenir le plus de renseignements possibles concernant les endroits à voir, les villes à visiter, les hôtels disponibles, les prix etc....

Avant de téléphoner, préparez une liste de toutes les questions auxquelles vous pensez.
APPENDIX D
STUDENTS' JOURNALS

Instructions given in class during the first week:

Journals:

➢ Will be written once every 2 weeks, for a total of 6 entries.
➢ Will be written in French.
➢ Will be read by the instructor only once final grades have been handed in.
➢ Will be about one page long per entry.
➢ Will count for 10% of the final grade.
➢ The content will include personal views, opinions, and observations about:
  ➢ The course structure,
  ➢ The course's content,
  ➢ The methodology used,
  ➢ The professor,
  ➢ The students' own learning
➢ Will be gathered every two weeks by a student-volunteer and will be kept in an envelope until it is time to hand them in to the instructor.
COURSE EVALUATION

On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the following statements by circling the appropriate number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Morocco was an interesting theme to study in a French course.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel now more knowledgeable about Morocco.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I improved my oral skills.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I improved my written skills.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I improved my social skills.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I enjoyed working in groups.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I liked the teacher's teaching strategies.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I worked well with my peers.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I enjoyed the presentations of my peers.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I devoted a lot of time to the preparation of my presentation.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I attended class.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I enjoyed the research I had to do for my presentation.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I would recommend this course to other students.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I enjoyed keeping a journal.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I enjoyed the overall experience of the course.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PERSONAL COMMENTS

16. What did you like the most about the course?


17. What did you like the least about the course?


18. What changes would you suggest to improve the course?


19. Other comments.


STUDENT'S NAME: ____________________________
COURSE EVALUATION

On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the following statements by circling the appropriate number.

1. Morocco was an interesting theme to study in a French course.
   1  2  3  4  5

2. I feel now more knowledgeable about Morocco.
   1  2  3  4  5

3. I improved my oral skills.
   1  2  3  4  5

4. I improved my written skills.
   1  2  3  4  5

5. I improved my social skills.
   1  2  3  4  5

6. I liked the teacher's teaching strategies.
   1  2  3  4  5

7. I attended class.
   1  2  3  4  5

8. I would recommend this course to other students.
   1  2  3  4  5

9. I enjoyed keeping a journal.
   1  2  3  4  5

10. I enjoyed the overall experience of the course.
    1  2  3  4  5

11. I enjoyed the texts we read.
    1  2  3  4  5

12. I enjoyed the exercises that accompanied the texts.
    1  2  3  4  5
PERSONAL COMMENTS

13. What did you like the most about the course?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

14. What did like the least about the course?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

15. What changes would you suggest to improve the course?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

16. Other comments.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

STUDENT'S NAME: ________________________________________________________
Dear Student:

During this semester, from September to December 1995, I will be collecting data in your class for a study I am carrying out. The title of my study is: "The relationship between Learning Preferences and achievement in French as a Second Language classes at the university level: A comparison between a collaborative and a Teacher-Fronted class".

In order to carry out this study, it is important for me to collect data from different methods. The instruments I will be using are:

- A personal biographical questionnaire
- A Learning Preference Scale
- Oral and written linguistic tests
- Observation by the instructor
- Videotaping of 4 classes
- Course evaluation
- Interview.

All of the above-mentioned instruments will be filled out during class except the interview which will be done at the end of the semester at your convenience. Only the grades obtained in the oral and written linguistic test will count as part of your final grade.

The anonymity of all students will be maintained by erasing the names and replacing them by a code only known to me. In the final report of the study, no student's name will be mentioned.

If you feel comfortable with the content of this letter and if you agree to be a participant for my study, please sign it and return it to me.

Should you be interested in discussing my research, do not hesitate to come and see me.

Thank you for your participation.

Louise Lewin
Instructor/Researcher

Student's signature: __________________________

Date: __________________________
Dear Student:

During this semester, from September to December 1995, I will be collecting data in your class for a study I am carrying out. The title of my study is: "The relationship between Learning Preferences and achievement in French as a Second Language classes at the university level: A comparison between a collaborative and a Teacher-Fronted class".

In order to carry out this study, it is important for me to get feedback from the students themselves. One of the common techniques used to get students' feelings and personal comments is the writing of diaries.

I am asking, in this class, that all students write a journal every two weeks. All entries will be done in French and will count for 10% of the final grade. To reassure students that the content of the journals will have NO influence on the grade, I would like to suggest that all journals be kept by a designated student, in a sealed envelope to be read by me only after the final grades have been assigned. It is understood that all students that have written 6 journals will receive the full 10%.

The anonymity of your names will be protected the same it was described in the general consent letter.

If you feel comfortable with the content of this letter, please sign it and return it to me. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to talk to me.

Louise Lewin
Instructor/Researcher

Student's signature: _______________________
Date: _________________________
**APPENDIX G1**

**SYLLABUS: GROUP INVESTIGATION**

**COLLÈGE UNIVERSITAIRE GLENDON**

**DÉPARTEMENT D'ÉTUDES FRANÇAISES**

**FRSL 2512 SECTION 3 (G1)**

**LOUISE LEWIN**

**PROGRAMME**

**MERCREDI 13 SEPTEMBRE 1995**

- Présentations
- Introduction du cours

**VENDREDI 15 SEPTEMBRE 1995**

- Lecture du programme
- Explication des devoirs
- Faire écrire un paragraphe sur le Maroc
- Présentations et introduction des étudiants
- Explication du projet de recherche
  - *Faire signer les lettres de consentement*
  - *Pre-test écrit*
  - *Remplir le questionnaire*
  - *Remplir le LPS*

**MERCREDI 20 SEPTEMBRE**

- Introduction générale du thème
- Remettre textes à lire
- Lecture du texte: "L'histoire du Maroc"
  Étude du vocabulaire, exercices etc....
  - *Observation*.

**VENDREDI 22 SEPTEMBRE**

- Visite au laboratoire de langue
  - *Pre-test oral*
- Explication de la technique dite "Group Investigation"
- Les étudiants écrivent 3 sujets qui les intéressent tout particulièrement
- La professeure ramasse les 3 sujets et les compile pour la prochaine rencontre

**MERCREDI 27 SEPTEMBRE**

- Explication grammaticale: "Les interrogatifs"
- Discussion des sujets de présentation
- Choix des sujets par les étudiants
- Former les groupes

En groupes:
- Discussion du sujet choisi
- Finaliser l'orientation que le groupe va prendre
- Rédaction d'un paragraphe expliquant cette orientation

La professeure ramassera le paragraphe de chaque groupe.
VENDREDI 29 SEPTEMBRE

- Distribuer les paragraphes qui auront été compilés (par la prof.)
- Chaque étudiant prépare 3 questions personnelles sur chaque sujet
- Ramasser les questions et les remettre à chaque groupe.

En groupes:
- Se consulter et faire une liste du travail à faire
- Compiler les questions des étudiants et éliminer celles qui se répètent.
- Partager les rôles et répartir le travail par étudiant
- Préparer un échéancier... à court terme et à long terme

- Ramasser le journal #1

MERCREDI 4 OCTOBRE
COURS EST ANNULÉ: JOUR DU GRAND PARDON

VENDREDI 6 OCTOBRE

- Chaque groupe commence sa recherche, se consulte, se prépare pour la réunion avec la professeure et organise la présentation.

MERCREDI 11 OCTOBRE

- Recherche en groupes
  - Observation par vidéo des 3 groupes sélectionné

VENDREDI 13 OCTOBRE

- Recherche en groupes
  - Ramasser le journal #2

MERCREDI 18 OCTOBRE ET VENDREDI 20 OCTOBRE

Réunion de chaque groupe avec la professeure (prendre rendez-vous)
- Chaque groupe doit faire une présentation du travail accompli jusqu'à date
- La professeure fait des suggestions et des recommandations pour améliorer la présentation

MERCREDI 25 OCTOBRE

- Recherche en groupes

VENDREDI 27 OCTOBRE

TEST DE LECTURE (15%)

- Ramasser le journal #3

MERCREDI 1 NOVEMBRE ET VENDREDI 3 NOVEMBRE

SEMAINE DE LECTURE
MERCREDI 8 NOVEMBRE
Présentation du groupe #1 (30%)

VENDREDI 10 NOVEMBRE
- Ramasser le journal #4

MERCREDI 15 NOVEMBRE
Présentation du groupe #2

VENDREDI 17 NOVEMBRE

MERCREDI 22 NOVEMBRE
Présentation du groupe #3

VENDREDI 24 NOVEMBRE
Quiz sur les présentations 1, 2 et 3 (5%)
Visite au laboratoire de langue
- Post-test oral
- Ramasser le journal #5

MERCREDI 29 NOVEMBRE
Présentation du groupe #4
- Observation par vidéo

VENDREDI 1 DÉCEMBRE
Présentation du groupe #5 (suite le 6 décembre)

MERCREDI 6 DÉCEMBRE
Première heure: Jour du souvenir. Cours annulé
Deuxième heure: Fin de la présentation du groupe #5

VENDREDI 8 DÉCEMBRE
TEST DE LECTURE (15%)
- Ramasser le journal #6

MERCREDI 13 DÉCEMBRE
Quiz sur les présentations 4, 5 et 6 (5%)
Test sur les Interrogatifs (10%)
- Post-test écrit
- Évaluation du cours
SYLLABUS: TEACHER-CONTROLLED

COLLEGE UNIVERSITAIRE GLENDON
DÉPARTEMENT D'ÉTUDES FRANÇAISES
FRSL 2512 SECTION C (TC)
LOUISE LEWIN

PROGRAMME

MERCREDI 13 SEPTEMBRE 1995
- Présentations
- Introduction du cours
- Lecture du programme
- Explication des devoirs
- Paragraphe sur le Maroc
  - Faire signer les lettres de consentement.

VENDREDI 15 SEPTEMBRE
- Présentations et introduction des étudiants
- Explication de mon projet de recherche
  - Pre-test écrit
  - Remplir le questionnaire
  - Remplir le LPS

MERCREDI 20 SEPTEMBRE
- Visite au laboratoire
  - Pre-test oral

VENDREDI 22 SEPTEMBRE
- Introduction sur le thème: Le Maroc
  (Professeure)
- Remettre textes à lire
- Extraits du film: "Les mémoires" OFN, commentaires par la professeure
- Lecture de l'article: L'Histoire du Maroc
  Exercices

MERCREDI 27 SEPTEMBRE

THEME: LE TOURISME
- Introduction (Professeure)
  * Vidéo sur 2 villes du Maroc: Casablanca
    Marrakech
  * Lecture et discussion sur les livrets
VENDREDI 29 SEPTEMBRE

- Explication grammaticale: "Les interrogatifs"
- Le tourisme: Lecture du texte "Un thé à Zagora" par Maurice Roy
  Étude du vocabulaire

Présentations (10%):
1. Ville de Fès
2. Ville de Rabat
3. Ville d'Agadir

- Ramasser le journal # 1

MERCREDI 4 OCTOBRE

Le cours est annulé. C'est "Yom Kippur" "Le jour du grand pardon"

VENDREDI 6 OCTOBRE

Présentations:
1. Les montagnes
2. Le climat
3. Le Sahara

Composition en classe (10%)

MERCREDI 11 OCTOBRE

THEME: LA RELIGION MUSULMANE ET LE MAROC
- Introduction
- présentation par un invité
  * période de questions et de discussion

VENDREDI 13 OCTOBRE

- Lecture de texte: "A la gloire du roi du Maroc!

Présentation:
1. Les fêtes religieuses
2. La mosquée Hassan II
3. Les musulmans hors Maroc

- Ramasser le journal # 2
**MERCREDI 18 OCTOBRE**

**THEME:** LES JUIFS AU MAROC ET HORS DU MAROC  
- Introduction  
- Présentation par la professeure  
  * période de questions et de discussion

**VENDREDI 20 OCTOBRE**  
- Lecture de texte: "Sépharades: Limites et extension d'une définition  
  * Étude du vocabulaire, compréhension etc...  
Présentations:  
1. Les sépharades  
2. Déclaration au roi Mohammed V  
3. La communauté sépharade du Québec

**MERCREDI 25 OCTOBRE**  
Présentations générales:  
1. La polygamie  
2. La langue  
3. Le roi Hassan II

**VENDREDI 27 OCTOBRE**  
**TEST DE LECTURE (15%)**  
- Ramasser le journal # 3

**MERCREDI 1 NOVEMBRE ET VENDREDI 3 NOVEMBRE**  
**SEM AINE DE LECTURE**

**MERCREDI 8 NOVEMBRE**  
**THEME:** LA FEMME AU MAROC  
- Lecture du livret: La femme marocaine  
  * étude du texte, compréhension et vocabulaire  
  Ramasser le résumé sur la religion (10%)

**VENDREDI 10 NOVEMBRE**  
- Présentation sur le mariage juif (La professeure)  
  * vidéo  
  * discussion sur les coutumes
Présentations:
1. Le mariage princier
2. Le mariage et les coutumes (le henné, la dot ...)
3. Article 1 - Le Libéral
- Ramasser le journal # 4

MERCREDI 15 NOVEMBRE
- La femme marocaine: son rôle
  Lecture de texte: à déterminer

VENDREDI 17 NOVEMBRE

Présentations:
1. Le voile
2. La femme et la religion
3. Les différents rôles de la femme marocaine

THEME: L'ART, L'ARCHITECTURE, LA LITTÉRATURE, LA MUSIQUE ETC....
Introduction
Présentation par la professeure

MERCREDI 22 NOVEMBRE
- Lecture de texte: "Un fait divers et d'amour"
  Tahar Ben Jelloun
  * Étude du vocabulaire, compréhension...

Ramasser la composition faite à la maison (10%)

VENDREDI 24 NOVEMBRE
Laboratoire de langue
- Post-test oral

L'artisanat: Montrer des objects marocains
Discussion

Présentations:
1. L'art (article)
2. La musique
3. La littérature
- Ramasser le journal # 5

MERCREDI 29 NOVEMBRE

THEME: LES COUTUMES MAROCAINES
- Lecture de texte: "Une journée dans la vie.....d'une famille citadine de Fès
Abdelghani Maghnia
Lecture, explication, discussion etc...

VENDREDI 1 DÉCEMBRE
- Lecture de texte: "Une journée dans la vie...d'une famille d'un bidonville de Casablanca." Mohammed Naciri
  Comparaison avec texte # 1.
Présentations:
  1. Les costumes
  2. Quelques coutumes
  3. L'éducation
Test de vocabulaire (10%)

MERCREDI 6 DÉCEMBRE

Pas de cours: Journée du souvenir

VENDREDI 8 DÉCEMBRE
THEME: LA CUISINE MAROCAINE: NOURRITURE ET COUTUMES
- Lecture de texte: A déterminer
Présentations:
  1. Les épices/des remèdes
  2. Menu typique
  3. Des recettes
     - Ramasser le journal # 6

MERCREDI 13 DÉCEMBRE
- La nourriture: A déterminer

VENDREDI 15 DÉCEMBRE
TEST DE LECTURE (15%)
POST-TEST ÉCRIT (10%)
- Évaluation du cours
APPENDIX H

GI PRESENTATION

The following 3 pages are the information the GI groups were given to help them organize themselves in the planning of their presentation:

➢ Page H2: Students were required to fill out the responsibilities of each student in the group, including deadlines. This form was also given to the instructor and used during the meeting I had with each individual group.

➢ Page H3: This page contains the details about the content and the requirements of the oral presentation.

➢ Page H4: This page contains the details about the content and the requirements of the written assignment that was to be handed in to the instructor on the day of the oral presentation.
RESPONSABILITÉS DE CHAQUE GROUPE

Date de la présentation:

Sujet:

Membres du groupe: 1.
2.
3.
4.

Rôle et responsabilités de chaque membre du groupe:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

Résumé de l'orientation que le groupe a choisie:

Échéanciers:

Date à laquelle les articles doivent être distribués aux étudiants de la classe:

Date à laquelle les articles doivent être remis à la professeure pour assurer la photocopie:

Date et heure du rendez-vous avec la professeure:
LA PRÉSENTATION

* 45 minutes au maximum
* La présentation doit être répartie entre chaque membre du groupe.
* Introduire le sujet (avec le matériel audio et visuel)
* Décrire la recherche qui a été faite par le groupe
* Répondre aux questions que chaque étudiant avait posées
* Discuter et poser des questions sur les 2 articles (les étudiants auront eu le temps de les lire et de répondre aux questions par écrit)
* Faire une activité avec toute la classe (jeux-oral-écrit etc...)

Les étudiants (spectateurs) doivent:
* avoir lu les 2 articles
* compris le vocabulaire
* avoir répondu aux questions
* avoir préparé d'autres questions sur les textes et sur le sujet présenté.
LE TRAVAIL À REMETTRE LE JOUR DE LA PRÉSENTATION

* Organisation de la présentation (plan)
* Explication des démarches de la recherche
* Bibliographie de tout le matériel consulté
* Choix de 2 articles
* Liste de 10 mots de vocabulaire par article, leur définition
* Questions de compréhension sur l'article
* Liste des questions des étudiants de la classe avec les réponses
* matériel audio et visuel si nécessaire
* Une activité avec les explications.
APPENDIX I

Percentile Ratings

It will be obvious that particularly high and low scores cannot be converted to precise percentile rankings. The reason is that numbers at the extremes are too small to enable confident conversion. The scores should be recorded as, for example, 95+ percentile or 5– percentile.

By selecting an appropriate comparison group it is possible to convert a raw score for an individual into a percentile rating, indicating that the obtained score is equal to or greater than that of a certain percentage of that comparison group. For example, a score of 35 on the Cooperative subscale of the LPSS corresponds to the 36th percentile of scores of the secondary boys in the sample from NSW schools in 1978; that is, 36 per cent of that group of boys scored at or below 35. A score of 42 corresponds to the 88th percentile of the same group (see Table A1, Appendix II).

However, a score of 35 represents the 29th percentile for girls from that same sample, and a score of 42 represents the 82nd percentile (29 per cent of the girls in this group scored at or below 35 and 82 per cent of them scored at or below 42).

The percentile score gives some basis for interpreting raw scores such that it is possible to see how strong an individual student's preference is for one of the learning modes, relative to a comparable group. In addition, if the same reference group is used, it allows for comparisons of scores of an individual across subscales. For instance, if a student scores at the 35th percentile on the Cooperative subscale and at the 75th percentile on the Competitive subscale, it is reasonable to say that, relative to a comparable reference group, the student has a stronger preference for learning in the competitive mode than in the cooperative mode.

Full percentile tables are provided separately for primary boys and primary girls and for secondary boys and secondary girls for each of New South Wales (Sydney), Western Australia (Perth), Minneapolis (USA) and Midlands Counties in England, and for teachers in NSW, USA and England. In addition, tables are provided indicating the quartile scores and the mean scores and standard deviations of scores obtained by a number of smaller subgroups of these populations. Quartile scores on LPSS are provided for each school year group by sex and on LPST for different subject teachers, as well as for male and female teachers separately (see Appendix II).

When using the percentile tables it is obviously necessary to choose the reference group which corresponds most closely to the group being considered, but extra information may be gained by reference to the quartile tables.

Examination of the reference group tables and the quartile tables will reveal some differences between groups and subgroups. These are discussed in more detail in the research abstracts (Appendix I).

It should be noted that all of the school groups which were used to provide the reference group tables for the LPSS (Appendix II) were coeducational. It may be that single-sex schools or classes may reproduce somewhat different scores. To date we do not have enough data from single-sex schools to provide reference group tables based on them.
Table A5  Percentile table (LPSS) United States 1981

Secondary (Years 7-12)

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Mean  37.8    35.1    33.8    38.7    33.3    32.4  
SD    5.09    5.22    5.15    4.75    5.83    5.99

Coop. = Cooperation  Comp. = Competition  Ind. = Individualism
# APPENDIX J

## LEARNING PREFERENCE SCALE

### STUDENTS' SCORE

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<td>Phrases incorrectes</td>
<td>27</td>
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APPENDIX L
INTERVIEWS AND JOURNAL CODING

ACHIEVEMENT
Oral Skills
  Speaking
  Understanding
Writing Skills
  Writing
  Reading
  Grammar
  Comprehension
Oral
Written
Content

METHODOLOGY
Structure of the course

Group Work
  Advantages (benefits
  Disadvantages
  Role of the Instructor
  Use of French in Group Work
  Organization of Groups
  Non-Linguistic skills learned
Activities
Journal
Presentation

Teaching Style
  General Comments about the Instructor
  Instructor's Teaching Style

STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE
  Perception of their Own Learning Style
  Compatibility with Structure of the Course

MOTIVATION
  Attendance
  General Comments

OTHER COMMENTS
APPENDIX M
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Explain to the students that this interview is:
* Being taped
* Will not be listened to by the professor until the final grades have been handed in.

ACHIEVEMENT
Students perception of their improvement in their:
- Oral skills
- Learning of vocabulary
- Oral comprehension
- Writing skills
- Content
Students feeling about the lack of formal grammar instruction.

GROUP WORK
- Describe the type of group work they did in class
- Explain how they worked in their group
- Did learning occur during group work. Elaborate on the type of learning (linguistic, social skills, collaborative skills, etc…)
- Use of second language while working in groups
- Organization of the group
- How they enjoyed working in groups
- Other comments

TEACHING STRATEGIES
- How do they feel about the structure of the course?
- Comments about the teaching strategies used.

LEARNING PREFERENCE
- Discuss their own learning style
- Discuss their perceptions of the compatibility of their learning preference with teaching strategies used in their class.

MOTIVATION
- Comments about their motivation. If they say they are motivated, what does motivate them? Grades? Content? Presentation?

PERSONAL COMMENTS
- What would they change in the course to improve it.
- Would they take the course again?
- Do they want to make other comments that were not discussed during the interview.
APPENDIX N

ENGLISH TRANSLATION: STUDENTS' JOURNAL QUOTATIONS
CHAPTER 6

6.2.2.1 Oral and Written Skills Achievement

> "J'ai parlé avec beaucoup d'autres étudiants dans la classe, et nous sommes d'accord que nous n'apprenons rien, ou très peu jusqu'à maintenant." (#24, GI, p5)

I SPOKE WITH MANY OTHER STUDENTS IN THE CLASS, AND WE AGREE THAT WE HAVEN'T LEARNED ANYTHING, OR VERY LITTLE UP TO NOW.

> "...nous parlons en anglais, et notre français ne s'améliore pas depuis septembre." (#24, GI, p5)

...WE SPEAK ENGLISH AND OUR FRENCH HAS NOT BEEN IMPROVING SINCE SEPTEMBER.

> "Je pense que les présentations orales sont une bonne façon pour les étudiants d'étudier le Maroc, et, en même temps, acquérir les habiletés orales et de recherche." (#12, GI, p1)

I THINK THAT THE ORAL PRESENTATIONS ARE A GOOD WAY FOR THE STUDENTS TO STUDY MOROCCO AND AT THE SAME TIME ACQUIRE ORAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH SKILLS.

6.2.2.2 Content

> "J'ai appris beaucoup sur le Maroc, plus que ça aurait été possible si la professeure avait essayé d'enseigner tout elle-même." (#24, GI, p10)

I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT MOROCCO - MORE THAN I WOULD HAVE IF THE PROFESSOR HAD ATTEMPTED TO TEACH EVERYTHING HERSELF.

> "Deux semaines de classe sont finies. Je suis dans la classe de français 2512, le Maroc. Je pense que ce sujet est très intéressant." (#8, GI, p1)

TWO WEEKS OF CLASS HAVE PASSED. I AM IN A FRENCH 1512 CLASS. ON MOROCCO. I FIND THIS A VERY INTERESTING SUBJECT.

> "J'ai trouvé les discussions en classe très intéressantes et instructives. J'étais particulièrement intéressée aux sujets sur la religion et sur la femme." (#33, GI, p1)

FOUND THE CLASS DISCUSSIONS VERY INTERESTING AND EDUCATIONAL, PARTICULARLY THOSE ON RELIGION AND ON WOMEN.
I FIND THE CULTURE AND DIVERSITY OF THIS COUNTRY REALLY INCREDIBLE AND I HOPE WE'LL LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MOROCCAN PEOPLE.

I KNOW A LOT ABOUT MOROCCO NOW, EVEN MORE THAN CANADA, I THINK!

IN RETROSPECT, I ENJOYED THE COURSE. I ALSO LEARNED A LOT ABOUT MOROCCO. WHEN I STARTED THE CLASS, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THAT MOROCCO WAS IN AFRICA.

6.2.2.3 Structure of the Course

NOW I'M GLAD TO HAVE CHOOSEN THIS SECTION. I AM HAPPY WITH THE SCHEDULING OF THE CLASS AND WITH THE CURRICULUM.

THE CLASS COMPOSED QUESTIONS FOR EACH GROUP THE OTHER DAY. I FOUND THIS TO BE A GOOD IDEA

THERE IS A LOT OF FREEDOM IN THIS FRENCH CLASS AND I LIKE THAT.

I THINK THAT IN FIVE YEARS I'LL REMEMBER MORE ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THIS COURSE THAN ABOUT THE GRAMMATICAL SECTIONS. FOR, IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER THINGS THAT ARE INTERESTING. THAT'S WAY I LIKE THE FORMAT OF THIS COURSE.
"Je trouve que c'est une bonne idée de faire plusieurs petits travaux divers, comme des compositions, des résumés de travaux fait en classe. Ces travaux qu'on remet au professeure lui indique ce qu'on a appris, et pour nous si on ne réussit pas à un tel devoir, ce n'est jamais un grand échec." (#51, TC, p5)

I THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO DO VARIOUS SMALL ASSIGNMENTS INCLUDING ESSAYS AND SUMMARIES OF WORK DONE IN CLASS. THESE ASSIGNMENTS THAT WE SUBMIT TO THE PROFESSOR REFLECT WHAT WE'VE LEARNED, AND A POOR RESULT ON ONE ASSIGNMENT DOES NOT MEAN FAILURE IN THE COURSE OVERALL.

"Je n'aime pas le format de la classe. Le travail en groupes est peu réaliste." (#14, GI, p5)

I DON'T LIKE THE STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE. GROUP WORK IS NOT VERY REALISTIC.

"J'avais un petit problème avec le test des présentations. C'était trop difficile et un peu injuste. Pourquoi est-ce que c'était nécessaire pour nous de connaître les cinq piliers?" (p8, GI)

I HAD A PROBLEM WITH THE TESTING OF PRESENTATIONS. IT WAS TOO DIFFICULT AND A LITTLE UNFAIR. WHY WAS IT NECESSARY FOR US TO KNOW THE FIVE PILLARS?

"Cette classe est une classe de français, pas de recherché, mais j'ai passé tout mon temps à faire de la recherche."(#14, GI, p4)

THIS IS NOT A RESEARCH COURSE BUT A FRENCH COURSE, YET I SPENT ALL OF MY TIME RESEARCHING.

"J'ai aimé que le cours avait un sujet. Tous les cours de français que j'ai suivi c'était sur le français: les verbes, la grammaire, les temps. Mais, dans ce cours, nous avons appris les choses quand nous avons appris du sujet "Le Maroc" C'était très intéressant." (#48, TC, p6)

I LIKED THAT THE COURSE HAD A SPECIFIC SUBJECT. ALL OF THE FRENCH COURSES I'VE TAKEN WERE ABOUT THE FRENCH LANGUAGE - VERBS, GRAMMAR, TENSES. IN THIS COURSE, HOWEVER, WE LEARNED THESE THINGS WHILE LEARNING ABOUT MOROCCO. IT WAS VERY INTERESTING.

"J'aime l'idée que le cours est basé sur quelque chose, le Maroc et pas à propos de beaucoup de choses. Il y a un but." (#44, TC, p1)

I LIKE THE FACT THAT THE COURSE IS BASED ON ONE SUBJECT, MOROCCO, RATHER_THAN MANY DIFFERENT TOPICS. THERE IS A DEFINITE GOAL HERE.
> "Ah! Notre présentation est fini. Je pense que le résultat final était très bon." (p8)

**YA! OUR PRESENTATION IS OVER. I THINK THE FINAL RESULT WAS VERY GOOD.**

> "Cette semaine le premier groupe a présenté: L'Islam. Ce groupe était bien organisé et ils ont présenté beaucoup d'information. Ils m'ont enseigné beaucoup de choses." (#3, GI, p4)

**THE FIRST GROUP PRESENTED THIS WEEK ON THE SUBJECT OF THE ISLAMIC FAITH. THE PRESENTERS WERE WELL-ORGANIZED AND THEY PRESENTED A GREAT DEAL OF INFORMATION. THEY TAUGHT ME A LOT.**

> "C'était le jour de la première présentation. Ils ont fait très très bien! Ils ont utilisé beaucoup d'aides visuelles. Ils étaient bien organisés." (#24, GI, p7)

**TODAY WAS THE DAY OF THE FIRST PRESENTATION. THE PRESENTERS DID VERY, VERY WELL. THEY USED MANY VISUAL AIDS. THEY WERE WELL-ORGANIZED.**

> "A propos des présentations, je pense qu’elles sont une bonne idée. "(#51, TC, p3)

**THE PRESENTATIONS WERE A VERY GOOD IDEA.**

> "J’aime que nous devons faire des présentations. Je pense que c’est une bonne idée que nous allons dans les trois groupes. (#48, TC, p2)

**I LIKE THE FACT THAT WE HAVE TO GIVE PRESENTATIONS. I THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO DIVIDE THE CLASS INTO THREE GROUPS.**

> "Je crois que les présentations par les autres membres de la classe étaient très intéressants. J’aime les petites groupes pour ça. Ça nous donne la chance de parler plus, et de demander plus de questions. Aussi les petits groupes créent une atmosphère relaxante qui permet aux personnes qui font les présentations d’être plus calme. (#33, TC, p2)

**I THINK THAT THE PRESENTATIONS OF OTHER GROUPS WERE VERY INTERESTING. I LIKE SMALL GROUPS. THEY OFFER US THE CHANCE TO SPEAK MORE AND TO ASK MORE QUESTIONS. SMALL GROUPS ALSO MAKE FOR A RELAXED ATMOSPHERE WHICH HELPS PRESENTERS TO REMAIN CALM WHILE PRESENTING**

> "Le cours m’inquiète un peu parce qu’il n’a pas beaucoup de grammaire. Est-ce que nous sommes assez compétents en grammaire française? (#17, GI, p1)

**I'M A BIT WORRIED AT THE LACK OF GRAMMAR IN THIS COURSE. ARE WE STRONG ENOUGH IN FRENCH GRAMMAR ALREADY?**
I hope that we'll study more grammar.

...but as you can see, my grammar needs some improvement. I think that I would have been better off had there been a few grammar tests each week.

I am happy with the course, but I find that we need to spend some time on grammar.

6.2.2.4 Group Work

This experience taught me that there are lazy people and there are perfectionists and we have to deal with the challenges presented with this rather than arguing, because that's life!

6.2.2.5 Learning Styles

I found that I prefer individual to group work.

I find that group work is a waste of time.

I like group work.

"Honêtement, quand j'apris que la plupart du travail allait être fait en groupe, je n'étais pas très contente; pour moi, j'ai toujours préféré travailler indépendamment." (#24, GI, p1)
HONESTLY, WHEN I HEARD THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE COURSE WORK WOULD BE DONE IN GROUPS, I WAS NOT HAPPY. I'VE ALWAYS PREFERRED TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY,

> "Honêtement, quand j'ai appris que la plupart du travail allait être fait en groupe, je n'étais pas très contente. Pour moi, j'ai toujours préféré travailler indépendamment alors j'ai eu des réserves. Mais maintenant que j'ai mon sujet, le Judaisme (un sujet qui m'intéresse beaucoup), et que j'ai rencontré les membres de mon groupe je suis curieuse de voir ce qui se passera. Après notre première rencontre, nous avons déjà discuté comment nous allons faire une présentation très intéressante et créative."

HONESTLY, WHEN I HEARD THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE COURSE WORK WOULD BE DONE IN GROUPS, I WAS NOT HAPPY. I'VE ALWAYS PREFERRED TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY, THUS I HAD MY RESERVATIONS. BUT NOW THAT I HAVE MY TOPIC, JUDAISME (A SUBJECT THAT REALLY INTERESTS ME) AND I'VE MET MY FELLOW GROUP MEMBERS, I'M CURIOUS TO SEE HOW THINGS WILL GO. AFTER OUR FIRST MEETING, WE'D ALREADY DISCUSSED HOW TO MAKE OUR PRESENTATION INTERESTING AND CREATIVE.

> "Nous travaillons bien ensemble."

WE WORK WELL TOGETHER.

> "J'ai appris beaucoup sur le Maroc, plus qu'il aurait été possible si la professeure avait essayé d'enseigner tout elle-même."

I LEARNED MORE ABOUT MOROCCO THAN I WOULD HAVE IF THE PROFESSOR HAD TRIED TO TEACH IT ALL HERSELF.

6.2.2.6 Motivation

> "Ça c'est incroyable! Nous pouvons discuter les choses qui nous intéressent. Le professeur prend la décision finale, mais nous avons la liberté de rechercher ce que nous voulons apprendre. Je pense que je vais apprendre beaucoup de nouvelles choses dans cette classe parce qu'elle ne va pas être ennuyeuse." (#3, G1, p2);

THIS IS INCREDIBLE! WE ARE DISCUSSING INTERESTING THINGS. THE PROFESSOR MAKES THE FINAL DECISION, BUT WE HAVE THE FREEDOM TO RESEARCH TOPICS WE WISH TO LEARN ABOUT. I THINK THAT I'LL LEARN MANY NEW THINGS IN THIS CLASS BECAUSE IT WON'T BE BORING.
“Depuis mon dernier journal, j'ai vu les présentations du groupe 2 "Les Juifs du Maroc" et du groupe 3 "La politique." J'ai été très impressionnée par l'organisation et la créativité. (#12, GI, p6;)

SINCE MY FIRST LAST JOURNAL ENTRY, I'VE SEEN TWO GROUP PRESENTATIONS, #2 - JEWISH MAROCCANS AND #3 - THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF MOROCCO. I WAS VERY IMPRESSED BY THE ORGANIZATION AND CREATIVITY.

“J'aime apprendre les cultures différentes et le Maroc est un pays avec beaucoup d'histoire et c'est très exotique.” (#8, GI, p1)

I LIKE LEARNING ABOUT NEW CULTURES, AND MOROCCO IS A VERY EXOTIC COUNTRY WITH A GREAT DEAL OF HISTORY.

“Après le premier jour, j'étais convaincue que j'avais choisi un bon cours.... J'étais anxieuse d'apprendre! ” (#24, GI, p1;)

AFTER THE FIRST DAY, I WAS CONVINCED I'D CHOSEN A GOOD COURSE. I WAS EAGER TO LEARN.

“I aime beaucoup l'atmosphère dans la classe. C'est très calme et aimable.” (#12, GI, p1)

I REALLY LIKE THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE CLASS. IT'S VERY RELAXED AND ENJOYABLE.

“Je pense que j'ai besoin de pratiquer mon français, peut être je peux parler plus fort à la maison ou quelque chose comme ça.” (#29, TC, p3)

I THINK THAT I NEED TO PRACTICE MY FRENCH. MAYBE I CAN SPEAK MORE AT HOME OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

“Mon abilité d'écrire l'information dans une classe de français n'est pas très bonne. Cela est une chose que je voudrais améliorer” (#34, TC, p5)

MY ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE IN WRITING IN A FRENCH COURSE IS NOT VERY STRONG. THIS IS SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO IMPROVE.

“Je veux améliorer ma capacité de lire, parler et comprendre le français. Déjà pendant le cours, j'ai eu la chance de faire tout cela “ (#48, TC, p1)

I WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE MY READING, SPEAKING, AND COMPREHENSION LEVELS IN FRENCH. ALREADY THIS COURSE HAS OFFERED ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO THESE THINGS.

“Pour moi, c'est une bonne idée de m'habiter lentement à parler aux groupes, car n'importe quel emploi nous mettra dans cette situation!” (#51, TC, p3)
I think it's a good idea to introduce me to group presentations slowly, as all jobs require us to do this.

- "J'aime beaucoup ce cours et je ne veux pas le finir" (#29, TC, p5)

  I really enjoy this course and I don't want it to end.

- "Ce cours était intéressant et j'attends avec impatience celui du Maghreb." (#44, TC, p9)

  This course was interesting and I look forward to the course on Maghreb.
Linguistic tests:

The following are some examples of questions that were marked incorrect based on the criteria described in section 4.3.2.

* The word order of the interrogative form had to be correct.

  - Est-ce qu’il faut nécessaire de porter un certain type de vêtement?  
    (Student # 26, Written)
  - Qu’est-ce qu’il y a beaucoup de places au Maroc?  
    (Student # 26, Oral)

* The interrogative form had to be contextually appropriate.

  - Est-ce que c’est quelque chose en Terre Neuve qu’on peut voir?  
    (Student # 29, Written)
  - Quelle sorte de langue de les peuples en Maroc parlé?  
    (Student # 26, Oral)

* The sentence/utterance had to be grammatically well formed.

  - Combien de temps est-ce que mon ami a besoin pour faire toutes ces choses?  
    (Student # 3, Written)
  - Combien de se coûte si on veut regarder la tour CN?  
    (Student # 29, Written)

* Sentences that were not interpretable.

  - Est-ce qu’il ya beaucoup de toutes qui allaient au Ottawa en juillet pour l’anniversaire du Canada?  
    (Student # 14, Oral)