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SOCIOPOLITICAL ANALYSIS OF FRENCH IMMERSION DEVELOPMENTS IN CANADA

by Josée Makropoulos

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a pioneer investigation into the historical development of sociopolitical factors conditioning French immersion developments in Canada. The conceptual framework and methodology were especially designed for the creation and interpretation of the literature database of the study. Research conclusions presented in the four analysis sections of the study point out that power dynamics manifested between members of both official language groups in Canada had a crucial impact on the evolution of the immersion phenomenon. The sociopolitical transformations taking place in Quebec during the Quiet Revolution triggered interest in the immersion concept as it provided anglophone parents the opportunity to give their children access to bilingual resources. The response of the Federal Government to the nationalist movement in Quebec in the seventies also favoured the expansion of French immersion programs through the creation of funding programs to enforce its policy of bilingualism in government and educational sectors. The limitations of immersion however became more visible in the mid to late eighties as research showed in greater scope evidence of immersion social class bias, the plateau of immersion proficiency in French, and secondary immersion attrition trends. The analysis of the literature database suggested that conditions for minority francophones began to improve at this time as francophone lobby groups took legal actions to obtain services equal to those enjoyed by the English majority and later, began working toward the establishment of autonomous structures. Recent trends also revealed that federal authorities modified their political response to Quebec nationalism in the nineties by shifting their funding priority from official second-language programs toward official language minority education.
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<tr>
<td>ACFO</td>
<td>Association canadienne française de l’Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFOS</td>
<td>Centre for Franco-Ontarian Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNPF</td>
<td>La commission nationale des parents francophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMEC</td>
<td>Council of Ministers of Education (Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPF</td>
<td>Canadian Parents for French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRFCC</td>
<td>Centre for Research on French Canadian Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUP</td>
<td>Common Underlying Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECSS</td>
<td>Edmonton Catholic School System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFI</td>
<td>Early French Immersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCFAC</td>
<td>Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>First language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3</td>
<td>Third language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFI</td>
<td>Late French Immersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLC</td>
<td>Modern Language Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFI</td>
<td>Middle French Immersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTSSB</td>
<td>Metro Toronto Separate School Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAC</td>
<td>Ontario Academic Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLEP</td>
<td>Official Languages in Education Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OISE</td>
<td>Ontario Institute for Studies in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>Socioeconomic status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SREP</td>
<td>Service de recherche et d’expérimentation pédagogique</td>
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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

The limitations of teaching French via the immersion approach became increasingly visible during the late eighties and nineties, thus indicating the need to further investigate the evolution of the program in relation to broader dynamics manifested at the macro societal level. For instance, many studies pointed out that anglophone immersion students experienced difficulty mastering the French language (Bibeau, 1984; Hammerly, 1989; Lyster, 1987) while critics argued that immersion students lacked both the opportunity and the desire to engage in intergroup dynamics where they could use their French skills as the primary language of communication (Heller, 1990). Evidence of immersion social class bias (Burns, 1986; Hart and Lapkin, forthcoming; Olson, 1983; Olson and Burns, 1981; 1983) provided reason to believe that academic success traditionally associated with the advantages of learning French in immersion classes was the result of the self-selection process rather than the pedagogical merits of the program. Furthermore, research findings revealed that students of francophone backgrounds studied in immersion programs (Heffernan, 1979; Carey and Cummins, 1983; Lapalme, 1993; Hart and Lapkin, 1994) despite its pedagogical orientation for nonnative speakers of the French language.

Recent sociopolitical developments also suggested that immersion education was not receiving its customary support in government and public sectors. The failure to ratify the Meech Lake Accord (1990) and the Charlottetown Agreement (1992) signalled a lack of public and provincial support for legislative measures promoting linguistic duality in
Canada. Statistics Canada published research reports at this time revealing that high attrition rates characterized student enrolment trends in French immersion programs at the secondary level (Canada, Statistics Canada, 1992: 10) despite the booming growth of the program in the seventies and early eighties. The decision taken by the Federal Government in 1993 to impose a $90 million funding cut to its transfer payment program supporting official language education (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1994: 103) further suggested that promoting bilingualism was not the political priority of federal leaders in the early nineties. Rather, it seems that federal funding was more stable in the area of minority educational programs for francophone populations living outside Québec.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were designed in view of the issues described above:

(1) How did immersion research evolve between 1960 and 1995? (2) In which ways were minority francophone communities involved and/or affected by the promotion of French immersion programs? (3) What was the role of pressure groups in the national promotion of French immersion education? (4) At which level(s) did French language status change affect French immersion developments at the provincial and national levels? (5) What did immersion student enrolment trends explicitly and implicitly reveal about broader sociopolitical dynamics? (6) How did the distribution of funding grants supporting immersion activities evolve over time?
1.2 **Review of the Literature**

The following account will examine the issues raised above through the systematic review of literature dealing with French immersion developments and their broader sociopolitical implications. We shall review the array of data relating to each of the six research questions of the study in the order in which they were formulated.

The first topic to be discussed concerns the evolutionary trends of research about French immersion programs. It seems that research conclusions obtained in the United Kingdom and America prior to the sixties generally suggested that unilingual schooling was better than bilingual programs since the latter were detrimental to the intellectual development of children (Darcy, 1953; Haugen, 1956). The bilingual education profile however became more attractive in the sixties as more investigators conducted studies showing that learning two or more languages positively enhanced cognitive abilities (Genesee, 1984; Ouellet, 1990). Positive findings such as these were crucial to the immersion pilot program since they provided scientific proof suggesting that bilingualism could exert positive benefits on the academic development of children (Genesee, 1987; Ouellet, 1990).

Most of the studies evaluating immersion progress during the seventies and early eighties continued to promote the benefits of French immersion education. For instance, research results reassured hesitant parents by revealing that immersion students did not suffer from intellectual confusion (D'Anglejan and Tucker, 1971) or mental deficiencies (Rogers, 1976). It was shown that immersion instruction posed no risk to first language maintenance
(Hylton, 1982; Genesee and Stanley, 1976; Swain, 1976; Sweetman, Leblanc and Lawton, 1975) while allowing students to reach high levels of competence in French (Conners, Ménard and Singh, 1978; Genesee, 1978; Swain and Lapkin, 1981). Moreover, findings indicated that immersion students were more likely to excel in academic subjects than their peers in regular French programs (Morrison and Pawley, 1983; Swain, 1984).

Positive findings about immersion programs gave some researchers reason to believe that bilingual children were better conditioned to learn academic subjects. For instance, specialists suggested that immersion students achieved “additive” forms of bilingualism through the mastery of the French and English languages, thus facilitating the acquisition of cognitive benefits (Cummins, 1978; 1979; 1981; 1984; 1987; Cummins and Swain, 1986; Lambert, 1977; Swain 1984). In many instances, specialists also felt that under average academic performance of bilingual children from minority and lower socioeconomic backgrounds was the result of linguistic deficiencies associated with “semilingualism” which in turn, was attributed to societal racism and discriminating schooling (Skutnabb-Kangas, T. and P. Toukomaa, 1976). Critics however argued that research conclusions such as those mentioned above were incomplete because they failed to take into account the impact of socioeconomic and cultural factors which they felt, played a determining impact on student academic success (Edelsky et al, 1983; Martin-Jones and Romaine, 1986).

Skepticism about the positive immersion findings was also raised by Olson and Burns who disclosed evidence indicating that immersion programs in Northern Ontario schools catered to student populations from higher socioeconomic cohorts (Olson, 1983; Olson and
Burns, 1981; 1983; Burns, 1986). Their results cast doubt on the validity of research studies comparing the abilities of immersion students with peers in regular English classes since the two groups of students were found to come from different socioeconomic background. In view of these results, Olson and Burns suggested the social immersion selection process was a contributing factor influencing the apparent success of its students. Although other research (Wesche, Swain and Machin, 1972) supported this theory, members from public (CPF, No 17, 1982: 6-7) and academic sectors (Guttman, 1983) questioned the credibility of the immersion social class phenomenon on the grounds that parental involvement and student motivation also played an important role in the success of the immersion program.

Despite this debate, student enrolment in French immersion classes continued to soar across the country in the late seventies and early eighties. The need to accommodate more students with varying needs led to the creation of the Middle French Immersion (MFI) and the Late French Immersion (LFI) streams which usually begin in grade five and grade seven respectively. Studies evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of these programs generally found that Early French Immersion (EFI) programs beginning in Kindergarten gave students the most French exposure time and the best opportunity to reach high levels of proficiency in expressive skills such as reading and speaking (Lapkin and Swain, 1984; Morrisson and Pawley, 1986). However, research showed that immersion students in all three streams usually attained high levels of receptive skills in areas such as writing and listening in view of the native speaker norms they were compared to (Cummins, 1995).

The topic of multicultural bilingual education reached a peak of interest at that time since
MFI and LFI alternatives became more accessible to diverse ethnocultural student populations. It was suggested that immersion students from nonofficial language backgrounds who mastered their L1 and developed a good understanding of the English language could excel in French immersion programs (Cummins, 1981). The academic potential of francophones was however presented in a more negative light since findings were sometimes interpreted as meaning that immersion students generally developed receptive skills comparable to those of native French-speakers (Genesee, 1978; Swain, 1974). Research also suggested that immersion instruction was beneficial to minority francophones by allowing them to develop high levels of English proficiency while developing French language skills comparable to those obtained by student populations attending minority French schools in Ontario (Carey and Cummins, 1981).

Research published from the eighties onward nevertheless became more critical as many findings suggested that French-language skills of immersion students were not entirely adequate. For instance, research revealed that immersion students had a faulty linguistic system (Adviv, 1980; Spilka, 1976) and spoke a nonstandard French dialect which fossilized at an early age (Bibeau, 1984; Lyster, 1987). Findings obtained from data collected in the mid eighties (Hart and Lapkin, forthcoming) also reinforced the notion that immersion success was in part the result of the streaming effects of the program. The general conclusions of an attrition study conducted in the Toronto region during the 1991-1992 school year (Hart and Lapkin, 1994: 3) also revealed that many students enrolled in intermediate immersion classes were learning French because they (or their parents) had felt that bilingualism was required to access improved employment opportunities.
Another research topic addressed by the literature concerns the issue of francophone involvement with French immersion programs. Research conclusions drawn from the study of francophone and anglophone perceptions about the attraction of immersion programs to parents whose children were already attending French minority schools indicate that members from both linguistic groups shared different views about the appeal of these programs to francophone minority populations (Bordeleau, 1987). Ethnographic research suggests that some anglophone parents living outside Québec sent their children to French minority schools rather than immersion programs because they preferred the idea of "authentic" learning environments where students could freely interact with native speakers (Heller, 1987; Moïse; 1996; Mougeon, 1987). Research evidence also revealed that French immersion programs attracted a considerable proportion of francophone students (Lapalme, 1993; Hart and Lapkin, 1994) eligible for official minority instruction as outlined by Article 23 of the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Various publications issued by the Canadian Parents for French (CPF) association were referred to because they provided information about the establishment of partnerships between immersion patrons and francophone organizations. The CPF quarterly newsletters (1977-onward) and a masters thesis of a former CPF executive (Poyen, 1989) both indicate that partnership agreements were established between immersion patrons and the Fédération des francophones hors Québec (FFHQ) to strengthen the support for the alliance of supporters for French education outside the province of Québec. According to these sources, immersion students were also encouraged to enhance their French language skills by engaging in extracurricular trips in Québec and French-speaking Europe and through
their participation with locally-run francophone activities. Critics however suggested that bilingual partnerships risked disempowering the francophone minority by creating competition over who could have access to French capital in school (Heller, 1990).

We also found that many studies showed that immersion developments were linked to the fluctuating status of French capital in provincial and national settings. For instance, specialists have argued that immersion programs were introduced in the suburbs of Montreal during the sixties as a result of lobbying activities on behalf of anglophone parents who wanted to give their children access to functional levels of French proficiency to counteract rising power of the francophone majority in the province of Québec (Heller, 1990; Ouellet, 1990; Rebuffot, 1993). Research findings conducted in the eighties indicated that middle-class parents across Canada favored the immersion alternative because it was closely tied to the symbolic and material benefits associated with the national promotion of the two official languages in employment sectors (Olson and Burns, 1983; Burns, 1986).

It is equally important to note that research findings often showed that immersion programs attracted minority francophone students. According to Hefeman (1979: 24-26), a group of francophone parents in Newfoundland who were denied the establishment of a minority French program decided to work with anglophone parents to ask authorities to create an immersion program as it was the only alternative available to them. Research conducted in the seventies showed that many students from francophone and bilingual family backgrounds living in Alberta received immersion instruction since minority French schools were not yet accessible (Carey and Cummins, 1983: 159-167). A study conducted
in the early nineties revealed that many ethnolinguistically diverse families in Northern Ontario where one parent was francophone chose the immersion alternative rather than minority French education (Lapalme, 1993). Moreover, an attrition study based on data collected in Toronto French immersion classes during the 1991-1992 school year showed that the immersion students from francophone families were more likely to stay in the program at the secondary level than anglophone peers (Hart and Lapkin, 1994)

Another research topic which received considerable attention focussed on how student participation trends in French immersion programs evolved during the period extending from the late seventies until the mid-nineties. Research results compiled by Statistics Canada indicated that French immersion classes underwent momentous growth on a nationwide scale during the seventies and early eighties (Canada, Statistics Canada, 1978; 1979; 1980a; 1980b; 1982a; 1982b; 1983; 1985; 1986; Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1992; 1994; 1996). High student enrolment persisted during the late eighties and nineties despite the high attrition trends apparent at the secondary level (Canada, Statistics Canada, 1987; 1987; 1988; 1989; 1990; 1992; 1993). It however becomes more difficult to trace immersion participation trends in the nineties because budgetary cuts to the Official Languages in Education Program (OLEP) led to the discontinuation of government publications dealing with this subject (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1996: 71).

The final topic of research to be addressed concerns the literature dealing with funding allocations directed toward the support of French immersion programs and related promotional activities. It seems that information pertaining to funding issues became
widely accessible from the late seventies onward when immersion education reached nationwide proportions (CPF, 1978; 1979a; 1979b; 1981; 1985; 1994; Goodings, 1985; Poyen, 1989). Publications revealed that a greater proportion of federal subsidies from the OLEP was allocated to French second-language programs rather than to minority French schools (Secretary of State, 1989; Lécuyer, 1996) as the latter catered to a smaller proportion of students (Statistics Canada, 1978-1993). Critics also argued that generous government funding allocations supporting immersion research and promotional activities allowed interest groups to boost the profile of the program (Hammerly, 1989; Heller, 1990).

It is important to note that the literature reviewed here only skimmed the issues raised by the research questions of the study. We saw that considerable research data focussed on the pedagogical merits of immersion programs while a limited number of publications discussed ways in which French second-language programs were closely linked to broader political and socioeconomic factors. Few authors sought to draw parallels existing between immersion education and the interests of minority francophones living outside the province of Québec. Research prior to this study also failed to assess the evolution of Canadian French immersion programs in relation to the interplay of power dynamics manifested between political actors interacting at the provincial and national levels.

1.3 Outline of the Thesis

The remaining chapters of the thesis will reveal the close connection between French
immersion developments and issues of language status change and power dynamics. Chapter 2 will begin by defining the research problem of the study from both a theoretical and methodological perspective. Leading theories on language dynamics stemming from sociological and political orientations will be discussed in order to provide foundational knowledge of the guiding principles underlying the theoretical orientation of the study. This chapter will also show how the literature database was created based on the thematic, temporal and propositional aspects of the conceptual framework to allow for the formulation of a unique analysis drawing from an interpretativist understanding of culture.

Chapter 3 consists of four subsections which will analyze the data compiled for the literature database in relation to the corresponding time frames. The first subsection will examine how immersion developments which took place between 1960 until 1969 were closely linked to broader sociopolitical and economic dynamics involving language planning initiatives. We shall consider how social changes which took place during the Quiet Revolution of the sixties triggered anglophone interest in bilingualism and subsequently, French immersion programs. The broader implications of different historical interpretations about immersion origins will be taken up in order to illustrate how access to bilingualism was an issue of controversy. We will also focus on factors related to the lack of records on immersion available at that time.

The second subsection will analyze how power relations between different levels of political actors in Canadian society were intimately linked to the developments leading to the national promotion of immersion programs during the period extending from 1970
until 1981. We shall examine the extent to which language planning policies implemented at the provincial and national levels affected student participation in majority and minority schools in Canada. Our analysis will focus on how interest groups used positive immersion research findings to advance their political interests. This information will serve as a reference point when discussing some of the discriminating consequences arising from the promotion of immersion programs for students of francophone and/or lower class families.

The third subsection will address issues relating to power dynamics surrounding the promotion of French immersion programs from 1982 until 1989. We shall examine the interests and actions taken by political groups who wanted to safeguard French schooling outside Québec and draw attention to ways in which federal grants supporting bilingual education comparably benefitted immersion students and minority francophones. Our discussion will also examine how anglophone and francophone interest in becoming “bilingual” played a determining impact on the linguistic backgrounds of student populations attending French minority and immersion programs. Finally, we shall consider what immersion enrolment rates and evidence of social immersion class bias in Northern Ontario schools tacitly revealed about the French immersion phenomenon.

The fourth subsection of the analysis chapter will address issues relating to the institutional support to French immersion programs in light of the developments which occurred during the period extending from 1990 and 1995. We shall discuss how immersion attrition trends at the secondary level reflected macro power dynamics affecting the status of French as national bilingual capital. The close examination of immersion studies conducted at that
time will also reveal that a disproportionate number of students from higher SES families enrolled in French immersion programs. We shall also compare the political activities of anglophone and francophone interest groups working toward the improvement of French L2 programs and of minority French schools operating outside the province of Québec.

Chapter 4 makes a contribution to the understanding of French immersion developments in Canada by outlining the preliminary knowledge set forth in the study. This synthesis will present the theoretical and methodological basis for the analysis of the six research domains in the conceptual framework. We shall subsequently review the main research findings obtained in each of the four analysis sections which examined immersion developments between 1960 and 1995. The last section of the study will discuss what the results of the investigation helped us understand about areas of research relating to immersion and French minority education which deserve more critical attention.
Chapter Two

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY
THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter will present the theoretical notions underlying the methodological approaches employed for the study of French immersion developments in Canada. Subsection 2.1 will review leading sociopolitical theories concerning power dynamics and language status change. Subsection 2.2 will explain how the conceptual framework merged important research components to allow for the systematic analysis of the evolutionary trends of immersion programs. Subsection 2.3 will outline the research steps involved in the creation of an extensive literature database which over-arched the six research domains outlined in the conceptual framework. Subsection 2.4 will present the methods of analysis used to sort through the literature database while discussing how these approaches fit within the paradigm of human sciences and cultural research. Subsection 2.5 will conclude by explaining how the application of these theoretical and methodological principles will allow us to answer the six leading research questions guiding the orientation of the study.

2.1 Sociopolitical Perspectives on Language Dynamics

We shall discuss some leading social and political theories on language dynamics to situate our analysis framework from a theoretical perspective. One topic concerns social theories which discuss ways in which power dynamics are closely related to the production and
reproduction of linguistic capital in educational settings (Bourdieu, 1977; Heller, 1994). We shall consider how the ongoing process of language status change affecting different levels of actors within the framework of political control is linked to the process of power distribution among members belonging to the dominant and minority language groups (Labrie, 1992; 1994). The interdependent nature of the state institutional practices (Bergeron, 1993) will also be analysed in relation to sociopolitical issues concerning the construction of symbolic order and the allocation of status in society (Breton, 1984).

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu developed one of the leading social theories underlying the research approach of this study (Bourdieu, 1977: 645-668). His theory of linguistic production and reproduction postulates that language worth is proportional to the power and authority possessed by its group members which reflects the unequal distribution of resources and power manifested at the macro and micro levels in society. It can therefore become possible for members of a group to expand their power when they possess the means of imposing and appropriating their language as legitimate linguistic capital. These dynamics of power are reinforced when agencies of linguistic coercion imposed by gatekeepers of legitimacy favour dominant group members by further marginalising less powerful groups. Weaker groups are at risk of being disempowered when hegemonic standards of what constitutes legitimate language become widely accepted among members of both the majority and minority groups. Another disadvantage for minority groups is that quality of discourse is often evaluated in relation to the social value of the person rather than dialogue content. Bourdieu therefore argues that it becomes difficult for "illegitimate" speakers to access power until they reject norms of coercion in
order to appropriate the control of their linguistic resources to eventually impose them as legitimate capital in economic, political, social and cultural sectors of society.

Bourdieu also suggests that schools and learning institutions are central objects in the struggle for power since they monopolize the production and reproduction of knowledge and various forms of linguistic capitals. Ethnographic research conducted in a minority French school in Toronto illustrates this phenomenon by highlighting some characteristics of advanced and general French classes (Heller, 1995: 373-403). For instance, the research conclusions of the study show that students in the advanced French class received an education that prepared them for academic post-secondary education by strongly encouraging them to produce monolingual standard French by literature and decontextualized language whereas the general class placed less emphasis on the maintenance of French monolingual norms because they directed students toward the workforce or community college. Another important distinction between both programs is that advanced students were expected to collaborate with the teacher-centred distribution of talk and the order of established classroom dynamics while general students openly resisted authority through a much wider-spread use of code-switching practices that deviated from valued legitimate language. Findings also revealed that the advanced program catered to a homogenous middle-class group whereas students from working-class backgrounds and of Somali heritage were over-represented in the general class.

The model of political control developed by Bergeron (1993) and adapted by Labrie (1994) to the context of language diversity in the Canadian context provides a complementary
perspective on language power dynamics by suggesting that language status change be an ongoing process between agents in search of power and consensus. The main actors involved in these processes belong to three different levels of political organisation. The first level of actors consists of the Polity of citizens within political groupings. Different groups that we can classify at this level include the following: political parties, interest groups, professional elites, social classes, ethnic groups and the sum of regional segments of citizens. The second level of political organization outlined in the model is the Govern which encompasses the judicial, administrative, legislative and governmental functions of the State. The third level outlined is the Regime of determining symbols such as the Constitution, Charters, Sovereignty and International Declarations. These categories of actors existing within the framework of political control are presented underneath.

**TABLE I**
List of the main actors in the framework of political control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIME Level III</th>
<th>International identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sovereignty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOVERN Level II</th>
<th>Judicial functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrative functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legislative functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Governmental functions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLITY Level I</th>
<th>Political parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interest groups, consultative groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political and social collectivities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional and cultural elites; ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional segments of citizens and the sum of Canadians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Labrie (1994), the systematic application of the political control theory allows for a comprehensive analysis of the ongoing evolution of conflicts and compromises characterizing language status change. His framework of analysis based on the notions outlined above provides an excellent means of assessment to learn how interactions between actors in the political organization of control are explicitly and implicitly involved in language planning dynamics. The table presented below offers more elaboration.

**TABLE II**

**Conflict and compromise in language status change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of conflict</th>
<th>Point of friction</th>
<th>List of Actors</th>
<th>Methods of action</th>
<th>Resulting policy</th>
<th>Nature of compromise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Polity (internal)</td>
<td>List of actors in Table I</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polity and Govern</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rebellion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polity and Regime</td>
<td></td>
<td>Revendication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Govern (internal)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Govern and Regime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regime (internal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The diagram interweaves six analysis sections to simplify the comprehension of the power dynamics involved during language status change. The analysis methodology begins with the identification of the conflict cause (Box 1) which may arise between actors from two or more levels in the same framework of political control or internally between two or more actors in the same political organization. The proper identification of the point of friction (Box 2) is important because it allows us to determine which actors (Box 3) are explicitly and implicitly involved with the conflict at stake. The methods of action (Box 4) resulting
from the turbulent dynamics between the actors in question correspond to manifestations expressed in the forms of opposition, rebellion, revendication and/or contribution. Commonly, the policy (Box 5) resulting from these manifestations is administered through political channels in the form of linguistic compromises (Box 6). The establishment of linguistic compromises can however trigger new conflicts needing to be resolved since they generally introduce change in the distribution of power dynamics which tend to favour certain group members at the expense of others groups with less power (return to Box 1).

Breton (1984: 123-144) offers another perspective on ways for government policies and practices to influence social dynamics by examining the symbolic dimension of order. More specifically, his theory of the production and allocation of symbolic resources stipulates that cultural and symbolic aspects of intergroup relations are central to the institutional policies and practices affecting linguistic and ethnic dynamics. This theory is exemplified through the analysis of State interventions directed toward the reconstruction of Canadian symbolic order identified as a means of attaining identity, way of life and language. For instance, Breton argues that institutional elites reacted to the mobilization of the francophone majority of Québec in the sixties by attempting to redefine the symbolic character of institutions. The Federal Government extended the underlying constructs of Canadian identity to include the notions of bilingualism and biculturalism as integral components of the national symbolic system. In subsequent years, policies promoting the concept of multiculturalism were passed to include a wider distribution of social status among the various ethnocultural and linguistic communities of Canada.
The theoretical considerations presented above are important for the study of French immersion developments because they consider ways that social institutions and language are intimately linked to the distribution of economic, social, political and symbolic resources among different linguistic and ethnocultural groups at the macro and micro levels. The conceptual framework presented in the next subsection will further explain how the common philosophical orientation of these constructs lay the groundwork for the analysis scheme used to study the sociopolitical evolution of French immersion programs.

2.2 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

We created the conceptual framework of the study to facilitate the understanding of ways that power dynamics were intimately linked to immersion developments. The table illustrated on the next page shows how language, politics and power shaped the social construction of immersion education. We will conduct this analysis in relation to four historical time periods characterizing important trends in the evolution of immersion programs. Furthermore, six interrelated research domains (A, B, C, D, E, F) will be analysed in relation to each other in the historical analysis of immersion developments.

The first aspect of the conceptual framework is the prevailing theme of language, politics and power which rests on the theoretical premises discussed in the previous subsection. For instance, the social theory of production and reproduction (Bourdieu, 1977) will be applied to the French immersion context to understand how the implementation of French
immersion programs helped dominant anglophone students access bilingual forms of knowledge while francophone minority children became increasingly assimilated to the dominant linguistic group. The application of Bourdieu's theoretical conceptions to the minority French context in Heller's study (1995) will serve as a reference point when examining the uneven distribution among the student populations attending French immersion streams and regular English classes. The model of political control developed by Bergeron (1993) and applied by Labrie (1994) to language policies will help us identify ways that interactions between actors in the polity, the govern and the regime historically influenced immersion developments. Finally, we shall refer to the theory of the production and allocation of symbolic resources (Breton, 1984) when analysing the ways immersion programs were used by institutional elites to construct a symbolic order in order to counteract Québec nationalism which threatened the survival of bi-cultural federalism.

**TABLE III**
The conceptual framework of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE - POLITICS - POWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HISTORICAL TIME FRAMES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 - 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970 - 1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982 - 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 - 1995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DOMAIN A</strong></th>
<th><strong>DOMAIN B</strong></th>
<th><strong>DOMAIN C</strong></th>
<th><strong>DOMAIN D</strong></th>
<th><strong>DOMAIN E</strong></th>
<th><strong>DOMAIN F</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Francophones</td>
<td>Immersion</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Immersion</td>
<td>Immersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immersion</td>
<td>&amp; minority</td>
<td>pressure</td>
<td>language</td>
<td>enrolments</td>
<td>funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research</td>
<td>education</td>
<td>groups</td>
<td>status</td>
<td>allocations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-23-
The second part of the framework consists of four time frames which mark important periods when French language status changes manifested at the macro level were closely linked to French immersion developments in Canada. The first period (1960-1981) will examine immersion beginnings in relation to the growing worth of French resulting from the Quiet Revolution of Québec and the passing of the *Official Languages Act* in 1969. The second time frame (1970-1981) shall focus on ways that language policies set forth by the province of Québec (Bill 22; Bill 101) and by federal authorities (1970 Bilingualism in Education Program) affected educational programs for official minority and immersion students on a nationwide scale. The third time frame (1982-1989) will analyse how federal attempts to promote French within the symbolic order of Canadian identity (the 1982 constitutional repatriations; the 1987 Meech Lake Accord proposal; the 1988 Official Languages Act) led to contradictions surrounding the importance given to French immersion education as opposed to French programs intended for minority francophone populations. The fourth time frame (1990-1995) will discuss how lack of consensus about the balance of power between Anglo and Franco Canadians as reflected by the failure of the Meech Lake Accord (1990) and the 1995 referendum affected immersion developments.

The last part of the conceptual framework includes six interdisciplinary research domains (A to F) which address the close connection between French immersion developments and broader sociopolitical dynamics manifested by various actors in the structure of political control in Canadian society. Each domain will be identified as a separate entity for analysis and will not follow any specific order. Rather, they will be treated from a holistic perspective in each of the four historical time periods. The Domain A examines the
evolution of research findings about bi-multilingualism and the efficiency of the immersion approach to second language education. The Domain B discusses ways that francophones outside the province of Québec and minority French schools were involved with the evolution of French immersion programs intended for nonnative speakers of French. The Domain C looks at the role of pressure groups whose lobbying activities were directed toward the improvement of French-second language programs. The Domain D examines how events and legislation affecting the national and regional status of French were linked to immersion developments which took place in the Canadian context. The Domain E assesses how immersion student participation rates changed throughout the evolution of these programs. The Domain F examines how government funding allocated through the Official Languages in Education Program (OLEP) supporting immersion activities changed throughout the evolution of the program on a national scale.

2.3 THE LITERATURE DATABASE

The application of the conceptual framework outlined above required the creation of an extensive literature database which considered ways that all six research domains (A to F) evolved within each of the four historical time frames of the study and in relation to the overriding theme of politics, language and power. Compiling the materials needed for the study required a multidisciplinary selective approach where the most appropriate data were carefully chosen. The chronological order of the research steps involved during the compilation process of the literature database is however difficult to outline here since
many research methods overlapped with one another. Therefore, we shall review the documents used for the analysis of French immersion developments in relation to their corresponding research domain(s) for the purpose of continuity despite the fact that domains do not prescribe to specific order or hierarchy in relation to other domains.

The topic of immersion research (Domain A) is an area which required the consultation of a variety of references located through a CD Rom search and a systematic review of relevant journal publications dealing with immersion education. Other interesting sources of documentation were graduate theses (published and unpublished) housed at the Jackson Library at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto. Course reading lists obtained in seminars held at OISE and interviews with academic specialists working in the field of French immersion and minority education also provided leads to relevant materials. Moreover, I consulted unpublished documents and papers to include materials existing outside the regular canon of immersion literature.

Some references used to document the topic of immersion research also shed light on issues concerning francophone involvement (Domain B) with immersion education. Other data examined includes periodical articles and government reports dealing with Franco-Ontarian issues and demolinguistic trends of minority Francophones which were consulted at the Centre for Franco-Ontarian Studies (CFOS) at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in Toronto and at the Centre for Research on French Canadian Culture (CRFCC) at the University of Ottawa. Staff at the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFAC) also helped me locate a summary report presented by the
Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF) which discusses the distribution of funding for French minority and second-language programs. Relevant information about bilingual immersion partnerships equally surfaced in publications issued by the Canadian Parents for French (CPF) pressure group.

Materials published by CPF were also extensively used for the analysis of the role played by pressure groups (Domain B) in relation to the promotion of French immersion programs in Canada. The quarterly CPF National Newsletters (1979- onward) gave updates on lobbying initiatives taken by CPF members on nationwide scale whereas the consultation of documents kept stored at the CPF national office in Ottawa additionally clarified the history of CPF. The annual reports of the Commissioner of the Official Languages were reviewed since they discussed some promotional activities undertaken by CPF volunteers at the national, provincial and local levels. Relevant journal articles and books which addressed the lobbying contributions of the St. Lambert Bilingual Study Group and the Terre-Neuviens français were also cited to offer a global portrayal of pressure groups.

It is important to mention that we took up many issues raised by the research domains when we examined the status of French (Domain D) in Québec and in the rest of Canada. For instance, the CD ROM inquiry conducted at the onset of the research process offered a list of relevant books and government reports dealing with sociopolitical aspects of linguistic issues concerning the official majority and minority populations of Canada. The Internet Search also provided access to legislative texts drafted by federal authorities and to the results of the two Québec referendums in 1980 and 1995 aimed at establishing
provincial sovereignty. Moreover, information dealing with language policies was retrieved while reviewing documents stored at the CFOS, the CRFCC and the FCFAC offices.

It was however more difficult to locate data on immersion student participation trends (Domain E) because government records did not extensively cover the four time frames of the analysis. These constraints impelled me to rely on the annual statistical reports entitled *Minority and Second Language Education, Elementary and Secondary Levels* which provide in-depth analysis of student enrolment trends in French minority and second-language programs for the time period extending from 1977-1978 until 1991-1992. Secondary and primary sources dealing with immersion enrolment numbers were not often cited for this study as they generally provided less detailed information than presented in the annual reports published by Statistics Canada.

The sixth domain examined for the study deals with funding allocations (Domain F) supporting immersion programs and related promotional activities. Finding data on this topic was complicated because details regarding how federal funding grants were spent by the provinces and territories was beyond the jurisdiction of federal authorities. The scope of the study also prevented us from analysing how each provincial government distributed its funds to French minority and immersion programs over a thirty year period. We therefore relied on summary financial reports located at the Secretary of State in the Ottawa-Hull region which traced a summary of the evolution of federal-provincial-territorial agreements. This data was further complemented by a summary report issued by *La commission nationale des parents francophones* (CNPF) which analysed the distribution
of funds issued by the Official Languages in Education Program (OLEP) to official minority and second-language programs. We also consulted other materials issued by the Commissioner of the Official Languages and Canadian Parents for French.

2.4 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The materials compiled in the literature database were analysed from a cultural approach to knowledge production. In the following account, we shall review the guiding principles characterizing the research process of the study while bringing attention to the relationships existing between immersion developments and broader sociopolitical influences manifested between various actors in the social organisation of political control. We shall equally examine the complementary properties of qualitative and quantitative methodologies which were interchangeably used within the parameters of an interpretivist framework for the analysis of the research domains.

The methodologies employed for this research were not governed by a preformulated hypothesis investigated from a top-down approach. Rather, the methods used for the analysis of the literature database stemmed from a cultural approach to knowledge production which can be defined as a branch of human science which adopts an interpretative stance when examining the meaning of activities in relation to their normative content and organizational properties (Heap, 1995: 271-292). This approach is instrumental for social research because it contributes to the acquisition of basic knowledge.
regarding the nature and characteristics of the activities and phenomena examined. Variable forms of knowledge and analysis methods can be used here since cultural science exceeds the technical delineation of qualitative and quantitative methods to embrace a more grounded approach to knowledge production. This method also promotes the fusing of three different kinds of cultural-scientific claims for the analysis of elements.

One kind of claims formulated in cultural research is normative arguments which make statements about conditional relations which are contingent to specific reference contexts (Heap, 1995: 271-292). The generalizations made about these conditional associations produce *a priori* claim justified in terms of necessary relations between the elements studied. Empirical claims are similar to normative ones since both are contingent upon their reference scheme and do not necessarily apply uniformly to all situations. However, empirical propositions differ in the sense that they describe states of affairs factually and can be known experientially through direct appeal to experience or valid inferences. Normative claims also resemble logical ones as both use *a priori* arguments to produce generalizations about activities studied. Logical propositions however differ from both empirical and normative claim by describing necessary noncontingent relations which produce independent conclusions whose negations are intelligible statements (idem).

The sum of the analysis sections of the study and the overall synthesis presented in the concluding chapter will incorporate all three kinds of cultural-scientific claims. The value of normative analyses will become most apparent when the organizational properties of the research domains will be analysed in relation to each other. The empirical research
cited in this study will primarily derive from quantitative research findings based on immersion student testing results and on statistical reports dealing with immersion participation rates, funding issues and the demolinguistic trends of the official language groups. The logical propositions will draw from the bulk of research findings presented in the analysis sections to tell us about empirical divergences which surfaced in immersion studies and about trends characterizing immersion developments in Canada.

2.5 Conclusion

The theoretical and methodological considerations brought forth in this chapter will allow us to frame the research objectives of the study. We first reviewed leading theories on language dynamics stemming from both sociological and political orientations. The social theory of production and reproduction (Bourdieu, 1977) will provide insight about the crucial role that school plays in the distribution of valued linguistic resources and various forms of knowledge among linguistic group members. The model of political control adapted to the linguistic issues in Canada (Labrie, 1994) will help us identify how the interaction between different levels of actors is involved in the mutating status of language. The theory of production and allocation of symbolic resources (Breton, 1984) will facilitate the understanding of some institutional policies and practices affecting cultural-symbolic aspects of intergroup ethnocultural and linguistic dynamics. Finally, we carefully examined how these theories lay the groundwork for the creation of the conceptual framework of the study to incorporate its thematic, temporal and propositional elements.
in relation to the guiding principles outlined by the six research questions.

The second part of the chapter focused on the methodological application of the various elements presented in the conceptual framework. For instance, we reviewed the research steps involved in the creation of an extensive literature database which took into account aspects of the evolution of all six research domains within each of the four historical time periods of the study. We discussed the kinds of materials used to document immersion trends and the measures taken to ensure that data outside the regular cannon of immersion literature. Attention focused on the philosophical orientation of the methodological approach used to sort through the data compiled for the study. We also examined how the formulation of normative, empirical and logical claims allows for the creation of foundational knowledge in the discipline of cultural research in human science, which will be applied to the sociopolitical analysis of French immersion developments in Canada.
Section 3.1
The Quiet Revolution and the introduction of French immersion

This section shall consider ways that sociopolitical factors affecting the French language status in Québec and Canada were intimately linked to early developments of immersion programs. Subsection 3.1.1 will examine how social changes manifested during the Quiet Revolution of the sixties were closely linked to the lobbying activities of anglophone parents directed toward the obtainment of French immersion classes. Subsection 3.1.2 shall address some of the broader issues raised by the origins of immersion programs in the Canadian context. Subsection 3.1.3 will draw attention to scarcity of documentation on French immersion programs during this time period. Subsection 3.1.4 shall synthetise ways in which francophone and anglophone dynamics were linked to immersion origins.

3.1.1 A HISTORICAL PORTRAIT OF THE ST. LAMBERT EXPERIMENT

The following account will address some of the broader sociopolitical factors explicitly and implicitly related to the establishment of French immersion programs in the Canadian context. Ways in which those social changes in Québec during the sixties affected anglophone interest in learning French as a second language will be discussed.
Furthermore, we shall examine the role played by pressure groups and affiliated community members who directed their efforts toward the establishment of French immersion classes in Québec which eventually expanded across the country.

Evidence of bilingual education moved towards French immersion during the Quiet Revolution of the sixties when the francophone majority of Québec used their numerical strength within the province to challenge the supremacy of power within the hands of the anglophone majority of Canada. Until then, the anglophone population of the province had mainly sustained its dominance through the control of economic institutions while the majority of francophones were relegated to subordinate positions and peripheral activities (Levine, 1990: 18). It is also important to note here that until the sixties, a large proportion of francophones provided labour in agriculture, lumber, mining and manufacturing industries across the province of Québec despite the existence of a small clerical and professional elite (Heller, 1990: 69). The French language subsequently carried an inferior status to English which was maintained as the preferential language of work in management level positions in private sectors and in society at large. These dynamics therefore made it possible for a small proportion of francophones in direct contact with Anglophones in work settings to learn some English while most anglophones enjoyed a social condition which did not compel them to learn how to speak French.

The anglophone dominance in Québec however began to decline as a result of the social transformations triggered during the postwar period. The government of Québec dissociated itself from the Catholic Church to assume a more active role in provincial and
national affairs. Some subsequent changes included the democratisation of the educational system and the creation of thousands of professional and management positions in the public sector of the province requiring French proficiency (Heller, 1990: 69). The growing attraction to Toronto as a financial centre helped unlock positions in the private industry previously monopolized by an anglophone elite. Demographic changes within the French-speaking community of Québec also led to the épanouissement de la francophonie which increasingly defined itself in relation to its urban lifestyle rather than its traditional association with rural working-class settings (Levine, 1990: 43).

The promotion of French capital in Québec was probably less beneficial for the anglophone minority of the province as many began to lose certain of the privileges associated with being the dominant group of the country (Labrie, 1992: 25). One of the ways anglophone parents reacted to these changes consisted in taking steps to ensure that their children could become better adapted to employment markets requiring French knowledge by learning the language. This objective was however difficult to achieve at that time since children from English-speaking families rarely came into contact with francophone peers. The lack of extensive French L2 programs offered in the minority English schools of Québec were blamed as responsible for this problem. For instance, it was argued that audio-lingual teaching strategies adopted by most French L2 teachers insufficiently prepared students to develop their oral communication skills since more importance was placed on the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar rules through the use of pattern drills. Others also felt that 20 to 30 minutes of daily French instruction time inadequately prepared students to speak with native speakers in everyday situations (Genesee, 1987: 9).
Despite these drawbacks, the idea of switching to the French school system was not always seen as an attractive alternative to anglophone parents. Many parents valued their right to minority English instruction in Québec which allowed children to maintain their L1 skills while others felt hesitant about sending their children to the catholic system when confessional protestant instruction was offered in the English schools of the province. Another factor which probably incited anglophone parents to prefer the English school system was that teaching staff working in French schools often seemed unprepared and/or unwilling to cope with students with a limited understanding of French (Heller, 1990: 71). The geographical segregation of the two communities did not help the Anglophones in the western part of Montréal since most of the French schools were situated in the eastern part of the city. It is also important to note that majority schools were more crowded due to the integration of francophones from rural areas to the metropolitan and to the “revanche des berceaux” where French-speaking families of long term residence had large families.

The disadvantages associated with French majority instruction subsequently led a group of anglophone parents from St. Lambert Montréal to lobby for bilingual programs which could allow their children to reach high levels of French proficiency while maintaining their first language (Ouellet, 1990: 6). This group of parents subsequently solicited the help of the McGill Language Research Group whose research had shown that learning languages exerted positive cognitive effects (Genesee, 1984: 40). One of the ways Dr. Lambert more specifically helped the parent group achieve its mandate was through his initiative of paying the Berlitz Language School in New York for the authorisation to apply their immersion teaching approach in Canada (Genesee, 1987: 11).
The immersion approach differed from the more traditional teaching methods since it promoted the use of authentic learning situations where the target language of instruction was to be used as the primary medium of communication for teacher-student and student-student interactions (Heller, 1990: 73). The idea of promoting this method seemed innovative at the time since earlier research conducted in the United Kingdom and the United States provided results which reinforced negative stereotypes about bilingual education. Result interpretations had in the past decades suggested that children learning two or more languages generally performed less well in school than unilingual peers (Darcy, 1953; Haugen, 1956). Discriminating stereotypes about bilingual education subsequently persisted until the sixties despite the fact that such research conclusions generally failed to take into account that comparison groups shared different socioeconomic and ethnocultural backgrounds and life experiences (Tabouret-Keller, 1988: 38). In light of these differences, it is important to note that immersion programs intended for English-speaking Québeckers significantly differed from bilingual programs designed for children from minority and/or immigrant backgrounds since the anglophone minority of Québec occupied high SES ranks and constituted the majority group of the country.

With the academic support offered by the McGill group, the St. Lambert parents convinced authorities of the South Shore Protestant School Board to implement an immersion Kindergarten class in the suburbs of Montréal for the 1965-1966 school year. The fact that people lined up hours in advance to secure a place for their children in the experimental immersion class indicated that similar programs would be requested in the nearby future by other parent groups in the province and elsewhere in the country (Genesee, 1984: 80).
3.1.2 THE ORIGINS OF THE IMMERSION APPROACH

Academics who have written on the origins of immersion offer various interpretations depending on whether they see it as a form of bilingual education or whether they adopt a specialized definition. We must first understand that most of the literature referring to the origins of French immersion education cites the St. Lambert Experiment as the first program of its kind (see: Calvé, 1988; Genesee, 1987; Heller, 1990; Ouellet, 1990; Rebuffot, 1988). Many of these authors contend that social changes manifested during the Quiet Revolution of the sixties were intimately linked to immersion beginnings since the latter provided an interesting alternative to secure a brighter future for anglophone children by allowing them to master both English and French. We must however point out that other authors (OISE-Bilingual Education Project Staff, 1976: 597-605) are in opposition to this view as they suggested that two other bilingual programs in Ontario offered immersion education prior to the establishment of the St. Lambert program.

According to this report, immersion instruction was first introduced in 1958 by the St. Joseph School situated 132 miles north of Sault-Saint Marie in Wawa Ontario. However, the results of an interview conducted with the school administrator Mme Rose Leclerc by Ouellet (1990: 11-15) suggested that francophone children might have been mistaken for anglophone students. The respondent explained that anglophone students first attended the St. Joseph School during the 1953-1954 school year when the anglophone nuns of the St. Joseph congregation began using the basement of their chapel to offer primary English classes to anglophone children. They transferred these classes two years later to an
educational establishment to accommodate twelve classes of students ranging from grade one to grade eight. According to Mme Leclerc, two francophone nuns moved into the basement of this school in 1958 and began to offer a French program for a group of francophone children in grades one to four which was separate from the English program for the anglophone groups. Francophone children might have appeared at first glance to be immersion students because the administrative staff of the school was predominantly English and the francophone student population was demographically overpowered.

This same report also suggested that immersion instruction was offered by the Toronto French School as early as 1962 (OISE-Bilingual Education Project Staff, 1976: 597-605). As a matter of fact, the results of a documentary analysis conducted by Ouellet (1990: 12) indicates that newspapers (La Presse, Le Soleil, Le Devoir, The Globe and Mail) released articles supporting the view that immersion education was indeed available at this private nonconfessional school in the early sixties. However, in her documentary analysis of materials drafted by the school authorities, Ouellet notes that the terminology describing their French second-language program progressively changed throughout the mid to late sixties. For instance, a report published by officials of the Toronto French School in 1965 characterized the initial developments of their French language program as a bilingual education model and research centre, but not as an immersion program. The following excerpt from official documentation of the school illustrates this view:

.... the objective of this school is to provide Canadian children with a non confessional bilingual education based on an academic program of high quality. Therefore, this school is essentially for children from anglophone families. Given the lack of existing second-language teaching methods and curricular provisions
needed to meet the objectives set forth, our school has become a form of research centre to upgrade bilingual education (The Toronto French School, 1965: 12 in Ouellet, 1990: 12, Translation: Josée Makropoulos, 1998).

While "immersion" has always been viewed as a form of bilingual education, it is important to stress that bilingual education did not equate the use of the immersion approach which was adapted from the Berlitz Language School of New York to the Canadian context by Wallace Lambert in the sixties (Genesee, 1987). Rather, it seems likely that the intensive French program offered by the Toronto French School was a parallel development. The close analysis of official documents issued by the Toronto French School revealed that authorities of this private establishment only began to use the concept of immersion for their 1968-1969 registry which coincided with the period they were asking for funding from corporations and foundations (Ouellet, 1990: 11-15). In conclusion, we can therefore suggest that bilingual education existed in various forms but the term was first coined with the St. Lambert Experiment in Montréal Québec.

3.1.3 LACK OF FRENCH IMMERSION ENROLMENT RECORDS

The exhaustive review of the literature database compiled for the study revealed that few private or government organizations recorded student participation trends in pioneer immersion programs. Genesee (1984; 1987) suggested that the St. Lambert Experiment encouraged parent groups in other parts of Québec, Ontario, New-Brunswick and Nova-Scotia to lobby for the establishment of similar immersion classes in the late sixties.
(Genesee, 1984; 1987). An OISE Report published in 1976 provided a complementary list of schools believed to have offered immersion instruction to nonnative speakers of French in Canada during the late fifties and sixties (OISE-Bilingual Education Project Staff, 1976: 597-605). However, most of the remaining literature suggests that data on immersion enrolment trends and funding issues were scarce at this time.

Research conducted by Ouellet (1990: 9-10) did nevertheless offer some insight on the reasons why immersion records were improperly maintained in the province of Québec at that time. Results collected by means of interviews suggest that the Service de recherche et d'expérimentation pédagogique (SREP) which was responsible for maintaining and distributing information related to French immersion programs did not properly maintain records before 1968 because of political tensions and administrative turnovers at the Ministry of Education of Québec. We also found that documentation about enrolment trends and matters concerning the financial support to these programs were first published in the mid seventies. The situation however began to change in the seventies as the Federal Government became increasingly active in taking steps to counteract Québec nationalism through the adoption of language planning practices stemming from a personality approach. The Official Languages Act adopted in 1969 declared French and English as the official languages of Canada and introduced institutional bilingualism in federal institutions (Labrie, 1992: 28). We shall see in the following subsection dealing with the period extending from 1970 until 1981 that federal authorities later created a national funding program which extended financial support toward official language education for minority and second-language learners to further promote linguistic dualism.
3.1.4 CONCLUSION

The analyses set forth in this subsection allowed us to gain some understanding about the macro dynamics which marked the early developments of French immersion programs in the Canadian setting. In conclusion, we shall ask ourselves how broader sociopolitical transformations affecting the interplay of power relations between francophone and anglophone groups in Canada played a determining role in the implementation process of French immersion programs intended for nonnative speakers.

We first examined the historical origins of French immersion education in Canada through the systematic analysis of interrelationships existing between language dynamics and power relations among members of the community in Québec. For instance, we underlined that social changes resulting from the mobilization of the francophone majority of Québec during the sixties promoted French as valuable linguistic capital in government and semipublic sectors. One of the ways the dominant anglophone population of the province reacted to these sociopolitical transformations consisted in establishing experiments toward the implementation of French immersion programs in their minority English schools. We also stressed that research contributed to the creation of the immersion experiment.

Research publications dealing with immersion origins suggested that two immersion programs had preceded the establishment of the St. Lambert Experiment. This view implicitly suggests that anglophone interest in immersion education might have been triggered for reasons besides the social transformations taking place in Québec at that time.
While other factors such as personal opportunities and the value of learning languages might also have been at stake, this view must be analysed more closely. In one case, Ouellet found that minority children receiving first language instruction were mistaken for immersion students because their social condition impelled them to receive their primary education in an anglicized environment which was primarily administered in the English language. In the second case, Ouellet’s documentary analysis of records maintained by the private Toronto French School indicated that forms of bilingual education had been offered for years but that authorities of this school only referred to the immersion concept in 1969 when they also happened to solicit agencies for more funding.
ANALYSIS
1970 - 1981

SECTION 3.2
Legitimizing French immersion growth in Canada

This section will discuss how different levels of actors in Canadian society facilitated the national expansion of French immersion programs which took place between 1970 until 1981. Subsection 3.2.1 examines how language planning policies implemented in Québec and throughout Canada affected student participation in official-language programs intended for majority and minority students. Subsection 3.2.2 will discuss the role of lobbying activities and positive research findings in the promotion of the immersion alternative. Subsection 3.2.3 will question how positive immersion research findings could have affected the public perception of regular English programs and schools oriented toward minority francophone children. Subsection 3.2.4 will summarise how immersion developments which took place in the seventies reflected the existence of unequal power relations between members of different ethnolinguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

3.2.1 LANGUAGE PLANNING POLICIES: MINORITY AND IMMERSION STUDENTS

The purpose of the following analysis is to contrast how official-language programs designed for second-language learners and official minority students in Canada evolved
during the seventies. We shall first discuss how linguistic policies affecting the administration of Québec schools became a source of conflict between the linguistic groups of the province. This analysis will also examine how federal investments in the promotion of the official languages comparatively benefited anglophone immersion students and francophone students attending minority French schools outside the province of Québec.

We previously suggested that immersion instruction was an attractive pedagogical alternative for the anglophone minority of Québec since it allowed its members to learn their first language in homogenous minority English schools while reaping the socioeconomic advantages associated with learning French. The situation was however different for Québec allophones whose mother tongue was neither French nor English since they lived in a society which did not place great value on their first language. Many immigrant and minority families preferred regular English programs for anglophone children rather than French schools. Several members of the francophone majority of Québec who felt concerned about their ability to secure the primacy of French in the province subsequently disapproved of Bill 63 which posed no restrictions on the language of instruction (French or English) for children from allophone families (Plourde, 1988: 40).

The reelection of the Liberal Government however brought change to these dynamics as the latter passed the *Official Languages Act* (Bill 22) in July of 1974 as was promised since 1970 (Labrie, 1992: 28). This Law declared French as the official language of the province of Québec and implemented measures to safeguard its status in government and public sectors. Steps were taken to reduce allophone participation in English schools by requiring
that eligibility be determined on the basis of the English mother tongue as evidenced from language tests. This measure however generated additional conflict between the various language groups because it was difficult to enforce provincial test norms. Many francophones subsequently believed that testing was too lenient whereas several anglophone and minority groups in the province of Québec considered the Bill too strict.

The several conflicts regarding access to English minority schools were eventually settled when the newly elected Parti Québécois passed the *Charter of the French Language* (Bill 101) in 1977. This legislation reinforced the official status of French in governmental institutions and semipublic administration by declaring French as the official language of the courts and legislature of Québec (Labrie, 1992: 30). Sections 72 and 73 of the Charter dealt with minority education. These sections specified that eligibility for English minority schools would be thereafter restricted to students whose parent(s) had received their elementary education in the English schools of Québec (Martel, 1991: 117). The “Québec clause” was denying any future immigrant/refugee and anglophone students from other parts of Canada the opportunity to attend English minority school by making it mandatory that they register in the French school system of the majority in the province of Québec.

Since 1969, federal authorities had adopted the personality approach to language planning by promoting official bilingualism in government and educational sectors across the Canadian territory. The *Official Languages in Education Programs* (PLOE) were established in 1970 to provide financial assistance to the provincial and territorial governments offering official minority and second-language programs (Poyen, 1989: 12).

The formula payment grants distributed during this period were based on average provincial costs and enrolment costs of education for each children learning the official minority language. Three formula payment plans were designed for students at the elementary and secondary levels. The elementary and secondary levels minority official language education formula covered 9% of the average annual provincial cost of educating each child studying the official minority language on a full-time basis. Students at the elementary level eligible for this plan had to receive at least 75% of their instruction in the minority language while secondary students had to receive at least 60% of their instruction time in the official minority language. The two educational programs which could therefore receive funding under this formula plan were official minority schools (English schools in Québec and French schools in the rest of Canada) and French immersion programs offering intensive second-language instruction (Poyen, 1989: 72). Schools were also eligible for funding under the elementary and secondary levels second official language instruction formula (Secretary of State, 1983: 2). This payment plan offered to subsidize 5% of the average cost of educating each student in the second official language.

The elementary and secondary levels minority and official language education administration costs formula was however designed to improve conditions for the anglophone and francophone official minority populations by agreeing to subsidize 1.5% of the administrative costs associated with providing minority official language education.
The non-formula payment programmes which helped subsidize the costs of offering elementary and secondary minority official-language instruction were the special projects programme and the language training centres programme. The special projects programme proposed to subsidize on a cost-sharing basis with the provincial governments special projects and experimental programs to fulfill pressing needs in both minority language education and second language instruction. The language training centres programme offered provincial governments until the end of 1979 up to $100,000 per year for the purpose of establishing or improving language centres (Secretary of State, 1983: 4-5).

The close examination of the funding payment programs allows us to see that formula payments were designed to offer equal treatment to both minority and majority students learning French on a full-time basis outside the province of Québec. The only slight difference between both groups of students was that 1.5% of the administration costs for the official minority groups were subsidized at that time. It does not seem clear whether non-formula payments were distributed on an equal basis between majority and minority educational institutions since it was the responsibility of the relevant provincial departments to request federal funds for special projects and language training centres.

We would like to argue here that federal transfer payment plans treating immersion and French minority students did not sufficiently take action to remedy the disadvantaged situation for francophones living outside the province of Québec. The 1.5% administrative cost subsidy differentiating both groups has little significance when we consider that French minority classes were usually administered by English school boards despite the
fact that English schools in Québec were generally administered by the anglophone population of the province. The disadvantaged status of francophones outside Québec also made it more difficult for them to access federal subsidies associated with native instruction since they did not dispose of a legal recourse to obtain French minority schools.

An example which illustrates how federal attempts to equally promote the official languages in education disadvantaged minority francophones in comparison with anglophone majority comes from the developments which took place in Newfoundland during the seventies. Geographical and socioeconomic barriers made it difficult for French-speaking Newfoundlander to maintain strong links with francophone communities in other parts of Canada. Nevertheless, the remote nature of the west coast of the Island allowed large waves of settlers from the Îles de la Madeleine to maintain a strong sense of ethnolinguistic vitality following their arrival to Newfoundland in 1713 and 1783. These dynamics altered at the turn of the 19th century when the assimilatory forces of the English language infiltrated the once isolated fishing community of the British Colony which had never disposed of French programs to transmit their language and culture to subsequent generations (Heffernan, 1979: 24-26).

Approximately twenty years after the integration of the British Colony of Newfoundland in the Canadian Confederation, the francophone community was able to access French education as a result of the growing value of French as the co-official national language. However, it could be argued that educational gains obtained at this time reinforced the subordinate status of the francophone community. Francophone parents forming the Terre-
Neuviens français pressure group faced much opposition in the early seventies as they tried to obtain minority French classes. The lack of success encountered by this group subsequently led them to establish bilingual partnerships with anglophone parents who wanted to establish an immersion program for their children. Authorities responded comparably better to the second scenario as they agreed to implement an immersion program in the Cape Saint-George region available to children of anglophone, mixed and francophone families for the fall of 1975 (idem: 24-26). These developments therefore show that francophone parents who wished to offer their children an education in their mother tongue had no other alternative but to send them to an immersion program at that time.

The nature of these developments can subsequently lead us to argue that in some cases, the promotion of the official languages in educational sectors disadvantaged minority francophones since growing attraction to French immersion programs created competition over valued French linguistic resources. As we can see in the table on the following page, participation in French immersion programs dramatically increased across Canada during the late seventies. Nearly 20,000 students had enrolled in French immersion classes available outside the province of Québec during the 1976-1977 school year (Canada, Statistics Canada, 1979: 19). These statistics continued to increase in the nine provinces excluding Québec by an additional 13% during the 1977-1978 school year (Canada, Statistics Canada, 1979: 19). It is important to note that immersion enrolment numbers outside the province of Québec were highest in regions (Ontario and New-Brunswick) where linguistic contacts between anglophone and francophone groups were the most common. Lack of statistics about enrolment developments which took place in Alberta
after the 1976-1977 school year however makes it difficult to assess whether this province continued to dispense immersion instruction to many students. We did not cite enrolment rates in the Yukon and the North-West Territories because they were not yet administering immersion programs at that time. We should also mention that enrolment numbers for the period preceding the 1976-1977 school year were not presented in the table below because Statistics Canada did not publish official documentation pertaining to this time period.

**TABLE IV**

Enrolments in French immersion programs outside Québec from 1976 until 1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>2,003</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>1,301</td>
<td>2,094</td>
<td>3,141</td>
<td>4,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>1,290</td>
<td>1,666</td>
<td>2,521</td>
<td>3,113</td>
<td>4,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.B.</td>
<td>2,504</td>
<td>3,179</td>
<td>3,763</td>
<td>4,501</td>
<td>5,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>12,363</td>
<td>12,764</td>
<td>15,042</td>
<td>16,333</td>
<td>17,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E.I.</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>1,023</td>
<td>1,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>1,208</td>
<td>1,286</td>
<td>1,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>19,766</td>
<td>20,181</td>
<td>26,004</td>
<td>30,167</td>
<td>35,170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


For comparison purposes, we wanted to provide a detailed description of the funding allocations distributed under the formula and non-formula programmes supporting
minority French school systems and English school systems operating outside the province of Québec in relation to the amount of French instruction time dispensed to students on a weekly basis. This objective was however impossible to achieve due to research limitations. The enrolment data published by Statistics Canada provided an exhaustive account of national student participation trends in minority, immersion and core French programs for the period extending from 1976-1977 until 1991-1992 but did not offer an analysis of change from 1970-1971 to 1975-1976. We should also note that immersion programs offering less than 75% of the school week to French instruction at the elementary level were included in the 1976-1977 statistical count but were excluded from the figures examining enrolments from 1977-1978 onward. Another limitation was the unavailability of data for the percentage of the school week allotted to French minority instruction in the province of Ontario for the school years 1975-1976 and 1976-1977 and for the province of Alberta in 1975-1976. Furthermore, Alberta did not provide separate data on enrolments in minority French schools and second-language immersion programs from 1976-1977 until 1980-1981.

Another research limitation concerned the lack of detailed information on the distribution of funding grants through the OLEP among various provinces at this time. The descriptive and financial summary of federal-provincial programmes for the official languages in education for the period extending from 1970-1971 until 1982-1983 analyses how formula programmes were distributed to minority and majority schools but does not make these distinctions with respect to non-formula programmes. It therefore becomes difficult for us to assess whether each student enrolled in minority French schools during the seventies received an equal amount of funding in comparison to majority students learning French
in core or immersion programs. These limitations also make it difficult to evaluate the
degree of educational inequalities existing between both groups.

3.2.2 PROMOTING FRENCH IMMERSION BENEFITS

The next inquiry shall further examine the role of contributing factors leading to the
nationwide expansion of French immersion programs in the seventies. The focus is how
bilingual leaders and CPF worked together to promote the advantages of learning French
as a second language. We will subsequently analyse the nature of research findings
emphasizing the pedagogical merits of the immersion approach to French second-language
education in relation to their broader sociopolitical context.

The first issue addressed here concerns the relationships existing between the federal
promotion of national bilingualism and the establishment of the Canadian Parents for French
(CPF) association. The origins of this group dates back to Keith Spicer’s involvement in the
creation of grassroots approaches to bilingual education while he was serving his last year
as the Commissioner of the Official Languages of Canada (Goodings, 1985: 11). We know
this political leader as the father of CPF since he organized a conference in March 1977
which gave thirty concerned parents the opportunity to meet influential leaders who
similarly wanted to help young people from English and third-language backgrounds
develop a better understanding of the French language and culture of Canada.
The strong political support extended to the founding members of the CPF group enabled the organization to expand its membership to include more than five-thousand patrons within a short two-year period (CPF Newsletter, No 6, 1979: 1). Increased funding grants available at that time also gave the association the opportunity to increase its involvement in the promotion of French second-language programs. For instance, CPF published in its Newsletters that it received federal funds from 1979 onward for the publication of quarterly national and provincial newsletters. In 1980, The Secretary of State gave CPF another grant valued at $45,500 to assist them in the production of an information guide discussing the benefits associated with French immersion instruction (CPF Newsletter, No 8, 1979: 1). This project was subsequently contracted out to academics who published in 1983 the educational booklet *French Immersion: The Trial Balloon That Flew* (Lapkin, Swain and Argue, 1983: 1-26) which was reviewed and referred to in CPF National Newsletters.

Although research was conducted independently from political groups, we need to point out that findings generally painted a favourable picture of the immersion program which coincided with the political interests of CPF. One of the areas of research which was subject to considerable attention at that time concerned the cognitive consequences of bilingual education. As previously mentioned, several studies conducted before the sixties promoted negative stereotypes about bilingual children by repeatedly attributing learning difficulties to the simultaneous exposure to two languages. Research conducted from the seventies onward however provided reassuring results since they generally showed that immersion learners did not suffer from intellectual confusion (D'Anglegan and Tucker, 1971) or mental deficiencies (Rogers, 1976). Investigation results often revealed that
immersion instruction favoured creative development while allowing many students to excel in academic subjects (Swain, 1984: 90). Some findings also suggested that learning two languages allowed immersion students to obtain superior scholastic aptitude measures in comparison with peers in regular English programs (Morrison and Pawley, 1983).

Another research topic which received much attention at the time was whether anglophone participation in French immersion programs adversely affected the maintenance of English first language skills. This issue was mostly investigated by means of comparison tests administered to students in immersion programs and regular English classes. Interestingly, results generally indicated that students in both programs performed comparably well in English (Hylton, 1982; Sweetman, Leblanc and Lawton, 1975; Lapkin, 1982) while also showing that immersion learners often did as well or outperformed unilingual anglophone peers (Genesee and Stanley, 1976). Students in EFI streams were also believed to experience a temporary lag in English during their first primary years until they reached the level of their peers in the regular program by the end of grade four (Swain, 1976: 7).

Many studies conducted in the seventies examined the adequacy of French language skills among immersion students. The comparative analysis of core French programs and immersion instruction generally showed that students in French immersion streams were more likely to develop functional levels of bilingualism as opposed to a limited understanding of French (Connors, Ménard and Singh, 1978). Investigators however shared divergent views concerning the most suitable immersion alternative (EFI, MFI, LFI) for children of different age groups. The early French immersion (EFI) option offered
younger children classroom instruction exclusively in French until the "bilingual phase" where English language instruction time progressively increased from grade 2 or 3 onward (Carleton Board, 1994: 1.5). Students opting for the middle French immersion (MFI) alternative followed the regular Core French program until the end of grade 4 or 5 when they received an equivalent amount of instruction time in both official languages. The Late French Immersion (LFI) option which offered about 75% of the total instruction time in French was designed for intermediate students having received core French instruction.

The results of research investigations comparing the French competency of immersion students enrolled in these streams generally showed that EFI groups were more likely to develop high levels of oral French proficiency (Swain, 1978) but that differences among all groups were minimal for reading comprehension skills and writing abilities (Genesee, 1978; Lapkin and Swain, 1984; Morrison and Pawley; 1983). We also need to point out that it was difficult to evaluate the performance of students in the different streams because EFI students received up to twice as much French instruction time by the end of grade 8 as did their LFI peers. Moreover, MFI and LFI were more accessible to children from nonofficial language backgrounds since they could learn English more intensively at the primary level.

The growing diversity of older immersion student populations led some theorists to question whether ethnic minority children were doing as well as anglophone peers in these programs. In some cases, teachers perceived allophone children who were proficient in their native tongue as capable of outperforming immersion peers from strictly anglophone families (Cummins, 1981: 24). The comparisons made between immersion students and
children from francophone families however painted a less favourable picture for native speakers of the French language. Research results generally showed that oral communication skills of immersion students were weaker than those of francophones but that differences between both groups were less obvious on listening comprehension measures (Genesee, 1978; Swain and Lapkin, 1981).

3.2.3 OUTSIDERS ON THE PERIPHERIES OF IMMERSION RESEARCH

The impact of immersion research findings on the public perception about minority francophone students and children enrolled in regular English programs will be further discussed here. We shall argue that cognitive theories about bilingualism played an important role in the promotion of immersion instruction by providing scientific rationales to legitimate immersion instruction. One concrete example illustrates how the application of the common underlying proficiency model (CUP) and the developmental interdependency hypothesis allowed researchers to explain why immersion students were obtaining high proficiency scores in both official languages while excelling academically.

The CUP model, as illustrated in Table V on the next page, suggests that languages share common underlying characteristics which facilitate the acquisition of additional languages. These concepts underlay the theoretical structure of the developmental interdependency hypothesis which suggests that learners with high proficiency in their first language are in a better position when learning a second since they have access to a wide bank of
transferable forms of linguistic knowledge. This theory also stipulates that mastering two or more languages is especially useful for the acquisition of new languages.

In many instances, the CUP model served as an ideological reference to explain the nature of positive research results drawn from immersion settings. An example is the notion that French immersion instruction could allow anglophone students to maintain high levels of first language proficiency transferable toward the acquisition of French as a second language. It was also believed that children from nonofficial language backgrounds who mastered both their native tongue and English (L2) were predisposed to language instruction since they possessed common underlying proficiency knowledge in two languages which could be transferred to learning French in immersion settings.

**TABLE V**
The common underlying proficiency model (CUP) of bilingual proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surface features of L1</th>
<th>Surface features of L2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Source: Cummins, 1984.

The application of the threshold hypothesis also played an important role by helping researchers to rationalize why bilingual immersion students usually excelled in academic
subjects even if ethnic bilingual minorities were found in the past decades to obtain substandard school results. The discrepancies of scores obtained by both groups was attributed to the threshold hypothesis suggesting that different forms of bilingualism can exert either positive, neutral or negative cognitive effects on the intellectual development of children. This theory postulated that people with high threshold levels of mastery in their L1 and L2 are likely to reap the cognitive benefits associated with “additive” forms of bilingualism (Cummins, 1978: 858). However, bilingual people with low threshold levels of competency in two languages were considered at risk of suffering the negative effects caused by “semilingualism”. Dominant bilinguals mastering one language were usually identified neutral as they were believed to rarely manifest positive or negative effects.

The theoretical framework of the threshold hypothesis was adapted to bilingual educational contexts to show that minority language groups needed strong first language skills to avoid negative cognitive effects. For instance, investigators used this rationale to argue that Finnish migrant children learning Swedish as their second language often exhibited difficulty in carrying out complex cognitive operations because they were suffering from “semilingualism” caused by a lack of proficiency in their native tongue (Cummins, 1979: 222). Conversely, the application of the threshold hypothesis to the French immersion context in Canada helped construct the belief that bilingual education for majority children was cognitively enriching. This was in part possible due to the fact that immersion research conclusions repeatedly showed that anglophone immersion students generally reaped the cognitive rewards of “additive” bilingualism which allowed them to transfer cognitive gains achieved while learning French as a second language. The
enrichment of cognitive bilingual capacities was consequently believed to be largely responsible for the average to superior results immersion students were obtaining in academic subjects such as mathematics, science and geography (Cummins, 1978; 1979; 1981; 1984; Cummins and Swain, 1986; Lambert, 1977; Swain 1984). The theoretical concepts underlying these results are illustrated in the Table VI presented on the next page.

**TABLE VI**
The 3-level cognitive approach to bilingualism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTS</th>
<th>TYPE OF BILINGUALISM</th>
<th>COGNITIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Additive bilingualism</td>
<td>positive cognitive effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>high levels in both languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Dominant bilingualism</td>
<td>Higher threshold level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxx</td>
<td>native-like in one of the languages</td>
<td>neutral cognitive effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower threshold level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Semilingualism</td>
<td>negative cognitive effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxx</td>
<td>low level in both languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>xxxxxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxxxxxx</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cummins, 1979.

It is nevertheless important to point out that cognitive rationales such as the ones referred to in the CUP model and the threshold level hypothesis received critical responses at that time. It was suggested that cognitive theories were incomplete because they did not take
into account the impact of socioeconomic and ethnocultural inconsistencies existing between dominant and minority groups of bilingual students (Edelsky et al., 1983; Martin-Jones and Romaine, 1986). These critics maintained that applying cognitive rationales to bilingual learning contexts had discriminating consequences for minority children from lower SES families because they implicitly suggested that ability to succeed in school was related to intellectual capacities rather than to the forms of “knowledge” children had previously acquired in their family environments. These drawbacks also led some critics to recommend the implementation of culture-specific tests which take into account community-based norms for the evaluation of literacy skills of bilingual students (idem).

While many issues brought forth here were not explicitly applied to the context of immersion programs, there nevertheless exist many reasons to believe that cognitive rationales contributed to the marginalization of minority francophone children. For instance, comparisons made between immersion and native French-speakers showed that anglophone children achieved French proficiency levels comparable to those obtained by francophone peers whose native tongue was French. The nature of such conclusions can lead us to question whether investigators took into consideration that anglophone immersion students could be socially perceived as speaking prestigious forms of French despite its strong English influence because it was modeled on standard French (generally Parisian or International) rather than the popular vernacular forms of French spoken by Canadian francophones from working class backgrounds. It also seems important that we assess whether studies comparing the achievement of immersion students and native speakers of French obtained favorable results because they failed to consider that
anglophones had the benefit of living in a society where their L1 was widely valued while native francophones were disadvantaged in terms of education and socioeconomic status.

Another discriminating consequence arising from the application of cognitive theories to the immersion context concerned the public perception about regular programs. Research results obtained at this time repeatedly indicated that immersion children and students in mainstream classes obtained comparable results in English but that immersion learners were more academically inclined. These conclusions were justified on the grounds that learning well two languages in French immersion streams generally allowed children to reap cognitive benefits and as a result, to excel in the acquisition of academic forms of knowledge such as mathematics, geography and sciences. The children in the regular programs were comparatively portrayed as less academically inclined because they spoke only one language or in the case of immigrants, were affected by the consequences of "semilingualism". Such conclusions however seem unclear when we consider that English programs catered to more students from lower socioeconomic and third language backgrounds and to children suffering from learning difficulties in academic subjects.

While the topic of elitism did not receive much consideration in the seventies, it is important to note that research results already published in 1972 revealed evidence suggesting that EFI Kindergarten children were more likely to come from professional and multilingual families than their peers attending regular English programs. Data for this particular study was collected by means of interviews with parents of Kindergarten children enrolled in EFI classes (sample of 42 parents) and regular English programs.
(sample of 38 parents) in the Ottawa region. The findings collected for the purpose of this investigation are particularly interesting because they implicitly suggest that research conclusions drawn from the comparison of children in immersion and regular programs did not properly represent both comparison groups. As shown on Table VII illustrated on the next page, the general profile of parents of students in immersion programs and in regular English classes shared different ethnolinguistic and socioeconomic characteristics.

### TABLE VII
SES background of EFI parents in Ottawa, 1972

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>French immersion parents</th>
<th>English program parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil servants</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled backgrounds</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-multilingual</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual English</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic or little French</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good or excellent French</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from: Wesche, Swain and Machin, 1972.

The close reading of the data presented in the table above reveals that a higher proportion of children from professional family backgrounds attended the immersion stream (34%) rather than the regular English program (12%). The immersion student population was also exposed to more languages (19%) in their home environments in comparison with peers in the mainstream program (11%). Parents of students in regular programs were
mostly unilingual (86%) or spoke basic or little French (87%) while significantly more immersion parents claimed to speak good to excellent French (29%). We can infer that more students in regular programs had parents working in the Public Service (54%) in comparison to immersion peers (34%) since the period the study was carried out preceded the creation of thousands of bilingual positions in government sectors. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that EFI Kindergarten classes operating in Ottawa attracted more students from professional bi-multilingual families than did the regular program.

3.2.4 CONCLUSION

The research findings presented in this section focussed on the connection between immersion developments which took place between 1970 until 1981 and power dynamics manifested between different levels of actors of political control in Canada. In conclusion, we shall consider how sociopolitical processes subject to ongoing changes led to the unequal distribution of educational opportunities for children from different ethnolinguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

One of the research conclusions was that language planning policies implemented by the Québec Government and federal authorities played a determining role on student participation in majority and minority schools. Social conflicts and provincial legislation aiming to control who could access minority English schools reflected the existence of conflict between the francophone, anglophone and allophone groups of Québec who
shared different interests about the promotion of French capital in the province. The federal response to these tensions consisted in promoting French and English as the official languages of Canada and in establishing the OLEP which directed funds to support official minority and second-language programs administered on a nationwide scale. The limitations of research made it difficult for us to assess whether funding was distributed on an equal and equitable basis between minority and majority students learning French outside the province of Québec. Nevertheless, we expressed the view that federal promotion of the official languages was in certain cases more beneficial for the anglophone majority. In some cases, francophones living outside the province of Québec decided to attend French immersion programs offered in English schools.

The influence of government intervention on the educational progress for different groups of children was also observed through the examination of the creation of the CPF national pressure group. We saw that federal interest in bilingual education gave concerned anglophone parents the opportunity to join their efforts in establishing a national network directed toward the improvement of French second language programs in Canada. It was also suggested that interest groups such as CPF promoted positive research findings about the immersion program to dispel parental fears about the reliability of the immersion pedagogical alternative to French second-language education.

The final analyses looked at ways that positive immersion research findings had marginalizing consequences for students from lower SES backgrounds who were over-represented in mainstream English programs as well as minority francophones. It was
shown that cognitive theories were used to suggest that immersion students were more academically gifted than students in regular programs since they reaped the cognitive benefits of knowing two languages while also giving anglophone students the opportunity to learn French as well as minority francophones for whom this language was their mother tongue. A closer look at evidence of social class bias however indicated that children in regular English classes came from poorer families than their immersion peers did.
Section 3.3

*Power dynamics surrounding French immersion promotion*

The following section will examine the interplay of power dynamics manifested between the official language groups of Canada with respect to the promotion of French immersion programs between 1982 and 1989. Subsection 3.3.1 will analyse the different political interests of anglophone and francophone pressure groups in relation to sociopolitical developments affecting language status in political and educational sectors for majority and minority students. Subsection 3.3.2 will discuss how the national promotion of the official languages influenced the selection of students attending minority French schools and immersion classes outside the province of Québec. Subsection 3.3.3 will critically discuss the broader implications of immersion enrolment trends as well as research findings published during the period of investigation. Subsection 3.3.4 will consider what these issues implicitly revealed about the sociopolitical traits of immersion education.

3.3.1 **Lobbying for different causes?**

We shall examine the interests of different stakeholders involved in and/or affected by the promotion of the official languages in educational sectors across Canada for the period
from 1982 to 1989. This inquiry will consist of looking at the lobbying activities of anglophone and francophone pressure groups working toward the improvement of French educational services outside Québec. We shall look at the close connections between sociopolitical dynamics and language status change as well as the development of OLEP funding allocations supporting French minority and second-language programmes.

The pressure group most involved in the promotion of French second-language programs during the eighties was the Canadian Parents for French (CPF) national association. This group promoted the ideological vision of bicultural harmony suggesting that immersion and core French programs offered students from anglophone and allophone backgrounds the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the French language and culture of Canada. The idea of creating bilingual partnerships with minority francophones from Québec was subsequently important for CPF during the eighties. Some concrete examples include the launching of provincially-run projects such as *Rendez-Vous Canada* designed to improve dialogue between immersion and minority students (CPF, No 41, 1988: 1) and the establishment of national agreements of cooperation between CPF executives and members of the *Fédération des francophones hors Québec* (FFHQ) who agreed to work together to promote their common objective of improving French education (CPF, No 14, 1988: 1).

The notion of bilingual partnerships as illustrated above also served as an argument in lobbying actions taken by CPF executives to counteract the proposed funding cuts to official minority and second-language programs operating across Canada. This lobbying action began in 1989 when the Federal Government proposed a policy of fiscal restraint on
the funding subsidies allocated by the Official Languages in Education Program (OLEP) which offered financial support to provincial and territorial governments offering official minority and second-language education (CPF, No 6, 1979: 1). Hence, these cuts risked affecting French educational programs administered in minority separate French schools and in majority English schools which taught immersion and Core French.

Members of the CPF national pressure group subsequently reacted to the proposed budget cuts by lobbying against federal planning bodies in the hope of exerting sufficient political pressure to counteract the proposed cuts expected to save the Canadian Government approximately $200 million on a yearly basis (Poyen, 1989: 76). The CPF group began by soliciting the assistance of the Department of the Secretary of State whose lack of decision-making power at the budget-planning level hindered its participation despite its active role in administering the funds of the OLEP to provincial and territorial governments. The strategy of requesting the services of the Cabinet Committee however proved more effective as it gave CPF the opportunity to voice their concerns about French minority and L2 education while also giving the Cabinet Committee the chance to discuss the problems associated with a possible fiscal imbalance and the uneven distribution of funds (idem: 76).

Another strategy employed by CPF consisted in launching a national awareness campaign to inform patrons across Canada about the proposed federal budget cuts to immersion and core French programs. For instance, the association published an article in the CPF National Newsletter which urged parents, school boards and interest groups to establish consultation processes with provincial and federal authorities (CPF, No 12, 1981: 3). The Chairperson
of the Council of Ministers of Education (Canada) (CMEC) subsequently responded to this initiative by inviting CPF executives to a meeting scheduled for June 1981 (Poyen, 1989: 83). The outcome of this session however did not match the objectives of CPF since their position paper recommending different funding solutions was not implemented since the CMEC felt it lacked authority to act for the Ministries of Education.

Despite the lack of explicit recognition for these lobbying activities, CPF authorities nevertheless believed that their association played an important role in the funding consensus reached on December 20, 1983 (Poyen, 1989: 83). These bilateral agreements which were concluded between federal authorities and each of the provincial and territorial governments allowed for $200 million federal grants to be distributed toward the support of official minority and second-language programs for the period between 1983-1984 and 1985-1986. This Protocol was extended in 1985 to provide a 3% increase for the 1986-1987 and 1987-1988 school year periods (Department of the Secretary of State, 1989: 6). Funding distributed under this plan was available to public and private school systems offering primary and secondary education and for post-secondary education (CPF, No 30, 1985: 1). Conditions set forth in the revised agreements also proposed a more equal distribution of funds to students enrolled in French immersion programs. Students in EFI streams at the primary level qualified for a full-time equivalent which required that a minimum of 75% of instruction time be conducted in French whereas students in the MFI programs receiving at least 50% of their instruction in French qualified for a half of a full-time equivalent. Less stringent criteria of full-time admissibility were introduced at the secondary level by only requiring that students receive 60% of their school-load in French (Dietrich, 1991: 11).
We should note here that changes in the calculation of formula spending for full-time students was beneficial to the anglophone majority learning French as a second language in immersion and core French programs. As shown in Table VIII, a higher proportion of federal subsidies were directed toward the majority English schools offering French second language programs in comparison with the funding given to French schools at that time.

**TABLE VIII**  
Federal subsidies to French minority and L2 education outside Québec, 1983-1988

Adapted from: Department of the Secretary of State, 1989.

We can see in the illustration above that 25.3% of the funding supporting French educational programs between 1983 and 1988 was allocated to immersion programs. This amount is considerably high when we consider that immersion instruction was an optional
program that only catered to a select student population from higher SES cohorts. Core French was accessible to a wider student population since it was compulsory in most majority English schools. However, it only received 4.2% more funding than did French immersion streams since it was taught for a more limited period and was calculated at 5% of the total cost of instruction in comparison to the 9% distributed for the immersion students. The francophone communities living outside the province of Québec receiving mother tongue instruction in French minority schools obtained 45.2% of the total portion of funds allocated during that time period. The English majority schools in the nine anglophone provinces of Canada therefore obtained 9.6% more funding allocations distributed by the OLEP to teach French L2 education than did minority francophones.

For comparison purposes, we can calculate how many students received French instruction in minority, immersion and core French programs to analyse how much money was allocated to each of the programs. The next table presents this data by drawing attention to how many students were enrolled in various forms of French programs available in the nine predominantly anglophone provinces. We can see that minority French schools offered first language instruction to only 6.5% of the student population learning French in the nine provinces other than Québec. The majority English schools conversely offered French language instruction to 93.5% of the student bodies learning this language at the primary and secondary levels. Most of the students (84.8%) learned the co-official language in core programs which generally offered about thirty to forty minutes of instruction time in French. However, we can also see that 8.7% of the students outside Québec were learning French in immersion programs during the period extending from 1983 to 1988.
TABLE IX
Enrolments in French minority and L2 programs outside Québec, 1983-1988

The data presented in the above table however does not adequately show how much French language instruction was offered to students in proportion to the amount of instruction time they received in this medium. In order to offer a more accurate picture, we examined how many students were enrolled in French classes in the nine provinces excluding Québec for the period extending from 1983 to 1988 in relation to a 100% full-time equivalency. This form of calculation was necessary to fully understand enrolment discrepancies in relation to the amount of time students spent learning in French. However, it is important to stress that formula funding directed toward subsidizing the costs of French minority and immersion education for this period was not calculated on a
100% full time equivalency but rather, in terms of an envelope calculation which disadvantaged minority francophone students attending French schools. This can be explained by the fact that official-language minority schools outside the province of Québec provided on average 15% more French instruction time than did immersion programs for the period extending from 1983-1988. However, both programs received the same proportion of funds when they met the requirement for the full-time equivalency. The data presented in Annexes 1 to 3 which describes how much French instruction time was offered to students attending minority, immersion and core French programs outside Québec allowed us to construct Table X which illustrates the enrolment numbers based on the amount of time students French in minority and second-language classes.

**Table X**

Enrolments (100%) in French minority and L2 programs outside Québec, 1983-1988

![Pie chart](chart.png)

We can also see that core French programs offered 42.1% of the available French instruction time in the nine predominantly anglophone provinces during the eighties. The amount of weekly native instruction time offered in minority francophone classes constituted 31% of the total French language instruction time offered in primary and secondary schools between 1983 and 1988 in comparison to 26% in the French immersion programs. It is also interesting to note the results obtained from the comparative analysis of the student enrolment in French programs operating outside Québec calculated on a 100% participation rate with the funding distribution grants provided during the 1983-1988 period. Our calculations reveal that French immersion programs received an amount of funding which closely corresponded to their enrolment quotas. The situation was different for core French programs which received about 13% less funding in relation to their 100% student participation numbers. It could be argued here that the differences in the funding calculations for these programs are inequitable when we consider that French immersion education was an elective program which generally catered to higher SES student populations whereas core French was usually a compulsory subject.

Even though minority French schools received funding which exceeded by approximately 14% the direct amount of time for their first language instruction, we would like to argue that more funding needed to be directed to French schools operating outside Québec to ensure the equal treatment of the co-official minority population. This position may be defended for the reason that supplementary money needed to be allocated to French minority boards which were considerably smaller in comparison to majority boards and subsequently required special allocations to offer the same programs available in larger
scale boards which operated on larger economic scales. It is also difficult to assess whether federal grants intended to support immersion and core programs were in effect directed toward French language instruction since this funding could have been budgeted as an integral aspect of the general revenue of the board. The inaccuracy of audits and financial accounts however makes it impossible for us to evaluate statistically the extent to which English boards were spending federal transfer payments for their French programs.

Another important reason justifying why French schools outside Québec received proportionately more funding than immersion programs by means of non-formula programmes has to do with the minority status of francophones. Until the eighties, minority francophones were denied educational resources equal to those of the majority populations and in certain cases, enrolled in immersion programs since first language instruction was not otherwise available to them. This situation only began to improve in the early eighties following the events surrounding the passing of the Charter of the French Language (Bill 101) by the provincial government of Québec in 1977. This law played a catalyst role in the improvement of minority official language rights as it became a source of conflict by entering in direct conflict with the personality approach to language planning favoured by the Federal Government by placing restrictions on the eligibility of access to minority English schools in Québec. Sections 72 and 73 of the Charter were also contested for the reason they denied English-speaking Canadians migrating to Québec the right to have their children instructed in their mother tongue and compelled new-coming immigrants to enrol their children in majority French schools (Martel, 1991: 71).
The Federal Government nevertheless counteracted the provincial powers exercised by the Parti Québécois through the adoption of the Charter of Rights which was entrenched in the Canadian Constitution at the time of its repatriation in 1982. This measure was passed despite the formal opposition expressed by the Québec Government and the First Nations of Canada who equally wanted increased territorial powers (Levasseur, 1993: 127). One of the leading priorities of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was to secure the rights of official-minority populations in the country through the adoption of transportable rights. Section 23 which is outlined below defines the criteria needed to qualify for minority official-language instruction available both in Québec and in the rest of Canada:

(1) Canadian citizens
(a) whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside*, or  
(b) who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction in the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province, have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province.
(2) Citizens of Canada of whom any child has received or is receiving primary or secondary instruction in English of French in Canada, have the right to have all their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the same language.
(3) The right of citizens of Canada under subsections (1) and (2) to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the language of the English and French linguistic minority population of a province
(a) applies wherever in the province where the number of children of citizens who have such a right is sufficient to warrant the provision of them out of public funds of minority language instruction; and
(b) includes, where the number of those children so warrants, the right to have them receive that instruction in minority language educational facilities provided out of public funds.
*Section 23 (1) (a) does not apply to Quebec.
Criteria for eligibility for minority schools outlined in section 23 of the Canadian Charter were modelled on sections 72 and 73 of Bill 101 in order to counteract territorial powers assumed by the province of Québec. Federal supremacy was subsequently imposed in 1984 as the Supreme Court of Canada declared sections 72 and 73 of Bill 101 as unconstitutional since they violated the provisions for minority populations as set forth in section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Martel, 1991: 24). This ruling was based on the premise that federal authorities (Canada clause) could override provincial jurisdiction (Québec clause) to ensure the uniform treatment of official minority language groups. Nevertheless, the paragraph (1) (a) of section 23 which gives access to minority schooling on the basis of mother tongue was not implemented in Québec where the failure of Bill 22 had proven the impossibility to measure with a test what is one's mother tongue.

It is important to note that federal actions taken to protect minority anglophones in Québec greatly benefited the co-official minority francophone population living outside the province of Québec. For instance, the right to manage publicly-funded minority schools as was conferred by section 23 guaranteed anglophone communities in Québec the right to retain this service while giving francophone minority groups access to this same entitlement which was historically denied to them (Lécuyer, 1996: 3). The provision set forth in section 23 stipulating that minority communities have the right to educational services equal to those enjoyed by the dominant linguistic group was also beneficial to francophone groups living outside Québec since it conferred a legal recourse to obtain basic educational standards as those given to anglophone counterparts (Martel, 1995: 169). We can therefore argue that subsequent educational gains obtained by minority francophone
groups lobbying for the establishment of minority French schools and/or better quality educational services logically resulted in the distribution of additional funding grants needed to implement these services. For these reasons, it seems plausible that a higher proportion of federal transfer grants were distributed to minority French schools in the form of non-formula programme assistance to help them finance project developments to ensure the equitable treatment of Francophone students in relation to the majority.

The case of the Marchand family offers a concrete example which illustrates how educational provisions set forth in section 23 of the Canadian Charter specifically allowed minority francophones to improve their social condition. Controversy surrounding this matter began in the early eighties when anglophone school board authorities denied francophone students attending the Le Caron high school in Penetanguishene Ontario the necessary funding allocations needed for the construction of workshops and wood and metal-working classes (Heller, 1994: 116). School board representatives maintained that student enrolment numbers at the minority French school were too low to justify this kind of expense and that francophone students should use the equipment facilities housed in a nearby English school. This proposed deal was however not appealing to the minority students because it imposed considerable travelling time for the use of technical equipment which was only available when the anglophone students were not using it. Francophone students also felt that asking them to sacrifice their right to first language instruction was unfair since they would be subject to an English-speaking environment in a majority school.

The Marchand family subsequently challenged the school board refusal to grant the
requests of the francophone students by taking the case to the provincial courts with the assistance of the Association canadienne française de l'Ontario (ACFO). It is important to stress here that section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) was central in this case since it authorized the majority group to decide what constituted "sufficient enrolments" while also providing the official minority population a legal recourse to advocate for their rights (Martel, 1991: 34). For instance, school board authorities maintained that access to minority language educational facilities provided out of public funds was dependent on the clause of limitation of numbers which they felt applied to the Le Caron school since the minority school population needing access to a workshop was relatively small. The ACFO conversely argued that francophone students should be entitled to minority services equal in value to those given to the majority group because this right was guaranteed by article 23 (1) (b). The Ontario Court of Appeal brought closure to this case in 1986 by ruling in favour of the Marchand family and by recommending the application of a proactive treatment of the official language minorities.

3.3.2 ANGLICISING THROUGH MINORITY AND IMMERSION EDUCATION

Despite the gains section 23 offered to francophone populations, it nevertheless remained clear that the constitutional amendments of 1982 had been brought forth without the consent of Québec, the only province where a majority of francophones lived. In attempt to remedy this situation, the conservative federal government of Brian Mulroney subsequently introduced the Meech Lake proposal in 1987 to help Québec re integrate into
the Canadian Constitution as modified in 1982 (Labrie, 1992: 36). One of the conditions which were proposed included the recognition of the distinct character of the province of Québec. These conditions were initially accepted by the Canadian government leaders who unanimously agreed to sign the Meech Lake proposal which was to come into effect in 1990 (Bourhis, 1994: 30). However, the enforcement of this Agreement failed in 1990 as the legislative assemblies of two provinces refused to ratify it in the prescribed delay while another province de-ratified it. The conception of linguistic duality included in this agreement however survived through the implementation of the 1988 Official Languages Act which made provisions to enhance the vitality of the French and English languages in government and educational sectors in Canadian society (Labrie, 1992: 36).

We would like to argue here that contradictions inherent to language planning policies promoted by the Federal Government at this time were also reflected in micro settings such as school settings intended for francophone and anglophone children living outside the province of Québec. The first set of contradictions we shall examine concerns the linguistic dynamics manifested in French homogenous minority schools operating in predominantly anglophone areas. As an illustration, only 57% of the students who met the eligibility requirements set forth in section 23 were actually attending French minority schools in Ontario during the 1986-1987 school year (Martel, 1991: 127). In theory, the low proportion of students enrolled in French language minority schools suggested that some Franco-Ontarian parent(s) had become fully integrated into the dominant culture. Research however indicated that some anglophone families were also sending their children to minority French schools since many had begun this practice prior to the establishment of
the 1982 constitutional amendments which restricted access to French minority schools (Heller, 1994) in the way as the Charter of the French Language (1977) restricted access to English minority schools operating in the province of Québec.

The anglophone presence in minority French schools subsequently became a source of conflict among different stakeholders. On the one hand, many anglophone parents who were unsatisfied with the quality of immersion programs legitimized their preference for minority French schools on the grounds that they provided “authentic” learning environments with native-speaking models while others genuinely believed their children would better understand and appreciate the francophone culture (Heller, 1990: 78). Some anglophone families also enrolled their children in minority French schools when immersion classes were not available or when French instruction in majority schools did not correspond to their religious orientation. In certain cases, francophone authorities even went as far as to solicit anglophone parents to enrol their children in minority French schools since low enrolment numbers of “eligible” students jeopardised the survival of existing schools. Many anglophone parents also felt that it was unfair that publicly-funded learning institutions adopt discriminating measures against the majority group who also wanted to benefit from the services their tax dollars were helping to support.

The anglophone perspective was however less commonly shared among the francophone parents of children attending minority French schools. For instance, many francophones living outside the province of Québec had come to view homogenous French schools as a means to preserve and reproduce their ethnonlinguistic vitality. The struggle to maintain
French boundaries in settings where English was the dominant sociocultural and economic force also incited many parents to resent anglophone participation in "their" schools since they believed it would promote assimilation. Another common fear expressed by minority francophones was the belief that the academic content of programs would suffer as a result of the presence of children whose understanding of French was limited (Heller, 1990: 78).

The growing anglophone attraction to French minority schools led investigators to inquire whether French immersion programs were in turn attracting minority francophone students. To a large extent, research findings obtained in the early eighties (Bordeleau, 1987: 19-23) helped reduce concern about the potential loss of francophone enrolments to dominant English schools by showing the differences between anglophone and francophone parental perceptions about the immersion program. The analysis of questionnaires distributed to francophone and anglophone residents in Northern Ontario revealed that more than half of the Franco-Ontarian respondents felt it was unlikely that minority children would transfer out of French homogenous schools to enter immersion programs. The majority of the respondents from both groups also felt that immersion growth was not directly related to declining enrolment numbers in minority French schools and that it did not negatively affect minority Francophones outside the province of Québec. Nevertheless, some francophone respondents and a large proportion of anglophone respondents felt francophone attraction to immersion was highly plausible.

The study in question shed some light on the issue of francophone participation in immersion programs but failed to investigate whether francophone minority children
enrolled in EFI class at an early age rather than switching to immersion streams later on. Subsequently, we would like to show that considerable research provided evidence that children eligible for minority schooling were in fact enrolling in French immersion programs. As previously mentioned, instruction in French minority programs was not always available to francophone children living outside the province of Québec during the seventies. The case of the immersion program implemented in the Cape Saint-George region of Newfoundland in 1975 showed that some minority francophones only had the option of attending immersion programs introduced by English majority schools since their minority status prevented their access to separate programs (Heffernan: 24-26).

Data collected in Alberta immersion classes in the early eighties similarly revealed that French immersion programs catered to a significant proportion of francophone students from both franco dominant and anglo dominant family backgrounds (Carey and Cummins, 1983: 159-167). This particular study was conducted in three English primary schools (Grandin, St. Thomas, Our Lady of Lourdes) operating under the jurisdiction of the Edmonton Catholic School System (ECSS). As we can see in Table XI, the francophone and mixed groups of students of the study presented in the same colour because all groups were identified as coming from families where French was widely spoken in the home. Despite their extensive use of English, members of the mixed groups did not differ substantially from the francophone group since code-switching practices and bilingualism are common characteristics of minority francophone populations living outside Québec and among linguistically-mixed families where one of the parents is francophone often use English as the language of compromise (Heller, 1987; 1990; 1995; Heller and Lévy, 1994).
Table XI
Evidence of francophone participation in Edmonton immersion programs

Adapted from: Carey and Cummins, 1983.

The data presented in the table also shows that minority francophone children from franco dominant (25.2%) and mixed (29.1%) backgrounds formed 54% of the student population attending the immersion programs examined. The group of students identified as anglophone and other only constituted 45.6% of the total immersion student population. The investigators of this study defined the anglophone students as those who speak English most of the time at home and the allophone children as those who speak a language other than French or English to one or both of their parents. Using this definition, students from mixed-marrriages or in families subject to the assimilation process could have been identified as anglophone if English was used as the language of convention in family
settings even though they did not culturally identify with the dominant group. Students in the "other" category could also have a francophone parent despite the fact that they spoke a third language at home. It should also be noted that children from varying linguistic backgrounds whose L1 is neither French nor English might have belonged to "la francophonie internationale". Students falling in this category could include people of Lebanese or Haitian descent who speak Arabic or Creole as their native tongue while having been exposed to French as their second language in school.

The problems associated with the proper identification in terms of which students were francophone, mixed, anglophone and "other" however did not receive much consideration at that time. Nevertheless, findings were interpreted as meaning that francophone children in the ECSS immersion classes performed as well on their French cloze test as did children attending minority French schools in the province of Ontario. One of the conclusions which subsequently arose from this analysis was that francophone participation in immersion streams might negatively affect the performance of anglophone peers since the latter were found to score lower English test results than did the more homogenous groups of children attending French immersion streams in the province of Ontario. Subsequently, the investigators questioned whether separate francophone and anglophone schools were the best solution for francophones since the data interpretation suggested they could obtain approximately the same French results in either an immersion program or minority school.

The data analysis also led investigators to question whether anglophone students were disadvantaged by the presence of francophones in the immersion programs since the
Edmonton group of anglophone immersion students performed less well than anglophone students enrolled in an anglophone only immersion program in Ontario. As a result of these research contradictions, it was suggested that separate school systems might be more beneficial to the anglophone students in comparison to the minority francophone groups.

We would like to however suggest that more attention needs to focus on the problems associated with the proper identification of students attending immersion and minority French schools. The immersion children identified as francophones were clearly advantaged by the fact that French was more widely spoken in their family environments in comparison to francophones who did not respect monolingual standard French norms during their language interactions. It therefore becomes difficult to assess how francophone children performed in both programs because not all the francophone children attending the immersion program were selected for analysis. The students belonging to the “mixed” category were not included with the “francophone” category of immersion students despite the fact that members of both groups mainly came from French speaking families. In other words, the test results of francophone immersion students (approximately 29%) who did not speak mostly in French at home were not averaged with the test results of francophone immersion students whose families maintained French as the primary language of communication (approximately 25%). Furthermore, no distinctions were however made between the “francophone” and “mixed” groups of francophone students attending the Franco-Ontarian schools. Rather, the investigators included the test results of the francophone, mixed, anglophone and “other” categories as a whole when referring to student populations in Ontario French schools despite the fact that such distinctions were
made with the immersion population. It can therefore be argued that comparing a group of "francophone" immersion students who speak mostly in French in their home environments with a heterogenous group of students attending a Franco-Ontarian school that includes anglophone, allophone and francophone peers who speak less French seems hazardous because it risks disproportionately advantaging the immersion profile.

Another interesting aspect of this study is the research observation that francophone participation in immersion streams was potentially harmful to anglophone students as the control group in the Alberta study obtained lower English scores in comparison to immersion students attending more "anglophone" immersion programs in Ontario. In response to this concern, we would like to suggest that minority francophone students were at much greater risk of assimilation than children from anglophone families where both parents were native speakers of English. Anglophone students did not collectively risk losing their mother tongue as a result of francophone presence in their classes because they lived in majority environments where their first language carried great worth. The situation was however different for the francophone students because they did not have the option of receiving minority French instruction since the latter was not available at the time of the study. Furthermore, we can argue that accepting francophones in immersion programs was financially lucrative for English schools because they increased their enrolment numbers and were enabled to receive federal subsidies valued at 9% of the total cost of educating students on a full-time basis. The presence of francophone students in the immersion classes was also beneficial to the immersion students learning French as a second or third language since it provided them with native French-speaking role models.
The sociopolitical conditions surrounding this case were typical in the seventies and early eighties since minority francophones were significantly disadvantaged prior to the introduction of section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982. It is therefore safe to presume that it became less frequent in subsequent years for minority francophone students to choose immersion programs because no other alternative was available to them. Nevertheless, research results obtained in the nineties revealed that francophone immersion participation persisted in other regions of Canada. A concrete example pertains to a study (Lapalme, 1993) conducted in northern Ontario in the early nineties. As we can see in the table below, a significant proportion (26.3%) of francophone parents were sending their children to one of the three grade 5 immersion programs offered by the Sudbury District Roman Catholic Separate School Board (S.D.R.C.S.S.B).

Table XII
Ratio of anglophone and francophone immersion parents in Sudbury

Adapted from: Lapalme, 1993.
The data presented above reveals that about two-thirds of the immersion parents were anglophone (67.7%) in comparison to a low proportion of parents from third-language (4%) and bilingual backgrounds (2%) where choosing this alternative. The situation however changed with the second generation of children which is more bilingual as is illustrated in Table XIII which shows the ethnolinguistic family background of the immersion students.

**TABLE XIII**
Ethnolinguistic family background of immersion students in Sudbury

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both parents are anglophone</td>
<td>39.7% (126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterolinguistic couple (French and English)</td>
<td>39.1% (124)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents are francophone</td>
<td>3.2% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents come from heterolinguistic backgrounds</td>
<td>0.3% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parents and missing values</td>
<td>17.7% (56)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


We can see that 39.1% of the immersion students whose parents participated in the study came from heterolinguistic families where one parent was francophone and the other was anglophone. Although these families had the option of sending their children to minority French schools, it seems the immersion compromise was more appealing because it offered the opportunity to learn French in an English environment. We would like to also suggest that minority French schools could have seemed less appropriate for some “bicultural” families because instruction in English is generally offered only at the beginning of grade four in order to provide minority francophone children the opportunity to develop stronger
foundations in French. In comparison, the EFI alternative might have more appealed to couples where one parent was francophone and the other anglophone because their children could begin learning English as early as Kindergarten. The notion of “bilingual harmony” associated with immersion education also coincided with the genuine objective of many heterolinguistic couples where one parent is francophone and the other anglophone.

Another important characteristic of the immersion site examined is that approximately the same number of immersion students came from mixed marriages where one parent was francophone (39.1%) in comparison with anglophone families where both parents spoke English as their first language (39.7%) while a small proportion of francophone couples (3.2%) also chose the immersion alternative despite the availability of French schools. The results of this investigations subsequently led Lapalme (1993) to question whether immersion instruction offered to children from bicultural families accelerated their assimilation process by denying them sufficient exposure to the culture of French.

3.3.3 INCREASING EVIDENCE OF IMMERSION LIMITATIONS

The following discussion will draw attention to research and statistical evidence suggesting that limitations of French immersion programs were becoming increasing apparent in the eighties. For instance, the results of a study conducted in Northern Ontario majority schools in 1980 revealed that immersion students originated from more socioeconomic advantaged families than peers enrolled in regular English programs (Burns, 1986: Burns
and Olson, 1983; Olson and Burns, 1981). This data led investigators to suggest that high achievement scores of immersion students was not directly linked to the pedagogical implications of the program but rather, attributable to the fact that immersion classes catered to children whose families promoted academic success and valued the socioeconomic benefits of knowing French. Table XIV provides supporting evidence.

**TABLE XIV**
Incomes of immersion parents in Northern Ontario, 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0 - 488</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000 - 9 999</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 000 - 14 999</td>
<td>7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 000 - 19 999</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 000 - 24 999</td>
<td>18 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 000 - 29 000</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 000 - 34 999</td>
<td>19 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 000 - 39 999</td>
<td>4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 000 - 44 999</td>
<td>3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 000 - 49 999</td>
<td>3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 000 or more</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from: Burns and Olson, 1983.

We can see that average salaries of parents whose children were enrolled in immersion was much higher than the norms of the community. Approximately 2/3 of the immersion parents in the 1980 study had incomes in the $20,000 and above range while the population
sample of the regional mean for gross family income for 1979 was $10,899 (Burns and Olson, 1983: 203). The cross-tabulation of these findings with other research findings also led the investigators to conclude that middle class parents generally enrolled their children in the immersion streams because it coincided with their belief that the program offered access to bilingual skills which could lead to employment opportunities and social mobility.

The theory of immersion social class bias was however not always well received in public and academic sectors. For instance, Canadian Parents for French published articles which questioned the validity of the social class bias theory on grounds that immersion children speaking languages other than French and English and suffering from learning-related problems performed considerably well in the program (CPF, No 17, 1982: 6-7). Academics also challenged the immersion streaming theory by attributing its success to parental involvement and to student motivation (Guttman, 1983: 17-22). The philosophical underpinning of arguments counteracting evidence of class bias however did not bring forth any disqualifying evidence since knowing a third language and/or suffering from learning difficulties were not indicators of social class. Furthermore, we can argue that the suggestion that immersion is a self-selection process based on parental participation in educational matters supports in itself the idea that immersion students benefited from home schooling which prepared them to succeed academically.

It is interesting to note that evidence of immersion social class bias was accompanied by studies which questioned whether immersion programs were efficiently helping anglophone students develop high proficiency levels in French. For instance, research
indicated that mistakes made by immersion students were imbedded within a faulty linguistic system whereas native French-speakers usually made unsystematic errors (Spilka, 1976; Adviv, 1980). Systematic errors made by French immersion students often included mistakes with gender distinctions, verb tenses, plurals and word order within sentence structures (Harley, 1984). Research also revealed that immersion students regularly reached a plateau of second-language proficiency after spending a few years in the program and spoke a language dialect often coined “classolecte” (dialect of the classroom) which was found to usually fossilize at an early age (Bibeau, 1984; Lyster, 1987).

In light of these findings, we can suggest that immersion students experienced difficulty developing their expressive skills to the same extent as did francophone students since the curricular objective of the program was language and not culture. Anglophone students in the immersion programs usually wanted to learn French to improve their career opportunities and at the same time, familiarize themselves with another language. It however seems doubtful that these students identified themselves with the francophones of Canada and subsequently, wanted to develop a sense of belonging with this ethnocultural group. Furthermore, the curricular objective of the immersion program was to provide students the opportunity to achieve functional levels of French proficiency without undermining the maintenance of their first language skills in English. The immersion students were thus in an educational setting which encouraged them to identify with the dominant anglophone culture while at the same time, made it difficult for them to develop the skill and/or interest to learn how to speak like a native francophone.
The participation trends of students in French immersion programs as documented by Statistics Canada supports the view that immersion students valued the English language to a much higher extent than they did French. This may be illustrated by the fact that most of the students who enrolled in French immersion programs during the eighties never completed their studies until the end of high school. Table XV offers supporting evidence compiled from statistical government records on immersion student participation rates.

**TABLE XV**

*Enrolments in French immersion programs outside Québec, 1982-83 till 1988-89*


We can see that the Early French Immersion (EFI) program beginning in Kindergarten and/or grade one attracted the highest proportion of students and maintained high enrolment rates throughout the primary years (grades 2 and 3) before reaching a plateau
at the junior level (grades 4,5,6). The Middle French Immersion (MFI) programs helped enrolments remain relatively stable at the primary level by attracting a significant number of students in grades four and five. The Late French Immersion (LFI) streams beginning in grades seven or eight gave rise to a temporary increase in the level of intermediate student participation during the late eighties. Nevertheless, we can see that approximately half of the students who enrolled in the EFI streams in Kindergarten abandoned the program before the end of primary school throughout this period of time. It also remains clear that less than 10% of the immersion students completed the program till grade 12.

Despite the low immersion completion rate, statistical findings suggest that more anglophones were in effect learning French during the eighties. The 1986 census indicated that the proportion of French speakers among non-francophone groups tripled between 1951 until 1986 (Lachapelle, 1992: 91). Rates of anglophone bilingualism were found to increase most rapidly in geographical areas where both official linguistic communities coexisted, thus leading government authorities to suggest that immersion national growth was in part responsible for these social change (Statistics Canada, 1991). However, data also revealed that anglophone proficiency in French was highest among school-age students and that age groups of 25 years and above had lower levels of bilingualism rate.

We can see on Table XVI that anglophone bilingualism rates for the 1991 year corresponded to the school years. The data shows that 8% of Anglophone children aged between five and nine had a basic understanding of the French language at this time. This rate increased to 14.8% among the students in the age category extending from ten till fourteen years. Youth
of fifteen to nineteen years of age had the highest rate of bilingualism calculated at 16.7%. The ability to speak French in everyday conversation declined among high school graduates aged between twenty and twenty-four as only 11.9%, were identified proficient in their second language. Only 8.2% of the older Anglophone graduates in the age category of twenty-four to thirty-five years were considered capable of using French as the language of convention in non formal contexts. Hence, anglophone bilingualism rates were highest among students in comparison to older age groups in the workforce.

### TABLE XVI
**Knowledge of French as a second language by age group, Canada, 1991**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age groups with English mother tongue</th>
<th>Rate of French-English bilingualism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 64</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


While anglophone bilingualism became more widespread among students from the late eighties onward, increasing numbers of francophone youth used English at the expense of
their mother tongue as the primary language of communication in their families. According to government census records, the importance of French as the home language for native French-speakers under the age of 24 had dropped by 35.6% between 1971 and 1986 (Bernard, 1994: 78-80). Some of the factors subsequently attributed to this phenomena was the declining birth rate of francophones (Bordeleau, 1987: 17) and the fact that a high proportion of francophone students eligible to receive minority instruction were not attending French school (Martel, 1995: 17) but rather, might have enrolled in mainstream English classes or immersion programs geared for nonnative speakers of French.

3.3.4 Conclusion

The analyses in this section illustrated ways that sociopolitical developments surrounding the national promotion of French immersion programs in the eighties gave rise to inequitable power distribution between both official language groups living outside the province of Québec. In conclusion, we shall assess which linguistic group members had most to profit and lose from the establishment of bilingual partnerships at that time.

We suggested that francophone and anglophone pressure groups lobbied for different purposes despite their common goal of wanting to improve the quality of French programs in minority settings. The diverging interests were attributed to competition over linguistic capital valued in educational, social and political sectors. The analysis of funding distributions allocated through the OLEP to minority, core and immersion programs
however showed that past inequities were being rectified. It was suggested that socioeconomic rectifications which favoured the official minority groups reflected power distribution changes in the area of language planning policies implemented in Canada.

Attention also focussed on the effects of the federal promotion of bilingualism on the French minority school systems and French immersion programs. The close examination of student participation trends in French programs suggested that anglophone interest in bilingualism fostered the anglicisation of minority schools which catered to increasing number of students from anglophone backgrounds. At the same time, Francophones who did not have access to minority instruction and those coming from heterolinguisitic backgrounds attended French immersion classes. We subsequently argued that such processes disadvantaged the francophone population since it was becoming increasingly exposed to the dominant force of English in minority and immersion contexts.

The final part of this analysis examined research and statistical evidence showing the limitations of French immersion programs. We examined the broader implications of a study providing evidence that immersion programs in Northern Ontario catered to students from high SES families in the eighties and looked at studies indicating that French proficiency of immersion students was weak. This data was discussed in relation to the attrition phenomenon characterizing secondary immersion programs across Canada. We also suggested that minority francophone youth were increasingly susceptible to anglicization trends in the late eighties while anglophone students became more bilingual.
ANALYSIS
1990 - 1995

SECTION 3.4
Redefining French immersion space in Canada . . .

This analysis will shed light on how sociopolitical developments which took place in Canadian society during the early nineties were linked to a redefinition of French immersion space. Subsection 3.4.1 will suggest that immersion enrolment trends reflected the public disillusionment concerning the promotion of bilingualism in government and educational sectors. Subsection 3.4.2 will discuss immersion attrition rates at the secondary level in relation to issues concerning social class bias and francophone participation. The prospects for French education in minority settings will be examined from a sociopolitical and economic perspective in subsection 3.4.3. Finally, subsection 3.4.4 will synthetise the main trends characterizing immersion space at this time.

3.4.1 THE MATERIALIZATION OF BILINGUAL CAPITAL IN THE NINETIES

The following analysis will show how enrolment trends in French immersion programs reflected the changing value of bilingual capital in government and educational sectors during the period between 1990 and 1995. We shall consider how failed constitutional initiatives including the national promotion of the official languages were linked to funding developments in the area of bilingual services in government and educational sectors while
also taking into account what student participation trends in immersion streams implicitly revealed about the evolution of the program.

The topic of national bilingualism received much attention in the previous section as we examined the sociopolitical contexts surrounding the introduction of the Meech Lake Accord (1987) and the passing of the *Official Languages Act* of 1988. Much of the initial support for the ideological principles underlying the linguistic dimensions of these measures decreased in the nineties since different segments of the Canadian population expressed conflicting views on matters relating to national unity and regionalised rights. For instance, the Meech Lake Accord was widely criticized by different groups who felt the legislation insufficiently represented them at the provincial and national levels. The francophone majority of Quebec generally believed that more powers should be conferred to the province while a strong majority of anglophone Canadians felt it was unfair to grant Quebec the status of distinct society. The agreement was contested by native populations who felt insufficiently recognized as nations. The legislative Assemblies of the provinces of Manitoba, Newfoundland and New-Brunswick also took formal opposition by refusing to ratify the proposed Meech Lake Accord by June 22, 1990 (Labrie, 1992: 32).

The failure of the Meech Lake Accord subsequently prompted the federal conservative government of Brian Mulroney to introduce a new deal through the introduction of the Charlottetown Agreement. This accord guaranteed Quebec a 25% seat representation at the House of Commons while narrowing the distinct society clause to include areas of language, culture and law (Bourhis, 1994: 30). The rest of the Canadian provinces were
promised increased authority at the federal level and higher western representation in the Senate. Native populations were to receive additional powers through the right to self-government while remaining attached to the federal jurisdiction. However, these clauses did not satisfy the majority of Canadians as 55% of the voters opposed its ratification during the nationwide referendum held in October 1992 (Labrie, 1992: 32-33). The failure to resolve the question of the distinct society clause eventually led to a second provincial referendum held in October 1995 which asked the residents of Quebec whether they supported sovereignty accompanied by economic and political partnership with the rest of Canada. The poll results of this referendum showed that 49.42% of Quebec voters were in favour of sovereignty and that provincial support for the option of sovereignty had increased by 9% since 1980 (http://www.dgeq.qc.ca/dge/anglais/resultat/resu-80a.htm).

In light of these developments, we could suggest that federal attempts to promote linguistic dualism within the Canadian Confederation were less successful in the nineties than in the eighties and late seventies. There also exists evidence indicating a decline in the proportion of funds allocated by the Federal Government to support bilingual services in government and educational sectors. The Translation Bureau of the Secretary of State provides a concrete example of this situation since it was transformed into a Special Operating Agency operating on a cost-recovery basis from March 1995 onward (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1996: 60-61). An interview conducted with a P3-Level translator during these structural changes suggested that cuts to translation services conducted in the national official languages which were anteriorly financed by the Treasury Board reflect the decreasing importance of bilingual services in government sectors (Interview Notes, 1995).
We can also observe at this time sharp declines in funding allocations directed toward the support of government departments offering services in the official languages. The teaching staff at Language Training Canada dropped by 40% during the six year period following the budget restrictions imposed by the Treasury Board in 1985-1986 fiscal year despite the growing number of students waiting for statutory training (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1992: 31). The Public Service subsequently adopted less stringent guidelines for positions requiring the knowledge of both official languages. Most bilingual positions filled during the 1994-1995 fiscal year only required oral intermediate proficiency (B Level) in the second official language, thus making it difficult to ensure the equal representation of French and English during intergroup dynamics. Another contradiction is that 64% of the careers in the Administrative Support category required high levels of bilingual proficiency whereas only 38% of the Executive category position expected that candidates know the official languages (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1996: 60).

The cuts to federal spending in the area of bilingual services allowed the cost in constant dollars of federal services in French and English to decrease by 6% between 1981-1982 and 1991-1996 (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1996: 71). Furthermore, it seems that federal spending in the area of French second-language education was curbed following the renewal of the Protocol of Agreements reached in 1993. The provincial and territorial governments both accepted a $90 million reduction in transfer payments allocated to the OLEP for the five-year period extending from 1993 until 1998 (idem, 1994: 103-104). One of the services subsequently abolished was the annual publication of the government reports Minority and Second-Language Education, Elementary and Secondary Levels which
provided extensive statistical data on the national student participation trends. The table below shows some of the statistical research published in the last two editions.

**TABLE XVII**
Enrolments in French immersion programs outside Quebec in 1990-91 and 1991-92


We can see that immersion enrolments were concentrated in the primary and intermediate years before rapidly declining in secondary grades. The lowest level of participation was in grade 12 and in the grade 13 programs offered in the province of Ontario in the format of Ontario Academic Credits (OAC). A slight increase in student participation at the OAC level can be observed for the 1991-1992 school year in comparison to the preceding year as
the a larger number of students enrolled in OAC courses in the province of Ontario than in grade 12 immersion classes offered across the Canadian provinces during that year.

3.4.2 IMMERSION STAYERS AND OUTSIDERS

The following analysis will provide a better understanding of the issues surrounding immersion attrition trends at the secondary level by critically assessing what research findings explicitly and implicitly revealed about this phenomenon. This inquiry will discuss the broader implications of research evidence suggesting that immersion classes catered to student populations who proportionately came from higher SES backgrounds than peers enrolled in regular English programs. We shall also consider the impact of francophone participation in immersion programs intended for nonnative French speakers.

The research results of an attrition study carried out in northern Ontario during the 1991-1992 school year shed light on some of the broader sociopolitical issues relating to the problem of enrolment decline in secondary immersion programs (Hart and Lapin, 1994). The immersion student population at the intermediate level (grade 7 and 8) was examined to assess what factors played a determining role in choosing between remaining in or abandoning the French immersion program in high school. Students whose profile suggested they were most likely to pursue the program were identified as the “stayers”. The term “debaters” was coined for students possessing traits likely to influence their decision to abandon the French immersion program during their secondary studies.
The research conclusions reached by the investigators of the study suggested that four predominant factors influence student choice to remain in the program or not. It was concluded that students with low self-esteem about their French proficiency and who scored poorly on standard French language tests were more likely to withdraw from the program than peers who obtained better results in French. The investigators of the study also suggested that immersion "debaters" generally preferred regular English programs which offered the prospects of higher grades. They also found that immersion "stayers" did not express this same level of concern about their ability to succeed in French immersion classes at the high school level. The level of support provided by family and friendship networks was also identified as affecting student choice to remain in the program. Finally, it was suggested that immersion "debaters" usually learned French for extrinsic motivations such as career advancement opportunities while immersion "stayers" generally expressed intrinsic motivations for learning French such the desire to know additional languages and to gain a better understanding of the francophone culture.

We can therefore suggest that immersion attrition was closely linked to the social class bias phenomenon and we shall later discuss, to evidence of francophone participation in these programs. On one hand, research evidence showed that 90% of immersion "stayers" received family encouragement to remain in the program in comparison with only 20% of the immersion "debaters" who generally attributed their interest in French education toward the prospects of improved employment opportunities (Hart and Lapin, 1994: 3). Supplementary evidence that immersion programs catered to students from higher SES cohorts was shown in the data collected from three large scale multi-board studies in the
Toronto region and a series of single board evaluation during the 1986-1987 school year (Hart and Lapin, forthcoming). Research was conducted in schools operating in three public school boards (Etibocoke, Scarborough and the City of Toronto) and the catholic board of Metro Toronto separate schools (MTSSB). Correlations were established between the socioeconomic profile of grade 5 students attending the French immersion streams and the regular English programs offered by all of the four Toronto school boards examined in this study. The table below illustrates the principal findings of this research and shows that immersion programs catered to students from high socioeconomic families while children from lower class backgrounds were over represented in regular English classes.

**TABLE XVIII**
Class bias evidence in grade 5 immersion Toronto programs, 1986-1987

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prof./Upper Mgr.</th>
<th>Semi-Prof., Technician Middle Mgr. Supervisors</th>
<th>Skilled, semi- and unskilled workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Etobicoke Immersion</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etobicoke Regular</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarborough Immersion</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarborough Regular</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto Immersion</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto Regular</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTSSB Immersion</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTSSB Regular</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from: Hart and Lapkin, forthcoming.

We can see that all four boards in the Toronto region offered grade 5 immersion streams which attracted a significantly high proportion of students from professional and upper
managerial families. The Etobicoke Board and the Toronto Board were the most extreme cases since approximately 2/3 of their grade 5 immersion students came from upper class families. Social class differences were also apparent in the schools operating in the Scarborough region since only 4% of the grade 5 immersion clientele came from families where parents occupied skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled positions. This phenomenon must also be considered in relation to the fact that almost half of the students in the regular English programs offered by the Scarborough Board came from underprivileged backgrounds. The investigators however suggested that the catholic board of Metro Toronto separate schools presents a more balanced picture since their grade 5 immersion classes catered to only 12% more students from high socioeconomic cohorts than did the regular English program. Furthermore, they proposed that the slightly lower class difference between these two groups of students supports the theory that MFI classes attracted a more heterogenous student clientele since it gives children from L3 backgrounds access to immersion instruction after having acquired a more solid foundation in English.

In many ways, we can nevertheless argue that data collected for the study of Toronto immersion programs confirmed the research validity of findings obtained by Olson and Burns during the eighties which suggests that immersion programs served as a streaming process by attracting a higher proportion of students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds in comparison with regular English classes. For instance, the data for the study indicates that students from professional and upper managerial family backgrounds were about twice as much represented in the immersion programs than in the regular English classes operating under the Scarborough and MTSSB school board jurisdictions.
Furthermore, we can see that students from higher SES families were represented three times more often in the grade five immersion classes as opposed to the mainstream English programs in available in the boards of Etobicoke and Toronto.

It is equally important to point out here that social class evaluations based on the occupational status of parents was probably not the most reliable tool to assess the immersion socioeconomic bias phenomenon since the growing ethnocultural diversity of student populations attending Toronto schools catered to many refugee and immigrant families. In many cases, parents who constituted the elite and well-educated class in their country of origin cannot find employment in professional sectors corresponding to their previous status. For instance, a masters thesis (Singh, 1996) examining the language, identity and culture of South Asian female secondary students in Toronto brings forth evidence suggesting that Indo-Canadians belonging to a high caste Brahmin family in India experience difficulty surpassing the middle class barrier. The investigator suggests that immigrant families occupying high to middle class positions in their country of origin must usually accept working class or technical positions during their arrival to Canada since previous education and/or working experience is rarely acknowledged. We can subsequently argue that some students from immigrant families who may not be “privileged” in financial terms can nevertheless receive parental encouragement to ensure their social mobility through the learning of the official languages in immersion programs.

Another phenomenon which is closely linked to high immersion attrition rates at the secondary level concerns francophone participation in French immersion programs offered
by English majority schools. Data collected for the 1994 attrition study revealed that a significant proportion of immersion “stayers” came from families where one or both parents spoke French and that many had previously attended primary French homogenous schools before switching to immersion streams (Hart and Lapin, 1994: 3). The nature of these findings can lead us to conclude that immersion vitality was maintained at the secondary level through the participation of minority francophones who did not lose interest in learning French despite the realization that bilingualism would not necessarily open the doors to employment opportunities outside government and semipublic sectors.

In light of these findings, we need to ask what proportion of francophone minority students switched to French immersion streams available in majority English schools at the intermediate level and how many anglophone students were attending primary French minority schools before returning to the English system for their intermediate and secondary studies. We need to assess whether francophone participation in French immersion programs was related to the decreasing immersion enrolments of native French speakers in minority schools operating outside the province of Quebec.

Another issue deserving further attention is how immersion instruction affected the academic and social development of minority francophone immersion students who had to “relearn” their native tongue as a second language alongside majority anglophone students whose interest in French was primarily motivated by the desire to access improved career opportunities. We need to consider that francophone immersion participation might have boosted the profile of the program during testing periods since
research evaluations examining French immersion language results generally failed to consider that many immersion students were not French second-language learners. It is also important to note that many comparisons were made between immersion students and francophone peers attending immersion programs in regions with high concentrations of native French-speaking people such as Ottawa and Montreal. The French language schools in these regions were more linguistically homogenous than those in areas like Toronto where proportionately fewer francophone people lived. Therefore, comparing immersion students which comprised both anglophone and francophone children with more homogeneous groups of francophone students attending French schools in "border" cities is methodologically questionable because both groups share unmeasurable differences.

3.4.3 BILINGUAL PARTNERSHIPS OR MINORITY SELF-GOVERNMENT?

We shall develop a broader perspective on issues relating to francophone participation in the immersion phenomenon by critically examining recent sociopolitical developments and their repercussions on French programs geared toward second or third language students and minority francophone students outside Quebec. This discussion will also incorporate the examination of lobbying activities undertaken by anglophone and francophone groups working toward the improvement of French educational programs for these students.

The CPF pressure group was perhaps the most active to lobby for the improvement of French immersion opportunities in the early nineties. One of their promotional methods
consisted in alluding to the “Trudeanian” vision of bilingual harmony to legitimize anglophone interest in learning French as a second language. The release of their promotional video “Proud of Two Languages” transmitted this message while recruiting prospective students and patrons (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1996: 91). The CPF organization also launched the awareness campaign “Learning Two Languages Opens Doors to Tomorrow” (CPF, 1994: 1) to recruit the support of Canadians by referring to the socioeconomic advantages of bi-multilingualism on national and international markets.

The revitalization of core French programs available across Canada is another development which marked the evolution of French second-language instruction in the early nineties. According to the Commissioner of the Official Languages (1995: 99), the results of the 1989 National Core French Study led to a wake of cooperative spirit among five provinces (Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan) which subsequently decided to implement new multidimensional core French programs for the fall of 1995. Local interest was also expressed by school board authorities in areas such as the Ottawa region which commissioned MLC specialists at OISE to investigate developments characterizing their Core French program (Lapkin, Hart and Harley, 1995).

The economic viability of minority French education outside the province of Quebec however has been enjoying better federal support in contrast to immersion or core French programs even though both were affected by the $90 million reduction to the OLEP for the period extending from 1993 to 1998 (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1996: 103-104). One of the reasons supporting this view is that federal financial support to minority institutions was maintained through the establishment of a $112 million fund to assist the
provinces with the implementation of minority school management systems and the expansion of French-language post-secondary institutions for a six-year period (Commissioner of the Official Languages of Canada, 1994: 103). Furthermore, minority francophone associations obtained noteworthy territorial gains during this period. For instance, the Bill 109 adopted in 1988 led to the establishment an autonomous French public school system for the Ottawa region in 1989 and for the Prescott-Russel region in 1991 (Labrie, 1995: 11). The successful mobilization of minority francophone groups also led to the creation of a French community college (La Cité Collégial) in the Ottawa region in the fall of 1990 (Heller, 1994: 76) and later to Le Collège Boréal and Le Collège des Grands Lacs. Francophone organizations such as l’ACFO and Direction-Jeunesse began lobbying for the obtainment of a separate French-language university for the official minority population of Ontario (Commissioner of the Official Languages, 1996: 77). The guaranteed establishment of eight catholic and four public French language school boards in Ontario as of January 1998 further indicated a future demand for francophone education.

The comparative analysis of recent developments characterizing French minority and second-language programs operating in massively anglophone regions can therefore lead us to suggest that separate homogenous French schools will challenge immersion education. This position can be exemplified by the fact that anglophone interest in learning French is dependent on the fluctuating status of bilingual resources whereas minority francophone communities struggled throughout Canadian history to obtain the right to reproduce their ethnolinguistic and cultural heritage through the means of French schools.
3.4.4 Conclusion

The sum of analyses presented in this subsection pointed out that immersion developments which took place in the early nineties were closely related to issues of power dynamics manifested in Canadian society. In conclusion, we shall discuss the sociopolitical climate of this period in relation with the viability of French minority and L2 programs.

It was concluded that success traditionally associated with French immersion programs was heavily dependent on the federal promotion of the official languages as valuable symbolic and economic resources at the regional and national levels. We however saw that federal attempts to implement constitutional agreements on national unity in the nineties posed a serious threat to the continuous promotion of linguistic dualism as an integral aspect of federal identity. These developments were also accompanied by a sharp decline in federal funding allocations supporting bilingualism in government and educational sectors. We also found that decreased importance given to official bilingual capital coincided with the lack of successful immersion completion rates in secondary schools.

The closer examination of research pertaining to the immersion attrition phenomenon revealed that investigators felt that students with extrinsic motivations for learning French were more susceptible to abandon their secondary immersion studies than their peers whose interest in French was believed to be intrinsically motivated. The close analysis of these findings led us to inquire whether immersion programs served as a social streaming process which attracted disproportionate number of students from higher socioeconomic
cohorts who often abandoned the program when they realized that bilingual capital did not necessarily lead to social mobility. Moreover, we reviewed evidence suggesting that immersion students most likely to continue the program during high school came from francophone families and/or had attended French primary school before switching to French immersion streams. The broader implications of these findings led us to suggest that students from high SES cohorts and from French-speaking families enrolled in French immersion classes boosted the profile of the program since studies did not usually analyse how social class and linguistic background of students affected their progress. The data analysed here also allowed us to observe that immersion attrition trends at the secondary level strongly indicated the program was not as popular in the senior high school grades.

We equally found that anglophone and francophone organizations working toward the promotion of French educational services outside the province of Québec had diverging interests. CPF safeguarded its investments in French second-language programs by referring to the ideological principle of national unity and to the socioeconomic advantages of being fully bilingual in the global economy while minority francophone organizations took more steps to gain institutional autonomy from the majority group in educational sectors. It was also concluded that federal authorities had shifted their priorities at this time by directing fewer subsidies toward French L2 programs to help finance the establishment of autonomous minority institutions. The ongoing interest in French immersion education was also deemed particularly at risk due to the lack of secondary enrolments.
Chapter Four

CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter will review the research findings of the study while drawing attention to related areas of research which need further exploration. Subsection 4.1 will discuss the scope of the study in relation to its theoretical and methodological orientations. Subsection 4.2 will synthesize how French immersion developments which took place in Canada between 1960 and 1995 reflected the interplay of power relations manifested between actors involved in language planning processes. Finally, subsection 4.3 will consider what the findings of this study allowed us to learn about areas of research which received insufficient treatment in the fields of bilingual and minority education.

4.1 Scope of the Study

We shall examine the validity of this study by systematically analysing the theoretical and methodological aspects of the research process. Theories reflecting sociological and political aspects of language dynamics provided the ideological basis for the set of analyses deriving from our conclusions. We applied these principles toward the creation of the conceptual framework of the study which interwove thematic, temporal and propositional elements to facilitate the identification of sociopolitical processes shaping immersion dynamics. The cultural scientific philosophical orientation used here also led to the formulation of
normative, empirical and logical claims which together helped create an analysis about ways that French immersion developments reflected some of the broader sociopolitical processes characterizing important historical periods in Canadian history.

It is first important for us to note that research conclusions were reached through the systematic analysis of domain interrelationships. More precisely, we examined the development of French immersion programs by considering how six research domains evolved in relation to each other. These domains related to the following interdisciplinary areas: research about French immersion programs (Domain A); French minority education and francophone students (Domain B); immersion pressure groups (Domain C); French language status change (Domain D); immersion participation trends (Domain E); federal funding allocations supporting immersion activities in Canada (Domain F).

The table presented on the next page illustrates how often we analysed the six research domains in relation to each other in each of the four time periods analysed in the study. We can see that we treated each domain at least once in every time frame. Most often, the domains were treated once or twice in relation to the other domains in the analysis chapter. Investigating the domains necessitated the continuous reorganization of data to ensure an in-depth treatment of the six domains for each of the four historical periods covered in the study. Consequently, the analyses stemming from this methodological approach can therefore not be evaluated in quantitative terms. We must rather examine the research properties in relation to its propositional truth which were subject to the limitations of the scope and research context of the study and the cultural biases of the investigator.
TABLE XIX
Interrelationships established among the six research domains

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We can see that each domain was analysed. The research topics analysed most often concerned immersion research, minority French education, language status change and student participation trends in immersion programs. The area of research dealing with the role of pressure groups and the distribution of federal funds supporting immersion activities were however analysed less frequently in relation to the other domains. We would however like to point out that a high frequency of analyses based on domain interrelationships does not provide an accurate indicator that a particular subject of research was extensively analysed. In certain cases, topics of research received extensive
treatment as individual entities but not in relation to other domains while other research topics were treated in less depth but on a more frequent basis. It is also difficult to assess the qualitative properties of the research analyses in terms of quantitative truth and reliability because the domains have interdisciplinary characteristics which overlapped.

Despite attempts to present a balanced picture of immersion developments, the distribution and the frequency of the normative analyses clearly influenced general conclusions of research domain interrelationships. For instance, different analysis slants could have been achieved with the exclusion of domains or with the inclusion of other research topics. Hence, the research analyses set forth by this study presented one interpretation which was normatively linked to propositional, temporal and thematic conditions. These distinctive properties thereby make it impossible to assess the research conclusions in quantitative terms stemming from a positivistic framework. Attention must instead focus on the interpretative qualities of the research findings and their overall contribution toward the creation of foundational knowledge in the fields of bilingual and minority education.

4.2 **Synthesis of the Main Research Findings**

We shall synthesize the main research findings of the study to present a comprehensive account of French immersion developments which took place in Canada between 1965 and 1995. Specific attention will be focus on ways that power relations manifested between different levels of actors in the structure of immersion political control played a
determining role on the success attributed to French immersion programs operating during the various historical contexts examined.

The first analysis section of the study focussed on immersion beginnings for the time period extending from 1960 until 1969. We argued that French immersion education was first introduced to Canada in 1965 due to the successful lobbying efforts of anglophone parents who wanted to give their children access to bilingualism believed to provide both cognitive and socioeconomic advantages. Data suggesting that earlier immersion programs had preceded the establishment of the 1965 St. Lambert Experiment was also analysed. However, our inquiry conclusions suggested that minority Francophones attending a mixed school had been mistaken for immersion students and that a private school in Toronto claimed to provide immersion instruction in 1969 which coincided with the period it was soliciting agencies for supplementary funding allocations. The scarcity of records on immersion progress maintained at this time led us to suggest that the Federal Government became more interested in the program during the seventies because it coincided with its political objective of promoting the official languages in the country.

The research conclusions presented in the second section examined the promotional activities surrounding the development of immersion programs which took place between 1970 and 1981. We saw that territorial language policies passed in Québec incited federal authorities to promote the official languages in government and educational sectors. The subsequent establishment of the OLEP which provided federal transfer payments to provincial and territorial governments to help defray the costs associated with official
minority and second-language programs allowed French immersion programs to expand on a nationwide scale. The CPF pressure group and favorable research results published at that time also played an important role in promoting the immersion alternative by appeasing parental fears about the reliability of these programs. We also suggested that minority francophones in Newfoundland were disadvantaged because they were denied the right to minority French instruction until they finally agreed to collaborate with anglophone parents who wanted an immersion program available to both majority and minority students. Moreover, it was concluded that cognitive rationales used to legitimize positive immersion research findings had negative repercussions on francophone students and children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds enrolled in regular English programs since both groups were shown to be either equal to or inferior to their immersion peers.

The third subsection analysed data related to the interplay of power dynamics surrounding the French immersion phenomenon for the period extending from 1982 until 1989. The comparative analysis of the interests of different stakeholders revealed that CPF directed its lobbying efforts toward the maintenance of federal financial support for French second-language programs while minority francophones took legal actions to obtain educational services equal to those enjoyed by the majority. We examined how federal funds were distributed to French minority and second-language programs at this time to discover that more money was spent for English school boards because the latter had proportionately more students learning French than in French schools outside Québec. Our findings also indicated that constitutional repatriations gave minority francophones legal recourse to improve educational prospects and more funding to ensure their equitable treatment. We
nevertheless suggested that promotion of bilingualism in educational sectors resulted in negative consequences for minority francophone communities since their schools attracted more English speaking students while some francophone children eligible to receive minority instruction opted for majority schools. Finally, the review of immersion research findings and statistical data indicating the limitations of immersion education led us to argue that the program was not meeting its pedagogical or political objectives.

The last section of the analysis considered how sociopolitical transformations which took place between 1990 and 1995 affected the viability of French programs available to both immersion and minority students. We showed that failed attempts to implement constitutional amendments which promoted national unity might have been related to lack of secondary completion rates for immersion. This was illustrated through reference to the disadvantaged position of bilingual government services and educational programs due to funding cuts. The analysis of research results revealed that immersion streaming was allowing a large proportion of anglophone children from higher SES cohorts to attend bilingual education until they reintegrated into the already streamed high school programs. We saw that immersion students who completed their secondary studies in French often came from francophone families and/or had attended separate French school at the primarily level before switching to immersion streams available in majority English schools. CPF nevertheless continued to work at this time toward the promotion of immersion opportunities by referring to national unity and to the socioeconomic advantages of knowing both official languages while minority francophones took steps to gain institutional autonomy from the dominant anglophone group. The increase in federal
funding available to minority French groups and the decrease in funds given to immersion programs led us to suggest that government political objectives were changing at the time.

4.3. ASSESSMENT OF RESEARCH NEEDS

The research conclusions of the study provide a holistic portrayal of ways that immersion programs developed in relation to broader sociopolitical dynamics in the Canadian context. The creation of foundational knowledge about immersion developments is of great importance because it can allow us to understand how power relations manifested between different levels of actors in the framework of political control led to the creation of immersion programs associated with phenomenal success which was more critically assessed in recent years. Another contribution is the presentation of important research domains which until the present time have not received due consideration.

One research domain explored in the study concerns the evolutionary trends of research on French immersion programs. We concluded that positive findings obtained in the seventies and early eighties contributed to the national promotion of immersion education by appeasing parental fears about the reliability of these programs. The close examination of materials outside the regular canon of immersion literature however indicated that social class bias was an ongoing phenomenon characterizing the progress of French immersion programs. We also discovered that a large proportion of children from francophone families were attending immersion streams intended for nonnative speakers of French. The
broader implications of these two research trends consequently led us to question whether the positive immersion profile promoted for more than two decades had been positively skewed by research which insufficiently took into account how social class bias and the presence of native French speakers in the program affected overall research conclusions. Another topic we examined was relationships existing between French immersion dynamics and minority francophones. It was concluded that bilingual partnerships established during the seventies and eighties legitimized the national growth of immersion programs which received the endorsement of the Federal Government at this time. A closer analysis of partnership trends however suggested that minority French populations had much to lose since their schools subsequently attracted more anglophone students while many children from francophone families enrolled in French immersion classes intended for anglophone and allophone children. These discrepancies lead us to question the impact of immersion education on the quality of French minority instruction and assimilation trends. Future studies should subsequently examine in greater detail the extent to which francophone immersion participation enhanced the overall findings relating to these programs and should also take into account whether the immersion approach was suitable for minority students who already knew the target language.

The topic of pressure groups was also analysed in great detail. It was suggested that lobbying efforts exerted by anglophone parents in Québec and across Canada led to the nationwide establishment of French immersion programs which primarily served anglophone children from higher socioeconomic cohorts. For instance, we saw that pressure groups such as the St. Lambert Parents and Canadian Parents for French both
received endorsement from influential leaders and academics working in the field of bilingualism to promote French second-language educational opportunities. One of the factors which helped Canadian Parents for French build its success was the establishment of bilingual partnerships with francophone organizations who shared a personal stake in French education outside the province of Québec. The closer examination of partnership developments however leads us to question whether minority francophones were better off adopting the partnership approach or the tactic of minority self-government when dealing with the administration of French educational services.

Another research domain explored in the study concerns ways that French language status change was closely linked to immersion developments. We saw that anglophone interest in immersion education was triggered in the sixties by the social mobilization of the francophone majority of Québec which promoted French as a valuable linguistic commodity. Federal initiatives directed toward the neutralization of Québec nationalism led to the promotion of the official languages in the seventies and early eighties and to the nationwide expansion of French immersion programs which became symbolic emblems of the material benefits of knowing both official languages. The rise of Québec nationalism and the failed renewal of the Canadian Constitution were accompanied by a falling economy and a subsequent decline in the promotion of bilingualism during the nineties. These developments subsequently lead us to question the extent to which language planning policies implemented at the provincial and national levels affected the historical evolution of bilingual programs available to majority and minority students living in various sociocultural contexts. We also believe that more research is needed to examine
ways that language planning initiatives implemented in educational sectors empowered dominant group members at the expense of marginalised groups.

Student participation trends in French immersion programs was another widely studied topic. We showed that participation in these streams progressively grew as funding allocations supporting the expansion and maintenance of the programs became available. The enrolment numbers in immersion classes were relatively low in the sixties since additional funds were not readily accessible. However, dynamics began to change in the seventies and eighties when the Federal Government made funding allocations widely accessible to provincial and territorial governments offering French second-language programs. Enrolments in immersion programs soared for two decades until budget constraints in bilingual promotion downplayed the value of bilingual capital and the amount of funds given to school boards offering official minority and L2 programs. The continuous survival of these programs seems doubtful when we considered the broader sociopolitical issues relating to the high immersion attrition rates at the secondary level. Because of these developments, it appears necessary for us to question the extent to which funding grants and immersion enrolments trends were interrelated phenomena. We also need to investigate further whether immersion student participation rates were higher at the primary and intermediate levels because the program offered a streaming possibility.

The final domain addressed in the study pertained to the nature of funding allocations distributed toward the promotion of French immersion related-activities. We saw that economic benefits associated with immersion instruction surfaced in the sixties when
authorities of the private Toronto French School referred to the “immersion” concept when soliciting for the obtainment of increased grants. The creation of the Official Languages in Education Program (OLEP) established in 1970 further benefited the immersion cause through the allocation of federal transfer grants to provincial and territorial governments to help them defray the costs associated with official minority and second-language programs. The closer examination of funding distributions however revealed that anglophone populations benefited to a greater extent from the federal promotion of bilingualism in the eighties since they received a higher amount of funds to learn French as a second-language than did minority francophones to maintain separate schools outside the province of Québec. Recent developments which took place in the late eighties and nineties nevertheless indicated that federal support directed toward the promotion of the official languages in government and educational sectors was rapidly declining, thus leading to a redefinition of French immersion space. We subsequently need to assess the extent to which funding made available to polity members promoting immersion programs during the seventies and eighties were intimately linked to the success attributed to this teaching approach. Critical research needs to also focus on ways that minority francophones suffered from the promotion of bilingual linguistic capital which resulted in competition over access for French educational services and career opportunities throughout Canada. Furthermore, it would be insightful to examine funding developments for immersion and minority programs at the provincial and local levels.
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Tabouret-Keller, A.

Wesche, M. B., M. Swain and J. Machin.-
ANNEXES
### ANNEXE 1

Weekly French instruction for primary and secondary francophone minority students outside Québec, 1983 - 1988

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## ANNEXE 2

Weekly French instruction for primary and secondary immersion students outside Québec, 1983 - 1988

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ANNEXE 3

Weekly French instruction for primary and secondary core French students outside Québec, 1983 - 1988

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