Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in French as a Second Language Teaching Environments: A Multiple Case Study

by

Stefanie Muhling

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

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Abstract

French as a Second Language (FSL) teachers in Canada have historically faced deficits in pre-service and in-service professional learning opportunities intended to prepare them for the unique demands of their profession. As definitions of teacher professional learning expand to include informal and non-formal learning experiences, this multiple case study explores the potential of one heretofore underutilized source of professional learning to respond to such deficits.

The research applies a Complexity framework to teacher learning (Davis & Sumara, 2005) and language teaching (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) to study the reciprocal learning that associate teachers (ATs) experience when mentoring teacher candidates (TCs). These dynamic learning relationships are nested within the many systems in which ATs work and learn. Data collected from mind-maps, logs and semi-structured interviews with ATs (n=7) working in elementary and secondary Core French and French Immersion contexts was triangulated within and across cases.

Findings show that the participants view the experience of being an AT as an integral contributor to their professional learning. ATs report that mentoring TCs motivates them to explore and apply current theory and refine both their practice and the articulation of that practice. Enhanced pursuit of self-identified learning goals, reinforcement of existing strengths and accentuated implementation of Ontario Ministry of Education initiatives are among the professional growth experiences that participants linked to their work as ATs.
Implications call for educational institutions and regulatory bodies to accord increased recognition for the act of mentoring future teachers as a powerful source of ongoing professional learning and a catalyst for wide-reaching improvement in education.
Acknowledgments

Writing a thesis is a monumental undertaking, one that cannot be achieved in isolation. There were many times throughout my PhD journey that I felt as if I were a solitary seeker, reaching just beyond the threshold of my own ability. It is this reaching that leads to truly deep learning. Each time I crossed the threshold, someone was there to offer guidance and support. To these people, I extend my sincere gratitude and with them I share this great accomplishment.

I am extremely privileged to have been guided by the diverse and complementary skills and talents of the distinguished members of my thesis committee. First, I thank my supervisor Dr. Enrica Piccardo, who introduced me to complexity theories, and generously shared her wealth of knowledge and cosmopolitan approach to la didactique des langues. Second, I thank Dr. Antoinette Gagné for the mentorship and support she selflessly contributes to our community of practice. Finally, I express my deep gratitude to Dr. Sharon Lapkin, who has set a model of excellence in FSL research and who has championed my development as an educator and a researcher for over fifteen years.

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- my partner Evan, whose love, support and respect are integral to my continued growth
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Merci à tous et à toutes, continuons à inspirer l’apprentissage riche et collaborative!
Dedication

I dedicate this work to Eleni, Véronique, Ulrike, David, Jeanette, Scott and Josh, and to other associate teachers like them.

Their generosity and commitment provide teacher candidates with the modeling and support necessary to develop as exemplary professionals.

Their creativity, resourcefulness, and passion for teaching and learning enable them to consider and embrace serendipitous opportunities to advance their own practice.

May they receive both formal and informal recognition for this learning.

May they continue to share their experience and passion with other teachers at all stages in their careers, so that they too may continue teaching to learn

and loving to teach.
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<td>Associate Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQ</td>
<td>Additional Qualifications (course)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B.Ed.</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Dynamic Systems Theory</td>
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<td>CPF</td>
<td>Canadian Parents for French</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEFR</td>
<td>Common European Framework of Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMEC</td>
<td>Council of Ministers of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>EQAO</td>
<td>Education Quality and Accountability Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETFO</td>
<td>Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSL</td>
<td>French as a Second Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>The Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLAR</td>
<td>Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition</td>
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<td>PLC</td>
<td>Professional Learning Community</td>
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<td>SLE</td>
<td>Second Language Education</td>
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<td>TC</td>
<td>Teacher Candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Site Coordinator</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview and Background

Since the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms constitutionalized the principle of equality between French and English in 1982, ensuring official second language education has been an important mandate for Canadian schools (Department of Justice Canada, 2009). The study of French as a second language (FSL) is a compulsory education requirement in most provinces and immersion education is an ever-expanding program that has been the subject of study and critical acclaim since the mid-1960s (Lapkin, Swain, & Shapson, 1990). Yet, deficit and marginalization are historic and continual features of FSL teachers’ professional reality (Calvé, 1992; Lapkin, Mady, & Arnott, 2006; Ontario Public School Boards’ Association, 2008). Deficits such as limited opportunities for FSL-specific preservice and in-service professional learning are well-documented (Obadia, 1996; Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergrift, 2006). Between 2006–2007 and 2010–2011, enrolment in French-immersion classes increased by 12 percent nationally (Government of Canada, 2013). This growth entails a rising demand for qualified FSL educators. A current paradigm shift towards an action-oriented approach (Piccardo, 2011, 2012) in language teaching heightens the urgency to explore and expand professional learning opportunities for second language teachers, as many experienced teachers have had limited exposure to action-oriented language teaching approaches.

Mentorship is a powerful form of professional learning (Beck & Kosnik, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006) that can offer a means of preventing FSL teacher attrition (Karsenti, Collin, Villeneuve, Dumouchel & Roy, 2008). This multiple case study examines the experiences of FSL teachers working as associate teachers (ATs) with teacher candidates (TCs) in a concurrent Bachelor of Education program in Ontario. ATs are seasoned professionals who model effective teaching practices and support the development of TCs by providing feedback, mentoring and extending a bridge between theory and practice (Ontario College of Teachers, OCT, 2011). In this research, I approach the experience of being an associate teacher as a potential source of professional learning. I use the term *associate teaching* to refer to the act, practice or role of being an associate teacher, similarly to the way that
teaching refers to “the act practice or profession of a teacher” (Merriam-Webster, 2015). It is an established fact that reciprocal learning relationships can develop between ATs and TCs (Allen, Cobb & Danger, 2003; Elementary Teachers of Ontario, ETFO, 2010; Gilles & Wilson, 2004; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005; McCloy, 2011; Roland, 2009; Simpson, Hastings & Hill, 2007), yet to date, there is little attention to the specific context of language teacher development or FSL teacher learning. The purpose of this study is to gain insight into features of associate teaching that can contribute to the future and continued advancement of professional learning for FSL teachers.

Research Questions

In answer to the call for further examination and development of FSL teachers’ professional learning (Council of Ministers of Education, CMEC, 2014), I examine one potential source of teacher learning, with a view to contributing to its development. To this end, I pose two overarching research questions:

a) How do associate teachers in FSL contextualize the associate teaching experience within their professional learning?

b) How can the experience of being an associate teacher influence FSL teacher practice?

To facilitate the collection, organization and analysis of data necessary to develop rich description of the ATs’ contextualization of their mentoring experience and professional learning, I have divided the first research question into the following four sub-questions:

A1. How do the participating teachers characterize professional learning?

A2. How do they distinguish professional learning for FSL teachers from professional learning for teachers in general?

A3. In what ways do they see their role as an associate teacher as a component of their professional learning.

A4. What elements of their work do they identify as development areas that could be impacted by the associate teacher/teacher candidate relationship?
Similarly, the following four sub-questions enable me to discover details necessary to inform my response to the second research question:

B1. What changes, if any, do the associate teachers perceive in their planning process when they are working with a teacher candidate?

B2. What changes, if any, do they perceive in their selection and use of teaching resources?

B3. Are the associate teachers aware of changes in their interaction with students that occur during their work with teacher candidates? If so, which of these changes do they believe may extend beyond the practicum placement period?

B4. What connections do participating teachers see between their work with TCs and their implementation of updated curriculum and approaches to language teaching?

I approach these questions within the context of FSL classrooms in which teachers had volunteered to support the development of future FSL teachers. I specify that associate teachers are volunteers, to underscore the fact that mentoring future teachers is a professional service and not a job requirement.

Rationale and Positioning of the Researcher

My quest for comprehensive understanding leading to purposeful application of reciprocal learning relationships between experienced and novice teachers is rooted in a) first-hand experience as an AT who learned a great deal from TCs; b) as an Instructional Leader who faced systemic limitations to providing sustained professional learning opportunities for FSL teachers; and c) as a teacher educator responsible for recruiting and supporting ATs in their work with TCs.

Long before the experiences described above, mentorship played a strong role in my own development as an educator. Having started my career as an FSL teacher prior to attending a faculty of education, I created my own professional learning program by reading everything I
could about language teaching and finding myself a mentor. I approached the most dynamic teacher in the school, with the richest language program, and asked her to share her practice with me. Kate taught what was essentially an English immersion program for Grade 3 students whose previous schooling had been in their first language, Inuktitut. She taught recount writing by taking the class berry-picking and engaging students in talking and writing about the experience. She taught procedural writing through making jam and bannock with berries they brought back to the school. Kate was an action-oriented language teacher long before the publication of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) \(^1\). Exemplifying the CEFR’s definition of an action-oriented approach to language teaching, her students were language users, using English to accomplish tasks important to their daily life.

More recently, as an experienced teacher educator and novice researcher, I drew inspiration from the findings of a survey of 134 ATs working with TCs at the University of Windsor Faculty of Education. When asked to describe the benefits of working as an AT, participants consistently ranked reciprocal learning and personal and professional growth in the top three of nine benefits identified (Roland, 2009). Such recognition of the potential of the AT experience to contribute to the professional learning of experienced teachers appeared in email exchanges with ATs who have mentored TCs under my supervision. In response to my request to consider continuing in the role of AT for the 2014/15 academic year, two teachers wrote the following:

J’aimerais bien participer encore l’année prochaine dans votre programme de formation. Les TCs [sic] avec lesquels [sic] j’ai travaillé ces derniers jours m’ont donné beaucoup de bonnes idées et ils ont invigoré mon programme.

I would very much like to participate in your teacher education program again next year. The TCs with whom I worked recently have given me many good ideas and they enlivened my program.\(^2\)

Grade 4 – 6 Core French Teacher

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\(^1\) I asked Kate to mentor me in 1989. She had been teaching at the school for at least ten years prior to my arrival.

\(^2\) My translation
J'aimerais bien continuer à accueillir des stagiaires dans ma classe. J'adore la collaboration. J'ai un “growth mindset” et chaque expérience, même mauvaise, est une ouverture pour m'améliorer. ☺ [sic]

I would like to continue to welcome TCs into my class. I love the collaboration. I have a “growth mindset” and every experience, even bad ones, is an opportunity for self-improvement.3

Grade 4 – 8 Core French Teacher

These testimonials encouraged my quest to contribute to a research-informed pathway to the recognition and judicious application of reciprocal learning relationships to advance teacher practice. My quest gained momentum when I adopted the sculpture pictured below as the emblem for this study. The *œuvre*, created when a studio assistant merged a cast of Rodin’s hands with a torso sculpted by the master himself, embodied my proposition that within the synergistic teaching and learning relationships that develop between TCs and ATs, the input of the novice interacts with that of the experienced practitioner to create a new work or new practice.

*Figure 1*. Hand of Rodin holding a female torso

3 My translation
Overview of the Dissertation

The goal of this dissertation is to expand upon current understandings of reciprocal learning within the context of TC/AT relationships and contribute to the informed exploration of the associate teaching experience as a source of ongoing teacher learning. This research is representative of my career-long practice of seeking creative solutions to systemic challenges. To this end, I draw upon experiential knowledge gained as a teacher and learner and on the work of scholars in several fields including education, applied linguistics, sociology and philosophy. There are points in the discussion that may invite deeper exploration of a particular field; I have attempted to balance, competing requirements for thorough scholarly practice with pragmatic limitation of the scope of the project.

The first four chapters establish the foundations of the research. Chapter 2 situates the study within the literature of FSL teaching in Canada, reciprocal learning in mentoring relationships, and teacher learning. Chapter 3 begins by providing a brief history of complexity theories and models of teacher change. By blending these two frameworks, I developed the primary theoretical lens guiding the conception, elaboration, analysis and application of this multiple case study. Chapter 3 concludes by alerting readers to the fact that the theoretical lens embodies the complexivist approach of the study, and thus the model illustrating this lens is not static; subsequent iterations emerge as necessitated by research developments: one in Chapter 6 and one in Chapter 8. Chapter 4 describes the research methodology and provides a brief overview of the participants. I begin by presenting the research design, rationale, context and participants. When describing the data collection and analysis procedures, I emphasize the congruence between my handling of the data and the theoretical lens of the study. I highlight the innovative application of mind-mapping as one feature of this approach. Chapter 4 concludes by addressing validity, ethical considerations, limitations and my influence as a researcher.

I present the findings from this research in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Chapter 5 provides a detailed introduction to each participant and summarizes the answers to the two overarching research questions from the individual participant’s perspective. In light of the integral role that mind-mapping plays in this study, this introduction features a visual description and small
reproduction of each participants’ mind-map. I have included larger reproductions of the
original mind-maps (Appendix Q) and the participants’ revised mind-maps (Appendix R) as
the final appendices for ease of access. Chapter 6 is a dual-purpose chapter, serving both to
present findings related to the systemic issues interacting with the ATs’ teaching and learning
and to provide a lens through which to view the consolidated findings presented in Chapter 7.

In the final chapter, I synthesize the propositions, findings and interpretations presented in
Chapters 1 through 7. I then explain the conceptual process I followed in order to respond to
my research questions and review the responses before suggesting implications of this
research. Chapter 8 includes a description of a template (Appendix P) I developed to support
the application of the AT experience as a source of professional learning. I conclude by
making recommendations for future research to extend this inquiry into promoting and
supporting dynamic ongoing professional learning for FSL teachers and their counterparts
who teach other discipline
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction

I begin this review of literature consulted to inform and support this study by providing background information on FSL programs in Canada and presenting the ongoing need to develop and expand professional learning opportunities for FSL teachers. I then discuss the paradigm shift currently occurring in second language education, globally, nationally and specifically within the context of Ontario public schools. Subsequently, I examine reciprocal learning relationships between ATs and TCs and identify the potential of such relationships to contribute to the advancement of teaching practice. In the final section of the review, I present pertinent literature in the field of teacher learning.

FSL Teaching in Canada

An overview of FSL program models

FSL instruction in Canadian schools follows one of four program models: Core French, French immersion, Extended French or Intensive Core French. The Core French model, in which 90% of Canadian students are enrolled (Canadian Parents for French, CPF, 2006), presents the language as a subject taught during 30 – 50 minute periods of the school day. The second most common model, French immersion, features content-based language instruction in which French is the language of instruction for all or almost of the school curriculum. This model has several entry points: early immersion starts in Kindergarten or Grade 1; middle immersion begins around Grade 4; late immersion begins around Grade 7. The Extended French model, which provides students with greater exposure to French than the core French program, generally features French as the language of instruction for two or more subjects. Intensive Core French programs, which concentrate French language instruction during one half of the Grade 5 and/or Grade 6 school year without teaching other subjects in French, can enable students to achieve much higher oral proficiency levels than students enrolled in regular Core French programs (Canadian Parents for French, 2006). Core French is a compulsory subject from Grades 4 – 9 in Ontario, whereas the immersion, extended, intensive and programs are optional. The AT participants of this multiple case
study teach in either one or both of the first two program models presented in this section: Core French and French immersion. Three participants teach Core French, three teach French immersion and one teaches in both programs.

**Core French and French immersion: different programs different needs**

Each of the program models described above presents its own set of advantages and challenges. Core French teachers report higher levels of personal stress than their Immersion counterparts (Lapkin et al., 2006). This stress is largely attributable to the working conditions which reflect differences in perceived status of the two programs. Core French is a general program, whereas immersion is an optional program. In many jurisdictions parents must line up or enter registration lotteries in order to gain admission for their children. Core French teachers report feeling significantly less supported by students, parents and school administration (Lapkin et al., 2006). A very concrete sign of this lack of support is the fact that less than half of Core French teachers have dedicated classrooms in which to teach (Lapkin et al., 2006). Conversely, Core French teachers are far more satisfied with the quantity, quality and age and language appropriateness of available commercial resources and cultural materials than Immersion teachers.

One of the particular challenges for French immersion teachers is teaching language through content while teaching content in the students’ second or third language (Tedick, 2012; Lyster, 2007). Immersion teachers must adopt specialized approaches to both language and content instruction (Lyster, 2007) that they may not have encountered during their pre-service teacher education (Day & Shapson, 1993; Karsenti et al., 2008). Immersion teachers frequently bemoan the fact that finding resources to present grade-appropriate subject matter at a language level that is accessible to their students is extremely difficult. In fact, this disconnect between program expectations and available resources is one of the primary reasons that Canadian French immersion teachers leave the profession (Karsenti et al., 2008).

**Preparation and retention of FSL teachers**

Preparation and retention of FSL teachers in Canada has been a subject of study and concern for over a quarter century. Research on the shortages of qualified FSL teachers continues
(CPF, 2002; 2006), and stakeholders’ anecdotal complaints persist. Conversations held with school and board administrators from 2010 – 2014 about the employment prospects for recent graduates from a specialized FSL pre-service teacher education program, featured numerous complaints about the difficulties system leaders face when staffing French immersion schools. These shortages are related to inadequacies in teacher preparation (CPF, 2002), and subsequently to attrition among FSL teachers (Karsenti et al., 2008). Teachers who do not feel adequately prepared to face the diverse challenges of teaching in FSL contexts frequently leave teaching very early in their careers. This premature exit from teaching contributes to a revolving door effect (Brill & McCartney, 2008), as new teachers quickly enter and leave the profession prior to gaining the experience necessary to progress from the status of novice to experienced professional, thereby lowering overall levels of preparedness among working teachers. Though attrition in teaching workforces is an international issue of concern (Thant, 2002; Ingersoll, 2002) not restricted to language teachers, the rate of attrition among Canadian French immersion teachers is significantly higher than that of their non-FSL counterparts within Canada (Karsenti et al., 2008). In 2006, a national survey of practicing FSL teachers found that only 32% of the FSL teachers who participated in the survey had specialist FSL teaching qualifications and 40% of teachers surveyed reported that they had considered leaving FSL teaching in the last year (Lapkin et al.). This work follows a long history of research identifying the desperate need for FSL- and immersion-specific pre-service and in-service teacher development (Calvé, 1992; Day & Shapson, 1993; Obadia, 1986). Some improvements are certainly evident, as over 20 Canadian faculties of education offer specialized FSL pre-service teacher education programs; seven of these faculties are in Ontario (Karsenti & Dumouchel, 2006). Karsenti and Dumouchel reported these figures one year prior to the opening of the specialized program that provided the context for this multiple case study. However, as Lapkin et al. (2006) found, only a minority of practicing FSL teachers have benefited from the specialized preparation offered by such programs.

Karsenti et al. (2006) identified insufficient initial teacher preparation as one of five reasons for teachers leaving the profession. Other reasons included difficult working conditions inherent to FSL contexts and lack of instructional materials. These findings mirror previous suggestions that Lapkin et al. (2006) based on a survey of FSL teacher perspectives. Key
suggestions made in their report include improving access to adequate teaching resources and tailoring both pre-service and in-service teacher learning opportunities to specifically address the demands of FSL teaching. Identified requirements include a high level of language proficiency, strong pedagogy, knowledge of experiential and interactive teaching approaches (Salvatori & MacFarlane, 2009); for immersion teachers, there is the added necessity of skills in content-based language instruction.

The executive summary of the Karsenti et al. report concludes by drawing attention to mentoring as “a promising strategy to counter drop-out” (p.7). Mentoring, which I address further in the third section of this literature review, is essential to teacher retention (Guarino, Santibañez & Daley, 2006; Malderez, Hobson, Tracey, & Kerr, 2007; Martineau, 2008), and “is currently underused in the French immersion and French as a second language teaching profession” (Karsenti et al., 2008, p. 7).

**Provincial and federal support for FSL teacher preparation**

The publication of *A Framework for French as a second language in Ontario Schools*, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (FSL Framework) (Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2013a) is a significant development in the overall advancement of FSL education in Ontario. The document “presents a call to action to strengthen FSL programming, promote the benefits of FSL, heighten appreciation of and support for FSL educators, and increase public confidence in FSL education” (p. 7). It requires school boards to develop, pursue and report on measurable goals to this end. I discuss the FSL Framework’s influence on language instruction in the next section of this literature review; here I focus on the FSL Framework as it addresses the professional learning of FSL teachers. The ministerial expectation that school boards “develop professional learning models that meet the unique needs of FSL educators” (p. 15) is a promising indication that specialized learning opportunities for FSL educators have progressed from being an identified need to being an action item.

“Professional learning” in this document is understood as “focused, ongoing learning for every educator ‘in context’ (Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 7). This vision of ongoing, contextualized learning aligns with the central theme of this multiple case study:
ATs’ continual growth within the context of their teaching/learning/working relationships with TCs.

On a national level, the Protocol for Agreements on Minority and Second Language Education 2013-14 to 2017-18 (CMEC, 2014) highlights support for educational staff and related research as one of six funded areas of intervention. The primary detail of this support is the “development, provision and assessment of training (initial and continuous) and development programs for staff working in second language instruction” (CMEC, 2014, p. 4). The second form of support listed is “recruitment and retention of qualified staff” and “research with an impact on second-language instruction” (CMEC, 2014, p. 4). The fact that these initiatives are now receiving targeted funding indicates that cumulative understandings of the professional learning needs of FSL teachers emerging from research are making a tangible impact and much-needed growth is now a reality.

**Recent developments in second language education**

As I began the conception of this study, FSL education in Canada was riding a wave of renewed interest and support for program development. In 2003, the federal government produced a document entitled *The Next Act: New Momentum for Canada's Linguistic Duality*, which presented a commitment to "double the proportion of secondary school graduates with a functional knowledge of their second official language” by 2013 (p. 27). Though in 2015, the goal remains unattained, progress is substantial. The federal government designated funding for the renewal of teaching approaches and tools used in Core English and French language instruction across Canada. An updated Action Plan published in 2011, recommended adopting “a pedagogical approach that prioritizes oral communication and conversation with emphasis on content that can be used in everyday life” and “gradually aligning the second-language curricula with the proficiency scales in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)” (Canadian Heritage, 2011, pp.10 & 14). Though it does not specifically reference the CEFR, the Ontario Curriculum for FSL (2013, 2014) does espouse the use of an action-oriented approach to language teaching. Three examples of this espousal are (a) an emphasis on metacognition and strategy use throughout the curriculum documents and (b) overall learning expectations
that differentiate “speaking to communicate” from “speaking to interact” (Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2013 b, p. 57) and (c) declarations such as:

Communication is a social act. In order to learn French, therefore, students need to see themselves as social actors communicating for real purposes. Teaching language as a system of disconnected and isolated components gives learners some knowledge of the language, but does not allow them to use the language effectively. In contrast, communicative and action-oriented approaches to teaching French put meaningful and authentic communication at the centre of all learning activities. (Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2013 b, p. 9)

Parallels between the above declaration and following excerpt illustrate the fact that elements of the CEFR clearly informed the revision of FSL curricula in Ontario.

[An action-oriented approach] views users and learners of a language primarily as ‘social agents’, i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action. While acts of speech occur within language activities, these activities form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them their full meaning. (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 9)

Expansion and revision of FSL programs for students resulting from these federal and provincial initiatives have generated increased need for teachers who possess the knowledge base necessary to teach effectively within the context of an increasingly communicative and action-oriented curriculum. This knowledge base includes, but is not limited to, theories of teaching, teaching skills, communication skills, language proficiency and cultural knowledge (Faez, 2011). The Canadian Second Language Teachers’ Association has elaborated teaching resources and research documents to support CEFR implementation in across the country. In Ontario, the Ministry of Education has funded board-specific projects and, in collaboration with Curriculum Services Canada, developed a range of resources to support FSL teachers in the implementation of CEFR-informed teaching practices. These resources can be found on the Transforming FSL webpage http://www.curriculum.org/fsl/home.

The timing of this study coincides with the first academic year for mandated implementation of the revised Elementary FSL curriculum and the publication of the Secondary FSL curriculum. Thus, the AT participants were at a period in their professional practice where
the necessity to focus on targeted professional learning as language teachers may have been more pressing than during previous or subsequent academic years.

Reciprocal Learning in Mentoring Relationships

The second body of literature that I consulted to inform and support this study pertains to reciprocal learning within AT/TC and mentoring relationships. Deriving from the Latin word *reciprocus*, meaning “returning the same way”, the word reciprocal is defined as “mutually corresponding” or “consisting of or functioning as a return in kind” (Merriam-Webster, 2014). The concept of “returned” or exchanged learning is the inspiration behind this multiple case study. Teaching and learning to teach are multi-faceted ventures, so too is the endeavour of mentoring a TC. The voices of ATs presented in the literature have claimed to play a multitude of roles. These roles include, expert model, provider of practical advice, evaluator, counsellor, confidante (Sanders, Dowson, & Sinclair, 2005) instiller of passion for teaching and window to “real-life” practice (Goodfellow & Sumsion, 2000) coach, confidence-builder, and critical friend (Borko & Mayfield, 1995). Those who participated in research by Beck & Kosnik (2000), Clarke (2006), Iancu-Haddad & Oplatka (2009), Nguyen (2009), and Roland (2009) also spoke of playing the role of co-learner. When asked to list the benefits of working as an AT, participants named personal growth, professional growth, a sense of satisfaction gained from contributing to the development of student teachers, a feeling of energy and revitalization, and the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from the student teacher (Iancu-Haddad & Oplatka, 2009; Roland, 2009; Russell & Russell, 2011). This final benefit was most prominent in the literature.

As noted in Chapter 1, reciprocal learning was ranked either first or second as “most beneficial aspect” of being an AT, by participants in Roland’s (2009) research. Beck and Kosnik (2000), who conducted interviews with twenty ATs over a two-year period, reported “virtually all the interviewees gave as the main advantage of being an AT, that they learned from the experience, especially from the student teachers” (p. 212). Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, and Tomlinson (2009) observed similar contributions to the professional development of experienced teachers, noting that such reciprocal relationships fostered a culture of professional support and improved self-reflection and problem-solving skills. Upon examining the nature and substance of AT reflections on practice, Clarke (2006) also
concluded that there was ample evidence to support claims that “the practicum provides a rich reciprocal professional development environment for the cooperating teacher” (p.919).

Table 1

Summary of Research on Reciprocal Learning in TC/AT Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Notable Findings</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATs pursuing literacy specialist qualifications mentoring pre-service TCs</td>
<td>Allen, Cobb, &amp; Danger (2003)</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>All ATs reported increased reflection on and adaptation to their instructional strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ATs n= 11</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TCs n= 22</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>reflections on mentoring-related experiences</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational psychologist mentoring an intern in school setting</td>
<td>Carrington (2004)</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>Mentor identified three sources types of learning:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-study</td>
<td>• Reflection on and articulation of practice</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Intern ideas/innovations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Feedback from intern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Fellowship Program</td>
<td>Gilles &amp; Wilson (2004)</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>ATs identified four major types of learning:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up to previous research establishing that ATs in the program do learn</td>
<td>Focus groups n = 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Relearning, retooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus: ATs perceptions of what and how they learn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Gaining depth and breadth of learning and perspective</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Expanding their mentoring role</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Gaining insight in the process of mentoring</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Focus 1: AT role as a "cost effective" source of professional learning, supporting education reform

Focus 2: ATs needs to improve mentoring

Hudson (2013)

Mixed-method

Survey n = 101

Interviews n = 10

• Most ATs reported mentoring pedagogical knowledge and practices consistent with reforms
• ATs reflected on and articulated previous practice and new curricula
• ATs were more confident mentoring Literacy teaching than Science or Numeracy
• To improve mentoring ATs need:
  - advice from subject specialists
  - time to plan with TCs
  - full in-servicing on new curricula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Notable Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large-scale evaluation of school-university partnership</td>
<td>Lopez-Real &amp; Kwan (2005)</td>
<td>Mixed-method Survey n = 259 Interviews n = 18</td>
<td>70% of survey respondents stated they learned through mentoring: • Reflection • TC ideas/innovations • Collaboration • University tutors 98% highlighted Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based action research using cognitive coaching</td>
<td>McCloy (2011)</td>
<td>Qualitative Case study n = 1</td>
<td>AT learned through: • Reflection on and articulation of practice • Professional knowledge sharing • Contrasting own development with that of TC AT became aware of: • increased sense of accountability • Importance of relationship building in mentoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Small-scale study of ATs in isolated rural schools

Simpson, Hastings & Hill (2007)

Qualitative Multiple case study

Interviews n = 13

Learning in three areas:
• Personal – reflection on growth and challenges
• Professional – current research and theory
• Technical – strategies and resources introduced by TCs

| Table 1 |summarizes studies that have viewed TC/AT mentoring relationships through the lens of AT professional learning. |

My search for studies on AT learning and reciprocal learning in mentorship relationships located two single-participant studies, three mid-sized studies and two large-scale studies. The following synopsis of findings and suggestions from each of these studies proceeds from studies with the smallest number of participants to those with the largest. Carrington’s (2004) self-study analyzed the learning he achieved while supervising the field placement of a novice educational psychologist. He found that through mentoring he gained a fresh perspective, incentive for increased reflection and greater awareness of his practice due to the fact that he was being observed. Carrington suggested that these findings support the elevation of mentorship from “low-status task… done out of duty to foster the professional development of others” (p. 40) to a position of esteem, a foundation for developing more reflective and creative professionals in education. McCloy’s (2011) case study of one AT’s work with a TC employed cognitive coaching sessions to promote AT learning and improve mentoring practice. Cognitive coaching is a supervisory and peer coaching model in which the person being coached evaluates the quality, effectiveness and appropriateness of their practice as the coach guides them through a series of questions (Garmston, Linder & Whitaker, 1993). McCloy found that, in addition to reflection on and articulation of practice,
the AT also learned through comparing her own development to that of the TC. McCloy proposed that his findings would assist in reducing attrition among TCs and aid in the recruitment of ATs in his school district.

Simpson, Hastings and Hill’s (2007) multiple case study found that their 13 AT participants experienced personal, professional and technical learning. The authors suggested that universities, teachers’ associations and employers might enhance the professional learning potential of TC/AT relationships by “contributing conceptual inputs” (p. 495) and giving academic or professional recognition for the learning ATs gain through reflective mentorship. Allen, Cobb, and Danger (2003) studied the learning of 11 ATs mentoring pairs of TCs, as all pursued either advanced or initial qualifications as literacy teachers. The authors concluded that mentoring is a powerful source of professional learning for both TCs and ATs and that ATs require more support to refine their mentorship skills. Gilles and Wilson’s (2004) series of focus groups with 25 ATs working in professional development schools (PDS) showed that in addition to learning through reflection, ATs built leadership skills and “professional courage” (p. 104). PDS’ are schools that are schools affiliated with faculties of education through focused partnerships intended to simultaneously advance TC and AT practice while also providing research venues (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Preparation, 2010). Like Allen et al., Gilles and Wilson concluded that in order to support and extend the professional learning that both TCs and ATs experience, ATs must have opportunities to discuss and refine their practice as mentors.

Lopez-Real and Kwan (2005) incorporated questions about ATs’ perspectives on the benefits and challenges of their position into a large-scale evaluation of school-university partnerships. Of 259 survey respondents, 70% stated that they experienced learning through mentoring TCs. Follow-up interviews with 18 of the respondents generated two primary sources of AT learning: reflection and TC interaction. The authors divide these sources into two broad themes: reflection and interaction. ATs learned through general reflection on their practice, often for the purposes of deconstructing and explaining, and also through reflection aimed at providing feedback about TC’s planning and teaching. TC/AT interaction as a source of AT learning also appeared in two distinctive forms: learning new ideas directly from TCs and learning through collaboration with TCs. Lopez-Real and Kwan aimed to find
intrinsic motivations for experienced teachers to take on the role of AT. They concluded that AT learning was not confined to the practicum period but extended to long-term situated professional learning and that the mentoring process can act as a catalyst for further mentoring and collegial sharing among experienced teachers.

Hudson’s (2013) large-scale study of ATs working with Teacher Education Done Differently (http://tedd.net.au/), a mentorship-focussed teacher education in Australia, sought to prove that associate teaching is a “cost effective” (p. 771) source of professional learning that supports educational reform. He found that most of the 101 survey respondents reported modelling pedagogical knowledge and practices consistent with education reforms, and that mentoring provided ATs the opportunity to learn through reflection on and articulation of both previous practice and new curricula. ATs noted that they were more confident mentoring Literacy teaching than Numeracy or Science teaching. Interviews with ten ATs who had completed a Mentoring for Effective Teaching professional learning program (http://tedd.net.au/mentoring-for-effective-teaching/), identified the following three requirements to improve AT mentoring practice: advice from subject specialists, time to plan with TCs, and full in-servicing on new curricula. Hudson concluded that AT learning has yet to be exploited to its full potential. Like Simpson et al. (2007) and Lopez-Real and Kwan (2005), Hudson (2013) also proposed that AT learning be credited; he extended this proposal with the suggestion that specialized frameworks to guide AT reflection will enable educators to gain maximum benefit from mentoring as a professional learning experience.

As Hudson (2013) proposed for his research, I intend this multiple case study to contribute to the literature that will inform the application of TC/AT reciprocal learning as an agent of educational improvement on a broader scale. I expand upon the above-described research by extending the work into the field of second language education, and by viewing AT learning through a conceptual lens that has yet to be applied for this purpose. The theoretical lens, which I elaborate in Chapter 3, enables me to go beyond an examination of what second language teachers learn from their AT experiences to address questions of how such learning emerges.
The current body of literature about associate teaching is limited in its treatment of AT experiences within the field of second language education. In her review of research literature on mentorship in language教师, Asención Delaney (2012) notes that language teacher mentoring remains largely uninvestigated, and that the few existing publications are predominantly Program Descriptions. Asención Delaney considers mentoring in both pre-service and in-service contexts, thereby addressing both the mentoring of TCs and newly-hired teachers in teacher induction programs. The review calls for more data-driven research, itemizing such needs as program reviews to determine effectiveness of particular features of mentoring programs, and evaluation of the impact of mentoring on the development of language teachers and on students’ language learning.

In a study that mentions reciprocal learning between ATs and TCs in Second Language Education (SLE) contexts, Meskill, Anthony, Hilliker, Tseng and You, 2006 describe a project that brought together three groups of educators, who collaboratively implemented computer-assisted language learning (CALL) in K-8 classes for English for speakers of other languages. The in-service teacher participants shared practical classroom expertise with pre-service teacher participants, who offered new technical abilities learned through Faculty of Education course work. The two groups of teachers were supported by a team of doctoral students with expertise in educational technology. In the second year of the project, teacher pairs collaboratively developed web-based materials for language teaching. Data collected in the form of pre- and post-project questionnaires, interviews and written reflections, was analyzed qualitatively. The researchers concluded that linking pre-service to in-service teacher education is crucial to effectively promoting growth in teaching practice (Meskill, et al., 2006).

Asención Delaney (2012) extended the theme of promoting growth in teaching practice. Citing Wang and Odell (2002) as well as Wedell (2003), who state that mentoring is considered a good way to introduce positive change in education, she proposed that mentoring be employed to build the capacity necessary for the effective implementation of American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency standards that were newly-released at the time of the publication of her literature review. Her proposal echoes my suggestion that reciprocal learning may contribute to the implementation of
updated approaches to language teaching and Hudson’s (2013) suggestion that AT learning should be intentionally applied to support educational reform.

Teacher Learning

Evolving approaches to learning to teach

At one time, learning to be a teacher was considered a task that one could accomplish during a 4-month normal school program. The introduction of normal schools, the certificate-granting institutions that were the precursors to colleges of education, near the end of the nineteenth century represented significant advancement in the status of the teaching profession in Canada (Sheehan & Wilson, 2006). A century later, the conceptualization of teacher learning as a lifelong process that develops through teachers’ interactions and experiences both as learners and as teachers (Johnson & Golombek, 2003) emerged. Today, as the twenty-first century advances into its late teens, researchers and educational leaders affirm not only that teachers’ professional learning is best situated within the work environment (Guskey, 2002; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Whitcomb, Borko & Liston, 2009), but also that it need not be restricted to formally organized initiatives (Beck & Kosnick, 2014; Hoekstra, Beijaard, Brekelmans & Korthagen, 2007; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007), and can often occur incidentally (Ertaut, 2007; Smylie, 1988). We have progressed past the realization that isolated professional development sessions presented in contexts removed from the teaching environment, are a less-than-effective means of promoting teacher learning (Fullan, 1991; Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1991) to official recognition of the importance of collaborative endeavors and autonomous learning as important contributors to teachers’ continued professional growth (Alberta School Improvement Branch, 2006; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007; National Staff Development Council 2009). Coaching and mentoring are recognized as effective components of this broader, more active vision of professional learning (Asención Delaney, 2012; Zwart, Wubbels, Bergen & Bolhuis, 2007). Policymakers and their advisors can now approach teachers’ professional learning as something in which teachers actively engage, rather than something that is “done to them” (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).
Clarification of terminology: professional development, professional learning and teacher learning

Current transitions in terminology reflect this evolution of how we view the continuing education of teachers. Scholars, educators and organizations have contributed explanations of the differences between professional development and professional learning (Easton, 2008; Hilt, 2011; Killion, 2013, Learning Forward, 2010). The term professional learning generally refers to the more active, engaged approach, whereas professional development is now commonly associated with more traditional views of in-service education for teachers, such as isolated sessions in which teachers are trained to implement officially-selected or mandated practices. A prominent example of transition in nomenclature is the official name change of the National Staff Development Council to Learning Forward: The Professional Learning Association. Within this environment of transformation exists a certain element of confusion as not all authors have fully adopted such changes of terminology and different authors and educational jurisdictions employ the terms in variously nuanced ways. Kelly (2006), for example, referred to three types of professional learning: PPD (post-graduate professional development) or learning “opportunities associated with post-graduate accreditation” (p. 505), CPD (continued professional development) or “planned opportunities for teacher learning” (p. 505), and teacher learning, which he defined as “the process by which teachers move towards expertise” (p. 514). Kelly’s three categories correspond to the more commonly understood taxonomy of formal, non-formal and informal learning, which I explain in the next section.

Formal, non-formal and informal learning

Research on and comparison of learning achieved in unaccredited non-institutional settings gained momentum at the beginning of the 21st century. In 2010, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) published a report summarizing policies, practices and results related to member nations’ official recognition of a wide range of learning experiences. Canada is one of 30 OECD member nations, and also one of the 16 member nations that contributed to this report. The report begins with a review of terminology and an explanation of the concepts of formal, non-formal and informal learning,
which exist on a somewhat flexible continuum. Throughout this multiple case study, I use the following definitions for the three terms, based on those elaborated by the OECD.

*Formal learning* occurs in a structured environment, in which learning periods, objectives and resources are defined and regulated. Formal learning is intentional and leads to certification. Examples of this for teachers would be university degrees and Additional Qualifications (AQ)\(^4\) courses. AQ courses enable certified teachers to pursue qualifications to teach in a different division, or to expand their knowledge and skills in a particular area. *Informal learning* is neither structured nor regulated in terms of time, learning objectives or resources. It is learning that develops from daily activities, and is generally unintentional. With the exception of initiatives such as Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) programs,\(^5\) informal learning does not lead to certification. Examples of this for teachers would be learning through speaking to and working with colleagues. Between these two learning types is the less clearly defined *non-formal learning*. Like formal learning, *non-formal* learning is intentional. It may or may not be structured and may have defined learning goals. Non-formal learning is not regulated and, with the exception of PLAR programs does not lead to certification. Workshops and school organized professional learning communities (PLC)s are common sources of non-formal learning for teachers.

Though the initial purpose of the policies studied in the OECD’s 2010 report was to increase access to educational and work-place opportunities, the researchers found that all policies aimed at recognizing non-formal and informal learning outcomes raised public awareness of

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\(^4\) The Ontario College of Teachers regulates a system of Additional Basic Qualifications (ABQ) and Additional Qualifications (AQ) course that certified teachers may take to pursue certification to teach in a different division (ABQ) or to expand their knowledge and skills (AQ). The qualification earned by taking such courses is noted on a teacher’s professional record and can in some cases lead to a change in salary classification.

\(^5\) PLAR is the term used in Canada for programs which allow learners to gain academic and professional recognition for skills and knowledge gained outside of formal learning environments. An example of such programs exists in Ontario schools, which offer secondary school students the opportunity to earn credits by completing an equivalency examination for certain subject areas. Searches of school board websites in 8 other provinces (I did not search Quebec websites for the English term PLAR) showed that, while the possibility of receiving course equivalencies for previous experience may exist for secondary school students, the term PLAR is not used.
the value of the lifelong learning. Teacher learning, as I describe in the next section, is a lifelong process.

**Understandings and representations of teacher learning**

Individual teacher learning emerges from teachers’ own “reshaping of existing knowledge, beliefs and practices, rather than simply imposing new theories, methods or materials” (Johnson & Golombek, 2003, p. 730). This micro-level (Evans, 2014) yet expansive activity is a dialogic process through which teachers transform themselves and their practice through their own interaction with, and internalization of, new concepts, while concurrently interacting with their students and with the various resources and constraints in the teaching environment. For the AT participants of this multiple case study, this interaction also includes TCs. Thus, the TCs may contribute to AT learning by introducing new ideas to the learning environment and/or by providing an opportunity for the AT to engage with and process new information gained through other sources. New ideas and approaches related to this interaction, or any other learning relationship, may take time to filter into the teachers’ knowledge and practice. Accordingly, it is not necessarily the moments spent with their TCs that can lead to learning on the part of the ATs, but rather the individual ATs’ internalization of such interactions.

Due to the complex nature of the “continuous process through which knower and knowledge are simultaneously redefined” (Davis, 2008, p. 53), it is not possible to establish definite causal links between a specific interaction and the learning of a particular concept or the application thereof. However, our present climate of educational accountability, greatly values such connections. In this climate, provision of effective professional learning opportunities is recognized as a means of increasing student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2011; Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson & Orphanos, 2009; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss & Shapley, 2007). Wei et al. (2009) stressed that top-ranking countries according to PISA (Program in International Student Assessment) share common practices in their support of professional learning for teachers. Three of the five highlighted practices are pertinent to this multiple case study; these are: “extensive opportunities for both formal and informal in-service, time for professional learning and collaboration built into the
teachers’ work hours, professional development activities that are embedded in teachers’ contexts and that are ongoing over a period of time” (p. 18). While the establishment of such causal links between teacher learning and student achievement does generate interest in and support for teachers’ professional learning, it has also been called problematic (Evans, 2014) and reductive (Kelly, 2006). It is not my intent to solve this dilemma, but merely to acknowledge its potential influence on the research environment. According to Kelly (2006), attaching a causal relationship between teacher learning and impact on a class of students or on the systems that exist within or around the class denies the complexity of the distributed knowing and collaborative learning that characterize teacher expertise.

Examples of such oversimplification are prominent in the literature developed to guide and promote teacher learning. In 2011, Learning Forward published a revised set of standards for professional learning. The accompanying reference guide provides an elaboration of the seven standards - learning communities, leadership, resources, data, learning designs, implementation, outcomes - each of which commences with the phrase “professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and improves results for all students” (p. 2). Thus, the very wording of the guide leads readers to believe that professional learning for teachers causes increases in student performance. Similarly, the Ontario Ministry of Education has described its Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP), as a “project-based professional learning opportunity . . . for individual experienced teachers [or teacher-led groups] who undertake self-directed advanced professional development” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013c, p. 2). Though the program itself clearly supports autonomous micro-level development, it is guided by a mandate that states “the learning must have a positive impact on the students and school success” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). While it would be difficult to imagine a teacher who would undertake professional learning in order to have a negative impact on student and/or school success, success cannot be considered a guaranteed outcome of professional learning initiatives. I recognize the reductionist tendencies of such visions of teacher learning and thus, I do not attempt to identify a causal relationship between teacher learning and specific changes in classroom practice. With this study, I intend to provide insight into some of the factors that influence such changes. Development, such as language learning or advancing teaching practice, is the result of an individual’s interaction with their environment in conjunction with their own
internal reorganization of knowledge (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007). Increased understanding of this development, will make it possible to cultivate environments and promote knowledge reorganization conducive to teachers’ professional growth.

**Teacher beliefs**

Teacher beliefs are noteworthy in the study of teacher learning, as they play a central role in teacher development (Richards, Gallo & Renandya, 2001). Borg (2001) grounds her definition of *belief* in philosophy, identifying a belief as a mental state containing a proposition considered true by the person who holds it. As “the best indicators of the decisions individuals make throughout their lives” (Pajares, 1992), beliefs guide teachers’ thoughts and behaviours (Borg, 2001). Teachers’ beliefs about what it means to be a “good” teacher inspire them to model positive behavior, keep abreast of current practice, adapt to students’ needs, use authentic materials and adopt a learner-centred approach (Breen, nd). Teachers’ perceptions of their own practice in relation to such beliefs are significant predictors of individual change in practice (Smylie, 1988). For example, if teachers question their efficacy in a given situation, they tend to reflect on teaching and learning alternatives, which opens the door to related professional learning (Wheatly, 2002). Non-native speaker language teachers frequently question their efficacy as users of the target language (Horwitz, 1996). While this questioning can inspire teachers to focus on their own language practice, it can also lead to “foreign language anxiety”, which can limit teachers’ implementation of the interactive pedagogy they know to be effective (Horwitz, 1996).

When asked to reflect on changes in their beliefs in relation to their practice over the course of their careers, Bailey (1992) found that language teachers predominantly reported a shift towards more learner-centred, activity-based pedagogy, guided by a philosophical turn “from idealism to realism”. Teachers are inspired to change their practice when they experience a change in context, when they connect new ideas to their teaching context or when they are dissatisfied with their current situation (Bailey, 1992). With this in mind, to promote career-long professional growth, teachers need opportunities in which to confront their beliefs and question them in relation to new ideas (Borko and Putnam, 1996). And, because ideas are generally internal, they need to develop ways to frame conversations about practice
Associate teaching offers a context in which to engage in such conversations.

Reflective practice

Reflection is widely recognized as a fundamental component of initial teacher learning (Etscheidt, Curran & Sawyer, 2012; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hatton & Smith, 1995; van Manen, 1977, 1995) and ongoing professional growth (Clark & Hollingsworth, 2002; Dewey, 1933; Schön, 1984). Each of the studies reviewed in the section of this chapter on reciprocal learning in mentoring relationships emphasizes the importance of reflection. The researchers presented reflection as a source of professional learning (Carrington, 2004; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005; McCloy, 2011; Simpson, Hastings & Hill, 2007), credited mentoring relationships with promoting increased reflection (Allen, Cobb, & Danger, 2003), and suggested the application of reflection to improve mentoring practice (Gilles & Wilson, 2004; Hudson, 2013). In this section, I review relevant literature on reflective practice as a source of teacher learning.

Dewey considered reflection to be a kind of problem solving in which one gives “active, persistent and careful consideration” to a “supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it” and to any conclusions to which it may lead (p.6). He also stated that we learn not from action so much as reflection on action. This reflection is a five-step process, consisting of: (a) perceiving a difficulty, (b) defining it, (c) suggesting possible solutions, (d) developing rationales for the solution(s), (e) observing and experimenting to determine the validity of the chosen solution (Dewey, 1933). Schön also referred to reflection as a problem-solving process and framed it specifically within the context of learning as a professional. This problem-solving consists of two types of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Practitioners reflect in action in order to guide their practice in the moment, responding to unexpected occurrences, based on their knowledge of the field. They reflect on action retrospectively in order to build theory and inform future practice. According to Schön, professionals frequently base their judgments and actions on context-specific idiosyncratic theories in practice rather than on the documented theories of their professional canon. This seeming rejection of the influence of
espoused theory is controversial, however anyone who has observed teacher practice can attest that such eschewal is not uncommon (Lortie, 1975). Schön’s constructs, particularly the ambiguity surrounding the timing of reflection-in-action, have been the subject of criticism (Eraut, 1994; Moon, 1999). Whether reflection-in-action must take place simultaneously to the professional performance or whether it can involve taking a moment to “stop and think” remains unclear. Whether reflection-on-action must exclude reference to theory is also unspecified. However, there is no question that Schön’s contribution to the literature is foundational to the role of reflection in teacher education and ongoing teacher learning.

Van Manen (1977, 1995) used Schön’s work to inform his model *Levels of Reflectivity* and related application of reflective practice in teacher education. His model presented three levels of reflection: (a) technical rationality, during which the educator thinks about subject knowledge and curriculum; (b) practical action, when the educator considers pedagogical goals within the teaching context; (c) critical reflection, where the educator evaluates their teaching in detail, posing questions about the strengths of a teaching engagement, the conditions that were instrumental to its success, alternative ways to approach such lessons, the importance of the content to the students and the moral and ethical implications of the teaching engagement. Van Manen (1995) also outlined “anticipatory reflection” in which a teacher thinks about and strategizes for possible occurrences during particular teaching and learning situations. Hatton and Smith (1995) applied a similar model consisting of descriptive reflection, dialogic reflection and critical reflection to develop an evaluative tool that they used to study TCs’ development of reflective practice. They concluded that during the course of a teacher education program, the TCs did learn how to be reflective practitioners, and that verbal interaction with “trusted others” (p. 44) fostered their reflection.

When designing this multiple case study, I predicted that developments in SLE described earlier in this chapter would inspire the AT participants to consider the context of their teaching environments and reflect on (a) their learning process and (b) the ensuing changes in their practice. Parallels exist between this first topic of reflection and the first overarching research question: How do ATs in FSL contextualize the associate teaching experience within their professional learning? The second topic of reflection links to the second
overarching research question: How can the experience of being an AT influence FSL teacher practice?. The second topic of reflection links more specifically to the fourth sub-question: What connections do participating teachers see between their work with TCs and their implementation of updated curriculum and approaches to language teaching?

As demonstrated in this review of literature, scholars have noted an increasing awareness of the learning that ATs gain through mentoring. This learning is recognized within the recently broadened conceptualization of professional learning. Concurrently, teachers’ professional learning has gained attention as an important contributor to the advancement of effective learning systems. The needs and means to advance language-teaching practice is a perennially important theme in applied linguistics literature that has gained prominence in the Canadian context. I draw upon each of these fields, to make a contribution to collective understandings, specifically as they pertain to the professional learning of FSL teachers working in a changing teaching and learning environment.
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Lens

Introduction

In this chapter, I review theoretical literature in the fields of complexity and of teacher change. These two bodies of literature, in conjunction with the literature on teacher learning, reviewed in the previous chapter, provide the theoretical framework guiding the data collection and analysis as well as interpretation and discussion of findings of this multiple case study. I conclude this chapter by presenting a model (Figure 6) that merges the model introduced in the section on complexity (Figure 2) with the model developed in the section on teacher change (Figure 6), thereby providing a visual representation of the primary conceptual lens through which to view this research.

Complexity

Language, language learning, teaching, and language teaching are each dynamic, adaptive and non-linear. Each has accordingly been identified as complex (Beckner, Blythe, Bybee, Christiansen, Croft, Ellis, Holland, Ke, Larsen-Freeman & Schoenemann, 2009; de Bot et al., 2005a, 2005b, 2007; Davis, 2008; Davis & Sumara, 2005, 2012; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Piccardo, 2011, 2014). When examining and describing the complex process of learning, as it is related to the complex act of teaching a phenomena as complex as language, within the context of a classroom, one sees multiple levels of complexity. To provide insight into this use of the term complexity, I review some of the history behind the term complexity theory. We, as members of society, interact daily within one of the most highly complex systems in existence (Morin, 1977/1992). Striving to gain understanding of this reality, thinkers from the realms of science, mathematics, philosophy and popular science have proposed theories pertaining to the complex nature of physical and social phenomena. Though the term complexity theory has entered common usage, Alhadeff-Jones (2008) suggests that the oversimplified term jeopardizes the very nature of the paradigm, noting that complexity theories would more appropriately convey the various presentations of complexity developed from both complementary and contradictory positions. I respect Alhadeff-Jones’ point by avoiding the term complexity theory, and substituting the capitalized Complexity to embrace the various theories and approaches.
Austrian biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Russo-Belgian physical chemist Ilya Prigogine and Belgian sociologist and philosopher Marcel Bolle de Bal each elaborated one of the complementary and contradictory theories to which Alhadeff-Jones refers. Bertalanffy’s General Systems Theory of the 1950’s describes systems with interacting components to explain how complex order emerges, specifically in the fields of biology and cybernetics. Prigogine’s 1970’s study of the close interplay between structure and change led him to define how dissipative structures are able to self organize, thereby drawing attention to self-organization, which would later be identified as a defining feature of complex adaptive systems. In the 1980’s Bolle de Bal contributed the term reliance to the discourse. Reliance, which refers to the state of being both interdependent and altered by this interdependence, was created by transforming the French adjective relié (connected) from its passive construction into an active noun (Le Moigne, 2008). Bolle de Bal put forth this active “sharing of accepted solitudes and . . . exchange of respected differences” (Le Moigne, p. 178) in his call for progress from restricted theories of interdependence to a general one. Morin applied the concept of reliance in his 1990 work Introduction à la pensée complexe. (Le Moigne, 2008). His notion of interdependent and inter-reactive interaction is crucial to the framework of this multiple case study.

Several scholars have elaborated rationales for applying complexity science to education and educational research (Alhadeff-Jones, 2008; Davis, 2008; Davis & Sumara, 2005, 2012; Mason, 2008; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) align the field of applied linguistics to five features of complex adaptive systems (CAS). De Bot et al. (2005b) summarize Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), which is “the science of the development of complex systems over time” (p. 116), to introduce their conceptualization of applied linguistics from a DST perspective. Davis (2008) presents a series of “vital simultaneities” that establish Complexity as “properly educational discourse” (p. 50). In this section, I connect the features of this multiple case study to the three aforementioned frameworks.

A complex adaptive system (CAS) is (a) heterogeneous, (b) dynamic, (c) non-linear, (d) open (unpredictable), and (e) adaptive (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). This section outlines the pertinence of each of these features to ATs’ situated learning within and related to their
work with TCs in FSL classrooms. Heterogeneity and dynamism are prominent features of language classrooms. Just as the numerous identities, and learning styles (Gardner, 1983; Dunn & Dunn, 1993) of each student influence their individual learning (Dörnyei, 2005), the language teacher’s own personal and educational background and experiences influence the social and pedagogical decisions taken in response to students’ action, needs and interaction (Tudor, 2001). As these diverse individuals respond to one another as a group, learning emerges from the interaction in a non-linear manner. The experienced language teacher works to guide this interaction and maintain dynamic equilibrium (Senior, 2006).

As an open system, various components or agents may enter or leave (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) a language classroom. In the case of the teachers involved in this study, one such addition to their classrooms is a TC who joins the environment in order to work with and learn from them. When this additional teacher/learner enters the classroom system, various changes develop and the system adapts. Adaptations may be physical, as a workspace is provided for the TC, temporal, as the AT breaks down tasks and provides feedback, (ETFO, 2010) and relational, as the two teachers engage in dialogue and reflection and the pupils interact with the TC. Though direct causal relationships may not be observed in the classroom (Kelly, 2006; Senior, 2006), learning can emerge from such interaction. As they reflect upon their own learning within this system, ATs are able to identify their thoughts and actions as both contributing and responding to adaptations in the system. Three of the elements of DST presented by de Bot et al. (2005b) are particularly pertinent to this study. These are (a) the fact that complex systems are always part of another system; (b) the complete interconnectedness of systems, with changes in one variable impacting all others; and (c) the fact that systems develop both through interaction with their environment and through internal self-reorganization. Figure 2 illustrates how each of the systems addressed in the present study form a part of another system. An example of the complete interconnectedness of the various agents in classroom within which TCs, ATs and students are respectively teaching and learning can be found in the power of a simple introduction. When an AT introduces a TC to the class as a “student teacher”, students respond to that TC and the information they present with a different degree of esteem from that which is accorded to TC’s introduced as “interns” or “co-teachers”. This in turn impacts the TC’s
response to students, the students’ learning experience and the AT’s evaluation of and relationship with the TC. The importance of this introduction is stressed in 15 of the 20 Canadian and American AT handbooks consulted. In Chapter 2, I established that teacher learning emerges from the individual teacher’s reshaping of knowledge, beliefs and practices (Johnson & Golombek, 2003) and that teachers transform themselves and their practice through their own interaction with, and internalization of, new concepts, while concurrently interacting with students, colleagues, and with the various resources and constraints in the teaching environment. Thus, the AT is a complex system, developing through environmental interaction and internal self-reorganization.

This learning, which Davis (2008) has described as “ongoing transformations of both knowledge-producing systems and systems of knowledge produced” (p. 53) develops within the CAS of the classroom, which is itself situated within a number of both nested and interrelated systems. Such nesting and interdependence are particularly relevant to teacher learning as it “tends to be constituted simultaneously in the activity of autonomous entities (teachers), collectives (such as grade level and subject groups), and subsystems within grander unities [such as] … schools within school systems” (Opfer & Pedder, 2011, p. 379). As shown in Figure 2, the classroom context, which provides the immediate environment for the AT/TC relationship, is co-adaptive, responding to and influencing changes in other systems (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; van Lier, 1996), as is the case for ecosystems (van Geert, 1993). An example of such inter-organizational, inter-contextual adaptation appears in Chapter 4, where I describe how labour unrest in both the school board and the university contexts of this study necessitated changes in scheduling and program requirements within both sets of institutions that impacted the research. The practice and interactions that the participating ATs considered as they reflected on their learning is contextualized within the classroom, the school, the school community, the education system and the greater geopolitical environment.

Having established coherence between this multiple case study and characteristics of complex systems as outlined by Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) and features of the development of complex systems presented by de Bot et al. 2005b, I relate this study to Davis’s (2008) simultaneities, before returning to an earlier elucidation of Complexity to
conclude this section. Davis posits that a series of phenomenological sets, which include knower and knowledge, affect and effect, and descriptive and pragmatic insights, establish the appositeness of complexity science to educators and educational researchers (Davis, 2008). Where most popular paradigms present these phenomena as coincidental, complexivist thinking emphasizes their co-implication. This multiple case study considers knowers and knowledge simultaneously by viewing both TCs and ATs as agents contributing to the shared and separate professional learning. Neither partner is solely giver or receiver of knowledge, nor are they separate from this knowledge, as both partners develop knowledge through their co-engagement. When TCs and ATs work together to plan learning activities, integrate new material and solve problems, each partner contributes to and benefits from shared learning opportunities. TC/AT learning relationships can be a supportive entity within which both parties rely on one another to overcome challenges. Conversely, they can be sources of tension and frustration. Emotions are an integral part of cognition and may be co-constructed as an event progresses (Swain, 2013). Whether positive or negative, the emotions of TCs, ATs and students each contribute to, and are impacted by, the collective affective state of the classroom CAS and shared learning that develops therein. Davis (2008) suggests that frequently frameworks adopted by educational researchers from domains such as psychology were designed to describe a phenomenon rather that cause it to occur, whereas a Complexity framework requires participation and application. The simultaneous interplay between the descriptive and pragmatic nature of this research leads to its inexorable alignment with Complexity. Within a different paradigm my own presence in learning conversations with ATs and the contribution of this research to the participant learning that it is intended to study, might be seen as completely inappropriate. The framework of Complexity both permits and requires such interdependence.

Earlier elucidations of Complexity further underscore the affinity of complexity theories as a particularly apt paradigm to frame the study of professional learning experiences of language teachers as they occur within the context of mentoring relationships in a classroom environment. Edgar Morin itemized the principles of complex thought in 1977 as concentric, emergent and dialogic (Le Moigne, 2008). Whereas the concentric nature of the context of this study has been illustrated earlier in this chapter and in Figure 2, it is important to also address emergence and dialogue. Morin (1977/1992) explained that a Complexity approach
extends beyond the truism that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts”, to acknowledge system effects caused by the interaction among parts that are different from mere coexistence of the parts. Similarly, the whole is less than the sum of its parts, as some qualities of the parts “are inhibited or suppressed altogether under the influence of the constraints resulting from the organization of the whole” (p. 374). Though this second statement appears less intuitive, a simple example is seen in classroom management, as teachers strategically group certain students together in order to promote or discourage particular behaviours. This study aims to gain insight into system effects that may emerge with the addition of a TC to the classroom as they pertain to AT professional learning.

The principle of dialogic interaction is central to the study of reciprocal learning. Examples of such interaction identified by ATs as sources of professional learning include the need to explain one’s practice and the sharing of ideas with TCs (Hobson et al., 2009; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005). Within the CAS of the classroom, the learner is a dynamic subsystem (de Bot et al., 2005a), with his own cognitive ecosystem defined by motivation, aptitude, learning strategies and previous learning experience. This study expands the vision of learner beyond the pupils in the classroom to include both the teacher, who learns from reflection on and in practice (Schön, 1984) and the TC who contributes to a dialogic relationship with the AT.
Figure 2. AT learning situated within nested complex systems

Professional experience as a language teacher and teacher educator, etic and emic (Bailey & Nunan, 1996; van Lier, 1998) observation of the work of ATs, and examination of literature from such fields as applied linguistics, pedagogy, educational philosophy, and psychology have all converged to guide my research. The emic accounts of observation stem from my
own experience mentoring pre-service and beginning teachers. My work among ATs, as a university liaison, rather than as a classroom teacher, allows me to observe from an etic perspective. Current educational research is increasingly informed by Complexity theories. As this develops, study of the reciprocal influences between teachers, learning institutions and learning activities is leading to a better understanding of how teachers learn how to teach (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Within the applied linguistics literature, Complexity is increasingly framing inquiry into how language functions (Beckner et.al 2009; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) how it is learned (de Bot et al., 2005a; Dörnyei, 2005; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) and how it is taught (Piccardo, 2011, 2014). As Piccardo (2014) notes, the very complex nature of the plurilingual, pluricultural, global society for which educators must prepare their students necessitates a complexity-informed pedagogical approach. This study addresses the complex practices of teaching and learning (Davis, 2008; Davis & Sumara, 2005, 2012) a subject matter as complex as language (Beckner et.al 2009; Larsen-Freemen, 1997)) within the complex system that is a language classroom (de Bot et al., 2005a; van Lier, 1996). Thus, the most appropriate framework to guide its conception, its methodology, its interpretation and eventual application is that of Complexity.

Professional Learning and Teacher Change

Learning and change are inextricably linked. Referring to some of the definitions of teacher learning presented in the previous chapter, affirms this relationship. When “previously-held” knowledge, understanding, attitudes and competences are “displace[d] or replace[d]”, (Evans, 2001, p. 864) or “existing knowledge, beliefs and practices” are “reshape[d]” (Johnson & Golombek, 2003, p. 730), then change occurs. In other words, as teachers replace or reshape their knowledge and belief systems, they change the way in which they approach subsequent situations. Though such change may not be easily observed or measured, it influences interaction within the nested systems in which teachers live, think and work. Thus, the concept of teacher change is integral to the examination of learning within the AT experience.

In this section, I provide a brief overview of teacher change literature. The overview highlights three models of teacher change. This series of models represents an evolution, as the third model shows a collective increase in theorists’ acknowledgement of the complexity
of teacher learning and related changes in practice. I then present my own adaptation of the third model which informed the collection and interpretation of data particularly related to the second overarching research question, as it focuses on possible changes in AT practice related to their learning within the AT experience.

Visions and classification of teacher change

Scholars approach teacher change from two different vantage points, each of which has its own literature (Richardson & Placier, 2001). The first view is that of individual or small group change, which examines teachers’ cognitive, affective and behavioural change processes. The second view is organizational change, which studies change in teachers and teaching as they are linked to the structural, cultural and political aspects of school organization. In their review of both literatures, Richardson and Placier (2001) refer to a tripartite classification of strategies for generating change (Chin & Benne, 1969), delineating change that is a) empirical-rational, b) normative-reeducative and c) power-coercive.

Empirical-rational change is a top-down approach, which, when applied to the context of teacher change, would be generated by informing teachers of new practices which they are subsequently expected to implement, because they are rational individuals who have been shown empirical reasons to do so. Research within this approach predominantly seeks evidence of successful implementation of mandated or officially recommended practice (Kubanyiova, 2012). In contrast to empirical-rational strategies, normative-reeducative change strategies focus on cultivating growth by promoting the autonomy of people in a system to generate change from within. This type of change is seen as being achieved through problem-solving and collaborative dialogue. Researchers studying such change generally focus on how new practices are addressed rather than what teachers do, placing the emphasis on teachers’ mental lives (Kubanyiova, 2014). Normative-reeducative strategies are currently the preferred approach, as empirical-rational strategies have proven largely ineffective (Fullan, 1991; Gusky, 2002; Richardson & Placier, 2001). The third strategy for generating change, the power-coercive approach, is not common in the teacher change literature (Richardson & Placier, 2001) and not appropriate to the theoretical framework guiding this study.
Evolving models of teacher change

Gusky’s (1986) model of teacher change represents a transitional phase from an empirical-rational approach to a normative-standard approach. The traditional view of teacher change (Figure 3) asserted that teachers would experience a change in attitudes and beliefs as a result of staff development sessions (as they were known at the time), and subsequently change their classroom practice, whereupon they would observe changes in their students’ “learning outcomes” (Gusky, 2002, p. 383). Gusky posited that changes in attitudes and beliefs would occur only after teachers had witnessed positive effects on their students’ learning, thus acknowledging the need for a degree of autonomous interaction with concepts before adopting them (Figure 4).

**Figure 3.** Traditional model of teacher change, adapted from Gusky (1986, p. 7)

![Diagram of traditional model of teacher change](image)

In 2002, Gusky republished the model, providing a summary of research evidence supporting the model, updating the term “staff development” to “professional development” and
acknowledging that the model oversimplifies the complex process of teacher change “which is probably more cyclical than linear” (Gusky, 2002, p. 385). Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) concurred with this critique and proposed the interconnected model of professional growth (Figure 5). This model situates change within a given change environment, and emphasizes the need for teachers to both enact and reflect upon new concepts or practices in relation to their knowledge, beliefs, experimentation and observations in order to experience professional growth and related changes in practice. It is not sufficient for a teacher to merely study elements of the new approach and follow a recipe or set of directives to *do* the approach with their students. For change to develop, the teacher must purposefully think about what they have learned in order to relate it to their own knowledge and beliefs and put that learning into practice, or *enact* it. Having thought about and implemented elements of the new approach, the teacher can observe the effects or *salient outcomes* of the implementation and relate them once again to their individual system of knowledge and beliefs. Through subsequent engagement in further experimentation based on that reflection, change in practice can emerge.

*Figure 5.* The interconnected model of professional growth, adapted from Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002, p. 951)

For the purposes of this study, I propose a model that situates the concept of potential professional growth within the AT experience. This adaptation, shown in Figure 6,
simultaneously acknowledges the AT experience as a potential source of stimulus or information and recognizes the TC as an agent with whom they may interact while enacting and reflecting upon professional experimentation and knowledge and beliefs. In my adaptation, I choose the term *practice* rather than *enactment* in order to avoid allusion to inauthenticity that the word *enactment* can connote (i.e. enact in the sense of “playing a role”).

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 6.* The AT experience as a potential agent of professional growth, adapted from Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002)

Increased understanding of teachers’ situated learning can lead to the identification of means to introduce agents and/or support organically emerging agents to promote positive change within learning systems. As Morin (1977) said, “in today’s world, it is vital do much more than learn, relearn or unlearn. We must reorganize our mental systems in order to relearn how to learn” (p. 21).\(^6\)

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\(^6\) My translation
Conceptual Lens

By situating my adaptation of Clark and Hollingsworth’s (2002) model (Figure 6) within my own model of teacher learning situated within nested complex systems (Figure 2), I illustrate the conceptual lens guiding this study. The ATs’ mentoring experiences are viewed as an agent both within and surrounding their own learning and change (Figure 7). This dynamic relationship is nested within the many systems within which ATs live, work and learn. A Complexity approach such as this fits the examination of language teachers’ ongoing learning particularly well at this point in the history of language teaching in light of current influence of the CEFR, as described in Chapter 2. Heralded as one of the most significant developments in language teaching (Graves, 2008), the CEFR presents language teaching and learning within a Complexity approach, as evidenced by the interconnection and interdependence of key concepts of the framework (Piccardo, 2011). Realizing the full innovative potential of the CEFR in language teaching necessitates a Complexity approach to teacher education (Piccardo, 2010). Kubanyiova (2012) further endorses Complexity as a framework from which to study language teachers’ learning and change, as it “encourages the sustained wondering” (p. 195) that is vital to continued growth.
Figure 7. The AT experience as a potential agent of professional growth within nested complex systems
Emergent Theoretical Model

In keeping with the complexivist approach of this study, the theoretical model is dynamic and adaptive. Thus, Figures 6 does not depict the lens guiding the entire study, but rather the starting point from which emergent models developed. This initial lens certainly guided data collection and initial analysis. In Chapter 6, I present an adaptation of the primary model that emerged during data analysis (Figure 16). The second iteration of the model frames interpretation of the findings. A third depiction emerged to inform my elaboration of applications of the findings. Each iteration of the model represents both a whole and a part of the elaboration of this multiple case study.
Chapter 4: Methodology

Introduction

The aim of this study is to gain insight into features of associate teaching experiences that can promote the future and continued advancement of professional learning for FSL teachers. To this end, I have posed the following research questions:

1. How do ATs contextualize the associate teaching experience within their professional learning?
2. How can the experience of being an AT influence FSL Teacher practice?

In this chapter, I describe the methodology used to address these questions. After presenting the research design and rationale, I introduce the context and participants. I then describe data collection and analysis procedures. I conclude by discussing issues related to the validity, ethical considerations, limitations of the methodology and my influence as a researcher.

Research Design and Rationale

The context, scope, goals and theoretical framework of this study lead me to identify qualitative multiple case study as the most appropriate research design. Case study is an empirical inquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially when . . . the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not quite evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 13). This study is an investigation of the phenomenon of teacher learning and related change that may emerge from the experience of mentoring a TC. This situation presents fluidity of boundaries in that the context of the learning to be studied - the AT experience - is in fact a component of the phenomenon itself. Yin (2003) affirms that case studies are the preferred strategy when researchers pose “how” or “why” questions, such as the two research questions I state in the introduction to this chapter. Further support for the selection of case study derives from Nunan’s (1992) and Merriam’s (1998) descriptions of case studies as bounded, in-depth studies that feature contextualization and triangulation. The scope of this study is bounded as it addresses the learning and experiences of a small
Richardson and Placier (2001) recommend a qualitative approach to research on teacher learning as it allows for a depth of inquiry into teachers’ mental processes and representation of the contextual variables that may influence teachers’ situated learning and change in practice. Inspired by the teacher comments found in Chapter 1, I begin this study with the proposition that ATs already have some awareness that their mentoring role contributes to this learning. Use of such prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis is beneficial to case study research (Yin, 2003).

As the ultimate goal of this study is to contribute to the body of research on language teachers’ learning in such a way as to advance both individual and collective professional learning opportunities on a broader scale, it is important that the study be both credible and transferable. Employing a multiple case study design affords this in several ways. Studying the cases of several ATs enables me to develop a picture of FSL teacher learning within the context of associate teaching experiences that is “as full and complete as possible” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p.353). Examination of similarities and differences among cases within the study promotes better understanding of a larger collection of cases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and provides the opportunity to draw similar conclusions, thereby expanding the generalizability (Yin, 2003) of my findings. The present study is an instrumental study (Stake, 2005) in that it aims to provide insight into a phenomenon rather than into an individual case. In this study, the phenomenon about which I aim to build theory is AT learning within TC/AT relationships. Because multiple case studies provide an opportunity to examine the selected phenomenon from a greater variety of vantage points, Stake (2005) recommends them over single case studies for the purpose of building theory.

Finally, the congruity between case study research and the Complexity framework of this study is a fundamental reason for my pursuit of this approach. Johnson (1992) defines the
purpose of case study research as “to understand the complexity and dynamic nature of the particular entity and to discover systemic connections among experiences, behaviours and relevant features of the context” (p. 84). As described in the previous chapter, dynamism and systemic connections between the participants, their experiences and various elements of their nested teaching and learning contexts are essential to the conceptual lens of this study. Byrne (2005) and Haggis (2008) assert this affinity between case study and Complexity-based research in education, arguing that the unique nature of any complex system demands that any knowledge about that system be contextual. Everything I learned about the individual ATs and their professional learning during the course of this research is both part of and in part (Morin, 1977/1992) the nested contexts shown in Figure 7 of the previous chapter.

Context

I conducted this study within the context of ATs’ work with a specialized Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program in Ontario designed to develop FSL teachers. I clarify here that, while teachers’ work is situated within classrooms, which are located in schools, their work as ATs is enacted in the metaphysical space that is shared between their own classroom and the Faculty of Education with which they are partnering. Thus, the context of the study is neither the individual classroom or school, nor the Faculty of Education, but the ATs’ work within those intersecting environments.

The TCs with whom these ATs work are enrolled in a concurrent teacher education program and thus pursue a bachelor’s degree and teaching certification over a period of between four and six years.7 Within the structure of this particular concurrent program, TCs spend one day per week working with their AT and his/her students from September until June. In April or May, a 20-day block begins, during which time TCs are responsible for teaching between 50 and 100 percent of the school day. This program structure is germane to the data collection schedule that I discuss later in this chapter. Also pertinent to the context of the study is the

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7 The data collection period occurs during the final year in which the Bachelor of Education degree programs may be completed within one academic year in Ontario. Thus, the program format described in this study may not resemble program structures to be seen in subsequent years.
fact that at the time of data collection, I was a seconded faculty member of the Faculty of Education and coordinator of the specialized B.Ed. program in question. I address this feature of the study in further detail at the end of this chapter.

As outlined in Chapter 2, a salient feature of the context of this study is the fact that data collection coincides with the publication of a revised FSL curriculum for Grades 9 to 12, and the first academic year for mandated implementation of the revised Elementary FSL curriculum. Thus, I expected the 70 ATs who were partnering with the specialized B.Ed. program in question to have a heightened awareness of being “on a learning curve” as FSL teachers. One unexpected contextual feature that influenced the development of the study was the occurrence of labour unrest in both the university and school contexts. Though I address this occurrence in detail in Chapter 6, I mention it here because it affected both participant recruitment and data collection. The related adjustments in the research design appear in the participants and data collection sections of this chapter respectively.

Participants

Participant overview

The seven AT participants in this multiple case study are currently working in an English language school board in a large Ontario city. As summarized in Table 2, the participants represent a wide range of backgrounds and teaching contexts. Throughout this thesis, and any related writing, I will refer to the participants using the pseudonyms that appear in the table. A detailed description of each participant’s background and work environment appears in Chapter 5.

Table 2

*Participants’ Teaching Context and Background Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Grade level</th>
<th>First language</th>
<th>Teaching experience (years)</th>
<th>Associate teaching experience (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>FI</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>4 – 6</td>
<td>1 – 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulrika</td>
<td>FI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>11 – 14</td>
<td>5+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The initial research design for this study included a group interview with TCs mentored by the seven participating ATs. Changes in the academic year and in the practicum placement schedule related to labour disruptions at the university resulted in exceptionally poor response to the invitation to participate. Due to the fact that only one TC responded to multiple invitations to participate in a group interview, I elected to eliminate this component of the research design, thereby reducing the participant set to only ATs. I discuss this decision and associated repercussions further in the final section of this chapter, where I address limitations of the methodology.
Recruitment of participants

Prudent choice of cases is a requisite for achieving the greatest possible understanding of the phenomena (Yin, 2003) of AT learning and related change in practice. To this end, I intended to purposefully recruit eight participants who best represented the diversity of ATs partnering with the Faculty of Education in question with regard to their professional learning experience, language background, and teaching context. I established the target of eight in order to meet the average range of between four and six participants for multiple case studies in applied linguistics (Duff, 2008), allowing for possible participant attrition. After receiving approval (Appendix A) from the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Education (who is responsible for undergraduate programs such as initial teacher education), to recruit participants from among 70 ATs partnering with the specialized B.Ed. program, I sent an email (Appendix B) containing an attached recruitment letter and consent form (Appendix C) to these ATs. The email informed potential participants that upon receiving notification of their interest in the study, I would arrange to retrieve their signed consent forms and send them a link to the online background questionnaire. I deliberately sent this email using my student rather than my faculty email address, and clearly explained this choice and the distinction between my roles at the two institutions. I emphasized these points to avoid giving the impression that study participation was an expectation of the B.Ed. program. I sent this email twice over a three-week period and received exactly eight responses to my invitation to participate. Seven of the eight respondents completed the online background questionnaire (Appendix D). One respondent did not complete the questionnaire and, though she had initially expressed interest in participating in the study, did not respond to follow-up emails, phone call or a note left at her school.

Responses to the background questionnaire showed that the ATs who volunteered do in fact represent an array of contexts and characteristics that can lead to better theorizing about a larger collection of cases (Stake, 2005) and better understanding of AT learning in general. It is important to note that this array of contexts is not intended to be a representative sample of all ATs, but rather a replication of individual cases of ATs’ situated learning to provide the opportunity for analytic generalization (Yin, 2003) in a number of contexts. It is not possible in a sample size as small as that of the present study to obtain a representative sample of all
ATs. However, as Yin (2003) explains, by studying a phenomenon such as AT’s situated learning within the context of several different cases, the researcher gains the opportunity to compare and contrast features of that phenomenon. Such comparison affords the opportunity to build theory. As Table 3 shows, the distribution of teaching contexts and characteristics allowed me to look at similarities and differences between the following case pairs: Core and immersion, elementary and secondary, non-native and native speaker teachers, long-term and recent ATs. The identification of teacher language proficiency as an important issue in FSL teacher development (Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergrift, 2006; Salvatori, 2007), inspired me to be particularly cognizant of the importance of representation of both native and non-native French speakers. Had the sample of convenience that presented itself not offered such broad representation, I would have pursued a plan of purposeful recruitment to seek representation of missing programs, levels, or experience profiles.

The final question on the background questionnaire asked ATs for their consent for me to invite their TC to participate in a group interview at the end of the practicum period. All of the questionnaire respondents gave their consent. During the final teacher interview, I reconfirmed this consent and subsequently contacted their respective TCs by email, after completion of the practicum. I sent an email (Appendix E) containing an attached recruitment letter and consent form (Appendix F) to these ATs. As with the AT recruitment emails, I deliberately sent the TC recruitment email using my student rather than my faculty email address, and clearly explained this choice and the distinction between my roles at the two institutions. I had chosen the timing of this contact in order to assure TCs that their choice to participate and anything they might say during the group interview would in no way influence their practicum evaluation, which had been written by the AT. As previously mentioned, labour unrest at the university resulted in an extension of the spring semester. Due to the ensuing delay of start and end dates for the TCs’ final teaching block, many TCs had already left the city and/or commenced summer employment. The one TC who did complete an interview explained to me that some of her colleagues had said they might have participated had the timing been different.
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core</td>
<td>4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immersion</td>
<td>4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Background</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Speaker</td>
<td>1.5**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native Speaker</td>
<td>5.5**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 9 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 14 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15+ years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Associate Teaching Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 1 participant teaches in both Core and Immersion
** 1 participant identifies as both native and non-native (see Table 2)

Data Collection

To gain a deeper understanding of FSL teachers’ learning within the context of their role as ATs and potential related change in practice, I used several complementary data sources and methods. In harmony with the Complexity approach to this study, the data collection sequence itself exhibits features associated with complex systems. The sequence is iterative in that each phase is dependent on the previous one. It is purposefully adaptive as some instruments were designed to interact with information gathered in other phases. During the course of the research, the instruments developed both according to the information provided by the previous data collection phase, and to accommodate evolving environmental conditions.

8 In Ontario, public education is divided into Elementary and Secondary levels. This classification applies to both curriculum documents and to teacher certification. Elementary school refers to Kindergarten (K) – Grade 8. This classification is divided into Primary (K – 3), Junior (4 – 6) and Intermediate (7 – 8) divisions. Secondary school, also called “senior division”, refers to Grades 9 – 12. Through initial teacher training, teachers achieve certification in one of the following levels: Primary/Junior (K – 6), Junior/Intermediate (4 – 8), or Intermediate/Senior (7-12).
conditions and nascent findings. This section describes the purpose, features and both pre-planned and emergent adaptations to each phase of the data collection sequence shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4

*Original Data Collection Sequence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Biographical questionnaire</td>
<td>Online questionnaire</td>
<td>November 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2 Mind-maps      | • participants received a kit, containing drawing paper, art markers and an instruction page showing the following list of five key terms to include on the mind-map: *MY professional learning, professional learning for FSL teachers, being an associate teacher, MY areas for/of growth/development*  
  • participants received an email containing a brief definition of mind-maps and a hyperlink to images of sample mind-maps  
  • no specific expectations for how to organize content or present ideas | December 2014 – January 2015 |
| 3 Semi-structured interview # 1 | • prompts refined based on analysis of mind-map  
  • individual mind-map visible throughout interview | December 2014 – January 2015 |
| 4 Bi-weekly log  | • logs report teacher reflections on TC/AT discussion of specified topics and links made between these discussions and their AT learning and practice | January - March 2015 |
5  Revisiting of mind-maps
   • ATs received a kit containing:
     a photocopied reduction of their
     original mind-map, drawing paper, art
     markers and a note giving them the
     option to revise the map based on
     experiences of the previous 12 weeks
   March – April 2015

6  Semi-structured interview # 2
   • prompts to be refined based on
     analysis of bi-weekly logs and
     revisited mind-maps
   May 2015

7  Group interview with TCs
   • prompts to be refined based on initial
     analysis of all previously-collected
     data
   May 2015

**Data collection adaptations**

During the course of the research, the instruments evolved both according to the information
provided by the previous data collection phase, and to accommodate environmental
developments. As projected in the original data collection sequence, I refined the questions
for the first set of interviews based on the information provided in the mind-maps, and the
second set of interviews according to information provided in the logs. In both cases, this
pre-planned adaptation generated subsequent modifications, all of which enriched data
collection. In the case of the transition from mind-map to interview question, requests to
confirm or correct my interpretation of portions of the mind-maps promoted detailed
elaboration of important features of the participants’ experiences. One example of this
occurred in response to my request for Ulrike to expand upon her classification of “observing
the TC” under *MY professional learning*. The ensuing exchange not only afforded her the
opportunity to correct my rather simplistic interpretation that she learned about new
approaches and resources by observing her TC. In fact, Ulrike explained that her observation
was generally for the purpose of providing descriptive feedback to the TC. The process of
formulating this feedback leads her to reflect on strategies and resources to suggest to the TC
related to the developmental needs observed. This reflection in turn prompts Ulrike to revisit
ideas and resources that she has found useful and to examine resources presented during
formal professional learning sessions that she has not yet integrated into her practice. Thus,
Ulrike’s explanation not only provided a richer description of the contextualization of her work as an AT within her professional learning, it also pointed to a potential future application of mentorship relationships within broader reaching professional learning initiatives. I discuss this application in Chapter 8.

Similar dynamism is evident in the transition from logs to interview questions. I developed the second set of interview questions by transferring the log contents to a spreadsheet and reading the log entries in the categories planning, resources, interaction, language curriculum and self-identified areas for change across the table. This isolated examination of the issues discussed in a given category from week to week informed the elaboration of personalized preambles to questions that asked participants whether they noticed any change in their practice in the given category that could be related to their work as an AT. This initial analysis of the log content revealed that the data collected from most participants’ logs was neither as plentiful, nor as rich, as projected. This realization prompted my decision to change the order of the final phases of the data collection sequence. The paucity of this data set can be linked to repercussions of the climate of labour unrest that I introduced in the context section of this chapter and elaborate in Chapter 6. The logs reflected the fact that strikes and work-to-rule actions had significantly reduced the collaboration and discussion time available to TCs and ATs. By moving the revision of the mind-maps to the final phase of the data collection sequence, I was able to focus the participants’ attention on the log-derived questions rather than potentially diverting their attention with a request to revise their mind-maps prior to the interview. Promoting participant focus on the mind-maps during the second interview, would have resulted in an imbalance of data relating to the first overarching research question at the expense of data related to the second. The decision to reorder the data collection sequence was a fruitful one, as it not only permitted recuperation of lost data collection opportunities, it also provided the participants with a sense of closure to their participation in the project. Several commented that revising the map enabled them to “come full circle” with respect to thinking about the content and character of their professional learning as FSL teachers.
Table 5

Adapted Data Collection Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Biographical questionnaire</td>
<td></td>
<td>November 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Semi-structured interview # 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>December 2014 – January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Bi-weekly log</td>
<td>• fewer logs collected • longer collection period</td>
<td>January - May 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Semi-structured interview # 2</td>
<td>• prompts refined according to analysis of bi-weekly logs and interview #1 transcripts and original mind-maps • change in order of phases • questions such as “would you say that this could be connected to any change in your practice”, “would you say that this is more, less or the same as when you are not working with a TC” added to the prompts</td>
<td>May - June 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Revisiting of mind-maps</td>
<td>• change in order of phases to focus participants’ comments during interview on questions and reflections related logs</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Group interview with TCs</td>
<td>• no group session possible • one single TC completed a brief interview • this interview omitted from the data set</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questionnaire

For the first phase of the data collection sequence, I developed an online questionnaire (Appendix D) using Survey Wizard 2, a University of Toronto-based web application for producing online surveys, to gather biographical information about potential participants. The questionnaire, which Brown (2011) classifies with interviews as a sub-category of survey research, consists predominantly of closed, easily analyzed (Mackey & Gass, 2005)
items such as years of teaching experience, mother tongue and French language experience, teaching assignment, and previous professional learning experiences. By piloting the questionnaire with three colleagues who have previously conducted similar research, I gained feedback on the wording and order of the questions and confirmed that the link was active. The initial purpose of the questionnaire was to generate data that would either inform purposeful recruitment of participants from the group of respondents or provide background information on the sample of convenience that presented itself. As noted previously in this chapter, my analysis of the questionnaire data showed that the diversity of backgrounds and contexts presented by the seven respondents was such that subsequent purposeful recruitment of participants would not be necessary. Though this instrument is the only one whose format or application was not influenced by a previous phase, it too was designed to be adaptive.

**Mind-maps**

In the second data collection phase, I asked participants to create mind-maps that would provide information related to the first research question: How do ATs in FSL contextualize the associate teaching experience within their professional learning? Mind-maps are diagrams consisting of words and images that represent themes and concepts radiating from a central idea or word (Buzan & Buzan, 1995) currently gaining prominence as useful data collection tools (Wheeldon & Alberg, 2012). Mind-maps enable researchers to understand how participants view topics, permitting visual representation of connections between ideas and issues. These “participant-centric visual representations of experience” (Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009, p.69) enabled the depiction of dynamic schemes of understanding within the minds (Mls, 2004) of the participants. As, such they provided a means of gathering information that creatively engaged the participants and enabled them to reflect on and communicate experiences in ways that traditional data collection might not (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003). In his 2011 research, Wheeldon compared interview data collected from two groups of participants: those who completed pre-interview mind-maps and those who did not. He found that the responses of the map group contained significantly greater depth and detail than the non-map group. He determined detail by counting the number of unique concepts discussed in each response, and depth by considering the length and intricacy of connections.
made within responses. Moreover, the map group were almost twice as likely to provide voluntary reflective summaries of their experiences at the end of the interviews.

Within the context of a Complexity-framed study, several links exist between the use of mind-maps as a data collection tool and some of the key features of Complexity research, particularly nonlinearity and dynamism. First, the creative process of mind-mapping is conducive to the generation and representation of non-linear thought (Buzan and Buzan, 2000, Michalko, 2011). Second, mind-maps offer a structured way to collect and record information about how participants’ understanding of a concept or concepts change over time, based on predefined terms (Mls, 2004; Wheeldon and Ahlberg, 2012). In this vein, Farrell (2001) used concept maps to track change over time in pre-service English teachers’ beliefs about how to teach reading to secondary school students of English as a foreign language. In the case of the present study, the mind-maps and revised mind-maps show change over the course of the practicum period of the participants’ perception of the five terms provided in the mind-map kit and of the connections they draw between those and other concepts.

As suggested by Wheeldon and Faubert (2009), I used the mind-maps during one of the preliminary phases of a multi-stage data collection plan and applied information provided in the maps to guide the refinement of subsequent phases. Table 4 shows that I extended this use, adopting a cyclical approach and referring to the mind-maps throughout instrument adaptation and data analysis and returning to them as the final phase of the data collection sequence. I innovated further upon the applications described in the literature (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003; Mls, 2004; Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009; Wheeldon & Alberg, 2012) developing a unique approach to mind-map generation that I believe contributed significantly to their richness as a data source. Inspired by Buzan & Abbot’s (2014) emphasis on the use of colour and imagery and also by their reference to artists such as Michelangelo and Picasso as mind-map users, I crafted mind-map kits that framed mind-mapping as a creative act rather than mere preparation for an interview. I provided each participant with a clear plastic portfolio, containing a new set of artists’ markers, high quality drawing paper measuring eleven by fifteen inches, an instruction page featuring the five key terms to include on the mind-map and a link to images of mind-maps to which they could refer if they so chose.
The instructions read “please include the following phrases/concepts on your mind-map: professional learning, professional learning for FSL teachers, MY professional learning, being an AT, MY areas for/of growth/development”. Though they were asked to include all terms, I intentionally did not tell participants where or how to place the five provided phrases on the page. I did this in order to gain an objective view of any connections ATs themselves might draw, thereby fostering authentic representation of participants’ response to the first research question. The variety of approaches to organizing the key terms and the depth with which the seven participants were able to explain their placement indicates that the concrete decision-making activity played an important role in the participants’ elaboration and articulation of their conception of professional learning.

The provision of a minimum of ten days between the delivery of the mind-map kits and the scheduled pick-up date promoted the understanding among participants that this was a task that would require time and reflection. The result of this methodical approach was the careful creation of visually appealing, detailed representations of the participants’ thoughts about their professional learning. The participants expressed pride in the creation of their maps, which, in some cases, resembled works of art (Appendix Q). One participant took inspiration from the mind-map she created for the research project, and subsequently developed a unit of study employing mind-maps as the scaffolding for her students to write personal descriptions to be emailed to pen pals. By allowing several days between the pick-up of completed mind-maps from participants and the scheduling of interviews, I created rumination space in which to both formally and informally analyze the ideas presented on the mind-maps. This analysis informed the tailoring of generic interview questions to better engage each individual participant. The provision of mind-map kits is an element of the data collection design informed by my own experience and intuition rather than by research methodology literature. I developed the kits not only to promote creativity, as previously mentioned, but also to facilitate the process for participants by placing all necessary materials at hand, thereby avoiding potential impact of the ubiquitous supply shortages teachers face in public schools. My intuition regarding the importance of supply provision was confirmed by the fact that two of the three ATs who piloted the mind-map kits kept the markers.
At the end of the second interview, I left ATs with a mind-map review kit and gave them the option of revising the original mind-map to reflect their current thoughts about the issues they had depicted five months previously as well as any new issues that had emerged. The review kits contained a colour photocopy reduction of the original mind-map, art paper and markers like those provided for the original, a glue stick, and an instruction page (Appendix H). I developed the revision process, in which ATs would affix the reduced mind-map to the paper provided and make any changes on the larger sheet, to emphasize that I was not asking them to start from scratch or consecrate the same amount of time and effort that went into the original. The revised mind-maps are designed as a data source primarily related to the second research question as they present the ATs’ depiction of changes related to associate teaching, their professional learning and possibly their practice. They also informed my analysis of data related to the first research question as well as my decision to devote a chapter to examining the emergent issues within the dynamic educational and political context of this multiple case study.

**Interviews**

I conducted each of the two sets of semi-structured interviews as one-to-one professional conversations (Dörnyei, 2007). I audio-recorded all interviews and subsequently transcribed them verbatim. To permit triangulation of perspectives among the individual participants, the discussion prompts followed a standard outline (Appendix I and Appendix K). I personalized each set of prompts by referring to pertinent features of the individual participant’s mind-map for the first interview. For the second interview, I referred to their logs, in combination with the transcript of the first interview and mind-map, to inform this personalization. Like the phrases provided for the mind-maps (Appendix G), prompts for the first set of interviews (Appendix I) are designed to generate responses to the first overarching research question and its respective sub-questions. Informed primarily by the logs, which I describe in the next section, the second set of interviews addresses the second overarching research question and its respective sub-questions. This informed tailoring of generic interview questions to engage individual participants contributed significantly both to the depth and breadth of the information provided by the participants and to my understanding of that information.
Due to my role as Practicum Facilitator for some of the participants, there were times during these professional conversations where it seemed necessary to share pertinent information related to curriculum and resources. In all cases, I refrained in order to maintain both the flow of AT responses to the prompts and the integrity of my role as researcher. I noted my comments and, if time permitted, returned to the more advisory portion of the professional conversation after the turning off the recording device. If time was not available, I sent thoughts and links in a follow-up email.

Logs

Like the second set of interviews, which they informed, I designed the logs to generate data related to potential influences of the mentoring experience on AT practice. I deliberately developed the process to place as little demand as possible on the ATs, while still providing a means of tracking if and how ATs connected specific topics of mentoring discussions to their own learning and learning goals over the course of the practicum period. To this end, I established the options of typing into the log template (Appendix J), provided within the body of an email, or downloading an attached Word document and returning it via email, or completing the document by hand and returning it by fax. I offered the latter option out of respect for the technological learning curve of one participant in particular, though it was not necessary as all participants opted to complete and return the form electronically. In fact, one participant developed a third electronic response format to which I refer in the final section of this chapter.

In her critical overview of teacher change research, Kubanyiova (2012) cautions that common research design in the field allows for significant positive differences to be shown in pre- and post-questionnaires, as a result of the participating teachers’ heightened awareness of the desired responses, rather than as a result of any actual change in attitude or practice. I heeded her caution about this specific manifestation of the halo effect (Mackey & Gass, 2005), by which research participants attempt to please the researcher by providing the answers they believe to be expected. Thus, I designed a means for the AT participants to record their thoughts related to potential changes in practice throughout the associate teaching experience in order to present a more cyclical and holistic view of teacher learning.
In my initial research design, ATs would complete the logs every two to three weeks, acknowledging that prior to the teaching block TCs are only in their classrooms one day per week and that rich TC/AT discussion may not occur on some placement days due to absences, changes in scheduling or other demands. TCs and ATs missed a number of opportunities for such discussion due the labour unrest mentioned in the context section of this chapter. Thus, I adjusted log collection schedule and worked with three rather than four logs from most participants.

In this section, I have described the development, adaptation and application of a data collection sequence that exemplifies the concept of *reliance* (Bolle de Bal, 1985) – the state of being both interdependent and altered by such interdependence. As Morin (1990) applied the concept *reliance* in his introduction to complex thought, I have applied the work of both scholars to inform the design of this study. In the next section I describe the procedures I used to analyze the data generated from the interdependent phases of data collection.

### Data Analysis

In keeping with the research design, my approach to data analysis is iterative, cyclical and inductive (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This approach aligns to my theoretical framework in that my analysis of each data set interacted with that of other sets (Figure 8). With the exception of the initial coding of Interview 1, where I made a conscious decision to look beyond the classification of participants in order to focus on emergent themes related to individual ATs and to the group as a whole, the analysis was integrative. Seidel (1998) describes qualitative data analysis as holographic in that “each step of the process contains the entire process” (p.2). This concept of the wholes within the larger whole is integral to Complexity (Morin, 1990) and applicable to the data analysis process I employed.
As suggested by Duff (2008), I analyzed individual cases within this multiple case study prior to formally commencing analysis of the group as a whole. However, I remained consistently aware of what I had learned to that point about the group even while focusing on an individual. The following four sub-sections outline the process I employed to analyze each whole within the whole.

**Questionnaire**

Survey Wizard 2 software organized the ATs’ responses to the background questionnaire in an Excel spreadsheet. I extracted biographical information provided on this spreadsheet to create a working draft of Table 2. I referred to this table at various points throughout data analysis to make inferences about relationships between the ATs’ educational and linguistic background, teaching context, and teaching and mentoring experience.
**Mind-maps**

I analyzed each mind-map holistically immediately after retrieving it from the participant. I then examined individual mind-maps, one portion at a time, focusing on the map-creator’s interpretation and representation of the provided terms (*MY* professional learning, professional learning for FSL teachers, being an associate teacher, *MY* areas for/of growth/development). I paid close attention to the positioning of these terms and to the relationships indicated between them. I also used the frequency, size, colour, text features (e.g. block printing, underlining) of the words and images to interpret meaning. During this process, I observed themes that were important to individual participants (e.g. David: leadership, Ulrika: resources, Jeanette: collaboration, Véronique: situated learning and mentoring), and made note of asking about these during the interview. I recorded these and all subsequent observations in a research log. As mentioned in the methods section of this chapter, I used member-checking (Merriam, 2009) to verify my inferences during the first set of interviews.

I developed the process for analyzing mind maps by synthesizing the approaches described by Wheeldon and Ahlberg (2012) and Wheeldon and Faubert (2009). As shown in Table 6, researchers use a variety of features to determine the importance of elements in mind-maps created by research participants. The most common of these is concept counting. By considering size, appearance, position and connections drawn between elements, I was able to gain a more detailed interpretation the participants’ messages. For example, in the case of Jeanette’s original mind-map, *collaboration* appeared as a central theme for the following reasons: a) the term is repeated 3 times; b) the lettering is larger than other words on the page; c) the word is capitalized, whereas other words appear in lower case; d) Jeanette used orange marker for this word only; e) the term appears in the very centre of the map; f) Jeanette drew connections to this term and 3 major themes and 8 sub-themes. As not all participants will employ all emphasis strategies, it is necessary to consider the combinations of strategies employed in a holistic manner. For example, in Véronique’s mind-maps, mentorship is a central theme. In her original mind-map, repetition is the primary feature used to emphasize the importance of mentorship. However, Véronique employs two different types of repetition: she writes the word *mentors* in the three locations where she
situates her professional learning: the first school in which she taught, the second school, and the faculty of education with which she is connected as an associate teacher. The second iteration of this repetition is her deliberate incorporation of the names of each mentor and of each TC, with whom she has worked. Though she does use green ink rather than black to write the names of mentors from the beginning of her career, she does not repeat this for subsequent mentors. In her revised mind-map she repeats the name of one of her most influential mentors in green ink and uses embellishment in the form of star shapes to highlight the words of wisdom shared by this mentor. Farrell (2011) applied an approach similar to the one described above, using concept maps to study change in pre-service teachers’ beliefs about how to teach reading to secondary school students of English as a foreign language.

Though I did save images of the mind-maps and revised mind-maps as a data source file within the qualitative data analysis software Nvivo, the Mac version of the software did not permit coding or mark-up of images. Thus all analysis of the mind-maps was manual. I used the images saved in Nvivo to display mind-maps on the computer screen while coding and analyzing interview transcripts. This document storage method facilitated simultaneous viewing of the mind-map data and textual data from logs and transcripts. However, I also referred regularly to the hardcopies of the mind-maps and revised-mind-maps, which I stored in an artist’s portfolio book. This data storage method also facilitated analysis by enabling me to flip to appropriate pages in the book in order to question and compare various components of the data sets.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mind-map feature</th>
<th>Researchers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Wheeldon &amp; Faubert (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turns, Atman &amp; Adams (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farrell (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Bayram (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Font (e.g. all caps)</td>
<td>my interpretation of “physical construction … degree of formality” (Wheeldon &amp; Faubert, 2009, p. 75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embellishment (e.g. outline, underscore, colour)</td>
<td>my interpretation of “physical construction … degree of formality” (Wheeldon &amp; Faubert, 2009, p. 75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Bayram (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>Farrell (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bayram (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taylor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interviews**

After listening to the first set of interviews for holistic understanding, I transcribed each one verbatim. During transcription, I made mental note of recurring ideas and phrases. I also referred to mind-maps to clarify participants’ references, and repeated similar consultation with the mind-maps during coding. I began a multi-step process of open coding to identify patterns and themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) by highlighting portions of the transcripts from the first set of interviews using the colour-highlighting feature in Microsoft Word and creating descriptive codes by summarizing the primary topic of each excerpt (Saldaña, 2009). After identifying themes emerging from the transcripts of individual interviews, I focused on those that were common to most or all participants. The highlighting and summarizing process produced 13 themes (Appendix M), which I then reduced to six, using meaning condensation to facilitate categorization and interpretation of interview content (Kvale, 2007). It was these six colour codes that I would use to analyze the logs.
I followed the same transcription procedure for the second set of interviews as I used for the first, and then consolidated interview transcripts as case files within NVivo. I continued coding using the six original themes as nodes,\(^9\) adding nodes as other themes emerged. This second round of coding resulted in over 21 codes, which I proceeded to condense by considering the emphasis participants placed on each theme through word choice, repetition and tone. I further condensed themes by determining their pertinence to my research questions. During this process, I consulted with a fellow PhD candidate for feedback and with a member of my thesis committee to gain expert advice on the appropriateness of the themes. The final result was a collection of nine major nodes and a total of 30 sub-nodes. This process of definition, expansion and refinement of themes and codes approximates that which is recommended by Cresswell (2007). During this process, I developed a codebook according to the advice of Saldaña (2009) and the specifications of MacQueen, McLellan-Lemal, Bartholow, & Milstein (2008). The code book (Appendix O) provides a definition, usage guidelines and examples for each code. The coding table links codes to the research questions (Appendix N). These resources promoted clarity throughout the analysis cycle.

After finalizing codes, I developed node matrices that enabled me to assemble and visualize coded transcripts for each case and align them to the research questions and sub-questions. Table 7 shows the three sets of matrices: one related to each research question and one related to the systemic issues that emerged from the data as agents acting within the ATs’ teaching and learning environments; these systemic issues are the subject of Chapter 6.

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\(^9\)“A node is a collection of references about a specific theme, place, person or other area of interest.”

http://help-nv10.qsrinternational.com/desktop/concepts/about_nodes.htm#MiniTOCBookMark2
Table 7

Node matrices developed to assemble and visualize coded data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Node Matrices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How do ATs contextualize the associate teaching experience within their professional learning? | • Issues for FSL teachers  
• New approaches to language learning  
• Professional learning issues for FSL teachers  
• Reasons for mentoring  
• References to and comparisons between formal, informal and non-formal learning |
| How can the experience of being an AT influence FSL Teacher practice? | • Self-identified areas for growth  
• Change in practice  
• New approaches to language learning  
• Role of mentoring in practice |
| Systemic issues | • Contrast between relevance of Ministry/Board initiatives and teacher learning needs  
• Effect of school climate on teacher commitment to professional learning  
• Funding limitations impacting professional learning opportunities  
• Impact of student behaviour and learning needs on learning for all  
• Initiative fatigue, pressure to keep up, teacher work intensification,  
• Impact of Ministry initiatives (e.g. advancing Mathematics instruction).  
• Incorporation of technology into practice  
• Effects of labour unrest on professional learning and TC/AT relationships |

Logs

As described in the section on data collection and adaptations, I conducted the initial log analysis by creating a six-column spreadsheet per participant, consisting of one column per log, one column to record observations about developments from week to week, and one column to record how these observations would influence interview questions. The four rows of the spreadsheet, entitled planning, resources, interaction, language curriculum and
self-identified areas for change respectively, aligned log entries with each of the sub-questions of the second overarching research question. During this initial analysis I also colour-coded log contents, linking segments to themes. During consolidated analysis, I referred frequently to the week-to-week development columns and considered these when interpreting the node matrices described in Table 6.

In this section I have described the individual and interconnected procedures I used to analyze the various components of the data set. From phases one through five of the data collection sequence shown in Table 5, I employed an additive rendition of constant comparison (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In constant comparison, the researcher develops concepts by coding and analyzing data simultaneously while continually comparing elements in the data to understand their relationship to one another (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I followed this process and added data sets as they were collected, thus referring to the first mind-maps while coding and analyzing the interviews and referring to all previously collected sets when coding and analyzing the final set of interviews. Once the data set was complete, I adopted a kaleidoscopic approach to data analysis (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg & Coleman, 2000) in which I continually grouped and regrouped the same elements. As in the case of an actual kaleidoscope, the colour, size and shape of the elements remained constant; the regrouping and repositioning of these elements allowed different images to emerge. It was the creation of these images that enabled me to triangulate data in order to differentiate experiential knowledge from opinion (Stake, 2005) and develop a truthful representation of the participants’ experience and context (Stake, 2005).

**Validity**

Merriam (2009) describes several strategies recognized as effective means of promoting validity in qualitative research. In this section I explain how I employed three of these strategies: triangulation, member checks, and peer review or consultation with experts. Table 8 summarizes the multiple data sources I used to address each research question. The kaleidoscopic approach to integrative data analysis, described in the previous section, further illustrates my application of triangulation. I employed member checks by asking participants to read and comment on a draft of the section of Chapter 5 that introduces them by describing their personal and professional background, their mentoring context, prominent themes of
their mind-maps as well as a summary of their response to each research question. Thus, participants confirmed the information on which I would base my consolidated analysis. I consulted with an expert to determine the appropriateness of the codes I developed and promoted the dependability of the findings by having a peer independently code a portion of the data.

**Table 8**

**Summary of Data Collection and Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Instruments</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do ATs in FSL contextualize the AT experience within their professional learning?</td>
<td>Primary: Mind-maps</td>
<td>Holistic visual analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. How do the participating teachers characterize professional learning?</td>
<td>Interview 1</td>
<td>Thematic content analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. How do they distinguish professional learning for FSL teachers?</td>
<td>Consolidated:</td>
<td>Constant comparison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. In what ways (if any) do they see their role as an AT as a component of their professional learning?</td>
<td>Questionnaire Mind-maps Revised mind-maps Interviews 1 and 2</td>
<td>(Lincoln &amp; Guba, 1985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. What elements of their work do they identify as development areas that could be impacted by the AT/TC relationship?</td>
<td>Primary: Logs</td>
<td>Thematic content analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can the experience of being an AT influence FSL Teacher practice?</td>
<td>Revised mind-maps</td>
<td>Holistic visual analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. What role does Mentoring play in participating teachers’ practice?</td>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>Thematic content analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. What changes, if any, do the participating teachers perceive in their planning process when they are working with a TC?</td>
<td>Revised mind-maps</td>
<td>Holistic visual analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. What changes, if any, do they perceive in their selection and use of teaching resources?</td>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>Thematic content analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Are they aware of changes in their interaction with students that occur during their work with TCs? If so, which of these changes do they believe will extend beyond the practicum placement period?</td>
<td>Consolidated: Mind-maps Revised mind-maps Interviews 1 and 2 Logs</td>
<td>Constant comparison (Lincoln &amp; Guba, 1985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. What connections do participating ATs see between their work with TCs and their implementation of updated curriculum and approaches to language teaching?</td>
<td>Revised mind-maps</td>
<td>Holistic visual analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>Thematic content analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As discussed in Chapter 2, attempting to establish causal links between AT learning and specific changes in practice would deny the complex nature of learning itself and refute my theoretical framework. Thus, I sought analytic generalizability, by replicating several cases of ATs’ situated learning in an array of different contexts. I developed my analysis of these varied cases by building a strong chain of evidence, based on truthful representation and reflection. This analysis has enabled me to generalize my findings to theory on possibilities for occasioning the emergence (Davis & Sumara, 2012) of changes in practice related to teacher learning within mentoring relationships.

Ethical Considerations

I obtained approval for the procedures described in this chapter from research ethics boards of both the University of Toronto and of the University at which the TCs working with participating ATs were enrolled. As described previously in this chapter, I designed the data collection sequence in order to avoid any potential perception on the part of TC or AT participants that their participation in the study would influence the practicum evaluation. Similarly, to clearly differentiate for participants my role as researcher from my role as Practicum Facilitator, I explicitly used and explained my use of my University of Toronto email address for all research-related correspondence with participants. This was especially important, as I was the Practicum Facilitator for some of the TC/AT pairs. In order to protect the anonymity of participants I have used, and will continue to use, pseudonyms in all references to participants and have not revealed the names or locations of the institutions involved in the study.

Limitations of the Methodology

Despite my efforts to develop and follow a rigorous methodological path, this study does have several limitations. In this section, I describe limitations in the areas of participants, instruments and timeframe. The seven AT participants are a unique group among ATs in several ways. First, of the seventy ATs partnering with the B.Ed. program that provided the context for the study, they are the only ones who committed to participating in my research study. Second, they are leaders among ATs. Four of the seven participants are Site Coordinators for the TCs and ATs at their school. The Faculty of Education accords a Site
Coordinator position to schools that host four or more TCs from the particular Teacher Education Program to act as administrative liaisons between the faculty and the school. This proportion becomes even more important when one considers that the three remaining ATs were not eligible to be Site Coordinators either due to the fact that their school does not host a sufficient number of TCs or because (as was the case for Scott) the position of Site Coordinator was already filled by another study participant (Josh) working at the same school. During the current academic year, Josh has taken on my former role as Coordinator of the specialized Bachelor of Education program and Scott has replaced him as Site Coordinator at the school where both worked during data collection. All participants are highly reflective and involved in professional learning initiatives. Thus, though the cases I studied allowed for replication in a variety of teaching contexts, this replication was limited to a group of ATs that may be considered above average in their level of commitment to leadership and ongoing professional learning. Addressing this limitation in a future study would entail purposefully recruiting less-motivated ATs to participate, which in turn presents the challenge of convincing less-motivated individuals to commit numerous volunteer hours to the research.

With respect to the second research question, speaking to the TCs may have provided greater insight into an external perspective of change in practice. The lack of TC participation and my decision to exclude the voice of the one TC who did volunteer may be perceived as a limitation. My decision was based not only on the imbalance of representation but also on the fact that the transcript of the TC’s interview appeared to be a prime example of a halo effect (Mackey & Gass, 2005). I believe that to have included the one TC voice in the study without a means of triangulation would have detracted rather than contributed to the overall integrity of the research. Another way to have achieved some alternate data about possible change in practice would have been to ask teachers to talk about artefacts from their teaching throughout the year and relate this information to the log data. Discussion of potential change over time may also be enriched with a longer data collection period. The decision to limit the data collection period was based on academic deadlines rather than on the overall design of the study and thus may certainly appear to be a limitation.
Positioning of the researcher

Hetherington (2013) argues that approaching a case study from a Complexity framework necessitates situating the researcher within the case itself, because the researcher interacts with the case, and through this interaction becomes a part of the system. In my own situation, I was a part of the case prior to engaging in the study. During the academic year in which the study took place, I was a seconded faculty member of the Faculty of Education and coordinator of the specialized B.Ed. program in question. In this position, which I had held for four years, I was the Practicum Facilitator or Faculty Liaison for some but not all of the ATs involved in the study. Prior to my secondment to the university, I had been an Instructional Leader for the school board that employs all seven AT participants. Though I had never worked with any of the participants as a direct colleague or supervisor, all participants had experienced at least some interaction with me in an advisory or facilitative role. These previous professional relationships fostered levels of comfort and trust between participants and me that may not have been otherwise achievable within the timeframe of the study. As mentioned in the interviews section of this chapter, it was necessary for me to develop strategies to alter previous dynamics of these relationships, abandoning my customary practice of offering assistance or information in order to give precedence to uninterrupted discovery of participants’ thoughts, comments and responses to interview questions. Thus, the beginning of the study marked a shift in the nature of my interaction with the other agents in the system, occasioning it to adopt a smaller, quieter position.

I did not hide from participants the fact that the study began with the guiding proposition, that TC/AT relationships have the potential to contribute to the professional learning of the experienced partner. They understood that I wanted to find out more about how and why this proposition might relate to their own teaching and learning context. I cannot truthfully say whether this mutual understanding affected findings. However, the fact that the nature of the consolidated findings was quite different from my original proposition allows me to conclude that I as the researcher succeeded in allowing each case to tell its own story (Carter, 1993). The desire to advance professional learning opportunities for FSL teachers has been the driving force behind my professional and academic pursuits for two decades. This
motivation was understood by participants and probably contributed to their willingness to devote their time and thought to this study.

In this chapter, I have described the methodology I used to find out how ATs contextualize the associate teaching experience within their professional learning and how the experience of being an AT might influence FSL teacher practice. In the next chapter, I provide a detailed introduction to each one of the seven ATs who contributed to the elaboration of answers to these questions.
Chapter 5: Findings – Individual Cases

Introduction

As the first of three findings chapters, this chapter introduces each of the individual cases, the seven AT participants, as their identities emerged through the course of the study. The participants of this multiple case study are seven unique and committed educators whose contributions both to the development of learners and of future FSL teachers are considerable. This section provides an introduction to each one of these ATs and to their personal and professional background. After discussing their teaching and mentoring contexts, I describe their mind-maps, highlighting distinguishing features and prominent themes. Following the mind-map description, I summarize each participant’s response to each of the two research questions: How do ATs in FSL contextualize the associate teaching experience within their professional learning? and How can the experience of being an AT influence FSL teacher practice? I have grouped the participants according to their teaching assignment: Elementary Core French, Elementary immersion, and combined Secondary Core and immersion. As mentioned in the context section of this chapter, both the grade level and the program in which the participants taught influenced the individual ATs’ approach to professional learning and participation in the study.

Elementary Core French Teachers

Eleni

Eleni is an Anglophone who completed her initial teacher preparation with generalist qualifications at the Primary/Junior level, followed immediately by the FSL part one Additional Qualifications (AQ) course\(^{10}\) and shortly thereafter by the English as a Second Language (ESL) part one AQ. In addition to French, Eleni also speaks Greek and Macedonian. She is a mother of adult children. Throughout her teaching career, which spans

\(^{10}\) AQ courses are courses available to Ontario teachers after their initial teacher education programs. The format and content of these courses is guided by the Ontario College of Teachers. The qualification earned by taking such courses is noted on a teacher’s professional record and can in some cases lead to a change in salary classification.
more than twenty years, Eleni has been primarily a Core French teacher. She has been an AT for the past five years. Within this timeframe, she changed schools in order to consolidate her teaching responsibilities to one school location. Whereas previously, she taught Core French in two different elementary schools, she now teaches Core French, English as a Second Language (ESL), Visual Arts, and provides French instruction and educational support to a contained class of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. She teaches in an English language K – 6 school in a comfortable semi-suburban community. In response to the needs of a rapidly expanding school population, Eleni’s teaching environment and responsibilities have changed significantly in recent years. She no longer has a dedicated French classroom, and has increased teaching responsibilities in the areas of special needs and ESL.

Eleni’s mind-map shows the five phrases provided in the mind-map kit radiating from the word *mentoring*, which is written within a cloud shape at the centre of the page. The five phrases, *professional learning*, *MY professional learning*, *professional learning for FSL teachers*, *being an associate teacher* and *MY areas for growth/development* are written in blue and appear as headings with purple lists of concepts and experiences beneath each heading. The lines joining the lists to the topic cloud bear arrows at each end, indicating a two-way relationship between *mentoring* and each of the lists. The map shows that Eleni has participated in a broad range of non-formal professional learning experiences including, mentoring workshops connected to the New Teachers Induction Program (NTIP) and workshops specific to the demands of her evolving teaching responsibilities such as the addition of ESL and Visual Arts. She also participates extensively in FSL-specific non-formal learning experiences, offered by the FSL department of her school board and by the Ontario Modern Languages Teachers’ Association (OMLTA).

Three predominant themes are visible in Eleni’s mind-map (Figure 9): reciprocal learning, the use of technology and learning through professional dialogue. She specifies shared learning between TCs and ATs both in the categories of *MY professional learning* and *being an associate teacher*, repeating it in three items in this category. The only area for professional growth that she lists is “advancing the application of technology”, which she repeats in the category of *MY professional learning*. Technology appears to be an area of
concern for Eleni; she was the only participant to opt for a paper copy of the background questionnaire and requested some coaching in order to submit the logs electronically. Eleni highlights dialogue as a source of professional learning both in her original mind-map and in the revised version that she provided at the end of the data collection period, adding that meeting with other ATs to discuss growth and concerns would benefit both their work as mentors and their overall professional learning.

Eleni’s vision of professional learning is broad, presenting it as “pretty much any kind of learning that you can link to what you do professionally”. Though her formal professional learning is limited to initial teacher education and the two AQ courses, her strong commitment to non-formal learning is evident. Informal learning experiences are also a valued part of her practice, as she makes several references to learning through doing as well as through dialogue and collaboration. Eleni also highlights her participation in this study as a source of professional learning. She distinguishes professional learning for FSL teachers by its relative scarcity, commenting that while the essential structure of courses and workshops is similar across subject areas, it is the quantity that differs greatly. Cognizant of this, Eleni states that she is lucky to have been selected to participate in two board-financed FSL professional learning sessions this year.

Eleni considers mentoring an important component of both her teaching practice and her professional learning. She gains satisfaction from contributing to the development of future teachers. Though she acknowledges that not all of her associate teaching experiences have been ideal, Eleni is very enthusiastic about the reciprocal learning that occurs within TC/AT relationships. She notes that every TC with whom she has worked has brought something to her practice, highlighting specifically action-oriented teaching and technology as areas that have been enriched in this way. She credits her work with this year’s TC specifically with helping her to increase her confidence integrating technology, thereby enabling her to address a self-identified area for professional growth. “I’ve been able to learn a lot from them [TCs]. So keep them coming please, they are great!”

When asked to comment on change in her teaching practice that may be related to her work as an AT during the course of the study, Eleni discussed positive effects in each of the four
areas addressed in the bi-weekly learning logs: planning, resources, interaction and implementation of an action-oriented approach to language teaching. She identifies definite change in both the planning and resources sections, explaining that she is more mindful of the incorporation of active learning and interaction when lesson- and unit-planning. She makes note of increased use of iPads and apps that offer cross-curricular connections and speaks of continuing the process of reframing old textbooks to address new curriculum expectations that she developed collaboratively with her TC.

Figure 9. Eleni’s original mind-map

Véronique

Véronique comes from a francophone family background, though she was raised in an Anglophone environment and attended English language schools. She completed her Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) at the Junior/Intermediate certification level with French as her principal teaching subject. She has more than eleven years teaching experience and has been an AT for four years. She is the mother of young children and is currently learning Spanish. Véronique teaches exclusively Core French from Grades 4 to 8 in a K-8 dual-track school in an urban residential community. She came to this school three years ago from a school that is identified as having a high degree of social needs. The change of

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11 The term “dual-track” refers to schools that offer both English language and French immersion programs.
schools marked Véronique’s decision to emphasize FSL as her career focus. Previously, she had taught most subjects to a Grade 4 class in an English-only school, while teaching Core French for her own and one other class. In September, Véronique begins teaching Core French at a new school that offers what she believes will be a more positive work environment. At her current school, she teaches extremely large classes with a high ratio of students who have behavioural issues. The organizational structure at this school integrates self-contained special needs classes into corresponding grade level classes for Core French instruction without providing the educational support staff who accompany special needs students throughout the rest of the school day.

Véronique’s mind-map (Figure 10) is a pictorial representation of the interconnections between the various sources of her situated learning. At the centre of the map is an apple symbolizing her growth as a teacher. Four of the five terms provided in the mind-map kit appear as pathways between the apple of her professional growth and the buildings she identifies as the location of the learning experiences in a given category. For example, inquiry-based learning and effective descriptive feedback are components of her practice that she learned about while teaching at School S, which is located at one end of a path labelled *MY professional learning*. The FSL-specific teaching resources *Making Connections* and *Strategies for Success* appear as sources of learning linked to her work at School E., and connect to the AIM (Accelerative Integrated Methodology) tree shown as the trunk of her passion for teaching FSL and *professional learning for FSL*. Véronique depicts *MY areas of growth* at the base of a tree that presents the five standards of professional practice identified by the Ontario College of Teachers: commitment to students and student learning, professional knowledge, professional practice, leadership in learning communities, ongoing professional learning. She shows the dynamic nature of her professional learning by drawing arrows from the locations where she learned concepts to the path of *being an associate teacher*, the context in which she shares that knowledge. Google apps and a professional learning network (PLN) as well as differentiated instruction and the use of student portfolios appear as areas for future growth.

Three prominent themes in Véronique’s mind-map are situated learning, dynamism and mentorship. She explains the emphasis on situated learning by stating “Place is so important,
which is why I put the three places that really helped form me as a teacher at the top”. In addition to associating the categories provided in the mind-map kit with specific locations, she links three of the five categories with the names of mentors who were significant to her learning in a particular field. Created at the end of a challenging school year, Véronique’s revised map pays tribute to her first mentor, “a master teacher”, with the three pieces of influential advice depicted in gold stars: “keep your cool, keep smiling, innovate”.

Véronique’s passion for teaching and learning take centre stage throughout her logs and interviews. She compares professional learning to a moving train where “you pick up passengers along the way. You pick up cargo … and you just keep going across the landscape … constantly growing”. Her daily engagement in informal learning features reflection, collaboration, professional reading and participation in an online PLN for FSL teachers. She is also highly involved in non-formal learning opportunities such as Board-sponsored workshops and AIM-related workshops. She values these sessions as an opportunity for sharing and networking with other FSL teachers, who she stresses are generally isolated in their schools. Véronique’s extensive participation in AIM-related learning experiences indicates the level of her commitment to professional learning. The AIM program is not supported by her board of education, and thus AIM-related learning experiences are self-funded and occur during personal time. Integration of technology, implementation of new FSL curriculum, promoting student interaction in French, classroom management, inclusion, and articulating her thoughts and decisions more explicitly are among the numerous areas for growth that Véronique established for herself this year. She addressed each one with her TC through dialogue and collaboration.

As depicted on her mind-map, mentorship is essential to Véronique’s professional learning and teaching practice. She views being an AT as an opportunity to engage in a learning partnership, and describes several changes in practice that developed within this partnership during the course of the school year. One such change is the revision of her daybook, which she undertook in order to make her practice more visible to the TC and subsequently credits with assisting her to be more intentional in her practice. Her adaptation of existing resources in order to address new curriculum expectations and her incorporation of student use of Google Docs in FSL were enhanced by the desire to model best practice for her TC. “It’s all
connected with my pedagogy. So, if I improve my pedagogy, then I become a better AT... If I’m a better teacher, my students are more successful. Also, my TC is more successful.”

**Figure 10. Véronique’s original mind-map**

**Elementary Immersion Teachers**

**Ulrike**

Ulrike is an Anglophone, who completed her teaching certification at the Primary/Junior level in a concurrent teacher education program. Her major was French Studies with a specialized focus on didactics. She teaches Grade 1 French immersion in a K – 6 dual-track school in a semi-suburban neighbourhood. She has spent her entire twelve-year career teaching primary grades at that one school. The school currently hosts a cohort of six TCs from the B.Ed. program with which Ulrike is affiliated. Ulrike has been mentoring with this program for the past five years and is currently the Site Coordinator. Ulrike does not

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12 Concurrent teacher education programs, like the one in which this study is situated, provide the opportunity to complete a Bachelor or Arts or Bachelor of Science degree while simultaneously completing the requirements for a Bachelor of Education degree.
participate in many formal or non-formal professional learning opportunities such as AQ courses or after-school workshops. She cites the fact that she has young children as the reason for her preference for informal learning experiences. Her strong commitment to learning through self-reflection and consulting relevant resources is evident in her mind-map.

Ulrike’s mind-map (Figure 11) features the title of this study Teaching to Learn at the centre of the page in black, with four of the five phrases provided in her mind-map kit radiating from the title; the phrase MY professional learning does not appear on the page. Each phrase and its related ideas are presented in a distinct colour. The phrase professional learning for FSL teachers is truncated to FSL Teacher, and associated ideas indicate that Ulrike interpreted the provided phrase as being an FSL teacher. In this area, she notes some of her priorities as a language teacher such as modelling good language use and providing students with many opportunities to speak. The dominant ideas on the page are self-reflection and consulting resources, with each appearing in all categories except Areas of/for Growth. Assessment and accountability figures prominently in Ulrike’s revised mind-map, and is closely linked to the importance of “modelling what you coach”, which emerges as a key concept of Ulrike’s mentoring experience throughout the study.

Ulrike defines professional learning as “anything that informs my practice as a teacher”. Reflection, professional reading, daily professional dialogue and collaboration are the primary sources of this information. Her discussion of professional learning for FSL teachers centres on her recent pursuit of information on strategies for inclusion of students with special education needs in FSL. This is prompted by the fact that she has had a student with autism in her class for the past two years. As she avidly seeks resources to help her support this student, Ulrike notes that inclusion of students with similar learning needs in French immersion classrooms is new to her teaching environment.\(^\text{13}\) The two areas for growth that

\(^{13}\) Whereas exemption from FSL programs was previously routine in many school districts (Arnett, 2013), the inclusion of students with special education needs is now an expectation outlined in *A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12* and supported by the recently released *Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs*. 


Ulrike established for herself this year are extending her implementation of both open-ended tasks and three-part Math lessons. During the closing interview, she expressed satisfaction with having achieved both of these goals through her work with her TC this year.

Ulrike views being an AT as an integral part of her professional learning. The responsibility that she feels not only to model but also to be able to explain best practice to her TC inspires her to reference current pedagogical literature as she analyzes her teaching and provides formative feedback to TCs. “It brings me to another level with my teaching”, she says, noting that she also appreciates the leadership development and sense of well being that she has gained through her relationships with TCs and Faculty liaisons. Ulrike attributes several positive changes in her practice to her work mentoring TCs. She reports that her planning is more detailed and deliberate when she is mentoring a TC and that this tendency remains with her after completion of the practicum. Ulrike credits TCs with introducing her to new resources, and observes having increased her use of Ministry resource documents such as the Guide to Effective Instruction in Mathematics (2003) and Guide to Effective Instruction in Language (2003). She also says that the heightened sense of accountability she feels while mentoring has motivated her to increase her recording of anecdotal observations and descriptive feedback. She cites similar inspiration for initial revision of her approach to Math instruction, one year prior to the school board launch of this initiative. To allow TCs to develop a sense of leadership, Ulrike will “take a back seat” in terms of directing the class during the practicum. This affords her increased time to engage students in small-group dialogue about their learning process and strategy use. Though such metacognitive dialogue is a definitive focus of the revised FSL curriculum, Ulrike makes no specific reference to the document.
David has worked as an OCT certified teacher for five years, and has been an AT for two of these years. He is an Anglophone who graduated from French immersion schools. He is the father of one infant. David received no specialized FSL pedagogical instruction during his teacher education program, though he did do a practicum placement in a French immersion class. David currently teaches Grade 5 French immersion in a K – 6 dual-track school in an affluent neighbourhood. Like Ulrike, he is the Site Coordinator for ATs and TCs at his school. In the past two years, he changed work locations from a single-track immersion school. One of the reasons for the change in schools was the promise of pursuing leadership opportunities in a newer school with a less entrenched leadership structure.

David’s mind-map (Figure 12) places *professional learning* at the centre of the page, with the four other provided terms radiating from it. He uses colour to distinguish the title categories from the points listed in each category, with all titles in blue and all points in green. His is the only map to specifically identify professional learning as a “professional obligation”. David presents a system-wide view that positions learning opportunities as a vehicle for career advancement and highlights the influence of school leaders in creating a climate that promotes learning. In this systemic view, he also notes that being an AT is integral to the
future of education. His revised map emphasizes this strategic approach to professional learning extending it beyond personal advancement to institutional change, charting a path to “growth of pedagogy among staff” in mathematics. He also notes the importance of dialogue as a means of professional learning and calls for discussion with other ATs in order to improve mentoring.

As an enthusiastic lifelong learner, David views professional learning as a welcome opportunity to switch roles from teacher to student. He carefully selects learning opportunities that respond to his interests, his desire for career advancement and the needs of his school community. He underscores the recurrent gaps between professional learning experiences that are relevant to individual teaching contexts and those that are promoted by Ministry and school board initiatives, stating that teachers are “more likely to follow initiatives that resonate with the needs of the school community”. Ironically, his own commitment to the current Ministry priority of improving mathematics instruction has intensified markedly during the course of the study. The majority of professional learning opportunities in which David engages are not FSL-specific. He consistently finds it necessary to inform presenters about the distinctive learning needs of French immersion teachers, and notes that FSL-specific learning opportunities are far less frequent than those offered to teachers working in English. He identifies committee work among his professional learning goals, linking it to his preparation for a position in school or system leadership.

David strongly values mentoring as a means of supporting education. He had positive TC/AT relationships when he was a student, and was delighted to have the opportunity to be an AT so early in his career. He enjoys learning about improving his practice as an AT through the act of mentoring TCs. Though he does not directly attribute any change in his teaching practice to the associate teaching experience, he does identify some indirect influences and positive reinforcement of existing effective practice that emerged from this year’s TC/AT relationship. David prioritizes depth over breadth of curriculum coverage and became more aware of the rationale behind his commitment to addressing quality over quantity through his work with TCs. He observed similar reinforcement as he reflected on improvements in his teaching practice achieved through increasing his content knowledge,
noting that he feels “a stronger need to convey the importance of three-part math lessons and
great questions in math …”.

David observed no change in his use of resources. Though he was supportive of and
receptive to the TC’s use of a number of websites, he states that technology is not his focus
and that students are engaged in “equally rich” activities in his class. He poses the possibility
of indirect change in classroom interaction among students, attributable to the fact that
students interact differently with the TC, and suggests that this may expand the way in which
students respond to one another. David notes that deliberate modelling for his TC
emphasized his practice of providing students multiple opportunities to engage orally with
one another. Through provision of descriptive feedback to TCs, David reinforced his
analysis of action-oriented language instruction and the new Ontario FSL curriculum.

Figure 12. David’s original mind-map

Jeanette

Jeanette is the participant with the greatest number of years of both teaching and mentoring
experience. She is a francophone who completed all of her education in French. She is
certified to teach Visual Arts from Kindergarten to Grade 12, and received no FSL
pedagogical instruction during her initial teacher education experience. She has more than
Jeanette’s mind-map (Figure 13) is a complex creation that fills a 22” x 15” page, which she created by attaching two of the 11” x 15” pages provided in the mind-map kit. Three of the five provided terms, professional learning, professional learning for FSL teachers and being an associate teacher, appear in a horizontal line across the upper third of the page. The two more personal provided terms, MY professional learning and MY areas for growth/development form a horizontal line across the lower third of the page. All of the provided terms appear as main categories, written in light green and highlighted by blue and pink thought clouds. Each of the main categories has a number of branches drawn in one of three blue tones. Selected branch items are circled. Between the two provided terms in the lower row, Jeanette has added the category collaboration. It stands out due to its central position and to the fact that it is the only orange item on the page. Jeanette has divided both professional learning and MY professional learning into three sub-categories: Board/Ministry mandated, Self-directed and Board initiated. She illustrates the interconnectivity between core categories using red double-sided arrows. Being an associate teacher and MY areas for/of growth/development appear to the right side of the page, and are not joined by red arrows. The predominant themes depicted on this detailed map are the importance of collaboration to both teaching and learning, and the distinction between mandated and self-directed learning. Jeanette expands upon these themes in her revised map and in the written reflection she included on the back. At the end of the school year, she added the categories adapting to inefficiencies and Teacher on-the-spot learning, noting that Ministry initiatives are “grand ideas not always matched with the realities of the classroom”. Through creating and revising the mind-map, Jeanette realized

… to what extent we diversify or expand our learning as teachers – so much of our learning is contingent on our ability to reflect on our practice and be open to integrating and trying out the endless parade of new initiatives directed our way.
Jeanette draws marked distinctions between mandated and self-directed learning, and contrasts learning that occurs during school time or personal time. This is in no way indicative of a lack of enthusiasm for professional learning; she stresses, “I will happily learn whatever I’m asked to learn, and I will often take it further”. She is a strong proponent of situated professional learning, valuing action research, professional dialogue and team teaching as important sources of ongoing professional learning. She suggests that budgetary restraints are responsible for the fact that professional learning for FSL teachers is less available, less diverse and less inspired than that which is provided for teachers working in English. Jeanette laments that French immersion teachers have complained about this state of affairs for decades and that the FSL department of her school board appears unresponsive to requests for improvement. She has engaged in extensive learning in two self-identified areas for growth over the past several years through formal, non-formal and informal modes; these areas are teaching with technology and advancing arts-based education. Board-sponsored workshops and teacher-initiated class projects, for which she accessed special initiative funding, are the primary sources of her technology-related learning. Jeanette advances her practice in promoting arts-based learning through community project and committee work.

Jeanette highlights the importance of learning through dialogue, collaboration and shared questioning, when situating her work as an AT within her professional learning. She discusses the reciprocity of TC/AT learning relationships, stating that TCs each bring with them individual talents and experiences, and credits these relationships with affording her the opportunity to examine and describe effective components of her practice in order to respond to TC learning needs. In return for sharing her expertise with TCs, she has gained the opportunity to observe her class from a different perspective and has enjoyed the sense of being valued. For Jeanette, the negative side to this exchange stems from the fact that TCs do not generally possess the experience necessary to effectively integrate curriculum expectations, thus causing anxiety about having large portions of the curriculum to cover in reduced time.

Though she does not directly attribute any change in her teaching practice to her work as an AT, Jeanette does discuss how she emphasizes effective elements of her practice in order to highlight them for TCs. One example of this is her scheduling of a unit on debates during the
practicum period, thereby providing students with opportunities and necessary scaffolding to engage in spontaneous use of oral French, and establishing a context for showing the TC how and why to program this type of activity. Her sense of responsibility to provide TCs with this kind of contextualized learning also reinforced her implementation of Ministry initiatives such as applying open-ended questioning and three-part lessons in math and emphasizing oral language development in FSL.

Figure 13. Jeanette’s original mind-map

Secondary Teachers

Scott

Scott is an Anglophone who also speaks Spanish and German. He has over fifteen years of teaching experience and over five years of experience as an AT. He completed his teaching certification in a specialized program that focused on Modern Languages instruction. He also holds a Masters degree in Applied Linguistics. He is the father of young children. Scott currently teaches Core French, Extended French and Histoire in an urban secondary school that offers Core French, Extended French and Immersion French programs, and has a
reputation for being academically focused. He has taught at the same school for seven years. Prior to that, he taught at an alternative high school for fourteen years.

Though all participants were provided with a link to images of mind-maps following the approach developed by Buzan & Buzan (1995), they were not asked specifically to follow the model. Scott’s mind-map (Figure 14) presents a personal approach to this form of displaying ideas. The title “My World of Teaching” is centred and underlined at the top of the page. On the left side of the page, there is a long bulleted list of “Daily Work” activities that includes “prepping, marking, conferring with students, worrying, extra-curricularing, union-ing” and “learning”. The provided term MY areas of growth appears in an oval at the centre of the page, with a small arrow pointing to the list at the left. Between the list and the oval, there is a series of happy- and sad- faces, including one markedly distressed face and one face resembling Scott. Three of the remaining four provided terms appear in nested ovals on the right side of the page. The term being an AT sits inside the professional learning for FSL teachers oval, which is inside the larger MY professional learning oval. An oversized green arrow points from being an AT to the list of “Daily Work” activities. The more general of the provided terms, professional learning, does not appear at all. The most immediately visible themes are the multi-faceted and demanding nature of teaching and teachers’ learning and the importance of emotion or affect, as presented by the face series.

Prior to the first interview, Scott informed me that he had little experience with mind-mapping, and generally prefers to express his ideas lexically rather than graphically. Near the end of the data collection period, I modified the mind-map review kit that I gave to Scott, by adding a note indicating that there was no obligation to draw revisions. Scott responded by adding a series of yellow arrows linking my areas of growth to each of the three nested terms and in turn being an AT to professional learning for FSL teachers, my professional learning and my areas for growth respectively. His annotation explained that the arrows are intended to acknowledge “the dialectical relationship inherent in … my different roles [teacher, FSL teacher, AT] … learning and growth are mutually reciprocal processes.”

“Doing is learning,” says Scott, and “by definition, being a teacher means you are doing professional learning.” Though situated, informal learning appears central to his vision of
professional learning, Scott also frames his learning as an FSL teacher in terms of non-formal workshops and formal studies such as AQ courses, research and graduate level course work. He qualifies his identification of areas for professional growth, stating that motivation to extend application of technology stems from Board and Ministry pressure rather than personal interest. Conversely, his focus on interactions with students emerges from reflection on practice. Scott addressed both areas while working with his TC this year.

Though he has not always had positive mentoring experiences, Scott values the reciprocal learning and affective support that emerged from his most recent TC/AT relationship. The very presence of the TC mitigated some of the pressure and isolation he encountered teaching a particularly challenging group of students. While the TC’s relative ease of interaction with students contributed to effective classroom dynamics during the practicum placement period, Scott observed the need to rebuild relationships with students afterwards. He also noted that his long-range plans required some revision, to account for the pacing of the practicum period. He identified several changes in his practice that could be related to his work as an AT this year. He developed a template that enabled him to more effectively visualize and discuss three-week planning blocks. He extended his use of PowerPoint, and adapted his use of checklists as a means of tracking student work and providing feedback. The latter development emerged from formative feedback and modelling he provided to help the TC build a diverse range of assessment tools from which she could select the most appropriate tool for a given task. He reported that he was less likely to become visibly agitated by student behaviour when the TC was present and reflected on means of continuing this mindful approach in the future.
Josh has ten years of teaching experience and four years of experience as an AT. During his initial teacher education program, he specialized in French and Spanish instruction. He is an Anglophone who also speaks German, Spanish and Icelandic. In addition to being the Site Coordinator for ATs and TCs and Department Head at his school, he has also had experience writing curriculum, and teaching Additional Qualifications courses for second language teachers. Josh holds leadership positions in several language teachers’ associations. He currently teaches French and Spanish at the same urban secondary school as Scott. Prior to teaching at that school, Josh spent a year as an Instructional Leader for French and International Languages at the school board level.

Josh’s mind-map (Figure 15) presents the three provided terms professional learning, professional learning for FSL teachers and being an AT as similarly-weighted topics near the centre of the page. Each topic has a number of sub-topics clustered around it, frequently connected with double-sided arrows, showing the interconnectivity between elements. The provided terms MY professional learning and my areas for growth and development appear in a single box at the top right corner of the page, placing these terms in a title role. Subject associations such as the Ontario Modern Language Teachers’ Association (OMLTA),
Association Canadienne des Professeurs d’Immersion (ACPI), Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) and several others, appear as a central theme, linked to all main topic areas. The questions *purposeful? relevant? efficacy?* and *interest?* appear repeatedly as an evaluation of existing professional learning opportunities and experiences. Questions such as *support?* and *funding?*, posed in the professional learning for FSL teachers section, indicate that challenging the status quo is integral to Josh’s examination of professional learning.

Josh’s revised mind-map was created after he learned that he would soon replace me as the coordinator for the education program within which this research project is set. He presents this shift of role from teacher to teacher-educator on his revised mind-map, questioning whether he should now diversify his professional learning pursuits to include areas beyond second language education. He also stresses the need to focus on skill-building in his work with ATs, teaching them how to implement best practices and engage in effective self-reflection. The revised map also highlights the prominent role that advocacy plays in Josh’s teaching and commits to “raising some hell” for the advancement of FSL educators.

Josh makes a clear distinction between employer-mandated and self-directed professional learning. He notes that the vast majority of his professional learning, whether it be formal, non-formal or informal, is self-directed. His choice of learning experiences is guided both by his personal interests and self-identified areas for improvement as well as by his commitment to meeting the needs of the school community. Motivated by his conviction that an immersion school requires a French-speaking librarian and his willingness to fill that need in his school, Josh gained Teacher-Librarian qualifications. He experienced his most influential professional learning opportunities through his work as an Instructional Leader, and values similar situated learning achieved through instructing Additional Qualifications courses. He expresses concern that course and workshop offerings for FSL teachers are frequently out-dated and that opportunities are limited by budgetary constraints. He contrasts this with the generous subsidies that have supported his professional learning as a German teacher. “I love what I do, and I think I am good at what I do”, says Josh, “but I want to continually improve”. With that in mind, Josh established the expansion of his implementation of the Action-oriented approach as the focus of his own professional growth and of his work with
TCs this year. He stated that this work was motivated not only by needs he perceives in his own practice and that of his colleagues across the province, but also by a desire to avoid giving TCs the impression that the pedagogical approaches they are learning at the Faculty of Education are not applicable in real world FSL classrooms. In addition to providing a context for the pursuit of his professional learning goals, being an AT affords Josh the opportunity to learn more about his students, as he observes their response to various teaching strategies. He also notes that he acquires new ideas and teaching strategies through discussion with his TCs, and gains awareness of possible gaps in his practice when TCs ask to learn about something that he has yet to model for them.

In addition to being a source of reciprocal learning, Josh views associate teaching as an opportunity to pursue career growth and develop as a teacher educator. Through mentoring, Josh says he has become a better mentor and enhanced his leadership skills. Though he recognizes the potential for TCs to inspire positive change in teacher practice, Josh does not specifically identify elements of his practice that have changed through his role as an AT this year. He tends to focus on how he has achieved and encouraged change himself and credits the AT experience with providing the incentive to continuously advance as an effective model of best practice. He celebrates the fact that through this modelling and provision of descriptive feedback, his TCs were able to create French and Spanish teaching resources that were more relevant, authentic and appropriate than commercial resources. He stated that his decision to establish implementation of the Action-oriented approach and the new FSL curriculum document as the focal points of both his own professional learning and his work with TCs this year had a great impact on his practice and that of his TCs.
The information shared by the seven ATs participating in this study provides not only answers to the research questions, but also accounts of their concerns and plans for the following academic year and for their future paths in Education. In every case, the future path includes a continued commitment to working and learning with TCs. The information provided in this chapter scaffolds my presentation of findings in Chapter 7, where I address the research questions through a synthesis of the information provided by all participants.
Chapter 6: Findings – Systemic Issues

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I introduced seven individual FSL teachers whose observations and experiences contribute to a greater understanding of how ATs in FSL contextualize their professional learning and how the experience of being an AT can influence teacher practice. As shown in Figure 2 and described in chapter three, the learning environment in which these individuals engage as teachers, as ATs and as professional learners is situated within a much broader context. Classroom dynamics, school culture, community relations and current events all play a role in teachers’ professional learning and practice. In this chapter I describe emergent issues within the dynamic educational and political context of this multiple case study. Viewed from a Complexity framework these situational findings are more than themes; they are agents that interact with each other and with the AT participants as they teach and learn within nested systems.

The interplay between the participants and the systems within which they work and learn is integral to this research; it affects both the development of the study itself and the participants’ approach to and application of their professional learning. Though the form and placement of this chapter may seem unusual within the genre of thesis writing, it is intended to remedy the fact that one cannot concurrently report and explain an interconnected series of simultaneities. As an author, I respectfully request that readers adopt the flexibility necessary to approach this chapter both as a lens through which to view the findings that I present in Chapter 7, and as an introduction to the agents that actively contribute to those developments.

Figure 16 shows the ten systemic issues that emerged as important agents during the course of the study. I have grouped the issues of a) FSL-specific challenges, b) funding limitations, c) contrast between board and ministry initiatives and teacher and student needs, d) education trends, e) teacher job intensification, f) initiative fatigue, g) labour unrest, h) student behaviour, and i) the impact of school climate on teacher learning, in order to keep closely-
related themes proximal within the chapter. Due to the interconnectivity of the issues and related impacts, some issues and relationships are recurrent throughout the chapter.

**Figure 16.** Systemic issues interacting with ATs’ professional learning

### Issues Specific to FSL

Of the numerous challenges associated with teaching FSL identified in the literature (Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergrift, 2006; Lapkin, Mady & Arnott, 2006; Mollica, Phillips, & Smith, 2005), four are prominent in the data set. These four challenges fall into three different categories: those specific to Core French, immersion-specific challenges and challenges faced by all FSL teachers. Eleni’s professional practice and professional learning are greatly affected by a challenge that is common to the majority of Core French teachers in Ontario (Mollica, Phillips, & Smith, 2005): that of “teaching à la carte.” This obligation to move
between a variety of classrooms, portables and other school locations per day on a rolling cart, as opposed to working in a room dedicated to the teaching of French is among the greatest challenges faced by Ontario’s Core French teachers (Salvatori, 2008). In Eleni’s case, the issue gains prominence when she speaks of advancing her application of technology, noting that in addition to “overcoming fear”, she also needed to navigate hurdles such as transporting IPads to multiple locations and assuring Wi-Fi connectivity in portables.

The AT participants working in French immersion face a challenge common to all immersion teachers, that of balancing content and language instruction (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Lyster, 2007). Jeanette and Scott raised the issue of finding resources to present grade-level content at linguistic levels appropriate for their students; this challenge is one of the primary reasons that Canadian French immersion teachers leave the profession (Karsenti, Collin et al., 2008). Jeanette and Ulrike discuss the additional challenge of raising school and board administrators’ awareness of such obstacles and promoting a wider understanding that certain program-specific accommodations are necessary. Jeanette provides an example of how these varied and connected challenges interact with the ATs’ professional learning when she describes a situation in which a Ministry consultant was assigned to work with her grade team to examine student work samples in order to advance mathematics instruction. Jeanette said that while the group was “thrilled” that the consultant spoke French, this individual was completely unaware of the challenges related to finding linguistically appropriate resources and scaffolding discussion of complex concepts in students’ second or third language.

The necessity to advance FSL teacher practice with respect to the inclusion of students with special education needs (SEN) is a prominent issue in the teaching and learning environments of most participants. As noted in Chapter 5, whereas exemption from FSL programs was previously routine in many school districts (Arnett, 2013), the inclusion of

14 The concept of scaffolding is commonly referred to in numerous Ontario Ministry of Education resource and policy documents. Based on Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development, “scaffolding is used to help students through a learning task that is just outside their level of competency”. Originally applied to supported learning that takes place in parent-child interactions, (de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen, 2010) it is now widely understood in Education literature to refer to a process through which teachers provide students with progressively less support until the student is able to perform a given task or skill independently.
students with special education needs is now an expectation outlined in *A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013 a) and supported by the recently released *Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2015).

Ulrike, Jeanette, Eleni and Véronique all highlight the fact that students with SEN represent a larger proportion of their classes than ever before. Jeanette’s thoughts are representative of their discussion of ways in which professional learning and practice are influenced by this reality:

> I realized that it just wasn’t working with THIS class, in terms of … the expectations of the curriculum which are so EXTENSIVE… asking an 11-year-old student to go and ask questions about the Federal Government. Are they making an appropriate response to the flood or to the earthquake in Haiti and what would be an action plan? … Who are they going to talk to to ask those questions … in an inquiry-based unit [in French]? … I finally have to come to a decision and say … I am going to simplify it and I am going to reduce what I intended and they are still going to learn a lot from it. And, I have to give myself permission to do that.

The ATs’ observations and experiences echo the call for financial support for increased professional learning opportunities to enhance FSL teachers’ ability to meet the needs of students with SEN (Smith, M., 2008 as cited by Salvatori, 2008). The questionable availability of financial support for this endeavour and others is the subject of the next section.

**Funding limitations**

The issue of funding limitations in public education is pervasive. Though government expenditures on elementary and secondary education in Canada exceeds 40 billion dollars annually (Council of Ministers of Education, 2015), a considerable gap exists between publicly identified goals and policies and the “availability of ‘on the ground’ resources to realize those goals” (People for Education, 2015, p. 3). Each of the issues presented in this chapter connects in some way to funding and apparent lack thereof. Though the AT participants accept funding limitations as an unavoidable reality, they frequently contest the
way in which available funds are allocated. I discuss the challenge of aligning individual priorities with system priorities in the next section.

Contrast between Ministry and Board Initiatives and Teacher Learning Needs

“A lot of expectations brought upon either by the Ministry or by the board or by the people who write documents, they are all fine in terms of wonderful and lofty expectations,” says Jeanette, whose class of 32 Grade 5 and 6 students contains seven students working on Individual Education Plans (IEPs)\(^\text{15}\) and several others with documented social/emotional needs. What she requires is:

some professional learning … that really is very cognizant of the REAL experience of the classroom … where I can come back and say this will really HELP me in my classroom deal with that child who is hanging off his chair and that child who is singing and this child who just doesn’t understand …

Josh, who had the experience of developing and delivering some of the learning experiences offered by the school board, recalls encountering teachers’ dissatisfaction with specific projects and posing the question himself “is this really an effective use of time?” David addresses the need for balance and perspective, stating that ‘those initiatives that are brought forward by administrators to teaching staff are often placed in great value [whereas] the initiatives that might be outside of the FOS (family of schools) … from other levels … [may be less valued] … people have different stakes … influenc[ing] their mandates and their need for professional learning.” “Not all initiatives are necessarily well thought out, adds Jeanette, “but rather the result of quickly conceived reactions to the politics of education.”

Trends in Education

Though movements in education are generally evidence-based, they can appear as capricious as the changes in skirt length or tie width that mark the passage of time in the world of

\(^{15}\) An IEP is “a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on a thorough assessment of the student’s strengths and needs” …[it is also] an accountability tool for the student, the student’s parents, and everyone who has responsibilities under the plan for helping the student meet the stated goals and learning expectations as the student progresses through the Ontario curriculum” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 6).
fashion. In this section, I discuss two evidence-based trends that are particularly salient in the context of this study: the emphasis on teaching with technology and the focus on updating approaches to teaching mathematics.

**Increasing the use of technology in teaching**

The imperative and the deterrents to advancing teachers’ in-service and pre-service learning in the area of technology use are both established in education literature (Davis, Preston & Sahln, 2008; Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007; Polly, Mims, Shepherd & Inan, 2010). Ulrike finds affirmation for her hesitancy to adopt the use of SMART Boards with the same fervour with which it was originally promoted by the school board. This particular piece of hardware, which she believes reinforces teacher-centered class structure and adds to already elevated levels of “screen time” for her students, is now “on the way out.” Scott shares similar scepticism, stating, “if you are just making them do a word search with the new technology, what’s the point? Suppose that something like a SMART Board allowed people to memorize vocabulary more efficiently. But, is that language learning?” Jeanette extends the call for a judicious and complex approach to integrating technology into instruction emphasizing that “it is important to recognize that it is a new form of literacy that we must teach. Children are becoming too reliant on typing a keyword in Google, but they do now know how to break down the many texts and links into valuable and verifiable information.” Teachers across Canada have voiced similar needs for professional learning opportunities to help them effectively apply technology in meaningful learning situations (Canadian Teachers’ Federation Work Group on Teacher Quality, 2011). Funding limitations discussed earlier in this chapter, often lead to a lack of necessary infrastructure to keep up with technology that is available in privately-funded environments. Jeanette’s final reflection at the end of the data collection period underscores the fact that a substantial portion of her learning this year, both within and beyond TC/AT relationships, emanates from requisite “adapting to inefficiencies.”

**Advancing mathematics instruction**

The fact that Canada’s mathematics scores fell from tenth to thirteenth place in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) rankings in 2012 was a cause for concern that
inspired provincial Ministries of Education across the country to take action (Canadian Press, 2014). In Ontario, only 57% of Grade 6 students and 67% of Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in EQAO (Education Quality and Accountability Office) mathematics tests in 2013. Among the Ontario Ministry of Education’s responses to this situation was a four-million-dollar infusion of funds to subsidize Additional Qualifications courses, thereby encouraging more elementary teachers to gain specialist qualifications in math. David has accessed this funding, and completed the 3-part specialist certification during the 2014/15 school year. The two other participants who teach elementary level French immersion, Ulrike and Jeanette, have also been involved in several Board-mandated professional learning experiences at the school level throughout the year. Mathematics instruction plays a very prominent role in each of these participants’ discussion of their professional learning, teaching practice and work with TCs. The national and provincial focus on mathematics is not of prime concern to the other four participants, as they teach either elementary Core French or courses in secondary languages and humanities.

As discussed in chapter one, I had expected that the timing of this study, which coincided with the first year of official implementation of the revised elementary curriculum for FSL and the release year of the secondary FSL curriculum, would have generated a high degree of focus on professional learning linked to the implementation of the new curricula. While all participants did mention implementing a curriculum inspired by an action-oriented approach to language teaching, it appeared to play a minor role for elementary immersion participants. Transcripts from interviews with the three primary immersion teachers contain a total of 25 references to mathematics instruction, especially to “three-part math lessons.” This same trio of transcripts contained only ten references to the new FSL curriculum or action-oriented language teaching. Even Véronique, who teaches Core French, mentioned the school-board priority of advancing mathematics instruction. The fact that mathematics emerged as such a prominent theme in a study of FSL teachers’ professional learning is an interesting development in the systems within which they teach and learn.

Teacher Work Intensification and Initiative Fatigue

task of teaching, the scope of administrative duties extending, and less time for collegial
relations, relaxation and private lives?” (p. 160). Like 97 percent of Canadian teachers
surveyed (Canadian Teachers’ Federation, 2011), the AT participants have noted increased
workloads over the course of their careers. Canadian teachers’ standard fifty-hour work
week, almost half of which consists of duties other than scheduled teaching, is augmented by
an average of six hours per week of formal learning activities (Canadian Teachers’
Federation, 2011). Jeanette describes the frustration of juggling her commitment to
exemplary teaching with ever-increasing administrative expectations:

I have report cards due in 10 days and in all fairness to the students, what can I
pull out of what we’ve been working on that will give an honest reflection of
what they can do? … we’re so much about accountability and paperwork … but I
can look at their work and I observe them ALL DAY, and I can give you a good
assessment of what they are capable of. But, I don’t have ten marked pieces of
paper for that one task.

Josh extends the theme of juggling as he comments that it is often difficult to take advantage
of recent advances in professional learning opportunities. “A lot of steps are put in place for
successful professional sharing. But, with the overarching challenge of having so many
things to prepare within such a short period of time and so many responsibilities …” Scott’s
exasperation is evident as he admits, that the situation is “starting to really wear” on him.
“I’ve been teaching a long time,” he explains “and I’m realizing that life is passing me by. I
don’t remember the last time I went to see a play or read my own fiction.”

Closely related to this feeling of the being overwhelmed by an ever-increasing workload, is a
sense of discouragement in the face of what Jeanette referred to in Chapter 5 as “the endless
parade of new initiatives.” Reeves (2006) explains that the law of initiative fatigue deems
“when the number of initiatives increases while time, resources, and emotional energy are
constant, then each new initiative – no matter how well-conceived or well-intentioned – will
receive fewer minutes, dollars, and ounces of emotional energy than its predecessors” (p.27).
Jeanette discusses this within the context of her classroom, “I have shelves of books on how
to teach reading and writing and every one is considered fantastic at its moment.” “Lucy
Calkins … she’s great!” she exclaims, “and now we don’t talk about her anymore … we
don’t talk about it [literacy] anymore.” As I discussed in the previous section, the most recent initiative is mathematics. Scott approached the issue with irony, stating:

I dream of the day when our first day back in September the principal comes up and says “You know, this year’s going to be an exciting year for everybody. Welcome back from your holiday. You’re well-rested and this year there has been a lot of research that says that if you do XYZ . . . students will benefit tremendously. BUT, we’re not going to ask you to do that because you are already doing enough.

I DREAM of the day when that last sentence is added ...

OR a variation like:

We’re going to ask you to think about this but here’s something you no longer have to do -- we’ll take something else off your plate.

Clark (2012) points to events such as the cancellation of national testing in Wales and the slogan adopted by the education ministry in Singapore to “Teach Less, Learn More” (Hargreaves & Shirley 2009, p. 2) as evidence that system leaders are beginning to take heed of the need to address initiative fatigue. It is possible that Scott’s wishes may be granted.

The granting of this and similar wishes has great potential to relieve the job-related stress that 45 percent of Canadian teachers surveyed (Canadian Teachers’ Federation, 2011) feel at all times. In the next section, I discuss a systemic issue that the survey respondents identified as a major cause of job-related stress and a highly influential factor for those teachers who decide to leave the profession.

**Student Behaviour**

There appears to be a correlation between participants’ concerns about work intensification and initiative fatigue and their discussion about the impact of student behaviour on their professional learning and practice. As Figure 16 shows, those ATs for whom work intensification and initiative fatigue are noteworthy also focus on the issue of student behaviour.

Jeanette notices a distinct difference in recent years
There are so many behaviour issues that they really impact my teaching. They impact my teaching because I cannot go into the same depth that I would like to, that I have in the past, nor the same depth that many of the students could handle.

Scott often feels ill-equipped to deal with the increasingly demanding nature of classroom management, stating that during his pre-service education, it was understood that “if you give the kids something interesting to do, they’ll do it … I was totally unprepared for kids who didn’t want to learn and [over twenty years later] I’m finding once again it’s hard work.” Jeanette concurs “It’s a workout every day,” while Véronique introduces the entangled nature of the dynamics involved as she strives to increase her capacity to deal with behavioural challenges.

It’s always bothered me when I haven’t handled something well. Because, my first priority is my students, and we have so much power as a teacher. And, I’m so aware that students who are struggling in school, when you are cross with them or when you are impatient with them, it affects them. It affects your relationship. So, I’m constantly trying … and you know, you have to think about your mental well-being.

Labour Unrest

Another issue that played an active role in the teaching and learning environment recently has also influenced the well-being of ATs and TCs. The issue of labour unrest appears twice in Figure 16, as two different sets of negotiations stimulated a variety of effects on the participants and on this study itself. Both the university and the school board with which the TCs and MTs are affiliated experienced job action during the data collection period. A strike held by university teaching assistants, graduate assistants and contract faculty resulted in a two-week cancelation of university classes and subsequent extension of the university academic year. Consequently, TCs missed either two or three of their weekly placement days, and the final practicum block was shortened from twenty days to fifteen. This reduction of contact time between TCs and ATs necessitated adjustments in planning of the practicum-teaching block. It also led to a reduction in the number of logs submitted by participants, as five of the seven AT participants submitted three rather than four logs. Several participants reported that their students felt the impact of the TCs’ unforeseen absence and related changes in class routines. The ad hoc revision of the practicum placement period and university exam schedule may have also contributed to the difficulty in
recruiting TCs to participate in the planned group interview, which was to have taken place after final teacher interviews. As noted in Chapter 4, only one of eight possible TCs volunteered to speak with me about the study.

Shortly after strikes at the university were resolved, the five participants who are members of the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO) were in a work-to-rule situation. Employees who are working-to-rule are in a legal strike position. However, rather than fully withdrawing their services as a tool of collective bargaining, they limit their work to the bare minimum required by a very literal interpretation of their collective agreement. In the case of teachers, this generally entails the cancelling of extra-curricular activities and staff meetings and forbidding teachers from arriving to work early or leaving late. This may have impacted the time available for TC/AT dialogue, depending upon when individual TC began their placements and how ATs interpreted the required work restrictions. It also altered the timing and location for some of the final interviews. Though it may be coincidental, the five participants who were unable to complete the fourth log are all ETFO members, and therefore working to rule; the two secondary school teachers participating in the study did complete their final logs. Labour unrest is a perennial issue in education systems. Recent changes to collective bargaining legislation figure prominently in a timeline of labour strife in Ontario schools published by CTV news in May 2015 (Canadian Press, 2015). This timeline also includes the expiration of teachers’ contracts in August 2014, the April 2015 impasse in Ministry negotiations with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation (OSSTF), and the tabling of back-to-work legislation the following month. As I write this chapter, L'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO), the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA), and OSSTF have all signed agreements with the Ministry of Education. However, ETFO (of which I am a member) has escalated work-to-rule action.
Figure 17. Systemic issues discussed by participants.

**Impact of School Climate on Teacher Learning**

The climate of school is a critical contributor to teachers’ ability and desire to work and learn within and around the challenges presented in this chapter. Defined as “the atmosphere, culture, resources, and social networks of a school” (Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2011), school climate is strongly related to teacher commitment (Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2011; Firestone & Penell, 1993). The five AT participants who address school climate approach its significance to their ongoing learning in a number of ways. David has taken advantage of apparent disengagement among colleagues, in order to attend numerous funded workshops and contribute to committees without competition. This has prompted him to ask questions about the relationship between school climate and “teacher buy-in” to professional learning.
Josh and David discuss the importance of school climate in supporting language teachers as they continually develop their language proficiency and L2 pedagogy. Having observed the tendency among French immersion teachers to “relate to one another in terms of their abilities to speak French,” David reports having felt very intimidated when speaking French with colleagues. He has since moved past this language anxiety, “given [himself] permission to be a less-than perfect target language” user (Horwitz, 1996) and uses AT/TC relationships as a forum in which to engage in ongoing dialogue on the issue. Josh recalls a department meeting that “turned into a very unsafe space, very quickly” when a colleague’s statement that he had not taught a formal grammar lesson by midpoint in the school year was met with “visceral” disapproval and accusations of being “a poor practitioner.” Josh cites this as “a great example of how discomfort can lead to not wanting to learn, not wanting to push yourself further.” Both David and Josh affirm that teachers need to be more supportive of their colleagues’ efforts to improve their language proficiency and teaching practice.

Véronique and Jeanette both speak about administrators’ role in fostering a school climate that either promotes or hinders teacher learning. Véronique, whose exemplary level of commitment to ongoing learning was presented in Chapter 5, laments:

I’ve left meetings where I feel like I’m no good. Because I haven’t done this or I haven’t done that. I’m really TIRED of that kind of judgmental stuff coming down from administrators. I know that they have pressure because of EQAO\textsuperscript{16} and all the initiatives, but …

Jeanette has also experienced a lack of administrator support for her efforts to advance practice. She recalls how the collaborative online problem-solving project that she and her colleague designed, for which they were awarded external funding, was derailed by the decision of a school principal. “Feeling the pressure by her Superintendent that we should be a technologically savvy school, she [the principal] decided that we needed to share the laptops [which had been purchased with the project grant] with everybody in the school.” This decision limited access to the necessary equipment to such an extent that project momentum dissolved. She contrasts this negative experience with changes introduced by her

\textsuperscript{16} Véronique is referring to the annual standards-based numeracy and literacy tests administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office to Ontario Students in Grades 3, 6 and 9.
school’s new principal that include restructuring teachers’ timetables to promote co-planning, and assure that teachers are working in their areas of strength and supporting colleagues in area of need.

In this chapter I have provided internal and external views of the issues of FSL-specific challenges, funding limitations, contrast between board and ministry initiatives and teacher and student needs, education trends, teacher job intensification, initiative fatigue, labour unrest, student behaviour, and the impact of school climate on teacher learning. The notion of “entangled dynamics” refers to Davis and Sumara’s (2012) framework of the history of the application of Complexity theories in educational research, in which they establish that researchers have advanced from merely identifying complex dynamics within nested systems to analyzing the similarities between the origins and consequences of the dynamics. In Chapter 7, I present the participants’ visions of professional learning and perceived changes in professional practice within the context of the “entangled dynamics” (Davis & Sumara, 2012, p. 31) of the systemic issues I have just described.
Chapter 7: Findings – Consolidated Cases

Introduction

In this third findings chapter I present responses to the two overarching research questions and their respective sub-questions that emerged through consolidated analysis of information provided by the individual ATs introduced in Chapter 5, as they interacted with the systemic issues presented in Chapter 6. The first section of this chapter addresses the question of how ATs working in FSL situate the AT experience within their professional learning. The second section addresses the question of how the experience of being an AT can influence teacher practice.

Contextualization of Associate Teaching within Professional Learning

To discover how the participants contextualize their experiences as ATs within their professional learning, it is important to begin by establishing their view of professional learning in general. I do this by synthesizing the definitions, classification and reasons for engaging in professional learning presented by the seven AT participants through their mind-maps, mind-map revisions and interviews. I then refer to the same data sources to explain the distinctions the ATs make between professional learning experiences for FSL teachers and those offered to their colleagues in other program areas, as well as to describe the connections that the ATs make between their professional learning and the role of AT.

Visions of professional learning

All participants are actively engaged in a wide range of professional learning experiences, and share a very broad definition of what constitutes professional learning. This ranges from informal activities like reading resources and sharing professional dialogue to non-formal experiences such as participating in workshops and formal experiences such as taking AQ courses and pursuing graduate degrees. As Eleni said,

It can be any kind of learning that you can link to what you do professionally. That can be learning that happens within the school environment. It can be learning that happens outside that you can also link to or bring into your teaching
environment. It can be courses that you take, it can be experiences that you have.

Five of the seven participants emphasize the distinction between formal and less formal learning. The two exceptions are David and Josh, who are both extremely involved in formal learning experiences, having completed five and nine AQ courses respectively. Informal learning figures most prominently among the learning types discussed and depicted by the participants. Figure 18 shows the three categories of informal learning to emerge, as well as the degree to which ATs value self-directed learning. I now provide a context and examples for each of these three categories in order of the frequency with which the participants addressed them: learning through a) doing, b) collaboration and dialogue, and c) reflection.

![Figure 18. Types of professional learning presented by participants.](image)

Jeanette, Eleni, Ulrike and Véronique all specify learning through doing as their primary means of dealing with the issue of teacher work intensification presented in Chapter 6. Jeanette talks about learning how to prepare herself for school support team (SST) meetings and write Individual Education Plans (IEPs) as she goes through the process of completing these tasks. She recalls that this work was once the primary responsibility of Special
Education and resource teachers. However, it is now expected of classroom teachers, as the numbers of staff assigned to students with special needs appears to be decreasing and the numbers of students identified in need of additional support increases (Gallagher-Mackay & Kidder, 2014). As discussed in Chapter 6, revisions of Ministry policy in Ontario require greater inclusion of students with special needs in FSL programs; this is an important change that entails enhanced professional learning for FSL teachers.

Véronique, Eleni and Jeanette also refer to learning through doing in the area of incorporating technology into teaching practice. Eleni connects this to the issue of increasing her facility with inclusive teaching, noting that she has observed “especially with some of the special needs classes how really important and how really engaging it can be for those students to have that ability to use the technology.” Her evaluation of this particular component of her learning in action both critical and optimistic: “I hope I’ll get better at it. I’m sure I will.” While most participants referred to discrete skills when addressing the theme of learning through doing, Josh provided a more holistic example that links to the systemic issue of funding limitations impacting professional learning. Josh explained that the most influential learning experience of his career has been “working as an Instructional Leader for the school board… [it] opened my eyes and gave me an entrée into professional learning opportunities that the day-to-day classroom teacher just doesn’t have [due to funding limitations within the system].”

The second category of informal learning is learning through collaboration and dialogue. All participants referenced both interaction with colleagues well as with TCs when addressing this form of professional learning. Jeanette speaks of learning through collaboration with her grade team, with whom she co-plans the vast majority of academic program, co-curricular activities and teacher learning initiatives. As discussed in Chapter 6, members of this team applied for and received funding to gain access to additional computers needed to pilot an online math forum for students to discuss problem-solving. Jeanette refers to collaboration with colleagues who are digital natives as a means of trouble shooting difficulties with technology and alludes to the issue of teacher work intensification, when she states that “collaboration not only lightens the load of a job that is increasingly more challenging, it gives you ideas on how to improve … I see it as an ongoing path to learning ALWAYS.”
Ulrike stresses that dialogue is a daily feature of professional life and learning at her school, as teachers frequently consult each other on a wide range of topics. David summarizes by saying “you can’t grow if you’re not working with other people.”

As Figure 18 shows, reflection is the foremost source of professional learning for all participants. Reflection enables them to identify and prioritize their learning needs, make sound choices in their teaching practice and in their work with TCs. Scott shared an anecdote about how reflection on language teaching practice inspired the pursuit of graduate studies in Second Language Education. When a change in the order of daily warm-up questions elicited a series of nonsensical answers from students, Scott thought “Oh my God! I’m training monkeys here. ‘Cause they’re not really understanding language, they are just responding to routine.” Scott and Véronique both apply reflection to attend to the systemic issue of student behaviour. Scott likens his reflective approach to working through a particularly challenging classroom management situation to a therapy session in which he asks himself, “Why is it like this? Why does it have to be like this? What can I do to make it not like this? Véronique expresses how she uses reflection to gain insight into this often challenging area of her practice:

I do very well with students that have special needs – like learning disabilities – but when it comes to students that have neuro-behavioural problems I find that I lack patience and compassion. And I have to just get better at my skills. Like, being able to understand for example that students with ADHD, they’re not doing it on purpose. They have working memory problems … so sometimes they just require that super-human patience. And I don’t always have it.

She points to print resources on behaviour management that she keeps on hand so that she can reach for them when she feels like she is “slipping.” Such conduits between reflection and resources are often connected to the ATs’ work with their TCs; thus I revisit this theme in the second part of this chapter, where I address the question of how the experience of being an AT can influence teacher practice.

Whether professional learning is formal, non-formal or informal, all participants mention that they find self-directed learning more impactful than that which is board or Ministry mandated (see Figure 18). The systemic issue of perceived gaps between Ministry and Board initiatives and the needs of a particular school community influences teachers’ professional
learning. As David notes, “when [professional learning] is based on the needs of a classroom or a school, it seems a lot more attainable to people because they can relate to the scale of the initiative.” Personal interest is not generally the primary guide for ATs’ selection of self-directed learning experiences. Figures 10a and 10b show that though the most prominent influences are passion and personal commitment to ongoing learning, participants’ choices are strongly influenced by the needs of their students and school communities. Josh’s explanation of his choice to pursue Library qualifications, discussed in Chapter 5, combines all of the reasons shown in Figures 19 and 20: “Taking these AQs was a very important part of my professional learning and … it was also very much designed to improve my school and my department and it was very much altruistic …[and] I’m doing it because I enjoy it!”

Figure 19. Individual reasons for pursuing professional learning.
Figure 20. Overall Reasons for Pursuing Professional Learning.

Six of the seven ATs noted that ongoing learning is a professional responsibility, something that David believes should be “innate in all teachers.” Josh concurs: “If we cease to learn, we are going to cease to be professional.”

Professional learning for FSL teachers

Of the three themes to emerge from participants’ references to FSL specific learning opportunities, deficiency is the most salient. Participants refer to both insufficient quantity and insufficient fit. David notes that the majority of professional learning sessions he attends are not FSL specific; this is largely due to the fact that “there’s a lot less of it offered … there’s a major quantity difference.” Eleni alludes to this lack of opportunity when she stresses how lucky she feels to have been selected to attend two board-sponsored FSL workshops during the school year. Jeannette emphasizes that not only do FSL teachers receive fewer professional learning opportunities specific to their teaching context, immersion teachers are routinely expected to fill in the gaps between what is offered and what is required “we just know that when we come back [from PL sessions], we are going to have to translate and make it work for us.” She refers specifically to challenges related to the recently revised Social Studies curriculum. The school board offered a series of implementation workshops for teachers during the school day. When French immersion
teachers called for further assistance in adapting a very dense, language-dependent curriculum to immersion contexts, the ad hoc sessions provided by the school board served to underscore the frustration expressed by Jeanette and her colleagues.

The small piece of support that they’re offering us is AFTER SCHOOL. So, on your own time go to this professional learning session … and the instructional leaders, they’re working with those scant resources and that general attitude towards French immersion programming, where we don’t get the kind of support that the English programming does.

Scott addressed the need for immersion-specific support by offering a workshop at a recent subject-association conference. The workshop focussed on strategies for teaching secondary school content courses such as History in French immersion. The fact that the session was very well attended, despite being scheduled in the final time slot of the conference, is indicative of the interest and need that exists among immersion teachers for similar PL opportunities. As the only participant who does not dwell on these deficiencies, Véronique’s guiding motto is “take the best and leave the rest.” She views board-sponsored PL events as a forum to validate and to share the discoveries she makes through her implementation of strategies learned in sessions and forums offered by the AIM organization and by Sylvia Duckworth.17 She does, however stress that board-provided sessions are important as a venue for combatting the isolation experienced by so many FSL teachers. Josh and Eleni also speak frequently about this isolation and value school board offerings as an opportunity to network with other FSL teachers. Jeanette concurs, describing teacher collaboration as a means of dealing with the lack of resources and support for FSL teachers “giving each other that support that we are not getting.”

This lack of support points to the second important theme related to professional learning for FSL teachers: the need for advocacy. David engages in this advocacy by consistently mentioning at every workshop he attends, that he is a French immersion teacher and that he will be using the ideas presented in an immersion context, thereby opening the conversation

17 Sylvia Duckworth, who was featured in the June 2015 issue of Professionally Speaking as a recipient of the Prime Minister’s Award for Teaching Excellence, offers a range of private professional learning experiences for FSL teachers, including Google Apps for Classrooms. She also shares a wide range of classroom-ready resources such as video clips and PowerPoint presentations online.
of immersion needs and adaptations. When Jeanette and her colleagues voiced their concerns to the board’s FSL department, they were told that French immersion students only represent ten percent of the school board. Jeanette responds, “that small 10 percent still has to receive the same quality of education, and the teachers have to receive the same quality of support as that other 90 percent.” She also notes that she appreciates working with principals who understand the particular needs of French immersion programming, strategically find funding within their school budgets and thoughtfully voice support for immersion teachers and their students. Véronique’s advocacy is more specifically related to advocating for the importance of the French language in general. She passionately encourages her students to open their hearts, minds and ears to the French language, so that “even if they don’t continue with it, there is a general embrace.” She wants them to see learning French as “a good experience [one that can] open doors later on… it’s about SOLIDARITY.”

Focus on the French language is the subject of the third theme to emerge from participants’ discussion of professional learning for FSL teachers within their overall vision of professional learning. The issue is that of being a non-native speaker (NNS) of the target language. All participants who identify as non-native speakers (NNS) of French discussed how their NNS identity played a role in their teaching, their professional learning and/or in their work as ATs. Eleni describes her participation in Projet àQuébec, a program that provides Ontario FSL teachers with bursaries to attend summer courses at French Language universities while boarding with francophone families, as the most impactful professional learning experience of her career. David notes that most immersion teachers with whom he has worked have been NNS and thus language learning is an integral part of any discussion addressing professional learning for FSL teachers. “Caring about the programming,” he says “means to me that we continue to work to improve the French that we speak.” Josh discusses this development of language skills with TCs, highlighting the multifaceted nature of language teachers’ learning: “You can be an exceptional French teacher and not have exceptionally strong French. I’m a damn good German teacher, and my German’s B2
Ulrike explains that reflecting on her own experiences as a French language learner regularly informs her pedagogical choices. This theme recurs in several areas of this study and its findings. It is related to the discussion in Chapter 6 about the need for school environments to be supportive in order for teachers to feel comfortable and inspired to learn and grow. It also relates to the upcoming section on areas of practice that ATs believe can be developed through mentoring. I also address issues related to NNS teacher identity in the second half of this chapter, where I present findings related to the role that mentoring plays within and the impact the AT experience can have on teaching practice.

**Teachers’ visions of the AT role as a component of professional learning**

What connections do ATs make between the mentoring experience and their own professional learning? The participants’ mind-maps offer a fundamental access point to view their thoughts on the subject. I designed the process for the creation of the mind-maps, described in Chapter 4, to provide participants with the opportunity to include or omit the phrase being an AT in their visual representation of professional learning. Though they were asked to include all terms, I intentionally did not tell participants where or how to place the five provided phrases on the page. I did this in order to gain an objective view of any connections that might be drawn. Figure 21 shows a comparison between the visual prominence of links drawn between the concepts of my professional learning and being an AT in the initial and revised mind-maps. As described in Table 6, I established the weighting of each connection by considering size, proximity, colour-coding and repetition of elements on the page. I also considered the participants’ explanations of the images they created.

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18 B2 is considered an advanced intermediate level of language proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference. A key descriptor of this level of proficiency is: *I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible.*
Figure 21. Connections between associate teaching and professional learning depicted on mind-maps.

In all but two cases, the participants showed an increased sense of connection between the AT experience and their own professional learning. In Eleni’s case, she remained consistently enthusiastic about the learning she gained through the AT experience throughout the year. In Jeanette’s case her revised mind-map shows intensification of this link, however she implies that this was essentially gained through the reflection that participation in the study demanded, rather than through the mentorship relationship itself. Jeanette’s increased awareness may initially appear to be due to the Hawthorne effect, in which the knowledge that one is being observed inspires research participants to improve their practice (Mackey & Gass, 2005; McCambridge, Witton & Elbourne, 2014). However, she explained that it was through reflection and reporting that she identified greater connection between her own learning and the experience of mentoring a TC.

Though the nature of the connections varies, all participants do link the AT experience in some way to their professional learning. A similar pattern emerges from the participants’ discussion of the theme of reciprocal learning within TC/AT relationships. All of the participants speak of connections between their role as an AT and their own learning. They provide examples of how they see the AT experience as an opportunity to learn through a) doing, b) collaboration and dialogue, and c) reflection. When speaking about learning
through the AT experience, Josh focuses on management, negotiation and leadership skills that he uses and develops while being an AT.

Everyone brings their own life experiences, their own baggage their own positive experiences their own negative experiences to the table and it’s not always easy to wade through those waters. So the learning from them is professional, it’s personal, it’s interpersonal, it’s intrapersonal.

Scott highlights the links between the learning achieved through collaboration and dialogue with his TC.

I’m learning so much! When we debrief what she does [in class] there are so many times where these great ideas come up and she says WOW that’s a GREAT idea! But the only reason I came up with it is because she did [something to inspire it] first … It’s through that we are just generating some FABULOUS stuff … It’s all emergent.

Jeanette describes the learning related to her work as an AT as part of her ongoing development through reflective practice.

As I’m talking I’m thinking about what I’m saying, choosing my words, sharing my experiences. I’m trying to give insights and then in so doing, again it’s part of that self-reflection. I think too, when they are teaching, I’m able to sit back a bit and watch my class and make observations. And so again it’s all that self-reflection; you know what worked and what didn’t work. You know, it’s every day, pretty well.

In Ulrike’s case, the links are far more prominent in her discussion than they appear on mind-maps. She presents a rich description of how she links her learning through doing, through dialogue and through reflection to being an AT.

I think that when I am observing the teacher candidate and I have to provide feedback to that teacher candidate it really makes ME think about teaching practice, and it makes me think about current theories … about current practices … about trends in education … and I have to be observing the teacher candidate through that lens. So, I find that it encourages me to be more reflective on teaching practice, because I have to give feedback and goals that are meaningful. And, when I’m giving that feedback, I have to be able to explain to the teacher candidate why I’m saying what I’m saying, that it’s not just my random opinion about things. It’s that this is where are things are moving [in education].
Development areas for which AT’s identify the potential to address through their AT experience

The participants identified seven general areas of their practice as targets for growth during the data collection period. These areas are mathematics instruction, application of technology, implementation of the new FSL curricula and action-oriented language teaching, classroom management and relationships with students, articulating and scaffolding links between theory and practice, leadership, and arts-informed education. Figure 22 shows that most of these areas are identified by more than one AT, and that certain areas receive more attention than others. It is important to qualify that while the ATs may have actually discussed and learned about different areas of their practice while mentoring, the areas presented in Figure 22 are those which they highlighted as areas for targeted growth. For example, Jeanette focuses a great deal on advancing mathematics instruction and describes having worked on this with consultants, with her grade team and with her TC, however she did not identify it as an area for growth on her original mind-map. Similarly, Josh discusses developing leadership skills through his work as an AT and as a Site Coordinator for ATs, but did not include this among the many learning goals on his mind-map. The areas of practice explored by ATs during their work with TCs this year appear in Figure 23. As discussed in the previous chapter, the heightened attention paid to mathematics and technology and apparent disregard for language learning is related to systemic issues such as trends in education and related expectations on the parts of school boards. The participants demonstrate varying responses to these trends. Scott debates, “the technology aspect is being pushed a lot… I feel like it’s something I SHOULD work on, but I’m not really super-interested.” Whereas, David justifies:

I think that the board and the province have said, “you know what, actually people can read and write and we’re doing pretty well. Now we need to move on. We need to look at math, because there are gaps.

This is not to say that participants do not address language teaching as an area of AT practice that can be enhanced within TC/AT relationships. Eleni, Ulrike and Jeanette each discuss specific elements of action-oriented language teaching that they explored with their TCs, though they had not identified FSL as an area for targeted growth. Mind-maps created by
participants in the pilot for this study clearly showed ATs’ intent to address language proficiency as a self-identified area for growth within their work with TCs. And, though David did not set a language-related goal during the course of the study, he does recognize that interaction with TCs can have an impact on his development as a language user. He says that he tells TCs, “I will make mistakes from time to time. You will notice that. I will work to correct that. I really don’t mind if you notice something and you want to help me with that.” For Josh, the language teaching goal that he set at the beginning of the data collection period became increasingly nuanced and complex throughout the course of the school year. Reflecting on the many areas for professional growth depicted on his mind-map, Josh comments:

After the year of working with multiple teacher candidates … what stands out for me is BEST PRACTICES … as aligned to the new curriculum, aligned to my strengths, and most importantly aligned to what the students need in order to be successful and confident communicators in a second language … working with best practices was about teaching scaffolding, teaching strategies, teaching ideas rather than content, and how to be a more successful educator in a second language program. So that is something I can see now as the key element of my professional learning which reflected my goal as a mentor teacher.
Figure 22. Areas for growth as identified by ATs

Figure 23. Areas of practice addressed within TC/AT interaction as discussed by ATs
Discussion and summary of ATs’ visions of the associate teaching experience as a component of FSL teachers’ professional learning

The participants have a broad view of Professional Learning that encompasses formal, non-formal and informal learning activities. This expansive vision is reflected in the Ontario College of Teacher Professional Learning Framework (OCT, 2001 and in press) as well as in Canadian (Clark, Fabrizio, Lacavera, Livingstone, Pollock, Smaller, Strachan & Tarc, 2007; Friesen, 2009; Canadian Education Association (CEA), 2015) and international literature (European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2011; OECD, 2010). The tendency of the majority of participants to select informal and non-formal forms of professional learning is consistent with the Clark et al. synthesis of findings of a decade of Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) funded research into the learning habits and workload issues of teachers across Canada, entitled Beyond PD Days: Teachers’ Work and Learning in Canada (2007). The division of teacher involvement in formal learning is also consistent with Canada-wide research in that the less experienced teachers David and Josh opt for more formal learning experience while their more experienced counterparts pursue predominantly non-formal and informal professional learning.

As a whole, the ATs gravitate towards three sources of informal learning that have been found to be most beneficial to powerful learning (Wei et al., 2009; CEA, 2015) and effective teaching (CEA, 2009), namely learning through doing, through collaboration and dialogue and through reflection. The participants find self-directed learning to be more desirable and, like many of their counterparts nationwide (Clark, 2012), to have greater impact on their practice. Véronique, Eleni, David, Ulrike, Jeanette, Scott and Josh collectively paint a picture that aligns directly with a research-based definition of effective professional learning for teachers (CEA, 2015). Their global characterization establishes that professional learning is a) multifaceted; b) ideally autonomously selected; c) directly linked to the daily work of teaching; and d) grounded in dialogue, collaboration and reflection.

The participants concur that professional learning for FSL teachers pales in both quantity and pertinence to that which is available to colleagues working in English and/or in other
curriculum areas. This is consistent with experiences of FSL teachers described in the literature (Calvé, 1992; Lapkin, Mady, & Arnott, 2006; Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergrift, 2006). They view associate teaching as an integral part of their professional learning, and describe experiences that suggest that TC/AT relationships have the potential to fill some of the existing voids in FSL teachers’ professional learning options. These relationships offer FSL teachers an opportunity not only to learn about specific strategies and resources through collaboration and dialogue, but more frequently to extend their reflective practice and enhance their praxis through the enhanced level at which they engage with ideas and information in order to live up to the responsibilities of mentorship. Regulatory bodies and boards of education briefly acknowledge such inclusion of associate teaching within the scope of professional learning (OCT, 2012; Regina Public School Division, n.d; Yukon Education, 2103). I elaborate upon this inclusion and make suggestions for its expansion in Chapter 8. The participants identified a total of eight areas of practice that they intended to address during their work with their TCs. Without exception, all seven participants reported engaging in exploration and dialogue that contributed to the advancement of practice in their selected target areas. If one compares Figure 22 to Figure 23, it is evident that four of the seven ATs discussed having developed additional areas of practice as well as those they targeted initially.

In accordance with their expansive view of what constitutes professional learning, five of the seven participants identify their participation in my research as a component of their professional learning. Eleni indicated this on her mind-map, while Véronique stated in her first interview “I like this discussion because I am able to go back and reflect [on the discussion in relation to her work with her TC] and learn.” Scott affirmed that participation in the study afforded him a “heightened consciousness” around a number of issues and Josh concurred, noting that “the experience has been an enriching one. Any chance to reflect on and talk about professional practice is welcomed.” As a group, they agree that being an AT and participating in a study about the links between associate teaching and professional learning have each contributed to their professional growth. In the next section of this chapter, I present findings that show how the experience of being an AT has influenced their practice.
Influence of Associate Teaching on FSL Teacher Practice

To discern how the experience of being an AT can influence FSL teacher practice, I begin by determining the role that mentoring plays in the participating teachers’ practice. I do this by consolidating the depictions of mentoring presented by the AT participants through their mind-maps, mind-map revisions, interviews and mentoring logs. I then refer to the mentoring logs, interviews and mind-map revisions to describe changes in practice that the participants relate to their mentoring relationship with TCs. I address these perceived changes in four areas of practice: a) lesson and program planning, b) selection and use of resources, c) interaction with and among students, and d) implementation of updated curricula and approaches to language teaching. I conclude this section and this chapter by providing a consolidated view of change in practice presented by the participants.

Role of mentoring in teacher practice

Mentoring plays an important role in the development and practice of all of the participants. Their related involvement extends beyond associate teaching, to include supporting colleagues who are new to teaching and/or new to the school as well as to their own experiences having been mentored. As noted in Chapter 5, mentors and mentoring are so central to Véronique’s vision of professional learning and practice that she recorded the names of the mentors who contributed to her development in each area of situated learning illustrated on her mind-map. David describes how “learning from one another has just been a kind of constant DRIVER” and how his enjoyment of the mentorship process when he was a TC inspired his enthusiasm to become an AT. In contrast, Josh’s passionate commitment to mentoring is inspired by a very negative experience he had as a TC, when an AT’s mentoring style prompted him to spend a weekend sitting alone outside “smoking like a chimney” and questioning his career choice. Each year, he recounts this experience to his TCs “to let them know that there’s respect from day one from my end … I will NEVER do anything [to harm their self-esteem in the way that he experienced].”
Six sub-themes emerged from discussion related to the theme of mentoring; these are affective advantages [of mentoring/associate teaching], reciprocal learning, modelling and scaffolding for TCs, negative aspects of mentoring, balance of power within TC/AT relationships, and becoming a better mentor. As Figure 24 shows, the themes affective advantages and reciprocal learning are the only two to be addressed by all participants.

Eleni asserts that it is “thrilling” to observe the TCs’ progress during their time together; it leaves her “excited about the future.” Similarly, Ulrike credits the experience with contributing to her overall wellbeing, stating that when she observes the TCs gaining facility and confidence she enjoys being able to say to herself “I helped this person on their road to being a great teacher!” She links this sense of satisfaction to future personal successes, stating that “when you feel good, you’re more open to things!” Most participants derive similar affirmation from the AT experience. Eleni, Véronique, Ulrike and Jeanette all discuss how sharing their practice with TCs provides the opportunity to acknowledge their own strengths. Véronique and Ulrike also make connections to increased confidence in their leadership skills and Eleni celebrates increased self-assurance when working with technology. Scott values the sense of support he has found when TCs become allies in dealing with the systemic issues of student behaviour and teacher job intensification. He explains that having another adult in the room to deal with challenging student dynamics and being able to share the responsibilities of planning was “a weight off my shoulders… because I don’t have to face this alone.” Véronique also appreciates AT/TC relationships for offering a reprieve from working in isolation: “I have a lot of answers, because of the experience I have, but I don’t have all the answers and I’d rather, we have to work it through together.”

Each of these AT experiences illustrates how co-constructed emotions impact practice, highlighting the interdependence of affect and effect (Davis, 2008). The sense of being appreciated for her experience is an important affective benefit that Jeanette associates with mentorship. “When you take on a leadership role”, she says “and sharing your expertise, you feel valued because people are valuing what you have to say. So, it’s a reciprocal relationship.”
Figure 24. Mentorship-related themes discussed by ATs.

The concept of reciprocity, specifically as it pertains to the learning that ATs achieve within TC/AT relationships, is the most prominent theme to emerge from their discussion of mentorship. It is important to note that when analyzing the relevant data, I included all learning that participants associate with their work as ATs and did not limit it to discrete skills or notions that the TCs may have explicitly shared with ATs. Eleni’s observations illustrate this inclusive understanding of reciprocal learning as well as the interconnections between the affective advantages of mentoring and the theme of reciprocal learning. When discussing the professional growth she has experienced in her role as AT, Eleni focuses primarily on her achievements in implementing an action-oriented approach to language teaching. She explains that while she has attended numerous in-service sessions about the new FSL curriculum, it is her work with TCs that has helped her to bridge gaps between theory and practice, as she experiences “how to actually DO [action-oriented lessons] and incorporate the changes into regular classroom activities.” Working with and learning from the TC helped to boost her confidence, both in the area of implementing a new FSL curriculum and in the self-identified growth area of advancing her implementation of technology, and thus improve the affect of the working environment. Josh elaborates further
upon the value of TC contributions to the classroom environment, explaining that his undergraduate degree is in Spanish literature and thus he benefits from the knowledge of TCs who are more widely versed in French literature. “I learn from them,” he continues, “not just about teaching practices and Ideas and strategies, but also about my students … [observing them] reminds me of what works well with them and what doesn’t work well. It allows me to reflect on my practice further.” Ulrike expands upon the well-known adage that people come to a greater understanding of their actions when they are asked to explain and teach them to someone else. As noted in the first section of this chapter, the need to clarify and explain various elements of teaching practice for TCs often inspires her to re-examine her go-to resources as well as those that she acquires at various school board in-service sessions. Similarly, Véronique describes how her exploration of resources provided to ATs by the Faculty of Education in order to support AT work with TCs have helped her to enrich her own practice. One specific example she provides is lesson plan templates that emphasize the articulation of learning goals. She sums up the power of the TC/AT relationships by explaining her choice to include on her mind-map the name of each one of the TCs she has mentored over the years:

You know, they’ve been part of my life and it’s been pretty intense … And so I wanted to name them because with each of them, I grew a little bit more and I understood myself as a teacher a little bit more.

The third most prominent mentorship-related theme shown in Figure 24 is that of modelling and scaffolding for TCs. As with many of the findings, this theme converges with previously discussed themes and issues. This convergence is highlighted in Ulrike’s explanation of how modelling for TCs contributes to her implementation of elements of practice that are the focus of school board and Ministry emphasis. For example, modelling technology use “so that they can see what that actually looks like in the classroom and just encouraging them to use technology … sometimes they’ll have great suggestions … or they’ll say our math professor was talking about this … and I’ll take those ideas and bring it back to my own practice.” Véronique elaborates upon modelling and scaffolding elements of practice that have been the subject of recent in-service sessions such as inquiry-based learning, explicit statement of success criteria at the beginning of lessons, and provision of descriptive feedback as a component of effective assessment. She also describes how the process of
modelling for TCs helps her to identify areas of practice that she would like to develop further such as increased use of strategies to promote student voice in the FSL classroom. She appreciates the fact that the responsibility to provide a good model drives her to be even more thorough in her self-directed learning and refinement of teaching practice, noting “there is an element of doing it MORE, and really trying harder … because I’m responsible to my TC to show them a good example.” David links modelling to a theme that is very important to him: educational leadership. He encourages his TCs to think about career opportunities beyond the classroom and stresses “you’ve got to set yourself up for every single hoop. I just try to illustrate the path a little bit for them. There’s a lot of jump off points.” Josh focuses on teaching TCs how to scaffold, particularly in light of implementing an action-oriented approach to language teaching.

It’s one thing to say that students should be provided with opportunities to speak to one another in L2. It’s quite another to expect them to do so – you need to show them HOW … TCs came in to the beginner language classes with NO understanding of how to communicate in a second language if they were brand new to Canada … I spend a lot of time working with teacher candidates to build their skill set in this realm.

He also recounts his experience scaffolding the development of resources using authentic sources, “not just, here’s a model, take it and go, but use this model and take it further … incorporate strategies that can include metacognition … using language in appropriate contexts … not just sound bites but leading into interaction.”

Despite the quality of the model an MT presents, there are times when a TC may not be ready or able to “just take it and go”, as Josh advocates. When TCs require extensive support, ATs may need to postpone elements of their program and alter their schedules and expectations. This is one of several negative aspects of mentoring raised by the participants. Though it ranked fourth in terms of prominence among mentorship-related themes, it is important to note that the vast majority of references to the negative aspects of mentoring was solicited by the direct interview question “Can you tell me
about any of the negative aspects of mentoring”?

Jeanette explains that accommodating for a TC’s special learning needs led to an increase in her anxiety level, “looking at how much I still have to cover and how many marks I still have to collect.” Josh adds that some of the frustration in working with very weak TCs is compounded by self-questioning on the part of the AT “just like we don’t stream individuals out of immersion, we don’t stream individuals out of their dream [of teaching]. We help them hopefully identify their strengths and areas for improvement … while minimizing disruption to our students.” Scott describes challenges that can arise when working with a very strong TC; in his case the efficacy with which his TC took over during her teaching block left him feeling out of touch with his students at the end of the block. David refers to challenges related to yet another aspect of TC preparedness in which overly confident TCs make decisions contrary to the guidance of the MT, the curriculum or good pedagogy. He cites the example of a TC adamantly insisting that the students “need” explicit, decontextualized grammar instruction. The TC was most likely motivated by her own apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975). Eleni concurs that not all associate teaching experiences have been optimal. She recalls becoming very frustrated working with a particular TC who did not seem committed to teaching and refused to do anything other than the bare minimum. None of these experiences has deterred the participants from mentoring, despite the fact that it is, as Scott says, “a tremendous amount of extra work for the seven dollars a day.”

Three of the five ATs who raised the issue of the balance of power in TC/AT relationships did so in connection with negative aspects of mentoring. They each expressed concern about the inequality of the partnership, due largely to the fact that MTs are responsible for evaluating TCs in the Bachelor of Education program model that provided the setting for this study. Jeanette offers a more neutral view, stating simply that when ATs make the commitment to welcome TCs into their classroom and

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19 As described in Chapter 4, I was prompted to add this question about potential negative aspects of mentoring to the second set of interviews based on feedback received at a presentation of preliminary findings. A fellow PhD candidate suggested that that the findings sounded like an unqualified “victory song” for the advantages of associate teaching. The nature of his comment indicated the need for me to seek information that would enable me to provide a more balanced impression.
share their expertise, TCs need to be mindful of the fact that they are guests in that environment. Ulrike views the evaluation responsibility as a positive undertaking, stating that it affords her “a real voice in the process.” Véronique, who once saw evaluating TCs as a burden, affirms that “as I get better, I don’t see it [as such] … I don’t see any negative impact.”

Like Véronique, Josh, Scott, Eleni and Ulrike all shared their thoughts on becoming a better AT. Josh speaks of recognizing the need to explain expectations more concisely, developing innovative strategies for providing feedback and experimenting with adjusting his planning in order to provide TCs with more opportunity to develop areas in need of improvement. Scott and Eleni both suggested developing mentoring networks for ATs to share ideas and resources; I expand upon this idea in the next chapter. The quest to be a better mentor has occasionally inspired Ulrike to attempt activities she considers slightly beyond her students’ developmental capacity, in order to provide the opportunity for TCs to see examples of board and Ministry initiatives in action.

Ulrike’s observations offer a synthesis of several of the themes presented in this section. “If you are telling your TC that he or she needs to be doing something, you need to be doing it too.” This is one of the reasons for extending her practice of writing detailed descriptive feedback in the journals of her Grade 1 immersion students. “You get better at documenting it, so that you have it to show them [the TC]” and she explains to the TCs that although the students can’t read her comments, the writing is important because she needs to be able to show the process to TCs and “it jogs [her] memory” when discussing work with students and parents. “It makes you more consistent, and I like that.” She gains satisfaction from advancements she has made in her practice and connects these developments to her awareness of the power she holds and the sense of responsibility she has not only to model effective practice but also to improve her mentorship.
Changes in lesson and program planning perceived by ATs

All participants reported either definite positive changes in practice or the reinforcement of existing effective practice with respect to lesson and program planning. Most spoke of making their planning both more transparent and of more overtly including and demonstrating elements that are currently considered best practices in education, such as explicit articulation of learning goals and success criteria, collaborative inquiry, three-part math lessons, and promoting student voice.

Each of the cited practices are the subject of monographs issued between in the Ontario Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat’s *Building Capacity* series. David clearly attributes changes in his program planning to formal professional learning in which he is engaged, specifically to the course work for the Mathematics Specialist certification that he is pursuing. However, he says that he has gained greater insight into this learning and the effects it has had on his practice through modelling for and dialoguing with TCs. He finds that stronger content knowledge has improved his teaching practice and that when working with TCs he is more aware of the way he now focuses on quality over quantity of curriculum coverage. Véronique completely redesigned her daybook based on her observation that the TC looked to it as a reference text to guide lesson and unit planning. She based this redesign on models provided by the Faculty of Education and on goals that she had set for improving her practice. Both Jeanette and Scott spoke of adjusting their long-range planning in order to accommodate TCs’ learning needs, teaching style and the content of the teaching block. In the next chapter, I elaborate upon some of the realizations and suggestions they made with respect to these adjustments, incorporating them into the discussion of potential applications of these findings.

Changes in selection and use of resources

Though the ATs’ most frequently reported observations are either no change in resource selection and use or reinforcement of existing effective practice, Scott and Eleni do describe definite positive change in practice. Eleni’s interest in an app introduced by her TC inspired her to surmount a number of the systemic challenges
related to technology use described in Chapter 6. She independently incorporated that app and similar resources into her teaching, noting that she observed increased student engagement connected to these additions. Eleni also reports addressing the challenge of a lack of new resources due to funding limitations; she and her TC adapted existing student resources by using their texts and images as the basis for more interactive lessons. Scott, whose preference for lexical over pictorial communication was introduced in Chapter 5, has increased his use of graphic organizers and visual representation subsequent to his collaboration with a TC who made extensive use of these “high yields” teaching strategies (Marzano, 2004). David and Josh both describe how their work with TCs inspired them to emphasize their commitment to developing teaching resources using authentic materials. David refers to this in his logs as encouraging “the ability to build pedagogical imagination.”

Changes in student and teacher interaction

Similar to observations made in the previous section, most participants reported either no perceived change or reinforcement of existing practice with respect to student and teacher interaction in their classrooms. Véronique involves TCs in her ongoing work to promote student interaction in her Core French classroom, saying that while she has observed a marked improvement in students’ oral proficiency when speaking to her, she has been frustrated by the lack of transferral to peer conversation. One of the many measures she has taken to improve this situation was to arrange to visit a demonstration classroom in which she observed and debriefed with a Core French teacher identified by the board’s FSL department. She included her TC in both the visit and in the adaptation of new approaches to her own teaching context. David states that he has become more aware of the importance of encouraging student talk through recent formal learning experiences. He shares his discoveries with TCs and reinforces his application of strategies to promote student talk through mentoring. Ulrike presents a strong contrast to the experiences of David and Véronique, stating that student/teacher interaction changes completely when TCs are working in her classroom. She continues the personalized metacognitive dialogue with students, introduced in Chapter 5, throughout the school year, taking advantage of the increased teacher to student ratio to sit with individual or small groups of student, asking...
questions such as “What are you learning? What did Mademoiselle ask you to do today? Why do you think you are doing that? What’s the strategy that you are using?” She must do so, however, on a smaller scale due to time restrictions and physical limitations when the TC’s placement period has ended.

Changes in implementation of updated curricula and approaches to language teaching

As discussed in the previous chapter, the combined data sources contain relatively few references to either the contents of the revised Ontario FSL curricula or to action-oriented language teaching. In fact, three participants hardly mention this area at all. Those who do discuss changes in language teaching refer most frequently to either reinforcement of existing effective practice or to indirect change in practice. One change in David’s language teaching practice emerged from the situation presented earlier in this chapter: his TC’s unwavering focus on grammar. One of his early logs reports how discussion about why

… when direct instruction happens in language, we need to drive it toward higher order thinking even when the quick remedy seems to be rote drills” led David to re-examine some recently used strategies. In his final interview, he reported that he did not subsequently use certain strategies that had once played a fairly important role in his language program, deeming them “very low level”.

Two of the three ATs who relate positive change in practice to their work with TCs had identified action-oriented teaching and/or implementation of the revised curriculum as an area for growth on their original mind-maps. Véronique emphasized this on her revised mind-map by adding an image of the curriculum document itself linked to a variety of strengths, goals and accomplishments. Josh, who had set out to emphasize expanded implementation of action-oriented teaching in his work with TCs, devised ways to support not only TC scaffolding of student interaction, but also to support adolescent students struggling to adapt to a new approach (something he had not foreseen as a necessity). Two ATs attribute positive change in practice to a sort of cross-pollination of program approach contributed by their TCs. Véronique says that “immersion like” content-based activities initiated by her TC supported her quest to scaffold spontaneous interaction among students and inspired her to develop explicit instruction of circumlocution. Similarly, Jeanette says
that she used “some Core French activities” introduced by her TC to help students increase their functional vocabulary and gain confidence in oral interaction. The emphasis on oral interaction is an important feature of both of action-oriented language teaching and of the 2013 and 2014 Ontario FSL curricula.

**Discussion and summary of the influence of AT experiences on FSL teacher practice**

The significance of mentoring to the professional learning and practice of the seven participants resonates throughout the findings presented in this chapter. For these ATs, associate teaching is predominantly a positive experience that promotes enhanced pursuit of self-identified learning goals and accentuated implementation of board and Ministry initiatives and recognized best practices. One motivating factor for this heightened commitment to ongoing learning and exemplary practice is the sense of responsibility to provide strong role models for TCs. Roland (2009) reported similar tendencies among ATs, with 85% of the 134 ATs she surveyed reporting that they feel obliged to “model excellent planning, teaching and classroom management, model best teaching practices [and] model professional behaviour.” Most participants also recognize improvement in their mentorship practice related to this modelling. The importance of reciprocal learning within their TC/AT relationships is similar to the first-place ranking accorded by Roland’s (2009) survey respondents and Beck and Kosnik’s (2000) research participants. The increased sense of support and heightened practice of self-reflection reported by the seven AT participants are similar to those described by Hobson et al. (2009). Their experiences indicate that reciprocal learning relationships provide an environment for supported exploration and discovery that can foster positive change.

When the participants’ perception of changes in the four areas of practice discussed in this chapter are consolidated, it is evident that the experience of being an AT definitely can play an influential role in changing teacher practice. Figure 25 shows the nature of change that AT participants observed in their a) lesson and program planning, b) selection and use of resources, c) interaction with and among students, and d) implementation of updated curricula and approaches to language teaching. Ostensibly, the most commonly shared
experience among the ATs is that of a *definite change* in practice and the second most common experience is the *acknowledged reinforcement of existing effective practice*. However, to achieve a more accurate view of the group experience, it is necessary to temporarily remove the data provided by Ulrike. The magnitude of the impact on practice that she reported is so much greater than that of her fellow participants that it alters the overall picture. Figure 26 shows the change in practice reported by Eleni, Véronique, David, Jeanette, Scott and Josh. In this view, the most commonly shared experience among participants is an *acknowledged reinforcement of existing effective practice*, the second most common experience is that of *no perceived change* in practice and the third most common experience being *definite change* in practice. This pattern remains constant whenever one participant is isolated from Figure 26. Thus, I conclude that Figure 26 is most representative of the participants’ overall experience. This shows that according to the participants’ experiences, being an AT can influence positive change in practice; however more frequently it serves to reinforce both existing effective practice and commitment to ongoing learning.
In the next chapter, I discuss the interplay between these findings and the systemic issues presented in Chapter 6 in order to propose potential applications for these findings and suggest areas for future research.

Figure 25. Change in practice related to AT experience as identified by all participants

Figure 26. Change in practice related to AT experience as identified by six of seven participants
Chapter 8: Discussion – Implications and Applications

Introduction

In this chapter, I consolidate the propositions, findings and interpretations presented in the previous chapters. I also explain the conceptual process I followed in order to respond to my research questions. After reviewing these responses, I explore related implications. I proceed by suggesting potential applications to inspire, promote and support dynamic ongoing professional learning for FSL teachers and teachers in general. The three preceding chapters of this case study conveyed the experience of participants and stakeholders to promote understanding of the phenomenon (Stake, 2005) of associate teachers’ situated learning. In this final chapter, I also draw upon the experience of studying the case (Stake, 2005) to document the emergence of greater understanding of the concept of teaching to learn. True to the framework and spirit of the research, the structure of this chapter is recursive, as I explain the adaptation of guiding models at pertinent points throughout. I conclude by making recommendations for future research to extend this inquiry.

The Research Process and Emergence of the Study

The motivation for embarking on this research is grounded in a career-long goal to ameliorate a lack FSL-specific, pre-service and in-service professional learning opportunities (Calvé, 1992; Day & Shapson, 1993; Lapkin, Mady, & Arnott, 2006; Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergrift, 2006; Obadia, 1986) that I have encountered as a TC, as a teacher, as an AT and as a teacher educator. Inspired by the comments of ATs like the one I quoted in Chapter 1, who said that she viewed each previous encounter with TCs as an opportunity for self-improvement, I set out to explore and generate the theory that an informal source of teacher learning such as TC/AT reciprocal learning relationships could be developed in order to provide one potential means of responding to the limitations of available formal and non-formal professional learning opportunities. Thus, I posed the research questions:

How do ATs contextualize the associate teaching experience within their professional learning?
How can the experience of being an AT influence FSL Teacher practice?

Like the teaching and learning systems these questions were designed to examine, the research itself proved to be dynamic and emergent. One example of this is the way that need for a chapter devoted to systemic issues became apparent. Numerous thwarted attempts to synthesize the information gained through thematic data analysis pointed to the fact that something was missing. The table of node matrices shown in Chapter 4 (Table 6) depicts the essential questions that I had initially failed to ask: What are some of the other agents in the system and how might they interact with AT learning within mentoring relationships? By posing and seeking answers to these questions, I moved beyond simple identification of elements of the complex phenomena (Davis & Sumara, 2012) of AT learning, towards a better understanding of how these elements interact. Understanding this interaction enabled me to elaborate responses to the two overarching research questions.

Review of Responses to the Research Questions

ATs’ contextualization of the associate teaching experience within individual professional learning

The seven AT participants collectively paint a comprehensive picture of professional learning that includes a broad range of formal, non-formal and informal learning experiences. They have all earned credentials from formal professional learning experiences such as AQ courses or graduate studies in education and actively participate in non-formal learning experiences like workshops and board-organized Professional Learning Communities. Consistent with experiences described in the literature (Calvé, 1992; Lapkin, Mady, & Arnott, 2006; Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergrift, 2006), the participants have found professional learning for FSL teachers to pale in both quantity and pertinence to that which is available to their colleagues working in English and/or in other curriculum areas. The AT participants concur that thoughtful selection of professional learning experiences is essential and emphasize the importance of considering student and community needs to inform such decisions. The majority of participants show a very strong preference for informal sources of professional learning. These preferred sources include learning through doing, through collaboration and dialogue, and most importantly through reflection. A fundamental
component of teacher education (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Etscheidt, Curran & Sawyer, 2012) and professional growth (Clark & Hollingsworth, 2002; Dewey, 1933; Schön, 1984), reflection is essential to the participants’ teaching and mentoring practice. Each participant identifies reflection as a primary means of pursuing their commitment to ongoing professional learning and to linking that learning to the needs of their students.

Their work as ATs figures prominently among informal sources, and is integral to their overall professional learning. The learning they experience in relation to mentoring TCs aligns with both their own characterization of professional learning and with published research-based definitions of effective professional learning for teachers (CEA, 2015). They depict mentoring-related professional learning that is a) multifaceted, as it responds to AT and student learning needs within the context of curricular and institutional requirements b) autonomously selected, given that mentoring TCs is voluntary\(^{20}\) c) directly linked to the daily work of teaching; and d) grounded in dialogue, collaboration and reflection. Over the course of the study, five of seven participants showed an increased sense of connection between the AT experience and their own professional learning. This positive connection between being an AT and advanced professional learning is consistent with findings reported in recent literature (Allen, Cobb, & Danger, 2003; Gilles and Wilson, 2004; Hudson, 2013; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005).

**Impact of the AT experience on FSL teacher practice**

Véronique, Eleni, David, Ulrike, Jeanette, Scott and Josh concur that being an AT plays an important role both in their teaching practice and in the ongoing development of that practice. They describe how mentoring TCs promotes enhanced pursuit of self-identified learning goals and accentuated implementation of board and Ministry initiatives and recognized best practices. Such enhancement can be linked to the sense of responsibility to provide exemplary role models for TCs that they share with the AT participants in previous

\(^{20}\) Teachers are encouraged by their federations to contribute to the profession by mentoring TCs and they may be encouraged to do so by school administration, however it is not a job requirement.
research (Roland, 2009; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005). Most participants also recognized an improvement in their mentorship practice during the course of the study. Consistent with existing literature, all reported an increased sense of support (Hobson et al., 2009) and heightened practice of self-reflection (Allen, Cobb, & Danger, 2003; Hobson et al., 2009; Hudson, 2013; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005). Several also reported the increased sense of confidence and advanced leadership skills found by Giles and Wilson (2004) and the mitigation of the sense of isolation common to classroom teachers, especially FSL teachers (Mollica, Phillips, & Smith, 2005) found by Simpson, Hastings & Hill (2007). Participants’ comments on the nature of changes in practice related to the TC/AT reciprocal learning experiences indicated some change in practice in each of four specified areas: program planning, resource selection and use, student and teacher interaction, and implementation of updated curricula and approaches to language teaching. Initial analysis pointed to a conclusion similar to that of Allen et al. (2003), who found that all ATs showed changes in their teaching practice related to their work with TCs. However, recursive analysis of the data, showed that the most commonly shared experience among the seven AT participants is in fact an acknowledged reinforcement of existing effective practice. Such acknowledgement can also be considered change. “Change does not necessarily mean doing something differently; it can mean a change in awareness. Change can mean an affirmation of current practice” (Freeman, 1991, p. 38).

**Refining Symbolism and Implications of the Research**

Early in the data collection phase, I visited the Rodin Museum in Philadelphia and became transfixed by the sculpture presented in Chapter 1. The oeuvre, created when a studio assistant merged a cast of Rodin’s hands with a torso created by the master himself, became emblematic of my research and developing theory. The research began with the proposition that within the synergistic teaching and learning relationships that develop between TCs and ATs, the contribution of the novice would interact with the work of the master to create a new work or new practice. As the findings reviewed in the previous section show, this proposition is not entirely erroneous. However, the collective stories told by the seven cases (Carter, 1993) point to a more complex view. Unlike ATs in other studies of mentorship-related learning, the most important influential emergences for Eleni, Véronique, David,
Ulrike, Jeanette, Scott and Josh were not attributable to receipt of fresh ideas and resources (Carrington, 2004), professional knowledge sharing (McCloy, 2011; Simpson, Hastings & Hill, 2007) or TC innovation (Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005) but rather to increased and targeted reflection, enhancement of existing AT strengths and commitment to ongoing learning. Rather than expecting the TC/AT relationship to create change, it is more appropriate to view the relationship as an agent that, once introduced into the existing system, can promote thoughts and actions that inspire positive change. To express this in terms of the theoretical lens shown in Figure 7, the interactive reflection generated within the TC/AT relationships surrounds the AT’s own professional growth process, stimulating and/or protecting the practice of and reflection on professional experimentation in connection with new information and existing knowledge and beliefs. When one returns to the study’s emblem, and views the sculpture through this lens, the assistant’s assemblage can be seen to highlight the qualities of the torso that may have otherwise been overlooked had the torso been viewed in isolation. The collaborative oeuvre may also inspire further reflection, exploration and creation.

Figure 27. Hand of Rodin holding a female torso
The provenance of the collaborative oeuvre pictured in the previous section has been the subject of considerable controversy in the art world (De Roos, 2003). From my perspective as a researcher and educator working from a Complexity framework, the provenance of the work is indeterminable and irrelevant. The important question is how can the findings of this study be applied to promote similar collaborative enhancement. In this section, I apply a network model to illustrate how the introduction of the TC into the teaching and learning environment can influence the ATs’ interaction with an issue. I use two of the systemic issues presented in Chapter 6 to elaborate contrasting examples of how such networks can develop. As de Bot et al. (2007) propose, I look at patterns in different subsystems of an individual in order to gain insight into their development and discover connected sources of growth. I then suggest some strategies for “occasioning the emergence” (Davis & Sumara, 2012, p. 31) of practices that can foster positive change in similar environments. The systemic issues I highlight are a) student behaviour and b) incorporation of technology into language teaching.

**Networks of TC/AT interaction**

Scott and Jeanette each noted the prominence of the issue of student behaviour in their teaching and learning environments. Both Scott and Jeannette’s thoughts about and responses to this systemic issue interact with some or all of the four areas of practice recorded in their logs: lesson and unit planning, resource choice and implementation, student and teacher interaction, and implementation of updated curricula and new approaches to language teaching. Observing the nature of this interaction over the four-to-five-month period from the first interview to the final log, shows that the ATs’ exchanges with the TC do play a role in the way the AT develops his or her practice in connection with the issue. By observing the patterns in the interaction, one can infer attractor states within the system. Attractor states are states in which the system prefers to exist at a particular time (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Figures 28 and 29 show the interaction networks that developed between classroom events and AT thoughts, instructional choices, mentoring choices, and realizations for Scott and Jeanette respectively. The elements depicted in yellow appear in Log 1. Those shown in purple were recorded approximately four weeks later, and the
elements shown in green appeared in the final log, recorded approximately four weeks after
that. Grey outlining indicates elements in which the TC played an integral role.

In the first interview, Scott expressed apprehension and exasperation when he described
coming to terms with the challenges posed by student behaviour as analogous to going
through therapy. He noted that neither his own schooling nor his pre-service teacher
education prepared him for addressing these issues. In high school, it was simply understood
that students did as they were told, and the message he received from his teacher education
experience was that if teachers planned interesting activities, students would participate
appropriately. The interaction network (Figure 27) shows how Scott reconstructed his
theories about classroom management, which were initially rooted in the way he was taught
(Clark & Peterson, 1986; Lortie, 1975). “Why is it like this,” he asked “and what can I do to
make it not like this?” He provided responses to these questions in Log 1, where he stated
that the students’ attitude and low proficiency levels were the source of their negative
behaviour: “they’re weak/reluctant writers,” he wrote, “and would rather talk to each other
or disturb others (it’s way more fun to disrupt class than to learn French…) [sic].” Scott went
on to note that his previous approaches to getting students to speak to each other in French
were not effective, and described co-planning more interactive activities with his TC. He
lamented that the students’ short attention span limited the success of the new activities. In
the second log, he observed that the TC spoke “harshly” to the students for acting
disrespectfully on a field trip to the Holocaust Museum. His reflection about how best to
help the TC develop effective strategies to deal with student behaviour revealed changes in
his perception of the issue. Rather than simply attribute the unacceptable behaviour to the
students’ poor attitude and low academic ability, as he had done previously, Scott reflected
on how he could have “pre-empted” the negative behaviour by remaining in closer proximity
to the more challenging students, being more explicit about expectations prior to departure
and by following up with the school administration about the event. He then questioned the
idea of reporting the behaviour to the school administration, because he wanted to avoid
being “one of those teachers who is always on their [the students’] case.”

In the final log, Scott’s thoughts about the issue of student behaviour interact not only with
thoughts about his changing approach to language teaching, but also with his mentorship of
his TC. The account of a field trip to a local French café/emporium, which he organized for
the purpose of assessing students’ ability to make purchases in French, contained no mention of students’ behaviour. Given that Scott’s accounts of activities in Logs 1 and 2 are indicative of his belief that his teaching and the students’ learning were each undermined by inappropriate student behaviour, I infer that the omission of such a message in the third log indicates that student behaviour in this circumstance was more appropriate, and therefore did not warrant comment. In his analysis of a less-than-successful attempt to show students YouTube clips selected by the TC, Scott concluded that in order for the students to be actively engaged with the authentic materials, it is necessary to give them “something to do” during viewing. The third incident reported in this log highlights a transition in Scott’s approach to the issue of student behaviour from reactive to proactive. In the final interview, he made a connection between the introduction of the TC into the classroom system and the development of more positive working environment in which he was less prone to “fall into that pattern reprimanding them.” Within this positive dynamic, Scott felt inspired to develop his practice in new ways such as mining unexpected components of the TC/AT information exchange for potential means of addressing behaviour-related challenges. Scott responded to what he perceived to be the TC’s overuse of rubrics by discussing how to choose task-appropriate assessment tools from an array of possibilities and demonstrating the use of checklists in certain situations. He subsequently pondered in his log “maybe I could use checklists to indicate my interest in their learning, so that that interest in learning is a demonstration of something that could be valued … [and engagement could promote cooperation].”

Scott’s environmental interaction and internal self-reorganization contributed to the development of his practice not only with respect to the systemic issue of student behaviour, but also the self-identified growth areas of improving relationships with students and advancing his use of technology in language teaching. This interaction also contributed to his implementation of a more action-oriented approach to language teaching. Within this system, situations in which students are placed in the role of passive participant such as: a) “doing” a traditional dialogue exercise (Log 1 – yellow); b) sitting and listening to a presenter (Log 2 – purple); c) observing video clips without a pre-established means of interacting with the content (Log 3 – green) are attractors of students’ disruptive behaviour. Incidences of disruptive behaviour, are repelled when students are given short, structured and supported situations in which to engage in authentic interaction. Over the course of the
study, Scott’s reflections show the connections that he makes between these attractors and repellers. Potential growers for the development of Scott’s practice in relation to the systemic issue of student behaviour include dialogue and collaborative planning with the TC, his own sense of responsibility to help the TC advance her practice by proposing effective management strategies, and his extensive reflection on these interrelated forces. The network illustrates a change over time in Scott’s approach, as it shifted from faultfinding in the yellow section, to reactive strategizing in the purple section, and finally to recognizing improvement and proactive strategizing in the green section. As highlighted by the elements outlined in grey (Figure 28) the TC’s direct or indirect contribution to this change is evident at every stage.

Figure 28. Scott’s interaction network around student behaviour
Richards, Gallo and Renandya (2001) affirm that working with collaborators can contribute to change in teaching practice. Scott’s collaboration with his TC contributed to change in his practice by improving the working conditions and helping him come to terms with some of the demands of his job (Jackson, 1992). For Jeanette, who identified collaboration as a crucial component of her professional learning and her professional practice, the nature of the collaboration was extremely different.

In the initial interview, Jeanette said that she had shared mutually supportive relationships with past TCs and indicated that such exchanges may have helped to meet some of the increased challenges of her current teaching assignment. She expressed anxiety about addressing the sheer quantity of curriculum expectations with the whole class while single-handedly supporting several students with identified special needs, two of whom required constant individual attention. She stated that a considerable number of the 28 students in her multi-grade immersion class were not sufficiently proficient in French to successfully participate in inquiry-based learning activities in content areas such as Math or Social studies. Jeanette observed that the students’ “acute awareness” of their weakness was a source of their resistance to communicating in French. In her first log, she noted that the students were also aware of the fact that the TC required substantial support, and thus they responded to her quite negatively. In the second log, Jeanette described an excursion to a French film festival during which the students realized that “lo and behold” they could enjoy a contemporary film in French. Seeking to build on this success, Jeanette strategized “to create situations for meaningful dialogue where they can express their opinions in a heartfelt way, and not be encumbered by not feeling comfortable speaking in a second language.” This required that she explicitly model the teaching of conversational skills such as turn-taking and active listening. The nature of this interaction with her TC appears to have remained constant throughout the practicum placement, as Jeanette continued to model and deconstruct effective strategies to manage the students’ behaviour and address the wide range of learning needs. She described feeling frustrated by the fact that student behaviour and learning needs limited the depth with which they could engage with concepts and breadth of teaching approaches she could employ.

In the third log, Jeanette recorded how she and her TC discussed how to identify predictable behaviours and situations in which such behaviours may occur in order to avoid disruptions.
She provided the example of transition times from one activity to another as being one such situation. She connected this lesson in anticipatory reflection (Van Manen, 1995) to her realization that “classroom management hinges on ‘reading’ the class and … being flexible about when to end your lesson, or extend it”. When discussing this log entry during the final interview, Jeanette acknowledged her own skill in engaging in and applying such reflection in action (Schön, 1983). She also inferred that in scaffolding her TC’s ability to apply proactive classroom management strategies, she gained perspective of the scale of the challenges she was facing with this particular class and more assured that the pedagogical choices she had made were well-founded. Thus, as described in Chapter 6, she gave herself “permission” to simplify her approach and recognize that the students were “still going to learn a lot.” Through engaging in this interaction with her TC around the issue of student behaviour, Jeanette experienced internal self-reorganization in which her thinking about her practice changed noticeably in the relatively short timeframe of the study. This change is similar to changes seen in teachers’ belief profile over the course of a career “from idealist to realist” Bailey (1992) discussed in Chapter 2.
Within this system, incidences that draw Jeanette’s attention to the students’ disruptive behaviour are attracted by situations in which the students are given a task they find challenging, such as a) speaking French (Log 1 – yellow); b) autonomously regulating behaviour (Log 2 – purple); c) moving from one place or one activity to another (Log 3 – green). Incidences of disruptive behaviour, are repelled when students are given simple tasks conducted in English, or when authentic French texts target their interests. Over the course of the study, Jeanette’s reflections show the connections that she makes between these attractors and repellers. Potential growers for Jeanette’s changing perception of her practice in relation to the systemic issue of student behaviour include reflection, articulation and modeling of strategies, and visualization of the scale of challenges. The network pictured in

**Figure 29. Jeanette’s interaction network around student behaviour**

AT "gives herself permission" to simplify approach with challenging class

AT acknowledges her own ability to "read the class"

AT helps TC to identify and manage predictable behaviours

AT recognizes her skill as a seasoned teacher

AT stresses importance of engaging students in meaningful talk in French

AT helps TC create an oral based unit to motivate students to speak in French

How to create incentive for students to self-regulate their behaviour AND use of French?

How to deal with students who require constant one-to-one support in a class of 28 with many special needs?

AT notes that students "cannot get past" TC's weaknesses and are not willing to accept her help

TC has requires substantial support from AT

On field trip to French film festival, students can enjoy a French film about children their age

Models for TC how to teach turn-taking and active listening

How to create incentive for students to self-regulate their behaviour AND use of French?

AT identifies a successful experience and seeks ways to help TC extend it

AT laments the fact that she cannot program as richly as she has in the past

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Models for TC how to teach turn-taking and active listening

How to create incentive for students to self-regulate their behaviour AND use of French?
Figure 29 illustrates a change over time in Jeanette’s approach, as it shifted from faultfinding in the yellow section, to lamenting the impact of student needs and behaviour on her rich and eclectic programming in the purple section, and finally to recognizing personal skills and reconciling pedagogically sound program simplification in the green section. As highlighted by the elements outlined in grey (Figure 29) the TC’s direct or indirect contribution to this change is evident at each stage. In Jeanette’s case, the TC’s contribution helped her to reach a deeper understanding of her practice (Jackson, 1992). Jeanette’s experience illustrates Freeman’s (1989) assertion that change in teacher thinking and practice “does not necessarily mean doing something differently; it can mean a change in awareness” (p. 38). In both networks, the realizations they made about their practice with respect to student behaviour were also related to their implementation of an action-oriented approach to language teaching. In Scott’s case he became more aware of the importance of promoting interaction in French. In Jeanette’s case the focus on language learning strategies was highlighted. For both Scott and Jeanette, the learning needs of the TC play a significant role in the development of the network.

A comparison of the two illustrated learning networks reveals that Scott and Jeanette experienced a similar change in approach over the course of the practicum period (Table 9), as each one moved from finding fault with the students and the situation, to thinking about doing something about it, to moving forward and making progress. The fact that Reflection and dialogue were principal growers in both networks aligns well with the fact that each was identified in Chapter 7 as primary sources of professional learning for all participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of change over time</th>
<th>Scott</th>
<th>Jeanette</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Faultfinding</td>
<td>1. Faultfinding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Reactive strategizing</td>
<td>2. Lamenting impact of student needs and behaviour on programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Recognizing improvements and proactive strategizing</td>
<td>3. Recognizing personal skills and reconciling program simplification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attractors</th>
<th>Scott</th>
<th>Jeanette</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passive participation:</td>
<td>Challenge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- viewing</td>
<td>- cognitive demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- listening</td>
<td>- communication in French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- speaking in fixed dialogues</td>
<td>- expectation to self-regulate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I now turn to the systemic issue of integrating technology into language teaching to show brief examples of networks that developed around a different nature of TC/AT/issue interaction. In the network that developed in Eleni’s environment, introduction of the TC certainly provided Eleni the opportunity to engage with new ideas and resources (Carrington, 2004) and learn from TC innovation (Real-Lopez & Kwan, 2005). In her first log, she observed how competent and assured the TC was when using technology, alluding to the fact that she did not feel competent in this area. She noted that she was excited to learn about SmartBoard use and stated in her initial interview “I hope I get better at it”. This questioning of her efficacy with respect to implementation of technology is a source of her inspiration to pursue change in this area (Wheatly, 2002). In the second log Eleni recorded noticing the different ways in which her TC employed both ipads and SmartBoard, and commented that she was more aware of the technology available in the school. By the third log, Eleni committed to trying new activities and applications, and in the final interview she discussed her accomplishments. Over the four-month period from initial mind-map creation to final revision, Eleni’s approach to the single growth area that she had set for herself (Figure, 22) shifted several times, as she moved from observing the TC’s implementation of technology, to exploring various means of application in her context, to evaluating her application and making plans to expand upon it the following school year. As described in Chapter 6, Eleni not only learned about specific apps from her TC, she also gained confidence using technology, extending her exploration and application of ideas introduced by the TC after the end of the practicum period. The reciprocal learning context also encouraged Eleni and her TC to critically evaluate both electronic and print resources with respect to authenticity and ability to support action-oriented language teaching by engaging students as language users.
This TC/AT collaborative issue analysis and problem-solving (Hudson, 2013) inspired mutual TC/AT learning similar to that reported by Real-Lopez and Kwan (2005).

The most prominent contributor to the interaction between Véronique, her TC and the highlighted issue appears to be Véronique’s own commitment to “push” herself to continually expand her application of technology. This commitment is strongly motivated by her desire to model exemplary practice for her TC. Informed by a belief shared by many teachers, that good teaching is up-to-date teaching (Breen, nd), Véronique’s focus on technology can be linked to her belief that exemplary language teaching practice must include effective use of technology. In each of her logs, she referred to the ways in which she has addressed technology-related learning goals identified in her annual learning plan. This was especially noticeable in her second log, which was created in Google Docs and featured links to documents she was using in her planning as well as images and embedded video clips of class activities. She described sharing with her TC her concerted efforts to develop and update a class website, send out regular FSL-related tweets, and use Google Docs in teaching activities. She also showed her mind-map to her TC, who in turn proposed using SketchBook software to extend it.

In the network that developed around Véronique, her TC and the expansion of their application of technology in the language classroom, it is evident that Véronique explored significantly more territory in a more divergent manner than she would have had she not established the need to provide an exemplary model for her TC as a motivation for her dedicated professional experimentation, reflection on the outcomes of said experimentation and reorganization of her related knowledge and beliefs. Similarly, as described in the beginning of this section, Scott’s interaction with his own thoughts, beliefs, practices and environment in relation to the systemic issue of student behaviour adopted markedly different pathways when connected to the TC’s ideas, questions and actions. Each of the networks described in this section demonstrate the potential impact of introducing as little as two agents (the TC and the systemic issue) into the system that is the AT’s situated professional learning. They also show that AT/TC interaction can inspire a significant increase in AT momentum when experimenting, reflecting, reorganizing knowledge and diversifying practice.
The two sets of TC/AT interactions around the systemic issues of student behaviour and incorporation of technology differ in that in the first set of interactions the experienced partner appears to be playing a more traditional role in the mentorship relationship, responding to the less experienced partner’s needs, by providing procedural information, instruction (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992), guidance and support (Wang & Odell, 2002).

In the second set of interactions, TC/AT learning develops more through the TC’s contributions (Carrington, 2004; Real-Lopez & Kwan), collaboration (Real-Lopez and Kwan, 2005), and AT motivation to model exemplary practice (Gilles & Wilson, 2004). However, it is the commonalities between these two sets of networks that are more significant. In both sets, the learning itself extends beyond and around the reciprocal relationships in action. So too do the various motivations and repercussions related to the learning. Emotions play a prominent role in each one of the networks, as cognition and emotion are inseparable (Swain, 2013). The TCs and ATs and students co-create emotions that impact learning, which in turn influence their individual and collective affective environment. Each of these networks are both less than and greater than the sum of their respective parts (Morin, 1977/1992).

Over the course of the study, networks similar to the ones described in this section developed in relation to each of the systemic issues discussed in Chapter 6, as well as in relation to a host of pedagogical concepts and concerns. In most cases, the developments were not predictable, but were certainly comprehensible when I developed potential explanations through data analysis. This practice of “retrodiction” (deBot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011, p. 20), or “explaining after by before” (van Geert & Steenbeek, 2005, as cited by de Bot and Larsen-Freeman, 2011) is a means of applying findings that emerge in Complexity research. We cannot establish causality, but we can identify components of a system and patterns of interaction that have been connected to growth sources, thereby improving our potential to positively influence system development.

**From past conclusions to future applications**

Previous research on TC/AT reciprocal learning shows that effective mentoring is essential to the growth of both mentor and mentee as well as to the collective renewal of teaching practice (Gilles & Wilson, 2004) and that AT learning extends beyond the practicum, potentially acting “as a catalyst for further mentoring and sharing between teachers.
themselves” (Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005, p.24). The present study supports and extends these findings. By identifying networks such as those described in the previous section, I have taken an important step towards the application of our collective efforts. The usefulness of this study depends upon finding ways to encourage and support the emergence of such networks. Some possible approaches come from the AT participants themselves. Eleni suggests developing a forum where MTs can share best practices. Scott expands upon her suggestion, advocating the creation of a resource collection, where others could access ideas and materials developed by TC/AT pairs. Josh makes a suggestion similar to one I presented in an article based on pilot information and preliminary findings (Muhling, 2015). He posits that ATs could enhance their situated learning by specifying learning goals at the beginning of the school year that they intend to address within their mentoring experience. Hudson (2013) agrees, stating that AT learning has yet to be exploited to its full potential and that in order to gain maximum benefit from mentoring as a professional learning experience, specialized frameworks should guide AT reflection.

I concur with both Josh and Hudson, and propose the elaboration of a tool to document this process (Appendix P), thereby scaffolding refined application of the ATs’ preferred source of learning. A template similar to the log used to record participants’ thoughts during this study (Appendix J) can both capture and inspire the ATs’ reflection in relation to their own situated learning. The upper section of the template, guides ATs through anticipatory reflection (van Manen, 1995). The AT Reflection Tool (Appendix P) sets the stage for fruitful reflection, by asking ATs to state their learning goals for the school year, list prominent issues in the teaching environment and suggest ways they may address these goals and issues within their mentoring relationships. It establishes the potential for mentoring-related learning and asks ATs to begin strategizing to promote and profit from such learning opportunities. The final question in this section asks ATs to identify the strengths they have to offer in relation to the issues and goals listed. This step provides ATs with the opportunity to view the entire process as an additive one, and may promote the kind of enhancement of existing strengths reported by Eleni, Véronique, David, Ulrike, Jeanette, Scott and Josh. The anticipatory section of the AT Reflection Tool blends two levels of reflection: (a) technical rationality, whereby teachers consider the learning goals and demands (van Manen, 1995) and (b) practical action, whereby teachers address the teaching and learning context. Using Hatton
and Smith’s (1995) taxonomy, the upper section engages teachers in *descriptive reflection*. The lower section of the template has two columns. The left column asks ATs to report interactions with their TC during which they addressed the stated learning goals and/or environmental issues. This column engages ATs in van Manen’s second level of reflection: *practical action* and blends Hatton and Smith’s *descriptive reflection* and *dialogic reflection*, as ATs are asked to describe TC/AT interaction related to their learning goals and environmental issues. The right column asks ATs to record their thoughts related to the interaction noted on the left. This section of the template corresponds to *critical reflection* as described by both van Manen and Hatton and Smith’s taxonomies. By actively, persistently and carefully considering (Dewey, 1933) the possible connections between the mentoring experience and their own contextual issues and professional learning goals, ATs can both promote and benefit from the emergence of networks such as those described in the previous section. Reflection, dialogue and visualization distinguished themselves as potential growers of positive change within the networks. The AT Reflection Tool provides a framework that promotes the introduction of these growers into the system. Though it is not possible to predict the nature of the networks that will emerge, adopting processes such as those presented by the AT Reflection Tool equip teachers to recognize, explore and extend learning opportunities as they develop.

TC/AT interaction networks have the capacity to contribute to growth beyond the individual school or board level. Hudson (2010) concluded that ATs can be “capacity builders for implementing reform” (p. 40) by simultaneously enriching their own teaching and mentoring practice while furthering the learning of TCs. I concur with Hudson, and offer the heightened dedication to the Ministry initiative of advancing mathematics instruction that Ulrike and David linked to their mentorship practice as one example of TC/AT reciprocal learning contributing to reform. Another example can be seen in the networks that developed around Eleni and Véronique’s incorporation of technology and implementation of action-oriented language teaching in relation to the learning they shared with their TCs. As Hudson (2013) proposed for his research, I intend this multiple case study to contribute to the literature that will inform the application of TC/MT learning as an agent of educational improvement on a broader scale.
Writing from the Australian context, where teachers must complete a requisite number of professional learning hours in order to maintain certification, Hudson (2013) has called for the official recognition of associate teaching and mentoring as documentable professional learning activities. In Ontario, ongoing professional learning is one four standards of practice for the teaching profession. Though professional learning hours were legislated from 2001 - 2003, Ontario teachers now engage in professional learning voluntarily as a matter of professionalism. A public draft of the 2015 revision of the *Ontario College of Teachers Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession* presents a matrix of potential sources of professional learning that includes mentoring among the broad range of formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities available to teachers. The Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP) offers further evidence that regulatory and legislative environments are currently conducive to taking full advantage of associate teaching and mentoring as a source of professional learning and system renewal. TLLP is an Ontario Ministry of Education initiative that funds and supports teacher-developed research-to-practice projects responding to a locally-identified issue. Teachers involved in these projects share their findings and provide and receive mentorship through professional learning networks hosted on *Mentoring Moments*, a Ministry-sponsored website.

Continued and expanded recognition of associate teaching and mentoring as a source of professional learning has the potential not only to advance Ministry initiatives but also to strengthen school-university partnerships, which are essential to adaptive, effective education for teachers at all stages of their careers (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Davis & Sumara, 2012; Falkenburg, 2010; Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

**Suggestions for future research**

Future research can extend and apply the discoveries made and theories developed during the course of this study by elaborating answers to some of the following questions:

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• Are some issues more appropriately addressed through TC/AT interaction networks than others?
• Can the introduction or elimination of specific elements promote the positive development of such networks?
• To what degree should one manipulate interaction within and around reciprocal learning relationships?

The latter question serves as a reminder to approach the manipulation of reciprocal learning relationships with caution, as attempts to exploit the power of these relationships pose the risk of mitigating the organic informal nature that makes them attractive to teachers.23

Case study can be a “disciplined force in setting public policy” (Stake, 2005, p. 460). It is my intention that the present case study will lead to future research to inform policy that both maximizes the potential of reciprocal learning in mentorship relationships and respects its unique nature, never losing sight of the fact that each network exists within the larger whole.

The Emergence of this Study in Relation to Models of Complexity Research

In these eight chapters, I have presented three conceptual models that depict the development of the study through the phases of design, discovery and discussion. The theoretical framework pictured in Figure 2 shows the nested systems in which the ATs teach and learn. I drew this model when writing the research proposal, with the belief that this model would guide me through all phases of the study. As I explained at the beginning of this final chapter, the need to alter the model in order to pose and answer emergent questions became apparent during data analysis. Thus, I added notation of the systemic issues with which the ATs interacted throughout their teaching and learning as seen in Chapter 6 (Figure 15).

When conceptualizing discussion of the findings and related applications, the need for a third iteration of the description of TC/AT interaction around systemic issues became apparent. The network models, as they appear in Figures 28 and 29, represent a fourth version of my

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23 Hargreaves & Shirley (2009) caution against similar over formalization of when they point out the “contrived collegiality” (p. 92) mandatory professional learning communities (PLC) focusing on meeting Board-specified targets. Scott and Josh both lamented the inflexibility of board-mandated PLC time.
attempt to visually convey this interaction. Language learning is a “succession of cycles of emergence” (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008, p. 60). Through writing this thesis I have found that developing one’s use of the language of research presents a similar succession. Each iteration of my depiction of the network shows one such cycle and underscores the need for students like me, who are interested in pursuing further research from a CDST perspective, to develop basic modelling skills (de Bot, 2011). Thus, while it appears at the end of this dissertation, the network model itself and my use of modelling as a researcher are in their beginning stages.

I draw attention to the progression of the three conceptual models because I find it fascinating that the organic development of this study parallels Davis and Sumara’s (2012) representation of the history of Complexity research in three visual metaphors: (a) nested systems, (b) entangled dynamics and (c) decentralized networks. They describe the focus of Complexity research as moving from (a) identifying complex phenomena to (b) understanding how they work to (c) exploring possibilities for “trigger[ing] them into being” (p.31). Similarly, this multiple case study has identified depictions of AT professional learning within nested systems, fostered greater understanding of the dynamics of the learning environments and suggested means of promoting and potentially applying the interaction networks that may emerge. It has applied “the logic of the paradigm of complexity” by seeking “truer knowledge” and inspiring “complex praxis” (Morin, 1977/92, p. 375).

**Closing Remarks**

As educators we work within systems, systems that often seem to present more barriers than openings. We work in buildings that can encourage more stagnation than dynamism. Yet, the findings of this study show that teachers in mentoring relationships learn within, around and in relation to systemic challenges. Promoting the emergence of co-learning networks enhances agents within the system and empowers them to improve systems from within. Through this process I have grown as a learner and as a researcher. Through this study of teaching to learn I have had the intense experience of writing to learn. I look forward to applying the skills and knowledge gained through this process to continue seeking and sharing creative paths to advancing teaching practice.


Canadian Teachers’ Federation Work Group on Teacher Quality. (2011). *Canadian Teachers’ Federation national research project: The voice of Canadian teachers on teaching and learning*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Teachers’ Federation.


Appendices

Appendix A: Request for Consent from Faculty of Education

Dear Lyndon,
I hope this email finds you well.
I am writing today primarily as a student who also happens to be a seconded faculty member.
I have received clearance from U of T’s Ethics Review Board to proceed with my thesis study and have submitted to York ORE for an expedited review, which I expect to have cleared by the end of next week.
Through discussions with Wendy Jokhoo in York’s ORE, I learned that this additional step is necessary, due to my role as a faculty member.

Though I know you are extremely busy, I did want to make sure that you had some information about the research at this point. Officially, I am seeking your approval before recruiting participants among Mentor Teachers who are working with the Bed French program.

The study is a multiple case study for which I will be seeking 8 participants. Participants will be asked to reflect upon their own professional learning within the context of their mentoring experience. Data will be collected using interviews, mind-maps and logs to be kept during the winter semester. The study does not involve any classroom observation and has only minimal involvement of TCs.

Those TCs who are working with the participating mentor teachers will be invited to participate in a group interview (TCs only no MTs) at the end of the data collection period to contribute observations they may have made about changes in Mentor Teacher practice during their placement period.

I plan to send the recruitment emails and engage in any correspondence with participants via my UToronto email account so that participants are clear that their participation in the study is clearly separate from our relationship in my role as Course Director or Practicum Facilitator.

If you have any questions please let me know.

I would also be happy to share both preliminary and final results with all interested York faculty. I foresee that the results may be helpful in future efforts to build a strong team of Mentor Teachers.

Best,
Stefanie
Appendix B: Recruitment Email (Associate Teachers)

Dear Associate Teacher,

You may have received emails from me in the past from my XXX University email address in my role as Practicum Facilitator. Today, I am writing to you in my role as researcher and PhD Candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Your experiences mentoring pre-service teachers are of great interest to me, not only in terms of your contributions to the teacher candidates, but also in terms of your own professional growth.

Please take the time to read the attached letter outlining my research project and your potential role in the project. If you would like to accept this invitation to participate, please reply to this email. You may either attach your signed consent form to your reply, or we can make arrangements for me to retrieve a hard copy of your consent form.

Your involvement may advance situated professional learning for teachers in the future.

Your commitment to our profession is highly valued.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Muhling, OCT
Ph.D. Candidate, Centre for Research in Languages and Literacies
Department of Curriculum Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
Appendix C: Recruitment Letter and Consent Form (Associate Teachers)

(to appear on OISE letterhead)

Dear Associate Teacher,

My name is Stefanie Muhling. In addition to being an FSL teacher and a teacher educator, I am a doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto (OISE/UT). I am contacting you because you are hosting a Faculty of Education Teacher Candidate in your classroom during the 2014/15 school year. As an Associate Teacher, you are invited to participate in my study

*Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in French as a Second Language Teaching Environments: A Multiple Case Study.* The objective of this study is to gain insight into features of Associate Teaching experiences that can be applied to the future and continued advancement of professional learning for FSL teachers. As a researcher, I will not conduct any evaluation of Associate Teacher or Teacher Candidate practice.

Data in this study will be collected from five sources: questionnaires, mind-maps and logs completed by Associate Teachers, interviews conducted with Associate Teachers and a group interview conducted with Teacher Candidates upon completion of their practicum placement. Teacher Candidates will be invited to participate in the group interview only upon consent from their Associate Teacher.

Data collected and findings made within the context of this study may be used in publication and in presentations for the purpose of informing other scholars and stakeholders. You will be provided with a summary of the research report.

Your involvement in the study: Should you choose to participate, you would be asked to participate in a series of two interviews, and to record thoughts and experiences related to your learning and experience as an associate teacher. From December 2014 to May 2015 your total estimated time commitment would not exceed four hours.

This time would be allocated as follows:

- a) completing a brief online questionnaire 10 minutes
- b) creating and revisiting a mind-map about your learning as a teacher 60 minutes
- c) participating in two audio-recorded* interviews 70 minutes
- d) completing 4 bi-weekly logs from January to March 60 minutes

If you choose not to be audio-recorded, you may request that your answers to interview questions be recorded in writing. Your participation in the study would end before the end of the 2014/15 school year. You may freely withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason.
How can participating in this study benefit you?
By participating in this study you will gain an opportunity to reflect upon your experiences as an Associate Teacher and upon your own growth within your professional practice. You may also gain a sense of satisfaction from contributing to general understanding and potential improvement of FSL teachers’ professional learning. Upon completion of the final interview, you will receive a gift card to a bookseller as token acknowledging your participation in the study. What are the risks involved for you? The only foreseeable for participants in this study is fatigue associated with adding one more obligation to an already demanding teaching day. How will your privacy be protected? Your name and teaching assignment will not be revealed at any time throughout the study. Only I (the researcher) and the thesis committee will have access to any raw data. Questionnaires, interview protocols, recordings and transcriptions will be stored in a secure location in my office, and will be destroyed at the end of this research project. Data stored on computer hard-drive will be password protected. No mention will be made of the names of participating teachers, teacher candidates or schools or faculties of education in the reporting of this study. Should you choose to withdraw from the study, all data referring to you will be destroyed.

Should you agree to participate, please sign the attached consent form and contact me at stefanie.muhling@mail.utoronto.ca. I will make appropriate arrangements to retrieve your signed consent and send you a link to the online questionnaire, which will ask you ten questions about your teaching and professional learning background. Once the questionnaire is complete, we will schedule next steps according to your availability.

Thank you for considering to participate in this study. If you should have any related questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at stefanie.muhling@mail.utoronto.ca or by telephone at (647) 401-3083. You may also contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Enrica Piccardo, at enrica.piccardo@utoronto.ca for further information about this study. This research has been reviewed and approved by the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education Research Ethics Board of the University of Toronto and by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University’s Ethics Review Board. This research conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the University of Toronto Office of Research Ethics at ethics.review@utoronto.ca, 416-946-3273, or York University’s Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Sincerely,

Stefanie Muhling OCT Ph.D. Candidate, Centre for Research in Languages and Literacies Department of Curriculum Teaching and Learning Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto
Associate Teacher Consent Form

**Title of the Research:** Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in French as a Second Language Teaching Environments

**Name of Researcher:** Stefanie Muhling  **Institutional Affiliation:** Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

I, ______________________________, have read and understood the details of this research in the recruitment email written by Stefanie Muhling. I agree to participate in her study, Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in French as a Second Language Teaching Environments.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. Should I choose to withdraw, all data collected pertaining to me will be destroyed.

Participant Signature ____________________________ Date ______________ Participant Name: ______________________________________

Principal Investigator Signature: ______________________ Date ___________
Appendix D: Biographical Questionnaire (text for online questionnaire)

Background questionnaire - Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in FSL Teaching Environments

Thank you so much for your interest my thesis study Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in FSL Teaching Environments.

The survey consists of fourteen questions and a final request for consent.
1. Please provide your name:

_________________________________________

2. Please provide your most frequently used email address:

_________________________________________

3. Please indicate the number of years of teaching experience you have:

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<th>Please select one of the following:</th>
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<td>4 - 6</td>
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<td>7 - 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 - 14</td>
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<td>15+</td>
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4. Please indicate the number of years you have worked with Teacher Candidates in the role of Mentor Teacher:

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<th>Please select one of the following:</th>
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<td>this is my first time</td>
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<td>1 - 2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 - 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 +</td>
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5. Please indicate your current teaching assignment by checking the program or programs:

Core French  
Extended French  
French Immersion

6. Please indicate your current teaching assignment by checking the level:

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<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
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<td>Junior</td>
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<td>Intermediate</td>
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<td>Secondary</td>
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7. Please indicate your first language:

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<tr>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>French</td>
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<tr>
<td>other</td>
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8. Please describe your pre-service teacher education experience. Please name the INSTITUTION PROGRAM (e.g. PJ, JI, IS) and AREA OF FOCUS (e.g. generalist, FSL, Mathematics . . .)
9. Did you receive FSL-specific preparation during your pre-service preparation?

Please select one of the following:

- yes
- no

10. If you answered YES to question 9, please describe the FSL-specific preparation you received during your pre-service teacher education experience.

11. Please indicate professional learning experiences in which you have participated. Please check all that apply:

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<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Studies (M.A., MEd., PhD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Qualifications courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-service workshops and initiatives offered by the school board</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-service workshops and initiatives offered by professional associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in online discussion groups and forums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in professional learning communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in other forms of professional dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other. Please specify in the box provided in question 12.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

12. If you have participated in professional learning experiences other than those listed, please describe these experiences.

13. Of the professional learning experiences you checked in question 11, which of these experiences have contained elements specific to your development as an FSL teacher? Please check all that apply.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Studies (M.A., MEd., PhD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Qualifications courses</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Participation in online discussion groups and forums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in professional learning communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in other forms of professional dialogue</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
14. Please provide details about the FSL-specific professional learning experiences you indicated in the previous question.

15. Participants in the next phase of the study, have the option of either giving or not giving their consent for me to invite their Teacher Candidate to participate in the final phase of the study.

If you do participate in the next phases of the study, would you give your consent for me to invite your Teacher Candidate to a group interview with other Teacher Candidates to be held after completion of the Practicum block?

Interview questions will address learning experiences in the classroom environment during the course of the practicum placement.

If you do not give your consent, your Teacher Candidate will not be contacted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please select one of the following:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes.  I agree that my Teacher Candidate may be invited to participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.  I prefer that my Teacher Candidate not be invited to participate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you so much for your interest in my thesis study and for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

I am seeking a total of 8 Mentor Teachers, representing a broad range of previous experience and teaching assignments to continue with full participation in the study. If you are selected to continue to the next phase, you will be contacted shortly to arrange a date for a 30 minute interview and to review details of your further participation in the study.
Dear Teacher Candidate,

Please consider this request to contribute a research study.

Your ideas and experiences have the potential to improve professional learning experiences for teachers.

Please read the invitation below, and indicate whether you will accept this invitation by responding to this email.

Sincerely,

Stefanie

Stefanie Muhling OCT
Ph.D. Candidate, Centre for Research in Languages and Literacies
Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto
Dear Teacher Candidate,

My name is Stefanie Muhling. In addition to being an FSL teacher and a teacher educator, I am a doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto (OISE/UT). I am contacting you because you are working with an Associate Teacher during the 2014/15 school year who is participating in a study on Associate Teacher Learning. Your Associate Teacher has agreed for me to extend this invitation for you to participate in my study *Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in French as a Second Language Teaching Environments: A Multiple Case Study*.

The objective of this study is to gain insight into features of Associate Teaching experiences that can be applied to the future and continued advancement of professional learning for FSL teachers. As a researcher, I will not conduct any evaluation of Associate Teacher or Teacher Candidate practice.

Data in this study will be collected from five sources: questionnaires, mind-maps and logs completed by Associate Teachers, interviews conducted with Associate Teachers and a group interview conducted with Teacher Candidates upon completion of their practicum placement.

Data collected and findings made within the context of this study may be used in publication and in presentations for the purpose of informing other scholars and stakeholders. You will be provided with a summary of the research report.

Your involvement in the study: Should you choose to participate, you would be asked to take part in a 40-minute audio-recorded group interview, to be conducted with up to 6 other Teacher Candidates.

Interviews would be held at the completion of your practicum placement. Interview questions will address learning experiences in the classroom environment during the course of your practicum placement. They will not ask you to evaluate teaching practice.

Your participation in the study would begin and end during the winter semester of the 2014/15 school year. You may freely withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason.

How can participating in this study benefit you? By participating in this study you will gain an opportunity to reflect upon your experiences as a Teacher Candidate and upon the development of the classroom environment in which your practicum took place. You may also gain a sense of satisfaction from contributing to general understanding and potential improvement of FSL teachers’ professional learning.

Upon completion of the group interview, you will receive a letter acknowledging your participation in the study.
What are the risks involved for you? The only foreseeable for participants in this study is fatigue associated with adding one more obligation to an already demanding teaching/learning day.

How will your privacy be protected?
Your name and practicum placement location will not be revealed at any time throughout the study. Only I (the researcher) and the thesis committee will have access to any raw data. Interview protocols, recordings and transcriptions will be stored in a secure location in my office, and will be destroyed at the end of this research project. Data stored on computer hard-drive will be password protected. No mention will be made of the names of participating teachers, teacher candidates or schools or faculties of education in the reporting of this study. Should you choose to withdraw from the study, all data referring to you will be destroyed.

Should you agree to participate, please sign the attached consent form and contact me at stefanie.muhling@mail.utoronto.ca. I will make appropriate arrangements to retrieve your signed consent and schedule a group interview according to your availability and that of other participants.

Thank you for considering to participate in this study. If you should have any related questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at stefanie.muhling@mail.utoronto.ca. You may also contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Enrica Piccardo, at enrica.piccardo@utoronto.ca for further information about this study. This research has been reviewed and approved by the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education Research Ethics Board of the University of Toronto and by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University’s Ethics Review Board. This research conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the University of Toronto Office of Research Ethics at ethics.review@utoronto.ca, 416-946-3273. or York University’s Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Stefanie Muhling OCT  Ph.D. Candidate, Centre for Research in Languages and Literacies Department of Curriculum Teaching and Learning  Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto
Teacher Candidate Consent Form

Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in French as a Second Language Teaching Environments

**Name of Researcher:** Stefanie Muhling  **Institutional Affiliation:** Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

I, ______________________________, have read and understood the details of this research in the recruitment email written by Stefanie Muhling. I agree to participate in her study, *Teaching to Learn and Reciprocal Learning Among Associate Teachers in French as a Second Language Teaching Environments*.

I also understand that my participation consists of taking part in an audio-recorded group interview, and agree to having my voice audio-recorded.

I understand that all information shared by participants in the group interview will be treated by the researcher as completely confidential and that she will stress the expectation of confidentiality to all group interview participants. I also understand that the researcher cannot guarantee that all group interview participants will comply with these expectations, and that one participant’s failure to comply could potentially limit confidentiality for all group interview participants.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. Should I choose to withdraw, all data collected pertaining to me will be destroyed.

Participant Signature _______________________ Date __________________

Participant Name: ____________________________________

Principal Investigator Signature: _______________________ Date __________
Appendix G: Mind-map Explanation and Kit Instructions

Mind-maps are diagrams consisting of words and images that represent themes and concepts radiating from a central idea or word (Buzan & Buzan, 2000).

In this envelope you will find an 11 x 17 piece of paper and some markers.

Please use these materials to create a mind-map.

Please include the following phrases/concepts on your mind-map:

- professional learning
- MY professional learning
- professional learning for FSL teachers
- being an Associate Teacher
- MY areas for/of growth/development

You may wish to consult the following link for images of mind-maps.

https://www.google.ca/search?q=images+of+mindmaps&es_sm=91&tbnm=isch&imgil=ei9LDERHeeQNgM%2B53A%252Bhttps%2%52F%252Fencrypted-tbn3.gstatic.com%252Fimages%253Fq%253Dbn%253DANd9GcT0sJ7YV67RB1JduRDs8qHzcZ8m6pW0X83O__Cyr9wL72maxww5UA%253B446%253B313%253Bksuljvnln5tQOM%253Bhttp%252F%252Fgreatleadersserve.org%252F7-tips-for-better-mind-maps%252F&source=iu&usg=__gsPgh4IhP18vY6YssGpskcLXT4rRAjM%2Bhttp%252F%252Fwww.mind-mapping.co.uk%252F_images%252FADVICE-AND-INFORMATION%252FHow-to-MindMap-imindmap.jpg%2Bhttp%252F%252Fwww.mind-mapping.co.uk%252Fmake-mind-map.htm%253B1500%3B948

Please Note: you will receive this page by email, so that you may simply click on the link.
Appendix H: Mind-map Review Instructions

Mind-map Review Kit

Your mind-map has been a wealth of information during the course of the Teaching to Learn research project. THANK YOU so much for creating it!

As your participation in the project comes to a close, you have the option to revisit your mind-map.

In this envelope you will find:

1. an 8.5" x 11" photocopy of your original mind-map
2. a further reduced version of your original
3. an 11 x 14 piece of drawing paper
4. markers

If you would like to make any changes to your original mind-map, please affix the reduction to the drawing paper and make your revisions on/over around the smaller map as you see fit.

I will visit your school on June 22 or 23rd to drop off a token of appreciation for the contributions to this research and to pick up the revised mind-map (if appropriate).

Thank you again,

Stefanie
Appendix I: Associate Teacher Interview #1 – generic prompts

1. Please talk to me about your understanding of the term Professional Learning.
   - may refer to specific items/images on the mind-map

2. Please tell me about some of the professional learning experiences you have had:
   a) what types of experiences have you found to have a strong impact on you?
   b) what kinds “aha moments” have you had?
   - may refer to specific items/images on the mind-map

3. What comes to mind when I say FSL-specific Professional Learning?
   For you, is this different from Professional Learning in general?
   - may refer to specific items/images on the mind-map

4. (Depending on what mind-map shows)
   . . . either I see you have made some connections between being an Associate Teacher and your own professional learning
   can you talk to me about that?

   . . . or Do you see any connections between your work as an Associate teacher and your own professional learning
   if so, can you tell me about them?

5. (Depending on what mind-map shows)
   . . . either I see you have highlighted the following areas for your own growth
   __________, __________, ____________
   Do you see ways in which these may be addressed through your work with your Teacher Candidate this semester?

   . . . Or I see you have indicated links between the following areas for your own growth __________, __________, ____________ and your work as an Associate Teacher.
Can you tell me about that?

6. Is there anything that I should have asked you that I didn’t think to add?
Appendix J: Bi-weekly Log Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This week, my Teacher Candidate and I addressed the following: (Please check all that apply, and elaborate where appropriate)</th>
<th>In terms of my own practice, I thought about:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning (lesson, unit, theme ...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with students (language use, timing, turn-taking ...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language curriculum and approach to language teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-identified change area/s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K: Associate Teacher Interview #2 – generic prompts

(Prior to this interview, participating Associate Teachers will have the opportunity to revisit the mind-maps they created before the first interview.)

1. Please talk to me about anything you may have noticed in your planning process over the course of this school term.
   - may refer to specific comments/patterns found in bi-weekly logs

2. Please talk to me about anything you may have noticed about the teaching resources you have used or have made plans to use or over the course of this school term.
   - may refer to specific comments/patterns found in bi-weekly logs

3. Please talk to me about anything you may have noticed about interaction in your classroom over the course of this school term:
   - between students
   - between you and your students
   - between your teacher candidate and your students
   - between you and your teacher candidate

   Are there any changes/developments that you are aware of that you see extending into the future?
   - may refer to specific comments/patterns found in bi-weekly logs

4. Please tell me about your experiences implementing the new FSL curriculum and/or new approaches to language teaching during the course of this school term.
   - may refer to specific comments/patterns found in bi-weekly logs

5. On your original mind-map you highlighted . . .
   and/or
   In your first interview, you discussed . . .
   the following areas for personal growth ___________ ___________.
   ___________.
   Could you please reflect back on them
   
   a) in general  
   b) in terms of your work with your Teacher Candidate

6. Is there anything that I should have asked you that I didn’t think to add?
Appendix L: Teacher Candidate Interview – prompts

1. When thinking about the classroom environment over the course of your practicum placement, did you notice any changes?

   Please comment on your observations in the following areas:
   
   - type and variety of teaching strategies used by you and your Associate Teacher
   - resources used by you and your Associate Teacher
   - nature of interaction among students, between the teacher and students, between you and the Associate Teacher
   - other

2. Did you notice changes in the use of French in the classroom over the course of your practicum placement?

   Please comment on your observations in the following areas:
   
   - amount of French spoken in class
   - amount of oral interaction between students
   - students' interest in and enthusiasm for speaking and learning French
   - use of students' other languages applied to learning French
Appendix M: Original Themes Identified During Preliminary Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Number of ATs to address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-directed learning/PASSION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal commitment to ongoing learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Learning linked to the needs of students/school community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocal learning between MTs and TCs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective advantages of mentoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues for Immersion and FSL Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Ontario curriculum for FSL and new approaches to language teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal and informal learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning through collaboration with colleagues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native speaker teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporating Technology into Teacher Learning and Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These 13 themes were reduced to the following:

1. Teacher reference to and comparisons of learning type
   - formal, non-formal, informal
2. Issues and challenges for FSL teachers
3. Professional learning
4. Change in teacher practice
5. Mentoring
6. New approaches to language teaching and learning and the new Ontario FSL curriculum documents
7. References to mind-maps
8. References to Complexity
9. Systemic issues
## Appendix N: Coding Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do Associate Teachers in FSL contextualize the Associate Teaching Experience within their professional learning: _____</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do participating teachers characterize their professional learning?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do participating teachers distinguish professional learning for FSL teachers from professional learning for teachers in general?</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what way, if any, do they see their role as an associate teacher as a component of their professional learning?</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What elements of their work do they identify as development areas that could be impacted by the Associate Teacher/Teacher Candidate relationship?</td>
<td>6.1 - 6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can the experience of being an Associate Teacher influence FSL teacher practice?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What role does Mentoring play in participating teachers’ practice? _____</td>
<td>5.1 – 5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What changes, if any, do the participating teachers perceive their planning process when they are working with a Teacher Candidate? _____</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What changes, if any, do the participating teachers perceive their selection and use of teaching resources? _____</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are they aware of changes in their interaction with students that occur during their work with Teacher Candidates? If so, which of these changes do they believe will extend beyond the practicum placement period? _____</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What connections do participating teachers see between their work with Teacher Candidates and their implementation of updated curriculum and approaches to language teaching? _____</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These codes are related to elements of the study other than specific research questions</td>
<td>9.1 – 9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLEXITY Theory – theoretical framework</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIND-MAPPING – methodology</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECIPROCAL LEARNING – overarching theme</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix O: Code Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Guidelines</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teacher reference to and comparisons of learning types:  - formal  - non-formal  - informal</td>
<td>Comparison between courses/workshops and learning that takes place in less structured contexts.</td>
<td>Links or contrasts form  May provide examples of formal learning experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Formal, non-formal and informal: self-directed learning</td>
<td>Gives evidence of choosing learning opportunities rather that simply attending what is mandated or expected</td>
<td>Self-directed learning may be formal or informal e.g. self-selected workshops or AQ courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think that by definition being a teacher means you’re doing professional learning: So, specifically for FSL, I think there’s this process that just by going through the motions, you’re still learning. Learning doesn’t mean necessarily formalized learning when you take a PD day or you go to a workshop or you go and do one’s Masters or something like that. I think that by definition, doing is learning.

So taking these AQs was a very important part of my professional learning and self-directed learning. But it was also very much designed to improve my school and my department and it was very much altruistic.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.2 Informal: reflection</th>
<th>Generally specifies self-direction</th>
<th>It's not egotistical. It's like I'm doing it because I enjoy it. NOTE: this statement is also coded at professional learning linked to the needs of students and or school community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refers to reflection on practice as a source of professional learning and/or improving practice</td>
<td>Does not simply report memories of a previous experience</td>
<td>So I think that's when I made that initial connection OH YES INTERACTION We teach it . . . but what are specific skills that I need to scaffold for my students so that they can be successful at DOING that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example of something uncoded at this node: What I really liked was it might have been the former North York Board that had this ... I think that that was really more valuable as opposed to having one student compete for monetary prizes...</td>
<td>And where I might find that I’m quite satisfied with, let’s say for example, my pronunciation or let’s say my fluency but there are moments where I might have challenges with certain structures and grammar that I am trying to put together spontaneously and I have to think about how I am constructing that idea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So, I guess that I would say it’s reflective because I am trying to prioritize in terms of what I consider to be important in terms of second language learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Informal: learning through dialogue and collaboration with colleagues</td>
<td>Refers to professional dialogue and collegial collaboration as sources of learning or advancing practice</td>
<td>n.b. this node collapses learning through collaboration and learning through dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Informal: learning through doing</td>
<td>Refers to learning in action – improving on one’s practice through experience.</td>
<td>Makes specific reference to learning in action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All the oral activities and how to use them with the students and how to prepare them and what they look like when you actually do use them in the classroom. And I have found all of those experiences really valuable. I’ve been able to learn a lot from them. NB: also coded at Reciprocal learning under Mentorship, but participant describes DOing as source of learning

2 issues and challenges for immersion and FSL teachers

Addresses a variety of issues and challenges faced by FSL teachers that distinguish them from their colleagues who teach in English programs.

In my Core French position, it’s also really hard to make sure that they are up and working in each class that I want to use them in that’s been a real problem at our school because some teachers always have them going at our school and it’s great and they say just do this this and you can pull up what you need whereas other teachers say Oh I don’t know how this is my computer is not properly hooked up and I can’t get it working. So, it makes of an ad hoc way of using them which is unfortunate and I think the kids could benefit a lot more too with the use. – issue: Core French
So there are moments that I know that I would never want to leave the French immersion program, because I like what it’s doing and I think professional learning around that is quite important. THERE’S a LOT LESS of it offered. So I feel that they aren’t really different per se but I think that they [non fsl prof. learning opportunities] are a lot more abundant. I think there’s a MAJOR quantity difference - issue: Fewer Board-sponsored professional learning opportunities for Core and Immersion teachers

Could refer to various types of advocacy: e.g; 
- for learning opportunities for FSL teachers 
- for popularity of French Language learning 
- for traditionally underrepresented groups of learners 

Implies or refers directly to political engagement 

I can tell you that the majority of professional learning that I have chosen and been sent to has not had much to do with FSL specifically BUT I can tell you that every single p.l. event, I continue to refer to the fact that I’m in an FSL program and that always becomes . . . I’m a French immersion teacher and by the way PARTICIPANT describes speaking up
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.2</th>
<th>Issues and challenges for non-native speaker teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Describes issues and challenges for NNS teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Also refers to prevalence of NNS teachers in FSL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, even if they don’t continue with it, there is a general embrace. They embrace it. It’s totally normal. This is good for them. It was a GOOD experience and so it could open doors later on. And that to me is important. And it’s also political too. Because I’m a very political person. So for me it’s about SOLIDARITY.

PARTICIPANT advocates for FSL learning among her students

I am OK with making errors or not knowing masculine/feminin for every single word so that’s OK but for some teachers, they really put that really high on their priority list, but for me um lesson preparation, organization, preparation, execution management this is what the TC needs to learn first because French language learning is lifelong. For me, I’m not going to learn it all in a night.
you can be an exceptional French teacher and not have exceptionally strong French, one can. I’m a damn good German teacher, and my German’s B2 tops. But, my pedagogy’s great. I might not be able to have every plural correct and sometimes I mess up my dative, but that doesn’t mean by default, I’m a bad teacher. And I tell my teacher candidates that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>reasons for mentoring and/or pursuing professional learning</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3.1 | Passion | General passion for teaching and learning | Shows learning for the love of learning | Does not link learning to career-building | I think that professional learning has just been kind of switching in between being teacher to student learning from one another has just been a kind of constant DRIVER, because I ENJOY it! That’s why you know that’s why I enjoyed being in teachers’ college so much.

Speaking of two board-offered workshops: . . They are both different, but they are both interesting and I was lucky to get into both of them.

| 3.2 | Leadership | Addresses the development of leadership skills through mentoring AND mentoring as | Does not restrict leadership experiences to being ONLY a | I think that being an associate teacher REALLY helps you develop your leadership abilities. I think that you take on a different role. In a sense you are their colleague but at the same time you are more than that. In a sense, you are the authority figure in that relationship too. |
| 3.3 career-building | demonstrating leadership in the field and/or within a school | vehicle for career advancement | Pursuing the type of PD that grows a resume
Pursuing the type of AQs that set me up for potential administration or Instructional Leadership or other types of jobs outside of the classroom. Because I don’t think that I am going to teach in a classroom for more than a decade. I just feel that that’s enough for me.

Though outside of the realm of curricula and second language pedagogy, I try to get involved with professional learning that teaches leadership and how to be an effective leader. How to be an effective stakeholder, how to get involved with things at the ministry of education and the Ontario Teachers Federation and other realms that would benefit me as a teacher and as the president of a subject association. |

Links professional learning to career-advancement

Node may include references to competition and professional learning for the purpose of staying competitive

Even though the participant may discuss more intrinsic reasons for pursuing PL, data coded at this node does not refer to learning for the joy of learning
| 3.4 | personal commitment to ongoing learning | Demonstrates participant commitment to engaging in a variety of
- idea of taking the learning an extra step and/or making plans to learn further | Shows time and energy commitment to professional learning
Addresses professional learning specifically, rather than a general enthusiasm for learning | Does not link learning to career advancement |
| 3.5 | professional learning linked to the needs of students and or school community | Frames choices and motivation for pursuing professional learning within the context of student/school/community needs rather than individual teacher goals or interests | Does not refer to the teachers’ personal learning goals without connecting them to student/school/community needs |
| 3.6 | professional responsibility | Refers to professional learning as a responsibility shared by all teachers | Discusses the need to keep current even in areas that are not necessarily personal interests and/or the fact that |

It’s a great study! Yeah participating in this [is a form of professional learning]. I’m very curious as to what is the data you are collecting with this and where you are going to go with it and what you are going to find out. So keep me posted.

Again, I think it comes back to the relationship with the teacher candidate and it comes back to observing them when you’re giving that coaching and you’re giving that feedback, I think I do a lot of consulting with resources. At any rate, I say that the professional learning that I do is often based on my interests or on what I believe children need access to so I follow that through.

So taking these AQs was a very important part of my professional learning and self-directed learning. But it was also very much designed to improve my school and my department and it was very much altruistic.

I think that the technology aspect is being pushed a lot. But I feel that it’s not really internal. I feel like it’s something I SHOULD work on, but I’m not really super-interested. Just because I feel I should be more up on it.

Something that I would hope would be innate in teachers, that would be something that I would strive to continue to do.
professional learning is an expectation of all teachers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Change in Teacher Practice</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Mentoring Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>definite change in practice</td>
<td>Describes a change in practice linked to their mentoring experience</td>
<td>I noticed that I was conveying a message [in my planning] that they should be synthesizing the curriculum in terms of specific expectations into overall expectations. And that I am interested in LESS yet DEEPER information. I’m not accumulating stacks of things. I’m interested in LESS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>no change in practice</td>
<td>Asserts that they have observed no change in practice linked to their mentoring experience</td>
<td>Not likely. I feel that pretty much the resources I choose and use are the things that I have control of and I wouldn’t say that resources that I had offered or have, I wouldn’t change their usage dependent on whether I have a TC in the classroom. I never really thought about it, but I don’t think so. No, I don’t think so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>indirect change in practice</td>
<td>Describes an indirect change in practice linked to their mentoring experience</td>
<td>That started to come out a bit more naturally with a lot of the students, ESPECIALLY the students who were more keen and confident. The ones that were a little bit less confident, still asked if they could write it out. And I would go back and say, you can write it out BUT I would like it to be off the top of your head and be more of a natural description of what you’re seeing. And, I think that they a lot of them rose to that expectation, which I was happy about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>no change but reinforcement of current effective practice</td>
<td>Refers to how the mentoring experience has reinforced/advanced strengths in their current practice</td>
<td>I would say it’s equally present because it’s my responsibility to the student teacher to understand that this is the direction that the Ministry is taking that it is EXPECTED that she needs to be able to go and understand what a three-part math lesson is or an open-ended question is.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5  mentoring
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Extracted Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>affective advantages of mentoring</td>
<td>Describes positive emotions related to mentoring in general or being an AT specifically</td>
<td>So, those are the kinds of fears and concerns that I have around using technology. But working with the TCs has helped that immensely and has helped me feel a little more confident. Then a few months later you see them embracing a lesson and feeling confident and it just really give you a sense of WEL BEING I HELPED THIS PERSON ON THEIR ROAD TO BEING A GREAT TEACHER!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>balance of power in mentoring relationships</td>
<td>Addresses the fact that regardless of collegiality ATs are in a position of power</td>
<td>Which makes it an interesting relationship too. You are colleagues, but at the same time, you are not really colleagues, you are a little bit more than that. I just find that particularly the way that the program has changed [referring to the fact that MTs evaluate TCs]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>becoming a better mentor</td>
<td>Describes participants’ experience improving their mentoring practice</td>
<td>I find too that, just because I expect a certain answer, I’m not going to get it necessarily and that’s good for me as a mentor. Because it helps me to see where they’re coming from and it’s assessment AS learning reflection all of that from their points of view. But also for me, it helps me reshape how I can be a better mentor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Modeling and scaffolding for TCs</td>
<td>Presents instances where ATs explain how they scaffold teaching tasks for TCs.</td>
<td>But, they took a risk to try something new and it was a partial success, that’s still a big success. I want them to be</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>negative aspects of mentoring</td>
<td>able to do that. Not just WITH my guidance. I want them to feel comfortable to be able to do that.</td>
<td>I also feel that a lot of TCs bring their own everyone brings their own life experiences, their own baggage their own positive experiences their own negative experiences to the table and it’s not always easy to wade through those waters. I have probably been an AT about 10 or 12 times ... Certainly at the beginning I just found that it was so one sided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>reciprocal learning between TCs and ATs</td>
<td>Presents issues and challenges related to mentoring/being an AT</td>
<td>Discusses ATs learning from TCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This node offers a challenge to the researchers’ potential bias that mentoring is predominantly positive</td>
<td>May refer to learning about skills, resources and/or students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Does not refer to learning about mentoring through reflection – this is coded at REFLECTION and/or BECOMING A BETTER MENTOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oh I really like what Mr or Ms did this week. I was like great. I didn’t know that you guys were ready or interested to do something like that. And they are like: “Oh, we LOVED it!” OK so that’s good for me. So I learn from them [the TCs] not just about practices and teaching practices and Ideas and strategies, but also about my students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>new approaches to language teaching and new Ontario FSL curriculum document</td>
<td>Refers to the implementation/interpretation of the 2013/14 Ontario curricula for FSL and/or action-oriented language teaching</td>
<td>May also refer to the CEFR, though it is not addressed in the curriculum document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Does not praise or critique the new document – teacher response is coded at 6.2</td>
<td>The Lisons, parlons, écrivons [pl experience] is more learning about the curriculum expectations for the new curriculum in French and how to interpret that how to use it. The new competencies that we are looking at . . . with the Meta-cognition how to incorporate that in the class. Using the cadre that come out from the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>authentic use of French</td>
<td>Refers to incorporating authentic language use into teaching practice</td>
<td>Ministry, Growing Success of course was up to date at the time. But going back and referring to it was really important. BUT all of this information about the CEFR that’s also coming from curriculum.org ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>teacher response to new curricula and new approaches to language learning</td>
<td>Describes participants’ reactions to action-oriented teaching and the new FSL documents</td>
<td>Just that REAL LIFE FRENCH being able to connect with other people in the community who are speaking French. This year for example I have a parent who is from the East Coast who speaks French and so she’s coming in and working in the classroom and I think that’s great for them to see that there is someone else who lives in our community who isn’t a teacher but who speaks French and speaks it in a little bit of a different way from like how the teacher does.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>interaction in FSL</td>
<td>Refers to incorporating interaction into language teaching and/or promoting interaction in class</td>
<td>I think that ultimately the new curriculum is a lot stronger. A lot more motivating it’ a lot more OPEN than the last curriculum document. So, I think it’s only going to get better.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I still go back the idea that 90% of the French that my students [especially in applied] will EVER encounter is speaking with somebody AND it will be conversation based. It will NOT be task-based in a second language.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.4 use of L1 in FSL</th>
<th>Presents AT references to the inclusion of L1 in the FSL classroom</th>
<th>And overcoming that hurdle of OK, English or Russian or whatever is my first language, but when I’m in this learning environment, I have to be talking to my friends in French. And I think that any FSL teacher that I’ve every spoken to really struggles with that.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 mind-maps</td>
<td>Presents AT comments on the process of using mind-maps in the study and/or their application of mind-maps in their teaching</td>
<td>I did a mind-map of a penpal letter, brainstorming different ideas that I wanted my students to do for the last week of December before the break. So my idea was to model for them what a mind map LOOKS like and they would USE it for their writing as a stepping stone to their writing. And then my idea is that as the year continues, is that they will start using the mind-maps as I asked them to to give them the option of using a mind-map to reflect their learning . . . their own learning. Through units or whatever we are doing And I think that that’s really powerful and I really enjoyed that process myself I thought it was BRILLIANT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 COMPLEXITY</td>
<td>Refers to terms and concepts linked to complexity – specifically when the participants use these terms</td>
<td>Dialogic, situated, emergent, holographic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1 situated learning</td>
<td>Collapsed into 8</td>
<td>When we debrief what she does . . . there are so many times where these great Ideas come up That I think about and she says WOW that’s a GREAT idea it’s all emergent But the only reason I came up with it is because SHE did it first.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

bounds ahead of our curriculum in both FSL and International languages.
212

<p>| 9 | systemic issues | 9.1 contrast between relevance of Ministry/Board initiatives and teacher learning needs | Describing challenges related to teacher “buy-in” and also in terms of Ministry/Board initiatives | FSL specific contrasts | we had a workshop at our school after school to teachers show the wonders of SMARTBOARDS [sarcastic note] across the curriculum... do they support an approach to language learning that actually is effective and is based on sound teaching principles. If you are just making them do a word search with the new technology ... these initiatives can get really macro in scale and sometimes when it comes from a ministry for example I find that teachers sometimes find professional learning a little more difficult because they feel what is my place in terms of this massive scale initiative. Whereas, when is based on the needs of a classroom or a school seems a lot more attainable to people because they can relate to the scale of the initiative. |
| 9.2 effect of school climate on teacher commitment to professional learning | Staff buy-in is huge. Administrators love the work that’s happening. People feel recognized for what they’re doing, but it takes leaders to build momentum and that’s a part of the buy-in. I would also say that school climate also has a role for students. If students are activated teachers respond very quickly. |
| 9.3 funding limitations impacting professional learning opportunities | Describes participants’ perceptions and experiences of the role funding limitations play in their professional learning | Ultimately as an instructional leader, I was exposed to development opportunities, which I understand the logistics of not being able to provide them to everyone, but I understand that the challenges of passing |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9.4</th>
<th>Impact of student behaviour and learning needs on learning for all</th>
<th>learning experiences</th>
<th>Describes effects of student behavior and needs on teaching and learning environment – and direct/indirect impact on professional learning</th>
<th>May include references to integration of high-needs students without support</th>
<th>Does not have to include direct reference to the terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May include participants reflection on adapting practice accordingly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Initiative fatigue - pressure to keep up - teacher work intensification</td>
<td>Describes relationships between initiative fatigue, pressure to keep up, and teacher work intensification and professional learning</td>
<td>May include direct references to the terms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>IMPACT of Ministry Initiatives (advancing mathematics instruction)</td>
<td>Contains teacher references to targeting mathematics instruction in their practice and professional learning</td>
<td>May refer to targeting this area of instruction through mentoring</td>
<td>Is not limited to mentoring experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I’m so lucky that as a German teacher I have lot’s of access to PD that is almost entirely free that includes travel

I am sometimes just waving like a pendulum between having sympathy and understanding for them, and then other times just being “like NO” they give me grief and I shouldn’t have to go through this. So this is something I am working through myself, almost like therapy, I am working through it. And there are times when I just dread that class absolutely. A lot of times it seems like a puzzle. Like WHY, why is it like this? Why does it have to be like this? What can I do to make it not like this? And then I have to also look myself a lot more in this.

We are ALWAYS made to feel like we’re not good enough. There’s always something you can do. You know we get workshops or PD days and you always get AND HERE’S something else you can do. Because YOU are NOT good enough the way you are. No, seriously YOU are NOT.

I can tell you that in my regular practice, I’m more concerned now with content knowledge and I find that stronger content knowledge improves my teaching practice. It forces me to improve it, whether I am realizing it or not. I find that my delivery is
and/or in individual practice and learning

May include positive, negative and neutral experiences

Is not limited to mentoring experiences

improving based on how I understand content knowledge. Best example: education’s greatest need is in Math, so this is a FANTASTIC example of where content knowledge improves teaching practice. I would say that for a TC who has a lot less content knowledge but who can interpret the curriculum, I think that they are learning how to deliver it but I think that they have a lot of access to it, maybe more than they give themselves credit for.

It’s been one [a goal] for the last few years. And it’s funny because, I think the board is kind of on the way out with using SMARTBOARDS from things that I’ve read from the board. And I PERSONALLY have mixed feelings about it because, I think that children have a lot of screen time as it is

Things like we talked about me wanting to have a voice recorder to help with running records so I see technology more helpful for me in terms of moving the students forward with their collaborations so we’ll do some work with ipads.
Appendix P: AT Reflection Tool

My learning goals form this year are:

Prominent issues in my teaching environment are:

Ways which I might address these goals and issues within my mentoring are:

Strengths I have to offer are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Over the past several weeks, my Teacher Candidate and I addressed the following:</th>
<th>I thought about:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goal 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goal 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goal 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Issue 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Issue 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Q: Original Mind-maps

Professional Learning
- Visual Arts Workshops
- ESL - new curriculum workshop
- FSL - 3 part workshops
- PO45 - test mandatory training
- Boost - children’s Mental Health
- Mentoring Workshop & Science Centre (beginning teachers)
- AG courses
- many others...

Professional Learning for FSL teachers
- Lisons, Parlons, Servons
- Puis j’aurai votre attention
- Projet à Québec
- Monthly French Mtgs (Auditrix
- Ready, Set, Go
- Meeting & Prof Dialogue with other Core French teachers

Mentoring

My Areas for growth and development
- Personal
  - Yoga, Circuit
  - Walking, Timings, Fitness
- Professional
  - Computer, Technology

My Professional Learning
- How to become better at using the computer/smartboard
- Classroom Observations
- Integrating my new personal growth skills (e.g. Yoga) with my teaching.
- Learning from my TC’s.
- Discussions with staff, administrators
- Participating in the OUSE study

Being an Associate Teacher
- Reciprocal growth
- Sharing of ideas
- Giving back to new teachers
- Joy of watching TC’s successes
- Assisting with growth of TC especially with hyperactivity difficulties
- Learning what new in teaching from TC

Eleni

Véronique
aim

my professional learning at FSL
- reflection
- portfolio
- inclusive education

Curriculum skills collaboration mentors

my professional learning as a teacher

inquiry
- learning pathways
- success criteria
- learning goals
- classroom management
- effective, descriptive feedback

my areas of growth

as a teacher

my areas for growth

FSL

making connections strategies for success

student success mentors:

acquisition vs. literacy

as a teacher

my professional learning at FSL

professional development

- differentiated instruction
- PLN on Twitter
- technology
- Google Apps
- student portfolios
- inclusive education

professional learning at FSL

- student learning
- practice
- knowledge
- leadership
- ongoing learning
- standards practice

mentor:

modeling collaboration think alouds

thinking strategies
David

Ulrike
Jeanette
My World of teaching

Daily work
- Prepping (including photocopying)
- Organising (incl. equipment)
- Fixing
- Marking
- Markbook-ing
- Meeting
- Consulting teachers
- Contacting parents
- Contacting students
- Contending with students
- Meeting student needs
- Anticipating students' actions
- Remembering
- Reminding
- Wondering
- Worrying
- Extra-curricular-ing
- Union-ing
- Learning

My areas of growth

My professional learning

Professional learning for FSL teachers

being an A†
Appendix R: Revised Mind-maps

Eleni

---

I would like to add that meeting with other Mentor Teachers to discuss growth, issues, concerns... etc. would be beneficial to being an associate teacher.

(It could even be a part of professional learning.)
David

Establish better communication up front. Recognize strengths and challenges of partnership. Be open about teaching priorities.

Spend more time learning from Mt's about how they are mentoring... more active listening.

Creating PLCs in Math for different levels of community:
- Admin
- Teachers
- TC's

Based on student need growth of pedagogy among staff

Decide what the most useful ABQ will be:
- V.A.?
- FNMI studies?
- Math? - French?
Scott

I'll just briefly explain my modifications to the mind-map:

1. added an arrow from “My areas of growth” to “My prof. learning” & “Prof. learning for ESL teachers” & “being an AT” b/c I found that all those detailed parts/aspects of ‘growth’ need to inform (to use a very OSS an academic term) my development in the 3 areas on the right side.

I also added an arrow from those 3 categories on the right to “My areas of growth” in acknowledgement of the dialectical relationship inherent in teaching between my different roles: prof. learning/prof. for ESL teachers/AT. (I know that sounds like jargon/academic-speak, but I always had a soft spot for Vygotsky...) Learning & growth needs are mutually reciprocals processes in my view.

Hope that helps. Feel free to copyright my Picasso-esque creation, but I want 10% of the royalties.
Copyright Acknowledgements

Hand of Rodin holding a Female Torso

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