Pre-service Teachers, Feedback and French Proficiency Development: Running the Race or Crossing the Finish Line? To Win You Must Run…

by

June Starkey

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Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

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Abstract

This qualitative, exploratory study examined the feedback experiences of ten undergraduate students who hope to teach (in) French and five FSL instructors in Higher Education (HE). Through a series of three interviews with each student, an online survey, an analysis of work samples and course documents, as well as single interviews with instructors, classroom observations and focus groups, this study investigated four areas of interest: the characteristics of instructor-led feedback activities provided to future teachers wanting to teach (in) French; the ways future FSL teachers use feedback; how feedback practices interact with individual context variables; and tasks that allow instructors to provide the best feedback.

All participants were engaged with the topic of feedback. Students wanted to know how to improve, and demonstrated evidence that they thought about and acted on the feedback they were offered, even when the feedback was one-way (written), or minimally detailed. Some students were already preparing for a future in FSL teaching by the choices they made to use French, during and outside of coursework. However, the findings from this study corroborate the “feedback gap” found by Evans (2013), between the feedback
students receive and their capacity to use feedback to improve their work. When there was interaction pertaining to the work students did, students were more able act on the feedback given by their instructors.

Important implications for the theory and practice of forming FSL teachers follow from this. First, language teaching requires knowledge of language (language proficiency) (Andrews, 2003), thus, developing language proficiency for teaching, in HE, may be helpful. Second, to ensure that instructors’ investment of time in giving feedback is justified by its efficacy, students must both understand the feedback, and know what to do with it. To that end, employing dialogic feedback processes between instructors and their students may be productive for all (O’Donovan, Rust, & Price, 2016).
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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my late Aunt, Alethe Delyea, who during her life was a passionate and curious observer.

Aunt Alethe, you never stopped asking questions about best practices, before that term was ever known, both in your chosen field of nursing and in education, because you cared so much about children, both your own and others’.

Your passion, curiosity and desire to understand life from others’ perspectives is one of your legacies for me and for the world.

Thank you for forging a trail of love and care
This one is for you.

semper discere
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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFL: Assessment for Learning
AT: Associate Teacher
CF: Core French
CPF: Canadian Parents for French
CTEP: Concurrent Teacher Education Program
DA: Dynamic Assessment
EF: Extended French
ESP: English for Specific Purposes
EFL: English as a Foreign Language
FAP: French for Academic Purposes
FI: French Immersion
FN: Field Note
FSL: French as a Second Language
FSP: French for Specific Purposes
GOT: Goal Orientation Theory
GTA: Greater Toronto Area
HE: Higher Education
ID: Individual Difference
L2: Second Language
M.T.: Master of Teaching

NS: Native Speaker

NNS: Non-Native Speaker

NSS: National Student Survey, 2005 (UK)

OISE: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

OSSC: OISE Student Success Centre

PJ: Primary Junior division certification

SCT: Sociocultural Theory

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

SRL: Self-Regulated Learning

THE: Times Higher Education

TL: Target Language

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States

UT: University of Toronto

UTSG: University of Toronto St. George

UTM: University of Toronto at Mississauga

UTSC: University of Toronto at Scarborough

WTC: Willingness to Communicate

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development
Chapter 1: Introduction

…I think that teaching is also a very personal job, in the sense that your evaluating is, it's such an important source of feedback, if that makes sense, you want to have, like, a phrase or two that says "Listen, you know, like, I've taken 15 minutes to read your work and mark it...I'm talking as a prospective teacher here..."

Safiya, Interview 2

In the 1980s, a call for comprehensive changes in how schools at the local level contributed to student achievement in the U.S. resulted in the emergence of the concept of standards-based schooling (Chatterji, 2002). According to Volante (2007), standards-based schooling in Ontario followed in the 1990s, providing opportunities for public scrutiny on how tax dollars are spent in education, while at the same time supporting and nurturing excellence at all levels of schooling through the development of raised academic standards and tools to measure students’ abilities to meet these standards. Now 20 years into a province-wide conversation about accountability, student achievement and educational reform, this epoch of schooling in Ontario presents unique challenges and opportunities in French as a second language (FSL) learning contexts (Core, Extended and Immersion). These challenges may be specifically acute for teacher preparation, since preparing pre-service teachers with the discipline-specific knowledge and the pedagogical knowledge they will need to enable their future students to learn is of primary concern to teacher educators (Johnson, 2009).

In 1997 a standardized and norm-referenced curriculum from K-12 in Ontario introduced mandated content standards and performance standards to assess and evaluate all student achievement in every subject in primary and secondary school, and at every grade level, including French as a Second Language (FSL). Two million students from the beginning of Kindergarten to the end of secondary school in Grade 12 are required to learn a common curriculum. Through all FSL programming formats ranging from Core French (least intensive language learning at 40 minutes per day), Extended French (French
language arts and one additional subject in French) and French Immersion (a minimum of 50% of subjects learned in French), the new FSL curriculum “helps prepare students for their role as active and engaged citizens in today’s bilingual and multicultural Canada” (Ontario FSL Curriculum, 2013a, p. 7). Beginning in 2014, new and revised FSL curriculum documents in secondary schools (Grades 9-12) meant students and teachers in Ontario have access to the most comprehensive FSL programming ever seen in the province. These changes to the FSL curriculum are welcome additions because they are a potential step forward in achieving increased bilingualism in Canada.

French is a compulsory curriculum subject from Grades 4 through 9 in Ontario, and the least amount of French a student may take from Grades 4 through 8 is in the Core French program, where by the end of Grade 8 students amass a minimum of 600 hours (40 minutes per day, 120 hours per year). Extended French requires that 25% of the total of a student’s instructional program be delivered in French, meaning that a minimum of 1260 hours of French will have been accumulated by the end of Grade 8. French language arts instruction, along with one other subject, is selected from the following list of possibilities: the arts, social studies (Grades 1 to 6) or history and geography (Grades 7 and 8), mathematics, science and technology, and health/physical education. There is flexibility accorded to school boards in terms of entry point and total number of hours in the Extended French program, so school districts can explore program delivery options that work for their community.

French immersion programs in Ontario offer a minimum of 50% of instruction in French at every grade level, for a minimum total of 3800 hours of instruction by the end of Grade 8. FSL must be studied, as well as two additional subjects in French, from among a list of subjects such as the arts, science and technology, health and physical education, mathematics, social studies (Grades 1 to 6) or history and geography (Grades 7 and 8). Many immersion programs begin in Grade 1 with 100% immersion until Grade 3 or 4, when instruction in English language arts begins. French immersion programs that begin English instruction at this point typically introduce subjects in English, until half (50%) of the instructional program is delivered in English by the end of Grade 8.
Content standards address the “what” of the provincial FSL curriculum, and like other subjects, FSL is published as a separate curriculum document. Both “General” and “Specific” expectations outline the knowledge and skills students are required/expected to demonstrate by the end of each year. Performance standards in Ontario are based on a student’s achievement of the content standards, and are outlined in an achievement chart found in the document. Given that clear and specific standards to assess content knowledge and performance in FSL exist, along with a multi-million dollar practice of large-scale mandated assessments,\(^1\) it is surprising that information about students’ acquisition of FSL proficiency is not available to students, parents or teachers.

However, there is an additional piece in the FSL assessment puzzle: the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). Bill 30 established the EQAO in 1997, the same legislation that requires students enrolled in all publicly funded schools to participate in large-scale provincial assessments. This arms-length organization develops, administers, and reports annually on the results of the large-scale assessments they produce, based on the Ontario curriculum for all students in publicly funded schools. However, EQAO does not assess French, and its near exclusive testing in English may even provide significant challenges to those students in French immersion.

Students who study in English are tested in English in reading, writing and mathematics at Grades 3 and 6. In secondary school they are tested in mathematics at Grade 9, and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) is administered to students in Grade 10. FSL immersion students are tested (in French) in mathematics at Grade 3, and thereafter are evaluated in English, regardless of whether they have ever studied math in English and despite the fact that they have learned at least 50% of their subjects in French from Kindergarten or Grade 1 to Grade 6, 8, or beyond, in secondary school. In other words, FSL immersion students are not currently assessed in the French language outside the classroom context; neither in reading, writing, listening or speaking.

\(^1\) $33 million (CDN) in 2009-2010
Thus, without provincial tests or proficiency benchmarks, the mandate is that all Ontario schools follow the FSL curriculum and undertake assessment and evaluation for the primary purpose of improving student learning. The FSL curriculum (2013a) explains that teachers’ assessment practices must “be fair, transparent, and equitable and must support all students with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit” (Ontario FSL Curriculum, 2013a, pp. 22-23). Assessment procedures are to be clearly communicated to students and parents at the beginning of the year or beginning of the course and on an on-going basis, and students are meant to be given multiple and varied opportunities to show the full capacity of their learning over a period of time. The new FSL curriculum mandates increased emphases on oral communication in a variety of social settings; it highlights the value of cultural and linguistic diversity; and implements the explicit teaching of effective language learning strategies (e.g., making predictions before reading a text, and discussing the meaning of an audio clip with a partner to clarify understandings).

A highly useful companion document to the FSL Curriculum (2013a) is the Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (2013b). This document was conceived of to “strengthen FSL education in Ontario by supporting English-language school boards in maximizing opportunities for students to reach their full potential in FSL” (Ontario, 2013b, p. 38). The Framework for FSL (2013b) is important because it explicitly links the FSL curriculum in Ontario with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The CEFR is a comprehensive document of some 375 pages that constitutes an all-inclusive approach to language assessment through a departure from performance benchmarks or standards, to a set of linguistic descriptors. In this way, the CEFR promotes an interesting approach to language proficiency in that it outlines descriptions of proficiency according to linguistic behaviours. This approach to language learning puts the focus on the learner because it allows language users to make sense of their own context in order to determine the most appropriate language learning choices that align with their needs.
The last decade has seen the CEFR adopted both around the world and in Ontario where the *Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2013) aligns itself with the CEFR. This framework is of pivotal importance because in this province the reality is that it is currently possible for students to complete years of FSL education destined for teacher education programs offered in their second (or third, or fourth) language without the necessary skills to learn what they need to learn in the TL, French (Mady, Black, Fulton, Hart, Hawkins, & Lukaszuk, 2010). Without necessarily being equipped to understand and do what is being asked of them in French, future teachers may populate classrooms in HE planning careers as FSL teachers without having the knowledge and skills to plan for, manage and ensure their own successful French proficiency development, let alone the proficiency development of their future students.

This thesis explores the feedback experiences of future teachers and their FSL instructors in HE and begins, of course, in a situated and unique context—at the University of Toronto in Ontario. According to Lapkin (1990), finding room for change in this learning equation to allow all FSL students from all FSL streams, Core, Extended and Immersion French to be able to achieve depends not only on program structure, resources and on individual students themselves, but also on pre-service teacher preparation. In order to appropriately prepare pre-service teachers to teach, assessment practices in FSL teacher education merit systematic attention and care as we move forward in the 21st century.

**Rationale**

A new and revised Ontario French as a Second Language (FSL) curriculum (Ontario, 2013a) stipulates that teachers must give timely feedback to their students. This feedback should be descriptive, understandable, specific and useful (Ontario FSL Curriculum, 2013a, pp. 13, 23). One of the multiple purposes of feedback in the new curriculum is to teach elementary and secondary students to develop the self-assessment skills they need to set learning goals, and undertake steps to achieve those goals. In order for teachers to have information that gives them an idea about how students are progressing so they can plan instruction in ways that encourage students’ engagement and improvement, decisions must be made about what data to collect. Thus, the evidence used to determine
students’ language proficiency, and how vital information (i.e., feedback) about a student’s next steps for proficiency development is communicated, is of critical importance. This is specifically important because one of the objectives of the new FSL curriculum is to make it possible for students to “increase…[their] ability to communicate in French” (p. 15).

Since teachers play such a large role in student success, equipping pre-service teachers to instruct the new FSL curriculum has become a focal point for discussion. Teacher educators are appropriately invested in understanding the attributes of the knowledge base required for future FSL teachers, as it is these future teachers who will implement the revised curriculum.

According to Andrews (2003), teachers need knowledge of the subject matter (knowledge about language) but also require another kind of language knowledge—language proficiency (knowledge of language). In addition to the subject matter and language knowledge, teachers also need to know how to teach in ways that allow students to learn. I saw evidence of this in my work as Teaching Assistant during a 3-year stint in the OISE Student Success Centre (OSSC), where I engaged with teacher candidates in one-to-one and small group remediation in French. I observed that when I embedded language development activities within the professional language of teaching, students were able to simultaneously work on their language proficiency while developing aspects of their teacher knowledge base: curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, plurilingual school culture, as well as teacher identity and teacher presence. In addition to traditional face-to-face meetings and individual consultations, I used online technology (Skype) to meet with students individually and in small groups, and this proved to be helpful to students. I also contributed to a developing database of online resources in French that teacher candidates could access and I observed that these resources became an important way to empower students to take responsibility for their own learning in French outside of their coursework. Anecdotally I saw that virtual connections promoted motivation, collegiality and French proficiency development among HE students studying to become future FSL teachers.
I concluded that a study contributing to the literature on assessment models other than summative testing in HE for the French proficiency development of future teachers was urgently needed. I thus took up Evans’ (2013) call for more research on the role of feedback in HE, in light of the growing body of literature that has appeared in the last decade on this topic. My doctoral research investigates the usefulness of feedback practices in language learning for teaching, from the perspectives of both instructors and undergraduate students who wish to pursue a career in language teaching. This thesis shares findings from that doctoral research study, where the purpose was to investigate aspects of the role of feedback in developing future teachers’ FSL proficiency for teaching. Using a qualitative methodology, multiple sources of information were examined to reveal the ways university FSL instructors in HE used classroom interaction and feedback activities to guide instruction. Moreover, the various ways pre-service teachers perceived and took up the feedback given to them was investigated. Since the issues relating to language assessment, proficiency and effective teaching methodologies are complex, a social constructivist approach was used to examine participants’ perspectives closely. Using a qualitative methodology, multiple sources of information (online surveys, interviews, work samples and course documents, as well as classroom observations) were analyzed to understand the feedback activities FSL instructors in HE used to guide instruction in their FSL courses, at a large urban university in central Canada, the University of Toronto.

**Research Questions**

Key research questions of this study investigated the role of feedback in developing pre-service teachers’ French proficiency for teaching. The key questions included the following:

1) What are the characteristics of instructor-led feedback activities provided to future teachers wanting to teach (in) French?

2) In what ways do future teachers use the feedback they receive?
3) To what extent do instructors’ feedback practices interact with future teachers’ background variables and learning style?

4) What type of learning tasks provide opportunities for instructors to give feedback to future teachers on their language proficiency?

Significance

According to Andrews (2003) and as we have previously seen, future FSL teachers must develop knowledge about language (knowledge of the subject matter), knowledge of language (language proficiency), as well as pedagogical knowledge in French to allow them to implement the FSL curriculum in Ontario schools. Assessing the efficacy of their teaching practice as they teach the FSL curriculum means that pre-service teachers need opportunities to reflect on their teaching experiences. Additionally, pre-service teachers need practice in designing and implementing assessments that provide evidence of student learning so they can learn how to assess the efficacy of their instruction.

According to Scarino (2013), in order to evaluate the progress of students’ work teachers need to develop knowledge about language assessment (assessment literacy) for two reasons. First, to develop transformative assessment practices, and second, to develop an understanding of the process of assessment itself and their role as assessors. Teaching future teachers how to make sense of the assessment data they gather in French in order to arrive at reasoned and meaningful interpretations of student performance in FSL (i.e., the assessment triangle\(^2\)), thus requires thoughtful planning and action—before in-service teaching begins.

Additionally, and of equal importance, teacher candidates also need to become aware that acquiring the French proficiency necessary for teaching merits both their attention and action. One might argue that future FSL teachers need instruction and practice in knowing how to recognize and regulate their own language learning. This is imperative, as described by Aljaahfreh and Lantolf (1994) and Mackey (2006), in order for future FSL teachers to be able to know that their own future students are learning. The ways that

\(^2\) [http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/howto/basics/triangle.html](http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/howto/basics/triangle.html)
FSL programs are implemented in Ontario wherein students are not ever assessed for French language proficiency, even in the annual rounds of provincial testing in Grades 3, 6, 9 and 10, means it is entirely possible that students may leave several (even many) years of FSL programming destined for teacher education programs without the much-needed skills to learn what they need to learn in French. Without this knowledge and awareness, teacher candidates may not be equipped to understand and do what is being asked of them in French, attempting to start their careers as FSL teachers without having the knowledge and skills to ensure the success of the next generation of students.

Understanding feedback is important for all undergraduate students, but particularly important for those students who wish to teach in French because of the ways that undergraduate students use their own learning experiences as opportunities to learn about teaching. As Borg (2004) explains in her articulation of the ‘apprenticeship of observation,’ the task of teaching these skills is complex because pre-service teachers come to in-service teaching having observed only some aspects of a teachers’ work, namely, the parts of teaching that are visible. Lortie (1975) first introduced the term ‘apprenticeship of observation’ to describe how, having spent thousands of hours in a classroom as students, future teachers are not aware of other crucial components of a teacher’s work, components such as language proficiency development and assessment practice.

With regard to the provision of feedback in HE contexts, Boud and Molloy (2013a & b) observe that institutions in HE are critiqued more for the feedback they provide to students than for almost any other aspect of the courses they offer. Evans (2013) articulates a number of aspects at play: first, the lack of mindful uptake in higher education contexts for implementing feedback that “works” – both from professors’ and students’ perspectives; second, the recognition that feedback alone may be insufficient to improve student achievement; third, the need to provide a variety of types of feedback that benefits diverse learners in diverse contexts. Indeed, Evans (2013) declares that a “feedback gap” (pp. 73, 94-97) exists between the feedback students receive and their

capacity to use such feedback to improve their work. Boud and Molloy (2013) concur with this gap, noting that professors in HE spend tremendous amounts of time giving feedback in the hope that it will be helpful to students, though it is not clear that students understand or act on the feedback they receive.

Students, on the other hand, report that the feedback they receive is not specific enough to be useful, and that assignment requirements often lack clarity (Higgins, Hartley, & Skelton, 2002). Boud and Molloy’s observation that traditional models of assessment feedback consistently position teachers as the drivers of feedback is of key importance. Given this reality, Boud and Molloy instead propose a more sustainable assessment feedback model, one that provides learners with opportunities to generate, solicit and develop the capacities to act as their own arbiters in order to be equipped beyond the task—thereby feeding learning back to feed learning forward.

Since initial teacher education programs are an integral part in mobilizing this new FSL curriculum in Ontario, a study contributing to the literature on assessment models in higher education (HE) that may make a difference for the French proficiency development of future FSL teachers was urgently needed. Since teaching positions in Ontario are most often awarded to teachers with a significant degree of French proficiency, developing linguistic competence in French is on the to-do list for future teacher candidates. This is particularly the case because diverse pathways in FSL programming in K-12 contexts in Ontario mean that students come to teacher preparation programs with assorted sets of linguistic skills and experiences. One of the present and future goals of my research is to assist undergraduate students to perceive, understand and negotiate the intersections of learning and assessment in their developing teaching practice, and to equip them appropriately as they prepare to teach the next generation of students who attend school to learn.

**Position of the Researcher**

I came to the planning and implementation of this study via multiple pathways: as a second language speaker, an elementary teacher, tutor, teacher educator, graduate
research assistant and assessor. Each of these perspectives informs my understanding of this research.

![Researcher Positionality](image)

**Figure 1. Researcher Positionality**

I am an Anglophone, a product of the FSL system in Ontario, a Core French graduate of the “audio-oral approach” as outlined in the *Cadre Stratégique pour l’enseignement du français langue seconde dans les écoles de l’Ontario* (2013c, p. 32). My early years up to Grade 6 were spent in 3 Franco-Ontarian communities’ English schools. In the classroom, I learned French stories and vocabulary by heart through repeated practice. Outside of the classroom I learning skipping rhymes in French in my best friend Lizanne’s driveway; she was francophone. From these communities in Timmins and Sudbury, Ontario, I learned that French was “real,” that people really lived, worked and played *en français*. My first recollection of being evaluated for language ability happened in my new middle school in Oakville, Ontario after a family move to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). When the Grade 8 Core French teacher took me aside in the second week of school and asked me to stop speaking in French in class because my accent was already “very good,” I intuitively understood that the teacher was embarrassed by his own lack of proficiency. I stopped speaking in class.
Years later, having had (for the most part) excellent high school instruction in French, I decided to pursue FSL at Queen’s University in a Concurrent Teacher Education program. As I completed the second year in a French specialist in my Bachelor’s degree program, I realized that I had a lot to learn when the TA for the course returned my first composition with a big, red “67” circled at the top of the page, indicating not the percentage mark (as I had thought) but rather the number of grammatical errors in my written work! I worked hard, bought the best dictionaries I could afford, made trips to Quebec and to France, developed friendships with native speakers—and I graduated with greater proficiency than when I began.

A subsequent 17-year career as an elementary French immersion teacher in two school boards in Ontario has given me an opportunity to work with standards-based education and assessment for Grades K-8. This work includes experience as a scorer for the EQAO standardized test of Grade 3 reading and a decade of mentoring pre-service teacher candidates from Queen’s University and OISE/UT. In my current role as a bilingual literacy intervention tutor/consultant and advocate in private practice for the past 11 years, I have seen the profound effect that individual difference and student goal orientations have on student motivation and performance, and the power of feedback to improve teaching and learning through metacognitive strategy development.

My intersections as a teacher educator in the Initial Teacher Education program (both consecutive and concurrent) at OISE/UT for 5 years, as a graduate research assistant on two projects concerning language proficiency development over 4 years, and as an assessor of language proficiency for teaching in French at OISE/UT for 4 years during my doctoral studies, have led me to a deep understanding of the value of assessment for learning and the importance of systematic assessment practice to document progress and learning. Thirty years’ practical experience combined with my graduate work at the master’s and doctoral level in pedagogy, assessment and teacher development during the past decade qualified me to implement this study.

It is possible that my biases had an undue influence on this study. It has been my sincere hope that being and remaining aware of my bias has assisted me in productive ways
throughout the course of conducting this research. I piloted the instruments carefully. I believe that it was in fact possible to capture future teachers’ and instructors’ understandings and practices in ways that tell an objective and critically important story in this thesis. I sought to provide the participants with a venue from which to speak the truth of their lived experience. Indeed, my role was to think and act reflectively, in order to draw together the threads of the data in a way that advances our common struggle to teach and assess all students well so that all students—both now and in the future—may learn.

Overview of the Dissertation

This thesis shares findings from my doctoral research, wherein the primary purpose was to investigate aspects of the role of feedback in developing future teachers’ FSL proficiency for teaching.

Chapter 1 (Introduction) argues that assessment practices in FSL teacher education require attention and care as we move forward in order to appropriately prepare pre-service teachers to teach, particularly in light of a recent revised FSL (2013a) curriculum document in Ontario. This thesis discusses data collected over a 15-month period at the University of Toronto from undergraduate students studying French, as well as FSL instructors, and describes how assessment practices such as the provision of descriptive feedback may provide important information to students in HE who are studying to be future FSL teachers.

Chapter 2 (Literature and Conceptual Framework) takes up the empirical literature, theory and concepts of this research study about feedback in HE, and is constructed in two parts. In Part One I review the literature on feedback for learning in HE according to three themes: the perceptions and purpose of feedback; the role of self-regulation in feedback; and the value of dialogic feedback processes. In Part Two, I discuss the multifaceted theory that underpins this study, including French for Specific Purposes (FSP) and L2 Proficiency; assessment models and language proficiency frameworks such as the CEFR and STEP; formative and summative assessment; and language learning tasks. In addition, I then describe the three concepts I have chosen to frame the study:
Sociocultural Theory (SCT), Goal Orientation Theory (GOT) and Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998). I merge aspects of each of these broad concepts to construct the lens through which I view, analyze and discuss the data in Chapters 4 and 5 and interpret the findings in Chapter 6.

Chapter 3 (Methods) discusses the methodology I used to answer my research questions in this exploratory qualitative research study. To begin, I explain the context for the study and aspects of the study design that were important for its planning and execution. I introduce the two participant groups in the study and share the procedures by which I collected and analyzed data across five data types: interviews, online surveys, focus groups, work samples and course syllabi. To conclude, I clarify some issues regarding ethics, limitations, researcher bias and validity of the data from each participant group.

Chapter 4 (Students Run the Race) presents the findings from the ten student participants in the study from across five data sources: interviews, online surveys, focus groups, work samples and course syllabi. I introduce the student participants through language learner portraits so as to get a sense of the individual students, their linguistic backgrounds and language learning behaviours outside of class. I then present, analyze and discuss the data thematically, according to the first two research questions I asked, and in light of the research literature.

Chapter 5 (Instructors Map the Journey) shares the findings from the five instructor participants in the study from across five data sources: interviews, online surveys, focus groups, classroom observations and course syllabi. I introduce the instructor participants through their portraits to allow us to better understand their linguistic backgrounds and language learning behaviours as instructors and interlocutors of French. As with the student participant data, I present, analyze and discuss the instructor participant data in relation to the research literature.

Chapter 6 (The Race or the Finish Line?) steps back from the close reading of the data chapters (4 and 5) to interpret the findings. I begin the chapter with a summation of the findings from Chapters 4 and 5, and I offer interpretation of those findings according to the research literature, particularly in regard to Research Question 3 about individual
context variables. I then discuss some implications that arise from the findings based on the multifaceted theoretical dimensions and the conceptual framework that guided the study’s planning and execution.

Chapter 7 (Conclusion) completes the study and articulates messages in three important areas. First, I formally answer my four research questions. Second, I make data-driven suggestions for classroom teaching practice and course design in HE to facilitate sustainable feedback practices that will help provide productive programming for the preparation of future FSL teachers. Third, and finally, I propose some further research into two areas of feedback in HE to ensure that the field continues to evolve in valid and constructive ways.
Chapter 2: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Introduction

This qualitative research study explored the feedback practices across three campuses and four sites at the University of Toronto where FSL is taught. Part One of this chapter takes a close look at the relevant empirical literature about feedback in HE that has been growing at an exponential rate in the last decade. To facilitate this survey of the literature, I have undertaken a summary according the following themes: the perceptions and purpose of feedback, the role of self-regulation in feedback, and the value of dialogic feedback processes. Situating this research in the empirical literature about feedback practices in HE will allow me to appropriately examine the data I collected regarding students’ and instructors’ experiences of feedback to properly frame a discussion in Chapters 4 and 5. In addition, this in-depth survey of the literature will allow me to interpret my findings in Chapter 6.

In Part Two of this chapter, I present and explain the conceptual framework of the study. First, I take up the theoretical terms upon which the study is based: French for Specific Purposes (FSP) and L2 Proficiency, assessment models and language proficiency frameworks such as the CEFR and STEP, formative and summative assessment, and lastly, language learning tasks. Then, I draw on aspects of three important and broad concepts within the extensive topic of second language acquisition: Sociocultural Theory (SCT), Goal Orientation Theory (GOT) and Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (MacIntyre et al., 1998). In this section I share the aspects of each concept I merged to define my field of view for the data I collected from both participant groups in my study: the students and FSL instructors in HE.

Part One: Surveying the Literature about Feedback in HE

Four decades ago Kulhavy (1977) declared that to be powerful, feedback must be linked to a learning context; last year, Pereira, Flores, Simao, and Barros (2016) confirmed that feedback makes an important contribution to learning in HE. In the intervening time, proliferations of empirical and theoretical studies about feedback have garnered attention
in the academic literature. Researchers across the globe have taken up the challenge to understand how (and whether, and in what ways) feedback “works.” Some explored how students perceive and act on feedback (Wilbert, Grosche, & Gerdes, 2010; Pereira et al., 2016) and others investigated what kind of results feedback can produce (Mackey, 2006; Lin, 2009; Adams, Nuevo, & Egi, 2011; Price, Handley, & Millar, 2011).

Concerning empirical studies that considered the content of feedback (Corbalan, Kester, & van Merriënboer, 2009), Stafford, Bowden and Sanz (2012) show that student choice on a task does not determine motivation for taking up feedback, but the degree of feedback explicitness does matter in terms of language improvement. Those studies that investigated feedback processes, such as Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) and Ajjawi and Boud (2017) provide pivotal information about the power of mediation and dialogue in effective feedback practice in HE.

Regarding feedback formulation, delivery and follow up, researchers put students’ understandings, self-assessment and self-regulation at the core of the feedback project (Hounsell, McCune, Hounsell, & Litjens, 2008; Carless, Salter, Yang, & Lam, 2011; Moos, 2011; du Toit, 2012; Liu & Lee, 2015; Barton, Schofield, McAleer, & Ajjawi, 2016). This research is especially crucial in light of the findings of a significant disconnect between staff and students’ perceptions in regard to aspects of feedback practice (Beaumont, O’Doherty, & Shannon, 2011; Mulliner & Tucker, 2017).

Indeed, from many angles, academic engagement in feedback research has become an important, even urgent issue in HE. According to Carless et al. (2011), however, the crux of the matter may well be how students interpret and use the feedback they are given (p. 396). The interpretation and use of feedback will be explored in detail so there will be ample time to explore the issue of student uptake of feedback later in this section of the chapter when we discuss self-regulated learning (SRL) in detail.

One may ask why it is that feedback has become so…\textit{au courant}. Several plausible reasons come to mind. There is no denying that the current popularity of analyses on feedback is occurring in the context of a global accountability discourse, particularly in regard to student experience, retention and enrolment in HE. The annual National Student
Survey (NSS) in the UK began in 2005 and since then has provided hard data on the fact that students are not happy with the quality or quantity of the feedback they receive from their professors in HE. Indeed, issues with feedback have ranked first on the list of concerns for students in the UK since the survey’s inception (Ajjawi & Boud, 2017; Pitt & Norton, 2017).

In addition, the accountability discourse that has given rise to the standards-based schooling movement (Chatterji, 2002; Volante, 2007) has also increased the growth of and interest in assessment for learning practices that include assessment models other than testing to improve student learning (Chalhoub-Deville, 1997; Black & Wiliam, 1998). Both of these factors, then, namely, the global discourse on accountability and the will to find assessment models other than testing to advance student achievement have played a role in developing a research agenda about feedback. This evolution in the research literature is moving the field forward to broader and better understandings of the domain of feedback: whether and how it works, and for whom. To be sure, Askew and Lodge (2000) are not alone in calling for more research to investigate feedback practices and the beliefs about learning they represent, in order to discover how feedback can be used most effectively to promote learning (du Toit, 2012; Boud & Molloy, 2013; Evans, 2013).

As previously discussed, I summarize the literature thematically. I begin with a discussion of the perceptions and purpose of feedback. Following that, I explain the role of self-regulation in feedback. The literature review concludes with a discussion about the potential value of interaction in feedback processes in HE, and presents a model I constructed to show how the relationship between self-regulation and dialogic feedback could create more sustainable feedback practices in HE.

The Perceptions and Purpose of Feedback

The things instructors do and say to give students information about how they did and what they can do next time to improve, otherwise known as feedback, is seen as part of pedagogy because all good teaching is interactive and dialogic (Carless et al., 2011). Askew and Lodge (2000) suggest that feedback is both a complex and crucial aspect of
teaching and learning processes, and in the reporting of this study I will draw on their broad definition of feedback, to include all dialogue that supports learning in both formal and informal situations (p.1).

If the purpose of feedback is to support learning, then, who determines what is supportive and how can one measure this in HE? In order to understand this fully, speaking to both students and instructors is important. In their study, Beaumont et al. (2011) studied the perceptions and experiences from students and professors and asked whether feedback improves student learning. They conducted interviews and focus groups with 145 students and 23 staff in 6 colleges and 3 universities across 3 disciplines in the UK. The researchers asked three questions: first, what is quality feedback; second, what were students’ prior experiences with assessment, and what did students expect from their professors; third, they asked participants to identify obstacles to providing quality feedback. Students and professors were aligned on the question of quality feedback, but there were serious obstacles to providing good feedback. From students’ perspectives, there was not enough feedback to be helpful. Additionally, students were not able to apply feedback in the future because their assignments were different. From instructors’ perspectives, they were overwhelmed with the task of providing detailed feedback and were unable to return student work in less than three weeks. The delay in receiving feedback was difficult for students because they had other assignments due and could therefore not use the feedback they were given to feed learning forward.

Concerning empirical studies that considered the content of feedback (Corbalan et al., 2009), Stafford et al., (2012) show that students were not more committed or motivated to take up feedback when they had opportunities to choose an assessment task. Rather, the studies found that the degree of feedback explicitness matters in terms of language improvement. In other words, there must be enough feedback and it must be detailed enough in order to be useful.

In his unpublished dissertation, Lin (2009) studied the relationship between Individual Difference (ID), in this case, the level of bilingualism, and pedagogical conditions (types of feedback) as it affected third language development of 90 English as a Foreign
Language (EFL) students (32 male participants 58 female participants) in HE from several private universities in Taiwan. These students were learning Latin and for the study they were assigned a computer lesson on the semantic functions in Latin. Lin’s study design included working memory capacity and learning strategies. Lin found that more explicit feedback is more effective than less explicit feedback, or “right” or “wrong” feedback. He also found that participants at a higher L2 level outperformed their counterparts only in the less explicit condition, and theorized that more explicit feedback may level out differences among learners at different L2 levels. Indeed, more explicit feedback was shown to prove beneficial for both the higher and lower level L2 learners.

Pereira, et al. (2016) conclude that feedback can be an important part of the assessment process when it is aligned with the curriculum and is integrated with the assessment process. For this reason, feedback stands to make an important contribution to student learning and make positive changes in the HE classroom. In their quantitative study of 605 undergraduate students from 5 Portuguese public universities, Pereira et al., (2016) surveyed students’ perceptions of the effectiveness and relevance of feedback in HE. They found that there were differences in perceptions of effectiveness and relevance depending on the assessment methods used and where students were in the process of completing the tasks. In other words, the timing of the feedback mattered; and the mode of feedback was directly related to students’ perception of effectiveness (how useful the feedback was) and the relevance (how important the feedback was).

An example of how receiving feedback at different points is crucial during a task’s completion (and not simply at the end of an activity) is found in Hounsell et al.’s (2008) study of first- and final-year bioscience courses in each of three contrasting university departments. In this study a total of 782 students were surveyed, which was followed up with 23 fine-grained (in-depth and detailed) group interviews that involved a total of 69 students. The core of the analysis was a guidance and feedback loop that began with the premise that students’ prior experiences of assessment in the subject provided a template of sorts, an ‘organizing principle.’ The authors were able to pinpoint possible areas of concern in students’ experience of feedback and perceptions of quality.
From the study data, Hounsell et al. (2008) developed a 6-point framework that showed where students perceived that feedback events were most helpful to them (p. 66). The 6-point feedback that was deemed most helpful included: first, as they embarked on the task (after having received preliminary guidance about expectations and requirements); second, after they submitted the task; third, after they received the feedback on their performance and achievement; fourth, after receiving support to feed forward into the next task or assessment; and finally, after deploying new skills, knowledge or understandings in the next tasks. The authors postulated that the framework can be used to help students and their instructors figure out where they are in the process – both as a diagnostic tool (feed forward) and an analytic tool (feedback).

In their study of 65 Spanish-English bilinguals learning Latin through computer input, Stafford et al. (2012) asked participants to complete practice in Latin sentences that were designed to help them complete tasks. In this mixed methods study, there were four instructional language treatments in all. All groups received right / wrong feedback throughout the practice session. Additionally, two of the four groups received pre-practice explanation of how thematic roles are assigned in Latin via morphosyntactic cues (the ‘plus Explicit Feedback’ (+EF) groups). They found that practice and less explicit feedback were enough to trigger improvement in ability to interpret Latin case morphology. They also found that more explicit, metalinguistic feedback was necessary in order for improvement in production to take place. However, pre-practice explanation without metalinguistic feedback during the practice did not significantly influence abilities in either comprehension or production.

Sadler’s theoretical reflections on feedback (1989, 2010), however, remind us that we cannot assume that students know what to do with feedback. Although feedback can take a variety of forms, to what degree learners take up this information is changeable, depending on a host of variables. Indeed, the purpose of feedback (for information, task completion, language learning, or linguistic accuracy), the context of the learner and the learning environment will all impact how feedback is taken up. The next section examines the role of self-regulation in feedback.
The Role of Self-Regulation in Feedback

The reality is that students’ uptake of feedback is the number one issue illuminated by practitioners in HE to emerge in the literature (du Toit, 2012; Ajjawi & Boud, 2017; Mulliner & Tucker, 2017; Pitt & Norton, 2017). Practitioners repeatedly offer the observation that students do not use feedback from their professors, which represents lost opportunities for learning. Indeed, the role of self-regulation in students’ uptake of feedback for learning, in general, and in language learning, specifically (Liu & Lee, 2015), is crucial because language learning is a uniquely individual and performative activity.

Liu and Lee (2015) found that there was a “common awareness among researchers and practitioners that learners’ self-regulatory capacity greatly enhances their performance outcomes” (p.1). Indeed, Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) has long been identified as a key contributor to learning. The concept of SRL was defined by Pintrich and Zusho (2002) as ‘an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition’ (p. 250). The concept of self-regulation is relevant to language learning because without the learner’s active engagement in the process of language acquisition, language learning is simply a set of behavioural procedures (learned routines) to learn the language, rather than acquiring and taking in the language for active future use.

While Liu and Lee’s (2015) study recruited high-school participants at the Grade 10 and 11 level (rather than students in HE), I included it in this review for several reasons. First, the purpose of the study was to examine the psychometric properties of self-regulation in L2 learning via Rasch measurement (a quantitative measure that can reliably separate items and participants based on their difficulty levels and ability trait levels). Second, participants had been learning EFL as a required course for a minimum of 5 years. Finally, participants’ general English proficiency level could be considered approximately at B1 of the CEFR (low intermediate). I felt that there was enough similarity between Liu and Lee’s study participants and mine to warrant its inclusion, on the grounds of age, language exposure and language proficiency. Students in HE would not be more than 3-5 years older than Liu and Lee’s participants, would have studied
French for at least five years, and many participants in this study were at the B1-B2 French proficiency in the CEFR.

Liu and Lee (2015) found that the Self-Regulating Capacity in English Language Learning Scale (SRCLang Scale) authored by Liu (2009) contributes to the current understanding of the role that self-regulation plays in L2 learning. The study concluded that the SRCLang Scale serves as an appropriate scale to provide diagnostic information for L2 learners regarding their capacity to self-regulate their (English) language learning. It also found that L2 instructors can utilize the information from this tool to provide appropriate assistance to students based on their self-regulatory capacity and their needs. Finally, for L2 learners who want to set goals and achieve language learning outcomes independently, having a better sense of their own self-regulatory capacity can be helpful so they are able to manage their learning progress.

Du Toit (2012) undertook a study of first-year students in the faculty of education at the University of Free State, South Africa and concluded “The role of feedback is to inform students about their strengths and weaknesses and for them to actively engage with the information they receive” (p. 37). However, du Toit found that the way feedback was delivered to students neither allowed students the chance to actively engage to regulate their learning nor to engage in self-assessment activities. Through constructive feedback du Toit realized that students have to understand the technical side of feedback structure, such as accuracy, comprehensive detail and the overall appropriateness or “justness” of the feedback. However, they also have access to their own thinking process (Sadler, 1983) so they may figure out what to do. Du Toit reasoned that this may only be achieved by discussions with students after feedback has been provided. To improve students’ performance, instructors therefore need to constantly reflect on their own assessment and feedback practices to understand why many students are not using the feedback they receive and are therefore not progressing as they might.

In Moos’ (2011) study using think aloud protocols and self-report data from 65 education majors from Minnesota, a complex relationship was found between feedback and students’ use of SRL (p.287). Participants were randomly assigned to one of three
conditions (Control, Questions, Questions + Feedback), and used hypermedia for 30 minutes to learn about the circulatory system. Results indicated that the participants in the Questions + Feedback group first showed markedly lower levels of self-efficacy, but then reported improved levels of self-efficacy as they progressed through the task. Participants in the Questions and Questions + Feedback groups undertook monitoring processes and initiated prior knowledge more frequently than those in the Control group. Whereas participants in the Questions group employed significantly more strategies and outperformed those participants in the Questions + Feedback group. Moos theorized that this was because students were monitoring their learning to a greater extent by the questions they were asking, meaning that they were ultimately more successful than students who received feedback. In other words, students knew what they needed to do to be successful, and they acted on that by asking questions to ascertain their best path to success. This correlates to a finding from Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) who found that the feedback their level 2 (of 6) ESL students received at the University of Delaware’s English Language Institute functioned as regulation when students were able to modify their knowledge based on the new incoming information from the feedback.

In similar ways, Barton et al., (2016) found that when learners self-regulate, they engage in establishing learning goals and choose strategies to achieve goals and monitor their progress. Barton et al. undertook a case study demonstrating how a program’s assessment and feedback practices were reengineered and evaluated (with evidence from the literature) in the interACT (Interaction and Collaboration via Technology) project in an Online Medical Education program at the University of Dundee’s Centre for Medical Education. In order to do so, the researchers undertook a questionnaire with students (n=54), engaged in document analysis and held interviews with staff (n= 10) and students (n=7). Results showed gains in students’ self-evaluation, engagement with feedback and feedback dialogue. Moreover, the findings demonstrated the viable benefit of using the interACT technological process to promote self-evaluation, reflection on feedback, feedback dialogue, and long-term views of feedback.

One of the interesting things about Barton et al.’s (2016) study is their determination that feedback is a social act between people, and is therefore affected by power, identity and
gender because it is not a “one-off” occurrence. They postulate that for this reason, feedback needs to take ideas into account, as well as feelings and points of view, and that instructors should give opportunities for learning to be used in future assignments. In this way feedback can actually help students develop an evaluative approach towards their own work (self-monitoring), and in the long term, students may be inspired to seek feedback from other sources to engage in life-long learning.

In sum, the power of SRL to move things forward for students, particularly in language learning, seems clear. This provides a noteworthy vantage point from which to look at the power of interaction and dialogue to elucidate what is happening for students and to chart a course for “taming the feedback beast.”

**Getting Dialogic: The Value of Interaction in Feedback Processes**

In a meta-analysis of studies on feedback, Hattie and Timperley (2007) note that the most effective feedback contains information for students that reinforces certain behaviours, is expressed with video, audio or computer-assisted instructional feedback, and/or is related to instructional or task goals. This fact means that any classroom event can potentially provide the content for feedback to students, from ‘formal’ events (tests, labs, essays, and presentations) to ‘informal’ events (discussions and group work). Thus, offering students specific information about how they are doing at achieving what is expected of them and what they can do to improve, to the extent that it is possible, makes a significant difference to students’ achievement, motivation and overall learning.

However, as we have seen, student uptake of that feedback information remains a significant challenge (Pitt & Norton, 2017; Mulliner & Tucker, 2017). Although the usefulness of SRL to initiate processes in students that may allow them to become autonomous and effective learners has been demonstrated, how to “get there” is not obvious. This is one of the reasons I find the attention in the literature to dialogue and interaction so compelling, and particularly so, in language learning. It is absolutely possible to observe how students apply the feedback they receive. It is also possible to know individual context variables (language exposure, additional language learning and various program elements such as the use of TL, for example, in courses) that impact the
use of feedback. Similarly, it is also possible to be aware of appropriate instructional interventions (course expectations and tasks), and track those variables to observe the interaction of those outcomes. But all of these factors and variables, while interesting and important, do not tell us what is happening for students in the moments after they receive feedback from their instructors. It is here that the research of O’Donovan, Rust, and Price (2016) provides a visionary beacon that has impacted this study. Knowing how students make sense of feedback when they read it is critically important.

As a follow up to their 2005 study (Rust, O’Donovan, & Price, 2005), O’Donovan et al. (2016) chose an “analytic induction” process in which they built on their in-depth work over the last decade with HE practitioners from the UK and Australia. Through a decade of work, the researchers facilitated more than 80 multi-disciplinary workshops, undertook further exploration of the research literature about feedback and invited independent reviews from participants (HE practitioners). They found that practitioners viewed feedback as a logical and “coherent process in which students prepare for, engage with, and subsequently act upon feedback” (p. 940). Moreover, they go on to say that there are two pre-existing conditions in order for students to take up feedback: first, they need to understand it and second, they need to know what to do with it (Handley, Price, & Millar, 2008).

O’Donovan et al. (2016) postulate that students need exposure to and practice with this feedback protocol (to understand feedback and know what to do with it) right from the first year of their HE experience. The authors suggest this is because students’ levels of engagement with each of these tasks—understanding feedback, knowing what to do with it and taking action to apply the feedback—is changeable. Assessment literacy is a process, and the attributes that encompass this work are variable, meaning that this is a continuum of learning. The question is, according to O’Donovan et al., how much engagement is enough to improve a student’s work? If extrinsic and intrinsic motivation drives engagement (Price et al., 2011, p. 892), what are the measures of student engagement? What are the instructional practices that encourage student engagement?
Orsmond, Maw, Park, Gomez, & Crook (2013) suggest that interactive, dialogic feedback with learners in HE has a distinct advantage. When tutors assist students to develop understanding about the purposes for learning in the completion of course work and tasks, they can enhance learners’ use of self-regulation strategies that are so key to learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The practical framework (GOALS) Orsmond et al. developed helps students and tutors engage in dialogue about learning.

In the GOALS framework, learners are first expected to **Grasp** explicit information about the purpose of the learning. Second, they are required to **Orientate** themselves to think and ask questions about where they are going, what they are doing and what they need to do next. The third step in the GOALS framework is for tutors to take **Action** to help learners realize how to use and optimize opportunities for discussion and interaction (with peers) to use the feedback given to them. The fourth step is to provide learners with **Learning** evaluation opportunities through self-evaluation to increase self-regulation strategies and improve their work. The final stage in the GOALS framework is to assist learners to develop **Strategies** for next steps in carrying the feedback forward. When instructors deliver feedback in ways that create intentional interaction between themselves and their students about learning tasks, rather than seeing feedback as a product, students may be more able to understand and do what is being asked of them (Price et al., 2011). In other words, the findings from this study reveal that when there was interaction pertaining to the work students did, this process allowed students to perceive and act on the feedback given by their instructors.

As illuminated above, language production is accomplished through the execution of tasks and so feedback in language classrooms is a special responsibility. Simply put, the only venue from which to give feedback on language is as a result of a performance. Authentic tasks are critically important in language learning contexts because they not only furnish opportunities to give feedback, but also promote increased motivation for using the language. Tasks increase both the scope and frequency of the opportunities to give feedback at various points during the execution of activities, and of course, not simply at the end of an activity.
The studies discussed above demonstrate that SRL can be activated in HE classrooms, and from the literature we also see that interaction and dialogic processes with students hold promise in making practices such as student engagement with feedback both possible and probable. In other words, for the first time, there is theoretical and empirical evidence that we are closer than ever before to understanding how to ensure that students engage with feedback to their benefit.

Again, interaction and dialogue have specific implications for language classrooms in HE because language is performed and language acquisition requires attending to form. As observed in the previous section, Aljaafreh and Lantolf’s (1994) qualitative study found that feedback was able to help students regulate their performance when they were able to modify their knowledge based on new and incoming information from the feedback. Aljaafreh and Lantolf’s study was the only study that approached L2 learning from the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and it is this aspect that may be the most interesting and important to the conversation about self-regulation and dialogue.

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) examined the question of whether correction (negative feedback) leads to L2 learning with three university students randomly selected out of a class of nine students at the University of Delaware’s English Language Institute in the U.S. The researchers found that effective language learning (and error correction) depends on mediation from/with others. They clarified whether correction (negative feedback) is useful for language learning or not depends largely on the learner because of the way that in the ZPD occurs, since correction happens as a mediated activity between tutors and their students, in one-on-one interactions.

The study employed an intensive 8-week protocol wherein each student received Corrective Feedback on one essay they wrote each week (eight essays in all, the first essay was used as a baseline, and no feedback was given). The format for tutorials was in a one-on-one format for 30-45 minute sessions with the researcher. They developed a list of five transitional stages between complete dependence on the tutor (other-regulation) to complete independence (self-regulation), which shows the integral role of dialogue in mediation.
Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) also developed a regulatory scale (p.471) to show the surface behaviours of the student as they worked with their tutor to notice and correct target forms in the language. They posit that as a student becomes more self-regulating and less dependent on the tutor to notice target forms in the L2, there is less of a need for the tutor (and therefore less need of dialogue). In other words, the more a student needs explicit feedback to improve their work, the less able the student is to self-monitor and self-regulate. Self-regulated learning is ultimately a process whereby a student is able to improve their work over time, needing less explicit feedback. Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) also suggest that the level of implicitness in learning needs to be negotiated with the learner (p.480), and that the tutor must be ready to relinquish guidance when the student is ready to assume the path.

From this examination of interactive dialogue between instructors and their students, a number of themes emerge. First, research indicates that dialogue is helpful to developing shared understandings because the only way to really know about what is happening for students is to ask them. Second, creating dialogue with students is not easy. The transcript data from Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) shows how painstaking it is to scaffold noticing for students. Securing engagement from students is, at a minimum, a great effort if the student chooses to remain other-regulated. It is difficult to imagine how such conversation could be “rolled out” in a HE classroom or course syllabus. What is encouraging though, is the idea that if students were engaged and if they understood what their instructors were trying to communicate, there is a chance that there would be widespread implications for students’ uptake of feedback. Developing HE classrooms where feedback worked as such would certainly prove beneficial for students’ learning.

Towards Sustainable Feedback

Three interconnected themes of importance are found in the literature about feedback for learning in HE: self-regulation, feedback format, and sustainability. Moreover, it is the interactivity between these three themes that I find to be the most compelling because of the issue of student uptake of feedback. The first theme concerns self-regulation in learning, the second considers dialogic processes that help communicate feedback (“feedback talk”) and the third theme explores the sustainability of feedback practices.
The reason for my interest in these themes is because of the interactivity that seems to be evolving between them in the literature, and because of how these themes directly relate to my conceptual framework, which I will discuss in the second part of this chapter.

The graphic organizer below shows the interactive map between a dialogic, interactive approach to feedback that puts students in the ‘driver’s seat’ in monitoring their own learning. This dialogue and interaction, “feedback talk,” with instructors, in combination with self-regulation strategies and practices, may give students traction to take up feedback and thus create feedback practices that are sustainable for both themselves and their instructors.

Figure 2. Interactivity model between feedback, self-regulation and sustainable feedback practices

The final element in this graphic organizer is about sustainable feedback and the
conversation here is brief, for two reasons. First, we are in the beginning stages of being able to move forward with a sustainable model of feedback because this is new theoretical and empirical ground. Second, most of what we know about sustainable feedback practice is as a result of knowing what is not sustainable.

In their 2011 study of ten award-winning teachers at the University of Hong Kong, Carless et al. wanted to discover, without taking an a priori position in advance, whether it was possible to reconceptualize feedback to make it more sustainable. The researchers emphasized the importance of doing so given the tremendous amounts of time that instructors spend on giving feedback. The research team looked at the nature of feedback practices in relation to specific courses and how participants (“informants”) defined and interpreted the idea of feedback. The team also engaged in debate around different feedback types according to positive and negative benefits (pros and cons), their perception of what constitutes effective feedback, as well as how professors perceived students responses to feedback. Carless et al. found that feedback facilitates the development of self-assessment and reflection, and that it encourages teacher and peer dialogue about learning. The authors prioritized a focus on dialogue because of the sincere limitations of one-way written feedback comments, which they found constitute most of the feedback in HE.

Carless et al. (2011) shared two conclusions: first, that to be sustainable, student feedback must be reorganized with self-regulation at the centre; and second, this work will be greatly facilitated by tasks that furnish rich opportunities for feedback. This is because they see feedback as part of assessment; student learning is propelled by completing assessment tasks, and students need practice at understanding feedback and knowing what to do with it. The best way to do that, of course, is to have opportunities to complete tasks where students can do both of those activities—complete assessment tasks and practice understanding feedback (and receive concurrent feedback on how they did on applying that feedback). The authors’ preferred tasks for practicing this new method of more sustainable feedback included two-stage assignments, dialogic feedback through oral conversation, presentation tasks and the use of technology. There was an overarching notion of student self-evaluation at the core of all the reported practices in this study.
In an interesting in-depth interview study with 14 final year (3rd year) undergraduates in the UK, Pitt and Norton (2017) asked students to reflect on their perceptions and experiences of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ work. They were asked to bring two samples of their own work, with feedback on their marked assignments from some point during their undergraduate careers. The work was meant to act as a catalyst for discussion during the interview about their positive and negative experiences with feedback.

It was clear to the researchers that students had developed their own achievement levels before submitting their work, though, in terms of what constituted good work and bad work. Students’ determination of whether the summative grade they received was ‘good’ or ‘bad’ was directly related to the perceptions they had established for themselves. In other words, students’ perceptions of their work did not always align with their tutor’s.

Pitt and Norton (2017) took time to explain the complexity of the current feedback landscape in HE and illuminated that there are many variables at play in how students receive and understand feedback (or not). They emphasized that the methodology of having students bring in marked work samples from the past allowed them to share these and talk about them with more emotional distance from the experience. Although this was the case, the authors learned that emotional reactions (feelings) might play a significant role in influencing how students act on feedback they receive. They declared that since emotional reactions can determine how students move forward with intention on future assignments, this is important for research and for practice. They recognized that feedback should focus on the performance rather than on the individual.

Ajjawi and Boud (2017) conducted a qualitative study in the Postgraduate Certificate Medical Education program at the University of Dundee that consisted of an interactional analysis. Their systematic approach to analyzing “feedback talk” can provide new insight into heretofore-undocumented aspects of feedback, i.e., the interactional features that promote and sustain dialogic feedback. They explored how feedback dialogue helps us understand how goals (pedagogical, informational and interpersonal) are mediated through the interaction, the materials and in the learning context. The study took place in an online distance education program of four modules that was not cohort-based, with
rolling admission and flexible assignment submission dates. The researchers used Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) model to identify feedback loops and identify the kind of feedback intervention the tutor used: feed up, feedback, feed forward, task, process, self and self-regulatory comments.

Students completed an interactive cover page for each assignment, where they evaluated their own work against the assessment criteria and requested specific feedback. The feedback was framed in terms of episodes of dialogue (turn-taking) between student, tutor and the course. The tutor provided comments about the students’ work in regard to the assessment criteria as well as student self-evaluation, and to specific student requests in the “notes” section of the cover page. The student then uploaded their marked assignment to a personal feedback journal (accessible only by the student and tutors), where they were asked to reflect on and respond to four questions, including requests for further information. The tutor was alerted to the student response and continued the dialogue as needed. This research challenged the cognitivist information transmission/telling approach to feedback and substituted a socio-constructivist approach positing that feedback as dialogue helps students learn to monitor, evaluate and manage their learning.

This section has demonstrated that the provision and uptake of feedback is complex, and that more research is needed to fully understand the processes between teachers and students in the delivery of feedback. Yet, there is also evidence of what constitutes successful feedback practices and how we might design sustainable feedback practices. Thus, to complete this literature review, the work of Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, (2006, p. 205) is instructive in its provision of seven principles of good feedback practice in HE. The authors suggest good feedback:

1. Helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards);
2. Facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning;
3. Delivers high quality information to students about their learning;
4. Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning;
5. Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem;
6. Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance; 
7. Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching.

Summary of Literature Review

It is entirely true that the topic of feedback has received more airtime than ever during the past two decades, and the thematic summary I shared of the empirical literature concerning feedback in HE on the preceding pages detail the breadth and depth of that engagement. First, I examined the perceptions and purpose of feedback. Then, I discussed the role of self-regulation in feedback. Finally, I explained the value of dialogic feedback processes.

Feedback is considered one of the most powerful factors in learning but even with a proliferation of studies in the last thirty years regarding all feedback types and aspects of feedback delivery, results are variable and even confusing (Keiding & Kvortrup, 2014, pp. 191-192). Although the roots of feedback may be found long ago in the engineering domain (Boud & Molloy, 2013); and Bastin and Coron’s (2011) research is a good reminder that feedback was a necessary part of the loop between performances of the steam engine, feedback is both coming of age and here to stay. Indeed, in every subject and domain, and particularly in HE, a focus on feedback should endure in light of the contradictory perceptions between what feedback is offered and how students take it up.

Providing feedback to students that is useful and productive remains a challenge and a mandate, to properly connect the dots between performance and learning. Without a doubt, understanding why students do not always take up feedback remains an important area for future research (Pitt & Norton, 2017) because “student responses are not fully determined by the nature of the inputs, but by what they bring to them” (Ajjawi & Boud, 2017, p.253). Additionally, according to Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) conceptions of feedback must be shared between professors and students in order to be effective. Having examined a broad range of literature on feedback, the second part of the chapter discusses the conceptual frame for the study.
Part Two: Conceptual Framework

Part Two of this chapter has a dual purpose of first presenting the broader theoretical terms upon which the study is grounded, and second, to share the conceptual frame for this research. My objective in describing the theoretical terms that underpin the study is to provide a context for this research; this is a study about feedback practices that happen in the course of language teaching and learning an additional language (French) in HE. I therefore begin by discussing the theoretical terms that are foundational to the research. These theoretical terms include: French for Specific Purposes (FSP) and L2 Proficiency; assessment models and language proficiency frameworks; formative and summative assessment in FSL; and language learning tasks. Next, I describe the three conceptual lenses I have chosen to define the study’s field of view, namely, Sociocultural Theory (SCT), Goal Orientation Theory (GOT) and the construct of Willingness to Communicate (WTC). The relevance and contribution of each of these concepts to the research is surpassed only by their vastness, so I will also discuss those aspects of each I have merged to help define (and limit) my field of view for the data I collected from students and FSL instructors in HE.

Figure 2 below is a graphical representation (i.e., a roadmap) to show the plan of my conceptual framework.
This section begins with a discussion of four research areas that comprise the theoretical foundation for this research: first, French for Specific Purposes (FSP) and L2 proficiency; second, assessment models and language proficiency frameworks; third, formative and summative assessment in FSL; and, finally, language learning tasks.

**FSP and L2 Proficiency**

This study is situated in the FSP literature since it was concerned with future teachers’ language proficiency development for teaching and all of the study participants were either future teachers or taught future teachers. The question of what evidence will tell us that someone is able to teach in French is somewhat complex for two primary reasons. First, students in HE are taught and assessed according to a French for Academic Purposes (FAP) framework, which represents a different approach to language learning in that the language functions required for success in an academic context are different from those needed in a specific, professional (occupational) context. Second, the literature about language learning for specific purposes has been inspired by research on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Martin, 2010).
While focusing on English as a Second Language (ESL) instead of FSL, the findings from research on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) hold important insights for understanding FSP. Language assessment has received a great deal of attention during the last three decades as the learning of English as a second language has surpassed all other language learning (Martin, 2010; Graddol, 1997). However, it is the conceptual emphasis on the learner situated in a specific professional context that provides the rationale for my use of the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) literature to construct a theoretical framework for assessing French for teaching purposes.

ESP is a branch of applied linguistics and an approach to teaching that consists of a significant body of literature and research into approaches to effective teaching and assessment for specific purposes. ESP is principally concerned with ways of analyzing students’ language needs in specific contexts, the specialized knowledge and vocabulary used in specific contexts and the functions of language used in those contexts. The significant difference between most general English textbooks and courses, and courses in ESP is how the learner in the learning context is situated at the centre of the teaching and learning of English (Hamp-Lyons, 2001). This sets ESP apart from most general English textbooks and courses, which put language in context as the focal point of teaching and learning.

Thus, the question of what future teachers need to be able to do in French depends on an accurate understanding of how they will use French to communicate in teaching contexts. This is a priority both in terms of knowing the appropriate curriculum and learning opportunities pre-service teacher education programs need to offer, and in terms of assessment. Indeed, where assessment is concerned, it is important to use assessment to gauge whether teacher candidates are properly prepared for successful teaching in French once they begin their in-service teaching careers. This is a larger question, however, which will be taken up in chapters 6 and 7 when I discuss and interpret the data from the data chapters and make links to some implications that follow from the findings.

Christine Noe (2003) discusses the teaching and learning of French for Specific Purposes (FSP) in the context of preparing 16 to 19-year-old Austrian secondary students for
university studies and a wide range of careers in French. Noe draws on the work of the Council of Europe (1976) to highlight the necessity of conducting a needs analysis for specific contexts. She calls for three components to address who, what and how questions of French curriculum for specific purposes. First, she suggests that a profile of the students taking the course is necessary to discover their background and needs. Second an analysis of the contexts where students will use French to function should be undertaken. Finally, thought should be given to how to approach the teaching and learning of the specific vocabulary and specialized content knowledge required for the context. Noe (2003) wholeheartedly supports the notion that each learning context is unique and for this reason a needs analysis must be carried out for each different learning situation where a foreign language (in this case, French) is used (p. 200).

There are a variety of factors that seem to affect learners’ success at learning the target language, including learning styles and background characteristics (Kezwer, 1987; Cummins, 2000). Bialystok (1981) relates these factors to two things: the learning process (situated in the individual learner), and the learning situation (the learning context). To determine the needs of the learner in context for this study—learning French for the purpose of teaching—we must note that French proficiency plays a large role in the FSP conversation. In Barry O’Sullivan’s (2012) article outlining assessment issues in language for specific purposes, he eschews the traditional view of the proficiency movement as a gate-keeping function. Indeed, as van den Branden, Depauw, & Gysen, (2002) suggest, “Language assessment should not primarily perform a gate-keeping function; it should be part of a broader intake procedure taking into account additional aspects of trainees’ background besides their levels of language proficiency” (p. 451).

For our purposes in this research study, French second language proficiency for teaching was conceptualized under the ‘umbrella’ of FSP. In so doing, pre-service teachers’ language needs were considered in the context of the specialized knowledge and vocabulary needed in teaching contexts, and the functions of French that are used in those teaching contexts.
What does it mean to be proficient in a language? Bachman and Palmer (2010) and Alderson (2000) suggest that language proficiency tells about the extent to which students are able to use the language competence and skills they have to complete tasks that require them to both understand and produce the target language. According to Brown (2007), if language competence can be observed it can also therefore be measured by performance in both oral and written forms of comprehension. Thus, finding out what students know about the language they have learned can only be observed by their actual use of that language.

Skehan (1988) argues that understanding second language proficiency depends on examining the cognitive factors of second language learning. However, many of these factors have been underrepresented in the literature when learners’ characteristics and motivation, and learning channel preferences (visual and auditory) have not been fully examined. According to Skehan, linguistic factors alone are not enough to explain learners’ language proficiency development, and it is for this reason that this study specifically included Skehan’s work on the cognitive factors of language learning (intelligence, foreign language aptitude, working memory and personality). Seeking information about contextual variables such as learner and instructor background characteristics, motivation and learning preferences greatly enriched the data collected about the feedback practices and language proficiency, and this held true from the perspectives of both the instructors and their students.

Assessment Models and Language Proficiency Frameworks

How assessment is practiced may perhaps be the most critical part of the endeavour of the revised FSL curriculum (2013a) —for the students and their parents, as well as for the teachers and the school system (Ontario FSL Curriculum, 2013a, pp.23-24). How much and in what ways a student progresses may depend on instructors’ use of diagnostic activities to verify comprehension and monitor students’ errors (Edelenbos & Kubanek-German, 2004). This section elaborates on the evolution of assessment practices in the 20th century to show how assessing and evaluating a learned curriculum has been part of an educational to-do list for more than one hundred years. Since the early 1900s public school teachers, administrators and parents have used tests to measure the degree to
which students were able to retain and recall the curriculum they learned at school (Shepard, 2000). Formal exams, unit tests and quizzes have long been the arbiter of the degree to which learning has occurred in classrooms—at all levels and in all subjects.

For more than 100 years, people other than the learner have assessed the learning of curriculum. Indeed, such use of assessments for summative purposes and to evaluate curricular learning can arguably promote a deficit mentality among teachers and administrators. Of even greater concern it may engender a deficit mentality among students themselves; where students are judged for what they cannot do, as opposed to what they cannot do yet. This view of evaluation as judgement is in direct opposition to a more learner-centred approach to learning espoused by others such as educator, turned psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, whose observations about how, when and why students learn have influenced current notions of learning and assessment as it relates to curricular learning (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Feedback generated from external tests is rarely shared with the test-takers, and if it is shared, it is often after the fact (i.e., too late to change the outcome). However, Shohamy (1992) argues that feedback on school-based assessments can provide helpful information to both students and teachers, information that can actually change instruction and achievement outcomes. Shohamy’s observation of the usefulness of feedback when based on evidence gathered from school-based assessments is the theoretical impetus underpinning the focus on feedback as assessment for learning rather than testing as assessment of learning for this study of French language proficiency for teaching. Given that language proficiency testing may well be on the research agenda for professional organizations like the Ontario College of Teachers and Boards of Education, as well as post-secondary institutions, Shohamy’s work should act as a reminder of the value of feedback versus testing.

In the vein of assessment models other than testing, scholarly literature has emerged in the last 15 years that supports the use of descriptor scales in language classrooms to assess language proficiency. In Europe, Australia, Canada, and Hong Kong, common terminology to observe, assess, discuss and encourage students’ language learning over
time creates institutional cultures where assessment—as opposed to testing—is valued (Chalhoub-Deville, 1997; Davison, 2004; Turnbull, 2011). Using language proficiency frameworks as opposed to theoretical models of language proficiency for assessing language proficiency development is suitable and appropriate, according to Chalhoub-Deville (1997) because of the context-specific nature of language use. Proficiency descriptors that comprise assessment frameworks such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the Steps to English Language Proficiency (STEP) provide details about observable linguistic behaviours, details that provide clarity and decrease variability in scoring amongst teachers (Davison, 2004). For the reasons of reliability, clarity and practicality, both CEFR and STEP language proficiency frameworks provide the theoretical foundation upon which this study about feedback practices in HE is grounded.

Authored by the Council of Europe in 1991 and published in 2001, the CEFR is a comprehensive system for describing language proficiency. It was originally developed to assess the language proficiency development of adult learners across Europe, to establish a common terminology in language curriculum objectives, and to devise lesson tasks and individual student learning plans. For the first time ever, the CEFR provided transparency and coherence between what was being taught and assessed, and how adult students progressed in language learning. Its explicit, comprehensive and common system of describing language competence and proficiency allowed practitioners to collaborate in new and systematic ways (Arnott, Hart, Lapkin, Mady, Vandergrift, & Masson, 2015, pp. 11-12).

Hermans and Piccardo (2012) suggest the CEFR has had “immediate and far-reaching implications for language education” since first introduced in Canada in 2006 (p. 2). Moreover, Hermans and Piccardo provide evidence that explicit links to the CEFR could be found in the new additional languages curriculum document in British Columbia (2011); the draft of the new Core French curriculum in Ontario (published 2013a). Indeed, links to the CEFR are also found in the Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Ontario, 2013b).
The Steps to English Language Proficiency (STEP) assessment framework is a set of proficiency descriptors designed for use in K-12 Ontario elementary and secondary schools as a way to track students’ English language learning. STEP was implemented across several school boards in Ontario, an initiative that was led by the Ontario Ministry of Education. STEP was developed specifically to address the learning trajectories of English Language Learners (ELLs), both immigrants to Canada and students born in Canada, whose home language was not English or French. Unlike the CEFR, the STEP assessment framework focuses only on the educational context and is specifically concerned with both oral language development and literacy development (reading and writing). It consists of three sets of English proficiency descriptor scales, each comprising six levels or “steps,” for Reading and Responding, Writing, and Oral Communication skills. The scales are created for four grade clusters including: Grades 1-3 (Primary), Grades 4-6 (Junior), Grades 7-8 (Intermediate), and Grades 9-12 (Senior). In K-12 classrooms, the descriptors of the assessment frameworks describe students’ linguistic performance in relation to curricular knowledge, and reflect the integration of language and content learning. With the STEP assessment framework, therefore, classrooms provide the context to observe and document students’ language progression while they are engaged in meaningful, communicative activities.

To conclude, the CEFR and STEP language proficiency frameworks contribute to the theoretical conversation for this study in three important ways. First, language proficiency frameworks are the most suitable reference tool for assessing language in specific contexts (namely, where French is used for teaching). Second, because the learners in this context are adults who will be mandated to use a language proficiency framework in their chosen occupation as teachers for K-12 students. The final way that language proficiency frameworks contribute to the theoretical conversation for this particular research study is that its context is a (university) classroom context.

To further underscore the importance of the need to communicate with students about their learning (i.e., provide feedback), with the ultimate goal to ‘set the table’ for more learning to occur, the next section discusses formative and summative assessment.
Formative and Summative Assessment in FSL

The terms *formative* and *summative* assessment were first created and used in 1967 by Michael Scriven as a way of describing the goals of the information that provide indicators of learning and the purposes for which this information is used. *Summative assessment*, known as assessment of learning, has traditionally been used to discover whether the curriculum that has been taught has actually been learned and retained at the end of a unit of study. For example, summative assessment is undertaken through traditional testing methods on exams, unit tests, and quizzes. *Formative assessment*, known as assessment for learning, is used widely in practice to help both teachers and their students know “how they are doing” at learning what they need to learn (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005; Wiliam, 2010, 2011). Rather than marking an end point in a content-learning process, formative assessments give students the opportunity to learn from assessments as a result of the feedback they receive on those assessments, in order to improve their work. Formative assessments also give teachers the opportunity to adjust their instruction, to help students bridge the gaps in their learning.

To clarify, *formative* and *summative* assessments have been seen to be somewhat in opposition to each other, according to the specific purpose they fulfill. For Scriven (1967), the purpose of formative assessment was to gather information during the learning process to assess the usefulness of the curriculum and the instructional system. Black and Wiliam (2009) prefer a broader definition of formative assessment, one that prominently features teachers’ and students’ work and perspectives to be part of the equation since they are also stakeholders. They express it in this way:

[Assessment is formative] to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited. (p.24)

Black and Wiliam clearly state that the goal of formative assessment is to collect information that, when interpreted properly, will provide critical information that informs teachers’ decisions on next steps for instruction.
Thus, this dual-purpose aspect of formative assessment (to provide next steps to the learner, and to make decisions about what those next steps might be) provokes a variety of responses from practitioners. Indeed, these responses range from passionate support (Black & Wiliam, 2009) to critique because it is not obvious how to adjust instruction and note progress. Poehner and Lantolf (2005) argue that decisions about learning have often been made by using instructors’ intuitive judgements about what items might provide valid data from which to draw inferences about individual students’ learning. While instructors’ judgements seem logical, useful and beneficial for such tasks, there has been an absence of systematic application of procedures in formative assessment to make use of this data. This is particularly salient for FSL learning in HE because of the lack of specific system protocols (there should be feedback and feedback should look like x, y or z). Additionally, there has been a lack of understanding around how feedback can possibly help students (Higgins et al., 2002; Price et al., 2011), and lack of dialogue about how to make those practices sustainable (Boud & Molloy, 2013) to ensure the applicability of feedback.

**Language Learning Tasks**

Mobilizing FSL curriculum in the elementary and secondary panels means that FSL teachers not only need to have accurate and meaningful ways to find out where students are in their achievement of curricular objectives, but also need to know how to use assessment results to plan instruction and communicate results effectively to students. As previously discussed, Andrews (2003) posits that teachers need knowledge of the subject matter (knowledge about language), language proficiency (knowledge of language), and pedagogical knowledge (how to teach in ways that allow students to learn). Since this is the required skill set for in-service FSL teachers, it is logical that future teachers need opportunities to engage with the target language in HE classrooms. I would argue that this is a particularly crucial undertaking in HE because future teachers may have very little idea about where their language proficiency is “at” when they begin their studies. Indeed, provincial language proficiency benchmarks in French in language modalities of reading, writing, speaking and listening are absent in Ontario.
Bachman and Palmer (2010) underscore the importance of language learning tasks that allow students to engage with the TL, stating that language is used as we perform “specific, situated language tasks” (p. 55). Rod Ellis’ 2003 survey of task-based language learning discusses the importance of tasks to engage language users in communicative processes that replicate ‘real-world’ uses. Ellis summarizes the multiple interpretations of tasks provided in the research literature, where these definitions argue that class tasks should provide meaningful opportunities for learners to engage in various activities in order to use language for communicative purposes. Class activities and tasks that allow students to use the target language in authentic ways are necessary in order for assessment data to be useful. In an FSP context, Ellis’ notion of ‘real-world’ uses is limited to the uses of French in teaching contexts. However, as previously discussed, the agendas are somewhat mismatched between the FAP that provides the framework for courses in HE, and the FSP that is required for teaching. As previously noted, this question will be addressed in chapter 6.

In this study I used Skehan’s (1998b) definition of task that focused on four essential criteria. The criteria include tasks where: 1) meaning is paramount; 2) students work towards a goal; 3) activities are evaluated based on the outcome; and 4) authentic connections between the task and real world exist (p. 268). This conceptualization as proposed by Skehan (1998b) captures all the essential components of the task definitions. In Chapter 5 where data about the tasks students (as future teachers) completed is unpacked, these criteria will be used to explore whether future teachers had opportunities to engage with language tasks.

This section about language learning tasks completes the description of the theoretical foundation for the study. The theory on which this research rests includes: French for Specific Purposes (FSP) and L2 Proficiency; assessment models and language proficiency frameworks; formative and summative assessment in FSL; and lastly, language learning tasks. The final section of this chapter describes the three conceptual lenses that define the study’s field of view, namely, Sociocultural Theory (SCT), Goal Orientation Theory (GOT) and the construct of Willingness to Communicate (WTC).
Merging Concepts

Earlier in this chapter, Figure 3 depicted three interconnected themes that surfaced in the literature about feedback for learning in HE. In this figure, I showed how a dialogic, interactive approach to feedback puts students ‘in charge’ of their own learning. I discussed each element of the organizer, beginning with self-regulated learning (SRL). Then, I explored the dialogic processes that communicate feedback. I concluded with an examination of how feedback practices can be sustainable when dialogic practices secure students’ dispositions to engage with language learning. This graphic organizer is important because it explains why and how I chose the frameworks that were merged to construct my conceptual framework. The central premise of this framework is that students need direction, support, scaffolding and reinforcement to take the lead in their own learning.

My conceptual framework first and foremost draws on Sociocultural Theory (SCT), with a focus on the aspect of mediation “by an experienced other” as conceptualized by Vygotsky. Second, the role of goal structures and multiple goal perspectives in Goal Orientation theory (GOT) are included because of the role of the instructor in establishing and attending to motivation in the language-learning environment. The third and final piece of my conceptual framework is Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The interrelation of these concepts to my research appeared relevant and clear at the time of my proposal and their links and import have been reinforced throughout the time of data collection, data analysis and writing up the findings.

Formal language learning in HE occurs in regulated classroom environments (SCT), and students’ individual motivational positions (positionalities) would therefore interact with a variety of learning context variables in independent ways (GOT). In addition to SCT and GOT, though, I included the construct of WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998) in the conceptual frame for two reasons. First, because one of my experienced committee members felt that it would be important to look at the role of students’ communication behaviours in their language learning. Here the concept of WTC makes specific links between motivation and a language speaker’s affinity for communicating in an additional language, as well as language learning choices and behaviours. Second, the literature
mentions the role of the instructor in creating WTC, which fits very well with the SCT concept of mediation where a more experienced “other” scaffolds language learning for a smaller group of students.

**Sociocultural Theory**

Lev Vygotsky believed that learning is the result of social interaction, and that all new knowledge is mediated with others (Hedegaard, 2007). As previously discussed, monitored observation, when coupled with communication (feedback) and intentional interaction between teachers and students about specific learning tasks, is known as mediation (Feuerstein, Rand, & Hoffman, 1979; Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995). In this study, it is the ‘mediated’ aspect of teaching and learning that I would argue links research on feedback with SCT.

In the years since his untimely death in 1934 at the age of 37, Vygotsky’s work that sought to understand how an individual’s learning is influenced by the social context in which the learning takes place has been carried on by others (Feuerstein et al., 1979; Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995) and has become known as part of SCT. Sociocultural Theory stands to make a specific contribution to the conversation about language assessment and feedback in particular because of its position that understanding and researching cognition is not separate from the environment in which the learning occurs (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p.1).

Vygotsky’s research and work over the course of his short life put a priority on interaction in learning, and he argued for specific and timely learning interventions to facilitate students’ development. To be an effective teacher, from a Vygotskian perspective, one must also be a discriminating student of observation. Vygotsky (1978) conceived the “Zone of Proximal Development” (ZPD), a metaphorical place that allows students to learn more as a result of working with another more experienced ‘other.’ For example, a ZPD may be created through a teacher’s work with students where students are enabled to accomplish more and learn more through varying degrees of learning support that a teacher puts into place than they would be able to do on their own.
The focus of Vygotsky’s work is concerned with interaction that facilitates learning, and it is this point that I wish to draw on to provide a useful path forward to building dialogue and intentional conversation into course planning and execution. Here feedback practices such as peer evaluation, specific information on grammar and syntax, and evaluation of written work only after students complete more than one draft/revision should be included. Because the ZPD is focused on interaction for learning, Poehner and Lantolf (2005) support an assessment model known as Dynamic Assessment (DA) that draws on Vygotsky’s (1978) work. The DA assessment model is appropriate as it gives specific information about student learning in the context of actually doing a learning task in the presence of a more experienced “other”—facilitator, teacher or classmate.

Thus, it is clear that within SCT understanding and researching, cognition is not separate from the environment in which the learning occurs (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p.1), and thus approaches learning from the vantage point of social context. SCT therefore has particular relevance for FSL language learners because of the situatedness (context-based nature) of language learning. Since the development of an individual’s language learning happens as a result of communication and interaction through apprenticeship and is guided participation, a sociocultural approach requires that contextual factors be taken into consideration in the feedback practices of FSL instructors and their students at the University of Toronto.

**Goal Orientation Theory**

Although communicative competence is necessary for language proficiency and relies on the application of linguistic knowledge, communicative competence is not the only factor that determines whether a language learner may engage with the L2 in communicative situations. This is evident in Dörnyei’s research (2003) and MacIntyre’s research (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998). Personality traits, beliefs about self-efficacy and motivation (affective factors) play roles in communicative competence, as well as memory and ability (cognitive factors), and pragmatics, prior experience and exposure (context factors) also influence language production. Indeed, the importance of motivation in the equation of language
production cannot be understated (Dörnyei, 2003; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 1998).

Harackiewicz, Pintrich, Barron, Elliot, and Thrash (2002) argue that depending on the student (individual differences), the task (which subject and specific features of the activity), and the context (goal structures of the educational setting) students interact and engage with assessments differently, at times drawing on both performance and mastery goals. Students with a mastery goal orientation, which emphasizes learning and progress, focus on improvement regardless of the errors they make along the way. Students with a performance goal orientation prioritize demonstrating ability to others, meaning that students may be most concerned about winning, outdoing others and getting good marks (Woolfolk, Winne, Perry, & Shapka, 2010).

Although researchers agree that performance goals are not always helpful to students, Harackiewicz et al. suggested a Multiple Goal Perspective (MGP) that demonstrated the benefits of combining the strengths of mastery and performance goal orientations. MGP is of particular interest to this study because of the dual role that language production plays. Speaking and writing each possess a performative attribute and a mastery attribute as forms of language production. Indeed, one needs to practice in order to be able to perform, or, to perform well practice helps.

Goal structures are visible, and are expressed in instructional practices. Goal structures are important because they determine what kinds of goals individual students form based on the information conveyed to them. The way a student perceives the goal structures operationalized in their particular educational setting is therefore of paramount importance. In fact, according to Anderman et al. (2010) goal structures may affect performance, both directly and directly, as students who have mastery goals persist longer in academic tasks and use higher order cognitive skills, effective metacognitive skills and self-regulation strategies.

Although feedback may be expressed with stickers and rewards, neither extrinsic rewards nor negative consequences actually contribute to improved achievement. Indeed, Hattie and Timperley (2007) found a negative correlation between extrinsic rewards and task
performance. Not surprisingly, research has found that students who are in classrooms where mastery orientation (improvement and progress) is reflected in goal structures of the setting are more likely to adopt personal goal orientations that align with mastery goals (Woolfolk et al., 2010). The reverse is true where performance goals dominate the setting. In classrooms where performance orientation (comparisons of ability, demonstrations of one’s own knowledge) is reflected in goal structures of the setting, students are more likely to adopt personal goal orientations that align with performance goals.

These concepts provide important foundations as this study was interested in examining how instructors’ feedback interacted with learners’ learning styles and background variables (goal orientations, language learning experiences, etc.) to see if there were correlations between individual differences and feedback practices. For example, did learners with immersion experience prefer one kind or frequency of feedback practice over another; and, what did learners with a performance-avoid goal orientation find helpful in the process of applying feedback?

**Willingness to Communicate**

The performative aspect of second language (L2) communication remains one of the most complex challenges for language learners and their instructors because of the situated nature of communication. Using an additional language to communicate is, by nature, a complex task because it requires interlocutors to apply communicative competence (i.e., linguistic knowledge, including syntax and vocabulary knowledge) *in real time*. Linguistic performances occur in myriad contexts, and multiple factors may impact and affect both the form and content of those performances. Nowhere is this reality arguably more salient than in L2 teaching and learning contexts.

Unlike in L1 production, communicative competence in a L2 includes not only personality traits (shyness or talkativeness, for example) but also affective, cognitive, and contextual factors (MacIntyre et al., 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Affective factors such as beliefs about self-efficacy and motivation play roles in developing communicative competence in a L2. Additionally, cognitive factors such as memory and
ability, and contextual factors of pragmatics, prior experience and exposure impact L2 communication. Indeed, all of these variables contribute to the development of communicative competence and are attributable to a variety of IDs. Although communicative competence is a necessary condition for language proficiency (because it relies on the application of linguistic knowledge), communicative competence is not the only measure that determines whether a language learner may actually engage with the L2 in communicative contexts (Dörnyei, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998).

The WTC model (MacIntyre et al., 1998) highlights what is arguably the most important element of language learning; to initiate using the language in communicative situations. WTC is defined as “an individual’s readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p.542). The WTC construct is based on a 6-layered pyramid that includes a range of both linguistic and psychological variables. These variables include: linguistic self-confidence; the desire to affiliate with a person; interpersonal motivational intergroup attitudes; motivation and climate; as well as a variety of learner personality traits. Over the last two decades, the variables that comprise the WTC construct in L2 have emerged as important influences in second language acquisition. Figure 4 below depicts MacIntyre et al.’s WTC model for L2 where communication behaviour is placed at the apex of the pyramid and intergroup climate and context at the base.
MacIntyre and Charos were the first to apply WTC to L2 learners in 1996, and their work was later developed by McIntyre et al. in 1998. The L2 construct differs from the WTC model for L1 originally conceived by McCroskey and Richmond (1990). Indeed, the L1 model is significantly less complex as it concerns personality traits alone (Baghaei, 2013, p.1088). The WTC model for L2, however, includes both linguistic and psychological factors that impact second language learners’ performance. Contemporarily, then, the WTC framework for L2 integrates three factors (cognitive, communicative and linguistic) to explain and predict second language communication (Riasati & Noordin, 2011). In this model “Motivational propensities” (interpersonal motivation, inter-group motivation and self-confidence) are a key feature in the WTC construct, and as we see, form an entire layer (Layer IV) in the model pictured above. Indeed, motivation is featured in an even more prominent way than communicative competence, not only in terms of the amount of
space it occupies in the pyramid, but also its ranking in the hierarchical framework as positions five, six and seven in Layer IV. Communicative competence, on the other hand, is positioned in ten alone on Layer V. The WTC model (MacIntyre et al., 1998) is uniquely useful in on-going examinations of developing language proficiency in future teachers who wish to teach (in) French, because of the situated and multidimensional aspects of the construct (affective, cognitive and contextual factors). The construct of WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998) is instrumental in understanding my thesis data because contextual factors alone were not sufficient to explain why some of the student participants in my study seemed “unstoppable” in their quest to become proficient speakers of French, in the context of French speciality programs in the Concurrent Teacher Education Program (CTEP) at the University of Toronto. The data I will present in chapters 4 and 5 shows that in addition to being multifactorial, WTC is also multidimensional and includes multiple stakeholders.

Since communication is first and foremost a shared experience, one that is co-created by language speakers, the WTC model must be understood to be fully embedded/situated in the learning context. Contexts matter whether the language speakers be in a classroom or in a seminar room, in a formal or informal situation, or whether students are interacting with each other or with their instructor. It is ultimately within these contextual realities that WTC is a wholly situated approach (Dörnyei, 2003), one that allows for an in-depth or micro perspective of L2 communication.

Zarrinabadi’s (2014) assertion that instructors may exert tremendous influence on students’ willingness to communicate through pedagogical approaches and other context-specific variables is key to this discussion. Two instructional contexts in particular at one of the campuses at U of T explicitly sought and rewarded risk-taking (prise de risque) communication from their students as will be detailed in chapter 5.

The importance of setting the stage or building a foundation in the classroom for language learning cannot be understated. The apex of the WTC model (MacIntyre et al., 1998) looks at L2 communication behaviour, where instructors model for students (on a moment-by-moment basis) what it is to communicate in the TL. The focus of the WTC
construct emphasizes the situated context, and in layers 3, 4 and 5 an instructor “has the floor” to establish and maintain inter-group motivation, attitudes and climate. Indeed, there is ample evidence that there is tremendous value in looking closely at the antecedents of being “willing to communicate” in the classroom, particularly a class where the learners are future teachers.

The importance of helping students/future teachers see that they are/can be agents in their own learning to build a launching pad for their careers in teaching is of critical importance. Although instructors model for students what it is to communicate in the TL, the emphasis of the WTC construct (MacIntyre et al., 1998) underscores the situated context. In the classroom context instructors control in large measure the inter-group motivation, attitudes and climate, yet students have choice both in class and out of class. Future teachers could benefit significantly from understanding more about the antecedents of being willing to communicate in classroom, to prepare them to ‘mind the gap’ about their own language learning, so they can equip themselves to teach their future students.

The three theoretical lenses that define the study’s field of view, namely, Sociocultural Theory (SCT), Goal Orientation Theory (GOT) and the construct of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (MacIntyre et al., 1998) are depicted below in Figure 5.
Chapter Summary

This chapter was divided into two parts: Part One reviewed the relevant empirical literature on feedback for this exploratory study of feedback practices in FSL learning in HE. Key topics included: the perceptions and purpose of feedback; the role of self-regulation in feedback; and the value of dialogic feedback processes. Part Two of the chapter explained and discussed the terms upon which this research study is grounded. Here the review discussed terms including: FSP and L2 Proficiency; assessment models and language proficiency frameworks such as the CEFR and STEP; formative and summative assessment; and language learning tasks. I then described the three broad concepts from the research literature that I combined to provide the conceptual frame for the study. These concepts include: SCT, GOT, and WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The theory and concepts underpinning this exploratory study of feedback practices determined how I looked at and analyzed the data, and thus, how I will discuss the data in Chapters 4 and 5.

Although I have treated each theme discreetly here, they are absolutely interconnected. Taken in sum the themes and concepts described in this chapter accurately and comprehensively represent the multifaceted aspects of the current FSL feedback context as it relates to initial teacher education in Ontario.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the feedback experiences of future FSL teachers and their instructors in HE at the University of Toronto. The previous chapter discussed how future teachers of French must develop knowledge about language, knowledge of language, and pedagogical knowledge (Andrews, 2003) in the TL of French to allow them to assess the FSL curriculum in Ontario schools. The future teachers in this study themselves were once elementary and secondary students, yet because of the ways that FSL programs are implemented in Ontario they were never assessed for French language proficiency. Indeed, despite annual rounds of provincial testing at the regulated intervals of Grades 3, 6, 9 and 10, French is never assessed. As we have seen, it is thus entirely possible that students entering French specializations in HE may do so having the appropriate prerequisite years of FSL programming but without the necessary skills to learn, or to teach (in) French. It is clear both theoretically and in reality, FSL students in HE may neither be equipped to communicate in the TL, nor to understand and do what is being asked of them in FSL courses in HE. It makes sense, then, that this study followed an exploratory approach in order to gain a better understanding of what is happening for these students in HE aspiring to teach (in) French.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the research literature is clear about the potential value of understanding and implementing feedback for students in HE (see for example, Hounsell et al., 2008; Lin, 2009; Price et al., 2011; Stafford et al., 2012; O’Donovan et al., 2016; and Pereira et al., 2016), in regard to developing monitoring skills where students learn to regulate their own language learning (Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Mackey, 2006; Carless et al., 2011; Moos, 2011; du Toit, 2012; Liu and Lee, 2015; Barton et al., 2016;). We have also seen that assessment literacy (Scarino, 2013) is particularly important for students who wish to teach in French because of the ways that undergraduate students use their own learning experiences as opportunities to learn about teaching (Lortie, 1975; Borg, 2004). The rationale for undertaking this study at this time, then, is twofold: 1) to address the fact that feedback in HE is not working, and 2) to contribute to studies in FSL contexts.
The reality is that there is a lack of studies in HE contexts where feedback that is perceived to ‘work’ by professors and by students. Indeed, feedback that ‘works’ for professors is taken up and implemented by students, while for students valuable feedback is that that is be perceived as useful and possible—and mismatches often emerge between professors and students on these outcomes (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; du Toit, 2012; Evans, 2013; Ajjawi & Boud, 2017; Mulliner & Tucker, 2017; Pitt & Norton, 2017).

Certainly the fact that students perceive the feedback their instructors offer as too vague, not often and/or not detailed enough, and therefore not helpful is problematic (Higgins et al., 2002; Beaumont et al., 2011). However, just as problematic is professors’ perceptions that the feedback they offer to students is not read, not applied and therefore not worthy of the massive amount of time that they dedicate to it (Boud & Molloy, 2013; Mulliner & Tucker, 2017). The message is sufficiently clear: “feedback” as it is currently taken up in HE is not working (Beaumont et al., 2011; Boud & Molloy, 2013). This research study was designed to contribute to the literature about what is ‘going on’ with feedback in language learning for teaching, with the hope of suggesting some possible ways forward to something more useful, productive and sustainable.

Importantly, this research also contributes to the dearth of studies in FSL contexts. In fact, this research fills a significant gap in a body of Canadian and indeed international research by investigating the feedback practices in language learning for teaching in French

**Research Questions**

The key research questions of this study investigated the role of feedback in developing future teachers’ French proficiency for teaching. The key questions included the following:

1) What are the characteristics of instructor-led feedback activities provided to future teachers wanting to teach (in) French?

2) In what ways do future teachers use the feedback they receive?
3) To what extent do instructors’ feedback practices interact with future teachers’ background variables and learning style?

4) What type of learning tasks provide opportunities for instructors to give feedback to future teachers on their language proficiency?

Overview of Study Design

For this exploratory qualitative research study, I chose to follow a narrative approach with a social constructivist framework to rely “as much as possible on participants’ views of a situation” (Creswell, 2013, pp. 24-25) because the issues relating to language assessment, proficiency and future teachers are consequential and multi-dimensional. An inductive qualitative design was appropriate because it ensured thorough and comprehensive descriptions that allowed multiple and diverse perspectives to be heard through a variety of data sources (Creswell, 2013) in the context of HE (Contreras-McGavin & Kezar, 2007). Data sources included interviews, online questionnaire surveys, classroom observations and focus groups, as well as an analysis of course documents, student work samples and tasks. The data sources for each participant group are depicted in Figure 6.
From the outset of planning this study, I was not only interested in collecting data from each participant group in the feedback equation; students and instructors in HE, but also in comparing the two data sets. I decided that the best way to relate the two groups would be to look at the whole picture. In order to do that I undertook a parallel design, insofar as was possible, given the different roles and responsibilities that students and instructors play in the classroom. For this reason, as the above graphic organizer indicates, I planned to collect data of the same (or similar) types. Thus, course documents included course syllabi, course tasks, and rubrics, and I decided that work samples from students would include any marked work that they had done and submitted to their instructor to complete a course requirement. In keeping with the relatively longstanding research tradition in education, L2 acquisition and applied linguistics research (Baker & Lee, 2011), I chose to
include a component of classroom research in my study about feedback. Including classroom observations also seemed important because the key to improving student learning is found in the classroom, in particular through teacher-student interactions (Pianta, 2016). Classroom observations meant me attending classes and taking notes about the opportunities for feedback that I saw while observing. Table 1 displays the timeline for data collection for each participant group.

Table 1. Overview of research timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time / phase</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Instrument / Data</th>
<th>Procedure / Analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1st phase</td>
<td>Faculty Program Administrators</td>
<td>• Informed consent process</td>
<td>Email, in-person follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov/Dec</td>
<td>FSL Students and FSL Instructors</td>
<td>• Informed consent process</td>
<td>In-person kiosks at 4 campuses Email and in-person follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan-Mar</td>
<td>7 Student participants recruited</td>
<td>• Informed consent process • Online survey • Interviews (set of 3) • Document analysis</td>
<td>Email, text and in-person follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd phase</td>
<td>2 FSL Instructors recruited</td>
<td>• Informed consent process • Online survey • Interviews • Document analysis • Classroom observations • Asynchronous focus group</td>
<td>Email and in-person follow-up through personal networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar-Nov</td>
<td>3 Student participants recruited</td>
<td>• Informed consent • Online survey • Interviews (set of 3) • Document analysis • Classroom observations • 2 Focus groups</td>
<td>Email, text and in-person follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 2</strong></td>
<td>3 FSL Instructors recruited</td>
<td>• Informed consent • Online survey • Interviews • Document analysis • Classroom observations</td>
<td>Email and in-person follow-up through personal networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd phase</td>
<td>3 FSL Instructors recruited</td>
<td>• Informed consent • Online survey • Interviews • Document analysis • Classroom observations</td>
<td>Email and in-person follow-up through personal networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time / phase</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Instrument / Data</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd phase</td>
<td>40 participants</td>
<td>Workshop at OISE</td>
<td>Follow-up through personal networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan-May</td>
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<td>4th phase</td>
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<td>Data analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>May-Dec</td>
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My study received approval from the Office of Research Ethics (ORE) on Wed Nov 5, in Year 1 and I began recruitment immediately. Data collection activities commenced in February of Year 1 and were completed in May, Year 2.

**Context**

The context for this study was the University of Toronto, in downtown Toronto, Ontario; a large public university with an enrollment of some 87,000 students across three campuses in the Greater Toronto Area. The university offers more than 700 undergraduate programs and 200 graduate programs, from Aboriginal Studies, Accounting and Astronomy to Statistics, Urban Studies and Women and Gender Studies. French Language, Linguistics, and Literature programs are available at the Undergraduate and the Graduate level.

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4 2015, [www.utoronto.ca](http://www.utoronto.ca)
In 2017, according to the Times Higher Education (THE) world university rankings in the United Kingdom (UK), the University of Toronto is ranked as the top university in Canada, and 4th among public universities in North America. Globally, the THE also placed the University of Toronto 24th among public and private universities, behind Harvard, Stanford, University of Pennsylvania, Columbia and Cornell but 13th among public universities worldwide. According to U of T’s vice-president of research and innovation Vivek Goel, “We’re delighted the University of Toronto remains among the top 25 universities globally in recognition of our continuing strong reputation for our teaching and research, but in order to maintain our competitiveness, we need to keep investing in Canadian universities, particularly in funding cutting-edge global research.” (www.utoronto.ca)
From 2007 to 2013, the University of Toronto offered an undergraduate program called the Concurrent Teacher Education program, which essentially allowed students from a number of faculties to complete two degrees at the same time. This program permitted students to focus on a particular area of study—Music Education, Physical Education and Health, French, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Psychology, Education and Society, or Religious Education while concurrently completing qualifications for teacher certification in Ontario. In partnership with the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, also a part of the University of Toronto and located on the St. George (downtown) campus, courses were offered through the Faculty of Music, the Faculty of Kinesiology & Physical Education at the University of Toronto Mississauga, the University of Toronto Scarborough, St. Michael’s College and Victoria College (both at the St. George Campus) in the Faculty of Arts & Science. Students’ final year of study was spent at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE) to complete courses in curriculum, instruction and assessment (CIA) for Ontario Teacher Certification, including ‘teachable’ subjects for Junior/Intermediate (Grades 4-10) and Intermediate/Senior (Grades 7-12) qualifications. At the end of five years of study, students graduated with not one but two degrees, a Bachelor of Arts, Science, Music or Physical Education and a Bachelor of
Education. The program was terminated as a result of an administrative decision in 2013, and stopped accepting new candidates in the 2013/14 school year. The last students from the CTEP program’s last cohort will finish the program at the end of April of next year, 2018.

![Image](image1.png)

Figure 9. View of Health Sciences building from across the field, University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM), Research Journal, Oct 21

**Instrument Development**

It was my original intent to develop the interview protocols (for students and professors) after I had analyzed the data from the online surveys. It was also my intention to provide a self-reporting tool where participants would have an opportunity to share aspects of their experience and practice on a twenty-item checklist. My idea was to use the checklist to help guide the development of semi-structured interview protocols; I thought that designing a checklist for students and instructors would help the researcher (me) look for observable signs of feedback practices when I visited to complete the classroom observations segment of the study. I wanted to ensure that all instruments accurately
reflected the range of feedback practices used in the particular settings, so my original plan was that once instruments were developed according to the plan noted above, I would begin data collection.

However, while a truly iterative design would have been wonderfully interesting, I concluded early on that in light of the fact that this was a doctoral dissertation, there were some aspects of an entirely iterative design that were not feasible. I needed to show the Office of Research Ethics (ORE) that I had a plan (and would follow it) and I also needed to be able to explain the study to program administrators in order to obtain their informed consent. I therefore decided to adopt a more “formal but flexible” approach. I thoughtfully prepared instruments, anticipating what I might need and once that was complete, I piloted the instruments with colleagues (from among my professional contacts) and students (at the kiosks I set up at different campus sites) from January through March of Year 1 of data collection. I then proceeded to collect data mindfully using the instruments I designed. If there were things that needed modifying, I was prepared to do that. However, in the end there were no changes or modifications that were needed, other than the fact that I opted to make the survey bilingual. I made this choice in order to give students the opportunity to use more French than they might otherwise have done, by not making respondents choose between French and English. Instead, I followed a French-first protocol for all items and responses.
Online surveys

I began designing the online survey (for students, Appendix G and for instructors, Appendix I) by brainstorming a list of questions about the kinds of things that students and instructors might possibly experience in receiving and offering feedback in HE. Since I am both a student in HE and a former sole-responsibility instructor in HE that was not difficult. As my list of questions lengthened, I noticed that I could group my queries into product matters (i.e., structural or content items that inquired as to the what and how of feedback information) and process matters (i.e., items that asked about the how, when and why of feedback information).

I also noticed that there was a parallel structure developing in the questions between my student list and the instructor list. In other words, in asking if students received information from their instructors about their developing French language proficiency, I realized that I also wanted to ask whether instructors offered that information to their students. In the same way, when I questioned a student about whether their instructor

Figure 10. Screenshot, University of Toronto Survey Wizard, Online survey, bilingual question format
gave feedback to encourage dialogue between the instructor and the student about their work in the course, I realized that I could also ask instructors if they encouraged dialogue with their students about their work in the course.

Naturally, there were a few items (4) that did not lend themselves to an exactly parallel semantic structure (between students and instructors) because of content. For example, the responsibilities instructors have for planning and delivering a course and the tasks that fall to students (precisely because they are students enrolled in a course) meant that some questions had to be structured differently, to articulate the different responsibilities of instructors and students.

In those four cases, I made the distinction in the content, using clear language, and I made note of those items for future reference, and comparison purposes. An example of this can be found in Part 1, item 6 (Appendices I and G, respectively) when I queried instructors if they showed students how their work was evaluated, and I asked students if their instructors offered them feedback to set goals for themselves. My thinking was that if instructors showed students how their work was evaluated, students would be able to set goals for themselves. I went through each item carefully to ensure that the items were concise, in clear and specific language, and I made sure that there was the highest degree of parallel content and structure possible.

Consultation with the feedback literature suggested that the purpose of the feedback is paramount. Feedback can range from diagnostic assessment, which provides feedback to students and teachers about the next appropriate instructional steps (Black, 1993; Black & Wiliam, 2009), to dynamic assessment in language learning (Lantolf, 2009), which aims to weave together both instruction and assessment during a mediated activity. With this in mind, I divided the questions into three categories: the purpose of feedback (7 items); the outcomes of feedback (5 items); and the types of feedback (8 items). This gave me a total of 20 survey items in all. In the three tables below I have done a parallel content check in each of the three parts of the 20 survey items.
Table 2. Comparison of survey items, Part 1: The purpose of feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of feedback</th>
<th>Student survey respondents</th>
<th>Instructor survey respondents</th>
<th>Parallel content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 1</td>
<td>My instructor gives me feedback about my French proficiency—how well I speak, read, write and/or understand French.</td>
<td>I provide feedback to my students about their French proficiency—how well they speak, read, write or understand French.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 3</td>
<td>My instructor gives me feedback to inform me about my progress in the course.</td>
<td>I inform my students about their progress in the course.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4</td>
<td>My instructor has asked me for feedback regarding my needs.</td>
<td>I ask my students if I am meeting their needs.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 5</td>
<td>My instructor gives me feedback so I can set goals for myself.</td>
<td>I show my students how I evaluate their work so they better understand their progress and achievement.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 6</td>
<td>My instructor gives me feedback to encourage dialogue between us about my work in the course.</td>
<td>I encourage dialogue with my students about their work in the course.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 7</td>
<td>My instructor gives me feedback so I can understand how my performance compares to other students in the course.</td>
<td>I give feedback so students can understand how their performance compares to other students in the course.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Comparison of survey items, Part 2: The outcomes of feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes of feedback</th>
<th>Student survey respondents</th>
<th>Instructor survey respondents</th>
<th>Parallel content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 1</td>
<td>I keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting.</td>
<td>I keep track of the feedback I have offered (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to assist me with instructional planning and evaluation in the course.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 2</td>
<td>My instructor keeps track of whether students take up feedback (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help her/him with instructional planning and evaluation of our work.</td>
<td>I keep track of whether students take up feedback (i.e., either on paper or electronically) in their future assignments, to assist me with instructional planning and evaluation.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 3</td>
<td>My instructor expects students to take up the feedback s/he offers (i.e., the feedback s/he offers affects the way I am graded in my future work.</td>
<td>I expect students to take up the feedback I offer (i.e., the feedback I have previously offered to a student affects the way I grade students’ future work).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes of feedback</td>
<td>Student survey respondents</td>
<td>Instructor survey respondents</td>
<td>Parallel content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4</td>
<td>I spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.</td>
<td>I spend time offering descriptive feedback to students.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 5</td>
<td>I follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.</td>
<td>I follow up if a student does not apply feedback I have offered, or if a student does not participate in opportunities I have offered to discuss their work.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Comparison of survey items, Part 3: The types of feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of feedback</th>
<th>Student survey respondents</th>
<th>Instructor survey respondents</th>
<th>Parallel content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 1</td>
<td>I receive recorded audio or video comments about my work (essays, reports, projects).</td>
<td>I record audio or video comments about student work (essays, reports, projects) and post/send to students.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 2</td>
<td>I am invited to participate in formal student-instructor conferences (e.g., during office hours) at least once during the term.</td>
<td>I plan and facilitate formal student-instructor conferences (e.g., during office hours) at least once during the term.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 3</td>
<td>I receive email/electronic communication from my instructor to share feedback.</td>
<td>I initiate email/electronic communication with students to share feedback.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4</td>
<td>My instructor responds to email communication with more feedback when I initiate a request.</td>
<td>I respond to email communication with more feedback when students initiate.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 5</td>
<td>My instructor gives whole class feedback after students finish an assignment.</td>
<td>I give whole class feedback after students finish an assignment in the course.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 6</td>
<td>My instructor provides descriptive feedback to students without assigning numerical marks/letter grades.</td>
<td>I provide descriptive feedback to students without assigning numerical marks/letter grades.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 7</td>
<td>My instructor assigns numerical marks/letter grades to students without descriptive feedback.</td>
<td>I assign numerical marks/letter grades to students without descriptive feedback.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 8</td>
<td>My instructor provides descriptive feedback as well as numerical marks/letter grades to students.</td>
<td>I provide descriptive feedback as well as numerical marks/letter grades to students.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In sum, then, there were only four items that could not follow a parallel semantic structure in the online survey about feedback practices. One item in the “purposes of feedback” section; and three items in the “outcomes of feedback” section and zero items in the types of feedback section required modification to apply to the specific participant group.

In addition to the online survey items questioning participants about their experiences with feedback practices, I decided that it would also be wise to gather information about participants’ language learning practices outside of their coursework (teaching and learning), as well as their linguistic backgrounds. This led to two more brief parts being integrated into the 20-item online survey (for students, Appendix G and for instructors, Appendix I).

In terms of gathering responses to the questions I asked in the online survey, I realized that the easiest possible way for participants taking the survey and for me analyzing the results was to give them options about frequency of a given feedback activity, whenever possible. I opted for a five-point scale, between never (jamais) and almost always (presque tout le temps); the middle spots were rarely (rarement), sometimes (parfois) and often (souvent). When I piloted the survey with current students in HE, I asked them about moving to a 4-point scale, and the answer was clear enough—that the five choices worked well. The toughest subjective discrepancy, in my view, was to distinguish between often and almost always.

I used the Survey Wizard platform offered on the University of Toronto website, and it worked efficiently and without incident. The Survey Wizard interface that was displayed at the onset of the survey is depicted in Figure 11.
Figure 11. Screenshot, University of Toronto Survey Wizard, Online survey for students, introduction

Interview protocols

I designed three semi-structured interview protocols for FSL student participants (Appendices L, M and N) and one semi-structured interview protocol for FSL instructors (Appendix O). The protocols maintained a parallel structure, once again, between participant groups to facilitate ease of comparison later on in the analysis and write-up phases. For example, the first question in each first interview was about what descriptive feedback was.

I also sustained a parallel structure between the three interview protocols I developed for student participants. I hoped that by asking comparable questions of the students at each interview, I would be able to incite interest and dialogue about my research motifs: the types, frequency and purpose of the feedback they received from their instructors. Of course, I wanted to know as much depth and detail as possible about the feedback instructors offered, but I also wanted to know about students’ insights and observations. Furthermore, I wanted to know if students found certain kinds of feedback more helpful
than others. In particular I wanted to know if students actually used the feedback they were given, and if they could they talk about how (and if) they had seen their own work improve as a result of the feedback they received. Over three occasions, then, I intended to ask each participant about tasks that they found helpful for developing their French language proficiency and I also planned to ask each one to share work samples with me. I wanted to know if they had received feedback on work they had handed in, and if they had questions about any feedback they had received from their instructor. I also wondered if they could share examples of feedback that had helped them improve their work, and wondered if there were new feedback types that they had experienced since the previous interview.

Translation

I created all documents in English and French, and because my first language is English, I had all of my French work checked and verified by a francophone language service, Kingston Language Services. This company has been in business for more than thirty years, and its proprietor is a former French professor from the Royal Military College/ Collège Militaire Royal in Kingston, Ontario.

Ethics

My Ethics Protocol for the study was submitted to The Office of Research Ethics (ORE) of the University of Toronto on September 22 after being stalled at the departmental level for nearly three weeks, due to a clerical error. I received word on October 14 that some changes and clarifications to the protocol were required in order for my study to be approved. The ORE sought clarification about my methods and participants, and they also asked for more information about my background as a researcher to ensure that I was qualified to undertake this research.

Recruiting

Permission first had to be sought from the program administrators (Appendix A) in each of the units at the University of Toronto. There were 4 components of the study requiring informed consent from each program administrator. First, informed consent was needed
so the program assistant in each unit could send a link to the survey through the university email system to Teacher Candidates and to FSL Instructors because the survey was to be used as a recruitment tool.

Second, informed consent was needed from the program administrators to allow the researcher (me) to interview their students and instructors, observe in classrooms, and facilitate one-time focus groups in each of the units. I had planned (and received permission from the Office of Research Ethics (ORE) to send an email invitation to students (Appendix F) and instructors (Appendix H) with an active survey link, to inquire about their experiences of feedback practices in the development of their French proficiency for teaching. Concurrently, I had planned and received permission from the ORE to ask program assistants to send an email invitation to instructors (Appendix H), also containing an active survey link, to ask about French instructors’ understandings with regard to feedback practices and the development of French proficiency for teaching. The purpose of the surveys (one for students and one for instructors) was to discover information about feedback practices and French proficiency development for teaching, from each of these stakeholder groups. The idea was that if a survey respondent chose to complete the survey and expressed a wish to be contacted about participating in the full study, I would follow up with the appropriate letters of informed consent. Unfortunately, as I will now explain, this recruitment process could not happen the way I had planned.

Gaining administrative approval through a process of informed consent as required by the ORE (Appendices A through E) from each of the 3 campuses (4 sites) where French courses are taught at the University of Toronto was an interesting and challenging process. Each of the four sites had a different conception of what was required in terms of providing informed consent; the amount of time required to make contact with the correct person was challenging. The term was well underway, and end-of-term marking and exam preparation were looming. I learned that academics are always busy so response times to my emails were slow. In addition, the December holiday break was on the horizon.
As a result of an administrative decision, I was not allowed the benefit of getting the word out about my study, and a survey to question students’ and instructors’ understandings with regard to feedback practices in the development of French proficiency for teaching was not able to be sent to students. It was disappointing to not have opportunities to draw on a wider sample of students’ perceptions and experiences about feedback and French proficiency development for teaching because of an administrative decision over which I had no control. In the end, all student participants in the study had an opportunity to complete the survey, and a small sample of additional student participants (9) also completed the survey of their own volition, through my contact with their professors.

To obtain as representative a sample as possible I actively recruited students and instructors across the three campuses at the University of Toronto because I wanted to hear from as many French-speaking future teachers and FSL instructors as possible. I attempted to interview and observe at as many campus sites as possible in order to get a sense of the range of feedback experiences of instructors and their students.

Participants

All participants, FSL students and instructors, were from the University of Toronto.

Student participants

I was looking for approximately fifteen future teachers who hoped to teach (in) French upon completion of their program in HE, either in a B.A. or B.SC., or teacher education (either Concurrent or Consecutive) at OISE/UT. The list of eligibility criteria for FSL student participants in the study included:

1. Be enrolled as a student taking FSL courses at the University of Toronto.
2. Hope to teach (in) French upon graduation from the University of Toronto.
3. Complete an online survey about their experiences with feedback and language learning in French.
4. Participate in three interviews with the researcher, each of which will take between 30 and 45 minutes.
5. Share course documents and personal work samples from the course(s).
6. Consider participating in an optional, one-time, end-of-study focus group discussion about their experiences with feedback and language learning, with other teacher candidates.

There was representation from each of the three campuses at U of T among ten student participants in the study: OISE, UTM, UTSC and UTSG. The majority of student participants (8 out of 10) were registered students in the CTEP program (as opposed to the consecutive program). In fact, only one student was enrolled in the consecutive Teacher Education program at OISE; and one student was an undergraduate student in her third year of a Bachelor of Science program with a minor in French.

This is not only an interesting fact but also an important one. One of the FSL directors saw the potential of the study to provide an authentic experience of French for students and gave permission for me to sign off on remedial hours for students who had failed the French proficiency exam (Appendix S).

Two student participants stopped responding to emails, for unknown reasons. After a period of two months and multiple attempts to reach each one, I concluded that they had chosen to withdraw from the study. Table 5 includes participants’ pseudonym, year, program, the dates of interviews as well as whether or not they completed the online survey.

Table 5. Student participants’ total data capture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant (pseudonym)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Interview 1</th>
<th>Interview 2</th>
<th>Interview 3</th>
<th>FOC GRP</th>
<th>Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Myla (F)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>B.Sc.</td>
<td>Mar 3</td>
<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>Mar 25</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Zoe (F)</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>B.Ed.</td>
<td>Feb 26</td>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>Aug 20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mina (F) Withdrew</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>B. Ed.</td>
<td>Feb 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Chloe (F)</td>
<td>4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Apr 6</td>
<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Apr 20</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Safiya (F)</td>
<td>2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Apr 23</td>
<td>Sept 16</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Alexandra (F)</td>
<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Apr 28</td>
<td>Sept 18</td>
<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Jason (M)</td>
<td>4 &amp; Final</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>June 10</td>
<td>Aug 14</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Lin</td>
<td>2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>Sept 17</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Jamal (M)</td>
<td>2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Jul 16</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Veronika (F)</td>
<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Sept 30</td>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Oct 29</td>
<td>2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Nicola (F)</td>
<td>4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Oct 6</td>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Amelia (F)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>Apr 20</td>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I hoped that giving participants opportunities to reflect on and be listened to about their experiences with feedback for language learning as they prepared for teaching in French might allow them to gain new understandings, both about their own development as second language learners and about their future work with language-learning students. In addition, I expected that having opportunities to share personal work samples during three interviews might help students apply the feedback from their instructors in their future work in ways that they may not have otherwise done. I therefore imagined that participation in the study might help future FSL teachers understand the importance of feedback in language teaching and learning before they began their careers.

**Communication with student participants**

Communication with students happened in a variety of ways: email, texting, and to a lesser extent, on the phone. All of the interviews and focus groups happened live (as opposed to Skype or FaceTime™). The email below is an example of an email sent to one of a number of students who I had started interviewing in the Spring of Year 1 and wanted to initiate contact with again once classes began in September (of Year 1).

Bonjour X, et bonne rentrée!

J’espère que vous avez passé un été agréable, rempli d’activités et de projets de toutes sortes et que vous en avez pleinement profité!
Cet été j’ai voyagé en Angleterre pour présenter les premières données de mon étude lors du congrès « Assessment in Higher Education » qui s’est passé à Birmingham. C’était une expérience enrichissante, exigeante et productive de tous les côtés. Au congrès j’ai rencontré des chercheurs provenant de plus de 25 pays autour du monde, qui entreprennent les projets liés directement.

Je reprends contact avec vous afin de conclure/recommencer votre participation à l’étude.

Est-ce qu’on peut établir un rendez-vous pour la dernière entrevue?

Au plaisir d’entendre de vos nouvelles,

June

Figure 12. Screenshot, email communication with student participants

Students were eager to communicate with me. Most of the time they texted and emailed in English, even when I sent an email or text in French. I made a decision to always begin in French, and to use English only when completely necessary. I did not wish to be seen to be ‘forcing’ French, but one of the key elements I discussed with each participant in the informed consent meeting was the fact that their participation in the study could actually help them communicate more easily, clearly and confidently in French.

Instructor participants

I was looking for approximately five Professors/Instructors of French language, linguistics, literature, writing and/or teaching methodology courses in French. This included instructors who taught course(s) in French to undergraduate students, as well as instructors who taught course(s) in French to future teachers completing their pre-service teacher education training at OISE/UT. For the sake of brevity, instructors who met the criteria below were referred to as “FSL Instructor,” for the duration of the study.

The list of eligibility criteria for each FSL Instructor participant in the study included:

1. Teach in French, in the B.A., B.Ed. and/or Master of Teaching (M.T.) programs at the University of Toronto.
2. Complete an online survey about her/his experiences with feedback and language teaching in French.
3. Participate in one interview with the researcher, which took between 30 and 45 minutes.
4. Share course documents and syllabi with the researcher for the purpose of analysis.
5. Allow the researcher to observe during instructional time (a total of 3 periods of approximately 60 minutes each would be ideal).
6. Consider participating in an optional one-time end-of-study focus group discussion with other FSL Instructors to share experiences with feedback and language teaching.

I worked with five instructor participants at the University of Toronto according to the protocols I designed. This included: a single one-on-one interview with four instructor participants (Appendix O), one asynchronous focus group conversation involving two participants (Appendix R), 16 hours of classroom observations of three participants (Appendices L and M), 5 responses to online surveys (Appendix I), as well as course documents (15 task samples and 5 course syllabi) (Appendix P).

In spite of my prior professional connections as a Graduate Teaching Assistant and Teacher Education Program Assistant working with the French Language Proficiency Test and the Student Success Centre between 2009 and 2014, I encountered difficulty in securing instructors’ participation in my research. In total I spent 8 months reaching out to confirm instructor participants for my study before anyone signed a consent letter. In retrospect, I realize there were situational factors beyond my control that made recruitment of instructor participants difficult.

By the end of May of Year 1, the fact remained that I still needed five French instructor participants, however, so I reached out to my dissertation committee for advice. With the help of my committee members I was able to connect via email with a number of FSL instructors. I thus secured instructor participants for the study as a result of my committee’s timely suggestions.

In regard to instructor participants, I anticipated that having opportunities to reflect on and be listened to about their experiences with feedback for language teaching as they prepared FSL students for teaching in French would be helpful to them. I hoped that this study might allow instructors to gain new insights, both about their current French
teaching practice and about their future work with FSL students in HE. In addition, I felt that having opportunities to be observed in class might help FSL instructors increase their awareness and understanding of the importance of feedback in language teaching and learning. Finally, I hoped that FSL instructors might learn about new and collaborative professional contacts and opportunities as a result of participating in the end-of-study focus group.

**Communication with instructor participants**

Communication with instructors to establish meeting times and classroom observation periods happened by email. Two of four of the interviews and the focus group happened over Skype because of time constraints, while two interviews occurred live. Skype worked very well for these research activities. Here is one example of an email I sent to one of the instructors to set up his interview in June of Year 1.

---

le 11 juin

Bonjour cher Martin,

Je sais que le printemps est un temps chargé pour les professeurs, alors je suis particulièrement reconnaissante de votre temps en ce moment.

Je vais présenter les premières données de mon étude en Angleterre dans la semaine du 22 juin, alors en ce moment nous pouvons fixer un rendez-vous dans la semaine prochaine ou bien, quand je rentre, la semaine du 6 juillet.

Si je pourrai vous rencontrer à XX, j'ai beaucoup plus de flexibilité durant la journée:
- 12 juin (demain) à 15h
- le 15, le 16, le 17 ou le 18 juin > disponibilité entre 10h et 14h30

Par Skype, je peux offrir ces dates pour l'entrevue:
- 15 juin 16h
- 16 juin 16h
- 17 juin 16h

De vive voix à XX après 16h c'est plus difficile pour moi parce que j'enseigne dans ma clinique d'apprentissage, mais au mois de juillet, j'ai les heures suivantes:
- le 8 juillet à 16h ou 17h
- le 14 juillet à 16h ou 17h

Je ne sais pas ce qui fonctionne le mieux pour vous, alors j'attends de vos nouvelles!

Cordialement,

June

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*Figure 13. Screenshot, email communication with instructor participants*
Once I obtained signed consent forms from instructors, almost everyone was responsive and welcoming in their communication with me. I wanted to be flexible and respectful of their time so I avoided contacting instructors with expectations for responses on short timelines. I responded to their emails and questions in a timely fashion, and when it came to scheduling the classroom observation periods, I always confirmed as soon as possible, within a 24-hour window.

Data Collection

Interviews with students

I expected that students would be interested to share their work and be open to talking about their experiences. They had volunteered to participate, after all, and there was an offer of a $25 gift card to Starbucks, iTunes or Chapters upon completion of the study. I also expected that responses would be along a continuum of best case/worst case scenarios—given that this was an exploratory study; that there hasn’t been research done in this field in Canada.

There were emergent issues that I did not expect, however. First, I did not expect that students’ experiences would be so wide-ranging. The continuum of best case/worst case scenarios was far wider than I had imagined. Feedback practices ranged from a professor refusing to give students a study key for the final exam and entire paragraphs of illegible comments at one end of the spectrum, to instructors who held one-on-one meetings with students to give more feedback when students expressed the wish and professors who invited students to bring questions about feedback from any of their other courses in French. Second, I did not expect that students would be so willing to think about the topic of feedback outside of the interviews and share their questions about their own language learning with me. Throughout the interviews with students I heard comments from students that the discussions were helping them think about how their own language learning and course work. Third, and finally, I was stunned to see how concerned students were about the confidentiality of the data they were giving me. Time and again, students wanted to meet me in public places (outside on a patio, at Starbucks, the library in a study room, the cafeteria) rather than in a classroom or the French department (at
each respective campus site). Students lowered their voices, got up to close doors if they could during meetings, and asked me specifically about whether ‘anyone’ would hear what they were saying.

Whenever a student raised a concern about privacy and confidentiality (and they did), I referred to the letter of consent and reassured students about the data encryption practices I was using on my MacBook Pro. I explained again, that no one, not even my supervisor, would learn his or her real identity. In light of these realities and at the suggestion of my supervisor I decided to explore how vignettes might allow me to share some key findings in a way that would protect the identity of all of the participants. I created two composite stories (vignettes) containing some of the most key and confidential data. Based on the work of McIntosh (2016), I decided to use these two vignettes as “interludes” in two places in the thesis, to build bridges between chapters, which I will explain and discuss in the next section.

In all I met with each of ten student participants in the study for a total of three one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The work samples and course syllabi served as a prompt for the interview discussion. Indeed, the work and course plans acted as a way to help students remember what was happening in a particular course (Baker and Lee, 2011), since several participants had multiple French courses. I completed 32 interviews with students using three semi-structured interview protocols (Appendices L, M and N) I developed for my research. I hoped that by asking analogous questions of the students each time we met, I would be able to create sustained conversation with them regarding the themes of my research, namely, the types, frequency and purpose of the feedback they received from their instructors. I wanted to know about the depth and granularity of feedback instructors offered, but I also wanted to know about students’ perceptions and opinions about the feedback they received.

**Interludes**

As previously mentioned, the fact that students were concerned about potential ramifications of sharing their experiences struck a deep chord in me as a researcher. I believe that the students’ wishes to protect themselves, their classmates and their
professors must be respected, but the truths arising from their recounting of their experiences ought to be told. It was for this reason that I created two vignettes that provide a way for me to share actual findings in a way that protects all concerned.

According to Langer (2016), the use of vignettes in research has a number of functionalities that are not necessarily exclusive. First, the research vignette can illustrate findings by creating a narrative that draws closer to the lived experience of the readers; in other words, a vignette is a story that can be contextualized depending on the audience. Second, vignettes can allow researchers to reveal their affect in the story, thereby allowing them to understand themselves better. Third, the research vignette can act as a way to (compress) or condense findings. Lastly, the research vignette can function as an interpretive space where the essential results are shared. For all of these reasons I have opted to use the research tool of a research vignette. In addition, however, my use of the research vignette here allows for both reflexive knowledge production and interpretive knowledge construction. I heard a lot of stories, observed a number of realities and looked at many artefacts. I thought about them (reflexive knowledge production); and in thinking about those things I connected the dots (interpretive knowledge construction) about what those things meant, from my perspective as a researcher, an instructor, and a student in HE. As I researcher I realized that although this was incredibly important data, it was “dark data” or the ‘dark matter’ of qualitative research (Weiner-Levy & Popper-Giveon, 2013, p. 2086); in the sense that if people knew about what was really going on, it would be consequential for stakeholders. As an instructor in HE, I had many thoughts and feelings knowing that students felt so frustrated and alone in their learning, and that they did not know what to do to improve the feedback situation, for themselves or for their colleagues. I thus created two composite stories (vignettes) that contain some of the most important yet confidential data I collected for the study; they allow the key findings to be known in a way that protects the identity of all participants. I present each vignette as a bridge, an “interlude,” before and after Chapter 4. The function of the interludes is to provide a bridge into and out of the students’ world.
Interviews with instructors

I met with each of the five instructor participants in the study, and four agreed to be interviewed for a single one-on-one semi-structured interview. I thus completed four interviews with instructors (more than 6 hours of audio recording) using the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix O) I developed for my research. I hoped that by asking similar questions of the students and instructors, I would be able to observe comparisons in the data between the student data and the instructor data concerning the types, frequency and purpose of the feedback they offered to their students. I wanted to invite fine-grained conversation about the feedback instructors offered right in the interview. However, I also wanted to know about instructors’ perceptions and opinions of their experiences of investing time, energy and expertise in sharing feedback with students. The time I spent interviewing with the four instructor participants was very productive.

In a few key ways, collecting data from the instructors was a very different task, and differently arduous, from interviewing students. First, instructors wanted to speak in French and it was tough for me to keep up with their quick native-like vocabulary, in some instances. Second, instructors were very excited to talk about their questions and share their concerns in a one-on-one interview, and the interviews were long (some as long as 2 hours). Instructors felt frustrated and isolated in meeting students’ needs and expressed a desire to do a better job at communicating feedback so they looked at their participation in my research as an experience of developing a professional learning community of sorts. In three of four interviews, instructors told me that they were grateful to be having a chance to discuss feedback with an educator (I figured out that they meant me), and they were very keen on staying in touch with me. It was very clear to me that instructors knew that students were frustrated and they were, as a group, very aware that not all instructors were as committed and dedicated as they were in spending time with students and on students’ behalf. The fact that two of the four instructor interviewees approached me three to six months after the study was over to write them significant references about the teaching I had seen them do, told me that instructors appreciated their participation in the study and that it had been helpful to them.
Online surveys

There was a total of 18 responses from students (Appendix G) to online surveys (students) and 5 instructor responses (Appendix I). This data is available in the respective data chapters: Chapter 4 for Student participants and Chapter 5 for Instructor participants.

Since I did not look at the survey data at all over the course of the data collection, two things occurred. First, I did not realize that two participants had not completed the online survey (and therefore needed to follow up at a later date). Second, the two data types were completed separately and were kept completely separate from each other, which meant that I could see whether student participants reported similar or different perceptions over time/data type (triangulation).

Classroom observations

Classroom visits in three of the five FSL instructor participants’ classrooms provided an opportunity for the instructors to share components of their instructional practice. Studying classroom interactions and instructor feedback was important, since instructors
might not necessarily be aware of the feedback they were giving in the course of their
teaching, and they would not have necessarily known what was happening for students as
they were given feedback in class. Additionally, students’ perceptions about their
instructors’ feedback might determine how they responded in class. In fact, multiple
periods of observations in one specific course (an intermediate language course) with one
instructor participant maximized my understanding of routine, which is so pivotal to
understanding instructional contexts. Whereas each instructor had emailed or given me
copies of handouts, course syllabi, learning tasks, etc., hearing about the courses from the
FSL instructors before I observed helped me look for signs of feedback practices in the
classroom during classroom observation periods, and provided opportunities to confirm
data through multiple sources (triangulation). I kept a detailed observation log for each
class I attended (Appendices J and K) and I drew on these notes to add another dimension
of the analysis of the instructor data in Chapter 5. Table 6 depicts the observation
protocol I adopted.

Table 6. Sample of Classroom Observation Table, Appendix K

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I see/ Ce que je vois</th>
<th>What I hear/ Ce que j’entends</th>
<th>What I think/ Ce que je pense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional notes/ notes additionnelles:

Focus group discussions

The final component of the study included one-time focus groups with two groups of
future teachers (Appendix Q). In addition, I conducted one asynchronous focus group
with two course instructors (Appendix R). These opportunities were rich experiences and allowed more fulsome discussion of common themes that emerged through consensus (Creswell, 2013). The opportunity for participants to make contributions to joint theory building yielded productive insights from diverse perspectives. These perspectives included: one from the context of current undergraduate students who were French majors at one campus site; one from the context of Teacher Candidates in the final year of their Concurrent Education program at another campus site; and one asynchronous focus group with instructors.

The focus groups were very different experiences, and I will share the data from each one more fully as Interludes before Chapters 4 and 5. The most challenging thing about getting instructors together was not their willingness to meet, but finding mutually available times between them. Even with multiple days and time choices, instructors could not find a single day or time when they were both free at the same time, even outside my availability.

I could hear and see (based on participants’ lengthy interviews) that there was much to discuss, so in the end I proposed that I would share the focus group questions with both instructors and we would hold conversations asynchronously over Skype. This worked very well, and in total those conversations totalled some three hours.

Course documents

The usefulness of assessment to give feedback on learners’ work and the effects that these practices had on future teachers’ learning were explored when I examined the marked work that more than half of student participants (n = 6) brought to their interview(s). Additionally, analysis of course syllabi and tasks were also important components of the study to provide a context, depth and richness to my understanding of the participants’ voices and learning environments.

A total of 15 work samples and 5 course syllabi (Appendix P) were collected, in all. Table 7 shows the template I adopted to track and organize documents for analysis.
Data Analysis

Data collected from all sources was analyzed carefully on an on-going basis from February of Year 1 when I first began collecting data, to May of Year 2 when I finished with the last participants. At that point, I began an intensive 7-month period of data analysis as I transcribed and processed the data set as a whole, according to data type. Since interview data comprised the largest data category (n= 37), I began there. I tabulated all interview data into an Excel spreadsheet. In the case of student participants,
I isolated episodes for transcribing and I uploaded students’ work samples and course syllabi documents I had collected into digital files according to participant.

This also meant that I spent time adapting/translating the data, since all but three of the 37 interviews were conducted in French (92% of the total interview group). I listened to each audio recording multiple times, re-read my interview notes (field notes) and reconstructed interview experiences with each participant by ‘sitting with’ the artifacts. From there I created a separate data file for each participant, where I assigned keywords to the individual and summarized each participant’s responses to each of the research questions.

At the point when I had finished analyzing all of the data for all ten student participants, I decided to do two things. First, I put a participant’s three summaries in side-by-side comparison tables so I could look at (i.e., track) the data over the course of the three interviews. Next, I constructed a case narrative ‘portrait’ of each participant where I inserted all of the details about a particular participant, their language learning practices, linguistic background, etc. This helped me internalize each participant’s context and data set. In this way it was not difficult to “zoom in” and look at individual participants and begin to see similarities and differences since I analyzed interview data from the master spreadsheets (four in all) I created in Excel, using thematic groupings (open coding) of chunks of text to find patterns and examples of convergence and divergence.

One of the most important things I could have done was to listen to the student interviews many times as I transcribed them. Processing the data in this way allowed me to notice aspects of the oral proficiency of each participant, something that I was not expecting. In retrospect I realize that this was one of the most pivotal moments as I began writing up the data chapters because I was able to see the bigger picture of how the choices students made about their language learning affected their trajectories. Thus, although I had not formally planned to collect data or analyze French proficiency, it was enormously helpful when it came time to draft the implications chapter (Chapter 6).

After much reflection, in the case of instructor participants, I decided to have the entire interview transcribed by a professional francophone transcription service based in Israel.
The key detail in making this decision was that I saw how the character of the instructor data set was completely different from the student participants’ set. In fact, the instructors were all native speakers, or spoke with native-like proficiency, so their ideas, questions and stories were easy to understand. With the student data, the way they spoke (verb irregularities, anglicisms, vocal interruptions for uh and um, as well as code switching) was definitely a highly salient part of the story. I analyzed course documents and classroom observation data by isolating episodes and frequency counts of particular types of interactions, which I outline in Chapter 5, when instructor data is presented.

I collected data about what feedback is offered and received from the perspectives of students and their instructors in HE classrooms, and I determined patterns in the data that helped me understand what feedback practices look like in FSL classes in HE at the University of Toronto, across four sites on three campuses.

Translation of Data

All of the research activities (save three interviews) were conducted in French, so for the purposes of analyzing and sharing the data I collected and writing about it in this dissertation, it was necessary to translate and adapt participants’ words from French into English. Since I have native-like French proficiency, I was confidently able to undertake the task. In addition, however, all translations and adaptations were checked by a recently-graduated doctoral colleague with native-like French proficiency, who is also an Ontario certified teacher.

Regarding Language Use

As discussed above, all research activities except three interviews occurred in French. This created complexity when writing this thesis, because it is a document written in English. There were two issues I needed to resolve: first, how to accurately portray students’ words when there were errors in their utterances and written comments, and second, how to use French text (from the data) in the thesis in a way that promoted understanding (not confusion).
First, in the interest of preserving authenticity I opted to leave participants’ language choices as they were uttered in all direct quotations. In other words, I have purposely not corrected grammatical, syntax and vocabulary errors in any of the participants’ words in this document. For the same reason, I have also chosen to make the students sound as they were in natural communication in both interludes (before and after Chapter 4).

Next, regarding my use of French text from the data I gathered, I used French text in four ways in the thesis: in direct quotations, in tables, in both interludes, and in the body of the thesis text. When French is used in direct quotations, it is presented in black font on the left and translated/adapted in English, on the right, in blue italics. Immediately following the quotation appear the words (French translated by the author in italics). When French is used in tables, it is presented in black font and translated/adapted in English, immediately following, in blue italics, followed by the words (French translated by the author in italics). In the case of interludes, they are first presented in French, in black text, and are followed immediately in blue text. When a one-word term or phrase is used in French in the body of the thesis, the English translation of the term or phrase appears in parentheses, immediately after, in (blue italics). Additionally, if the word or term in French was a direct quotation, it appears in quotation marks (“blue italics”). In Chapter 5, I opted to optimize space and create flow in the instructor narrative by presenting some of the instructors’ words in the body of the text, already translated, in a colour other than blue, to show that different people were speaking. Prof. Louise’s discourse appears in aqua, Prof. Claude’s in magenta, Prof. Hélène’s in orange, Prof. Martin’s in green, and since Prof. Michelho did not wish to be interviewed, there was no discourse data.
Evolution of the Conceptual Frame

As previously mentioned, my use of the concepts of SCT, GOT and WTC in the study evolved over the course of data collection, and I documented three ‘shifts’ overall. First, the sustained importance of Goal Orientation theory to the planning, implementation and the analysis of the data I gathered for the study continued throughout all phases of the research. Second, the emergence of the importance of this conceptual frame led to the unexpected and augmented role that the WTC construct played in my data analysis and interpretation. Third, a review of the contribution of Sociocultural Theory to the conceptual frame proved that there was an intensified but reduced applicability of the aspect of mediation in the SCT to my research because of the nature of the classroom observations I carried out and the scope of the work samples I examined with students during their interviews.

I had hoped that I would be able to look at students’ work more carefully with them. I even offered each student participant the opportunity to have me review their work and discuss an assignment with them before they handed it in, in part to offer the feedback they seemed to want. The fact of the matter was, however, that students were reticent to share their work with me (marked and unmarked). This reticence is not something that I
knew how to navigate, as I had not encountered it previously. While many student participants would say that they would bring “something” with them next time for me to look at, and half of the students did, Myla and Chloe were the only students who willingly shared more than one marked work sample with me. Interestingly, none of the students took me up on my offer to review or offer next steps. All of the students repeatedly said that they had forgotten, and when I followed up by email, they repeated that they had forgotten.

This points to an interesting event in the data findings, in that students were not sure about whether it was “okay” for them to share their work (i.e., they perhaps felt vulnerable) and they were also not sure about whether it was “okay” for me to offer feedback on work that they had not yet handed in (i.e., perhaps they felt that because I had no authority as a TA or course instructor, that it was inappropriate). Either way, this reduced the effectiveness of the course work sample feature of the study design, which could have been of benefit to the students (and to the study). In retrospect, I am not aware of anything I could have done to alleviate these concerns for students, or how I could have addressed these concerns differently.

Background of the Researcher / Researcher Bias

As a doctoral researcher of language assessment and a second language speaker (of French), I have been fascinated by issues of language proficiency, pedagogy and motivation for language learning for more than three decades, from both practical and theoretical perspectives. The evolution of my research interest in feedback first commenced in 1985 when I lived in French residence at Queen’s University and discovered that my language learning flourished outside the classroom because I was “living” my second language, making friendships with native speakers.

During my two decades as a French immersion teacher in three divisions in two school boards in Ontario, I mentored teacher candidates from Queen’s University and OISE/UT in French. These experiences afforded me the opportunity to observe two things: first, that language learners benefit from strategy instruction because of the impact on motivation; second, that language learners must be provided for according to their
individual needs. In addition to my experience teaching French immersion, my decade of graduate study and research at the Master’s and Doctoral levels in language pedagogy and assessment, language proficiency and teacher development has allowed me to learn about feedback for language learning.

In my three years’ teaching experience during my doctoral program as a Sole Responsibility Instructor at UTSC for a course in French about language teaching, I saw how the linguistic diversity of my students enriched their experience of learning an additional language. When I later worked as a graduate research assistant with the Steps to English Proficiency project (STEP), I saw how elementary and secondary students across Ontario benefited tremendously from receiving explicit, descriptive feedback, and that it helped them progress significantly in their language learning. I have also seen what a difference it can make when students’ language learning is supported outside of the university classroom.

For all of the reasons cited above, I feel amply qualified in every way to have facilitated this research study. The opportunity to analyze and report on the findings is a privilege. Moreover, this research on feedback in HE is timely.

Ethical Considerations

Although there was a low risk for all participants in this study (an opinion validated by the ORE), language teaching and learning can raise some unexpected emotions, so I prepared for that in two ways. I was specifically concerned that participants might feel vulnerable about being audio-recorded during the interview (interviews, in the case of students) and potentially being observed in class, even though participation in the study was completely confidential. First, I explained in the letters of informed consent that each student and instructor would have had different experiences with language teaching and learning, and that each participant and their experiences would be treated with the utmost respect. The second way I prepared to minimize the risk for participants was to take time (between 45 minutes and one hour) during the recruitment process to ensure that participants’ informed consent was truly informed. Every participant, student and instructor, was given time to learn about the study in a face-to-face meeting with me.
Because of time constrictions, two instructors opted to meet via Skype for this, but I travelled live to everyone else (13 other participants).

During those first recruitment meetings, I wanted prospective participants to see and hear that my commitment to listening to their experience was genuinely sincere. I also hoped that my experience as a student and instructor in HE (and an Ontario FSL teacher of nearly 30 years) would give me credibility with prospective participants. In retrospect, I have no regrets about taking this time at the beginning to ensure that participants understood what they were signing up for, and what I was trying to do. I believe that this helped lay a foundation of trust and collaboration, and helped me collect valid and reliable data.

Participation in the study was completely confidential and every effort was made to protect the privacy of each and every participant. This was not necessarily easy to do, given that I ended up spending a great deal of time at UTM (the site where the study received the most active administrative support). The importance of maintaining a blind approach was critical; FSL student participants were in classes with FSL instructor participants and it happened that interviews with students were sometimes happening concurrently (chronologically) at the time when classroom observations were going on. I felt appropriately protective of my study participants and the challenge of recruiting instructors heightened my awareness of the privileged position of being allowed to observe in HE classrooms. Additionally, and as previously discussed, students’ serious concerns about confidentiality intensified my commitment to protecting the privacy of my ‘informants.’ Two instructors knew of each other’s participation in the study because of the one-time end of study focus group discussion (even though it was asynchronous). In the case of the two student focus groups of three students (OISE) and two students (UTM), students learned of each other’s participation at the time of the discussion.

All interviews were conducted in a mutually convenient, private and comfortable location. All participants were assigned a pseudonym for the study, and only my thesis supervisor and I had access to raw data. I encrypted all data both on my computer and on my external hard drive through an on-board encryption application on my MacBook Pro,
where I stored these electronic files in a secure location on my laptop. I stored my external hard drive in a secure location that travelled with me only when necessary (academic conferences in England, Calgary and Montreal). In addition, I stored all data and analysis in encrypted format, in Drop-Box™ with a password known only to me.

Validity

One of the noteworthy strengths of this research study is that I was able to build triangulation through separate inductive processes and instruments, with both students’ and instructors’ data sets. Students responded to the online survey in their own time, away from any other research activity, and I was therefore able to triangulate the results between their surveys and the significant body of interviews and focus group data I collected. In the same way, instructors also responded to the online survey as a separate process from the interview, classroom observation(s) and focus group. In this way, I was once again able to ensure triangulation between instructors’ survey results and the considerable quantity of instructors’ interview, classroom observations, course documents and focus group data I was able to gather. In addition, some student participants were enrolled in some instructor participants’ courses, which also contributed to a greater degree of triangulation between students’ data and instructors’ data. Although I had hoped for this occurrence, it was not something that could be planned, nor was it therefore a guaranteed eventuality; it was, however, most certainly welcome.

Limitations

There is no doubt that the greatest limitation of this study is the small sample size. That fact notwithstanding, the data I collected is rich and the way it was collected (as described above) ensures its validity and reliability.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I detailed my research design. This exploratory qualitative study about the feedback practices in HE at the University of Toronto took a narrative approach with a social constructivist framework. An inductive qualitative design was suitable because it ensured that I could gather rich and thick descriptions of multiple and diverse
perspectives using a variety of tools (Creswell, 2013). The tools that I designed were based on a survey of the qualitative literature about teacher-student interaction in HE (Contreras-McGavin and Kezar, 2007), classroom research (Baker and Lee, 2011), and qualitative research design (Creswell, 2013).

This design allowed me to speak about the relevant issues about feedback, proficiency and future teachers in HE, because it allowed me to ask participants’ direct questions about their experiences (Creswell, 2013) in multiple ways, using a variety of instruments that I conceived for this specific context at the University of Toronto. The issues around feedback are complex and multifaceted, and by collecting data from interviews, online questionnaire surveys, classroom observations and focus groups, as well as an analysis of course documents, student work samples and tasks, I was indeed able to explore the topic fully.

In this chapter, I began with an introduction of the breadth and depth of the field of inquiry, in other words, the rationale for the study. I then shared the Research Questions, the overview of the study and the model of the study design. The research timetable showed the trajectory of the study, and in particular, the difficulties with instructor recruitment. I explained the University of Toronto context, in part to show the diversity of the campus and in part to show its size. This institution of HE is a privileged space and it holds a prestigious place in the global learning community in HE, which is why it also has a responsibility to provide hallmark experiences for students.

The chapter continued with detailed descriptions of my Ethics protocols and recruiting procedures, followed by an explanation of how I developed my instruments, namely, my online surveys (2) and semi-structured interview protocols (4). I spoke about the participants in my study (students n=10 and instructors n=5) and discussed aspects of all data collection procedures with regard to surveys, interviews, classroom observations, focus groups and course documents (including student work samples). This was followed by a fulsome account of my data analysis procedures, which began as soon as I commenced collecting data in March of Year 1 and ended in December of Year 2. Next, I reviewed the evolution of the conceptual frame I presented in Chapter 2. The chapter
ended with a review of my background (bias) as a researcher and a discussion of the ethical considerations of the study, as well as its validity and limitations.

Chapters 4 and 5 illuminate the data and take us into student participants’ lives as language learners and future teachers, across three campus sites and four locations at the University of Toronto.
Deux étudiantes se rencontrent dans la queue à Starbucks.
Bindhu : Alexa! Bonjour! Ça fait longtemps—comment vas-tu?
Alexa : Salut Bindhu! J’ai trop de travail en ce moment, mais tout va bien, merci…Toi?
Bindhu : J’ai hâte pour la fin du trimestre…
Alexa : Moi AUSSI! Quel cours as-tu?
Bindhu : Le 279, l’écriture intermédiaire
Alexa : J’ai le 299 maintenant. Je n’ai aucune idée comment je fais. Ça me tue. Qui fait le 279?
Bindhu : Berlingot. Le 299? C’est linguistique ou l’oral intermédiaire?
Alexa : L’oral intermédiaire. Je n’ai aucune idée pourquoi ce cours est appelé “l’oral”…il y a seulement le prof qui parle…bien—les francophones parlent. Mais nous, on ne parle jamais! J’sais pas comment je vais gagner les 10 points pour la participation…
Bindhu : Pourrais-tu parler au prof? Qui est-ce?
Alexa : Tu le connais.
Bindhu : Oh NON. Tu plaisantes.
Alexa : Oui, c’est comme ça.
Bindhu : J’ai presque changé de spécialité à cause de lui.
Alexa : Tu sais, je peux accepter ses préjugés…Je suis un anglophone qui essaie de parler « sa » langue, mais ce qui me rend folle c’est que je n’ai aucune idée comment améliorer mon travail. Je sais que mon accent pourrait être meilleur, mais à part de ça, je n’ai aucune idée!
Bindhu : Lui pose-tu des questions après le cours? Assiste-tu aux heures de bureau?
Alexa : Ok, j’ai laissé tomber ça il y a un mois. Je vois comment il parle aux anglophones qui ont une grammaire moins bonne. Il les regarde à travers—et ne répond même pas à leurs questions. Pourquoi j’irai lui parler après le cours ou bien durant ses heures de bureau? Une amie est venue à son bureau avec moi une fois, et il n’y était même pas!
Bindhu : Ça ce n’est vraiment pas bon du tout. Est-ce que tu lui as envoyé un courriel?
Alexa : Oui, j’ai essayé ça aussi—une semaine avant l’examen partiel parce que je voulais comprendre mon rendement. On n’avait qu’un devoir corrigé et j’ai eu un 65 p.c. Je voulais savoir comment faire dans le partiel pour gagner un 70 p.c. au cours…
Bindhu : Et alors?
Alexa : Je n’ai rien reçu de lui. C’est comme je n’existe pas, ou bien, qu’il pense que je suis nulle parce que je viens du programme de français de base.
Bindhu : C’est épouvantable. Alors tu ne voudrais probablement pas entendre de mon expérience dans l’écriture intermédiaire?!

Alexa : Pas du tout! Je pourrais profiter des bonnes nouvelles!

Bindhu : Je sais que j’ai dit que j’ai trop à faire, mais c’est de ma faute. J’ai trop focalisé sur mes autres cours ce trimestre et je n’ai pas assez travaillé ce que j’aurai dû faire. Je suis tellement contente que la semaine de lecture arrive! Je plonge dans le Bescherelle.

Alexa : Youpi! Vas-y ma chère!

Bindhu : Ouais, c’est moi. Fillette des Verbes!

Alexa : Comment le savais-tu même que tu devais travailler des verbes?

Bindhu : De ce cours d’écriture! 279…à chaque fois que nous faisons une composition, le prof nous écrit un couple de phrases de rétroaction, puis elle fait une diapo de toutes les erreurs qu’elle a vues/entendues. C’est vraiment utile.

Alexa : Cool!

Bindhu : Ouais, elle affiche les diapos en ligne puis elle en parle en classe. Elle affiche les exemples de toutes les erreurs (sans noms!) Ensuite elle se promène en classe pendant qu’on regarde nos travaux—comme, qu’on puisse lui poser les questions.

Alexa : Super! Puis-je voir un exemple?

Bindhu : Bien sûr! (elle fouille dans son sac à dos retrouver son dossier du cours) Cette manière de remarquer/observer mes fautes et de les trouver avec la rétroaction visuelle et auditoire me fait très bien! La chose la plus drôle c’est que je n’avais jamais remarqué que je ne connaissais pas mes verbes à l’oral non plus. Je n’avais aucune idée pour les verbes! Je ne savais jamais si je devais employer le présent, le passé composé, l’imparfait ou le conditionnel. Je me sens constamment en arrière quand je parle aux autres. C’est comme…une fois que je sache ce que j’ai à dire, la conversation est déjà partie. (Elle rit, gênée.) Quand est-ce que je serai capable de parler assez bien pour enseigner le français?

Alexa : Je n’sais pas, Bindhu, mais je ressens la même chose. On doit écrire l’examen des compétences linguistiques l’année prochaine et je suis certaine que je l’échouerai si je devais l’écrire maintenant. (Elle regarde le travail de Bindhu…) Formidable! C’est fantastique! Elle t’a montrée carrément où tu te trompes!

Bindhu : Pas pire, eh? Après le premier devoir, le prof nous a demandé d’identifier une chose où on voulait recevoir de rétroaction à chaque reprise. J’ai demandé de rétroaction sur mes verbes, et elle me dit que je m’améliore.

Alexa : C’est merveilleux!

Bindhu : Tu sais, quelques-uns de nous, on se réunit tous les jeudis à 13h pour se pratiquer. Tu es la bienvenue d’assister. Tu as seulement besoin d’apporter un texte que tu veux travailler, avec un exemplaire pour chaque personne—nous en sommes 5.

Alexa : Fantastique! Je dois faire quelque chose pour aider moi-même. Pourrais-tu m’envoyer un texto avec les infos? Merci beaucoup, Bindhu! J’suis si contente qu’on s’est vu aujourd’hui!
Two students meet in the line at Starbucks.

Bindhu: Alexa! Hi! It’s been ages! How are you?
Alexa: Hey Bindhu! I’m drowning in work at the moment but I’m well, thanks. You?
Bindhu: I can hardly wait for the end of the semester…
Alexa: No kidding! Which course are you taking?
Bindhu: 279—intermediate writing. You?
Alexa: 299 now. I have NO IDEA how I’m doing. It’s killing me. Who’s teaching 279?
Bindhu: Berlingot…299? That’s linguistics or intermediate oral?
Alexa: Intermediate oral. I have no idea why that class is called oral…only the prof speaks…well, the francophones speak. But the rest of us, we don’t say a thing! I dunno how I’m supposed to get the 10% participation marks…
Bindhu: Can you talk to the prof? Who is it?
Alexa: You know who.
Bindhu: Oh man. I feel your pain.
Alexa: Yup. It’s like that.
Bindhu: I very nearly decided to change my major because of that guy.
Alexa: You know, I can get past the judging…I’m just another anglo trying to speak “his” language! What really drives me crazy is that I have no idea how to improve my work. I mean, I know that my accent could be better, but beyond that…zippo!
Bindhu: Are you asking him questions after class? Going to his office hours?
Alexa: Well I kinda gave up on that about a month ago. I see what he does to anglos who use less than perfect grammar in class. He looks right through them—and doesn’t answer their questions. Why would I approach him after class or during office hours? One of my friends went with me to his office once and he wasn’t even there!
Bindhu: Yikes, that is really not good. Have you emailed him?
Alexa: Yup, tried that too—a week in advance of the midterm to try and get an idea about how I was doing…we’ve only had one piece of marked work back and I got a 65%. I wanted to know how well I had to do in the midterm in order to maintain a 70% overall…
Bindhu: And?
Alexa: Never heard back from him. It’s like I don’t exist, or like he doesn’t care because I’m from CF, or something.
Bindhu: That’s awful. I guess you’re probably not going to want to hear about my experience with intermediate writing then?
Alexa: Of course! I could use some good news!
Bindhu: Well, I know I said that I have too much work to do, but that’s my fault. I’ve
been focusing on my other courses this term and I haven’t put in the time I should have. I’m so glad that reading week is almost here! I’m gonna get serious with the Bescherelle.

Alexa: Wow! You go girl!

Bindhu: Yep, that’s me. Verb girl.

Alexa: How did you even know that you needed to work on verbs?

Bindhu: From that writing class…279! Every time we do a composition, the prof gives us a couple of sentences of feedback and then, she makes up a slide of all the common errors she has seen and heard. It’s really helpful.

Alexa: Wow!

Bindhu: Yeah, she posts the slides on line and talks about them in class. She posts examples of the errors (no names!) Then she walks around the room while we look at our work—like, so we can ask questions.

Alexa: That sounds amazing. Can I see?

Bindhu: Of course! (digs around in her backpack to find her notes) This way of learning rocks, for me. Having the visual and audio feedback in addition to having opportunities to ask questions is just fantastic. The bonus about this whole thing is, I never realized that I was also really struggling with verbs in my oral. I never knew whether I’m supposed to be using présent, passé composé, imparfait or conditionnel. I constantly feel on a five-second time lag when other people are talking. It’s like by the time I know what I want to say to keep the conversation going, the conversation has already moved on. (She laughs ruefully.) When am I gonna be to be able to speak French well enough to teach it?

Alexa: I dunno Bindhu, but I feel your pain. We have to write the proficiency exam next year and I am pretty sure that at this point I’d fail. (looking at Bindhu’s work…) Wow! This is really awesome! She actually showed you where you are going wrong!

Bindhu: I know, eh? After the first assignment my prof started asking us to identify one thing we would like specific feedback on every time we do an assignment. I asked for feedback on my verbs and she says I’m getting better.

Alexa: That’s fantastic!

Bindhu: Hey some of us from that class have started to get together every Thursday at 1pm for practice. You’re welcome to join anytime. You just need to bring a piece of your writing to work on with copies for everyone—there’s 5 of us.

Alexa: Fantastic. I’ve got to do something to help myself. Can you text me all the deets? I’ll be there. Thanks, Bindhu. So happy I ran into you today!

(French translated by the author in blue.)

From the outset of this conversation between Alexa and Bindhu, we see the common vocabulary and shared experience between these two French majors. Their connection with similar vocabulary, empathy about workload, etc. is obvious. These two young
women are clearly having different experiences with their French courses, though, despite the fact that they are both second year French students. The differences and difficulties emerge around the way a particular professor teaches a specific course on intermediate oral practice.

First, the ‘oral’ course isn’t really oral, and more experienced (i.e., francophone) students participate more and receive more validation (and feedback) for their participation in class, to the point where the CF students feel blocked about how they might speak enough in class to earn the class participation marks. In a sense, then, the CF students silence and marginalize themselves, in anticipation of the professor’s disdain of their oral skills. They anticipate and avoid the negative feelings that inevitably arise when they are not acknowledged or ignored by the professor, by not engaging in the single best thing they could do in class to improve their oral work—to talk.

In addition, the vignette shares that one piece of writing has been marked, with insubstantial and vague feedback, and the student was not aware of what she could do to improve her work before the midterm was written. Alexa has no alternative other than to guess how she is doing and estimate what she has to do to achieve her desired outcome—a 70% in the course. The fact that the professor does not recognize Anglophone students’ efforts and does not help address the power differential with more experienced speakers of French is problematic, as is the fact that the professor doesn’t always answer emails, or attend office hours. The fact that students are aware of this professor’s practices is also not surprising, since information about particular courses and specific instructors travels fast among students.

On the positive side, however, Bindhu offers some valuable information about the new language learning experiences she is having in her course 279—intermediate writing. She demonstrates her own ‘new’ learning and is able to voluntarily share that experience with her classmate. She explains how what the professor is doing is helping her think about her own work and what her next steps are to achieve improved French proficiency. She appears to understand that there are gaps in her verb learning; she knows what to do about that; and she has reached out to other colleagues to take steps to make learning
happen for herself (by engaging in a collaborative work-study group that meets regularly). When faced with the (well-known and somewhat dreaded) performance requirement of the third-year French proficiency exam, Bindhu becomes a motivated agent on her own behalf. She takes up the feedback offered to her, of her own accord, and applies that feedback, improving her proficiency in the process.

In addition, Bindhu shares her experience and reaches out to another classmate who might benefit from this practice, peer review and feedback process. We can see that Bindhu’s motivation has increased, her personal commitment and ‘time on task’ has increased, and that progress is indeed being made—according to Bindhu and her instructor. Bindhu seems to realize that she has a clear part to play in her improvement plan; that she has agency. She also seems to sense a mutual engagement from the professor—that she is not alone on the journey. Bindhu’s motivation to improve is partly about her own efforts, then, and partly about her professor’s support of her learning through scaffolding and dialogue practices that seem to be built into the course design.
Chapter 4: Students Run the Race

Introduction

In this chapter I share and discuss the findings of my research with ten student participants at the University of Toronto across three campuses and four sites, according to the protocols I designed and described in Chapter 3. The chapter begins with a summary description of each student participant, which I present through learner portraits. Each portrait explains the language learning experiences of a particular student language learner (and future teacher) in HE. The learner portraits not only give information about participants’ academic program and language learning, but also share important information regarding their linguistic backgrounds and principle concerns. Next, I share an overview summary of participants’ views of descriptive feedback, as a starting point to understanding students’ perceptions of the concept of feedback. Then, I communicate the findings by research question. First, I describe the characteristics of the feedback received by students from their FSL instructors. Second, I discuss what students did with the feedback they were offered. The chapter concludes with a cross-case analysis that allows an in-depth discussion of the specific findings of the data I collected. The role of individual context variables will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 6 when I explain and address Research Question 3 concerning the relationship between students’ feedback use and their context variables.

Since I collected all data over a 15-month period, I had the opportunity to work with half of the student participants over a longer period of time because the focus groups happened after the interviews and classrooms observations. The summary table below shows the participants, their program (for review) and the timeframe of data collection activities.
Table 8. Summary table of student participants showing timeframe of data collection activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant (pseudonym)</th>
<th>Academic Program</th>
<th>Timeframe of data collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Alexandra</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Amelia</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chloe</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Years 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Jason</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Years 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lin</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Myla</td>
<td>B.Sc.</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Nicola</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Years 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Safiya</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Veronika</td>
<td>CTEP</td>
<td>Years 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Zoe</td>
<td>B.Ed.</td>
<td>Years 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alexandra

My first contact with upper-year CTEP French major Alexandra, was via a text from her on a Friday evening in April at 6:36pm. I was to learn that Alexandra’s preferred method of communication was by text. During the duration of the study I was in contact with her but once by email, and that was to send her the link for the online survey.
Alexandra was extremely reserved, the most reserved of all the participants in the study. I was never entirely sure why this was—whether it was in her personality to be more quiet or whether she felt less confident in sharing orally in French or perhaps both. In the beginning, Alexandra would only communicate with me in English, both by text and during the consent process when I met with her for an hour to explain the study to her. Other than a few words in French when I specifically asked her to speak in French, she spoke in English. I successfully gained her trust though, and she signed the consent and we did the first interview on April 28 (when she spoke mostly in French).
Part way through the process of Alexandra’s interviews I secured permission to sign off on what became known as “remedial hours” for students who had not been successful in passing the CTEP French proficiency exam in the Spring term. This was good news for Alexandra because she had a number of hours (ten) to complete for oral production. It was somewhat surprising that Alexandra shared in her second interview that she would give herself a B1 or B2 on the CEFR, and that she had completed the Explore program twice. I couldn’t understand the gap between the language exposure Alexandra had experienced and her level of self-assessment, versus her conditional pass on the proficiency exam. Receiving remedial hours for her participation in the study was a helpful motivator for Alexandra; she was pleased to speak in French when I explained to her that she could get credit for something she had to do.

During the second and third interviews, Alexandra had very little to say, and seemed to be confused or bewildered. In fact, she even seemed slightly offended when I kept asking to know more details about how she was handling the heavy demands of two upper year literature and language classes in the fall term. Her class was reading a classical French tome by Racine, and having read that oeuvre once upon a time, I knew that it was a challenging read. Knowing that Alexandra was a CF student who began her study of French at the age of 9 in Grade 4, and knowing how much she was reticent to speak in French, I found myself wondering how it was that she came to select French as her major.

When I met Alexandra again in January in the context of a focus group, I was surprised at how much more open she was to talking about her courses. While still reticent to initiate responses to the questions, preferring to let her colleague and classmate/friend take the lead, she did volunteer a few key statements (in English) during the hour-long conversation. She said, “I care that my profs care,” and “I appreciate it when I see that my profs teach in ways to avoid misunderstandings” (Focus Group 2, Jan 20).

**Amelia**

Amelia was an upper-year CTEP student who began her undergraduate degree in the program as a Math major. She shared without hesitation that working on both her oral skills and her vocabulary was the number one priority in her French proficiency
development since beginning university. One reason for that, she explained, is that she didn’t have a great deal of opportunity to practice. Amelia talked about the fact that she was not francophone and she therefore had to work hard to “keep up” in all aspects of her course performance. She also spoke in glowing terms about her time in the summer EXPLORE program at Laval the previous summer, where she opted to do a homestay accommodation with a family in Quebec City in order to get maximum benefit from her time there. Amelia also shared that she had really benefitted from the course in advanced oral skill development with one of the instructor participants in the study where students were expected to take risks in oral practice during class and on their assignments.

Amelia openly admitted that she knew nothing about what either “Syntaxe”\(^5\) (syntax) or “Morphologie,”\(^6\) (morphology) meant (her first two French linguistics courses). She said she still found this lack of understanding odd considering that she had achieved a bilingual certificate at secondary school (she had attended French immersion from Kindergarten to Grade 8). Her lack of comprehension notwithstanding, Amelia switched her major to French at the end of 1st year and continued with Math as a minor. At the time of her third interview, Amelia shared she felt the biggest challenge for her was her lack of confidence. She spoke at length about her required placement in an intermediate French Immersion class at a local school where she was shorter than all of students. She talked openly about wearing high boots (with high heels) to make herself taller, so she had the confidence to look the students in the eye and “tell them what to do” (her words). Amelia explained that there was a real classroom management struggle going on in the class with the AT in her placement—the students did not want to speak French. They had a class point system but no one (neither the teacher nor the students) really paid any attention. Amelia was keenly aware of how her confidence was linked to her ability in speaking French, both in class and during her placement, and she was concerned about that.

\(^5\) Syntax: “The way in which linguistic elements (such as words) are put together to form constituents such as phrases or clauses. [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/syntax](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/syntax)  

\(^6\) Morphology: “A study and description of word formation (such as inflection, derivation and compounding) in language; the system of word-forming elements and processes in a language.” [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/morphology](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/morphology)
Chloe

At the time I first met Chloe she was an upper-year CTEP French major. She was eager to participate in the study because she saw that she lacked the necessary confidence and skill to teach in French and wanted to improve. Once I found out that I would be allowed to work with students and sign off on proficiency hours (Appendix S), I offered remedial help to Chloe during the spring term of Year 1. Chloe was unable to do any work on her French that summer because she had a summer job, but we re-established contact in September and met for an hour for the first time in the first week of October. We discussed what was required to complete her remedial hours in French proficiency. Chloe had received a conditional pass on the French proficiency exam in April, and had been assessed with 15 hours of oral production and 10 hours of written production to do before she would pass.

At the time of that first meeting at the onset of the new school year, I observed a serious and renewed commitment to improvement from Chloe, although she was surprised when I asked her to talk about what “things” (aspects) of her oral French proficiency she needed to improve. She seemed bewildered by my question and was unable to answer—I was left with the impression that she had not yet considered about the specifics of what she needed to learn, or what she needed to “work on” with respect to her oral French.

In the end Chloe named proficiency with using verbs properly in conversation as a top priority [the imperfect (l’imparfait), the simple future (le futur simple) and the conditional (le conditionnel)]. I subsequently discovered that Chloe had chosen to do a social foundations of teaching and learning course, en français (in French), even though she could have taken it in English and was initially registered for the course in English. In other words, Chloe had opted for a challenge, and doing so meant taking action in the first week of classes to change her timetable. She was committed. In the text below we can see that verbs were still on the “to-do list” for Chloe, as she asked me for some suggestions about how to teach the past tense with reflexive verbs and after the imperfect.
Chloe continued to be in touch with me after her participation in the study was complete; she texted and emailed when she had questions about her work or her upcoming practicum.

Jason

Jason was an upper-year CTEP French major when he contacted me about becoming a student participant in my study. The remarkable thing about having Jason join the study was that he had been in an undergraduate class I had previously taught. I had not seen him for some time, and I was delighted to have an opportunity to speak with him about his experiences of feedback in HE, especially since he was in his final year. Jason’s French proficiency had always been very well developed, but because of his participation in my study I had a chance to learn where that proficiency came from. First, his Mom is a NNS of French, and she had on-going conversations with Jason in French since he was very young. Second, because of the importance his parents placed on learning French, he had gone to a unilingual French school until Grade 8 before continuing high school in a French immersion setting. This experience gave him an opportunity to master French grammar and syntax in a way that many students do not.

I learned that Jason had been thinking about teaching and his own language learning for years. It was remarkable to see how Jason’s confidence grew as he shared his pedagogical ideas over the course of our interactions. Each time I met him for an
interview, he shared experiences that were interesting and demonstrated significant motivation for his learning about language and about language teaching. Jason shared a website he was developing for students learning French which included tasks, texts, activities and games for students of all ages and levels. Because his website had not yet launched, screen shots were not available. However, as Jason walked me through it in a 30-minute tour, I could see that it will be a phenomenal resource! He created a number of options for learners to choose from on the site map. Thus, whether one was an early immersion student or a Core or Extended, there were a wide range of activities, texts in a variety of genres, and feedback options available. Jason was also very active on campus; he was the editor for a campus publication, and had recently started a bilingual journal that he and many of his colleagues were working on over the summer.

Jason indicated that he always attended a professor’s office hours if there was feedback given to him that he did not understand. I contacted Jason about participating in a focus group during his final year, and it was during that discussion on January 13, Year 2 that Jason shared the wise observation that if there was no feedback forthcoming (which often happened), it was impossible for him to implement that feedback. He then went on to say unequivocally that it is the teacher’s job to initiate feedback—not the student’s job. These heartfelt words had a resounding impact on the ensuing discussion with two other classmates.

Lin

Lin was a CTEP student who was specializing in French and Biology. She expressed a great deal of interest to learn about how she could learn more about feedback; what it was, what she could use it for, and why she had not been aware of the power of feedback before now. A first language speaker of Cantonese, Lin’s approach to French language proficiency seemed to be “If I work hard, practice and ask questions, and I do my homework, I can do this.” Lin asked me many questions, and emailed me after her first interview to thank me.
Chère June,

Merci de tes questions perspicaces pendant notre entrevue aujourd'hui! J'ai appris plus sur mes préférences d'apprentissage et l'importance de demander une clarification sur la rétroaction. Je suis aussi très reconnaissante de tes compliments sur mon niveau de langue: ils m'encouragent à améliorer mes compétences du français et à approfondir mes connaissances de la culture française.

On a suggéré que la deuxième entrevue se passe lundi prochain. Je serai disponible le matin et l'après-midi jusqu'à 16h; Est-ce qu'il y a un temps qui te convient pendant cette durée?

Figure 20. Screenshot, Email from Lin, June 3

In her second interview on June 8, Lin responded enthusiastically when I asked her how her week had been. She said that she was very surprised and happy to learn from being a participant in my study that she could do more to help herself learn. She mentioned that it had never occurred to her that it was a possibility to improve her work by asking questions of the professor, and she expressed not even knowing she was allowed to seek such support! Lin explained that her experience so far with asking for more feedback was that the profs thoughts she was asking for more marks. She had needed to explain that it was not at all her intention. She shared that in her culture it was not acceptable to go and petition the teacher for more marks and she thought that this was what feedback was.

As soon as Lin made the link between asking for more feedback and next steps, she realized that it was no longer about petitioning for higher marks but rather about increasing her knowledge. Over the course of the study Lin took a risk to seek feedback from a professor who offered it and she was thrilled with the result. Although Lin did not take me up on my offer to read any of her work to offer explanation of the feedback, she
did ask me to share how to give feedback to students on their writing because she was an editor for the French language journal on campus.

I asked her if participating in this study changed how she looked at and applied feedback and she shared that in fact, it had. She shared that while in France during her 5-week summer course Lin went to her professors and asked them for more feedback so that she could improve her work. Although they were astonished (they thought she was asking them to re-mark her work because she was unsatisfied with her grade), Lin reported that they were very pleased to help.

Myla

Myla was an upper-year student and the only participant who was not a French major. Unlike other student participants, Myla hoped to pursue a career in the green sector business/technology upon graduation. A biology/environmental science major, Myla was convinced of the value of French for her future. It was not in her plan to pursue a career in teaching, necessarily, although she did not rule that out as an option. Myla attended the EXPLORE program after her second year, and she raved about the benefits of the program. At the time of her participation in the study, Myla was enrolled in one French course, an upper-year translation class. The professor explained to all students that it took knowledge of both languages to be able to translate well.

Throughout the three interviews with Myla, I made two observations of her French language proficiency. First, she was very deliberate and methodical about each word and each verb choice. Second, she often “had it right” but did not think she did. She often either said things in English after she had carefully reflected. In fact, Myla always reflected first and carefully and she never ‘just spoke in English’ until she had really thought about what she was trying to say and was sure that she did not know how to say it in French.

Myla had an extensive collection of work samples to share, a total of four electronic folders of her past work, articles, handouts and PowerPoint™ presentations from her past courses. It was evident that she cared deeply about her learning and wanted to improve.
Throughout the three interviews, Myla spoke in French with a wonderful accent and intonation and she stopped me, when needed, to clarify her understanding. She was taking an upper year translation course at the time of her participation in the study, and she spoke with great passion about her professor. This professor had an innovative way of teaching translation to his students—he gave them the opportunity to correct a translation of a text. Myla said that her proficiency and knowledge really grew as a result of this task. She said that she grasped translation and grammatical knowledge of French in a way that she had not before, as a result of this professor and her work in this course. She spoke about it being the most helpful task she had ever experienced up until now in her language learning in French.

In the two screenshots below is the course outline of an upper year language course that Myla took early on. She loved the professor and the course because she learned so much. The course description explains “students will further develop their writing and speaking, comprehension and listening abilities, with a particular cultural focus on francophones around the world.”

![Figure 21. Screenshot, Course syllabus, upper year language course, course description and organization](image)

There were multiple opportunities for feedback in this course including two in-class compositions, two reading comprehension tests, two oral production tests, two listening comprehension and spelling tests, two grammatical analysis and use of reference tools tests, two cultural studies projects, and a possible 5% “overall assessment” for each term.
I met Nicola through Chloe, the participant profiled above, in late September. She was in her final year of the CTEP program. Both Chloe and Nicola had been assigned remedial hours to complete after they had written the CTEP French proficiency exam the previous May. My first meeting with Nicola in person was with Chloe at the library where I facilitated a conversation with them about what they wanted/needed to improve. It was immediately obvious that Nicola was very aware about the ways she wanted/needed to improve.

During the first two interviews with Nicola in early October I learned that her course in the sociology of education was in French and all of the lectures were presented in French by a professor who read, spoke and published scholarly articles in French. Students were not required to speak in French, however, neither in class nor in small group discussion. Additionally, they were not required to hand in their written work in French, even though this course was a French credit and all students in the class would be certified teachers by the end of the academic year and hoped to teach (in) French. According to Nicola, most (if not all students in the course) were French majors/specialists.
Apparently, students had a choice about whether to do their reading reflections about articles in English or French, regardless of whether the article was in English or French. Reading reflections were posted online, in English or French according to the students’ choices. Although students could read each other’s posts, there was no requirement to read or respond to anything or anyone else’s posts. The professor used the completion of this work to fulfill/constitute the participation requirement of the course (10%) but did not offer any feedback, either global or individual, to students. In other words, the professor did not refer to student feedback, questions or reflection in course lectures, nor was any individual feedback given on content or grammar.

When I met Nicola again on January 14 for a Focus Group, she had developed some strong (and valid) opinions about the usefulness of her sociology course in French (it had finished in December). She felt that the lack of descriptive feedback provided on anything she wrote in French had not helped her progress in any way in her French proficiency. She also saw that when the readings were in English, she found it very challenging to respond in French. For her this meant that “taking the easy way” was similarly easy to do in this course, even though she was committed “globally” to doing the work in French.

In terms of her curriculum and teaching methods course in French, Nicola indicated that she wanted to tell me more at her third interview. The following week I learned that Nicola was frustrated about the fact that she had not yet received any feedback from the instructor. It was January, and this was a full-year course. Figure 23 depicts the assessment portion of the course outline for Nicola’s course.
Safiya

Safiya was a highly motivated French major in the CTEP program. She was reflective, from the outset, about the ways that her coursework was preparing her to become a teacher. Safiya had not yet written the French proficiency exam, but was looking forward to it, as she felt already quite prepared and was attending workshops given by the CTEP office. She also had a sibling in the CTEP program, which helped her know what was ahead. Safiya won a speech contest when she was in high school and she looked at that experience as the porthole through which all of her future French language learning has taken shape.

The questions below from Safiya occurred during her second interview (April 23) when she shared that she and a group of her classmates had, that very day, sought assistance from the department coordinator to share their concerns about one of their instructors. Office hours were not observed, emails were not returned, and no feedback was given to students, even when they asked. The most challenging thing for students was that when they had asked the instructor to share a study guide with them about what to expect on the exam. The instructor responded that if they wanted her to do that, they would have to pay her extra, out of their own pockets for her time.

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**Figure 23. Screenshot, Nicola’s FSL for teaching course, Description of tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Plan de leçon + Micro-teaching (20%)</td>
<td>Ce travail comprend un cycle de préparation enseignement réflexion préparation pour une leçon de FLS au niveau et pour la dimension de la langue de votre choix. Présentation d’un mini-leçon (15 à 20 minutes)</td>
<td>Plan de leçon – le 16 octobre et Micro Teaching selon les dates d’inscription du 8 au 20 janvier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Exploitation / Partage d’une ressource multimédia (site internet, blog) (10%)</td>
<td>Ce travail comprend une description et compte rendu d’une ressource multimédia qui soit exploitable en classe de FLS. Fiche explicative et exemples d’activités possibles avec réflexion didactique. Travailler en binômes</td>
<td>Le 4 décembre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Plan d’unité d’apprentissage (25%)</td>
<td>Une unité d’apprentissage sert comme guide de l’enseignant.e pour enseigner une série de leçons regroupées par un même thème. Ce travail se fait en groupe ou le groupe : i) choisit une année intermédiaire (7ème, 8ème et 9ème année) ; ii) prépare la structure générale de l’unité et iii) repartit le travail (c.a.d. trois leçons par personne)</td>
<td>Fin de cours – à rendre avant le 15 avril 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Portfolio professionnel et langagier (15%)</td>
<td>Portfolio électronique de support à votre pratique et à votre formation pédagogique intégrée par la partie concernant votre parcours de formation pédagogique.</td>
<td>Réflexion sur mon « Autoportrait » (identité linguistique/culturelle/professionnelle)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Pourquoi est-il si difficile d’obtenir des renseignements spécifiques à propos de comment je peux améliorer mon travail en français?”

“How come it’s so hard to find out how I can improve my work?”

“Est-il véritablement ma responsabilité de chasser mes professeurs pour connaître mon rendement dans leurs cours de français?”

“Is it really my job to track my professor down to find out how I’m doing?”

Safiya, Interview 2
(French translated by the author in italics)

Safiya had an intuitive ability to think like a teacher while she was a still a student. From our first meeting, Safiya shared important observations about her coursework because she was already thinking like a teacher. Safiya said something (in English) along the lines of, “Well June, I’m sitting in my classes and I’m thinking like a student but I’m also thinking like a teacher because I find myself wondering what I will say, what I will do when I am the teacher at the front of the room.” It was this capacity for looking at her own learning process as a way to learn about a future in teaching that made Safiya’s interviews so interesting. She realized the benefit of optimizing her learning through as many means possible, and shared in her third interview that she had started her own study group with a few colleagues as a way to better understand peer feedback (Sept 16).

Veronika

Veronika was a motivated, reflective and diligent upper-year CTEP student. She felt that her lack of experience and exposure to French, and in particular her production of the language, was a real deficit for her since the only time she used French was in her classes. For this reason she was glad to participate in the study, and in the workshops offered by CTEP. She described how she made the decision to go and see the professor when she did not understand something, either a part of the assignment or the feedback received. When I asked her how many times she had gone to speak to a professor about her work, she thought for a moment and said, “Une fois”—once (Veronika, Interview 2).
Veronika contacted me through her classmate and friend Alexandra. Participating in my study was an excellent way for students to practice their French and Veronika saw that immediately.

Veronika was one of the most ‘choppy’ speakers of French I’ve ever heard and yet her writing in French was astoundingly competent. She said /um/ or /euh/ about every fourth or fifth word and she spoke French with a significant accent. Her agreements (based on gender and number) were non-existent most of the time, and her spoken grammar (verbs, particularly) really affected the overall meaning of her message. In addition, her pronunciation was poor making it difficult to understand most of the time, which was quite alarming. It was clear from her comments (and I had a chance to read her writing) that writing was her strength.

One of the tremendous things about Veronika was her intuitive ability to think like a teacher while she was still a student. She shared many insightful observations, authentic thoughts and experiences. For example, Veronika offered the observation that she needed to see the whole sentence written out correctly, using the correct structures (vocabulary) and word order (syntax), rather than simply seeing “corrections” in her work.

**Figure 24. Screenshot, Text from Veronika, Sept 22**

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One of the tremendous things about Veronika was her intuitive ability to think like a teacher while she was still a student. She shared many insightful observations, authentic thoughts and experiences. For example, Veronika offered the observation that she needed to see the whole sentence written out correctly, using the correct structures (vocabulary) and word order (syntax), rather than simply seeing “corrections” in her work.
In this way Veronika was very similar to Safiya. Both participants shared detailed and important observations about their coursework. For example, they deemed that their language courses for teaching were “useless” for developing French proficiency. Between the end of October and early January I did not see or hear from Veronika, so it was a lovely surprise to see her growth in confidence and her proficiency development when we met up for a focus group on January 20. I met Veronika with her classmate Alexandra (the same student who had referred her to my research study back in September) for an hour on a snowy day in January where Veronika took the lead on responding to each of my questions. Veronika shared her thoughts on what she felt students need to know about feedback (and what they do not need to know), what students need to hear from their instructors about feedback (and what they do not), as well as what she needs to know about feedback in terms of her own next steps for language learning and/or assessment literacy. Her passion for explaining her ideas was remarkable.

Zoe

Zoe was the only consecutive teacher candidate in the study, in her final (and only) year at OISE. A former French immersion student herself, Zoe was in the PJ stream and hoped to teach French immersion upon graduation. My experiences teaching consecutive teacher candidates in the past in required courses at OISE allowed me to see that Zoe was both comfortable and relaxed with “school” and talk about school. During her second interview on March 16, Zoe received a call from one of the large Boards of Education in the GTA offering her a job interview for the following week. This event provided an interesting segue into discussing what she might expect in terms of interview questions, French proficiency, etc. Zoe was excited and it was a lovely moment as a researcher to be invited into sharing a conversation with her about an exciting life event.

Zoe’s oral French proficiency was well developed and she expressed hope about a bright future in teaching, particularly because one of her parents was a teacher. She really enjoyed her instructor’s FSL for teaching course because of the way she used innovative ways to encourage students to evaluate themselves. Indeed, the instructor proposed interesting tasks to explore the readings where each group member was responsible for
enacting a different role each time (similar to a literature circle in a junior/intermediate classroom). Zoe was unapologetic about giving herself great marks on her self-assessment for her work in various roles in the Group Readings portion of the course (worth 25%). Figure 25 below is an example of the rubric used for self-assessment:

![Figure 25. Self-assessment rubric for group readings in Zoe’s FSL for teaching course](image)

Zoe was one of the first participants I interviewed. She presented as a kind, motivated student. She talked a lot about how much work there was to submit and that she had to be strategic because it was not possible to do it all. She spoke about how the attitude of her one of her FSL instructors meant that no one in the course took the job of curriculum planning very seriously. She said that her instructor “smiled a lot” but that she did not expect respect from her students (Interview 2). The fact that her instructor had positioned herself as a friend, and was “un peu désorganisée” (« a little disorganized ») was definitely noticed by her students (Mar 16). Zoe talked about how she had not done a good job on writing her curriculum plan because she did not feel it was important enough to warrant a significant allocation of time (Mar 16).
Zoe’s third interview happened after she had left OISE and had started teaching. It was very interesting to hear her reflections and observations about her consecutive year at OISE in retrospect. She had been clear through the first and second interviews that one particular instructor’s approach and pedagogy were preferable. This instructor expected to be taken seriously, and expected students to take their work seriously. She espoused plurilingualism and identity-reinforcing activities. One year later, Zoe’s favourite instructor’s approach and pedagogy still resonated deeply for her. Zoe was planning to repeat a project on linguistic self-portraits that she had done at OISE with her students this upcoming year. Zoe’s first year of teaching was “a total survival show” (her words, in English), and she was enjoying every moment of it.

Summary of Portraits

This concludes the portraits section of the chapter. These portraits allowed an introduction to the ten student participants in the study. As previously mentioned, each of four sites on three campuses at UT was represented in the data, with eight out of ten participants registered students in the CTEP program with a specialty (major or minor) in French; one student was enrolled in the consecutive Teacher Education program at OISE; and one student was studying in a Bachelor of Science program. The next section turns to the data that pertain to Research Questions 1 and 2, namely, the characteristics of the feedback offered and the way students took up that feedback. In sharing this data, I will return to each portrait to provide a more fulsome perspective.

Students on Descriptive Feedback

During the first interview I asked each student participant about their conceptions and understanding of descriptive feedback because I wanted to better understand students’ experiences and know more about their thinking on the topic. This question was, of course, particularly important because each of the student participants had expressed interest in a future career in teaching (in) French and would therefore be required to give timely, descriptive, understandable, specific and useful feedback to their students (Ontario FSL Curriculum, 2013). Table 9 presents a summary, from the student participants’ perspectives, about descriptive feedback.
Table 9. Student participants’ notions of descriptive feedback from Interview 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Participant</th>
<th>Notion of descriptive feedback</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Amelia              | • Had never, not once heard the term descriptive feedback  
                      • Descriptive feedback is about her process as a learner: how she is developing/has developed, how she can continue to develop | • Felt that summative evaluations and tests were often “for the prof” and formative tasks are “for me” |
| Alexandra           | • “Professors give advice on how we can improve our work, when they don’t simply find grammatical errors…”  
                      • “Descriptive feedback means that my professor is looking more at the content of what I’m writing (rather than the grammar) and is making comments about that on my work, not just giving me numerical grades.” | • “To be honest there’s not a lot of feedback given in terms of comments…most of the time” |
| Chloe               | • “The prof is really giving input about what I can do next time to make my work better, to improve my writing or speaking”  
                      • Chloe was very clear, though, that she didn’t mean “correcting” her work. | • I began to wonder if a big part of this distinction for Chloe was about understanding—that correction without comprehension meant nothing.  
                      • Although Chloe knew “the right answer” about what descriptive feedback meant, it was challenging that she did not take up the feedback on form offered to her many times in the study |
| Jason               | • For Jason, the number grade and comments were needed in order for feedback to be considered *descriptive*  
                      • He was most interested in 3 kinds of comments, in this order of priority: content, grammar, style, and he noted that of those 3 kinds of comments, grammar was the toughest to implement.  
                      • “I am not afraid to learn that I have more to learn…” | • At one point in his first interview, Jason said (in English), “We don’t know what we don’t know,” and I realized that one of the jobs on the to-do list of instructors is to help students realize what they don’t know.  
                      • Students have to be *willing* to learn and perhaps that begins with knowing that there is more to learn |
| Lin                 | • Comments that include both positive and constructive points…to encourage her  
                      • Wants to identify not only what she did well on in an assignment, but also what she didn’t do well, what she didn’t yet know she needed to learn next | • Lin was eager to seek information about both the strengths and the weaknesses from her professor, in order to learn, even though she wasn’t sure how to do that |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Participant</th>
<th>Notion of descriptive feedback</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Myla               | • Descriptive feedback is about engagement with the learning process with students—that the conversation “on paper” is the beginning point to a larger (and on-going) conversation about moving a student’s work forward  
“It’s very clear, it’s not vague…ce n'est pas juste “bon.” (“It’s not just ‘good.’”) “There are like, specific, things that he points out.” | • Myla was very clear that it was not enough to tell students what was wrong; they needed to understand the feedback so they could do differently in the future |
| Nicola             | • Descriptive feedback is about next steps for what she needs to do in her work the next time  
Nicola found it very helpful when the instructor sat with each student to explain what needed to be understood in order that she could improve her work | • As I reflected on what Nicola had experienced (that applying feedback was predicated upon her understanding); it occurred to me again that the idea of student comprehension was a key feature in the application of feedback. |
| Safiya             | • Looking for strengths and next steps of how to improve her work. (Keep doing this, for example, and next time, do that…)  
• Liked the of “3 stars and a wish” model | • Safiya was clear that she was looking for information (emphasis hers), about her work from the professor  
• She wanted to see evidence that the professor had looked at her work and had reflected on it, and could tell her how to move forward. |
| Veronika           | • Descriptive feedback is about being able to go back and review work at a later date  
• Having a visual (something written down) assisted Veronika to concentrate (her word) and remember | • Shared that most of the time, professors did not write next steps or descriptive comments on work. At most, she said, they would write a complete sentence to show her how something should be/look, rather than simply circle or underline a word |
| Zoe                | • Noted the basics of descriptive feedback: comments, rubrics with success criteria, words and conversation around her achievement of the success criteria | • Particularly appreciated how the instructor gave students opportunities to set the performance criteria for some assignments and she drew the link between how her experiences as a Teacher Candidate were helping her in her work of becoming a teacher |
The features of descriptive feedback, in the student participants’ own words, became a rich backdrop against which I examined the feedback they were actually given. As previously discussed, data collected from student participants regarding the feedback they received from their French instructors was surprising in three ways: their experiences were wide-ranging, wider than I had expected; students were more open than I had anticipated; and were thus more concerned about the consequences of revealing their experiences. In other words, the best-case scenario showed superlative feedback practices, and the worst-case scenario revealed an appalling shortage of even the most basic of feedback practices (legible copies, coherent information).

Research Question 1: Students Experience Feedback

Si on ne me corrige pas, je prends pour acquis que c’est correct…  
If no one corrects me, I make the assumption that it’s correct…

Jason, Interview 2  
(French translated by the author in italics)

The characteristics of feedback offered to students were varied and many, as previously noted. Indeed, feedback ranged from superlative and informative, descriptive and useful, to exceedingly vague, unintelligible, judgmental and ineffectual so as to be of very little use to students. The figure below shows that constructive feedback came to students in several formats.
Figure 26. What type of feedback was offered to student participants?

Students were unanimously positive about any and all feedback that was helpful to them. From Alexandra’s experience, however, it was clear that feedback was not widely or readily available to students:

There really hasn’t been a lot of feedback throughout my French courses. If there was any, it was relevant to the particular assignment, not French as a whole.

Amelia, Online survey

Amelia brought several (7) work samples from her courses, all of which showed a checklist or checkmarks. In fact, Amelia shared that she found it difficult to find samples where there was any descriptive feedback given.

Je pense que si les professeurs étaient un peu plus clairs, les étudiants seraient un peu plus sérieux, plus motivés, pour faire une [sic] bon travail.

Amelia, Interview 3

One professor insisted on giving Amelia and her classmates their tests back during his office hours so he could give them individualized feedback, which was helpful. However, there was no rubric for any of the course assignments, and the success criteria were given orally in class and never written down anywhere. This professor also gave students an opportunity to resubmit any essay once they had made corrections, and he would re-mark the work. This meant that he would give a second mark and would take an average of
both marks—which Amelia thought was a “good deal.” Unfortunately, in terms of pedagogical approach the professor would talk for 2 hours, straight, without any notes, slides, text, visuals or PowerPoint™ presentations, and there was absolutely no use of the electronic learning platform, Blackboard. Amelia found this very challenging, and when faced with the opportunity to take another course with the same professor the following year she dropped the class after two weeks.

Chloe’s experience of feedback was similar to Amelia’s as of the six work samples she brought to three interviews in April, there was but one example of descriptive feedback. In her online survey Chloe added that she had never received information from her instructors about her French language proficiency. Perhaps it was not surprising, then, that Chloe failed two sections of the French Proficiency test, and needed to spend significant time remediating her writing and speaking in French. Chloe also reported that her emails often went unanswered when she initiated a request for more feedback.

Jason shared that what had helped him the most was that he had explicitly gone to his professors and asked to be corrected, and that two professors had undertaken to do just that. Jason shared the usefulness of this corrective feedback in light of his experiences with two established professors where one had corrected him on anglicisms. First, he was corrected on using an incorrect structure /demander une question/ (to ask a question) rather than the correct formulation (instead of /poser une question/). Second, he learned that he was using a superfluous preposition /attendre pour/ when one was not needed in the construction of attendre (to wait for) because the verb attendre already includes the preposition.

When I asked Lin if there was anything she wanted to share about how she might have used feedback; she was very clear that she had never received any feedback about the next steps she could take in order to improve her work in French. As evidence, Lin shared her 6-page essay with me where the pages looked like the one depicted in Figure 27.
Figure 27. Screenshot, Lin’s essay, advanced language course

Other than a few grammar corrections here and there, and a few squiggled lines (the meaning of which Lin didn’t know), the only words which indicated to Lin that she had missed some key ideas in her analysis of the poem were “non” and “au vers 4” (“no” and “in verse 4”). Unfortunately, the exact meaning of “non” (“no”) and “au vers 4” (“in verse 4”) was a mystery to Lin. From reading her essay I could see that she expressed herself well in writing. Her professor did comment on her use of rich vocabulary and the well-organized nature of her writing. Lin described how next steps were to work on better
comprehension of the texts she was writing about so that she could analyze them to the best of her ability.

Expression écrite: grammaire, syntaxe, style, orthographe, richesse lexicale, précision, 9 sur 10 ☺

Written expression: grammar, syntax, style, spelling, complex structures and precision of communication 9 out of 10 ☺

utilisation et intégration des outils d'analyse:
13.5/20

Use and integration of analytical tools:
13.5/20

(French translated by the author in italics)

Lin’s proficiency was well developed, and the only feedback she had received was positive. I asked her if she was surprised that I had asked her about feedback, and she responded quickly with “No,” saying that she had previously done courses in English where “feedback” was a part of the course design.

In Myla’s case, she went to talk to the professor in advance to get some of her questions answered before handing in another assignment. This meant going to the professor’s office hours because staying after class really was not an option. First, there is a class in the hall directly after her course so there really was not time to stay and chat with the professor. Second, Myla had another class in another building directly after so there was no time. When she attended her professor’s office hours she was able to get all of her questions answered and felt ready to do the assignment on her own (Myla, Interview 2).

When I first met Nicola in late September, she had just started her final year in the CTEP program, and was getting herself “on track” to complete remedial hours in writing and oral after not passing the proficiency exam the previous Spring. Nicola found her time at OISE to be challenging in that there was less feedback than she expected. Nicola expressed that she was most concerned about the lack of feedback on her writing. By her third interview Nicola had some important observations to share about how things “worked.”

We discussed the sociology course offered in French that had finished in December 2015. The course was structured in such a way that the francophone professor taught in French,
and most/many of the readings were in English, and the discussion groups and written reflections could happen in any language. Nicola explained that the end result was that she had received no feedback at all on her French, including nothing for her to work on during the 5 months she had been at OISE. This was particularly troubling because Nicola reminded me (I had forgotten) that all the CTEP courses at UTM were instructed in English, so she had never done courses on pedagogy in French before arriving at OISE. This further explains why and how it would have been so helpful for Nicola to receive feedback on her writing at OISE as she suggests.

Ce serait plus utile si on me corrigerait. It would be more useful if someone would correct me. Nicola, Interview (French translated by the author in italics)

As a motivated French major, Safiya preferred tasks where she was asked to read something in order to write something because tasks that involve production improved her proficiency the most. Safiya brought a work sample to her first interview on April 23 and shared that she was given corrective feedback but no next steps, and it was this that she was most concerned about. Safiya talked about how this professor used a kind of rubric where it was basically a tally chart “all the time.” Essentially the professor kept track of the number and kind of error, according to a pre-determined checklist. This example sparked a note in our conversation about the fact that professors use whatever kind of assessment and evaluation system they like, whether that is a checklist or a rubric, or descriptive feedback (or not). When I ask Safiya what would have been helpful, she suggested that if the professor had written full sentences to explain what was missing or how she did not understand, it would have been very helpful. Safiya shared the work sample with me. There was no feedback on the task itself. There were circles and x’s and sections that were underlined. The comments read:

Votre intro est un peu trop longue… Your intro is a little bit too long…
la négation… The negative…
clair… Clear…
Safiya felt strongly that this “all or nothing” checklist was problematic, not only because there were no next steps given but also because they were scored as having a 0 or a 5 on grammar, syntax, etc. There were no comments or scores on the content of the task.

When Safiya did not understand a task, or feedback, she attended the professor’s office hours or stayed after class to ask her questions. She confirmed that some professors had open door policies for their office hours—meaning that students could simply show up at the professor’s office at any given day and time, without pre-arranging a meeting. Safiya also shared that she had worked with some professors who did not answer her emails. There was one professor in the teaching and learning stream who was well known among students for giving no feedback, at any time, ever.

From my first interview with Veronika on September 30, it was clear that despite a lack of vocabulary and struggles with grammar and pronunciation in French, her commitment to and comprehension of French were emerging. She highlighted several key themes in our first meeting, themes that carried through all of the interviews and to the Focus Group with Alexandra in January. She saw that understanding instructors’ feedback was critical to her improvement. She also wanted to build her confidence, and relationships with professors and small classes helped with that. Additionally, her motivation grew when she believed in herself. Veronika shared that one of her professors (whom she had studied with twice previously) gave excellent feedback in a more informal and relaxed way, and
that this was really helpful. He shared global feedback with the whole class, orally, with visual support via slides on the data projector.

By the time of her second interview on October 15, Veronika shared some surprising information about her FSL course. Although the professor spoke in English and all of the articles in class were in English, students were required to do the work tasks in French. Moreover, they were marked by the French-speaking TA despite the fact that there was no rubric in place for these analytical summaries. The students were to submit three summaries immediately after one session of giving and receiving peer feedback. However, the feedback was not an exercise that generated improvement, as they were told to submit only the original work and were not allowed to make any changes based on the peer feedback. Veronika made the astute observation that it would have been helpful to get feedback on each task rather than submitting three at once; that way she could actually work and improve. She also pointed out that work was only submitted twice during the term. Students had to wait about three weeks between submissions to see their marked work. For the first time in any of the interviews with students (I had been interviewing students for nine months at that point and instructors for five months), I heard a participant say that she “had a problem with that,” and I was struck by her honesty and righteous frustration (Veronika, Interview 2). When I asked her what students were actually marked on, she could not tell me because she had not yet received any feedback from that class (and there was no rubric). Veronika, however, assumed that like most of the feedback she received, it would be about grammar, not about content.

Veronika shared a work sample where there was a barème de correction (a rubric) similar to what Safiya and Amelia had shared. In a similar fashion to the other rubrics, there were categories of errors listed in a table and where the prof “kept score” on the numbers (frequency) of those errors. I helped Veronika to “read” the rubric, and could see that one of her strengths for that piece of writing was that there were no spelling errors, which we discussed. She shared that she found it challenging when a lot of words, phrases and sentences were underlined, without any explanation. She expressed frustration about the fact that she had no idea what specifically was wrong with those underlined things—only that they were wrong. At this point Veronika and I had a very
interesting conversation about how there was no rubric for the summaries she was required to do for her FSL language learning class.

Zoe had a different perspective of feedback, of course, given that she was a consecutive student at OISE. Not only was she “thinking like a teacher” for the following September, but she was also getting ready for placements when I first met her on February 26. In her related studies class, Zoe spoke about how the instructor gave students opportunities to set their own success criteria and how much she enjoyed that (and how useful it was as a beginning teacher to have this experience).

To conclude this section, sharing the findings from the first research question regarding the characteristics of feedback students received were diverse. The data shows that all students experienced a wide range of feedback quality, sources, frequency, level of detail (specificity, granularity) and purpose, regardless of campus, academic program, specialization or other context variables. The presentation of these findings has included an examination of all data sources where students were asked to share information about the feedback they received including: interviews, online surveys, course documents including syllabi and assignments and focus groups.

**Research Question 2: Students Use Feedback**

Like, in composition classes all I see is that they underline stuff and take off marks for grammar, blah blah blah! All I see is red and marks taken off…that is very down-putting. And then at the end, well, sometimes they don't even put anything. So if all I see is red marks, red lines, that just shows me that I suck at this. But with feedback like I'm getting from my translation prof, I know, this is how I can improve, this is what I can do, and for next time, I can do better.

Myla, Interview 1

Given the wide continuum of feedback quality and quantity student participants received, it was genuinely heartening to see how committed and resourceful students were in their attempts to decipher scribbled comments, unclear copies of rubrics, and even very small font, not to mention frequency error counts that did not match their hard copy. Again, what was most arresting in this part of the data collection was hearing over and over again from student participants that the kind of feedback that would have been most
helpful, was often not available. Trying to improve their work, then, was most often a serious challenge. Figure 28 presents a visual of the affect and correlation I saw developing between frustration and motivation as I interviewed student participants.

![Student interview data showed:

- Motivation decreased when frustration increased.

Figure 28. Student participant data on motivation/frustration continuum](image)

Amelia shared two experiences of this dynamic—one at each end of the continuum. First, she talked about an experience she had in a second-year course, where the professor included things on tests and exams that were not taught in the course. In addition, what was challenging about this was that this professor had also added an assignment to the course syllabus less than 24 hours before it was due, which students were really unhappy about but felt completely powerless to address. Amelia contrasted this story with her experience of Prof. Louise’s course, where the professor offered unlimited assistance to students outside of class regarding pronunciation and comprehension. The professor even offered to help students with material on a test—before the test! Amelia shared that she felt like she was “cheating” in accepting the help of her professor in this regard. She said she had never had the benefit of this kind of teaching before, and shared how much she had learned as a result of it (Amelia, Interview 2).

As previously discussed, although Chloe brought six work samples over the course of her three interviews in April, there was only one example of descriptive feedback. For this
reason, Chloe shared that each and every time that a task was marked and handed back by a professor, she went to the professor’s office hours to ask questions. Chloe reported that she thought it helped her because she was able to speak about the specific things she did not understand. She explained, for example, that one of the things she learned during one such foray into the professor’s office hours, was that you cannot write /ça/ (that) in an academic text, you must write /cela/ (that is) instead.

Jason had a “personal protocol” for taking up feedback from professors. This protocol was one that he generated entirely on his own, without input from any course plan, syllabus or professor and aided him to read and understand ALL the feedback he was given. As previously discussed, Jason gave two examples, both of oral corrective feedback from professors during one-on-one conversations outside of class. In the first example, Jason used the Anglicism “demander une question” (to ask a question) when the correct French is “poser une question.” The second example also surfaced during a conversation with an instructor outside of class, when Jason said “attendre pour quelqu’un” when no preposition is supposed to follow the verb “attendre” (to wait for) because /attendre/ in French is a transitive-indirect verb. Transitive-indirect verbs act to or for their object. In English, however, “to wait for” does require a preposition, meaning that the transitivity of French and English contrast, in this case, making this an error of anglicism. Jason’s quest was to improve his work, he said, “Even if I’ve achieved an A-plus in the work, there are still things I need to do to improve my work” (Jason, Interview 3). Jason went on to comment about the importance of not only knowing grammar, but also using grammar properly in his writing. He shared,

On n'est pas nécessairement assez ambitieux...les étudiants qui sont bons, ils pensent qu'ils sont "assez bons." Il y a un écart entre la connaissance de la grammaire ET l'application de la grammaire en situation d'écriture.

We [students] are not necessarily ambitious enough...good students think that they are “good enough.” There is a gap between grammatical knowledge and applying that knowledge in writing situations.

Jason, Interview 1
(French translated by the author in italics)
Although Jason was committed to following up on feedback from his instructors he candidly shared his concern in the focus group that if there was no feedback forthcoming (which often happened), it was impossible for him to implement that feedback. He then went on to say that he felt there was no difference between feedback for learning in elementary and secondary students and feedback and learning in HE. Here he emphasized that teachers, instructors and professors had an ethical responsibility to give feedback for learning to their students.

Until the second paper in the second-year French literature course Lin was taking at UTSC during the spring term, she had never taken a professor up on their offer to give feedback and guidance on assignments. She shared that the professor had offered to give feedback before the paper was due but Lin had not taken her up on it. She did not know of any other professors who did that, so she was reticent to avail herself of the opportunity. Lin was proud and happy to share that she did do and seek feedback from the professor on her second paper and it made a big difference (Lin, Interview 2). During her meeting with the professor, Lin explained that she talked out her ideas and the professor praised her for her “take” on the assignment. Lin was jubilant that the overall mark differences between the first and second papers were more than 10%, with the second paper scoring an 89% (Lin, Interview 2).

Myla shared that she used her memory of class lectures and activities to help her improve her work. She found that she was able to remember specific “conversations” in class where the professor used instructional opportunities to explain errors. She took notes during class and relied heavily on those notes and her memory of those classroom “snapshots” to help her as she was doing work, on her own, on class tasks. Indeed, my field notes reflected her approach.

When Myla talks about her work in this translation course, she uses the words "je me souviens" quite a number of times; meaning, she remembers things from the lectures. When I ask her if she could mention a specific example, she can't remember just one, but says that the prof talks a lot in class. When he hands out an assignment in class he talks about it with his students a great deal in the class, even after he goes over the whole assignment in class (there were so many examples…)

FN, March 4
In my field notes I made a comment that Myla found it very helpful that the professor made such explicit distinctions between what was okay for this course and what would not be okay in a more advanced course. Not only did the professor give students information about what was current, what was more formal/less formal (which of course really matters)—he did this both during class and also when speaking to students one-on-one during breaks and office hours (Myla, Interview 2).

At the time of her first interview on April 7, Safiya expressed the wish that more instructors would give more feedback because she found it so helpful. She shared that one of her professors had given the entire class the option of re-submitting a 5-page essay, applying the feedback he had given them, and she took up the opportunity and was able to raise her grade by 12%. Safiya shared, though, that this experience was a ‘first’ and that the university seemed to be of the opinion that it was a student’s responsibility (i.e., her job) to follow up with professors if she really wanted the best information possible about how she really did and what her next steps were.

Safiya explained that she often did not know who was marking her work and why she got a particular mark on an assignment, and that there was simply no information available to students about how one could improve. She said that students had to actually go and track the instructor or TA down, and if the person who was teaching the course was different from the person who was marking the course, one really had no idea if the professor had even read the work. She did not think that was an appropriate (i.e., defensible) position, either as a student (which she was) or as a future teacher (she did not see that she would ever be interested doing this this way, when she became a teacher). When I asked her to theorize about why that was, she said:

That's a good question…I feel like I don't want to judge and say that, Oh it's because the teacher is lazy and they have to go through like 80 pages…but at the same time, I do, you know, I'm simultaneously completing my B.Ed. I do know that you're a Teacher for a reason, you know, you're teaching students…you know, you literally have the next generation in your hands.

Safiya, Interview 2
When I asked Veronika if there had ever been an assignment where she used the feedback from the professor and applied it in a new context, she paused for 12 seconds without saying anything. Following this pause, she then said that there was once (in her four years) where the professor posted an example of something and she was able to use that example to help her with an assignment because she knew exactly what the professor was looking for (Veronika, Interview 1). In terms of using feedback given to her by her professors, Veronika went once to see the professor in third year after she got a paper back because she had not understood the professor’s comments. She had a great meeting with the professor and found this to be very beneficial for her learning because she left understanding how she could improve her work for the next time. She explained that the professor had a particular code for his feedback, and that he had explained that to her. She learned that the question marks meant he did not understand, the underlining meant that her sentence/phrases were awkward or incorrect because of vocabulary or syntax and the circles meant a word error (again, vocabulary, syntax or grammar). This led to a discussion about when/how she decided to go and speak to the professor. I reformulated the question three times in French so that she understood the question. Once she knew what I was asking, she said that she went to speak to the professor when she did not understand something. However, it is notable that she went to see a professor once, in her third year.

By the time of her third and final interview on October 29, Veronika had received feedback from the TA on her first ‘batch’ of summaries. In this case, she had already been required to submit a second ‘batch’ before having received feedback on the first lot, which seemed ludicrous to her. As previously mentioned, the professor did not speak French in class, at all, and students who spoke French were required to write in French, even if the reading (article) was in English. This (of course) posed a real problem for an authentic use of academic vocabulary in context. The professor did not mark students’ work, rather, the TA did, and she marked for content alone. There was no feedback given at all on writing (i.e., grammar and syntax in French). To make a long story short, then, it was challenging to “use feedback” when there was none given on language.
Both Nicola and Zoe were in their final year at OISE, and although in different programs, they had a similar challenge to Jason in terms of not receiving timely feedback in order to be able to improve their work. I found it interesting that both of these Teacher Candidates had come to a career of teaching in French through diverse pathways (the CF and CTEP programs for Nicola, and the Immersion and Consecutive programs for Zoe), yet both participants were genuinely frustrated about the lack of feedback opportunities available to them at a time when they were arguably most seriously needed. Zoe seemed more resolute to this reality than Nicola, whose frustration was visible.

Zoe did not communicate a sense of urgency or commitment to developing her French language proficiency. A former French immersion student, she spoke French well enough, and although there were things (vocabulary and grammar—syntax, accords) that could use some work, she seemed more focused on honing her skills for teaching (pedagogical knowledge as opposed to linguistic knowledge or assessment knowledge). Zoe was very conscious of the overwhelming number of tasks to do in her courses, this was particularly the case in both her French courses. In her second interview on March 16, Zoe shared that there was one time when she felt that her group had done an outstanding job on a presentation for a course. However, they had received an A rather than an A+ even though they had followed all of the success criteria. The whole group decided to let the lower grade go because they were all far too busy to follow up with the instructor.

Having examined each of the student participants’ descriptions of how they used feedback (when they received it), Figure 29 below shows the key ways student participants used the feedback that came their way.
Data that answered the second Research Question regarding students’ use of the feedback they were offered were also found in three questions from the online survey, and are presented below in Table 10. As the table below shows, three questions asked specifically about what students did with the feedback they were given. First, Question 8 asked students if they kept track of the feedback their instructors offered (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help them with goal setting. Half of student participant respondents said they almost always kept track of the feedback their instructor offered (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help them with goal setting, while the remaining half sometimes, rarely or never kept track. Second, Question 11 asked students if they spent time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback they were offered by their instructors. Online survey results showed that nearly all students almost always (n=4) or often (n=3) reflected on the feedback their instructors offered. Third, Question 12 asked students if they followed up with their instructor if the instructor offered opportunities for additional feedback to them, or to students in the class. Responses were split between students who almost always (n=3) or often (n=3) followed up, and sometimes (n=1), to rarely (n=2).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student participant</th>
<th>Response to survey question</th>
<th>Interview data</th>
<th>Confirmation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>8. I rarely keep track of feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting.</td>
<td>- « En général il n’y a pas beaucoup de rétroaction descriptive. » (&quot;In general, there’s not a lot of descriptive feedback.&quot;) (Alexandra, Interview 1) (French translated by the author in italics)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. I almost always spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.</td>
<td>(Alexandra FN, Interview 3)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12. I rarely follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.</td>
<td>- Lack of confidence in following up; fear factor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td>8. I sometimes keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting.</td>
<td>- « Le problème c’est qu’on ne reçoit pas tellement de rétroaction descriptif. » (&quot;We don’t really receive so much descriptive feedback...&quot;) (Amelia, Interview 1) (French translated by the author in italics)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. I often spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.</td>
<td>(Amelia FN, Interview 3)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. I sometimes follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.</td>
<td>- The feedback that is offered is either too little, impossible to decipher, or mismatched frequency counts</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>8. I almost always keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting.</td>
<td>- The examples Chloe gave actually had more to do with the instructor not giving feedback to improve her work…stories about shame, humiliation, profs not being “available”—even when they were present during office hours…(giving one-word answers, not explaining things, etc.) (Chloe FN, Interview 1)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. I almost always spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.</td>
<td>(Chloe, Interview 2)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. I almost always follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.</td>
<td>- Each and every time that a task (marked) was handed back by the professor, Chloe went to her office hours to ask questions. (Chloe, Interview 2)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Jason** | 8. I almost always keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting. | - Jason says, “If you don’t apply the knowledge you have, it’s as if you don’t know it at all.”
(Jason, Interview 1, comments given in English) | Yes |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
|           | 11. I almost always spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me. | Jason is not afraid of learning that he has more to learn. Even if he’s achieved an A+ on a course task, « Il y a toujours des choses que je devrais améliorer. » ("There are always things I should improve.")
(Jason, Interview 3)
(French translated by the author in italics) | Yes |
|           | 12. I almost always follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class. | | Yes |
| **Lin**   | 8. I almost always keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting. | Lin has never experienced “next steps” in her feedback experiences of language learning in French, although she has experienced this in other courses. (Lin FN, Interview 1)« D’habitude, il n’y a pas beaucoup de commentaires sur le travail. » (“Normally, there are not a lot of comments on the work.”)
(Lin, Interview 2)
(French translated by the author in italics) | Yes |
|           | 11. I almost always spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me. | | Yes |
|           | 12. I almost always follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class. | | Yes |
| **Myla**  | 8. I sometimes keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting | - The professor points out particular things that she needs to improve and then follows that up with a global conversation in class about “where people went wrong” and what would be a better answer.
(Myla, Interview 1, comments given in English) | Yes |
|           | 11. I rarely spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me. | - Myla uses her memory of class lectures and activities to help her improve her work. She remembers specific “conversations” ("conversations") in class where the professor uses instructional opportunities to explain errors. She takes notes during class and relies on those notes and her memory of those classroom “snapshots” to help her as she’s doing work, on her own, on class tasks.
(Myla, Interview 1)
(French translated by the author in italics) | No |
<p>|           | 12. I rarely follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class. | | Yes |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nicola</th>
<th>8. I almost always keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting.</th>
<th>- Nicola has always tried to improve her work and apply feedback from her professors in terms of structures and grammar in French. (Nicola, Interview 1)</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. I often spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. I often follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safiya</td>
<td>8. I almost always keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting.</td>
<td>- Safiya asks questions after class, or will attend office hours if she has questions (Safiya, Interview 1)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. I almost always spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.</td>
<td>- “As a student, it’s your job to track professors down if you really want the best information possible about how you really did and what your next steps are.” (Safiya, Interview 2, comments given in English)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. I almost always follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veronika</td>
<td>8. I sometimes keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting.</td>
<td>- Descriptive feedback, for Veronika, is about being able to go back and review her work at a later date. Having a visual (something written down) helps Veronika concentrate (her word) and remember. (Veronika, Interview 1, this comment given in English)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. I often spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.</td>
<td>- When I ask Veronika if there has ever been an instance where she was able to use feedback from a professor to assist her in her next work, she pauses for 12 seconds and says that « une fois » (&quot;once&quot;) (in 4 years) did the prof post an example that she was able to use in the completion of her assignment. (Veronika, Interview 1) (French translated by the author in italics)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. I rarely follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>8. I never keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal setting.</td>
<td>- “Si elle ne va pas nous donner ses grands efforts, on ne lui donnera pas nos grands efforts non plus.” (“If she isn’t going to give her best efforts, we’re aren’t going to give her our best efforts either.”) (Zoe, Interview 2) <em>(French translated by the author in italics)</em></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>11. I often spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.</td>
<td>(Zoe FN, Interview 2)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>12. I often follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.</td>
<td>- There was no work that Zoe had received, so no feedback available, which seemed kind of strange since the interview took place in mid-March (Zoe FN, Interview 2)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the results shown in Table 10, there are two important items to note. First, there was confirmation between the interviews and online survey results. Second, there was a pattern of not enough feedback, or feedback that was vague or impossible to understand—across programs, years of study, linguistic backgrounds, and participants.

As previously noted, the wide variability in the quality and quantity of feedback that student participants received made it difficult for them to use the feedback consistently and accurately because each professor had a different approach to how feedback was “taken up” in the course. I was surprised time and again by the ways that students reflected on the feedback they were given. There was a sincere effort on their part to try to glean from it all the information they could.

Summary and Discussion

Though discussions with student participants regarding their views and experiences of feedback varied, these discussions echoed themes found in the literature, a fact I found both revealing and encouraging. For example, all students explained to me that good feedback was about more than a number, and that information from their instructor in HE about their work could help support their learning (Beaumont et al., 2011; Hays, Kornell & Bjork 2010; Hattie & Timperley 2007). Moreover, as Myla described, feedback is about dialogue. She said, "Descriptive feedback is about engagement with the students, and not just on paper" (Myla, Interview). Thus, without ever having read Hattie and Timperley (2007), student participants had two robust understandings of what feedback “should” look like and what it “should” do. First, students understood that feedback needs to provide detailed information and second, students comprehended that there was an important aspect of feedback with regard to relationship and dialogue with the instructor. Since there are no studies (before this one) that have transpired in HE contexts involving future language teachers and/or French language learning students and their perceptions of feedback, it is of course not possible to say to what degree student participants’ awareness of pedagogy and teaching practice affected their understandings of feedback.
The most distressing point about the data I collected from students about their feedback experiences occurred when I revisited the seven principles of good feedback practice in HE from the work of Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006, p. 205). In returning to their insights, it is possible to see that there was not enough feedback offered to student participants that:

1. Helped clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards);
2. Facilitated the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning;
3. Delivered high quality information to students about their learning;
4. Encouraged teacher and peer dialogue around learning;
5. Encouraged positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem;
6. Provided opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance;
7. Provided information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching.

When feedback did not meet any of the above criteria, students felt their contributions were without purpose. As Nicola shared, “Why am I writing this…to post on line…when no one gives me any feedback? It's like someone is checking off tick boxes to say, ok, you've done that” (Nicola, Interview 1).

Despite this, student participants seemed to intuitively know that feedback is the things teachers do and say to give students information about how they did and what they can do next time to improve. This section discusses the relationship between the empirical literature and the way student participants in the study experienced feedback (Research Question 1) and used feedback (Research Question 2). I will take up this discussion according to the following themes: first, the purpose of feedback for learning; second, the importance of students’ understanding of the feedback they are given (to be able to know what to do with the feedback); and third, the salience of interaction in feedback practices in HE.

Regarding the purpose of feedback for learning, improvement or for engagement, I found corroboration between the student participants’ experiences and the findings in Price et al., (2011). Price et al. saw that for participants to engage with the feedback they needed
to remain motivated. In other words, student participants saw that the outcome or the purpose of feedback was not simply an end point, but rather a stepping-stone to somewhere else.

An example of this is found in Amelia’s metacognitive reflections on her lack of knowledge about descriptive feedback. In her first interview she began connecting the dots between feedback and the purpose of feedback, in the same way that she had connected her lack of knowledge about “syntaxe” and “morphologie” (syntax and morphology). Although she had gone through 12 years of French immersion instruction without knowing what those words meant, she now knew that language had a framework. Thus, for Amelia realizing that structure explicitly was helping her become more aware, and therefore a better, language learner. She reflected,

Ce n’est pas un test, ce n’est pas un contenu…[la rétroaction] indique comment je développe. Ce n’est pas une note…à quel niveau est-ce que je suis arrivée et comment est-ce que je peux développer plus de compétence, comment est-ce que je peux progresser? Pas vraiment pour que le professeur sait comment vous noter mais plutôt pour savoir comment, comme juste pour moi. Comme, quand j’écris un test c’est pas pour moi, souvent, c’est pour le prof. Et si c’est une évaluation formative, je peux voir comment est-ce que je développe, comment je peux arriver à un niveau plus supérieure? Le problème c’est qu’on ne reçoit pas tellement de rétroaction descriptive…dans ce sens.

It’s not a test; it’s not content…feedback indicates how I am developing. It’s not about a mark…[it’s about] at what level have I achieved and how can I develop more competence, how can I progress? Not really for the professor to know how to mark you but more about, to know, like, just for me. Like, when I write a test, it’s not for me, often, it’s for the professor. And if it’s a formative evaluation, I can see how I am developing, [and] how I can achieve at a level that is more advanced? The problem is that we don’t really receive descriptive feedback, in this sense.

Amelia, Interview 1
(French translated by the author in italics)

Of the ten student participants, Amelia was the only student participant who had not ever heard the term descriptive feedback. Despite this, she had an intuitive sense of the meaning of the term—both its depth and breadth—as being useful for her own learning and progress, and she was highly motivated to keep learning.
To situate my data amongst existing studies in order to show how my data aligns with the literature, I summarized the empirical research in two tables below. With the goal of guiding a coherent summary and discussion of Research Questions 1 and 2, I organized the empirical studies according to two themes. Specifically, Table 11 summarizes the literature related to students’ experiences of feedback in HE, which aligns with Research Question 1. Table 13 provides an overview of empirical studies that highlight interaction in feedback because of the relevance of dialogic feedback in students’ use of feedback in HE, which aligns with Research Question 2.
Table 11. Summary table of empirical literature about students’ experiences of feedback in HE

*Indicates that the study specifically concerned language learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Author/Date</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Data Collection</th>
<th>Notable Findings</th>
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</thead>
</table>
• 23 staff | Interviews and focus groups:  
a) What is quality feedback  
b) Prior experience with assessment  
c) Obstacles to providing quality feedback | • Not enough feedback to be helpful  
• Not able to carry feedback forward b/c assignments were different…  
• Timeliness was an issue |
| Relationship between ID (Level of Bilingualism) and pedagogical conditions * | Lin, H.-J. (2009). | • 90 L1 Mandarin/L2 English bilinguals during interaction with a computer lesson on assignment of semantic functions in Latin (L3)  
• EFL students in HE from several private universities in Taiwan | Design included learning strategies | • More explicit feedback is more effective than less explicit feedback, and “right” or “wrong” feedback  
• Study supports the “more is better” hypothesis (Miyake & Friedman, 1998) |
| Students’ perceptions of effectiveness and relevance of feedback in HE | Pereira, D., Flores, M., Simao, A-M., Barros, A. (2016). | • 605 undergraduate students from 5 Portuguese public universities | Surveyed differences in perceptions of effectiveness and relevance depending on:  
Assessment methods used and phases of the work | Feedback can be an important part of the assessment process and can make an important contribution to student learning |
| When and what kind of instruction will produce the best learning? * | Stafford, C., Bowden, H., & Sanz, C. (2012). | 65 Spanish-English bilinguals learning Latin through computer input | • All groups received right / wrong feedback  
• Two groups received, in addition, pre-practice explanation of how thematic roles are assigned in Latin | Practice *and* less explicit feedback enough to trigger skill improvement  
• More explicit, metalinguistic feedback necessary for improvement *in production* to take place |
In terms of feedback for the purpose of improvement, Stafford et al., (2012) found that increased metalinguistic feedback was a necessary condition for improvement. Regretfully, most students did not have access to the types of dialogic feedback that would make a difference for improving. This situation was in part due to the lack of feedback offered to students, but it was also a result of students’ reticence to approach their instructors. For example, feedback that determined next steps was the type of feedback that Lin felt was truly missing in her HE experience. Lin brought a couple of marked essays for me to look at and as I scanned page after page of her documents there were many pages where nothing was written. It was even impossible to know, if the instructor had read her work, because there were no words, comments, underlining or scribbles—anywhere.

Of the participants who asked for “extra feedback” on a regular basis (Chloe, Jason, and Safiya) shown in blue in the summary table below, all three participants shared that it was incredibly helpful. But that left seven out of ten participants who did not speak to their instructors at the break, after class, via email or during office hours.

*Table 12. Student participants seek more feedback*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Sought interaction with the prof outside of class</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td>• No</td>
<td>• Once in her schooling so far, upper-year student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>• No</td>
<td>• Once in her schooling so far, upper-year student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>• Yes</td>
<td>• Regular attendance at office hours, upper-year student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason</td>
<td>• Yes</td>
<td>• Regular attendance at office hours, upper-year student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin</td>
<td>• No</td>
<td>• Never in her schooling so far, until becoming a participant in the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myla</td>
<td>• No</td>
<td>• Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicola</td>
<td>• No</td>
<td>• Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safiya</td>
<td>• On the way to yes</td>
<td>• A few times in her schooling so far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronika</td>
<td>• No</td>
<td>• Once in her schooling so far, upper-year student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>• No</td>
<td>• Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student participants in the study, quite simply, did not appear to know that seeking contact with their FSL instructors outside of class was a useful thing to do. Of the reasons cited for not initiating opportunities to engage in French, some named work and family obligations. However, several students named performance anxiety as the biggest impediment to sending an email to a professor, attending office hours, or approaching an instructor before or after class, even though they knew classmates who did all of those things.

To facilitate my analysis of the data I collected from students and guide the discussion about what they did with the feedback (Research Question 2), I summarized the empirical literature in regard to interaction and dialogue, shown below in Table 13.
**Table 13. Summary table of empirical literature about interaction in feedback in HE**

*Indicates that the study specifically concerned language learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Author/Date</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Data Collection</th>
<th>Notable Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• fully online distance education program with four modules  
• not cohort-based, rolling admission and flexible assignment dates | Mandates turn-taking between students and their tutors:  
• Cognitivist transmission/telling approach vs. socio-constructivist approach feedback dialogue helps students learn to regulate and manage their learning | |
| Does correction (negative fb) lead to L2 learning?* | Aljaafreh, A., & Lantolf, J.P. (1994). | 3 university students randomly selected out of a class of 9 students at the University of Delaware’s English Language Institute (US)  
• Level 2 (of 6) ESL Reading and Writing class | Students received Corrective Feedback on one essay they wrote each week (8 essays in all) in a 30-45 min 1:1 tutorial with the researcher | Mediation from/with others leads to effective language learning; when the learner draws on that info to modify their knowledge, feedback functions as regulation |
| Translating evidence-based guidelines to improve feedback practices | Barton, K., Schofield, S., McAleer, S., & Ajjawi, R. (2016). | Online Medical Education program University of Dundee  
• Interviews with staff (n = 10) and students (n = 7)  
• Student questionnaires (n = 54) | Aspects of the study:  
• Document analysis and interviews  
• Descriptive statistics used to analyze questionnaire data | Feedback is a social act between people, influenced by power, identity and gender  
• Not a single occurrence |
| Relationship between interactional feedback, noticing form during class interaction and L2 development* | Mackey, A. (2006). | 28 ESL students enrolled in a university-level intensive English program | Assessed through online learning journals, introspective comments questionnaire responses | Feedback provided through conversational interaction  
• Facilitates L2 acquisition |
Concerning the importance of student participants understanding the feedback they are given so they know what to do with it, the literature is clear that this is critical. Barton et al., (2016) declared that feedback is not a “one-off” experience. Rather, students should be given opportunities to use feedback on future occasions, in order to be able to apply the feedback and make proper use of it.

Myla shared a great example of this process, noting that the professor would point out particular things that she needed to improve and then followed that up with a global conversation in class. Such discussions focused on “where people went wrong” and what would be a better answer (emphasis hers).

He underlines where I went wrong, and in the class afterwards, he says, "Ok, here's where many people went wrong." And he gives us opportunities to ask questions…like to tell him if there's something he missed or they missed in terms of other options for the translation.

Myla, Interview 1

The interesting point to note in the above quotation from Myla is that she felt that often the meaning becomes clear in dialogue with the professor. Although Myla believed that feedback must be specific to be useful, her point was that having opportunities to ask questions was a critical part of the exchange process so a student could improve their work the next time.

This is a theme that resonates very strongly in the research literature on feedback discussed in Chapter 2. Revisiting Pereira et al., (2016), the authors wanted to investigate the effectiveness and relevance of feedback in HE. Through a quantitative methodology, they asked 605 undergraduate students from 5 Portuguese public universities about their perceptions of relevance and effectiveness in feedback as assessment and as a way to help students regulate their learning. Pereira et al. wanted to learn about students’ experiences with several important aspects of feedback: the types and the timing of feedback, as well as the format of the feedback (written, oral or a combination thereof). They found that feedback is an important part of the assessment process when it is aligned with curriculum standards, expectations and goals and is integrated with the curriculum and
assessment process. They also found that feedback can make an important contribution to student learning and promote positive changes in the classroom. This supports the finding of Beaumont et al.’s (2011) qualitative study that found in order to carry the feedback forward, the assignments needed to be the same or similar, and students needed to be given enough feedback to be useful to them. Both of these findings from the literature are corroborated by the data from this study. Students expressed the need for repeated experiences of feedback in order to be able to apply the feedback. Additionally, the importance of being able to draw on feedback to feed learning forward was echoed in a very significant way by six participants’ experiences, as shown below in Table 14.

Table 14. Student participants feed learning forward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Participant</th>
<th>Example of feeding learning forward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td>Not possible until she was in Prof. Louise’s class, until then Amelia had never had opportunities to do similar tasks a second time so she could use what she learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>Not possible; students rarely, if ever, had opportunities to do similar tasks a second time so they could use what they learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>Tries to feed learning forward by making multiple trips to each professor’s office hours to obtain supplementary feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason</td>
<td>“I am not afraid to learn that I have more to learn…” Feeds learning forward by developing rapport with the instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin</td>
<td>Not possible; students rarely, if ever, had opportunities to do similar tasks a second time so they could use what they learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myla</td>
<td>Other than in her translation courses, not possible because students rarely, if ever, had opportunities to do similar tasks a second time so they could use what they learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicola</td>
<td>Not possible; students rarely, if ever, had opportunities to do similar tasks a second time so they could use what they learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safiya</td>
<td>Not possible; students rarely, if ever, had opportunities to do similar tasks a second time so they could use what they learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronika</td>
<td>Not possible; students rarely, if ever, had opportunities to do similar tasks a second time so they could use what they learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>Not possible; students rarely, if ever, had opportunities to do similar tasks a second time so they could use what they learned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, concerning the affective aspects of feedback, students’ responses to receiving feedback are linked to expectations (Beaumont et al., 2011). Since students were neither able to re-use feedback (feed forward) in their next assignment, in part because the assignments were different and in part because there was not enough feedback in the first place, there was no doubt that students were frustrated. Participants in this study had expectations that they would be able to use the feedback from instructors, especially when they had waited at least three weeks for it. The expectations related to feedback thus strongly resonated for the students in this study.

The most specific and honest comments about descriptive feedback came from Alexandra who shared her interesting perception that understanding a professor’s feedback was akin to solving a riddle. She stated,

En général il n’y a pas beaucoup de rétroaction descriptive. On nous donne les notes et les fautes sont encerclées. Il y a peut-être un commentaire à la fin, par exemple : « Un bon compte-rendu, il faut faire attention à la structure des phrases » dans un résumé de 2 pages. J’ai eu 79% mais c’est une devinette, je ne savais pas tout à fait ce que je devais faire…ok oui, la grammaire, mais quel point de grammaire? Il n’y avait aucune grille, barème de correction, rien—qui est très normal dans le cours de français de 1ère, 2e et 3e année—jusqu’à date.

In general, there’s not a lot of descriptive feedback. They give us marks and mistakes are circled. There is maybe a comment at the end, for example: “A good analysis, you need to pay more attention to the structure of sentences” in a summary of 2 pages. I got a 79% but it’s a riddle, I didn’t really totally know what I was supposed to do, yes, ok, grammar, but what specific grammar point? There was no rubric, no success criteria, nothing—which is very normal in 1st, 2nd and 3rd year courses, up until now.

Alexandra, Interview 1

(French translated by the author in italics)

In Alexandra’s voice one can hear frustration about the lack of a systematic feedback plan or protocol. There were no rubrics, performance criteria, and no specific information about what exactly was wrong with her grammar and on what specific success criteria she was being marked. In fact, Alexandra’s voice was echoed, at least in part, through every interview I did with student participants (n=32).

This idea of expectations also touches on an aspect of Barton et al., (2016), where the
authors found that feedback is a social act between people and is therefore effected by power, identity and gender. In the Barton et al. study of the Online Medical Education program at the University of Dundee’s Centre for Medical Education, students were aware of the power instructors had to give (or withhold) feedback. The significance of emotions in receiving feedback and emotional “backwash” described by Pitt and Norton (2017) was seen in their in-depth interview study with 14 final year undergraduates in the UK. In this study the authors asked students to reflect on their perceptions and experiences of their own ‘good’ and ‘bad’ work from their undergraduate experience. The authors saw that emotions can govern students’ moving forward in their future assignments, because their emotional reactions (feelings) might influence how a student might act on feedback they receive. I observed this phenomenon at least six times in the student interviews I conducted.

What I did not see, in the feedback upper year students had opportunities to receive, was evidence of the kind of continuum between instruction and feedback to which Hattie and Timperley (2007) refer. Specifically, instances where instruction and feedback are woven together in such a way that new information (i.e., new instruction) is shared with the learner. In this conception, Hattie and Timperley highlight the importance of the learning context, since ‘new’ instruction is an integral part of giving good feedback. Feedback was one-way in that feedback was mostly written and the power dynamic of being a less-than-proficient speaker definitely influenced student participants’ dispositions to engage with the TL, with their instructors and with the course tasks.

In this discussion I drew comparisons between the empirical literature that specifically pertains to three key themes. First, I articulated existing conceptualizations of the purposes of feedback: for learning or for improvement on future tasks. Second, I discussed the importance of students’ understandings of the feedback they are given and their ability to know what to do with the feedback. Finally, I explained the salience of interaction in the feedback process.
Chapter Summary

This chapter shared, analyzed and discussed the findings of my research with ten student participants at the University of Toronto. The protocols I designed are described in Chapter 3. In all, 32 interviews (Appendices L, M and N), 2 focus groups (Appendix Q), 18 responses to online surveys (Appendix G), 15 work samples and 5 course syllabi (Appendix P) were collected. Each of the four sites (3 campuses) at UT was represented in the cohort of ten student participants in my study: OISE, UTM, UTSC and UTSG, with most student participants (8 out of 10) enrolled in the CTEP program. One student was enrolled in the consecutive Teacher Education program at OISE, and one student was an undergraduate student in her third year of a Bachelor of Science program with a minor in French.

The chapter began with a description of the student participants, presented via learner portraits. Each portrait explained the language learning experiences of a particular language learner in HE, not only in terms of their academic program, but also their linguistic backgrounds and some of their language learning concerns. Next, I presented a discussion about how students conceptualized descriptive feedback in order to understand their perceptions of feedback. Then, I shared the data according to research questions one and two. First, concerning the characteristics of feedback, and second, what students did with the feedback they were offered.

There were three unexpected findings from my work with students. First, the wide-ranging nature of students’ experiences with feedback that differentially fell on a continuum from horrendous to marvelous. Second, students’ overall interest and engagement with the topic of feedback, an interest which for some endured beyond this study. Finally, students’ concerns about the highly confidential nature of their feedback experiences, to protect themselves and their colleagues from the wrath of the university if the data they shared with me was linked to them.

More than half of student participants showed evidence of written feedback from instructors that was vague, minimally detailed and difficult to decipher, even when an instructor-generated (typed) rubric was used. Students reported decreased levels of
motivation when instructors were not engaged with them (unavailable during office hours, did not respond to emails, etc.). Students who did not seek additional feedback from their FSL instructors identified that they did not see how following up with instructors would help them improve, and also offered that they simply did not have time. Additionally, some students in this study wondered whether it was “allowed” to ask for additional feedback upon hearing that this is a common practice among some students in HE, something that I have not found evidence for anywhere else in the empirical or theoretical literature.

Findings from student participants in HE (across a range of years) show that fewer than half of them (three out of ten) consistently sought additional feedback from instructors to help them improve their work. These students reported that: a) when asked, their instructors willingly offered more feedback and; b) students showed evidence that this feedback was helpful for improving their work. This data confirms that the “feedback gap” proposed by Evans (2013, pp. 73, 94-97) does indeed exist between the feedback students receive and their capacity to use such feedback to improve their work.

Evans (2013) articulates a number of aspects are at play where the feedback gap is concerned. First, the lack of mindful uptake in higher education contexts for implementing feedback that “works” –both from professors’ and students’ perspectives. Second, the recognition that feedback alone may be insufficient to improve student achievement, since the quality of feedback (from instructors) and uptake (from students) is variable. Additionally, Evans is clear that that professors need to provide various types of feedback that benefits diverse learners in diverse contexts. In other words, feedback for an early-level language course would look quite different than feedback for an upper-year language course, particularly if those language courses were designed for future language teachers. For example, the feedback for early-level courses might be more explicit and more directive, such as the interactive cover page that Ajawi and Boud (2017) used in their study. These kinds of examples will be taken up in a more comprehensive way in Chapter 6 when I discuss the implications of this research.
In sum this data shows, that there is, at a minimum, no official expectation or protocol for feedback practices in the courses surveyed in this study at the University of Toronto. Unfortunately, this ultimately translates into missed learning opportunities for students in HE who will be future teachers. Additionally, however, my experience of students’ reticence to speak about their feedback experiences and the intense concerns about confidentially as well as the difficulty in securing instructor participants for the study (as outlined in Chapter 3) may also indicate a culture of silence around feedback in HE. This would not only propagate missed learning opportunities, but also points to a more complex systemic deficit in understanding and applying the practices of teaching and assessment for learning.

Students did not know how to assess their own work critically, but they also did not know how to decipher instructors’ feedback in ways that lead to learning and progress. In other words, the knowledge students most needed remained hidden to them, either because instructors did not articulate it explicitly in the classroom or in course documents, and/or because students did not understand how to use this information to their benefit.

Chapter 5 will take us into the world of the instructor participants, where their conceptions of descriptive feedback are illuminated, as are their experiences and perceptions of students’ uptake of the feedback they offer. Prior to moving to the instructor data, the next section presents a narrative that traverses or bridges into the instructor participants’ data via an Interlude, a conversation between two students as they wait for their TA to arrive for a language support session on campus. I have constructed this second Interlude of diverse viewpoints from data I received from multiple participants during the 15 months I collected data across the three campuses at the University of Toronto.
Deux étudiants attendent une séance de soutien langagier avec l’assistante graduée.

Suresh: Salut toi! Comment ça va? L’as-tu reçu?

Khalid: C’est pourquoi je suis ici, mon homme. Je ne comprends pas! J’ai fait le résumé comme je l’ai fait toutes les autres fois et puis cette fois, au lieu de 64%, j’ai eu 78%!

Suresh: Fantastique, mon ami! Pourquoi es-tu ici alors? Moi je travaille tellement fort avec les lectures en anglais et qu’on doit écrire en français.

Khalid: Moi aussi, c’est pourquoi je suis venu. Ce cours est encore plus de travail que j’ai attendu. Je veux savoir ce que j’ai fait pour avoir réussi autant pour que je puisse le refaire à l’avenir!

Suresh: Tu as reçu un 78 et tu veux connaître les prochains pas?

Khalid: Écoute, comme rétroaction cette fois, on m’a dit « Intéressant ». Que fais-je avec ça? Penses-tu qu’elle aurait pu prendre le temps d’écrire une phrase complète?

Suresh: Je comprends. La dernière fois j’ai reçu 4 soulignements, deux cercles avec des points d’interrogation et un soulignement bosselé, et—ah oui—« Bien »–et un 68%. Qu’est-ce « Bien » veut dire, alors?

Khalid: Pour te dire, tu as reçu plus de rétroaction que moi, mon ami.

Suresh: J’ai décidé après cette dernière évaluation que je ne pouvais plus supporter ça. Je voulais comprendre comment améliorer mon travail. Une chose qui m’aide c’est de venir travailler mon français ici. Suzanne m’a conseillé d’aller en discuter avec le prof moi-même, durant ses heures de bureau.

Khalid: Puis…? Y es-tu allé? As-tu enfin appris la différence entre un cercle et un soulignement?!

Suresh: Alors oui. Un cercle veut dire une faute d’anglicisme et un soulignement est une faute de grammaire…et un soulignement bosselé, ça veut dire…plus de détail.

Khalid: Voyons donc? Tu es allé aux heures de bureau et c’est ce que tu as appris?

Suresh: Effectivement. Pourtant, ça m’a beaucoup aidé. Le prof m’a vraiment dépanné. Je lui ai dit que c’est le cours le plus difficile que je n’ai jamais fait. Elle m’a expliqué qu’elle voulait que je comprenne comment m’améliorer. Elle a regardé mon travail avec moi et j’ai
découvert que je dois travailler mes prépositions. Tu sais, comme, aider à faire quelque chose and avoir besoin *de* quelque chose. Je sais que je n’ai jamais compris ces choses à l’école secondaire, ni même l’année dernière.

Khalid: Es-tu sérieux? Pourquoi elle ne nous explique pas son code en classe?

Suresh: Je ne sais pas…Il me semble que tout ça c’est un mystère…mystérieux. Comme, on devrait savoir ce qu’on ne connaÎt pas…pour faire le travail.

Khalid: Tout à fait.

Suresh: Voilà tout, elle m’a dit que je peux revenir n’importe quand, lorsque je ne comprends pas comment je peux mieux faire. Alors je ferai ça, bien sûr.

Khalid: J’ai une peur bleue qu’elle dirait que mon français est mauvais et que je ne devrais pas être dans le programme, comme la prof de l’année passée. Tu t’en rappelles?

Suresh: Je m’en souviens. Mais elle a dit ça à tout le monde.

Khalid: Véritablement? Elle m’a ignoré à chaque fois que je posais une question.


Suzanne: *(entre dans la salle)*…Qu’est-ce qui pourrait faire une différence?


Suzanne: Bonne idée! Si je m’en souviens comme il faut, vous avez besoin d’écrire une dissertation pour ce cours avant la semaine de lecture, oui?

Khalid: Exactement! Voici la grille…

Suresh: Alors Suzanne, j’ai appris de ma prof que un soulignement veut dire une faute grammaticale et un soulignement bosselé …mettre de plus de détail.

Suzanne: Super chouette! Allons regarder cette grille alors, d’accord?

Khalid: à vrai dire, Suresh, je suis perdu. Je ne comprends carrément pas comment elle note nos réflexions, et je ne sais pas non plus comment améliorer mon travail. Il n’y a aucun endroit où je vois « les prochaines étapes… » Toi?
Two students wait for a language support session with the French TA to begin.

Suresh: Hey, hi! How are you? Did you get that assignment back?

Khalid: That’s why I’m here, man. I can’t figure this course out. I did the summary—like I’ve done all the other times, and instead of getting 64% this time, I got a 78%!

Suresh: Dude, that’s awesome! Why are you even here then? Me, I’m struggling so hard with the readings in English when we have to write in French…

Khalid: Me too, that’s why I came. That course is way more work than I expected. I also want to know what I did this time to get a 78%, so I can do it again!

Suresh: You got a 78 and you still want to know next steps?

Khalid: Listen, on this assignment I got « Intéressant ». What am I supposed to do with that? Do you think she could have taken the time to write a complete sentence?

Suresh: On my last assignment I got 4 underlines, 2 circles with question marks and a squiggly underline, and—oh yeah—« Bien »--and a 68%. What’s “Good” about that?!

Khalid: You got more feedback than me, my friend!

Suresh: I decided after the last assignment that I couldn’t take it any more. I needed to understand how to improve my work. One thing that’s been helping me is coming here to work on my French. Suzanne told me that I should just go talk to the prof.

Khalid: And…? Did you? So what’s the difference between a circle and an underline?!

Suresh: So like, yeah, basically, a circle is an anglicism, an underline is a grammar error and a squiggly underline is…you need more detail.

Khalid: Seriously? You went to office hours and that’s what you learned?

Suresh: Well, yes. It was super helpful though. The professor totally helped. I told her that this is the hardest course I’ve ever done! She said she wanted to make sure that I understood how to improve. She looked at my work with me, and I learned I need to work on my prepositions—you know, like aider à faire quelque chose and avoir besoin de quelque chose. I never really understood that stuff in high school, or even last year.

Khalid: Are you kidding me? Why doesn’t she tell us this stuff about her code in class?

Suresh: I don’t know man. It all seems a little…mysterious. Like, we’re somehow supposed to know what we don’t know so that we can work on stuff.
Khalid: Totally.

Suresh: All I can say is that she told me to come back anytime I don’t understand how I can do better—so I’m gonna do that, of course.

Khalid: I am so scared that she’s just gonna tell me that my French is bad and that I shouldn’t be in the program—like that woman last year did—remember?

Suresh: I remember. But she said that kind of stuff to everybody.

Khalid: Really? She seemed to look right through me every time I asked a question.

Suresh: You and me both. This prof is different. She is really caring. She seems to really want us to understand. You should try going to see her and see if it makes a difference.

Suzanne: (coming into the conference room)…If what makes a difference?

Khalid: Long story, Suzanne. Hey, I really need to understand this rubric for the next essay. What does “syntax” mean, and how come it’s worth 25%? Why am I still being graded on grammar? When am I going to hear about style and content?

Suzanne: Great idea! If memory serves me right, you need to write an essay before Reading Week, right?

Khalid: Exactly! Here’s the rubric…

Suresh: So Suzanne, I found out from the prof that an underline is a grammar error and a squiggly underline is… you need more detail.

Suzanne: Well, awesome! Let’s have a look at this rubric, shall we?

Khalid: To be honest, Suresh, I’m lost. I absolutely don’t understand how she’s marking these reflection papers, and I don’t understand how to improve my work either—there’s no place where I see “next steps”—do you?

(French translated by the author in blue.)

As the vignette explains, Suresh and Khalid are attending an extra help session in French language proficiency on campus with their TA Suzanne, and since they arrive early they discuss why they are attending and what they hope to accomplish. It is clear that they are frustrated with the lack of detail that they have each received from their professor, although Suresh is taking a more proactive approach to understanding what he can do to
improve his work in the course just before Reading Week. Khalid cannot understand why
Suresh would choose to attend an optional session when he did so much better on this
assignment (78%) than on his last (64%) but Suresh insists that he is on the right path,
having taken his TA’s advice and gone to speak to the professor directly about what her
feedback meant. He learned some important information, even beyond what circles and
“underlinings” mean, and is ready to share that, both with his classmate and with the TA.

Furthermore, he is committed to improving, and sees that he has his professor’s support
in returning for more help and information if there is something he does not understand.
The point of this vignette is to show that if he had not had a TA to urge him to go and
speak directly with the professor, and if he had not been able to find out the information
he needed, Suresh would have continued to be unable to improve because he would not
have understood what his professor needed him to learn, or do differently. Khalid,
although he is mystified by his classmate’s proactivity, is also at the extra help session to
take his own proactive steps, so he can continue to improve, despite the lack of feedback
from the instructor.

Once again, it is important to note that this interlude accurately represents the experiences
of student participants. Although it shares some of the more challenging data I collected,
it does not compromise the confidentiality of the participants or their colleagues, nor any
professor at the University of Toronto.
Chapter 5: Instructors Map the Journey

Introduction

In this chapter I present and discuss the findings of my research with five instructor participants at the University of Toronto according to the protocols I designed and outlined in Chapter 3. As we have seen, this included five one-on-one interviews (Appendix O), one asynchronous focus group conversation via Skype (Appendix R), 16 hours of classroom observations (Appendices J and K), five responses to online surveys (Appendix I), as well as course documents (15 task samples and 5 course syllabi) (Appendix P).

Chapter 5 follows a parallel structure to Chapter 4. First, I present the instructor participants via a narrative portrait that explains the language learning experiences, linguistic backgrounds and principle concerns of each FSL instructor (n=5). Next, I share a summary table of instructors’ views of descriptive feedback as a starting point to understand their views regarding the notion of feedback. Then, I present the data by research question, that is, Research Questions 1, 2 and 4. First, I offer the characteristics of the feedback received by students from their FSL instructors. Second, I share what students did with the feedback they were offered. Finally, regarding Research Question 4, I present the data I collected about tasks. The chapter concludes with a summary of specific data I collected using a cross-case analysis and discussion of the findings in light of the relevant literature. The role of individual context variables (Research Question 3) will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 6 when I explain and address the relationship between students’ feedback use and their individual context factors (linguistic background, language exposure and language learning practices).

To begin this chapter, I share an excerpt from my field notes during the data collection phase of this research. I spent quite a lot of time on the UTM campus for nearly a year, so, in some important ways, UTM felt like a research ‘home-base’ of sorts. The excerpt that follows presents my reflections during my time at UTM.

*At the crossroads of paths just outside the student centre at the University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM), I sit on a rock, aware of students bustling between classes and I*
listen to animated chatting in at least two languages other than English and French. In addition to a multi-table plant sale for the United Way, kiosks for a campus clothing exchange and a honey/beeswax vendor contributed to this happy space on a busy, beautiful October afternoon.

This campus is a mix of 70s architecture and post-modern glass, steel and concrete design, showing a blend of new and newer buildings and infrastructure. Walkways through forests lead one through a labyrinth of buildings across a sprawling suburban campus. Culturally and linguistically, this campus is diverse.

FN Oct 10

Figure 30. On the path to the CTEP Office at UTM, Research Journal, Oct 21

I knew three out of five instructor participants from my previous professional connections. Although I was concerned that I had a prior relationship with these constituents, I have come to see that this fact may have actually helped to establish rapport and trust with participants in a timely manner, something that ultimately facilitated the data collection process.
As a result of reading Douglas Boud’s work on sustainable feedback practices (2015), I found myself wondering if the instructors’ feedback practices were ‘working’ for them. The answer was a resounding “in some ways” and “not really,” and this will be discussed fully, later in this chapter.

Instructor Participants

This section of the chapter presents a detailed portrait of each instructor who participated in the study. Rich narrative explains the language learning experiences, linguistic backgrounds and principle concerns of each of the five FSL instructors.

Professeure Louise

Prof. Louise’s first language is French and she shared that she began learning French as a child from her parents, in France, where she lived and attended school until she moved to Canada in 2005 to begin a doctorate. At the time of her participation in the study Prof. Louise was beginning her career at U of T, although she taught in the teaching program at a university in Québec for a decade.
In her one-on-one interview on March 31, Prof. Louise shared her astute observations and discussed some concerns about assessment and French proficiency development. She also answered my questions about her feedback practices to students. In addition, Prof. Louise participated in a 50-item online survey about her assessment and feedback practices and provided detailed data about her personal French language learning practices. In Table 15 below, I summarized Prof. Louise’s self-reporting of her feedback practices, according to the online survey she completed.

Table 15. Summary of Prof. Louise’s most and least used feedback practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prof. Louise</th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provides feedback to students about their French proficiency (how well they speak, read, write or understand French)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provides students with information about how they can improve their assignments in French in her course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Shows students how she evaluates their work so they better understand their progress and achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Responds with more feedback when students initiate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Gives whole class feedback after students finish an assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Gives feedback to a student where their performance is compared to other students in the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Audio tapes or video tapes comments about student work (essays, reports, projects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Plans nor facilitates formal student-instructor conferences (e.g., during office hours) during the term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assigns numerical marks/letter grades to students without descriptive feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I had the opportunity to observe Prof. Louise’s advanced oral class before the end of term in April, where I saw some things that I had never seen before. First, I had never heard a professor say to students that she was looking for evidence of them taking risks. Second, I had never heard a professor speak directly to students’ feelings of fear and lack of
confidence as they prepared for their final oral exam. Third, I had never seen so much participation from students in class.

Prof. Louise reflected carefully on how her experiences of schooling in France are so different from what she sees in Canada, and said that she is working hard to figure out what students need (versus what they want). Prof. Louise explained that over the course of her first year of teaching, she received some feedback that she found challenging to understand. First, students wanted one textbook. In her advanced oral course evaluations at the end of term, students shared that they found it challenging when learning materials from as many as ten different academic texts were used in her course. Second, students said that they found Prof. Louise’s teaching ‘disorganized’ and wanted her to simplify her teaching by sticking to one theme per class. They wanted power-point presentations in nice, neat groups of 20 slides. They did not want her to adjust or individualize her teaching according to the needs of the learners, nor did they want her to take more time if needed to explain something that the class was struggling with. The thing that surprised Prof. Louise the most, however, was to discover that students really did not want to know in advance what was on the exam; they wanted to be taken by surprise. This was illogical and incomprehensible to Prof. Louise, who always wants her students to succeed.

Student participant Amelia was in Prof. Louise’s class and shared with me that she had never felt such support from any teacher. She enumerated the way that Prof. Louise invited students to go and see her when they had questions about anything, whether the question pertained to her course or not. Amelia was also grateful for the way Prof. Louise offered students assistance with pronunciation—even right before a test. Amelia said she felt as though she was cheating because she had had access to so much support.

Prof. Louise shared that she was grappling with two key issues at the moment: the first regarding student engagement and the second about offering ‘next steps’ to students. Prof. Louise was frustrated by the fact that students neither read nor followed the detailed course syllabus. She wanted students to engage with reading for their own success in her course, but she saw that they did not, could not, and/or would not. She explained that she wants to know how to change students’ disengagement with learning outside of the class.
Secondly, Prof. Louise wants to be able to offer ‘next steps’ to her students, but it is clear that this is a longer-term project. I suspect that it is going to take more time because taking up next steps requires students to have literacy in applying feedback and this requires repeated experiences of receiving feedback. In other words, when students do not read and apply the course syllabus it does not seem possible that they would then be able to take in and take up individualized feedback from their instructor on individual assignments.

Professeur Martin

Prof. Martin explained that he began learning French at the age of 11, in Canada, and that he spent years and years in CF classes where there was little to no element of oral communication and very little oral practice available to students. When Prof. Martin attended university, it was first on an Anglophone campus. Prof. Martin characterizes that he learned French “with difficulty.” He attended a francophone campus to become more bilingual and eventually went to France after completing another degree on another Anglophone campus. When Prof. Martin was in France, people were surprised that it was his first time in France (because his French was very good). Prof. Martin commented that his communication, comprehension and his ability to speak quickly took a tremendous amount of time to develop, given that the methods for language learning in use at the time were more traditional, and involved tasks that emphasized writing and memorization. Prof. Martin reads, speaks, understands and writes a little Italian. Prof. Martin also speaks and understands about 100 words in Spanish and about 30 words in Korean. He has been teaching in the FSL program for the past 20 years.

Prof. Martin shared his in-depth observations and reflections about assessment and French proficiency development and answered my questions about his feedback practices with students. In addition, he participated in a detailed online survey about his assessment and feedback practices. In Table 16 below, I summarized Prof. Martin’s self-reporting of his feedback practices, according to the online survey he completed.

Table 16. Summary of Prof. Martin’s most and least used feedback practices
Prof. Martin

| Almost Always | - Expects students to take up the feedback he offers (i.e., the feedback he has previously offered to a student affects the way he grades students’ future work  
- Responds to email communication with more feedback when students initiate  
- Gives whole class feedback after students finish an assignment  
- Offers descriptive feedback as well as numerical marks/letter grades to students  
- Provides descriptive feedback to students without assigning numerical marks |
| --- | --- |
| Never | - Records audio or video comments about student work (essays, reports, projects), nor does he post or send to students  
- Plans and facilitates formal student-instructor conferences (e.g., during office hours) during the term |

Additionally, Prof. Martin provided rich data about his personal French language learning practices. His participation in my research also included an asynchronous discussion (a focus group) with another instructor, as well as a series of three classroom observations.

Prof. Martin reflects continuously on how to balance estimating students’ success in communicating a message with the correctness of the form of that message (online survey data, Jun 16). Prof. Martin wants to know how to know which next steps/tasks to offer to which students, and how to do that in a way that is sustainable from the standpoint of time (Focus Group). Prof. Martin shared that homework tasks that comprise the participation mark in his course do not receive a quantitative result; rather, students receive a mark simply for doing the work. He instead prefers to do a holistic, diachronic evaluation at the end of the year. Prof. Martin believes that it would be very helpful for professors and students if a database of exercises were available for reference purposes because opportunities for practice are needed. Additionally, Prof. Martin felt that such resources must be continually updated. In addition, up-to-date models of feedback sheets are needed: work plans, grammar points to perfect, and spelling. He says that there is a
need to proceed in ways that are most informed (i.e., (“evidence-based”) (Focus Group, Jan 19).

I worked with Prof. Martin for nearly two years, where he became a pivotal member of our assessment and evaluation team of native/native-like French speakers, along with six experienced OISE/UT Faculty, Sole Responsibility Instructors and retired Ontario teachers. Prof. Martin worked tirelessly and with enthusiasm on assessing both oral and written components of the French proficiency examinations. He offered his vast communicative competence and linguistic knowledge of the French language (grammar, syntax, vocabulary, etc.) in ways that were highly constructive and of tremendous benefit to the CTEP program and its students.

Since 2013, I have maintained contact with Prof. Martin because we share similar interests in and passion for the importance of French proficiency development for future teachers. Prof. Martin’s recent teaching venture shows both commitment and dedication to student learning and experience in French. Prof. Martin and I have spoken at length about both the need to provide systematic instruction and descriptive feedback to students to engage them in the process of developing proficiency for teaching (in) French, and the need for appropriate tasks and classroom practice to support future teachers in their learning.

Professeure Hélène

Prof. Hélène shared that she began learning French at the age of 6, in a CF program in Ontario, and that she spent time learning another language in her family as well. She speaks Italian as her first language and she reads, speaks and understands English, French, Italian and Spanish. Prof. Hélène spent time in France and in Quebec to become more proficient in French. She has been teaching in the French as a Second Language teacher education program for the past 20 years.

Prof. Hélène was also an experienced member of the assessment and evaluation team of native/native-like French speakers, along with six experienced OISE/UT Faculty, Sole Responsibility Instructors and retired Ontario teachers. I worked with Prof. Hélène for
two years. Prof. Hélène worked on assessing both oral and written components of the French proficiency examinations, and offered her considerable communicative competence and linguistic knowledge of the French language (grammar, syntax, vocabulary, etc.) in bi-annual French proficiency exams for the CTEP program, where there was on average a 30% pass rate.

Student participant Nicola had Prof. Hélène as a course instructor for Italian, and another instructor for French. Prof. Hélène taught the curriculum course for Italian in French, something that Nicola really enjoyed. Nicola shared that she had learned more about French and Italian in Prof. Hélène’s class than she had learned in either of her other two French courses. One of the principle reasons for this, according to Nicola, was the amount of feedback she received from Prof. Hélène.

Prof. Hélène underlines errors in students’ work and students are required to correct all errors and re-submit their work. Nicola was suitably impressed by Prof. Hélène’s commitment to students’ progress, and said that Prof. Hélène’s course was the first time she had ever had a professor who re-corrected her work to ensure that the errors were properly corrected. Nicola reported that Prof. Hélène had shared early on in the course that if she did not correct students’ errors, they would continue to make those errors and pass them on to students. I confirmed with Nicola that Prof. Hélène checked the work a second time. In Table 17 below, I summarized Prof. Hélène’s self-reporting of her feedback practices, according to the online survey she completed.

*Table 17. Summary of Prof. Hélène’s most and least used feedback practices*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Prof. Hélène</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Almost Always** | - Provides feedback to students about their French proficiency (how well they speak, read, write or understand French)  
  - Provides information to her students about how they can improve their assignments in French in her course  
  - Shows her students how she evaluates their work so they better understand their progress and achievement  
  - Expects students to take up the feedback she offers (i.e., the feedback she has previously offered to a student affects the way she grades students’ future work)  
  - Responds with more feedback when students initiate  
  - Gives whole class feedback after students finish an assignment  
  - Provides descriptive feedback as well as numerical marks/letter grades to students |
| **Never** | - Records audio or video comments about student work (essays, reports, projects)  
  - Assigns numerical marks/letter grades to students without descriptive feedback |

I have maintained contact with Prof. Hélène, because we share similar interests in and passion for the importance of French proficiency development for future teachers. Before she became a participant in this research Prof. Hélène and I had spoken on many occasions about our mutual concerns and commitment to the linguistic competence of future FSL teachers. We are both committed to finding ways to engage students in the process of developing their proficiency for teaching (in) French.

In her interview, Prof. Hélène spoke about the hierarchy that can exist between tenured teaching faculty and sessional instructors. She noted that she has observed that sessional instructors have no seniority and no job security, and are hired according to need, number and past feedback forms from students. She explained that sessional instructors rarely
have input on course development and feedback practices, and little authority to engage the administration in seeking resources or support for the FSL for teaching courses.

Professeur Claude

I met with Prof. Claude, a long-time professor (20 years) at U of T for an interview on October 3, where he graciously offered two hours of his time. Prof. Claude shared many in-depth observations and concerns about assessment and French proficiency development and answered my questions about his feedback practices to students. In addition, Prof. Claude participated in an online survey about his assessment and feedback practices and provided rich data about his personal French language learning practices. Prof. Claude’s contribution to my research also included an asynchronous discussion (a focus group) with another instructor, Prof. Martin, as well as a series of three classroom observations.

Prof. Claude began learning French at the age of 23 in France and came to Canada when he was 28. He speaks and understands French, Spanish and English; he also reads and writes Sanskrit.

Prof. Claude spoke at length about how he carefully develops course tasks, projects and activities in order to be able to best understand the French language proficiency development of each student in his class. He explained how he decides on what kind of feedback he offers his students well in advance of the course’s beginning based on the established and published outcomes for the course, all of which are available to students as of the first day of the course. In Table 18 below, I summarized Prof. Claude’s self-reporting of his feedback practices, according to the online survey he completed.

Table 18. Summary of Prof. Claude’s most and least used feedback practices
I knew from both my interview and from the online survey Prof. Claude completed that he is an experienced language professor so I was interested to observe his teaching. In the third week of October I completed 6 hours of classroom observations in Prof. Claude’s classes. In total I observed: 2 hours at the beginners’ level, 2 hours at the intermediate level and 3 hours at the advanced level, a 3rd year course in oral practice. Each course had an enrolment of 35-40 students. Prof. Claude knew all students by name and demonstrated considerable rapport with them. He actively encouraged their participation and asked for feedback from them about his teaching. In fact, he explicitly asked students how he could assist them in achieving their learning goals for the various tasks he proposed in class.

Prof. Claude’s teaching at all levels focused on students’ understanding of how the French language “works” or “behaves”. This is evident with his words in purple
(followed by the translation in blue, by the author), his line of questioning always began, “Qu’est-ce qui se passe ici?” (“What’s happening here, in this example?”), and “Qu’est-ce que cela veut dire?” (What does this mean?”) Delivered with both humour and empathy, it was interesting to watch students’ attempts to engage in the metacognitive thinking and in the interactions with Prof. Claude when he asked those questions. Carless, et al.’s (2011) study with ten practitioners in HE who were award winners shared the observation that not only is feedback seen as part of pedagogy because all good teaching is interactive and dialogic, but also that there needs to be a focus on dialogue because of the limitations of one-way written comments. Prof. Claude’s teaching was a brilliant example of this kind of dialogic teaching. Students at all levels, but particularly at the intermediate level, responded to this highly interactive and metacognitive approach (Claude, Classroom Observations: Oct 21, 4.0 h; Oct 22, 2.0 h).

Prof. Claude gives detailed feedback (both orally and written) to his students so they can improve over the duration of the course. He knows that some students find it easier to apply feedback than others, and there was ample evidence that he looks for opportunities to help students be successful. In his advanced oral class, for example, Prof. Claude provided a detailed exemplar and explanations for an oral presentation task based on their reading of “Le Petit Prince.” The practice of providing exemplars was one that my study found is rarely provided for students, but which is known to propel student learning. When students have additional questions about an assignment and the feedback he has given after he has returned an assignment Prof. Claude was generous with his time before class, at the break and after class to take students’ questions.

As a final comment on his online survey Prof. Claude shared that it is “sometimes necessary to “teach” students to understand feedback and descriptive comments so that they are able to integrate and use this information in their future work.” He also sees that “it is a big challenge to find an efficient way that is simple and easy to put more importance on the learning process through the use of detailed and individualized feedback.” (Claude, Online survey; translated by the author).
Professeur Michelho

Prof. Michelho shared that he first began learning French informally in his community, but it was not until high school that he began to formally learn French. He moved to Canada in 1990. When he first attended university, Prof. Michelho studied in English and he considers that English is his first language even though he reads, speaks, understands and writes in French, and has a Master’s degree in French language and literature. In addition to French and English, Prof. Michelho also reads and understands Portuguese, and speaks another Romance language. He has been teaching in the French as a Second Language pre-service concurrent teacher education program at OISE for the past seven years, and he completed his dissertation ten years ago. In Table 19 below, I summarized Prof. Michelho’s self-reporting of his feedback practices, according to the online survey he completed.

*Table 19. Summary of Prof. Michelho’s most and least used feedback practices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prof. Michelho</th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provides feedback to students about their French proficiency (how well they speak, read, write or understand French)</td>
<td>- No data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Keeps track of the feedback he has offered (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to assist him with instructional planning and evaluation in the course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Keeps track of whether students take up feedback (i.e., either on paper or electronically) in their future assignments, to assist him with instructional planning and evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Expects students to take up the feedback he offers (i.e., the feedback he has previously offered to a student affects the way he grades students’ future work)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Gives whole class feedback after students finish an assignment in the course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provides descriptive feedback as well as numerical marks/letter grades to students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prof. Michelho was an experienced member of the assessment and evaluation team of native/native-like French speakers, along with six experienced OISE/UT Faculty, Sole Responsibility Instructors and retired Ontario teachers for some time. I worked with Prof. Michelho for two years while he was preparing his dissertation in teaching practices that promoted plurilingualism. During bi-annual French proficiency exams for the CTEP program, Prof. Michelho assessed communicative competence and linguistic knowledge of the French language (grammar, syntax, vocabulary, etc.) in both oral and written components in French.

Before he became a participant in this study, Prof. Michelho and I had spoken on several occasions about our concerns about the linguistic competence of future FSL teachers. As an instructor in the CTEP program Prof. Michelho and I have spent a great deal of time (individually and together) assessing the linguistic competence in French of future FSL teachers. Engaging Teacher Candidates in developing their proficiency for teaching (in) French is something that Prof. Michelho has been involved in for over a decade.

This concludes the portraits section of this chapter, which has allowed me to introduce the five instructor participants in the study. As I move to present the data that concerns Research Questions 1 and 2, I return to each portrait as a way to give dimensionality to the data.

**Professors on Descriptive Feedback**

To begin this section I share a summary table that summarizes the discussions I held with each instructor during their interview regarding the notion of descriptive feedback. As I had done with students in Chapter 4, I asked each instructor participant about their conceptions and understanding of descriptive feedback because I wanted to know about their experiences as well as their thinking on the topic. This question was, of course, particularly important because each of the instructor participants was teaching FSL to students in HE who were intent on pursuing a future career in teaching (in) French. Thus, in order to prepare students adequately, instructors would therefore be required to understand that their students would ultimately need to give timely, descriptive, understandable, specific and useful feedback to their future students (Ontario FSL
Curriculum, 2013). Table 15 below thus presents instructor participants’ views on descriptive feedback.

Table 20. Instructor participants’ notions of descriptive feedback from Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Notion of descriptive feedback</th>
<th>Comments from the instructor participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Louise</td>
<td>• There is a direct link between descriptive feedback and what is qualitative</td>
<td>The act of writing or telling comments explaining why there would need to be an /s/ at the end of a word, or when there is an anglicism written, Prof. Louise always proposes alternate words to use instead. The challenge, of course, is time. With 40 students in the class, restructuring sentences and offering detailed descriptive feedback is challenging, especially when one doesn’t know if students are even going to read the feedback. Prof. Louise ruefully used the metaphor of burning money to describe the usefulness of giving feedback if it would never be read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Martin</td>
<td>• “We give the what and the how” (spoken in English during the interview)</td>
<td>Prof. Martin had nothing else to say on the subject of descriptive feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Hélène</td>
<td>• Individualized and honest comments that include next steps</td>
<td>“I should be able to write and to give as much for an A+ as for E” (spoken in English during the interview).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Claude</td>
<td>• Prof. Claude was very clear; he could not tell me what descriptive feedback was because, in his word, he is “self-taught”</td>
<td>Prof. Claude had nothing else to say on the subject of descriptive feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Michelho</td>
<td>• No data</td>
<td>Prof. Michelho did not wish to be interviewed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The characteristics of descriptive feedback, in the instructor participants’ own words, became a valuable backdrop against which I looked at the way students used the feedback instructor participants offered. As previously discussed, the wide-ranging and challenging data collected from student participants regarding the feedback they received from their
French instructors was surprising. However, I was surprised yet again when I compared the feedback student participants shared with the feedback practices I saw, even in action, from the instructor participants in the study. In other words, instructor participants often showed comprehensive feedback practices. The challenging data from the instructor participants often revealed disengaged and resistant students. I will discuss this gap later in this chapter when I take up this data in light of the literature.

**Research Question 1: Instructors offer feedback**

To capture the essence of what instructor participants said about the feedback they offered to their students, I looked at the interview data, online survey data and focus group data. During the one-on-one interviews, in addition to asking professors about the term “descriptive feedback,” I also asked participants about three elements of their feedback practice. The three elements included: the kind of feedback they offered to their students; the type of feedback most helpful to students; and I asked instructors to describe one of their course assignments and how they evaluated students’ work. What emerged was an interesting collection of feedback practices that resembled a patchwork quilt. What instructors said in their online surveys triangulated (reinforced) what was shared in the interviews and focus group conversation.

I describe feedback practices as ‘patchwork’ because each instructor had their own set of practices that they used in a coherent way—to them. This echoed with what students said about the feedback they received as well as with findings in the literature (O’Donovan et al., 2016). Students said that, first, there often was not enough feedback given. Second, that it was not clear to them what to do with the feedback they received, in part because there was not a standard format of rubric used or a standardized way that professors expected students to take up the feedback. Third, some of the feedback was completely unintelligible. Here then, is what the instructors said about the feedback they offered to students.

For Prof. Louise, there was not “one moment” when she decides what kind of feedback she offers to students. She shared that she looks carefully at how students are reacting to the course. For example, she explained how she changed her feedback practices in the fall
term when she was teaching a new course because students were not taking up and applying her feedback when they completed in-class tasks. The specific example she gave was about students’ use of linking words. Prof. Louise therefore opted to offer bonus points when students showed evidence of using her feedback in their work, and she allocated a total of 6 points out of 20 for the application of feedback. She held the view that instructors must plan tasks in a way that gives students opportunities to practice and consolidate whatever skills they are being asked to demonstrate so they can ‘reinvest’ (i.e., use) the feedback.

Prof. Louise shared information about the critical analyses that students had to do for her advanced oral course. Students were asked to respond to an article from the course (there were six or seven articles in all to choose from) in a critically reflective way. Specifically, they were asked to summarize first (in a half a page) and then to make links to the course and to their experience. In other words, students had to situate the article in context, including what came before and what came after. According to Prof. Louise, this was a university-level analysis. In other words, she was looking for students’ mastery of the article and their ability to critically reflect on and contextualize the themes raised in the article while also making connections to the course themes. In short, Prof. Louise was looking for students to demonstrate critical thinking in their written analyses in French.

Prof. Martin’s most frequent feedback practice was to make some short qualitative comments on students’ work that they were required to hand in each week. There were courses where Prof. Martin said he would never give a weekly homework task,. In fact, in two or three courses the previous year he had done so, meaning, for 10 weeks out of 12 students had to submit something in writing every week. Although these assignments were not marked quantitatively, Prof. Martin used a series of qualitative comments, “very good, this or that point to work on, ‘this is good’ scale” (Martin, Interview).

The type of feedback Prof. Martin offered seemed to be task dependent. For many tasks, he described scales (a grid with many criteria), where for each criterion the mark meant something, not only ‘good,’ ‘very good,’ or ‘excellent,’ according to Prof. Martin. For example, in the class task where students had to write about an anecdote from the past,
Prof. Martin assigned a score of 3.5 for language and 3.5 for content. To achieve a language score of 100% there had to be no errors at all and verb tenses had to be well chosen and correctly conjugated. A 3.2 out of 3.5 meant up to 4 small errors in spelling and gender, and 2 errors in verbs. For a content score of 3.2 or more, this meant clear and creative work throughout the piece, and the conclusion needed to be made with confidence and skill, after a logical paper with subtle organization using linking words and appropriate transitions. In sum, a rich variety of vocabulary and structure needed to be used. Prof. Martin said, “It’s a little bit more qualitative but even so we try to not only say that it’s good, it’s creative, it’s cool but to really give them an idea” (Martin, Interview). For each grade point of the value of the result, it did not only mean ‘excellent’ or ‘very good.’ Rather, these marks were also linked to real criteria, which were revealed to students from the beginning, in a grid, when the task was first assigned. Prof. Martin emphasized,

Il ne faut jamais donner de note quantitative sans explication. Même un court encouragement, mais jamais juste la note. We never give a quantitative mark without an explanation. Even a short encouragement, but never only a mark.

Prof. Martin
Online survey

(French translated by the author in italics)

For other tasks, dictée, for example, things were less qualitative and more quantitative in Prof. Martin’s teaching. He said, “For each sentence they have the corrections and they know how many points (out of how many points) it’s worth. There is the point, point, point, point. I try to be very clear on what it is worth, how many points” (Martin, Interview). Prof. Martin said that he always explained to students how he evaluates; the auxiliary was worth a half point, the past participle was worth a half point and the agreement, if necessary, was worth another point. If the negative was needed, it had to be in the right place, and that was another half point (Martin, Interview). Prof. Martin explained exactly how marks were divided. What was less clear, according to Prof. Martin, was how to get students’ engagement in the shared task of improving their work. As he articulated:
Il est fort difficile de responsabiliser certain-e-s et de faire en sorte qu'ils surmontent leurs difficultés suite à la rétroaction. Il en est de même pour encourager les étudiant-e-s à profiter des heures de bureau. J'hésite quand aux rencontres formelles tout simplement parce qu'il y en a toujours quelques-un-e-s qui sont responsables, etc. mais dont l'horaire ne cadre point avec le nôtre, et ceux/celles qui en ont le plus besoin ne viennent souvent pas.

It is difficult to help students take ownership in a way that allows them to overcome their difficulties with feedback. In the same way it is challenging to encourage students to take advantage of office hours. I hesitate when it comes to formal meetings, not only because there are always some students who are responsible, etc., but also when their schedules don't jibe with ours, and those in greater need often don't come.

Prof. Martin
Online survey
(French translated by the author in italics)

For Prof. Hélène, feedback needs to be differentiated in the same way that instruction is differentiated, because students are different. She said, “I should know my students so that if I say such-and-such a thing to X, for example, she will shut down; but if I say it to X, she might not shut down. She’ll say, “Hmmm, I’ve got to jump higher.” Okay? So it’s about knowing your students.” Prof. Hélène went on to discuss this idea about differentiation in more detail when she shared:

I guess it depends on the assignment, but I think you have to offer them…it’s like, differentiated instruction means differentiated feedback. You’ve got to differentiate the feedback too. That’s what I think. You can’t really make a blank statement about that. I know that X needs this in order to continue doing whatever, but someone else might need something different so it’s like feedback but it’s not the same. It’s not, it’s not…it’s being equitable not equal.

Prof. Hélène
Interview

Prof. Claude shared that the feedback he offered was almost always written and most always with a rubric (85% of the time), in advance, from the beginning of the course. Similar to Prof. Hélène, Prof. Claude gave frequency counts on grammatical errors, and he required that students must identify, correct, then re-write their texts to ensure correctness. Many of Prof. Claude’s assignments were about developing linguistic competence and linguistic confidence and all of Prof. Claude’s tasks (that I saw or heard about) were authentic in the sense that they were based on real-life tasks. Prof. Claude
designed the success criteria of tasks in such a way as to balance the weight equally between correct form and communication of content or message. In other words, successful achievement of a task was tied directly to the accuracy of both the content and the form of the communication in French.

To conclude this section sharing the findings from the first research question regarding the characteristics of feedback instructors offered, the data shows that all instructors gave a rich range of feedback opportunities to their students. There were multiple sources, frequencies, level of detail (specificity, granularity) and purposes for feedback, regardless of campus, academic program, specialization or other context variables. The presentation of these findings included an examination of all data sources where instructors were asked to share information about the feedback they offered. These data sources included one-on-one interviews, an online survey, course documents including syllabi and assignments, and one asynchronous focus group.

Research Question 2: Professors (Re)Experience Feedback (As Students Implement Feedback)

Mais si les gens stressent, ça bloque leurs aptitudes cognitives et leur mémoire à courte terme et l’aptitude à développer à partir de ça, alors quelque chose d’ancré dans leur mémoire à longue terme. Alors il faut réduire le stress en donnant la rétroaction. Ils doivent également savoir comment profiter de la rétroaction d’une manière constructrice pour planifier la suite.

But if people [students] are stressed out, their cognitive aptitudes and short term memory is blocked, as well as their ability to develop based on those reference points—so that things can become planted in their long term memory. So we must reduce the stress in giving feedback. They [students] must also know how to benefit constructively from feedback in order to plan next steps.

Prof. Martin
Focus Group
(French translated by the author in italics)

There were several surprises issuing from the data collection with the instructor participants regarding students’ use of feedback, and the range of best and worst-case scenarios was wider than I might have imagined. Instructors’ experiences were similar and consistent, however, as all instructors reported that some students were more engaged
than others about the quality of their work and learning in French. For example, shared experiences between the instructors ranged from: a student tossing their marked assignment in the garbage after class (basically in front of the instructor) and students who showed disrespect in other ways to professors (i.e., a curt or resistant attitude when asking questions in class or emails demanding the professors do this or that); to students who worked assiduously to develop collaborative relationships with professors and showed curiosity in following up with their instructors regarding the ways they could improve their work in French.

Prof. Louise believes that students must have a moment (or moments) of consciousness about the feedback they are given. Moreover, if students do not engage with the awareness/reality of the feedback, Prof. Louise believes that instructors must bring this to students’ attention. Prof. Louise shared that she often finds that students have additional questions about the assignment and the feedback she has given. In her experience, questions fall into two main domains, both of which are time-consuming and annoying. First, students do not/will not read the course syllabus, and do not follow instructions as far as task criteria. This is, of course, highly problematic. Secondly, students will approach Prof. Louise in front of the entire class and say things like, “I gave the same answer as my friend and she got more marks than me.”

Prof. Louise has numerous stories about how students have not applied her feedback, in fact, that is one of the reasons why she made the changes to her feedback practice in the past academic year to ensure that students would use the descriptive feedback she gave. What Prof. Louise specifically noticed was that students were not using what she was teaching in class, in their writing or in their oral work in class. To address this she assigned an identity text, 500 words of which had to be written at the mid-point of the course and the second 500 words to be submitted after the mid-point showing evidence of the application of her feedback on the first 500 words. A total of 5 or 6 points out of a possible 20 marks were assigned specifically for this task. What Prof. Louise was looking for was evidence of learning between the first half of the assignment and the second. (This notion of “visible learning” was new to me.) The end result is that the texts were much better. Prof. Louise was pleased with the level of students’ engagement.
In his interview Prof. Martin shared that he had applied for and received a bursary from the University of Toronto’s Writing Centre on his campus to implement writing workshops in courses. He underwent training to facilitate re-evaluating and re-writing the course in order to level criteria as much as possible. This had been a tremendous amount of work, and at the time of his interview he was reflecting openly about whether it had been worth the investiture of time. Prof. Martin had just received his course evaluations and said,

“Once again, we see the gap in our projects between what happens on paper and what happens in the classroom, not only in my opinion this time but according to students. Our scholarship requests were assessed as being exceptional. Our reports on what we did, our documentation and our methods, everyone said, “Oh wow, this is exceptional, this is great, these are model requests, we will quote them on our website, bla, bla, bla. Super, excellent. No problem to give you your scholarship.”” (Prof. Martin, Interview)

For students, the interest in completing homework in the course was variable in practice but according to Prof. Martin on the course evaluations, “students said yes, the tasks, they liked the tasks.” He wondered about that contradiction, wonders why a segment of students seem to think that explicit metacognitive strategies are a waste of time. He says,

“And the more we explain, ‘But this is for you,’ the more they have this impression. I would really like to know how and why we have designed and worked so hard on the tasks, and they, they ooh and aah…”

(Prof. Martin, Interview)

It was clear that students enjoyed this less, in practice. Prof. Martin concluded that, “We need to reconceptualise and really restructure the material. So that is good for me because I also know that restructuration is one of the cognitive tasks that most facilitates long-term learning and integration of knowledge.” Prof. Martin was looking for multiple ways to advance language learning in the classes he teaches, and found that his own understandings about cognition and learning were helpful to that reflective process.

Prof. Hélène finds that students often use her feedback to improve their work, and shared that this is incredibly satisfying and rewarding for her (and for the student). In particular she shared a story about a student who had struggled and is now teaching French at a prestigious independent school.
Prof. Hélène: …I know that a couple of years ago a girl who was thinking of dropping out of the program, the only reason she decided to stay in is because I have her 20 plus out of 20 for that assignment. And I wrote two things: how wonderful and talented she is. This was a girl who did not believe in herself.

JS: Wow. Hmmm.

Prof. Hélène: m hmmm…She’s now teaching at XX. I recommended her.

JS: And so…what do think…what was that about…in the end? Was that about you as a teacher, an experienced teacher, seeing what she needed and….

Prof. Hélène: Descriptive feedback…descriptive feedback that touched the heart. It was personal. It was for her. You got an A+, good job. What about that was a good job? How did you do a good job? Oh my God I see the beginnings of a wonderful teacher here. All of that.

JS: So descriptive feedback…but you’re saying that it goes beyond all of that. Descriptive feedback is only part of it? It’s descriptive feedback but it’s also individualized for that specific student

Prof. Hélène: What I see is that you took hours and hours to do this assignment for me. I should be taking hours and hours to give you feedback. It has to be. It has to be. That’s an insult to you if you give me a 50-page assignment and I write “Good Job!”

Prof. Hélène found that because she had opted out of online web communication with students through Blackboard and Pepper for the last two years, there were more questions via email and in class. She shared that to compensate, she has spent more in-class time explaining assignments. Prof. Hélène says that because she does not have office hours before or after the class, and not many students come early (the course is in the evening), she finds that writing descriptive comments to students is often the most effective way to communicate with her students. She shared that some students may stay later. Her final comment on feedback was “This is going to sound really strange but I think that best kind of feedback that helps them to do better in their assignments is loving kindness.” She
went on to elaborate, “I think that if the student really feels that the teacher cares about them, then they will be more open to accepting that constructive descriptive feedback. That, and wanting to improve.”

To conclude this section sharing the findings from the second research question pertaining to students’ use of the feedback the instructor participants offered, we have seen that despite the fact that instructors gave a rich range of feedback opportunities to students via multiple detailed sources and diverse purposes, instructors report a wide range of student responses. Some students struggled to understand and take up the feedback, and some more than others. Once again, these findings included an examination of all data sources where instructors discussed the feedback they gave including: one interview, an online survey, and course documents including syllabi, and one asynchronous focus group. As previously noted, the wide variability in the quality and quantity of feedback that student participants received made it difficult for them to use the feedback consistently and accurately. It is important to note, however, that this is a separate issue from the data I collected from the instructor participants. I will take up this matter fully in the analysis and discussion section, later in this chapter.

Research Question 4: Information About Tasks

Since it is instructors who delineate and regulate many aspects of the classroom experience, the use of tasks in language learning is both important and interesting. Indeed, it is through the completion of tasks that students use the language they are learning. During my 16 hours of classroom observations I had the opportunity to see a number of tasks occur in real time across all levels of French instruction (beginners, intermediates and advanced). I also had the opportunity to hear about tasks from ten student participants and five instructor participants, and to read about language learning tasks from many course syllabi. I also had the honour of conducting a workshop in assessment, feedback and curriculum-based rubric building for future teachers.

The tasks issuing from Prof. Claude’s classes were innovative. In the beginning class, for example, there was a “Family Tree” class activity that built on previous lesson material and allowed students to practice new vocabulary and structures. Students were asked to
draw a family tree indicating their parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, and were then asked to share their family trees with a partner. Prof. Claude assigned students to groups of two or three students and gave them 6 minutes on a large screen timer. He directed students to introduce themselves to each other before they began talking about their family tree… (this was a review from another lesson). While students were working, Prof. Claude did two things. First, he walked around and offered support and encouragement, explicit feedback. Second, he took time to type things into the computer onscreen: « Mon père, il s’appelle…; Ma mère, elle est professeure; Mes frères, ils sont grands; Ma soeur, elle est sympathique. » (“My father, his name is…; My mother, she is a teacher; My brothers, they are tall; My sister; she is nice.”) He was always on the move, and always ready to jump in with ‘instant’ praise, encouragement and information.

In Prof. Louise’s upper year FSL class on March 21, students were preparing for their final examination (an oral exam) in which they would be required to demonstrate ‘risk taking’ in their twenty-minute presentation to Prof. Louise. The task was that they had to design an interview where they would simulate a future job interview in whatever field they wished, where they gave the questions to Prof. Louise in advance. I had never seen such an engaged group of students, in terms of the number of students who participated actively in the two-hour class. The pace was quick, with visual support, and Prof. Louise had students work together in small groups (peer support) to help each other rehearse their questions and answers. She was clear with students that she would be available to answer emails and meet with students right up until their oral exam appointment, if they had questions about vocabulary or structures. I truly had never seen or heard so many “check ins” from students in a class in HE about specific vocabulary, grammatical structures and definitions for terms that Prof. Louise was expecting students to know. She explained clearly that “playing it safe” would not score students as high a mark as taking risks in using the language skills they had in French.

This class put Prof. Louise’s works from her interview into perspective when I asked her to share (her words in aqua) about what tasks in particular were the most important or
In one student participant Myla’s case, the professor sought feedback from his students about the tasks they did in his class; during class and for homework. He was genuinely interested in knowing how he could help his students succeed. This type of teaching/feedback on tasks was unusual. Myla described a class task that did not work very well and the prof saw that and changed what he was doing because he saw that the students were not motivated or engaged (Myla, Interview 2).

**Missed Opportunities on Tasks**

There were several missed opportunities via classroom language learning tasks that I observed over the course of my data collection activities. In this section I will share three of those missed language-learning opportunities. The first was Nicola’s experience of a Foundations for Teaching course in French (where most of the work was done in English) that was offered at OISE. The second example of a missed opportunity for language learning through tasks was Alexandra’s lack of engagement with a required reading in her advanced French literature class. The final example of missed opportunities for
language learning through classroom tasks was found in my experience of teaching a workshop to future high school teachers, in an FSL curriculum class one afternoon.

In an instructional context designed to equip future teachers, future teacher Nicola shared a course syllabus for her required Foundations course that was completely in French, where all the lectures were presented in French, by a professor who read and spoke and only in French. In her final year of the CTEP program, Nicola was surprised that students were not required to speak in French, in class or in small group discussions, nor were they required to hand in their written work in French. This was the case even though the course was a French credit, and all students in the class would be certified teachers by the end of the academic year and hoped to teach (in) French.

According to Nicola, most (if not all students in the course) were French majors. Students had a choice about whether to do their reading reflections about articles in English or French, regardless of whether the article was in English or French. Reading reflections were posted online, whether in English or French (again, students’ choice). Although students could read each other’s posts, there was also no requirement to read or respond to anything or anyone else’s posts.

The professor used the completion of this work to fulfill/constitute the participation requirement of the course (10%) but did not offer any feedback, either global or individual to students. In other words, the professor did not refer to student feedback, questions or reflection in course lectures; nor was any individual feedback given on content or grammar. Nicola was surprised (shocked, even) that she had not received any feedback on her writing in French while in her final year of teacher preparation, despite the fact that she was taking two courses in French. This was particularly problematic when she knew that she would be expected to offer feedback to her future high school students. Not only did she miss out on opportunities to improve her own French proficiency, but she did not receive the kind of pedagogical preparation needed to ensure her readiness to teach successfully.

In an upper-year course on French literature, student participant Alexandra shared how she was reading a classic novel for class. The conversation in the third interview opened
with me trying to get a sense of what students were going to have to “do” with the novel once they had read it. Alexandra shared that she had no idea, other than she was being quizzed on the content of the book, that it was difficult to read, and that she did not understand it. The course was a required course, and the professor had not lectured at all on the book; he wanted students to read, understand and get a sense of the plot and characters, first.

I asked Alexandra about any strategies she was using to “get through it,” and she said that she was reading it in English at the same time. I followed up and inquired if she was working with a study group, and she shared that she was meeting with a group that very day, for the first time (although it was clear she felt quite ambivalent about that). I invited Alexandra to reflect on how she would know if the study group was helpful to her, and she shared that she would know if she left understanding more. She also explained that she did not feel that she had much to offer to anyone in terms of resources or knowledge. When at a later date I queried Alexandra about how it went, she was noncommittally positive.

I expected that Alexandra would be taking notes to help her remember what was happening/happened in the story, so I questioned her about that, and she said no, she was not. When I inquired why, she offered that it was because it took a lot of time. I probed to see if she was consulting online resources, and she said no. When I asked if she was taking note of any vocabulary that she did not know, she responded that she was not.

When I tried to engage Alexandra in a conversation about how this process was influencing/could influence her development as a future teacher of high school, she said that she really did not know, and that she really was not thinking about that right now. When I asked her if she thought that doing this task (reading and understanding the novel) would help her develop her language proficiency, she said that she was not sure. From this arduous conversation I surmised that she was just trying to get through. Clearly this task did not speak to Alexandra, either on the level of preparing for a career as a high school teacher, nor on the level of improving her French. Indeed, it seemed as if jumping
through the hoop was all that was required, or all that would be forthcoming from Alexandra.

The final example occurred when I had an unexpected opportunity to teach a workshop to a group of future teachers. The course instructor had asked me to organize a hands-on, two-hour workshop for his students so they could work with the FSL curriculum documents to plan assessment opportunities and learn how to construct rubrics. I settled on four objectives for the two-hour workshop. The specific objectives included: to reflect on what evaluation is; to explore planning a lesson followed by assessment; to practice how to plan an evaluation; and finally, to discover and discuss the kind of feedback that promotes learning. For the workshop I planned four tasks. In the first task, students were presented with activities based on the curriculum, and then had to plan a follow-up evaluation activity. Each group had an opportunity to present their activity to the class and to offer feedback. The second task allowed students the opportunity to moderate a number of exemplars. In this task they were asked to evaluate work samples according to the provincial achievement levels and to offer individualized, descriptive feedback to the student in writing. The third task asked students to construct a rubric for a classroom task from a short list of tasks that was presented to them. The final task of the workshop was to discuss the challenges, possibilities and concerns they had about assessment and evaluation in French.

I structured the workshop content and limited the field of inquiry to a how-to approach because the instructor had asked for a particularly hands-on approach. Since these Teacher Candidates would very shortly be certified to teach in Ontario classrooms, the more practice they received with linking the curriculum to planning assessment tasks and building rubrics with specific performance criteria, the better. Questions we considered included: What does one need to know to teach? What does one need to know to evaluate? What does one need to know to provide feedback? I shared with future teachers that to teach, one needs four elements: 1) subject matter; 2) curriculum; 3) expectations of what must be mastered, and; 4) the teaching and learning strategies needed to do whatever task needed to be done, including any adaptations for the activity.
When it comes to giving feedback, I shared with workshop participants that knowing where exactly a student is in the process of learning what they need to learn and doing what they need to demonstrate is key. Additionally, I explained that knowing how to use language that the student understands when communicating next steps, so that the student sees that they can do what needs to be done is critical. My overarching point of the workshop, then, was to share with future teachers that a student’s motivation increases, often dramatically, when they see that they can do the task they need to do.

It was a challenging afternoon of learning. Although students were very keen to understand and work with the revised FSL curriculum document (Ontario, 2013d) for secondary school, they had not had the opportunity to plan assessment opportunities post-instruction, and had no idea how to structure evaluations in ways that supported student learning. When tasked with the job of linking instructional objectives with assessments, they felt frustrated when they realized that to construct a rubric that they had to think carefully about how they would know if, and to what degree, a student had mastered a curricular objective. I was surprised that students were so motivated and yet so frustrated, and I modified the afternoon to give students more time to work and share together. I was even more surprised by the positive feedback I received from students about the usefulness of the workshop.

To conclude this section sharing the findings from the fourth research question pertaining to the tasks I observed over the 15 months I collected data demonstrates that instructors were aware of the importance of tasks for learning and for providing opportunities to give good feedback. Moreover, the data suggests that students were aware that the completion of tasks was their responsibility. The information about tasks was collected from participants (student participants and instructor participants) during one-on-one interviews, as well as through course syllabi collected from students. Although I invited instructors to share course syllabi and course tasks with me, this did not occur. While these documents would have been interesting to see, I stopped asking after broaching the subject more than once in writing and in conversation. Therefore, the data about tasks came principally from an examination of interview data, and from the classroom observations I undertook.
Summary and Discussion

Instructors were engaged with me in thinking about the topic of feedback outside of the interviews and this was surprising to me, considering the difficulty I had experienced in securing instructor participants. Moreover, I did not expect that instructor participants would be so forthcoming in sharing their questions and reflections about their own language teaching with me (which they did). In the same way that student participants had shared unsolicited comments with me (i.e., feedback) about my study, so too did the instructor participants. Throughout the interviews with instructors I heard comments from them that the discussions were helping them think about their own language teaching and work. I also learned that they were frustrated by the amount of time they spent giving feedback, which in their words too often fell on “deaf ears.” (Martin, Focus Group; Louise, Interview). Third, and finally, I was surprised to see how caring and concerned instructors were towards their students, and about their colleagues. One instructor spoke to me for 90 minutes during her interview one morning before I could ask him any questions, after which he apologized. He said he had been thinking about feedback for at least the past 15 years and had never had the opportunity to speak with someone who was studying feedback. In short, the depth and breadth of the data instructors gave me was remarkable.

As previously noted, this study is using the principle definition asserted by Askew and Lodge (2000), that feedback includes all dialogue that supports learning in both formal and informal situations. Instructors’ words and actions can give valuable information to students about the work they do and how they can improve next time, and it is this information that is known as feedback. As the most powerful tool for improving student learning (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam, 2003), “descriptive feedback” is, in its best iteration, individualized instruction that contains specific information provided to a learner that builds a bridge between what is currently understood and what has not yet been understood (Sadler, 1989). In other words, the impetus for descriptive feedback comes from the purpose of instruction itself. As such, the responsibility for feedback arguably rests with the instructor’s knowledge, expertise and observations.

During three periods of classroom observation with Prof. Martin I was able to witness
small groups of student presentations of various grammar concepts during class time in an intermediate level language learning class. Although these classes were the only classes where I saw students present to the entire class, I saw that in every case Prof. Martin gave each group specific group feedback in front of the entire class where he described what he saw in terms of meeting the task requirements. His comments always stayed “in the positive,” saying what students had done (rather than what they had not done), and made note of students’ use of illustrative examples, which was a task requirement.

Prof. Claude’s use of instant feedback, particularly about oral production, was a cornerstone of his classroom practice. His belief that descriptive feedback is more in-depth, more detailed, more about next steps then what he gives his students was somewhat surprising to me. Indeed, it was his impression is that he gives his students feedback for information.

As previously discussed, Hattie and Timperley (2007) articulate a continuum between instruction and feedback and argue that depending on the purpose of the feedback, various types of feedback are possible. At one end of the continuum instruction and feedback are clearly delineated (separate entities) and at the other, instruction and feedback are woven together in such a way that new information (i.e., new instruction) is shared with the learner. In this conception, Hattie and Timperley highlight the importance of the learning context, since ‘new’ instruction is an integral part of giving good feedback. In other words, when feedback and instruction are integrated, a gap is bridged between what is understood and what needs to be understood (Sadler, 1989). It is important to articulate here that feedback is really about instruction. This is because as Hattie and Timperley, and Sadler articulate, feedback is specific, situated and detailed (and perhaps even, to some extent, individualized). I was curious to learn about how instructors in HE conceptualized feedback for precisely this reason; feedback is about instruction.

FSL instructors who participated in the study reported that offering useful feedback takes a great deal of time. They also reported unequivocally that students were not always open
to receiving feedback; and that some students were not engaged with what they can do to improve their work. Instructor participants in HE who spent time giving feedback in the hope that it would be helpful to students discussed feeling genuinely frustrated by students’ lack of engagement in the process of learning a language for the eventual purpose of teaching.

These findings are consistent with Boud and Molloy (2013), who found that professors in HE spend tremendous amounts of time giving feedback in the hope that it will be helpful to students, though it is not clear that students understand or act on the feedback they receive. From a close reading of Boud and Molly, however, we must see that there is a world of difference between understanding and acting; that even if I understand the feedback, it does not mean that I know what to do to act, or what actions to take to improve my work.

In this way the data supports the existence of a “feedback gap” as proposed by Evans (2013, pp. 73, 94-97) where there is gap between the feedback students are offered and their ability to use such feedback to ameliorate their work. As previously discussed, Evans (2013) points to a number of elements at play in the feedback conversation. First, the lack of careful uptake in HE to implement sustainable feedback practices that give students the information that they can use to take their work to the next level. Second, the recognition that feedback alone will be unlikely improve student achievement. Third, the critical need to provide diverse types of feedback that benefits individual learners in multiple and different contexts.

If we are to understand this feedback gap as conceptualized by Evans (2013, pp. 73, 94-97), perhaps we must look beyond the binary of outcome feedback (“Did I get the right answer or not?”) as explained by Butler and Wynne (1995). In order to begin this task, it may be necessary to adopt a broader definition of feedback as is proposed by Askew and Lodge (2000) where feedback includes all dialogue that supports learning in both formal and informal situations. Askew and Lodge argue that feedback is a complex and crucial aspect of teaching and learning processes, and call for more research to investigate feedback practices and the beliefs about learning they represent. The authors argue that
this is necessary in order to discover how feedback can be used most effectively to promote learning (p.1), but it is clear that the usefulness of self-regulation can help students in two ways. First, to help students understand the feedback they do get. Second, and importantly, to help students monitor their understandings as they apply the feedback (Hounsell et al., 2008; Carless et al., 2011; Moos, 2011; Du Toit, 2012; Liu & Lee, 2015; Barton et al., 2016).

In fact, instructor participants were very much engaged in observing their students’ learning processes for the purpose of improving their teaching, and thus learning for all. It was nevertheless challenging because I could see that instructors were “on their own” in their reflections. One instructor shared a story that one of her colleagues had judged her assessment practice to be too permissive and intimated to her that descriptive feedback led to inflated marks. To build capacity for sustainable feedback practices, system support and opportunities for professional development would be of tremendous benefit to instructors. Unfortunately, in the study context neither system supports or professional development seemed terribly available to instructors. However, most instructors remained serious about adding value to their own teaching and feedback practices related to their ability to facilitate the process of offering descriptive feedback, even with little system support.

In the asynchronous focus group conversation I found Prof. Claude and Prof. Martin’s pleas for more collaboration and more next steps for their own professional learning about feedback poignant. In fact, all of the instructors were clear about wanting to engage with students and wanting to get to a different place in their practice, but there was no time, no support and no demonstrated administrative support for the deep, collaborative and honest work required (Claude, Interview; Louise, Interview; Martin, Interview).

All of the instructors demonstrated a theoretical understanding of the notion of descriptive feedback, whether or not they knew the terminology. Dr. Claude’s comments from his online survey, where he talked about his concern about students’ misconception or misunderstanding of what feedback meant or how to apply that feedback was a
verbatim analysis of the feedback literature from the last decade (Handley et al., 2008; Du Toit, 2012; O’Donovan et al., 2016).

Regarding tasks, as previously discussed in Chapter 2, Bachman and Palmer (2010) state that language is used as we perform “specific, situated language tasks” (p. 55). Since feedback about language is generated as a result of a performance, task-based language learning that engages language users in communicative processes that replicate ‘real-world’ uses is critically important (Ellis, 2003). In his survey of task-based learning, Ellis argues that classroom tasks that allow students to use the target language in authentic ways is necessary, in order for assessment data to be useful. In an FSP context, the notion of ‘real-world’ uses is limited to the uses of French in teaching contexts. Since there are somewhat mismatched agendas between the FAP approach that provides the framework for academic courses in HE, and the FSP methodology that represents the required language needed for teaching, this difference must be addressed in the future research for language learning for teaching. Moreover, this difference needs to be addressed in program and course design in HE, and I will discuss this more fully in Chapter 6.

In this study I focused on the definition of task in four essential criteria. As described by Skehan (1998) these criteria included tasks: where meaning was paramount; students worked towards a goal; the activity was evaluated based on the outcome; and there was authentic connection between the task and real world (p. 268). This conceptualization as proposed by Skehan (1998), although it captures all the essential components of the task definitions did not emerge in this study. This is because students did not have opportunities to engage with language tasks that met these criteria, in large measure because of the approach of French for Academic Purposes guides the instructional approach in HE classrooms.

As we have previously seen, language production is accomplished through the execution of tasks and so feedback in language classrooms is a special responsibility, and particularly so for future teachers. Authentic tasks are critically important in language learning contexts because they not only furnish opportunities to give feedback, but also promote increased awareness and learning about language for the purposes of teaching.
(Andrews, 2013). In this way, then, the findings indicate that the tasks proposed to future teachers do not match the requirements of what they need for their future careers.

To be sure, the path to properly evaluate the progress of students’ work requires FSL instructors to develop knowledge about language assessment (assessment literacy) for two reasons. First, according to Scarino (2013) instructors must develop transformative assessment practices. Second, instructors require an understanding of the process of assessment itself and their role as assessors in this process. However, the critical piece that emerges here is that the best (only?) way to develop assessment literacy is to work on authentic tasks that require language production, an approach that is supported by two of the seminal articles from my survey of the literature, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) and Mackey (2006).

If students had opportunities to gather assessment data of their own in learning in French, in other words, to participate in a linguistic portfolio process where they engaged in some self-assessment, this could make a significant difference in developing their knowledge of language (language proficiency). A linguistic portfolio would require students to employ self-regulation strategies in order to arrive at reasoned and meaningful interpretations of their own performance in FSL. Such an approach would also allow students to develop pedagogical knowledge by applying the feedback from their FSL instructors. This would promote exponential growth in future language teachers, in French, in the required knowledge domains articulated by Andrews (2003)—before in-service teaching even begins.

From my analysis of students’ use of their instructors’ feedback, it was clear that not all students were able make use of the information offered to them by instructors. This was even the case when the feedback was descriptive and detailed. Thus, the usefulness of WTC as a portal to understanding students’ engagement in taking up feedback from their instructors in L2 classrooms cannot be overlooked, particularly if feedback can initiate a communicative process rather than a product (Price et al., 2011). As students completed tasks, both on their own and in real time (in the classroom) instructors’ interactions (feedback, dialogical instruction, etc.) had an impact on these future teachers’
performances, a finding that is supported by Zarrinabadi (2016). The construct of WTC as a way to understand the complex and dialogical processes between students and their instructors shows great promise for HE classrooms, particularly for future FSL teachers, a finding that I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 6.

When students asked, instructors willingly offered more feedback and students showed evidence that this feedback was helpful for improving their work. This data confirms that a “feedback gap” as proposed by Evans (2013, pp. 73, 94-97) does indeed exist between the feedback students receive and their capacity to use such feedback to improve their work. However, Evans’ point that there is a lack of mindful uptake in higher education contexts for implementing feedback that “works”—both from professor and students’ perspectives—cannot be overstated. It is navigating this important disjuncture that is and where the “next chapter” needs to happen.

Evans’ suggestion that, feedback alone may be insufficient to improve student achievement may be true, thus there is a need to provide a variety of types of feedback that benefits diverse learners in diverse contexts. The data from this study shows that challenges also exist in the lack of institutional directives, official expectations or protocols for feedback practices at the University of Toronto. The lack of formal structures in context therefore also translates into missed teaching opportunities for instructors in HE who teach future teachers.

Additionally, however, my experience of the difficulty in securing instructor participants for the study may also indicate a culture of silence around feedback in HE. This does not only mean missed learning opportunities for instructors, but also points to a potentially challenging dynamic of silencing engagement in the practices of teaching and assessment for learning. Instructors have a job to do, and that is to articulate feedback clearly, and hopefully in ways that lead to learning and progress for their students. This process must be both sustainable and consistent in the classroom and in course documents. Indeed, if students cannot decipher instructors’ feedback, and if students do not understand how to use the feedback from their instructors as information to benefit their future work, teaching opportunities are missed and students may not make optimal progress.
Chapter Summary

This chapter shared, analyzed and discussed the findings of my research with five instructor participants at the University of Toronto, according to the protocols I designed and outlined in Chapter 3. The chapter began with a description of the instructor participants, presented via instructor portraits. Each portrait explained the language learning experiences of each language instructor in HE, not only in terms of their years of experience and program, but also their linguistic backgrounds, language learning practices and principle concerns. Before sharing the data according to specific research questions, I undertook a close look at how instructors viewed descriptive feedback and shared a summary table of those discussions because it was important to understand each instructor’s approach to feedback practices in their teaching. This was particularly critical because each instructor was teaching future teachers. Then, I presented data according to the three research questions as follows: first, the characteristics of feedback instructor offered; second, what students did with the feedback they were offered; and third, the role of tasks in furnishing opportunities for instructors to give feedback.

I also discussed three important findings from my work with instructor participants. First, instructors’ experiences were similar and consistent across cases in terms of students’ uptake of feedback. All instructors reported that some students “cared” (far) more than others about the quality of their work and learning in French. Second, FSL instructors who participated in the study reported that it takes time to offer useful feedback; that students were not always open to receiving feedback; and that for whatever reason, some students did not seem to want to know what they can do to improve their work. Third, instructor participants in HE who spent time giving feedback in the hope that it would be helpful to students discussed feeling genuinely frustrated by students’ lack of engagement in the process of learning a language for the eventual purpose of teaching.

The overarching purpose of the next chapter is to pull back the view from the micro level, to articulate some conceptual possibilities for engaging students in their language learning. It also highlights some of the intricacies in language teaching and learning in HE, particularly for future FSL teachers. The next chapter therefore begins with an examination of how context variables impacted the ways students took up feedback to
answer Research Question 3. The chapter also takes a close look at two dyads of student participants: the striving/challenged and the preparing/equipped dyad. Then, I undertake an interpretive discussion of the findings from chapters 4 and 5, between the student participants and their instructors, to examine the implications of those findings.
Chapter 6: The Race or the Finish Line?

If a tree falls in the forest, does anybody hear?

Introduction

In this chapter I lead an interpretive discussion of the findings from Chapters 4 and 5 in a concerted attempt to offer some coherence to the messiness that was so much a part of the data I collected. In drawing back from the proximity of the findings, I am afforded an opportunity to view the data through the macro conceptual lens I constructed in Figure 5, Chapter 2, showing three slightly overlapping circles. This framework was based on the three concepts that defined the study’s terrain, namely, Sociocultural Theory (SCT), Goal Orientation Theory (GOT) and the construct of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

There are three overarching purposes in this chapter: first, to revisit and update my conceptual framework, second, to illuminate some of the complexities inherent in language teaching and learning in HE, specifically for those students who wish to become FSL teachers; and third, to use examples from the study and the construct of WTC to suggest some possibilities for engaging future teachers in their language learning, going forward.

Thus, I return to my conceptual framework to assess its validity and to update it to reflect my understandings based on the data I gathered. First, I re-examine the importance of SCT for this study. Next, I explain how goal orientations and classroom goal structures affect language learning. These concepts are important because the data from this dissertation study shows the importance of including motivation, and more specifically, goal orientations and classroom goal structures in the conversation about language proficiency for teaching. I follow this discussion with an in-depth look at how student participants’ willingness to communicate in French may have been affected by multiple factors, and how understanding WTC could be helpful to developing French proficiency in HE classrooms.
SCT: The Foundation

I chose to include Sociocultural Theory in my conceptual framework because it makes a specific contribution to this research about feedback in HE. SCT approaches cognitive development with the explicit understanding that learning cannot be separated from the environment in which the learning occurs (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). As previously discussed, monitored observation, when joined with communication, feedback and intentional interaction between teachers and students about specific learning tasks, is known as mediation (Feuerstein et al., 1979; Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995). Thus in this study, it is the ‘mediated’ aspect of SCT that I draw on because this is a study about teaching and learning in HE. I previously argued that SCT has particular relevance for FSL language learners because of the context-based nature of language learning. A student’s language learning happens as a result of communication and interaction through apprenticeship and is guided participation.

Since it is the focus of Vygotsky’s work to be concerned with interaction that facilitates learning, I drew on SCT in the planning and execution of this study. All feedback practices are mediated activities and happen in a context, whether they be online or live; with peers, T.A.s or instructors. Every communication to support student learning (Askew & Lodge, 2000) where specific information on vocabulary, grammar and syntax, or descriptive details are communicated to/with students regarding the work they produce in the TL is feedback. It becomes an experience of ‘mediation’ when in the presence of a more experienced “other”—whether that person be a facilitator, instructor, tutor, parent, friend, or classmate.

GOT: Individual /in/ group context

Two aspects of GOT make a critical contribution to the conceptual framing of this study and both are linked to context. First is the context of the individual student in terms of their personal goal orientations (mastery or performance learning goals), and second is the context of the individual student situated in the learning environment because of the role that goal structures play in regulated learning environments (i.e., classrooms in HE).
Goal structures determine what goals individual students set for themselves both directly and indirectly, according to Anderman et al. (2010). Goal structures that focus on process as preferable to outcome—where making progress rather than achieving a certain mark—helps students think about what they need to do over time to improve. A focus on product (in terms of the number of tasks, the number of errors or the number of times students participate in class) may increase students’ performance or their awareness of their performance, but that may not actually be helpful to creating progress. Indeed, since students who have mastery goals persist longer in academic tasks and use higher order cognitive skills, effective metacognitive skills and self-regulation strategies are imperative.

As previously discussed in Chapter 2, goal structures are visible, and are expressed in instructional practices. Goal structures are important because they determine what kinds of goals individual students form based on the information conveyed to them. What a student perceives about the goal structures and goal orientation operationalized in their particular educational setting is therefore of paramount importance. This is because goal structures may affect performance, both directly and directly, according to Anderman et al. (2010). Students who have mastery goals persist longer in academic tasks and use higher order cognitive skills, effective metacognitive skills and self-regulation strategies.

One of the goals (Research Question 3) of this study was to investigate how, and to what extent, instructors’ feedback practices interacted with students’ individual context variables (language exposure, language learning activities, etc.) to see if there were correlations between individual differences and feedback practices. It has become evident from examining survey data alongside interview data and course materials (course syllabi, course tasks and evaluated writing samples), that as students completed tasks, both on their own and in real time in the classroom, individual differences and aspects of individual goal orientations and classroom goal structures were visible, a concept we examined in Chapter 2.

The way a course was “rolled out” became an important feature in the relationship between the student participants and their language learning and proficiency
development. As discussed in the conceptual framework in Chapter 2, goal structures are the established mechanisms or performance goals that are present and visible in tasks and classrooms. Instructors communicate goal structures to students via the course syllabus, course tasks and during instruction. Some examples of goal structures I saw included: the tasks students completed outside of class for class; speaking only in French in class; taking risks by participating orally in class; and attending office hours to speak with the professor. The tasks and expectations, that is the goal structures, provide the framework for courses and are therefore an inherent part of the proficiency puzzle because it is through interacting with the goal structures that students may (or may not) progress.

Another example of a goal structure was when I secured permission to sign off on what has become known as “remedial hours” for students who had failed the CTEP French proficiency exam (Appendix S). Students were given a clear goal structure: DO this, and you will pass. If you do NOT do this, you will need to write the exam a second time. Several upper-year student participants had significant amounts of remedial work to do to move their Grade to a ‘pass’ on the University of Toronto French Proficiency Exam, and this clear articulation of a goal structure from the University was helpful to students who had chosen to avoid addressing their lack of proficiency for teaching until later in their program.

However, as Anderman et al. (2010) make clear, goal structures determine what goals individual students set for themselves. Since students with mastery goals are able to persevere longer in academic tasks where they are required to use higher order cognitive skills, classroom goal structures that focus on process rather than outcome actually help students think about how to improve over time, which is helpful to them in two ways. Persisting in a task may help a student complete task A, now, but will also help the student in the future, when they remember that persisting in Task A led to successful in completion. In other words, then, a focus on process over product (in terms of the number of tasks, the number of errors or the number of times students participate in class) causes improvement to the extent that a student or develops an awareness of their performance and begins to monitor their own learning. The importance of mastery learning cannot be understated, particularly because of the consequences of SRL for language learning, as
discussed in Chapter 2 (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Liu & Lee, 2015). Over the course of the study, there were many opportunities for me to see how students approached their language learning. Some students were fully engaged in their own mastery learning agenda, and some students were not. Here are five examples of mastery learning I observed:

1. Myla really struggled to get the pronunciation right on some things…for example, she pronounced the word "esssayé" as "ess"I" yé." We did at least four attempts on that word, but she got it, in the end, and practiced it to make sure that she had mastered it (Myla, Interview 3).

2. Veronika started participating in a study group to help her clarify how she could improve her work in one of her FSL courses. (Veronika, Interview 3)

3. Safiya started her own peer study group with classmates to “just talk” in French over coffee. This group was a mix of friends who were francophones and NNS. (Safiya, Interview 3)

4. Myla started watching movies in French because she thought it might help her with her translation class, and with her French proficiency in general. (Myla, Interview 3)

5. Zoe shared that the way we teach students is really important…and that the way she is being taught to teach students is really important too. Her reflective philosophical questions about how to help students make connections with the world, with themselves and with each other…because teaching is not just about the curriculum, we are teaching people. (Zoe, Interview 3)

In interviews, these student participants shared, of their own volition, their often personal and valuable language-learning lessons related to what helped them learn and what made a difference for their progress in language proficiency. It was noticeable that the participants were exited and hopeful.

My profound interest in data that demonstrated moments of engagement and/or resistance is linked to my understanding of how motivation (goal orientations, classroom goal
structures and willingness to communicate) may shape communication in the TL. Over the course of 32 interviews with student participants there was evidence of engagement in—and resistance to—language learning. Language learning here included grammatical learning (including vocabulary, syntax and linguistic conventions), communicative competence (in speaking, reading, writing and listening comprehension), and pedagogical development through reflection.

**WTC: Use language to learn the language**

The complex task of using language competently requires not only the application of grammar and vocabulary knowledge, but multiple affective factors also impact on students’ language performance, factors which are attributable to a variety of individual differences (e.g., personality, motivation and self-confidence) (McIntyre et al., 1998).

Jason, an upper year student was immensely engaged in his language learning. He spent 3-5 hours per week reading or writing in French, read a variety of print materials several times per month including newspapers, magazines, non-fiction and online and still complete all of his coursework. However, Jason spoke thoughtfully about how even with all of his engagement he did not know what he did not know (« On ne sait pas ce qu’on ne connaît pas »). He went on to describe how he had realized at some point early on in his beginning years at U of T that in order to be able to participate and take advantage of classroom opportunities to use French, he had to supplement that with work on his own outside the class.

A look at work samples from Jason on his laptop showed the care he invested in applying feedback on grammar, syntax and vocabulary from his instructors into his compositions. At the time of his participation in the study he was getting ready to launch an online, unilingual French publication for students at the university that has created significant opportunities for students studying French to share their writing in a peer-reviewed setting. Jason was also working on creating a free website of resources for teachers and students of French, to support learning in French. It was clear that Jason was employing a multiple goal perspective (mastery and performance goals) to prepare himself for his future career as a high school FSL teacher. It was also clear from looking at the course
syllabi of Jason’s courses that it was not his motivation (goal orientation), classroom goal structures, or the feedback he received on assignments that were alone responsible for his robust language proficiency.

Instructors model for students what it is to communicate in the TL, to be sure, but the emphasis of the WTC construct (MacIntyre et al., 1998) underscores the importance of using the TL at any opportunity. In the classroom context, instructors manage the learning climate, goal structures and tasks, but students have choices to communicate in the TL (or not) in and out of class. Jason realized that he was an agent in his own learning and he went on to co-created contexts where he could use and invite others to use the TL. His website project for developing and showcasing resources for FSL teachers had a team of upper-year future language teachers collaborating, and his writing and publishing endeavours including two peer-reviewed journals at the University, one in French only, and the other bilingual, also actively engaged a core team of dedicated upper-year language students. The WTC model (MacIntyre et al., 1998) is at the core of the conceptual frame for this study, then, because WTC is context-based (Dörnyei, 2003).

Although instructors can inspire students’ willingness to communicate (Zarrinabadi, 2014), the context for language learning is ultimately so much larger than what happens in the HE classroom.

I have revisited each of the lenses of my original conceptual framework from Figure 5 in Chapter 2 where I showed three overlapping circles of SCT, GOT and WTC, and I posit that the conceptual frame I developed is a valid way to view and analyze the data I collected for the study. In the following section, however, I update my framework based on the new understandings I have gained from undertaking this research.

Reimagining the Conceptual Framework

My original framework was based on the three concepts that defined the study’s terrain, namely, SCT, GOT, and the construct of WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Taken in sum these three concepts accurately and comprehensively represent the multifaceted aspects of this research study regarding the feedback practices in HE for future FSL teachers.
With a number of refinements to show the development of my learning, and specifically, the relationship between each of the concepts I chose, I share Figure 32 below.

I positioned SCT at the base of the pyramid because, with its emphasis on context and mediation, SCT is the foundation of language learning in HE. Since the context-based nature of language learning has particular relevance for learning environments in HE, and specifically for future FSL teachers, I added green (productive) arrows leading to the middle section of the pyramid, where I positioned the concept of WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998). GOT is situated at the apex of the pyramid because goal orientations offer a way to understand contextual factors that can advance WTC in profound ways, which is why I also added green (productive) arrows leading to the middle section of the pyramid, where I located WTC. In other words, SCT as the foundation provides the fertile ground that gives rise to learning contexts where interlocutors can use French to communicate in myriad ways, both in and outside the HE classroom. All three of these concepts are influenced by context-specific variables (personality, language exposure, linguistic
background, etc.), but as a framework, they allow a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the complex dimensions of feedback for language learning for future FSL teachers.

In the next section I review the data from Chapters 4 and 5 to answer Research Question 3 regarding the way individual context variables influenced students’ uptake of feedback.

**Research Question 3: Individual Context Variables and Feedback Use**

The significance of the context variables came to the fore as I poured over the student participants’ data looking for similarities and differences. Students’ experiences of feedback were wide-ranging. The continuum of best case/worst case scenarios was far wider than I had imagined. In fact, at the worst end of the spectrum feedback experiences included a professor refusing to give students a study key for the final exam or entire paragraphs of illegible comments. On the other hand, the best feedback interactions included instructors who held one-on-one meetings with students to give more feedback when students expressed the wish, and professors who invited students to bring questions about feedback from any of their other courses in French.

I listened to participants’ voices, and I found myself in reflection on the diverse experiences of each participant. I observed that Alexandra and Chloe sincerely struggled with their oral language proficiency in French, whereas Lin and Safiya excelled. Before looking closely at these four students in CTEP to understand their diverse experiences, I first analyze the individual context variables (language exposure, language learning activities, linguistic background, etc.) student participants shared related to their language learning practices. These self-report items from the online survey show how and in what ways students in the data set participated in building their own foundation for a future in language teaching.

**Language Learning Practices**

In the online survey students who participated in the study shared that they spent between 1 and 2 hours each week practicing French. During the time spent practicing their French
outside of coursework, students reported that they read fiction and read online a few times a month, texted and watched You-Tube, more or less monthly and participated in online chats, a few times each month. The most popular use of practice time in French was to perform online searches, something student participants reportedly did several times monthly. In sum, then, students were most likely to search online in French, read fiction, read online and participated in online chats a few times each month, and texted and watched You-Tube in French, once per month. Students were least likely to read newspapers, magazines or comics in French, read non-fiction in French, play computer games in French and use Facebook in French.

The results from the online survey are reported in two different tables in the next two pages. Since not all the survey respondents were study participants, I have split the data into two tables. As Table 21 below indicates, all survey respondents reported their language learning practices related to how often they read fiction and non-fiction, read online, texted and watched You-Tube in French. They shared their participation habits in online chats in French, and their tendency to perform online searches in French.

The results from the student participant respondents reported in Table 22 showed that they were most likely to watch You-Tube and text in French. Respondents also read online, read newspapers, and searched online and in French. Student respondents were least likely to read magazines, fiction and non-fiction in French, or play computer games in French. Respondents were less likely to read comics or use Facebook in French.
Table 21. Online survey data: Language learning practices of multiple online respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
<th>S3</th>
<th>S4</th>
<th>S5</th>
<th>S6</th>
<th>S7</th>
<th>S8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How many hours do you read or write in French, not including your coursework?</td>
<td>1-2 h/wk</td>
<td>3-5 h/wk</td>
<td>1-2 h/wk</td>
<td>&gt;1h/wk</td>
<td>1-2 h/wk</td>
<td>&lt;6 h/wk</td>
<td>&gt;1h/wk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In your free time, do you read newspapers in French?</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In your free time, do you read magazines in French?</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In your free time, do you read works of fiction in French?</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. In your free time, do you read non-fiction books in French?</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. In your free time, do you read comics in French?</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. In your free time, do you read online in French?</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. In my free time, I write text messages in French.</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. In my free time, I watch You-Tube in French.</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. In my free time, I write online chat messages in French.</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. In my free time, I play computer games in French.</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. In my free time, I use Facebook in French.</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. In my free time, I do Internet searching in French.</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>Jason</td>
<td>Lin</td>
<td>Myla</td>
<td>Nicola</td>
<td>Safiya</td>
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<td>1. How many hours do you read or write in French, not including your coursework?</td>
<td>1-2 h/wk</td>
<td>&gt;1 h/wk</td>
<td>1-2 h/wk</td>
<td>1-2 h/wk</td>
<td>&gt;1 h/wk</td>
<td>1-2 h/wk</td>
<td>&gt;1 h/wk</td>
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</tr>
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<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. In your free time, do you read magazines in French?</td>
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<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
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<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
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<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
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<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. In your free time, do you read comics in French?</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. In your free time, do you read online in French?</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. In my free time, I write text messages in French.</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. In my free time, I watch You-Tube in French.</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. In my free time, I write online chat messages in French.</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. In my free time, I play computer games in French.</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. In my free time, I use Facebook in French.</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. In my free time, I do Internet searching in French.</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/mo</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>A few times/wk</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23 below shows study participants’ most frequent language practices outside of their coursework while Table 24 shows the least frequent practices.

Table 23. Student participants self-report of most likely language learning practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student participants in the study most likely to:</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Search online in French</td>
<td>A few times each month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Read fiction, read online and participate in online chats a few times each month</td>
<td>A few times each month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Write texts</td>
<td>A few times each month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Watch You-Tube in French</td>
<td>About once per month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24. Student participants self-report of least likely language learning practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student participants in the study least likely to:</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Read newspapers, magazines or comics in French</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Read non-fiction in French</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Play computer games in French</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use Facebook in French</td>
<td>Almost never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were some differences between the results from the online survey respondents (n=8) and student participant data (n=8). Namely, student participants were most likely to search online in French, read fiction, read online and participate in online chats a few times each month, and they texted and watched You-Tube in French, about once per month. Student participants were least likely to read newspapers, magazines or comics in French, read non-fiction in French, play computer games in French and use Facebook in French.
From the tables above, there were some differences between online survey data regarding the language learning practices and those of student participants. In fact, the data collected in the two modalities contrasted in the eight key ways, which are outlined in Table 25.

*Table 25. Comparison table between student participants and student respondents to self-report items from online survey*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-report items from online survey</th>
<th>Student participants</th>
<th>Student respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Time on task outside of coursework</td>
<td>More time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Read online, more fiction, non-fiction and magazines</td>
<td>More frequently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Read newspapers and comics</td>
<td>More frequently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Watched You-Tube videos</td>
<td>More frequently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wrote text messages and online chats</td>
<td>More frequently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Used Facebook in French</td>
<td>More frequently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Initiated Internet searches in French</td>
<td>More frequently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Computer games in French</td>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>Equal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, looking broadly at the survey and participant data, the following eight differences emerge:

1. Survey respondents reportedly spent more time than student participants in the study practicing their French, outside of coursework.

2. Student participants in the study reportedly read more online in French, more fiction and non-fiction in French; they also read more magazines.

3. Survey respondents reported that they read more newspapers and more comics in French.

4. Survey respondents reported watching more You-Tube videos in French.
5. Student participants reported writing more text messages and more online chat messages in French.

6. Student participants reported using Facebook more extensively in French.

7. Student participants reported doing more Internet searches in French.

8. Both groups reported playing computer games in French, to the same extent (almost never).

From this close reading of the self-report items from the online survey, it is possible to see that the student participants in the study, while they did not out-pace their contemporaries in terms of the number of hours spent on learning French outside of their coursework, they perceived that they read more and in more genres and formats. Additionally, student participants perceived that they wrote more than their colleagues. Although it is not possible to generalize the findings because of the very small sample size, it is possible to say two things about the self-report data from student participants in the study.

First, student participants did not perceive that they did less than their contemporaries, indicating that student participants had the perception that they were engaged in developing their French proficiency. Second, student participants perceived that they spend more time on language production (writing) than their colleagues do. These findings are important because as a student engages in speaking the TL, for example, they realize that they are indeed speaking the TL (and are thus able to communicate in an additional language). Indeed, in his study of language students involved in study abroad programs, Hernández (2010) found that as speakers were able to produce the language, the more they wanted to produce the language. The findings shown in Table 25 speak to the potential usefulness of the WTC construct (MacIntyre et al., 1998) because it focuses on interlocutors’ dispositions to relate to and engage in communication in the TL. This ultimately may have profoundly productive effects on language production, and therefore, on language proficiency development.

When I looked at and analyzed the individual context variables (language exposure, language learning activities, linguistic background, etc.) student participants shared about their language learning practices, I realized that this data shows how and in what ways students in the data set participated in building their own foundation for a future in language teaching.
While my original intention was to look at the “extent of interaction (emphasis mine) between individual context variables and instructor’s feedback practices,” the questions I thought I might be able to answer, though simple enough, left me empty-handed. For example: did learners with immersion experience prefer one kind or frequency of feedback practice to another? Or, what (if anything) did learners with a performance-avoid goal orientation find helpful in the process of applying feedback? In fact, it was not possible to answer either of these questions. There was no recipe for preference (feedback type or frequency) because students all expressed, unequivocally, a desire to have more feedback of whatever kind the professor would offer. This was simple enough; more feedback was better for students and, there simply was not enough feedback given to students to allow me to answer those questions.

Neither was it possible to unearth what performance-avoid learners found helpful in engaging with feedback. This was more complex, in part because there was little excellent feedback offered, and because students who did not seek mastery in their language learning did not seem to know how to do something/anything different. I observed that student participants in the study tried to “get it,” but I also observed that in many cases they did not know how to try (Alexandra and Chloe). In other words, students who did not excel (particularly in oral proficiency) seemed to lack the language learning strategies to excel.

Upon reflection, I realized that any interaction would most likely manifest itself in the way(s) students applied (or did not apply) the feedback offered to them. Since the overarching purpose of this third research question was to ascertain whether there was some relevance or relationship between the students’ prior exposure and experience with French and language learning to how they interpreted and used the feedback they received, I opted to take a closer look at each of the core student participants in context, knowing that language learning does not happen in a bubble (Bialystok, 1981). What I learned when I took a more comprehensive look at the ways that student participants took up the feedback they were offered surprised me.

7 Research Question 3, To what extent do instructors’ feedback practices interact with pre-service teachers’ background variables and learning style? In Starkey, 2017 (proposal): Pre-service teachers, feedback and French proficiency development: Running the race or crossing the finish line?, p. 3.
Since I was convinced that context variables played a role in how/what ways each language learner engaged with a distinct curriculum, course plan, program and feedback, I looked closely at two students’ interview data, Chloe and Alexandra. I chose these two participants because they each experienced significant challenges. I then examined two additional students’ interview data, Lin and Safiya, because they had a different approach to and experience of the challenge of communicating in French.

I observed that Alexandra and Chloe sincerely struggled with their oral language proficiency in French, while Lin and Safiya excelled. These student participants ranged between 2nd and 4th year in their program, two of four were born outside of Canada and came to Canada as children in primary or junior school and all began learning French around the age of 8 or 9 years old, at school in Ontario in CF programs. All had attended the summer bursary language program *Explore* in Québec at some point in their post-secondary experience. All were French majors and all identified as women. I felt that these participants’ journeys were significant because the intrinsic motivation and goal setting was apparent (or visibly absent.) I realized that the Willingness to Communicate construct offered a distinct opportunity to better understand the complexity of what I observed.

**Chloe’s Commitment**

A Canadian-born undergraduate student who began learning French in primary school, Chloe spoke English at home and was an upper-year student in the CTEP program. Chloe was studying to be a high school French teacher, and her major was French. In her second interview, Chloe shared that she had been assigned many hours of remedial work (approximately 30) in order to turn her ‘conditional pass’ into a ‘full pass’ on the French proficiency exam. These remedial hours were necessary for her to successfully move on to her final year in the CTEP program at OISE. She explained to me why she struggled so much with anglicisms, saying “Le français est mon deuxième langue.” It was clear to me that Chloe had not yet mastered the fact that the word /langue/ is feminine, not masculine (the sentence should have been: “Le français est *ma* deuxième langue”). When at least five times in the same interview Chloe referred to /problème/ as feminine not masculine, and when she sometimes self-corrected and sometimes did not, I found myself wondering how a student could get to 4th year without knowing these basic facts about French (Chloe FN, Interview 2).
To assist Chloe in completing her remedial hours I forwarded her two folders of French proficiency materials by email, activities that I had developed while I was working in the OSSC two years previously. In the first folder were three integrated activities for secondary school candidates, in which I had essentially created a scenario from a high school context that required candidates to read, take notes and speak in a role play situation, with a partner (either me or a classmate). We met on October 7 to begin working through an activity. Chloe struggled with some vocabulary from the teaching context—(i.e., parents would come and pick up their kids (les parents viendront chercher leurs enfants) at school after a field trip to Cirque du Soleil). In a short debrief following the activity, Chloe talked about how it was her knowledge of verbs that made the activity challenging. She discussed how she was trying to search her brain for the correct conjugation, and described trying to make herself visualize the verb root and correct ending—but that it did not come fast enough. She was visibly frustrated. In the second folder I sent her were two oral activities from Radio-Canada that were designed to practice oral comprehension. The goal of the task was to listen to the three-minute video clip and discuss the questions that followed (questions I had designed). I do not know if Chloe did any of the activities I sent to her after she had completed the integrated activity with me.

Chloe completed her language remediation hours and passed the proficiency test, and my next interaction with her was in a focus group, 3 months later.

Alexandra’s Approach

A Russian-born student who came to Canada at the age of 5 years and who began learning French (in the CF program) in Grade 4, Alexandra spoke English and other languages at home and was an upper-year student in the CTEP program. Alexandra was also studying to be a high school French teacher and was a French major (with minor specializations in English and psychology). As previously mentioned in her language portrait, Alexandra was quite reserved, and preferred to let me direct the conversation. During the second half of the second interview the conversation began to open up with Alexandra; it was the first time she had mentioned the concept of “motivation.” She shared that she was strongly motivated by fear (fear of a bad mark) and that this kept her from seeking help during an instructor’s office hours for the purpose of obtaining clarification. Office hours with a friend in tow were much easier to undertake. In fact, Alexandra stated that she did not see a reason to go to office hours unless she
was really struggling or was ‘scared’ about her marks. She noted that going to office hours for an English professor felt easier because with an English professor her sincere fear of making mistakes in French would not be realized. This comment prompted a brief discussion between us about what constituted a ‘bad’ mark; for Alexandra, a bad mark was anything below 80%.

I asked Alexandra to talk about what motivation was linked to, and when she did not respond, I reformulated the question. She offered that having a friend meant that she felt motivated. She then used the word lazy—indicating that lacking motivation was a bit lazy. However, she then spoke again about how scary it was to go and talk to the professor in their office in French, even though in the one instance when she spoke she had actually had a great result. Indeed, following that single interactions she understood the work, was no longer scared and her work improved (this improvement was observed by Alexandra herself as well as her professor). Nonetheless, Alexandra remained ambivalent about seeking clarification from the professor, and did so only when no other possibility for information was available to her. She stated,

A : Je n'ai pas beaucoup de motivation de voir les professeurs aux heures de bureau. Je suis allée parce je n'ai pas compris et j'étais...j'avais peur pour le test. J'allais avec mon amie alors c'était bon...il a aidé de comprendre plus et il a dit qu'il a vu des améliorations (avec un accent français).

J : Des améliorations? Il a vu des améliorations dans ton travail?

A: Oui.

J: Tu es allée avec une amie so c'était plus confortable...et plus de confiance...

A: Oui...et plus de motivation.

J: So tu viens de dire que la motivation est liée à des choses...comme, pour être motivé, il faut que je me sens...comfortable.

A: umm

A: I don’t have a lot of motivation to go see professors during their office hours. I went because I didn’t understand and I was...(corrects herself to make a correct verb choice)...scared for the test. I went with my friend so it was good...he helped me understand more and he said that he saw improvements in my work.

J: Improvements? He saw improvements in your work?

A: Yes.

J: You went with a friend so it felt more comfortable and you felt more confident...

A: Yes, and I had more motivation.

J: So you’ve just said that motivation is linked to other things...like, for example, to be motivated, I need to feel...comfortable.

A: Ummm.
J: ou?
A: mmm
J: La motivation est liée à quoi? à la confiance? À la confortabilité?
A: Je pense que c'est juste avec mes amis…je n'aime pas aller seule dans les heures de bureau.

J: Non, je ne demande pas seulement pour toi, mais je demande ton opinion en général, comme de théoriser un peu, comme… est-ce que tu observes, que c'est non seulement pour toi que c'est comme ça? Ou pour les amis et toi? Est-ce que tu en discutes? Comme tu as dit que pour toi personnellement tu n'as pas beaucoup de motivation d'aller te présenter dans les heures de bureau…et c'est à cause de quoi?
A: Pour moi, ou pour tout le monde?
J: Quelconque…
A: Un peu paresseuse et…
J: Un peu paresseuse et…?
A: Oui, et c'est plus difficile de parler en français avec un prof parce que je ne veux pas faire les erreurs…Si c'était en anglais, c'est plus facile d'aller aux heures de bureau.

A: For me, or for everyone?
J: Whichever…
A: A little bit lazy and…
J: A little bit lazy and…?
A: Yes, and it’s more difficult to speak in French with a professor because I don’t want to make errors…if it was in English, it’s easier to go to office hours.

Alexandra, Interview 3
(French translated by the author in italics)

The whole topic of asking questions about the feedback Alexandra received, for her, came down to grades or self-advocacy, it was not necessarily about learning. In other words, the importance of learning what she might need to learn seemed invisible (or at least, not noteworthy.) It made me wonder about how students may be aware that they do not understand
but somehow that fact gets forgotten or pushed aside, in favour of getting through. I reflected in field notes,

There seems to be a real disconnect between what Alexandra is learning (the curriculum of the courses) and what she is learning about learning; she didn’t seem to make note of those links for herself (or she didn’t express that). What concerns me is that the advanced oral practice class won’t improve her proficiency; after sitting in on that class for 2 hours where there was zero oral practice, I think it’s safe to say that it’s going to be tough for Alexandra to improve her oral proficiency, and given that this interview was the first time she spoke entirely in French—there is much work to do.

FN Sept 18

Lin’s Labour

An undergraduate student who came to Canada from China at the age of 9 years, Lin began learning French (Core program) at the age of 10 in Grade 4 and spoke English and other languages at home. Lin was in the early stages of her studies in the CTEP program, and she too was a French major (with a minor specialization in math), studying to be a high school French teacher. Lin was highly motivated to use all learning opportunities that come her way and she was thoughtful, optimistic and engaged with her own learning. She reflected continually on all aspects of her proficiency. As a former CF student, Lin was highly cognizant of her need to work hard at all of the elements of oral proficiency. I learned that Lin was in France studying for 5 weeks when I contacted her during the summer break to schedule her third interview. We therefore met for her final interview upon her return once classes had resumed. When I asked Lin if courses were enough to be proficient in French, she looked shocked and said, “Mais bien sûr que non” (*But of course not.*). Lin’s certainty on the matter was informed by her own research as is illuminated in our exchange below:

*J:* So you’ve added the idea that discussions would really help you/others to improve their French competence but you're also telling me that you haven't experienced that in your classes...in fact, you tell me that there is very little opportunity for discussions in class. My question is: how do you know that if you've never had that experience?

*L:* I've read articles about it...

Lin, Interview 3
Lin was critically reflective about improving her French oral proficiency upon returning from her time in France. She looked even more shocked than with my previous question when I asked her if she talked about the fact that courses are not enough to become proficient in French with her friends and classmates. She indicated that students were far too busy to think about whether what they were doing right now would be enough for the future (Lin, Interview 3).

What was so clear about Lin’s trajectory was the way she set herself up for success by acting on the reality that work was needed, from her, in order to be ready to teach in French. Lin accepted the mission, as it were, and was highly motivated to move along in the journey using whatever opportunities came her way.

Safiya’s Strategy

Summer happened between Safiya’s 2nd and 3rd interviews. By the time we met the following September, Safiya was in a very different place with regard to her coursework and learning—a much more positive space than she had been in the spring. Her three new upper-year FSL courses included a course in grammar and language acquisition, and were taught by professors who all seemed “organized” (her word). The professor about whom the students had complained had not returned, so everyone was happy. Indeed, Safiya shared that students were relieved that they had spoken up. It was particularly interesting to see how Safiya and her friends had found their own strategies and opportunities for giving each other peer feedback. Although French professors encouraged the practice of working in small groups (with peers), it was not mandated. Thus, the student agency factor stood out, to me and I wondered what was it that allowed students to see that this would help them?

It was interesting to see how Safiya’s sense of agency and urgency blossomed over the 4-month interval between Interviews 2 and 3. Whereas she had been righteously angry about the many surprises on the exam (from a content perspective) at the end of April, she had come to the realization that she could take charge of self-assessment and use peer feedback to help her progress. She shared:

Après les entrevues, après que tu m’as envoyé les questions et les choses comme ça, je n’ai pas pensé sur la rétroaction de plus, like a peu, mais pas like, j’ai pas mis

After the interviews, after you sent me the questions and other things like that, I did not think about “extra” feedback, like a little bit but not like, I didn’t put an
Safiya had an articulate vision for what she wanted to accomplish in terms of her own learning. Although she did not attach explicit timelines to her goals, and although she knew that there were (and would be) obstacles and challenges (i.e., professors who were not always competent, little time, a great many things to do), there was no question that she was prepared to persevere with determination. In fact, she appeared remarkably on track to achieve her goal of being proficient enough to teach in French. For someone in the beginning stages of her studies, Safiya demonstrated an astute understanding that she needed to take ownership for her learning, that the university really was not particularly engaged with her in her journey, and that she needed to take the lead in her own learning.

I spent time thinking about each of the student participants in the cohort of ten because I wanted to discover if there were ways of grouping them according to similarities and differences, for example, that would allow me to see patterns and analyze their attributes and skill sets more deeply. As I reflected about the student participants who were most alike, four participants emerged organically as being of interest because of the ways they approached their language learning journeys. As previously noted, these four student participants Alexandra and Chloe (upper-year year students), and Lin and Safiya (lower-year students) who were all in the CTEP program and enrolled in some form of French specializations (majors or minors). I realized that these four participants could be grouped into two dyads in a Venn diagram: the Striving and Challenged (Chloe and Alexandra) versus the Preparing and Equipped (Safiya and Lin).
Alexandra and Chloe each received a conditional pass on the French proficiency exam because of their lower results, and the University of Toronto ‘system’ recognized that they needed to do remedial work before they could proceed to OISE the following September for their final year. Indeed, the remedial work required was not an insignificant effort for these two students; in each case it meant +/- 30 hours of work in speaking and comprehension of French, outside of class time. When I learned this news from the students I had two thoughts, first relief and second, concern. First, I was relieved that there was some consistency between my anecdotal findings and the official proficiency test results. The perceived message from the university to students was that adequate French proficiency for teaching was an important priority, and that the university was performing a sort of gatekeeping proficiency measure to require students to change their practice and improve before graduating and heading into an Ontario classroom to teach (in) French. Second, I was concerned, because although I was not surprised that neither candidate had passed the French proficiency exam, I realized that the urgency of their French proficiency rested on the fact that both of these young women were in the final year of undergraduate French specialist programs, yet they could not undertake a competent, fluent conversation in French. Both Alexandra and Chloe, though mildly surprised that they had numerous remedial hours to do, seemed passively resigned to the matter. In my own mind, I wrestled with the fine line between assessment for information and assessment for evaluation.
There was a surprise/shock factor to the realities of the lack of French proficiency that was challenging to understand.

In similar ways, but with different conclusions, I had realizations about the Preparing/Equipped dyad, Lin and Safiya. Both women were early on in their programs of study and had not yet written the proficiency test, and although they expressed serious concern about their readiness, they also kept working with determination on their proficiency. What surprised me was that these two dyads emerged organically as I thought about the participants who were most alike. What I find interesting about this is that in the final analysis are the differences between the dyads. Indeed, these differences emerged as relating to age and the stage they were at in their program, in combination with the strategic and communicative competence they each exhibited. Alexandra and Chloe seemed to have missed the opportunity to apprehend the fact that they were behind, or, if they understood, they had not taken the appropriate steps to ameliorate that before the university-mandated remedial hours (a goal structure) occurred.

I realized that before I could examine the relationship between individual context variables (language exposure, language learning activities, etc.) and the learner’s use of instructors’ feedback, I needed to look at the similarities between the learners. These similarities are depicted in Figure 34 and include their program, language experience, exposure and linguistic background.
Figure 34. Commonalities between two learner dyads

Although one participant from each dyad was born outside of Canada and came to Canada as a child in primary or junior school (Alexandra and Lin), all were French majors and identified as women. Additionally, all began learning French around the age of 8 or 9 years old in public school CF programs in Ontario. All had attended Explore in Québec. Three of four spoke English and other languages at home (Chloe spoke only English). I was still convinced that context variables played a role in how and in what ways each language learner engaged with language learning, so my next task was to examine the relationship between the individual context variables (language exposure, language learning activities, etc.) and the learner’s use of instructors’ feedback.

With so many similarities between the dyads (Chloe, Alexandra, Lin and Safiya) I had to admit that I was baffled. How was it that younger students, at earlier stages in their programs were more “on track” than their older colleagues? What was the difference between struggling and not struggling, if not language exposure and linguistic background? I had to accept that what made the difference in their level of success at language learning, could not be found in the individual context variables (Individual Differences, or IDs). Rather, it rested in their
willingness to communicate (WTC), a finding supported by Baghæi (2012) in his work on developing and validating a multidimensional scale for WTC in a foreign language (FL). The point is that the language learning activities and strategies used by the preparing/equipped student participants moved them from students (passive) to learners (active). There was no question that both of the participants in the Preparing/Equipped dyad, Lin and Safiya, were more ready than their colleagues to begin their teaching careers, even in the early stage of their academic programs. This surely tells a more complex story about motivation and communicative competence that may be fruitful and has implications for language teaching and learning in HE. The fact that these two students appeared to be able to “mind the gap” or be more aware of what was ahead for them as future teachers has important implications.

Implications of Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

Chapter 5 presented data from the instructor participants showing the importance of the interaction between students and the course material. It also showed that in addition to being multifactorial, WTC is also multidimensional, with multiple stakeholders. From this contextual vantage point, I provide an explanation of one of the key findings of my dissertation study, that language proficiency needs to be a shared task between students and their professors (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). In this section, I present examples of how the construct of WTC looked during the classroom observations. It became evident that as students completed tasks, both on their own and in real time (in the classroom) and that instructors’ interactions (feedback, dialogical instruction, etc.) had an impact on these future teachers’ performances.

Two instructional contexts in particular explicitly sought and rewarded risk-taking (prise de risque) communication from their students: those of Prof. Claude and Prof. Louise. Both of these experienced language professors knew their students by name and actively encouraged their participation. Both demonstrated that humour and empathy help build students’ engagement in the course material and in their own learning. During 8 hours of observations in their classrooms Prof. Claude and Prof. Louise gave descriptive feedback (both orally and written) to students so they could improve their work. Students were welcomed when they had additional questions about an assignment or about feedback they were given after an assignment was returned. Both professors were generous with their time before class, at the
break and after class to take students’ questions. In addition, the following three features were noted:

1. English was only used when necessary in intermediate classes and no English at the advanced levels and upper year classes
2. Technology was used in all classes
3. Activities and tasks other than direct lecturing were employed

Many examples of sincere and warm encouragement were also offered to students, creating an energized atmosphere in the classroom.

**Missed Opportunities for WTC**

The findings of my doctoral research show unequivocally that students reflected on the feedback they were given through two modalities: the self-report items in an online survey measure, and one-on-one interview evidence between the student participants and the researcher (me). This was corroborated (triangulated) with five instructor participants, in both an online survey measure and one-on-one interview. I observed a sincere effort on the part of both groups of participants—instructors and students—to do their best possible work. Students were committed in principle to doing the tasks instructors set and assessed, and to glean all the information they could from the feedback their instructors offered. Professors were dedicated to the provision of feedback to students for the products students created. It is clear to me, however, that to improve their work, and specifically, to improve their language production, students were often walking alone in the proverbial darkness.

In terms of missed opportunities for creating WTC, future teacher Nicola shared a course syllabus for a required course in the “Sociology of teaching and learning contexts in Ontario.” The syllabus was completely in French and all of the lectures were presented in French, by a professor who read and spoke and only in French. In her final year of the CTEP program, Nicola was surprised, however, that students were not required to speak in French, neither in class nor in small group discussion, and she reflected on that, saying, "Speaking in English for a French course is a bit bizarre.” Nicola went on to say

« Dans ce cours, ce serait très utile de parler en français. »

*In this course, it would be very useful to speak in French.*
Furthermore, students were not required to hand in their written work in French, even though this course was a French credit, and all students in the class would be certified teachers by the end of the academic year and hoped to teach (in) French.

According to Nicola, most (if not all students in the course) were French majors/specialists. Students had a choice about whether to do their reading reflections about articles in English or French, regardless of whether the article was in English or French. Reading reflections were posted online, whether in English or French (again, students’ choice). Although students could read each other’s posts, there was also no requirement to read or respond to anything or anyone else’s posts. The professor used the completion of this work to fulfill/constitute the participation requirement of the course (10%), but did not offer any feedback, either global or individual, to students. In other words, the professor did not refer to student feedback, questions or reflection in course lectures, nor was any individual feedback given on content or grammar.

Nicola was surprised (shocked, even) that she had not received any feedback on her writing in French while at OISE, despite the fact that she was taking two courses in French. This was particularly surprising when she knew that she would be expected to offer feedback to her future high school students. Not only did she miss out on opportunities to improve her own French proficiency, but she did not receive the kind of pedagogical preparation needed to ensure her readiness to teach successfully.

Zarrinabadi and Tanbakooei’s (2016) assertion that instructors may exert tremendous influence on students’ willingness to communicate through pedagogical approaches and other context-specific variables is key to this discussion. The importance of helping students/future teachers see that they are/can be agents in their own learning to build a launching pad for their careers in teaching cannot be understated. Certainly instructors can and should model for students what it is to communicate in the TL. Additionally, as is clear in the emphasis of the WTC construct that stresses the situated context where instructors control in large measure the inter-group motivation, attitudes and climate, we must remember that students have choice—both in class and out of class. Future teachers could benefit significantly from understanding more about the
antecedents of being willing to communicate in classroom, to prepare them to mind the gap about their language learning.

As previously discussed in Chapter 2, unlike in L1 production, communicative competence in a L2 includes not only personality traits (shyness or talkativeness, for example) but also affective, cognitive, and contextual factors (MacIntyre et al., 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Although communicative competence is a necessary condition for language proficiency (because it relies on the application of linguistic knowledge), communicative competence is not the only measure that determines whether a language learner may actually engage with the L2 in communicative contexts (Dörnyei, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998).

Since communication is first and foremost a shared experience, co-created by language speakers, the WTC model must be understood to be fully embedded/situated in the learning context. This is true whether the language speakers be in a classroom or in a seminar room, in a formal or informal situation, or whether students are interacting with each other or with their instructor. It is ultimately this reality, that WTC is a wholly situated approach (Dörnyei, 2003) that allows for an in-depth or micro perspective of L2 communication. Prof. Martin was reflective about how he saw moving forward with a more interactive approach in his own courses. He suggested

Et à cet égard, on pourra par exemple, après le test de mi-semestre, faire quelque chose d’assez élabore : on donne quelques suggestions et quelques points de langue à travailler, mais après on les fait travailler avec une feuille de travail, alors, « Où avez-vous fait des erreurs; recopiez l’erreur; maintenant recopiez la bonne forme » des choses comme ça. « Quels verbes devez-vous savoir; écrivez-les; faites les conjugaisons » des choses comme ça pour qu’ils fassent quelque chose d’un peu plus pratique puisqu’on suppose quelque fois qu’ils savent quoi faire avec, tel type d’exercice…ils vont juste savoir que ça c’est un problème, et ce n’est pas nécessairement que c’est un problème, c’est

And in this regard, we (professors) can for example, after the mid-term test, do something quite a bit more elaborate: we give some suggestions and some language points to work on, but after we have them (students) work with a worksheet, such as “Where did you make errors; recopy the error; now correct your work” things like this. “What verbs should you know; write them out; do the conjugations,” things like this so they can do something a bit more practical because we think that sometimes they know what to do with this type of exercise…they will only know that it is a problem, and this is not necessarily that it is a problem, it’s that everyone has things they need to work on. And this is also
Tasks and WTC

The content of my third interview with Alexandra was largely about the novel students had to read for class. The conversation opened with me trying to get a sense of what students were going to have to “do” with the novel once they had read it. Alexandra had no idea, other than she was being quizzed on the content of the book, that it was difficult to read, and that she did not understand it. The course was a required course, and the professor had not lectured at all on the book; he wanted students to read, understand and get a sense of it first.

When I asked Alexandra about any strategies she was using to “get through it,” she said that she was reading it in English at the same time. When I asked her if she was working with a study group, she shared that she was meeting with a group that very day, for the first time (although it was clear she felt quite ambivalent about that). When I asked her how she would know if it was helpful to her, she said that she would know if she left understanding more. She also shared that she did not feel that she had much to offer to anyone in terms of resources or knowledge. When I asked her at a later date about how it went, she was noncommittally positive.

When I asked Alexandra if she was taking notes to help her remember what was happening/happened in the story, she said no. When I asked her why, she offered that it was because it took a lot of time. I asked her if she was consulting online resources, and she said no. When I asked if she was taking note of vocabulary that she did not know, she responded in the negative. From this I got the strong sense that she wanted to do the bare minimum of work in order to get through.

I tried to engage Alexandra in a conversation about how this process was influencing/could influence her development as a future teacher of high school. She said that she really did not...
know, and that she really was not thinking about that right now. I got the sense that she was just trying to get through. When I asked her if she thought that doing this task (reading and understanding the novel) would help her develop her language proficiency, she said that she was not sure.

Alexandra’s case is of paramount importance because of the way my conceptual framework (Figure 34) positions SCT at the base of the pyramid. With its emphasis on context and mediation, it is the foundation of language learning in HE. It is clear that Alexandra does not see the classroom learning environment as “fertile ground that gives rise to learning”; rather she views the task of understanding this novel as taking up her time in an already overloaded schedule of course requirements and remedial French proficiency hours. In addition to having a lack of willingness to communicate because she sees the task as not very relevant or useful, Alexandra is challenged by her own context (the apex of the pyramid in Figure 34) of a performance learning orientation, where for her, a ‘bad mark’ is anything below 80% (Alexandra, Interview 3). She doesn’t see a reason to go to office hours unless she is really struggling or is ‘scared’ about her marks (Alexandra, Interview 3), so pushing forward in spite of her challenges, in Alexandra’s eyes, remained her only option.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 6 had three broad purposes. First, I revisited the macro conceptual lens I constructed in Figure 5, in Chapter 2, which showed three slightly overlapping circles depicting three concepts that defined the study: Sociocultural Theory (SCT), Goal Orientation Theory (GOT) and the construct of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (MacIntyre et al., 1998). I presented an updated and re-imaged conceptual framework that reflects the data I collected and the understandings I gained from analyzing that data. The second purpose of this chapter was to lead an interpretive discussion of the findings from Chapters 4 and 5, in a concerted attempt to offer some coherence to the jumble and confusion that was so much a part of the data I collected. In particular I shared some of the complexities characteristic to language teaching and learning in HE because of how goal structures and goal orientations take shape and become visible in language learning and in classrooms. The third and final purpose of the chapter was to explain what student participants’ willingness to communicate in French “looked like” according to their language practices outside of their coursework. These efforts could be
examined to see how students’ choices were indicative of active and productive preparation or active struggle for student participants.

Presenting an interpretation of the data from a wider conceptual perspective also allowed me to look properly at the findings from Research Question 3, concerning how (to what extent) instructors’ feedback practices interacted with students’ individual context variables (language exposure, language learning activities, etc.). Two things became evident from my examination of survey data alongside interview data and course materials (course syllabi, course tasks and evaluated writing samples). First, that as students completed tasks, both on their own and in real time in the classroom, individual differences and aspects of individual goal orientations and classroom goal structures were visible. Second, the self-report items from the online survey show how and in what ways student participants participated in building their own foundation for a future in language teaching.

I also learned the value of SRL in terms of monitoring and using language learning strategies, which although I had not planned to collect data about this, I did observe how students who did not seek mastery in their language learning did not seem to know how to do something different in order to achieve a different outcome. In other words, students who did not excel (particularly in oral proficiency) seemed to lack the language learning strategies to excel. Although student participants tried to “get it,” I also observed that in a few cases they did not know how to try (Alexandra and Chloe).

The next chapter integrates the findings from the data chapters to summarize the key findings. It also discusses key issues that arose from the findings of the research questions I investigated. Chapter 7 also considers implications of this research as well as pathways for future research.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

That learning can guide teaching is...revolutionary. To many, this is a relief; to those who resist, it feels like a blow to their identity as teachers. If they are not the cause of students’ learning, then what are they doing as teachers? It takes time to reorient their sense of themselves from someone who controls to someone who serves.

Rodgers (2006)

Figure 35. Minding the gap, Killbear Provincial Park, Research Journal, Sept 5

Introduction

Future FSL teachers must develop knowledge about language, knowledge of language (language proficiency), as well as pedagogical knowledge to implement the FSL curriculum (Andrews, 2003). However, students in HE who wish to teach (in) French may face challenges in completing tasks in French, which is an indicator of insufficient language proficiency (Bachman & Palmer, 2010; Alderson, 2000). When instructors engage with students (Askew & Lodge, 2000) to give information about how they did and what they can do to improve (Sadler, 1989; Hattie & Timperley, 2007), students may be more able to understand and do what is
being asked (Price et al., 2011). Students may not have the capacity to understand and use this feedback to improve their work, however. Boud and Molloy (2013) and Evans (2013) call for more research to investigate this “feedback gap” to discover how feedback can be used more effectively to promote learning in HE (Du Toit, 2012; Pereira et al., 2016).

In fact, Price et al., (2011) focus on feedback as a process rather than a product, citing that efforts must be made to develop engagement from all parties through a longer-term dialogic process. They argue that utilizing descriptive feedback allows students to develop their learning and make better use of their instructors’ feedback. Understanding feedback is important for all undergraduate students, but it is particularly important for those students who wish to teach (in) French. The importance for those who are studying to teach in French lies in the ways that undergraduate students use their own learning experiences as opportunities to learn about teaching.

As we have seen, Borg (2004) articulates an ‘apprenticeship of observation’ to describe how the task of teaching pedagogical skills to future teachers is complex because pre-service teachers come to teaching having observed only some aspects of a teachers’ work; that is, the parts which are visible. Lortie (1975) reminds us even though they may have spent thousands of hours in a classroom as students, future teachers are not aware of other crucial components of a teacher’s work, such as language proficiency development and assessment practice, as a result of this notion of an ‘apprenticeship of observation.’ It is therefore of critical importance that more research be done about feedback for language learning in HE, specifically for future teachers.

Research about feedback matters because decisions are made every single day about what scores and marks mean, and therefore, which students will (and will not) succeed. Without detailed and specific information about how to do the best work they can, students underachieve, sometimes massively and sometimes intentionally too, in the “game” of organized learning. Giving feedback may therefore be the greatest ethical contract teachers have with students. As a teacher educator I feel a particular responsibility to give good feedback to my students because they will have multiple opportunities to facilitate the future learning of the next generation of students, so equipping future teachers is of critical importance. The project of assessment for learning and feedback is thus no small task.
One of the biggest impediments to sustained critical conversation on “what to do” about French proficiency development for future teachers may be the robust scores we have on the number of jobs available in FSL at the moment. Indeed, positions are fruitful for French teachers in a job-strapped teachers’ market. There is an urgent need for FSL teachers (Arnott et al., 2015), which may drive the practice of overlooking less-than-proficient teachers of French.

Initial teacher education programs are an integral part of mobilizing recent changes to the FSL curriculum (2013) in Ontario. The question of what in-service teachers need to be able to do in French and how they will use French to communicate in teaching contexts is a priority. We must work to understand what pre-service teacher education programs need to offer in terms of appropriate curriculum and learning opportunities to properly prepare candidates for successful teaching in French once they begin their in-service teaching careers.

**Summary of Major Findings**

This study sought to explore the feedback experiences of future teachers and their FSL instructors in HE. I collected data over a 15-month period at the University of Toronto from undergraduate students studying French, as well as FSL instructors, to describe how assessment practices such as the provision of descriptive feedback may give detailed and important information to students in HE who are studying to be future FSL teachers. Data sources included interviews, online questionnaire surveys, classroom observations and focus groups, as well as an analysis of course documents, student work samples and tasks.

I was not only interested in collecting data from two participant groups in HE; students and instructors in HE, but also in comparing the two data sets. Thus, I created a parallel study design, inasmuch as that was possible, particularly since students and instructors have different roles and responsibilities in the classroom. I included a component of classroom research in my study about feedback for two reasons. The first reason I included classroom observations was because teacher-student interactions are a key element in improving student learning in the classroom (Pianta, 2016). Second, to respect the tradition in language education where L2 acquisition and applied linguistics research happen in formal learning contexts (Baker & Lee, 2011), including periods of classroom observations were important.
Future teachers’ experiences of feedback in French

The quality and quantity of feedback that student participants in my doctoral study received from (too) many of their French instructors made it difficult for them to use the feedback consistently and accurately. This contributed significantly to a “feedback gap” (Evans, 2013, pp. 73, 94-97; Boud & Molloy, 2013). Since there is no institutional standard or protocol for feedback practices at the University of Toronto, each professor had a different approach to how feedback was “taken up” in their course(s). Each professor’s instructional approach and feedback practices varied from course to course, and sometimes quite widely. There was a genuine lack of coherence in the approach and practice of delivering and applying feedback that I observed throughout the 15 months I collected data for this study.

Findings from student participants (across a range of years) show that fewer than half of them (n=3) consistently sought additional feedback from instructors to help them improve their work. These students reported that: a) when asked, their instructors willingly offered more feedback, and b) students showed evidence that this feedback was helpful for improving their work.

Students who did not seek additional feedback from their FSL instructors (n=7) identified that they did not see how following up with instructors would help them improve, and also offered that time was an issue, with busy schedules and demands outside of school. Additionally, some students in this study wondered whether it was “allowed” to ask for additional feedback. I have not found evidence for this anywhere else in the empirical or theoretical literature but have learned, from my experience as a course instructor, that it is a common practice among some students in HE to seek additional feedback from their instructors.

At a minimum, no official expectations or protocols for feedback practices currently exist at the University of Toronto. This ultimately translated into missed learning opportunities for students in HE who will be future teachers. Students reported decreased levels of motivation when instructors were not engaged with them (unavailable during office hours, did not respond to emails, etc.). Furthermore, my experience during data collection of students’ reticence to speak about their feedback experiences and their serious concerns about confidentiality, as well as the difficulty in securing instructor participants for the study (as outlined in Chapter 3) may also indicate a culture of silence around feedback in HE. This would not only mean missed learning
opportunities but also point to a more complex systemic deficit in understanding and applying
the practices of teaching and assessment for learning, from the instructors’ side.

Future teachers use feedback

Students’ interest and engagement with the topic of feedback was an unexpected (and pleasant)
surprise to me. Time and again, students wanted more feedback, wanted to know how they
could improve, and shared evidence that they thought about and acted on the feedback they
were offered.

Some students did not know how to assess their own work critically, which points to an
instructional opportunity to show students how to properly look at and assess their work.
Additionally, though, students demonstrated that they also did not know how to decipher
instructors’ feedback in ways that lead to learning and progress. The data showed that this was
in part because there were few opportunities (depending on the course) to repeat similar tasks
so students could feed learning forward (apply what they learned in this task, to the next task).
In other words, the knowledge students most needed (how to self-assess and how to feed
learning forward as a result of repeated experiences) remained hidden to them, either because
instructors did not articulate it explicitly in the classroom or in course documents, and/or
because students did not understand how to use this information to their benefit.

The findings from this study corroborate that a “feedback gap” (Evans, 2013, pp. 73, 94-97)
exists between the feedback students receive and their capacity to use feedback to improve their
work. There was data to indicate that when there was interaction pertaining to the work students
did, this process allowed students to perceive and act on the feedback given by their instructors.
Evans (2013) articulates a number of significant components to this feedback gap. These
components include: the scarcity of mindful uptake in HE contexts for effecting feedback
practices that “work”—both from professors’ and students’ perspectives; the awareness that
feedback alone may be insufficient to improve student success; and the need to provide a range
of feedback types and formats that stand to be of benefit to diverse learners in various contexts.

The reality is that students’ uptake of feedback information remains a substantial challenge,
which is consistent with findings from Pitt and Norton (2017) and Mulliner and Tucker (2017).
Although the role of SRL to assist students in becoming independent and effective learners may
be clear in the literature (Hounsell et al., 2008; Carless et al., 2011; Moos, 2011; Du Toit, 2012; Liu & Lee, 2015; Barton et al., 2016), how to engage students in learning and using SRL strategies for classroom language learning for teaching is not obvious.

Individual context variables and feedback

I presented the findings from Research Question 3 as part of an interpretative conversation from a wider conceptual perspective in Chapter 6 because a wider-angle view allowed me to look properly at how instructors’ feedback practices interacted with students’ individual context variables (language exposure, language learning activities, etc.). Two things were evident from my analysis and interpretation of survey data alongside interview data and course materials (course syllabi, course tasks and evaluated writing samples through the macro viewfinder.) First, individual goal orientations and classroom goal structures were visible as students completed tasks, both on their own and in real time in the classroom, and this had an affect on language proficiency development. Second, student participants were very much engaged (or not) in building their own foundations for a future in language teaching by what they did and the choices they made, not only during coursework but outside of coursework as well.

While it was not possible for me to answer the questions I thought I might be able to answer, regarding individual context variables and feedback preferences, I learned that regardless of language exposure, program or proficiency level students want to receive (more) feedback. Students are also interested to understand the feedback they are given and they demonstrate engagement in reflecting on using feedback to improve their work. Student participants in this study were also not only concerned about the consequences of feedback for their learning now in HE, but they also, in many cases, talked about their future teacher-selves.

Tasks that provide opportunities to give the best feedback

In short, what is needed for future FSL teachers, according to the literature, are tasks that allow for language production (Bachman & Palmer, 2010) and tasks that replicate ‘real-world’ uses (Skehan, 1998b; Ellis, 2003). Although many of the tasks observed captured all the essential components of the task definitions (Skehan, 1998b), students in HE who want to pursue a career in teaching (in) French absolutely did not have opportunities to engage with language tasks that met these criteria. This shortcoming, as mentioned above, emerged because of the
approach of French for Academic Purposes that is operationalized in HE classrooms. Adapting or modifying the pervasiveness of this approach is an issue that should addressed in the future research for language learning for teaching.

As this study has demonstrated, language production is accomplished through the engagement with tasks as students complete course requirements; meaning feedback in language classrooms is a critical responsibility. In fact, tasks not only furnish opportunities to give feedback, but also promote increased awareness and learning about language for the purposes of teaching (Andrews, 2003). Thus, the findings indicate that the tasks proposed to future teachers do not match the requirements of what they need for their future careers.

**Implications**

One of the present and future implications of my research is to engage future teachers in understanding, learning and acting on assessment for learning practices, including descriptive feedback, in their development of French language proficiency and skills for teaching (in) French. It is my hope that this learning may assist future teachers as they prepare to teach the next generation of students who attend school to learn (in) French. Since we are in the beginning stages of moving forward with more sustainable models of feedback because of new theoretical and empirical ground delineated by a number of important empirical studies about dialogic and interactive feedback that have emerged in the last five to seven years (Beaumont et al., 2011; Carless et al., 2011; Price et al., 2011; Orsmond et al., 2013; Barton et al. 2016; O’Donovan et al., 2016; Ajjawi & Boud, 2017), the future of language learning for teaching looks bright, productive and interesting.

Specifically, however, to adequately prepare future language teachers, students in HE need exposure in class to learning opportunities that prioritize:

1) **Explicit information about feedback practices**: Findings from this study found missed teaching and learning opportunities in course syllabi regarding feedback practices. Students in HE did not understand what to expect and what was expected of them, both as students and as future teachers (Ajjawi & Boud, 2017).
2) **Authentic language production**: Students in HE need consistent, repeated and authentic exposure to tasks that promote language acquisition, language learning strategies and experiences from their “experienced others” (i.e., instructors) during their study of/in French during class (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994). These tasks are necessary for students to self-assess and use the feedback they are given to feed learning forward (Hounsell et al., 2008), and to prepare for teaching.

3) **Intentional interaction**: Instructors in HE need to offer feedback in ways that create dialogue between themselves and their students *as a coherent process* (O’Donovan et al., 2016), rather than provide feedback as a one-way product (Carless et al., 2011). Dialogue in feedback is necessary so that students are more able to understand and do what is being asked of them (Price et al., 2011). Indeed, feedback for learning should be a shared task between students and their professors (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006), and this is particularly the case for language learning (Mackey, 2006).

**Contributions and Limitations**

This study contributes to the literature on assessment models in HE that has implications for the development of French proficient and assessment literate future FSL teachers. My research also contributes to understanding the essence and potential impact of instructor-student interaction and feedback in language learning.

This research study was designed to contribute to the literature about what is ‘going on’ with feedback in language learning for teaching, with the hope of suggesting some possible ways forward in developing practices that are more useful, productive and sustainable.

There is no doubt that the small sample size means that no generalizable claims can be made. The small sample size, however, allowed for depth and comparison and provided tremendous opportunities for insight at this crucial time in the field. While this study is not replicable in terms of finding the same results, it is worth designing and implementing similar studies elsewhere to see if feedback processes differ; and if so, then how.
Suggestions for Further Research

1. There is an urgent need to construct a framework for assessing French for the specific purpose of teaching (FSP). This is in part due to the fact that French for Academic Purposes (FAP) is the organizing framework for FSL courses and programs in HE. To undertake this, we must first look to the literature on, in, or about French that specifically addresses second language learning, as well as to the literature on language for specific purposes. Then we must undertake a needs assessment to determine exactly what language and (language functions) are needed for teaching in French (Noe, 2011).

2. There is a critical need to continue to research dialogue and interaction as it pertains to feedback for language learning because assessment literacy is a process, and the attributes that encompass this work are variable, meaning that this is a continuum of learning (Barton et al., 2016).

It is entirely possible to observe how students take up the feedback they receive. It is also possible to study how individual context variables such as language exposure, additional language learning and various program elements (use of TL, for example, in courses), as well as how appropriate instructional interventions (course expectations and tasks) may affect language learning. Similarly, it is also possible to track those variables and observe the interaction of those outcomes. But all of these variables, while thought provoking and relevant, do not explain what is happening for students in the moments when they are reading or “taking in” feedback from their instructors.

The two pre-existing conditions O’Donovan et al. (2016) found that are needed in order for students to apply feedback are noteworthy: first, they need to understand it and second, they need to know what to do with it (Handley et al., 2008). O’Donovan et al. (2016) postulate that students need exposure to and practice with this feedback protocol in order to understand feedback and know what to do with it. These practices need to begin right from the outset of students’ HE experience because students’ levels of engagement with all of these tasks (understanding feedback, knowing what to do with it and taking action to apply the feedback) is dynamic and fluctuating. As discussed in Chapter 2, the question is, according to O’Donovan et al., how much engagement is enough to improve a student’s work? If extrinsic and intrinsic
motivation drive engagement (Price et al., 2011, p. 892), what are the measures of student engagement? Is student engagement to be found at the nexus of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation? What are the instructional practices that encourage student engagement? How is student engagement similar to (and different from) WTC?

While these questions remain to be investigated, one thing is certain: we are at a pivotal moment in the conversation about feedback for learning in HE. This is particularly true in Canada, where there has been silence about feedback in HE, despite the movements at the elementary and secondary levels of schooling. The next decade holds a great deal of promise and possibility for learning in general and language learning in particular, if we can seize the challenge of asking questions of multiple stakeholders in diverse contexts about what works, and what does not.

Conclusion

In regard to my thesis title, *Running the race or crossing the finish line*, the answer is that both are immensely important. The reality is that there are multiple finish lines to cross in language learning, and the only way to cross a finish line is to run the race, in the first place.

Those of us who teach, learn and make decisions about teaching and language learning are at a challenging crossroads. Changing the way French proficiency development might be taken up in the classroom, either from an instructional perspective or from an assessment perspective, is not possible as long as we do not take opportunities to *think* about what language proficiency development is and find a way to assess it and give feedback on it, in ways that are meaningful, valid and reliable, using methods that feed learning forward.

Now a decade old, this quote from John Hattie and Helen Timperley must remain at the forefront of future work about feedback in language learning for teaching, because it clearly articulates that learning doesn’t happen in a void, away from others. According to Hattie and Timperley,
Feedback has no effect in a vacuum; to be powerful in its effect, there must be a learning context to which feedback is addressed. It is but part of the teaching process and is that which happens second—after a student has responded to initial instruction—when information is provided regarding some aspect(s) of the student’s task performance.

Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p.82

In this quotation it is clear that feedback happens after instruction and is focused on the student’s response to the task. Specific and detailed information about a completed task describes the strengths of a piece of work and explains the next steps that a student must undertake in order to improve (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 156). In other words, when feedback and instruction are integrated, a gap is bridged between what is understood and what needs to be understood (Sadler, 1989).

In an important way, then, understanding the language of feedback is akin to acquiring an additional language. In both instances, learning is involved because there is a message to be apprehended. It is this point that is perhaps the most important reason to move forward with more research about feedback for language learning at all levels of schooling, but in particular in HE. Language learning for the specific use of teaching is of course about interaction, because of all the reasons we learn languages, there are none more real than communicating messages. The classroom is a microcosm of the world, and language learning must emulate those authentic contexts of “real life” because to learn language we must use language.

Ultimately, because language is what connects us to each other, and it is the connection between us that matters, teaching practices in every language that cultivate opportunities for open dialogue between students and instructors can create learning environments that feed learning back in order to feed learning forward. In those dialogical learning spaces all participants can learn and teach, and gaps can indeed be bridged.
References


Appendices

Appendix A. Informed Consent for Study Participants (for Program Administrators)

Dear Program Administrator;

My dissertation research project seeks to learn about feedback practices and French language learning for teaching in Higher Education classrooms, from students and their French Instructors; this includes instructors who teach course(s) in French to undergraduate students, as well as instructors who teach course(s) in French to future teachers completing their pre-service teacher education training at OISE/UT. Through this study I hope to learn about the role of feedback in French courses for developing pre-service teachers’ French proficiency for teaching.

I, June Starkey, am a Doctoral Candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning. I am completing a PhD in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. I will personally carry out all research and reporting involved in this study in order to fulfill the requirements of my Doctoral thesis. The following description outlines both the study itself and your role as a research participant. If you require further information or explanation, please contact me at june.starkey@utoronto.ca or at 416-XXX-XXXX. My thesis supervisor is Dr. Antoinette Gagné. She may be contacted at antoinette.gagne@utoronto.ca.

I seek permission from you, the program administrator, to undertake this study in your program at the University of Toronto. There are 4 components of the study requiring your consent. First, informed consent is needed so the program assistant in each unit may send a link to an online survey through the university email system to Teacher Candidates and to French Instructors, since the survey will also be used as a recruitment tool. Informed consent is also required from you to allow me, the researcher, to interview students (3 times) and French Instructors (once), to observe in French courses (ideally 3 occasions of approximately 60 minutes), collect course documents and assignments and to facilitate one-time end-of-study focus groups with each of the participant groups (students and French Instructors).

Rationale for the study:

There is a new and revised French as a Second Language (FSL) curriculum in all three French as a second language programs in Ontario. The New FSL curricula at the elementary and secondary levels are welcome additions because they are a potential step forward in achieving
increased bilingualism in Canada. Since teachers play such a large role in student success, equipping future teachers to instruct the new FSL curriculum is an important point for discussion.

Teacher Educators want to understand what future FSL teachers need to know. According to Andrews (2003), teachers need knowledge of the subject matter (knowledge about language) and knowledge of language —language proficiency, in addition to knowing how to teach in ways that allow students to learn. As Borg (2004) explains in her articulation of the ‘apprenticeship of observation,’ the task of teaching these skills is complex because pre-service teachers come to in-service teaching having observed only some aspects of a teachers’ work, namely, the parts of teaching that are visible.

A study contributing to the literature on assessment models in higher education (HE) that may make a difference for the development of French-proficient and assessment-literate pre-service teachers is needed.

**Students’ involvement in the study:**

I am looking for approximately fifteen future teachers who hope to teach (in) French upon completion of teacher education training at OISE/UT. Specifically, each student participant in this study will:

1. Be enrolled in the B.Ed. or M.T. teacher education program at OISE/UT.
2. Hope to teach (in) French upon graduation from OISE/UT.
3. Complete an online survey about their experiences with feedback and language learning in French.
4. Participate in three interviews with the researcher, each of which will take between 30 and 45 minutes.
5. Share course documents and personal work samples from the course(s).
6. Consider participating in an optional, one-time, end-of-study focus group discussion about their experiences with feedback and language learning, with other teacher candidates

Once a student has signed the appropriate consent form (Appendix B), their involvement in the study would begin.

The online survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete, at the student’s convenience. Each of the 3 interviews is designed to take between 30 and 45 minutes, and will be held in a mutually convenient, quiet, comfortable place. Each interview will be audio-taped so I can later transcribe and study the data. During the 3 interviews I will ask some questions about the participant’s experiences with feedback in the French course(s) they are currently taking. The participant may decline to answer any question. Although there are ‘set’ questions, the questions are quite open-ended. The final part of this study is for all/some of the Teacher Candidate participants to meet at an optional one-time, end-of-study Teacher Candidate focus group(s). Each participant will have an opportunity to re-confirm their consent to participate in the Teacher Candidate focus group after completing the 3 interviews. The focus group meeting will take approximately 60 minutes and the student may participate as much or as little as they like in the discussion.
French Instructors’ involvement in the study:

I am looking for approximately five Professors/Instructors of French language, linguistics, literature, writing and/or teaching methodology courses in French; this includes instructors who teach course(s) in French to undergraduate students, as well as instructors who teach course(s) in French to future teachers completing their pre-service teacher education training at OISE/UT. For the sake of brevity, instructors who meet the criteria below will be referred to as “French Instructor,” going forward. Each French Instructor participant in this study will:

7. Teach in French, in the B.A., B.Ed. and/or M.T. programs at the University of Toronto.
8. Complete an online survey about her/his experiences with feedback and language teaching in French.
9. Participate in one interview with the researcher, which will take between 30 and 45 minutes.
10. Share course documents and syllabi with the researcher for the purpose of analysis.
11. Allow the researcher to observe during instructional time (a total of 3 periods of approximately 60 minutes each would be ideal).
12. Consider participating in an optional one-time end-of-study focus group discussion with other French Instructors to share experiences with feedback and language teaching, which will take approximately 60 minutes.

Once a French Instructor has signed the appropriate consent form (Appendix C), their involvement in the study would begin.

The online survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete, at the Instructor’s convenience. An interview with the researcher where the French Instructor can share their experiences with feedback in the French course(s) they are currently teaching will be planned after the French Instructor completes the survey. The interview will take between 30 and 45 minutes, and will be audio-taped so I can later transcribe and study the data. Once the interview has been completed, 3 periods of classroom observations will take place on days and times that the French Instructor and I will establish in advance. This study also includes an analysis of course documents, tasks, syllabi, course plans, etc. and these documents may be shared in whole or in part at any point during the study. The last part of this study is for all/some of the participants to meet at an optional one-time, end-of-study French Instructor focus group. Each participant will have an opportunity to confirm consent to participate in the French Instructor focus group. The focus group meeting will take approximately 60 minutes and each French Instructor may participate as much or as little as they like in the discussion.

Data collected from all sources will be analyzed carefully. I hope to determine patterns in the data that may help me understand how feedback in HE classrooms is used to help prepare FSL teachers for teaching in French. Further, it is my hope that participants will bring to light other needs or areas of interest that I have not anticipated.

When will participation begin and end?

Participation in the study will take place sometime between September 2014 and April 2015. Participants will set the appointments for all research activities of the study with me, the
researcher. I will accommodate participants’ scheduling preferences to the best of my ability. All instruments and interviews will be conducted in French and/or English, according to each participant’s choice.

**How can participating in this study benefit student participants?**

Having opportunities to reflect on and be listened to about their experiences with feedback for language learning as Teacher Candidates prepare for teaching in French may allow participants to gain new understandings, both about their own development as second language learners and about their future work with language-learning students. In addition, having opportunities to share their personal work samples during each of three interviews with the researcher may help Teacher Candidates apply the feedback from the French Instructors in their future work, in ways that they may not have otherwise done. Participation in this project may therefore help future French teachers understand the importance of feedback in language teaching and learning.

**How can participating in this study benefit French Instructor participants?**

Having opportunities to reflect on and be listened to about their experiences with feedback for language teaching as French Instructors prepare Teacher Candidates for teaching in French may be helpful to the participants. First, this project may allow participants to gain new insights, both about their current French teaching practice and about their future work with language-learning students in HE. In addition, having opportunities to be observed during each of three classroom observations may help French Instructors increase their awareness and understanding of the importance of feedback in language teaching and learning. Finally, French Instructors may derive new and collaborative professional contacts and opportunities as a result of participating in the end-of-study focus group.

**Is there compensation provided to students who participate in this study?**

For Teacher Candidates who agree to participate in this research, financial compensation will be made available. A gift card in the denomination of $25 from iTunes, Chapters or Starbucks will be offered to participants who complete the online survey, 3 interviews and one-time focus group with other Teacher Candidates. In addition, in-kind compensation will be offered to every Teacher Candidate, whether they complete the research study or not, in terms of an extensive list of electronic and print resources for teaching (in) French. Having opportunities to share their work during each of three interviews with the researcher may help Teacher Candidates apply feedback from French Instructors in their future work in ways that they may not have otherwise done. In this way, the support Teacher Candidates receive as a result of being a participant in this study may be described as compensation in the form of tutoring.

**Is there compensation provided to French Instructors who participate in this study?**

If a French Instructor agrees to participate in this research, financial compensation will be made available. A gift card in the denomination of $25 (choice of Chapters, iTunes, or Starbucks) will be offered to all French Instructor participants who complete the online survey, interview, classroom observations and the focus group. A bibliography of electronic and print resources for teaching (in) French will also be offered, whether a French Instructor completes the research study or not.
What are the risks involved for participants?

Although there is a low risk for all participants in this study, language teaching and learning can raise some unexpected emotions. Participants may feel some vulnerability about being audio-taped during an interview and potentially being observed during class time, even though participation in the study is completely confidential. Each participant will have had different experiences with language teaching and learning, and each participant and their experiences will be treated with the utmost respect.

How will participants’ privacy be protected?

Participation in the study is completely confidential and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of each participant: no French Instructor will know if any Teacher Candidate in their class is a study participant and no participant (Teacher Candidate and French Instructor) will know whether their colleagues are participating in the study until the one-time end of study focus group discussion (should the Teacher Candidate/ French Instructor choose to participate in their respective one-time end of study focus group discussion). All interviews will be conducted in a mutually convenient, private and comfortable location. All participants will be assigned a pseudonym for the duration of the study. Only my thesis supervisor and I will have access to raw data. All data collected will be encrypted with data encryption software and stored in a secure location in locked files on my laptop with a password known only to me.

What if participants need to stop their participation in this study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and participants may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time, without negative consequences. Should a participant decide to withdraw from the study they will also have a choice about withdrawing the data they have already given, excluding it from the study altogether. In such a case I will return data to the participant in its entirety, unless the focus group has already occurred, however, since it will be too difficult to extract a single voice from a group discussion while preserving the integrity of the discussion.

Research consent

I have read and understood the conditions under which students and French Instructors will participate in this study and I give my consent for this study to go forward. I understand that I will be given a copy of this information/consent letter for my records.

Name: _______________________________       Date: ___________________

Signature: _______________________________
Appendix B. Informed Consent for Study Participants (for Students)

Dear Future Teacher of French as a Second Language,

Thank you for your interest in my dissertation research project about feedback practices and French as a Second Language learning for teaching. Through an online survey, three interviews and an optional one-time focus group, I hope to learn about the role of feedback in developing pre-service teachers’ French proficiency for teaching. If you decide to participate in this study, you will have opportunities to share your experiences and provide valuable insights into learning about the feedback activities that are provided to future FSL teachers such as yourself. You will also have a chance to reflect on and tell about how you use the feedback you receive; what variables affect your use of feedback; and what type of learning tasks may provide opportunities for instructors to give you feedback for learning about your language proficiency.

I, June Starkey, am a Doctoral Candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning. I am completing a PhD in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. I will personally carry out all research and reporting involved in this study in order to fulfill the requirements of my Doctoral thesis. The following description outlines both the study itself and your role as a research participant. If you require further information or explanation, please contact me at june.starkey@utoronto.ca or at 416-XXX-XXXX. My thesis supervisor is Dr. Antoinette Gagné. She may be contacted at antoinette.gagne@utoronto.ca.

Rationale for the study:

There is a new and revised French as a Second Language (FSL) curriculum in all three French as a second language programs in Ontario. Since teachers play such a large role in student success, equipping future teachers to instruct the new FSL curriculum is an important point for discussion. A study contributing to the literature on assessment models in higher education (HE) that may make a difference for the development of French-proficient and assessment-literate pre-service teachers is needed.

Your involvement in the study:

I am looking for approximately fifteen future teachers who hope to teach (in) French upon completion of teacher education training at OISE/UT. Specifically, each student participant in this study will:

1. Be enrolled in the B.Ed. or M.T. teacher education program at OISE/UT.
2. Hope to teach (in) French upon graduation from OISE/UT.
3. Complete an online survey about your experiences with feedback and language learning in French.
4. Participate in three interviews with the researcher, each of which will take between 30 and 45 minutes.
5. Share course documents and personal work samples from the course(s).
6. Consider participating in an optional, one-time, end-of-study focus group discussion about experiences with feedback and language learning, with other teacher candidates.

Once you have signed this consent form, your involvement in the study would begin. There are three possible parts to your participation in this study: completing an online survey; participating in three individual interviews (during which time you will interact with me, the researcher); and concluding with an optional end-of-study focus group.

Each of the 3 interviews is designed to take between 30 and 45 minutes, and will be held in a mutually convenient, quiet, comfortable place. Each interview will be audio-taped so I can later transcribe and study the data. During the 3 interviews I will ask you some questions about your experiences with feedback in the French course(s) you are currently taking. You may decline to answer any question. Although there are ‘set’ questions, the questions are quite open-ended.

The purpose of the third part of this study is for all/some of the Teacher Candidate participants to meet at an optional one-time, end-of-study Teacher Candidate focus group. Each participant will have an opportunity to re-confirm their consent to participate in the Teacher Candidate focus group after completing the 3 interviews. The focus group meeting will take approximately 60 minutes and you may participate as much or as little as you like in the discussion. During the focus group meeting, I will be writing notes in a field note journal that I will later transcribe into more complete notes.

The data collected from each part of your participation in the study will be analyzed carefully: the online survey, the interviews and the one-time, end-of-study Teacher Candidate focus group. I hope to determine patterns in the data that may help me understand how feedback in classrooms is used to help prepare FSL teachers for teaching in French. Further, it is my hope that participants will bring to light other needs or areas of interest that I have not anticipated.

**When will your participation begin and end?**

Your participation in the survey, interviews and optional one-time end-of-study focus group will take place between September 2014 and April 2015. You will set the appointments for both the interview and the optional one-time focus group with me, the researcher. I will accommodate as many of your scheduling preferences as possible. Instruments and interviews will be conducted in French and/or English, and it is your choice entirely to decide which language(s) to speak.

**How can participating in this study benefit you?**

As a result of participating in this study you may benefit from reflecting on and being listened to about your experiences with feedback for language learning as you prepare for teaching (in) French. Gaining new understandings about your development as a future FSL teacher may be helpful to you. If you choose, you may interact in French for all or part of this project, which may also contribute to your professional development. Any recommendations or conclusions...
from the study will be communicated to you when the final results of the study are complete, if you would like to be contacted.

**How will I be compensated for my participation in this study?**

If you agree to participate in this research, financial compensation will be made available to you. A gift card in the denomination of $25 (your choice of Chapters, iTunes, or Starbucks) will be offered to all participants who complete the online survey, the 3 interviews and the focus group. In addition, a bibliography of electronic and print resources for teaching (in) French will be offered to you, whether you complete the research study or not.

**What are the risks involved for you?**

Although there is a low risk for participants in this study, language learning can raise some unexpected emotions. Participants may feel some vulnerability about being audio-taped during the three interviews and potentially seeing the researcher in the classroom observing during class time, even though a participant’s participation in the study is completely confidential. Each participant will have had different experiences with language learning, and each participant and their experiences will be treated with the utmost respect.

**How will your privacy be protected?**

All interviews will be conducted in a mutually convenient, private and comfortable location. All participants will be assigned a pseudonym for the duration of the study. Only my thesis supervisor and I will have access to raw data. All data collected will be encrypted with data encryption software and stored in a secure location in a locked file on my laptop, with a password known only to me. No mention will be made of the names of any of the participants in the reporting of this study and no instructors will know about any of the students participating in the study.

French Instructors will also be participating in this study, so the participant may also see (but not interact with) the researcher in their French classes while the researcher is observing the class, on three occasions, for approximately 60 minutes each time. As previously stated, should you decide to participate in this study, your participation in this study will be kept confidential: your participation will be known about by my thesis supervisor and to me.

The one-time end-of-study focus group will be conducted in a mutually convenient, private and comfortable location. As previously mentioned, all participants will use a pseudonym for the duration of the study. Only my thesis supervisor and I will have access to raw data. All data collected will be stored in a locked cabinet in my home and will be destroyed at the end of this research study. No mention will be made of the names of participating students or instructors in the reporting of this study.

**What if I need to stop my participation in this study?**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time, without negative consequences. Should you decide to withdraw from the study you will also have a choice about withdrawing the data you have
already given, excluding it from the study altogether. I will return your data to you in its entirety, unless the focus group has already occurred, however, since it will be too difficult to extract a single voice from a group discussion while preserving the integrity of the discussion.

**Research consent**

I have read and understood the conditions under which I will participate in this study and give my consent to be a participant in the online survey and interviews. I understand that I will be given a copy of this information/consent letter for my records.

Name: _______________________________       Date: ___________________

Signature: ______________________________

**Research consent for the focus group**

I have read and understood the conditions under which I will participate in this one-time end-of-study focus group, and I give my consent to participate. I acknowledge and agree to maintain the confidentiality of the identity of the focus group participants. I also agree to keep the conversation from within the focus group confidential, once the focus group discussion has finished. I understand that I will be given a copy of this information/consent letter for my records.

_____ I will participate in an optional one-time focus group meeting for Teacher Candidates at the conclusion of the study. I understand that I will be given an opportunity to re-visit my decision before the focus group occurs.
Appendix C. Informed Consent for Study Participants (FSL Instructors)

Date _____________________

Dear Professor/Instructor of French language, linguistics, literature, writing and/or teaching methodology courses in French;

Thank you for your interest in my dissertation research project about feedback practices and French as a Second Language learning for teaching. Through an online survey, an interview with you, the Instructor, 3 periods of in-class observations and an optional one-time French Instructor focus group, I hope to learn about the role of feedback in French courses for developing pre-service teachers’ French proficiency for teaching. If you decide to participate in this study, you will have opportunities to contribute valuable information about the feedback activities you facilitate for your students in your role as Instructor, and you will also have a chance to reflect on and share information about students’ application of the feedback they are given in your course(s). In addition, your participation will increase understanding of the types of learning tasks that may provide opportunities for French Instructors to give feedback to students in Higher Education (HE) about their French language proficiency.

I, June Starkey, am a Doctoral Candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning. I am completing a PhD in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. I will personally carry out all research and reporting involved in this study in order to fulfill the requirements of my Doctoral thesis. The following description outlines both the study itself and your role as a research participant. If you require further information or explanation, please contact me at june.starkey@utoronto.ca or at 416-XXX-XXXX. My thesis supervisor is Dr. Antoinette Gagné. She may be contacted at antoinette.gagne@utoronto.ca.

Rationale for the study:

There is a new and revised French as a Second Language (FSL) curriculum in all three French as a second language programs in Ontario. The New FSL curricula at the elementary and secondary levels are welcome additions because they are a potential step forward in achieving increased bilingualism in Canada. Since teachers play such a large role in student success, equipping future teachers to instruct the new FSL curriculum is an important point for discussion.

Teacher Educators want to understand what future FSL teachers need to know. According to Andrews (2003), teachers need knowledge of the subject matter (knowledge about language) and knowledge of language —language proficiency, in addition to knowing how to teach in ways that allow students to learn. As Borg (2004) explains in her articulation of the ‘apprenticeship of observation,’ the task of teaching these skills is complex because pre-service
teachers come to in-service teaching having observed only some aspects of a teachers’ work, namely, the parts of teaching that are visible.

A study contributing to the literature on assessment models in higher education (HE) that may make a difference for the development of French-proficient and assessment-literate pre-service teachers is needed.

**Your involvement in the study:**

I am looking for approximately five Professors/Instructors of French language, linguistics, literature, writing and/or teaching methodology courses in French; this includes instructors who teach course(s) in French to undergraduate students, as well as instructors who teach course(s) in French to future teachers completing their pre-service teacher education training at OISE/UT. For the sake of brevity, instructors who meet the criteria below will be referred to as “French Instructor,” going forward. Each French Instructor participant in this study will:

1. Teach in French, in the B.A., B.Ed. and/or M.T. programs at the University of Toronto.
2. Complete an online survey about her/his experiences with feedback and language teaching in French.
3. Participate in one interview with the researcher, which will take between 30 and 45 minutes.
4. Share course documents and syllabi with the researcher for the purpose of analysis.
5. Allow the researcher to observe during instructional time (a total of 3 periods of approximately 60 minutes each would be ideal).
6. Consider participating in an optional one-time end-of-study focus group discussion with other French Instructors to share experiences with feedback and language teaching, which will take approximately 60 minutes.

Once you have signed this consent form, your involvement in the study would begin.

The online survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete, at your convenience. An interview with the researcher where you can share your experiences with feedback in the French course(s) you are currently teaching will be planned after you complete the survey. The interview will take between 30 and 45 minutes, and will be audio-taped so I can later transcribe and study the data. Once the interview has been completed, 3 periods classroom observations will take place on days and at times that we will establish in advance. This study includes an analysis of course documents, tasks, syllabi, course plans, etc. and these may be shared in whole or in part at any point during the study. The last part of this study is for all/some of the participants to meet at an optional one-time, end-of-study French Instructor focus group. Each participant will have an opportunity to re-confirm consent to participate in the French Instructor focus group.

Data collected from the interview, classroom observations and focus group will be analyzed carefully. I hope to determine patterns in the data that may help me understand how feedback in classrooms is used to help prepare FSL teachers for teaching (in) French. Further, it is my hope that French Instructor participants will bring to light other needs or areas of interest that I have not anticipated.
When will your participation begin and end?

Your participation in the online survey, interview, classroom observations and focus group will take place sometime between September 2014 and April 2015. You will set the appointments for the interview, classroom observations and the optional one-time focus group with me, the researcher. I will accommodate your scheduling preferences to the best of my ability. Instruments and interviews will be conducted in French and/or English, and it is your choice to decide which language(s) to speak.

How can participating in this study benefit you?

As a result of reflecting on and being listened to about your experiences giving feedback for language learning in the preparation of Teacher Candidates for teaching, there may be several positive benefits to you. Gaining new understandings about the development of future FSL teachers may be helpful in your role as a French Instructor. Interacting in French for any, all or part of this project, may be a collaborative experience of professional development. Any recommendations or conclusions from the study will be communicated to you when the final results of the study are complete, if you would like to be contacted.

How will I be compensated for my participation in this study?

If you agree to participate in this research, financial compensation will be made available to you. A gift card in the denomination of $25 (your choice of Chapters, iTunes, or Starbucks) will be offered to all participants who complete the online survey, interview, classroom observations and the focus group. A bibliography of electronic and print resources for teaching (in) French will also be offered to you, whether you complete the research study or not.

What are the risks involved for you?

Although there is a low risk for participants in this study, language teaching and learning can raise some unexpected emotions. Participants may feel some vulnerability about being audio-taped during an interview and potentially being observed during class time, even though participation in the study is completely confidential. Each participant will have had different experiences with language teaching and learning, and each participant and their experiences will be treated with the utmost respect.

How will your privacy be protected?

All interviews will be conducted in a mutually convenient, private and comfortable location. All participants will be assigned a pseudonym for the duration of the study. Should you decide to participate in this study, your participation will be kept confidential: participation will be known about by my thesis supervisor and to me. Only my thesis supervisor and I will have access to raw data. All data collected will be encrypted with data encryption software and stored in a secure location in a locked file on my laptop, with a password known only to me.

What if I need to stop my participation in this study?

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time, without negative consequences. Should you decide to withdraw from the study you will also have a choice about withdrawing the data you have
already given, excluding it from the study altogether. I will return your data to you in its entirety, unless the focus group has already occurred, however, since it will be too difficult to extract a single voice from a group discussion while preserving the integrity of the discussion.

**Research consent**

I have read and understood the conditions under which I will participate in this study and give my consent to be a participant. I understand that I will be given a copy of this information/consent letter for my records.

I will participate in the optional one-time focus group meeting for French Instructors at the conclusion of the study. I understand that I will be given an opportunity to re-visit my decision before the focus group occurs.

Name: _______________________________       Date: ___________________

Signature: _______________________________
Appendix D. Study Flyer (for Students)

Please post/circulate electronically

- Are you hoping to teach (in) French when you graduate?

- Are you taking courses in French at the University of Toronto as part of your B.Ed. or M.T. degree?

Yes? I seek research participants for my dissertation study about the feedback experiences of future teachers hoping to teach (in) French after graduation

- Participate in a 20-minute online survey about the experiences you’ve had with feedback and your French language learning.

- Reflect on your experiences of feedback in your French language learning at three 1:1 interviews with the researcher. Each interview takes between 30 and 45 minutes.

- Share your experiences of feedback in a one-time small group discussion with other teacher candidates. The one-time focus group discussion will take 60 minutes.
Interested in finding out how you can participate in this study about feedback and French language learning for teaching?

CONTACT:
June Starkey
416-XXX-XXXX

june.starkey@utoronto.ca
• Espérez-vous enseigner en français lorsque vous obtiendrez votre B.Ed.?

• Suivez-vous des cours en français à l’Université de Toronto pour compléter vos études de premier cycle en éducation (B.Ed.) ou Master of Teaching (M.T.)?

Oui? Je cherche des étudiant(e)s qui veulent éventuellement enseigner en français afin qu’ils/elles puissent contribuer à mon étude doctorale portant sur les expériences de rétroaction des futur(e)s enseignant(e)s de français

• Répondez à un questionnaire en ligne à propos de vos expériences de rétroaction en tant qu’apprenant(e) du français à l’université (20 minutes).

• Assistez à 3 entrevues avec la chercheuse pour examiner plus amplement vos expériences de rétroaction dans votre/vos cours de français, ce trimestre (30 à 45 minutes chacune).

• Partagez vos expériences de rétroaction dans un petit groupe de discussion avec d’autres futur(e)s enseignant(e)s, une fois à la fin de l’étude (60 minutes).
Êtes-vous intéressé(e) à participer à cette étude à propos des pratiques de rétroaction et de l’apprentissage du français pour l’enseignement? Désirez-vous plus de renseignements?

CONTACTEZ
June Starkey au 416-XXX-XXXX
june.starkey@utoronto.ca
Appendix E. Study Flyer (for FSL Instructors)

Please post/circulate electronically

- **Do you teach (in) French at the University of Toronto?**

- **Do you teach pre-service teachers in the B.Ed. or M.T. degree programs?**

**Yes?** I seek research participants for my dissertation study about the feedback experiences of future teachers hoping to teach (in) French after graduation

- Participate in a 20-minute online survey about the experiences you’ve had with feedback and your French language teaching.

- Reflect on your experiences of feedback in your French language teaching at one interview with the researcher. The interview takes between 30 and 45 minutes.

- Allow the researcher to observe your teaching of pre-service teacher candidates for three 60-minute periods over the term.
• Share your experiences of feedback in a one-time small group discussion with other FSL Instructors. The focus group discussion will take 60 minutes.

**Interested in finding out how you can participate in this study about feedback and French language learning for teaching?**

**CONTACT:**
June Starkey
416-XXX-XXXX

[june.starkey@utoronto.ca](mailto:june.starkey@utoronto.ca)
Veuillez afficher ou faire circuler par courriel

- Enseignez-vous en français à l’Université de Toronto?

- Enseignez-vous à de futur(e)s enseignant(e)s dans les programmes de premier cycle en éducation (B.Ed.) ou Master of Teaching (M.T.)?

Oui? Je cherche des professeur(e)s qui contribueront à mon étude doctorale portant sur les expériences de rétroaction dans les cours de français des futur(e)s enseignant(e)s de français

- Répondez à un questionnaire en ligne à propos des expériences de rétroaction que vous avez eues en tant que professeur(e) de français à l’université (20 minutes).

- Assistez à une entrevue avec la chercheuse pour examiner plus amplement vos expériences de rétroaction dans votre/vos cours de français ce trimestre (30 à 45 minutes chacune).

- Permettez à la chercheuse d’observer votre enseignement durant 3 périodes pendant le trimestre et partagez quelques documents de cours.

- Partagez vos expériences de rétroaction dans un petit groupe de discussion avec d’autres professeurs de français qui enseignent
aux futur(e)s enseignant(e)s de français, une fois à la fin de l'étude (60 minutes)

Êtes-vous intéressé(e) à participer à cette étude portant sur les pratiques de rétroaction et de l’apprentissage du français pour l’enseignement? Désirez-vous plus de renseignements?

CONTACTEZ
June Starkey au 416-XXX-XXXX
june.starkey@utoronto.ca
Appendix F. Invitation email to complete Online Survey (for Students)

Hello, bonjour!

You are receiving this email because you may be taking courses in French at the University of Toronto as part of your B.Ed. or M.T. degree.

If you are, and if you are you hoping to teach (in) French when you graduate, you are invited to participate in a dissertation study about the feedback experiences of future teachers hoping to teach (in) French after graduation.

This study has been approved by the Office of Research Ethics of the University of Toronto and has received permission from the Program Administrator of your program to send you a link to an online survey where you will have an opportunity to share your experiences on the feedback that is provided to you in your current FSL course(s).

The following link will take you to the online survey:

www.surveywizard@utoronto.ca/feedbackforlanguagelearning/TeacherCandidates

There are 20 multiple choice questions in total, and there is an opportunity to provide comments at the end. You may choose to complete the survey in English and/or French. By completing this online survey, you give consent for your answers to be collected and used in the study.

If you are interested in finding out more information about how you can participate more fully in this study about feedback and French language learning for teaching, please contact the researcher June Starkey 416-XXX-XXXX or june.starkey@utoronto.ca

Merci beaucoup!

June Starkey
Appendix G. Online Survey (for students)

Online Survey for Students

This online survey is an opportunity to share your experiences on the feedback that is provided to you in your FSL course(s). There are 20 items in total, and there is an opportunity to provide comments at the end. You may choose to complete the survey in English and/or French. By completing this online survey, you give consent for your answers to be collected and used in the study.

Part 1: The first 7 items focus on the purpose of the feedback you’ve received

For each numbered item below please check the box that most closely represents your experience in your current FSL course(s) so far this year.

1. My instructor gives me feedback about my French proficiency—how well I speak, read, write and/or understand French.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. My instructor gives me feedback on how I can improve my assignments in French, in the course.

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<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. My instructor gives me feedback to inform me about my progress in the course.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
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</thead>
</table>
4. My instructor has asked me for feedback regarding my needs.

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<th>2 Rarely</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Sometimes</td>
<td>4 Often</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Almost always</td>
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5. My instructor gives me feedback so I can set goals for myself.

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<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Sometimes</td>
<td>4 Often</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Almost always</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. My instructor gives me feedback to encourage dialogue between us about my work in the course.

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<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Sometimes</td>
<td>4 Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Almost always</td>
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</table>

7. My instructor gives me feedback so I can understand how my performance compares to other students in the course.

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<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Sometimes</td>
<td>4 Often</td>
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<td>5 Almost always</td>
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</table>

Part 2: The next 5 items focus on the outcomes of the feedback you’ve received

For each numbered item below please check the box that most closely represents the frequency of your experience in your current FSL course(s) so far this year.
8. I keep track of the feedback my instructor offers (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help me with goal-setting.

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<td>Sometimes</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Often</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Almost always</td>
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</table>

9. My instructor keeps track of whether students take up feedback (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to help her/him with instructional planning and evaluation of our work.

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<td>Almost always</td>
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10. My instructor expects students to take up the feedback s/he offers (i.e., the feedback s/he offers affects the way I am graded in my future work in the course).

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<td>4</td>
<td>Often</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Almost always</td>
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</table>

11. I spend time reading and/or reflecting on the feedback my instructor offers me.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Sometimes</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Often</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Almost always</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

12. I follow up if my instructor offers to give additional feedback to me, or to students in the class.

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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Often</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Almost always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 3: The final 8 items focus on the types of feedback you’ve received

For each numbered item below please check the box that most closely represents your experience in your current FSL course(s) so far this year.

13. I receive recorded audio or video comments about my work (essays, reports, projects).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

14. I am invited to participate in formal student-instructor conferences (e.g., during office hours) at least once during the term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

15. I receive email/electronic communication from my instructor to share feedback.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

16. My instructor responds to email communication with more feedback when I initiate a request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

17. My instructor gives whole class feedback after students finish an assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
18. My instructor provides descriptive feedback to students without assigning numerical marks/letter grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

19. My instructor assigns numerical marks/letter grades to students without descriptive feedback.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

20. My instructor provides descriptive feedback as well as numerical marks/letter grades to students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This survey has asked about some of the purposes, outcomes and types of feedback. Do you have additional comments about any/all aspects of the feedback experiences you receive in your FSL course(s)? Comments are not required but welcome!
About your French language learning:

1. How many hours do you read or write in French, not including your coursework?
   ( ) less than 1 hour per week
   ( ) 1-2 hours per week
   ( ) 3-5 hours per week
   ( ) 6 hours or more per week

2. In your free time, which of these materials do you read in French, and how often?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Once a month</th>
<th>Few times/month</th>
<th>Few times/week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Fiction</td>
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<td>Non-fiction</td>
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<td>Comics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. In your free time, how often do you participate in these activities in French?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Once a month</th>
<th>Few times/month</th>
<th>Few times/week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watch YouTube</td>
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<td>Chat online</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer games</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use Facebook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet searching</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. When did you begin learning French? ______________________________

5. How did you learn French? ______________________________

About your language learning background:
6. In what country were you born? ____________________________

7. If you were not born in Canada, when did you come to Canada? ___________

8. What languages do you speak most of the time at home (if you don’t live with your family)?
   a. You: ( ) only English ( ) only French  
      ( ) only other language—which?_______________________________  
      ( ) both English and other language(s)—which?_________________
   b. Your housemates: ( ) only English ( ) only French  
      ( ) only other language—which?_______________________________  
      ( ) both English and other language(s)—which?_________________

9. What languages do you and your family speak at home most of the time (if you live with your family)?
   a. You:  
      ( ) only English ( ) only French  
      ( ) only other language—which?_______________________________  
      ( ) both English and other language(s)—which?_________________
   b. Your family:  
      ( ) only English ( ) only French  
      ( ) only other language—which?_______________________________  
      ( ) both English and other language—which?_________________

10. Do you speak, read and/or write language(s) other than English?
   I read…_________________________________________________________
   I speak…_______________________________________________________
   I write…_______________________________________________________
   I understand…__________________________________________________

   About you:

11. What program are you in? ________________________________

12. What year of your program are you in? ______________________

13. What is the year of your birth? ____________________________

14. Do you identify as ( ) male or ( ) female?
This survey is part of a larger study on feedback for French language learning in Higher Education. If you would like to participate in this study or you would like more information about this study, please contact the researcher june.starkey@utoronto.ca 416-877-0051 OR leave your name and contact information below.

I would like to participate in this study! □

I would like more information about becoming a participant in this study! □

Name: ___________________
Phone: ___________________
Email: ___________________

I would like to be contacted by phone □ or email □

Thank you very much for participating in this survey about feedback practices!

Now that you’ve completed the online survey, you are invited to enter a draw for a $25 Starbucks gift card! Please leave your contact information below so you can be contacted if you are the lucky winner!

Name: ___________________
Phone: ___________________
Email: ___________________

I would like to be contacted by phone □ or email □
Appendix G (en français). Online Survey (for students)

Ce questionnaire en ligne vous fournit une occasion de partager vos expériences (en tant qu’apprenant(e) de français) à propos de la rétroaction que vous recevez dans votre/vos cours de français. Il y a 20 questions au total, et il y a une occasion de partager vos commentaires (si vous désirez élaborer) à la fin.

Partie 1 : Les 7 premières questions concernent la raison/le but de la rétroaction qu’on vous offre dans votre/vos cours de français.

Pour chaque question numérotée ci-dessous, veuillez sélectionner, la réponse qui ressemble le plus à votre/vos expérience(s) dans votre/vos cours de français cette année.

1. Mon/ma professeur(e) m’offre de la rétroaction à propos de mes compétences linguistiques en français—comment je parle, je lis, j’écris en français et/ou mes habiletés pour comprendre le français.

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<td>Souvent</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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2. Mon/ma professeur(e) m’offre de la rétroaction à propos de comment je peux améliorer mon travail en français durant le cours.

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<td>Souvent</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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3. Mon/ma professeur(e) m’offre de la rétroaction pour m’informer de mon progrès durant le cours.

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<td>5</td>
<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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</table>
4. Mon/ma professeur(e) m’a demandé de donner de la rétroaction/ des renseignements à propos de mes besoins.

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<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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5. Mon/ma professeur(e) m’offre de la rétroaction pour que je puisse établir mes propres objectifs.

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<tbody>
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<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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6. Mon/ma professeur(e) m’offre de la rétroaction pour encourager le dialogue entre nous à propos de mon travail durant le cours.

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7. Mon/ma professeur(e) m’offre de la rétroaction pour que je puisse saisir ma performance durant le cours vis à vis des autres étudiant(e)s.

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<td>Souvent</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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</table>

**Partie 2 : Les 5 prochaines questions portent sur les objectifs spécifiques de la rétroaction que vous avez reçue dans votre/vos cours de français.**

*Pour chaque question numérotée ci-dessous, veuillez sélectionner, la réponse qui ressemble le plus à vos expériences dans votre/vos cours de français cette année.*
8. Je garde/tiens un compte-rendu de la rétroaction que mon/ma professeur(e) m’a déjà offerte (p.ex., écrit sur papier ou sous format électronique) parce que cela m’aide à définir et à atteindre mes buts personnels dans le cours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. Mon/ma professeur(e) garde un compte-rendu (écrit ou informatisé) de si nous nous servons de sa rétroaction pour l’aider avec sa planification et/ou son évaluation des travaux du cours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. Mon/ma professeur(e) s’attend à ce que les étudiant(e)s se servent de la rétroaction qu’il/elle nous a déjà donnée (c.à.d. mes notes à l’avenir sont affectées par la rétroaction qu’il/elle m’offre).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. Je passe du temps à lire les commentaires de mon/ma professeur(e) et/ou à réfléchir sur la rétroaction qu’il/elle m’a déjà offerte.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. Je fais un suivi quand mon/ma professeur(e) m’offre d’autres occasions ou opportunités de discuter mon travail, ou quand mon/ma professeur(e) offre à tout le monde dans la classe d’autres occasions ou opportunités pour discuter nos travaux.

| 1 Jamais |
Partie 3 : Les 8 dernières questions portent sur les différentes sortes de rétroaction que vous avez reçu, jusqu’à date, dans le(s) cours de français.

Pour chaque question numérotée ci-dessous, veuillez sélectionner, la réponse qui ressemble de plus près à vos expériences dans votre/vos cours de français cette année.

13. Je reçois les commentaires de mon/ma professeur(e) à propos de mon travail du cours, enregistrés par audio ou vidéo.

14. Mon/ma professeur(e) m’invite (nous demande) à participer aux conférences de professeur/étudiant (p.ex., pendant ses heures de bureau) au moins une fois pendant le cours.

15. Je reçois des courriels (ou d’autres communications électroniques p.ex., sur Blackboard, Pepper, etc.) de mon/ma professeur(e) pour partager sa rétroaction.

16. Mon/ma professeur(e) répond à mes courriels avec plus de rétroaction ou de renseignement à propos de mon travail, si je lui demande.
17. Mon/ma professeur(e) partage une rétroaction globale avec tous les étudiants de la classe, après avoir évalué un travail quelconque.

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<td>Jamais</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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</table>

18. Mon/ma professeur(e) offre une rétroaction descriptive (des commentaires écrits ou oraux) sans donner de notes traditionnelles (des chiffres ou/et des lettres).

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<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Parfois</td>
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<td>Souvent</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

19. Mon/ma professeur(e) offre des chiffres ou/et des lettres sans donner de rétroaction descriptive (les commentaires écrits ou oraux).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jamais</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Rarement</td>
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<td>Souvent</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

20. Mon/ma professeur(e) offre une rétroaction descriptive (les commentaires écrits ou oraux) ET des notes traditionnelles (des chiffres ou/et des lettres).

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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Ce questionnaire vous a posé des questions à propos des buts, des objectifs spécifiques et des sortes de rétroaction que vous avez déjà rendus aux étudiant(e)s dans votre/vos cours de français cette année. Si vous avez des commentaires à partager concernant d’autres aspects de la rétroaction que vous avez déjà rendue à vos étudiants, vous êtes cordialement invité(e) à les laisser ci-dessous.

Maintenant, à propos de votre apprentissage du français :

1. Combien d’heures par semaine passez-vous à lire ou à écrire en français?
   - ( ) Moins d’une heure par semaine
   - ( ) 1 à 2 heures par semaine
   - ( ) 3 à 5 heures par semaine
   - ( ) 6 heures ou plus par semaine

2. Dans vos temps libres, lesquels de ces textes/ressources et matériaux lisez-vous, et à quelle fréquence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activité</th>
<th>Presque jamais</th>
<th>Une fois par mois</th>
<th>Quelquefois par mois</th>
<th>Quelquefois par semaine</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Des journaux</td>
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<td>Des revues</td>
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<td>Des livres de fiction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Des livres de non-fiction</td>
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<td>Des bandes dessinées</td>
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<tr>
<td>En ligne</td>
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</table>

3. Dans vos temps libres, participez-vous aux activités suivantes en français?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activité</th>
<th>Presque jamais</th>
<th>Une fois par mois</th>
<th>Quelquefois par mois</th>
<th>Quelquefois par semaine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Écrire des textos par téléphone portable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regarder YouTube</td>
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<tr>
<td>Écrire des textos en ligne (c.à.d. « chat »)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Des jeux informatisés</td>
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<td>Facebook en français</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faire des recherches en ligne</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4. Quand avez-vous commencé à apprendre le français? _________________________

5. Comment avez-vous appris votre français? _______________________________

Maintenant, à propos de votre expérience avec d’autres langues, en plus du français :

6. Dans quel pays êtes-vous né(e)? _______________________________

7. Si vous n’êtes pas été né(e) au Canada, quand êtes-vous venu(e) au Canada? __________

8. Quelle(s) langue(s) parlez-vous la plupart du temps chez vous aujourd’hui (de nos jours)?
   a. Vous: (   ) Seulement l’anglais (   ) Seulement le français
      (   ) Seulement une autre langue –laquelle ? ____________________________
      (   ) L’anglais et aussi une ou d’autre(s) langue(s) – laquelle/lesquelles ?

   b. Votre conjoint(e) : (   ) Cela ne s’applique pas dans mon cas
      (   ) Seulement l’anglais (   ) Seulement le français
      (   ) Seulement une autre langue –laquelle ? ____________________________
      (   ) L’anglais et aussi une ou d’autre(s) langue(s) – laquelle/lesquelles ?

   c. Vos enfants : (   ) Cela ne s’applique pas dans mon cas
      (   ) Seulement l’anglais (   ) Seulement le français
      (   ) Seulement une autre langue –laquelle ? ____________________________
      (   ) L’anglais et aussi une ou d’autre(s) langue(s) – laquelle/lesquelles ?

9. Connaissez-vous d’autre(s) langue(s) à part de l’anglais?
   Je lis…______________________________________________________________
   Je parle…____________________________________________________________
   J’écris…______________________________________________________________
   Je comprends…________________________________________________________

Maintenant, à propos de vous :

10. Dans quel programme enseignez-vous? ________________________________

11. Depuis combien de temps? ________________________________

12. Êtes-vous de sexe masculin (   ) féminin (   )?
13. Ce sondage fait partie d’une plus grande étude à propos de la rétroaction et de l’apprentissage du français aux programmes du 1er cycle pour les gens qui s’intéressent à enseigner en français à l’avenir. Si vous voulez participer à cette étude, ou si vous souhaitez recevoir plus de renseignements à propos de cette étude, veuillez contactez la chercheuse qui mène l’étude : june.starkey@utoronto.ca 416-877-0051, ou bien laissez vos coordonnées ci-dessous.

Je voudrais participer à cette étude!  

Je souhaite recevoir plus de renseignements à propos de cette étude!  

Nom : ___________________
Téléphone :  ___________________
Adresse électronique :  ___________________

Je préfère que vous me contactiez par téléphone  ou par courriel

Merci beaucoup d’avoir participé à ce questionnaire à propos des pratiques de rétroaction!

Maintenant que vous ayez complété ce questionnaire en ligne, vous êtes cordialement invité(e) à participer au tirage d’une carte cadeau de 25$ de Starbucks! S’il vous plaît, laissez vos coordonnées ci-dessous afin que je puisse vous contacter si vous êtes le/la gagnant(e)!

Nom : ___________________
Téléphone :  ___________________
Adresse électronique :  ___________________

Je préfère que vous me contactiez par téléphone  ou par courriel

Hello, bonjour!

You are receiving this email because you may teach courses in French language, linguistics, literature, writing and/or teaching methodology courses in French at the University of Toronto.

If you do, and if you teach students in the B.Ed. and/or Master of Teaching (M.T.) programs, you are invited to participate in a dissertation study about the feedback experiences of future teachers hoping to teach (in) French after graduation.

This study has been approved by the Office of Research Ethics of the University of Toronto and has received permission from the Program Administrator of your program to send you a link to an online survey where you will have an opportunity to share your experiences about the feedback practices you employ in your current FSL course(s).

The following link will take you to the online survey:

www.surveywizard@utoronto.ca/feedbackforlanguagelearning/Frenchinstructors

There are 20 multiple choice questions in total, and there is an opportunity to provide comments at the end. You may choose to complete the survey in English and/or French. By completing this online survey, you give consent for your answers to be collected and used in the study.

If you are interested in finding out more information about how you can participate more fully in this study about feedback and French language learning for teaching, please contact the researcher June Starkey 416-877-0051 or june.starkey@utoronto.ca

Merci beaucoup!

June Starkey
Online Survey for FSL Instructors

This online survey is an opportunity to share your experiences on the feedback you provide to your students in your FSL course(s). There are 20 items in total, and there is an opportunity to provide comments at the end. You may choose to complete the survey in English and/or French. By completing this online survey, you give consent for your answers to be collected and used in the study.

Part 1: The first 7 items focus on the purpose of the feedback you’ve given to students

For each numbered item below please check the box that most closely represents your experience in teaching your current FSL course(s) so far this year.

1. I provide feedback to my students about their French proficiency—how well they speak, read, write or understand French.

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<td>4</td>
<td>Often</td>
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<td>Almost always</td>
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2. I provide information to my students about how they can improve their assignments in French in the course.

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<td>Almost always</td>
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3. I inform my students about their progress in the course.

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<td>Almost always</td>
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</table>
4. I ask my students if I am meeting their needs.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
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</thead>
</table>

5. I show my students how I evaluate their work so they better understand their progress and achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
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</table>

6. I encourage dialogue with my students about their work in the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
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</thead>
</table>

7. I give feedback so students can understand how their performance compares to other students in the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Part 2: The next 5 items focus on the outcomes of the feedback you’ve given to students

For each numbered item below please check the box that most closely represents your experience in teaching your current FSL course(s) so far this year.
8. I keep track of the feedback I have offered (i.e., either on paper or electronically) to assist me with instructional planning and evaluation in the course.

   1 Never
   2 Rarely
   3 Sometimes
   4 Often
   5 Almost always

9. I keep track of whether students take up feedback (i.e., either on paper or electronically) in their future assignments, to assist me with instructional planning and evaluation.

   1 Never
   2 Rarely
   3 Sometimes
   4 Often
   5 Almost always

10. I expect students to take up the feedback I offer (i.e., the feedback I have previously offered to a student affects the way I grade students’ future work).

   1 Never
   2 Rarely
   3 Sometimes
   4 Often
   5 Almost always

11. I spend time offering descriptive feedback to students.

   1 Never
   2 Rarely
   3 Sometimes
   4 Often
   5 Almost always

12. I follow up if a student does not apply feedback I have offered, or if a student does not participate in opportunities I have offered to discuss their work.

   1 Never
   2 Rarely
   3 Sometimes
Part 3: The final 8 items focus on the types of feedback you’ve given to students

For each numbered item below please check the box that most closely represents your experience in teaching your current FSL course(s) so far this year.

13. I record audio or video comments about student work (essays, reports, projects) and post/send to students.

1 Never
2 Rarely
3 Sometimes
4 Often
5 Almost always

14. I plan and facilitate formal student-instructor conferences (e.g., during office hours) at least once during the term.

1 Never
2 Rarely
3 Sometimes
4 Often
5 Almost always

15. I initiate email/electronic communication with students to share feedback.

1 Never
2 Rarely
3 Sometimes
4 Often
5 Almost always

16. I respond to email communication with more feedback when students initiate.

1 Never
2 Rarely
3 Sometimes
4 Often
5 Almost always
17. I give whole class feedback after students finish an assignment in the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

18. I provide descriptive feedback to students without assigning numerical marks/letter grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

19. I assign numerical marks/letter grades to students without descriptive feedback.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

20. I provide descriptive feedback as well as numerical marks/letter grades to students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Never</th>
<th>2 Rarely</th>
<th>3 Sometimes</th>
<th>4 Often</th>
<th>5 Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
This survey has asked about some of the purposes, outcomes and types of feedback. Do you have additional comments about any/all aspects of the feedback experiences in teaching your FSL course(s)? Comments are not required but welcome!

About your French language learning:

1. How many hours do you read or write in French, not including your coursework?
   ( ) less than 1 hour per week
   ( ) 1-2 hours per week
   ( ) 3-5 hours per week
   ( ) 6 hours or more per week

2. In your free time, which of these materials do you read in French, and how often?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Once a month</th>
<th>Few times/month</th>
<th>Few times/week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-fiction</td>
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<td>Comics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online</td>
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</table>

3. In your free time, how often do you participate in these activities in French?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Once a month</th>
<th>Few times/month</th>
<th>Few times/week</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watch YouTube</td>
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<td>Chat online</td>
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<td>Computer games</td>
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<td>Use Facebook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet searching</td>
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</table>
4. When did you begin learning French? ______________________________

5. How did you learn French? ________________________________

**About your language learning background:**

6. In what country were you born? ______________________________

7. If you were not born in Canada, when did you come to Canada? ___________

8. What languages do you speak most of the time at home?

   a. You: ( ) only English ( ) only French
      ( ) only other language—which?
      ( ) both English and other language(s)—which?______________________________

   b. Your partner: ( ) This does not apply to me
      ( ) only English ( ) only French
      ( ) only other language—which?
      ( ) both English and other language(s)—which?______________________________

   c. Your children: ( ) This does not apply to me
      ( ) only English ( ) only French
      ( ) only other language—which?
      ( ) both English and other language(s)—which?______________________________

9. Do you speak, read and/or write language(s) other than English?

   I read…____________________________________________________________

   I speak…____________________________________________________________

   I write…____________________________________________________________

   I understand…________________________________________________________

**About you:**

10. What program(s) do you teach in? ________________________________

11. For how long? ________________________________

12. Do you identify as ( ) male or ( ) female?

This survey is part of a larger study on feedback for French language learning in Higher Education. If you would like to participate in this study or you would like more
information about this study, please contact the researcher june.starkey@utoronto.ca 416-XXX-XXXX OR leave your name and contact information below.

I would like to participate in this study!  

I would like more information about becoming a participant in this study!  

Name: ___________________
Phone:  ___________________
Email:  ___________________

I would like to be contacted by phone ☐ or email ☐

Thank you very much for participating in this survey about feedback practices!

Now that you’ve completed the online survey, you are invited to enter a draw for a $25 Starbucks gift card! Please leave your contact information below so you can be contacted if you are the winner!

Name: ___________________
Phone:  ___________________
Email:  ___________________

I would like to be contacted by phone ☐ or email ☐
Ce questionnaire en ligne vous fournit une occasion de partager vos expériences (en tant que professeur(e) de français) à propos de la rétroaction que vous avez rendu aux étudiant(e)s dans votre/vos cours de français, à l’heure actuelle. Il y a 20 questions au total, et il y a une occasion de partager vos commentaires (si vous voulez élaborer) à la fin.

**Partie 1 : Les 7 premières questions concernent la raison/le but de la rétroaction que vous offrez aux étudiant(e)s dans votre/vos cours de français.**

*Pour chaque question numérotée ci-dessous, veuillez sélectionner la réponse qui ressemble de plus près à vos expériences dans le/les cours de français que vous enseignez cette année.*

1. J’offre de la rétroaction à mes étudiant(e)s concernant leurs compétences linguistiques—comment ils parlent, lisent et écrivent en français et/ou leurs habiletés pour comprendre le français.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. J’offre de la rétroaction à mes étudiant(e)s concernant des moyens d’améliorer leurs travaux en français dans le cours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. J’informe mes étudiant(e)s à propos de leurs progrès dans le cours.

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<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
4. Je demande à mes étudiant(e)s de me donner une rétroaction/ des renseignements à propos de leurs besoins.

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<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. Je montre à mes étudiant(e)s comment j’évalue leurs travaux afin qu’ils comprennent d’avantage leur progrès et leur rendement dans le cours.

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<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
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</thead>
</table>

6. J’encourage le dialogue avec mes étudiant(e)s à propos de leurs travaux dans le cours.

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<th>1 Jamais</th>
<th>2 Rarement</th>
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<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
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</thead>
</table>

7. J’offre une rétroaction pour que les étudiant(e)s puissent saisir leur performance dans le cours vis à vis des autres étudiant(e)s.

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<th>3 Parfois</th>
<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Partie 2 : Les 5 prochaines questions portent sur les objectifs spécifiques de la rétroaction que vous avez rendue aux étudiant(e)s dans votre/vos cours de français.

Pour chaque question numérotée ci-dessous, veuillez sélectionner la réponse qui ressemble de plus près à vos expériences dans le/les cours de français que vous enseignez cette année.
8. Je garde un compte-rendu écrit ou informatisé concernant la rétroaction que j’ai offerte à mes étudiant(e)s parce que cela m’aide avec la planification et/ou l’évaluation dans le cours.

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<th></th>
<th>1 Jamais</th>
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<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
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</table>

9. Je garde un compte-rendu, écrit ou informatisé à savoir si mes étudiants se servent de ma rétroaction dans leurs futurs travaux, pour m’aider avec l’évaluation de leurs travaux du cours.

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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. Je m’attends à ce que mes étudiant(e)s se servent de la rétroaction que je leur ai offerte/rendue (c.à.d. leurs notes à l’avenir sont affectées par la rétroaction que j’ai déjà offerte).

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<th>1 Jamais</th>
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<th>4 Souvent</th>
<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
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</table>

11. Je passe du temps à offrir des commentaires descriptifs à mes étudiants.

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<th>3 Parfois</th>
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<th>5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</th>
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</table>

12. Je fais un suivi quand un(e) étudiant(e) ne réagit pas à propos de ma rétroaction, ou quand j’offre des occasions ou opportunités de discuter de son travail et qu’il/elle ne vient pas me voir.

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<th>4 Souvent</th>
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Partie 3 : Les 8 dernières questions portent sur les différentes sortes de rétroaction que vous avez rendues à vos étudiant(e)s, jusqu’à date, dans le(s) cours de français.

Pour chaque item numéroté ci-dessous, veuillez sélectionner la réponse qui ressemble de plus près à vos expériences dans le/les cours de français que vous enseignez cette année.

13. J’enregistre mes commentaires (par audio ou vidéo) à propos des travaux du cours et je les affiche/envoie à mes étudiant(e)s.

1 Jamais
2 Rarement
3 Parfois
4 Souvent
5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps

14. Je planifie et j’invite (je demande à mes étudiant(e)s de participer aux conférences de professeur/étudiant (p.ex., pendant mes heures de bureau) au moins une fois pendant le cours.

1 Jamais
2 Rarement
3 Parfois
4 Souvent
5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps

15. J’envoie des courriels (ou d’autres communications électroniques p.ex., sur Blackboard, Pepper, etc.) à mes étudiant(e)s pour partager ma rétroaction.

1 Jamais
2 Rarement
3 Parfois
4 Souvent
5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps

16. Je réponds aux courriels électroniques de mes étudiant(e)s avec plus de rétroaction ou de renseignement à propos de leurs travaux, s’ils me le demandent.

1 Jamais
2 Rarement
3 Parfois
4 Souvent
5 Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps

17. Je partage une rétroaction globale avec toute la classe, après avoir évalué un travail quelconque.

1 Jamais
18. J’offre une rétroaction descriptive à mes étudiant(e)s (des commentaires écrits ou oraux) sans donner de notes traditionnelles (des chiffres ou/et des lettres).

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19. J’offre des chiffres ou/et des lettres à mes étudiant(e)s sans donner de rétroaction descriptive (des commentaires écrits ou oraux).

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20. J’offre une rétroaction descriptive (des commentaires écrits ou oraux) ET des notes traditionnelles (des chiffres ou/et des lettres) à mes étudiant(e)s.

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<td>Tout le temps/ presque tout le temps</td>
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Ce questionnaire vous a posé des questions à propos des buts, des objectifs spécifiques et des sortes de rétroaction que vous avez déjà rendus aux étudiant(e)s dans votre/vos cours de français cette année. Si vous avez des commentaires à partager concernant d’autres aspects de la rétroaction que vous avez déjà rendue à vos étudiants, vous êtes cordialement invité(e) à les laisser ci-dessous.
Maintenant, à propos de votre apprentissage du français :

1. Combien d’heures par semaine passez-vous à lire ou à écrire en français?
   (   ) Moins d’une heure par semaine
   (   ) 1 à 2 heures par semaine
   (   ) 3 à 5 heures par semaine
   (   ) 6 heures ou plus par semaine

2. Dans vos temps libres, lesquels de ces textes/ressources et matériaux lisez-vous, et à quelle fréquence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activité</th>
<th>Presque jamais</th>
<th>Une fois par mois</th>
<th>Quelquefois par mois</th>
<th>Quelquefois par semaine</th>
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<td>Des livres de fiction</td>
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<td>Des livres de non-fiction</td>
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<td>Des bandes dessinées</td>
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<td>En ligne</td>
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</table>

3. Dans vos temps libres, participez-vous aux activités suivantes en français?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activité</th>
<th>Presque jamais</th>
<th>Une fois par mois</th>
<th>Quelquefois par mois</th>
<th>Quelquefois par semaine</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Écrire des textos par téléphone portable</td>
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<td>Regarder YouTube</td>
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<tr>
<td>Écrire des textos en ligne (c.à.d. « chat »)</td>
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<td>Des jeux informatisés</td>
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<td>Facebook en français</td>
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<td>Faire des recherches en ligne</td>
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</table>

4. Quand avez-vous commencé à apprendre le français? _________________________

5. Comment avez-vous appris votre français? _______________________________

Maintenant, à propos de votre expérience avec d’autres langues, en plus du français :

6. Dans quel pays êtes-vous né(e)? ____________________________

7. Si vous n’êtes pas né(e) au Canada, quand êtes-vous venu(e) au Canada? __________

8. Quelle(s) langue(s) parlez-vous la plupart du temps chez vous aujourd’hui (de nos jours)?
a. Vous:  
( ) Seulement l’anglais  ( ) Seulement le français  
( ) Seulement une autre langue –laquelle ? ____________________________  
( ) L’anglais et aussi une ou d’autre(s) langue(s) –  
laquelle/lesquelles ? ____________________________  

b. Votre conjoint(e) : ( ) Cela ne s’applique pas dans mon cas  
( ) Seulement l’anglais  ( ) Seulement le français  
( ) Seulement une autre langue –laquelle ? ____________________________  
( ) L’anglais et aussi une ou d’autre(s) langue(s) –  
laquelle/lesquelles ? ____________________________  

c. Vos enfants : ( ) Cela ne s’applique pas dans mon cas  
( ) Seulement l’anglais  ( ) Seulement le français  
( ) Seulement une autre langue –laquelle ? ____________________________  
( ) L’anglais et aussi une ou d’autre(s) langue(s) –  
laquelle/lesquelles ? ____________________________  

9. Connaissez-vous d’autre(s) langue(s) à part de l’anglais?  

Je lis… ____________________________________________________________  

Je parle… ____________________________________________________________  

J’écris… ____________________________________________________________  

Je comprends… ____________________________________________________________  

Maintenant, à propos de vous :  

10. Dans quel programme enseignez-vous? ____________________________  

11. Depuis combien de temps? ____________________________  

12. Êtes-vous de sexe masculin ( ) féminin ( )?  

Ce sondage fait partie d’une plus grande étude à propos de la rétroaction et de  
l’apprentissage du français aux programmes du 1er cycle pour les gens qui s’intéressent à  
enseigner en français à l’avenir. Si vous voulez participer à cette étude, ou si vous  
souhaitez recevoir plus de renseignements à propos de cette étude, veuillez contactez la  
chercheuse qui mène l’étude : june.starkey@utoronto.ca 416-XXX-XXXX, ou bien laissez  
vos coordonnées ci-dessous.  

Je voudrais participer à cette étude! ☐
Je souhaite recevoir plus de renseignements à propos de cette étude! □

Nom : ___________________
Téléphone : ___________________
Adresse électronique : ___________________

Je préfère que vous me contactiez par téléphone □ ou par courriel □

Merci beaucoup d’avoir participé à ce questionnaire à propos des pratiques de rétroaction!

Maintenant que vous ayez complété ce questionnaire en ligne, vous êtes cordialement invité(e) à participer au tirage d’une carte cadeau de 25$ de Starbucks! S’il vous plaît, laissez vos coordonnées ci-dessous afin que je puisse vous contacter si vous êtes le/la gagnant(e)!

Nom : ___________________
Téléphone : ___________________
Adresse électronique : ___________________

Je préfère que vous me contactiez par téléphone □ ou par courriel □
Appendix J. Data Collection Guide for Classroom Observation Visits

Data Collection Guide for Classroom Observation Visits

OUTLINE:

1. Pre-Observation Activities
   a. Site
   b. Course
   c. Instructor/class

2. Planning classroom observation visits
   a. Communicate with French Instructor
   b. Set up visit schedule
   c. Collect information about the tasks/activities
   d. Interview the French Instructor (Interview protocol—Appendix O)

3. Data Storage

1. **Pre-Observation Activities: Collect background information**

   Prior to visiting each classroom, gather information about the site, course, program and classroom demographic. This information includes (but not necessarily limited to):

   a. **Site**
      - Campus name: ________________________________
      - Qualitative information about the campus (e.g., socioeconomic, diversity, etc.):

        __________________________________________________
        __________________________________________________

      - Qualitative information about the program (e.g., B.Ed. (consecutive or concurrent MT, etc.)

        __________________________________________________

   b. **Course**
      - Course name: ________________________________
      - Course program: ________________________________
      - Course population: ________________________________

      Other site information (e.g., Percentage CTEP students, MT students, French language supports available to students, etc.)


c. Instructor/Class

- Name: ____________________________________________
- Years of teaching experience: ____________________________
- Years of teaching experience with FSL: _________________________
- Class being observed (course, subject, program): _________________
- Number of students in the class: _____________________________
- Number of francophone students in the class: _________________
- TAs or TEPAs in the class (specify): _________________________
- Use of technology in the classroom: _________________________
- Evidence of the use of English (or other languages) in the classroom ___Yes___No

2. Planning classroom observation visits

a. Communicate with the instructor(s) to confirm details of interview and visits. In the event that classes are longer than one hour, offer to attend the whole class so as not to create a disruption in any way.

b. Set up 3 times to visit on days and times when the instructor plans to facilitate a task/activity that is representative of typical instance(s) when s/he gives feedback to students.

   • Set up time to meet instructor for interview prior to students arriving (can occur day of the first observation or on another day prior to the first observation) to discuss research objectives (including observation visits and student interviews, instructor interview) and confirm plans (e.g., determine the task/activity information)

c. Complete the task/activity background information before the task/activity begins, with the help of the instructor.

Task/activity background information

- Task/activity planned to observe: _________________________________________
- Placement of activity/task within the unit of study: ____________________________
- Purpose and intended outcomes (specify language outcomes if observed):
  ___________________________________________________
  ___________________________________________________
- Will feedback be delivered during the course of this activity? How and for what purpose?
318

Teaching aids/resources/materials used:

Will students be assessed for this lesson? How?

Student grouping:

Duration: ______________________

3. DATA STORAGE

Interviews (10 Teacher Candidates X 3 and 5 French Instructors X 1) audio recorded data files will be transferred from digital voice recorder to June’s laptop into a secure folder with format: Interview_Pseudonym_yy.mm.dd, encrypted with data encryption software; password protected with a password known only to me.

Classroom observations (5 French Instructors X 3) will be uploaded in the form of table and field notes for each set of classroom visits in a separate folder with format: Observation_#_Pseudonym_yy.mm.dd, encrypted with data encryption software; password protected with a password known only to me.

Course documents (5 French Instructors, 10 Teacher Candidates) will be uploaded into a separate folder with the following format: Coursedocx_Pseudonym_yy.mm.dd, encrypted with data encryption software; password protected with a password known only to me.

Focus groups (X 2 Teacher Candidates and French Instructors) audio recorded data files will be transferred from digital voice recorder to June’s laptop into a secure folder with format: TCFG_yy.mm.dd, or FIFG_yy.mm.dd, encrypted with data encryption software; password protected with a password known only to me.
Observation Protocol for Classroom Visits

Instructor:

Course:

Location:

Date:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I see/ Ce que je vois</th>
<th>What I hear/ Ce que j’entends</th>
<th>What I think/ Ce que je pense</th>
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Additional notes/ notes additionnelles:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Appendix L. First Interview protocol for Student Participants (en français)

1. Quelles sortes de tâches, devoirs et activités du cours trouvez-vous utiles afin de développer vos compétences linguistiques ?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. Que veut dire la terme « rétroaction descriptive, » d’après vous ? Quelle sorte de rétroaction de votre professeur(e) de français trouvez-vous la plus utile ?
   Pourquoi ?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. Pourriez-vous citer un exemple de comment vous vous êtes servi(e) d’une rétroaction ou d’un commentaire de votre professeur(e) pour améliorer votre travail ?

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4. Avez-vous un échantillon de votre propre travail à partager provenant d’un de vos cours de français ce trimestre ? Pourrez-vous discuter la rétroaction qu’on vous a donnée ?

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5. Avez-vous eu d’autres questions à propos de la tâche et la rétroaction que vous avez reçue après que le professeur vous a rendu votre travail ? (Si oui, pourrez-vous en discuter ? Si oui, qu’avez-vous fait?)

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6. Dans le cours, est-ce que votre professeur fournit d’autres sortes ou formes de rétroaction, à part des notes et/ou des commentaires écrits ? (Par exemple > la rétroaction de vos collègues (paires), la rétroaction informelle, la rétroaction en petit groupe)

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Appendix L. First Interview protocol for Student Participants (in English)

1. What kinds of course tasks, projects and activities do you find most useful to develop your French proficiency?

2. What does the term “descriptive feedback” mean, to you? What type of feedback from your French Instructor do you find to be most helpful to you?

3. Can you give an example of how you have used your instructor’s feedback to improve your work?

4. Can you share a work sample from one of your current course(s) in French and talk about the feedback you received on it?

5. Did you have any additional questions about the assignment and the feedback you were given after the assignment was returned to you? (Prompts > If yes, what were they? If yes, what did you do?)

6. In the course does your instructor offer opportunities for other kinds of feedback? (Prompts > for example, feedback from peers, informal feedback, small group feedback)
Appendix M. Second Interview protocol for Student Participants (en français)

1. Quelles tâches, devoirs et activités dans le cours trouvez-vous les plus utiles au développement de vos compétences linguistiques en français pour l’enseignement?

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2. Depuis la dernière fois que nous nous sommes rencontrés, y aura-t-il un échantillon de votre propre travail d’un de vos cours de français actuels que vous pourrez partager avec moi? Pouvez-vous décrire la tâche? Pouvez-vous discuter la rétroaction qu’on vous a donnée?

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3. Avez-vous eu d’autres questions à propos de cette tâche et/ou la rétroaction que vous avez reçue après que le professeur a rendu votre travail? Si oui, pouvez-vous les partager avec moi? Si oui, qu’avez-vous fait? Quel était le résultat de vos questions et vos discussions avec le professeur?

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4. Pouvez-vous expliquer comment vous vous servirez de la rétroaction qu’on vous a donnée dans ce travail pour améliorer votre travail à l’avenir?

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5. Depuis la dernière fois que nous nous sommes rencontrés, est-ce que votre professeur a fourni d’autres sortes ou d’autres formes de rétroaction, à part des notes et/ou des commentaires écrits? *Par exemple >la rétroaction de vos collègues (paires), la rétroaction informelle, la rétroaction en petit groupe* Si oui, pourrez-vous donner des détails spécifiques?

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Appendix M. Second Interview protocol for Student Participants (in English)

1. What kinds of course tasks, projects and activities have you found most useful in the course so far, to develop your French proficiency for teaching?

2. Since we last met is there a work sample from one of your current course(s) in French you’d like to share? Can you briefly describe the assignment task? Can you talk about the feedback you received on it?

3. Did you have any additional questions about this assignment and/or the feedback you were given after the assignment was returned to you? If yes, what were they? If yes, what did you do? What was the result of your questions and/or discussions with the professor?

4. Can you give an example of how you might use your instructor’s feedback in this instance to improve your future work?

5. Since we last met, has your instructor used feedback from other sources in the course? (For example: feedback from peers, group feedback, informal feedback) If yes, can you elaborate on that?
Appendix N. Third Interview protocol for Student Participants (en français)

1. Depuis la dernière fois que nous nous sommes rencontrés, quelles tâches, devoirs et activités du cours trouvez-vous les plus utiles au développement de vos compétences linguistiques pour l’enseignement ?

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2. Depuis la dernière fois que nous nous sommes rencontrés, y aura-t-il un échantillon de votre propre travail d’un de vos cours de français que vous pourrez partager parce que la tâche/le travail représente justement votre apprentissage du français à l’heure actuelle ? Pourrez-vous brièvement décrire la tâche ? Pourrez-vous discuter la rétroaction qu’on vous a donnée ?

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3. Avez-vous eu d’autres questions à propos de cette tâche et la rétroaction que vous avez reçue après que le/la professeur a rendu votre travail ? Si oui, pourrez-vous les partager avec moi ? Si oui, qu’est-ce que vous avez fait ? Quel était le résultat de vos questions et vos discussions avec le/la professeur(e) ?

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4. Pourrez-vous expliquer comment vous vous servirez de la rétroaction qu’on vous a donnée dans ce travail particulier pour améliorer votre travail à l’avenir ?

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5. Depuis la dernière fois que nous nous sommes rencontrés, est-ce que votre professeur(e) a fourni d’autres sortes ou d’autres formes de rétroaction, à part des notes et/ou des commentaires écrits ? *(Par exemple > de la rétroaction de vos collègues (paires), de la rétroaction informelle, de la rétroaction en petit groupe)*  
Si oui, pourrez-vous en fournir quelques détails ?
Appendix N. Third Interview protocol for Student Participants (in English)

1. Since we last met what kinds of course tasks, projects and activities have you found most useful in your FSL course(s), to develop your French proficiency for teaching?

2. Since we last met is there a work sample or specific example from one of your current course(s) in French that you can share because you feel that the task is representative of your current language learning? Can you briefly describe the assignment task? Can you talk about the feedback you received on it, if any?

3. Did you have any additional questions about this assignment and the feedback you were given after the assignment was returned to you? If yes, what were they? If yes, what did you do? What was the result of your questions and/or discussions with the professor?

4. Can you give an example of how you might use your instructor’s feedback in this instance to improve your future work?

5. Last time you talked about how your instructor’s feedback was mostly concerned with x, y and z. (Refer to my notes to offer specific examples from the participant’s last interview.) Since we last met, has your instructor offered other kinds of feedback in the course? (Feedback from peers, informal feedback) If yes > can you elaborate on that?
Appendix O. Interview Protocol for FSL Instructors (en français)

1. Quelles sortes de tâches, devoirs et activités trouvez-vous utiles pour mieux saisir le développement des compétences linguistiques de chaque étudiant(e) dans votre classe ?

________________________________________________________________________
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2. Comment décidez-vous quelle sorte de rétroaction vous allez rendre à vos étudiant(e)s ?

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3. Que veut dire le terme « rétroaction descriptive, » d’après vous ? Quelle sorte de rétroaction trouvez-vous la plus utile pour les étudiant(e)s ? Pourquoi est-ce cette sorte de rétroaction les aide tellement, croyez-vous ?

________________________________________________________________________
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4. Pourrez-vous citer un exemple de comment un(e) étudiant(e) s’est déjà servi(e) d’une rétroaction que vous avez donnée dans un travail quelconque pour améliorer son travail ?

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5. Pourrez-vous décrire un des travaux de votre cours et pourrez-vous partager comment vous évaluez ce travail ? (par ex., donnez-vous des critères spécifiques qui expliquent et précisent ce que vous attendez d’eux ?)

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6. Trouvez-vous que les étudiant(e)s ont parfois des questions supplémentaires à propos des tâches et/ou à propos de la rétroaction que vous avez donnée après que vous ayez rendu leur travail ? Si oui, quel est le genre de questions ? Qu’en pensez-vous ce cela ?

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7. Vous avez dit que le genre de rétroaction que vous rendiez le plus souvent aux étudiant(e)s s’adresse à x, y, z (fais référence à mes notes). Servez-vous d’autres formes de rétroaction dans le cours ? Suivi : Employez-vous de la rétroaction des collègues/des pairs ou de la rétroaction en petit groupe, ou de la rétroaction informelle ? Si oui > pourrez-vous élaborer sur ces autres formes/genres de rétroaction ?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
1. What kinds of course tasks, projects and activities do you find most useful to understand the French proficiency development of each student in your class?

2. How do you decide what kind of feedback you offer your students?

3. What does the term “descriptive feedback” mean, to you? What type of feedback do you find to be most helpful to students? Why do you think that this particular type of feedback helps students so much?

4. Can you give an example of how you have seen a student use your feedback to improve their work?

5. Can you describe one of the your course assignments and share how you evaluate students’ work? (Prompt > do you offer specific criteria that explain to students what you are looking for?)

6. Do you find that students sometimes have additional questions about the assignment and the feedback you’ve given after you’ve returned an assignment? If they do, what kinds of questions do students ask? What do you think about that?

7. You previously shared that the type of feedback you most often use is concerned with x, y and z. (Refer to my notes.) Do you use other kinds of feedback in the course? Probe > Do you use feedback from peers, informal feedback? If yes >can you elaborate on that?
### Appendix P. Document Analysis Protocol

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Appendix Q. One-time end-of-study focus group protocol for Student Participants

Focus Group Protocol for Student Participants

Introduction: Tout au long de votre participation dans cette recherche, vous avez été encouragé(e) à plusieurs reprises de réfléchir sur la rétroaction que vous avez reçue en tant que futur(e) enseignant(e).

1. Qu’est-ce que vous avez appris à propos de la rétroaction pour l’apprentissage du français que vous voudrez employer dans votre propre enseignement, à l’avenir ?

2. Est-ce que vous avez vu/appris des pratiques spécifiques/des techniques de rétroaction que vous voudrez utiliser à l’avenir lorsque vous deviendrez enseignant(e) ? Pourquoi ?

3. Quel est la pratique de rétroaction la plus innovatrice/utile que vous avez vue dans votre/vos cours ?

4. Est-ce que vous avez vu/appris des pratiques spécifiques/des techniques de rétroaction que vous ne voudrez point utiliser à l’avenir lorsque vous deviendrez enseignant(e) ? Pourquoi pas ?

5. Est-ce que vous avez appris des nouvelles idées/des nouveaux concepts vis à vis la rétroaction pour l’apprentissage des langues, que vous voudrez partager?

6. Êtes-vous au courant de si vous avez eu de fausses compréhensions vis à vis la rétroaction avant de participer à cette recherche ? Pourrez-vous en élaborer ?

7. Avez-vous des questions à propos de la rétroaction que vous avez reçue ce trimestre ?
Introduction: Throughout this study you have had opportunities to reflect on the feedback practices you’ve experienced as a Teacher Candidate.

1. What have you learned about feedback that you will want to apply in your own teaching, in the future?

2. Have you seen some feedback practices that you will likely want to replicate when you become a teacher? Why?

3. What is the most innovative kind of feedback practice you’ve experienced in your course?

4. Have you seen some feedback practices that you will likely not want to replicate when you become a teacher? Why not?

5. Do you have any new understandings you’d like to share about the usefulness of feedback for language learning?

6. Are you aware of any misconceptions you had about feedback before participating in the study? Can you elaborate on that?

7. Do you have any questions about the feedback you’ve experienced this term?
Appendix R. One-time end-of-study focus group protocol for FSL Instructor Participants

Focus Group Protocol for FSL Instructor Participants

Introduction: Tout au long de votre participation dans cette recherche, vous avez été encouragé(e) de réfléchir sur la rétroaction que vous avez rendue à vos étudiant(e)s en tant que professeur(e) de français.

1. Est-ce que vous avez eu de « nouvelles compréhensions » vis à vis la rétroaction pour l’apprentissage des langues ? Pourrez-vous en partager ?

2. Est-ce que ces « nouvelles compréhensions » vis à vis la rétroaction pour l’apprentissage du français trouveront une place dans des pratiques spécifiques/des techniques de rétroaction que vous emploierez à l’avenir ? Pourquoi ?

3. Y a-t-il des pratiques spécifiques/des techniques de rétroaction que vous voudrez continuer à employer à l’avenir ? Lesquelles sont-elles et pourquoi voudrez-vous continuer à les employer dans votre enseignement ?

4. Par contre, y a-t-il d’autres pratiques spécifiques/techniques de rétroaction que vous ne voudrez plus employer à l’avenir ? Lesquelles sont-elles et pourquoi voudrez-vous cesser de les employer dans votre enseignement ?

5. Quelle est, d’après vous, la pratique de rétroaction la plus innovatrice/utile que vous employez dans votre enseignement ?

6. Êtes-vous au courant de si vous avez eu de fausses compréhensions vis à vis la rétroaction avant de participer à cette recherche ? Pourrez-vous en élaborer ?

7. Y a-t-il des questions qui se sont produites vis à vis l’enseignement et la rétroaction, ou à propos de comment les étudiant(e)s se servent de la rétroaction ? Pourrez-vous en partager ?
Appendix R. One-time end-of-study focus group protocol for FSL Instructor Participants
(in English)

Introduction: Throughout this study you have had opportunities to reflect on the feedback practices you’ve made use of as an FSL Instructor.

1. Do you have any new understandings you’d like to share about the usefulness of feedback for language learning? Can you elaborate on that?

2. Is there anything you have learned about feedback that you will want to apply in your own teaching in the future?

3. Are there some feedback practices you will want to continue to use? What are they and why will you want to continue to use them?

4. Are there some feedback practices you will not continue to use? What are they and why will you want to stop using them?

5. What is the most innovative feedback practice you feel you use in your teaching?

6. Are you aware of any misconceptions you had about feedback before participating in the study? Can you elaborate on that?

7. Do you have questions about the feedback process you’ve experienced in your teaching, or about the ways you’ve seen students use the feedback you’ve given? Can you explain more about that?
Log Sheet for Remedial Work in French Proficiency Development for:

Name ___________________
Unit ___________________

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<th>Focus of the workshop/session</th>
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