Introduction

Interculturality is a well known and useful concept for language teachers, since it is very difficult to separate language from culture (Hinkel, 1999; Kramsch, 1993, 2002). In fact, one of the goals of French immersion (FI) is that students "will gain insight into the common attitudes and values of French-speaking communities" (Greater Victoria School District 61, No date), and this is often accomplished within the Social Studies curriculum. However, for students to acquire not only knowledge about, but cultural sensitivity to, French speaking Canadians, it is essential that teachers use an appropriate methodology that fosters learning in an authentic context or in "as if" activities (Andersen, 2004). Cognitive psychologists refer to this notion as *situated learning* (e.g., Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991), which makes a bridge between what is learned in the classroom and what is needed in the real world.

From this perspective, drama, which often involves the entire class in improvised roles within an imagined context, seems to be an effective teaching method for the acquisition of appropriate knowledge and attitudes towards other cultures. Yet, no studies have been conducted to date on the impact of drama activities on cultural sensitivity, motivation and literacy skills in FI. Therefore, the purpose of this pilot study was to explore this untapped area of research, along with related questions, based on

differences observed between a Drama (experimental) group and a Library (control) group within an elementary FI context.

Theoretical Background

With culture at the heart of language learning, it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate language from culture for second language teachers. Furthermore, Kramsch (1995) explains, that for political reasons, culture has an important role to play in language teaching. She says, "Educators fear that the mere acquisition of linguistic systems is no guarantee of international peace and understanding" (p.1). Therefore, the goals of language teaching are not only communicative skills, but also "humanistically oriented cultural content." Intercultural education and cultural sensitivity are important in Canada in order for Francophone and Anglophone people to live together peacefully and appreciate their differences and similarities. In fact, all provincial curriculum guidelines for French as a second language in Canada include cultural content and have projected learning outcomes for the achievement of cultural awareness and understanding. For example, the British Columbia curriculum for FI (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1997) is comprised of three components: Language and Communication, Language and Culture, and Language and Self Development in Society. The same is true for Core French, especially since Stern (1982), during an address at the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers Conference, made a plea for interprovincial cooperation

in renewing the French core curriculum. He advocated the widening of its scope to become a viable alternative to the popular immersion programs. He also introduced a multidimensional language curriculum consisting of four syllabi (language, culture, communicative activities, and general language education) in which culture was a new feature of language teaching in Core French. The Stern (1982) multidimensional curriculum was used successfully in the National Core French Study; details of the cultural syllabus component are clearly articulated in LeBlanc, Courtel & Trescases (1990).

Besides developing their intercultural sensitivity, FI students must also acquire a minimum threshold level of French literacy in order to learn social studies, sciences, or mathematics in French. Therefore, strategies that motivate students to learn French are essential to their success, as some studies have associated drop-out rates from FI with lower literacy skills (Hogan & Harris, 2005; M. Stern, 1991). Thus, FI teachers have to use the best approaches to teach language, literacy and culture in an integrated way. However, the literature acknowledges only a superficial understanding of the relationship between second language (L2), culture, and literacy (Atkinson, 2003; Fantini, 1991; Hinkel, 1999; Lambert, 1964).

Drama may be an approach that could enhance literacy, motivation, and help the development of intercultural sensitivity in second language classes and, more specifically, in FI programs. In fact, drama fosters an environment where L2 learners can experientially explore cultural aspects of

the target language that are essential for them to grasp that second language (Wagner, 1998). Drama has long been part of the English language arts program in Canada, while less so in other subjects (White, 1986). From a psychological, moral, and socio-emotional perspective, drama has several advantages (Basourakos, 1998; Beale, 2001; Belliveau, 2003b; Bouchard, 2002; Edmiston, 2000; S. Stern, 1993; Winston, 1998). Stern (1993) indicates that drama in language teaching reduces inhibition, increases spontaneity, and enhances motivation, self-esteem and empathy. In addition, drama has also been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement. For example, in a compendium of 19 studies gathered by Catterall (2002) for their rigorous comparison group designs, drama was seen as a viable and beneficial approach to learning for students of various ages and within diverse contexts. These benefits include the following:

- development of social skills
- improvement of expressive language skills with remedial readers
- increased imaginative play
- development of literacy
- development of mental images for stories, which in turn helps with comprehension skills, improvement of student engagement in learning, as well as higher-order thinking skills.

Different studies within Catteral's compendium also point to how the specific use of literacy activities and artifacts within dramatic play can reinforce

reading and writing development. In addition to the studies that reflect drama's impact on achievement (Catteral, 2002), researchers from various disciplines have also highlighted the positive effects on student learning when drama is used as a pedagogical approach or as an intervention strategy (Conrad, 1998; Eisner, 1998; Kardash & Wright, 1987; Rose, Parks, Androes, & McMahon, 2000; Wagner, 1998).

In regard to drama and second language learning, recent studies suggest how drama has been successfully used in English As a Second Language learning environments (Dodson, 2002; Elgar, 2002; Liu, 2000; Miccoli, 2003; Song, 2000). These research studies have shown how and why drama within an ESL context can increase written and communicative skills, motivation to learn, and socio-cultural understanding of the target language. The studies suggest that drama creates a positive learning environment, which promotes peer collaboration and encourages students to participate linguistically, emotionally and intellectually.

However, drama has received little attention in FI, either in French language arts or other subjects (Crinson & Westgate, 1986; Shacker, Juliebo, & Parker, 1993). In one of the few studies taking place in an FI program Shacker et al. (1993) found a relationship between the type of session (drama or not) and the frequency of four language functions: informative, directive, expressive, and imaginative. A study conducted in the context of Spanish immersion in the United States found that "drama

changes the nature of teacher talk and student discourse by enhancing the already meaningful context of immersion through purposeful use of language" (Wilburn, 1992, p. 72). Another finding by Wilburn (1992) that is consistent with our hypothesis, suggests that drama as an approach to learning motivates students as it engages them at the emotional level. Wilburn states that "drama has the potential of activating the affective side of the curriculum as well as content areas from across the curriculum by involving students emotionally and cognitively in the learning process" (p. 72). While reflecting on his over 30 years of teaching French as a second language, Ralph (1997) indicates that research has consistently shown that drama produces several benefits in both first- and second-language (L2) programs and concludes his article by saying: "I assert that these drama activities that I was able to incorporate into my teaching repertoire, primarily in FSL programs, proved to be among the most effective instructional approaches I have had the opportunity to use." (p. 288).

From a theoretical point of view, drama as an approach is characteristic of constructivist learning, which is recognized as crucial to teaching and learning. Constructivist theorists suggest that children are not empty vessels, but rather astute "thinkers and language-users" (Donaldson, 1978, p121) who are able "to reason, to make sense, both on [their] own and through discourse with others" (Bruner, 1996, p. 57). As such, children are culturally cultivated (Bruner, 1990; Freire, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978) before

their introduction to institutionalized education. To explain his definition of children as cultural beings, Bruner (1990) confirms that symbol systems of language and art and dance and drama used by individuals to construct meaning "are already in place, already 'there', deeply entrenched in culture and language" (p. 11). Vygotsky and Bruner help us see drama in the classroom as a means of deepening and expanding learners' understanding. The underlying idea of their theories is that knowledge is not passively transferred to learners, but rather constructed by each learner. Students experience information, knowledge and the world, and hypothesize and testify to interpret and make meanings. Consequently, experience and reflection form their thinking. Learners are viewed as "active goal-oriented hypothesis-generating symbol manipulators" (Wagner, 1998, p 17). Thus, we propose in this paper that the practice of using drama to facilitate learning in different subject areas, and in particular L2 environments, incorporates social constructivist theory. For instance, in drama, children usually gather in a circle for whole group activities or work in small groups interacting with one another. Drama fundamentally revolves on social interaction (Belliveau & Fels, in press; Bowell & Heap, 2001) either inside or outside a fictional context. In addition, drama does not operate on a system of one-way dialogue; instead, it encourages an interactive teacher-student relationship and peer-based learning. In the process of drama, participants engage in "negotiating and renegotiating the elements of dramatic form"

(O'Toole, 1992, p. 2). Each member of a drama, including the teacher, is equally endowed with rights to make decisions and take responsibility for dealing with decisions made, which, as Needlands (1992, p. 4) suggests, is a "shared cultural activity." In this sense, student knowledge is recognized, valued and applied in drama (Heathcote, 1984; Needlands, 1984; O'Neill & Lambert, 1982).

Researchers have also discovered that situated cognition is essential for learning about culture. "Situated learning emphasizes the idea that much of what is learned is specific to the situation in which it is learned" (Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1996, p. 5). Drama in education usually involves the entire class playing roles that students improvise in an imagined context and in these activities the process is the end in itself. As Andersen (2004, p. 281) indicates, "Rather than confine learning to the context of the classroom setting, the pedagogy of drama in education seeks to frame learners within an 'as if' world." Since language cannot be learned in isolation of its socio-cultural context, drama offers a social context in which to use and learn language. Within this context, students can develop intercultural competence, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. In a drama context, students write and speak for imaginative as well as functional purposes, making drama a powerful learning medium (Wagner, 1994). Furthermore, Fleming (2006) claims that drama compels pupils' interest, because of the degree it appears to imitate real life. These benefits

of a drama approach to teaching are very relevant and useful to the FI context, as opposed to other French teaching contexts in Canada, because the main methodology used in FI is also one that is based on social constructivism. This is in part due to FI programs constructing, in a sense, "as if" worlds. Because FI students speak and write in an additional language, they are in a sense negotiating different identities, much in the same way that a student does when he or she is playing in role. We wanted to investigate the FI context rather than Francophone schools outside of Quebec, because these schools are not about learning a new language or a new role, but primarily focused on maintaining the mother tongue. On the other hand, Core French programs do not have the level of intensity of immersion programs; as such students in Core French are not fluent enough for teachers to implement the drama approach we propose. Furthermore, subjects such as Social Studies (the subject we explore in this study) are not taught in French within Core French programs. However, this is not to say that a drama approach to learning would not be beneficial in Core French; it arguably would, but it would be a modified model from the one we present in our unit and study.

Because of the gap in the research literature on the connections among drama, culture and FI, we decided to design a study where an aspect of Canadian culture was taught in one group using drama (Drama Group) and in the other group using a more teacher-centered method (Library

Group). Our central question examined: What is the impact of drama activities in elementary early FI on language learning motivation, on cultural sensitivity, and on second language writing? Based on our literature review, we hypothesised that the Drama Group would be more motivated toward learning French, show a greater cultural sensitivity, and do better in their writing than the Library group.

Method

For this pilot mixed methods study, we chose two teachers who were willing to try this experiment. We used quantitative and qualitative methods: pre- and post-testing, field observations, and teachers' journals.

Participants The participants were from two early FI elementary classes (see Table 1). French immersion in Canada consists of programs and courses designed for students speaking English and sometime another first language. In these programs, French is the language of instruction and, as much as possible, the means of communication of the classroom. Usually, 100% of the content is taught in French until Grade 3, and then 80 or 50% of the content is taught in French and the rest in English until Grade 7. Teachers are generally Anglophones or Francophones who are fluent both in French and in English. The researchers had applied to the university Behavioural Research Ethics board that sent them a certificate of approval. The parents or guardians of the students all signed a consent form after being informed of the research study.

Both groups (Drama and Library) had almost the same number of participants; however, there were more boys in the Drama group than in the Library group. The participants came from two combined classes: the Drama group was a grade 5/6 combined class while the Library group was a grade 6/7 combined class (see Table 1). All sessions throughout the study were conducted in the target language of French. Both teachers were bilingual (French-English), with one of them raised in a bicultural environment (Eastern Canada) and the other from a Francophone milieu (Quebec). The teacher in the Drama group had one more year of professional teaching experience in FI than the Library group teacher. Both teachers had minimal training in drama. However, during the research project the researchers mentored the teachers (particularly the Drama Group teacher) on ways of using drama as an approach to learning. The mentoring took the form of modeling lessons, providing resources, and helping co-plan the drama activities.

Table 1: Description of the participants in the Drama and Library Groups

French Immersion	**Drama Group**	**Library Group**
Number of students	31	29
Gender	15 girls 16 boys	20 girls 9 boys
Level	Grade 5 n=4 Grade 6 n=27	Grade 6 n=12 Grade 7 n=17
Teacher's experience	4 years	3 years

Activity Design and Intervention

The main drama approaches used were process drama techniques (Belliveau & Fels, in press; Bowell & Heap, 2001; O'Neill, 1995; O'Toole, 1992) such as teacher in role, student in role, visualization, storytelling, hot seating, and writing in role. These approaches were selected because they gently introduce the students (and teacher) to drama as a way of knowing in a non-threatening manner, with a focus on the exploring rather than on the performing. The topic of the intervention lesson was the Deportation of the Acadians from Eastern Canada by the British in 1755. The activities were based on a unit plan developed by Belliveau (2003a) that explores the arrival and expulsion of the Acadians between the years 1604-1755 (see Table 2).

In both classes, the teachers had resource information from the unit plan that described some of the recorded events in Acadian history (facts, dates, etc.), which was shared with the students. In the Library Group, the content was delivered lecture-style, whereas in the Drama Group, it was offered in role as the teacher became an Acadian telling her (fictional) story. Lesson One in both classes was used for a writing pre-test based on the novel by Roch Carrier (1984), *The Hockey Sweater* (see description in written compositions measures). Then, most of the background information was given in Lesson Two, with the other lessons focusing more on what the students imagined may have happened, based on their prior knowledge,

imagination and given resources. The idea is that this type of work extends what is offered through written records and allows students to bring the curriculum to life, seeking to discover what may have happened by recreating and playing out the roles of Acadians. Music was used in both groups to provide cultural context and highlight some of the emotions highlighted within the lessons. Plus, images (paintings) of Acadia were provided, specifically for Lesson Four, in an effort to offer visual images of life in Acadia during the 17th and 18th century.

Table 2: Description of the lessons in the Drama and the Library Groups

Lessons	Library Group	Drama Group
1	Read and discuss *The Hockey Sweater* by R. Carrier, then narrative writing based on the story; pre-test for motivation	
2	Background information about Acadian History: ***Lecture based, teacher delivered information***	Background information about Acadian History: ***Storytelling, teacher in role as Acadian***
3	Exploring reasons for individuals and families leaving France to come to the New World in the 17th century: ***Writing in role, imagining being in the situation***	Exploring reasons for individuals and families leaving France to come to the New World in the 17th century: ***Same as Library group, then sharing their situation in role as Acadians***
4	Boat crossing of new immigrants and arrival to the New World: ***Class discussion about the experience, imagining, then drawing***	Boat crossing of new immigrants and arrival to the New World: ***Moving to the experience, then drawing and role playing***
5	Beginning of the deportation in Acadia: ***Exploring and writing about what women may have experienced***	Beginning of the deportation in Acadia: ***Role playing what women may have experienced***

6	The deportation: ***Writing and discussing what men may have experienced***	The deportation: ***Role playing what men may have experienced locked up in the church***
7	The decision: ***Discussing what families may have decided to do***	The decision: ***Creating tableaux of what families may have done***

Data

Both quantitative and qualitative measures were used to respond to the questions posed in this research. The quantitative measures consisted of pre- and post-tests examining motivation (Gardner, 1985), as well as pre- and post- written compositions to investigate student writing (Moore & Caldwell, 1993). For the qualitative data, our research methods included field observations, teachers' daily journals, and interviews.

Quantitative

Gardner test (1985) The following clusters of the motivation test from Gardner (1985) were administered to both groups: attitudes toward French Canadians and French European people; foreign language; learning French; French class anxiety; and desire to learn French. There were also 10 questions about parental encouragement. Motivation was differentiated between integrative (or intrinsic) and instrumental orientation (see Table 3). In addition, a series of 25 scales describing feelings towards the unit on the Acadians, such as meaningful/meaningless, enjoyable/unenjoyable, were administered at the end of the unit as an evaluation. Apart from the

multiple choice questions within Gardner's motivation model, all the other questions were based on a 7-point Likert scale. The pre-test was administered during lesson one and the post-test during class after the final lesson of the unit. Some of the clusters were administered only during the post-test.

Table 3: Description of the clusters from the Gardner test (1985) administered at pre-test and at post-test with the number and types of questions.

#	Concept	Pré-test	Post-test
A	Attitudes toward French Canadians (10 questions)	√	√
B	Interest in foreign languages (10 questions)		√
C	Attitudes toward French European People (10 questions)	√	√
D	Attitudes toward learning French (10 questions)	√	√
E	Integrative orientation (4 questions)		√
F	Instrumental orientation (4 questions)		√
G	French class anxiety (5 questions)	√	√
H	Parental encouragement (10 questions)		√
I	Motivational intensity (10 multiple choice Q)		√
J	Desire to learn French (10 multiple choice Q)	√	√
U	The Acadian Unit (25 scales)		√

Written compositions The written composition (narrative letters) evaluative process was adapted from Moore & Caldwell (1993) with both groups of students participating. In the pre-test, the students read and discussed the novel of *The Hockey Sweater* by Roch Carrier (1984). This story was chosen because of its Canadian cultural content, since the Social

Studies unit plan was about the Acadians, an aspect of the cultural and historical context of Canada. *The Hockey Sweater* is a humorous story that underlines the "two solitudes" element of Canadian society, where two social groups, the English speaking and French speaking populations, live in the same country, but can—literally--barely speak to or tolerate each other. In this story, a boy in Quebec has to endure the terrible shame of being given the sweater of the predominantly English speaking Canadian hockey team, the Toronto Maple Leafs, instead of the same sweater as his idol, Maurice "Rocket" Richard, of the Montreal Canadians. After reading and discussing the story, students were asked to write a narrative letter to a friend as if they were the little boy in the story and retell what had happened when they were too big to wear their Montreal Canadians hockey sweater.

The written compositions were assessed according to criteria adapted from Moore and Caldwell (1993). Two coders, blind to the group to which the compositions belonged, marked the written narratives individually and came to a consensus, through negotiation, after their first assessment. Each criterion could be coded from 1 to 5, with 5 being the full presence or excellence of the criteria. The following seven criteria were used:

1. Overall quality
2. Accuracy of ideas and coherence including logical narrative and realistic details

3. Organization/cohesion (writing makes sense, presence of paragraphs, introductory words to paragraphs)
4. Expression of emotion (narrative in the first person, use of exclamation marks, adjectives describing emotion)
5. Style (letter format, salutation formula, beginning and end of letter, signature)
6. Context/details/precision on the reaction of Acadians
7. Cultural content (French names, reference to Maurice Richard for example, importance of religion, French-English tension and identity)

In the post-test, at the end of the unit on the Acadians, the students were asked to write a letter to a cousin as if they were an Acadian narrating what had happened to their family during the years of the Deportation. The letter was to describe the events that led to the Deportation, as well as what individuals and families did to face this crisis. The letters were then coded, using the same criteria as in the pre-test assessments.

Qualitative data The teachers' journals (8 entries per teacher) and interviews (1.5 hours post project) as well as the researchers' field observations (4 x 1 hour observation taking notes) were analyzed for recurrent themes and patterns.

Results

Gardner's motivation test

Table 4 presents the means by clusters for Gardner's motivation test. The means for each concept were measured using the coding 1 to 7, with 7 being the highest, except for multiple choice questions. Different analyses were conducted depending on whether the cluster was administered at pre- and post-test or only at post-test. If the cluster was administered only at post-test, a *t* test for independent samples was conducted; however, if the cluster was administered at both pre- and post-test an Analysis of Covariance was used with the pre-test as covariate.

Table 4: Gardner's motivation test (Means by clusters)

#	Concept	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Drama	Lib	Drama	Lib
A	Attitudes toward French Canadians (10 questions)	5.67	4.94	5.52	4.83
B	Interest in foreign languages (10 questions)	NA	NA	6.42	5.67
C	Attitudes toward French European people (10 questions)	4.64	4.58	4.77	4.45
D	Attitudes toward learning French (10 questions)	4.09	3.93	3.43	3.38
E	Integrative orientation (4 questions)	NA	NA	5.73	5.15
F	Instrumental orientation (4 questions)	NA	NA	5.21	5.27
G	French class anxiety (5 questions)	2.09	2.61	2.21	2.59
H	Parental encouragement (10 questions)	NA	NA	4.84	4.91
I	Motivational intensity (10 multiple choice Q – coding 1 to 3)	NA	NA	2.16	2.14
J	Desire to learn French (10	NA	NA	2.17	1.94

	multiple choice Q)				
U	The Acadian Unit (25 scales)	NA	NA	5.22	4.28

Appreciation of the unit on Acadian culture Cluster U is an evaluation in 25 questions of the experience of the students for the unit on Acadian culture. It is clear that the Drama Group enjoyed the unit more than the Library Group. There is a significant difference between the two groups; $t_{(56)} = 3.866$ (p=.00). However, it is interesting to note that there were no significant differences between the two groups for French class anxiety (Cluster G) or parental encouragement (Cluster H).

Motivation Several clusters correspond to the concept of motivation. Cluster I (motivational intensity) was greater than 2 for both groups (maximum 3) and there was no significant difference between the two groups. Two concepts measured integrative and instrumental motivation, and they were fairly high for both groups as well (M= 5.73 for the Drama Group and 5.15 for the Library Group for integrative motivation; and M= 5.21 for the Drama Group and 5.27 for the Library Group for instrumental motivation). There was a significant difference between the two groups for integrative motivation, with the drama group having a higher integrative motivation. Desire to learn French was also significantly higher at post-test for the Drama Group (M=2.17 compared to 1.94 for the Library Group), $t_{(56)}$ =. 2.498 (p=.01).

Cultural sensitivity Clusters A (Attitudes toward French Canadians), B (Interest in foreign languages), C (Attitudes toward French European people), and D (Attitudes toward learning French) in the Gardner test related to cultural sensitivity. Results show that students in both groups already had positive attitudes toward French Canadians and French people from Europe with a slight preference for French Canadians. They also had a positive attitude toward foreign languages and learning French. There were no significant differences between the two groups at pre-test on those four clusters except for the cluster on Attitude toward foreign language where the drama group had a more positive interest $t_{(56)}$=3.178 (p=.00).

Written compositions Analyses of covariance were conducted to measure the differences between the two groups at post-test on the different criteria used to code the compositions. Here again, the assessment at pre-test were used as covariate. Table 5 shows the means for the criteria of the written compositions by groups at pre- and post-test (coding from 1 to 5).

Table 5: Written Compositions

	overall	accuracy	cohesion	emotions	genre	context details	Cultural content
Drama Pre-test	3.46	3.43	3.29	3.86	3.61	3.14	3.43
Library Pre-test	3.52	3.59	3.41	2.79	3.24	3.34	3.97
Drama Post-test	3.76	3.59	3.48	3.34	3.93	3.79	4.03
Library Post-test	3.54	3.50	3.46	2.86	3.29	3.71	3.50

The results of the coding of the compositions show differences on several criteria. In each instance of difference, it reflects how the Drama Group performed better than the Library group. For instance, there was a significant difference between the two groups for the overall quality of the letter in the post-test $F(1,50)= 3.009$ ($p=.08$). There was also a significant difference for the criteria "genre" (letter style), $F(1,50)= 4.850$ ($p=.03$), and perhaps, most important, there was significant difference between the two groups in the cultural content of the letter in the post-test, in that the Drama Group outperformed the Library Group $F(1,50)= 5.467$ ($p=.02$). Finally, the criterion of "expression of emotions" was not far from significance, $F(1,50)= 2.236$ ($p=.14$). However, there was no significant difference between the two groups for the criteria of accuracy, cohesion, and details.

Qualitative Findings

Researcher observations. Both classes appeared to enjoy the process, yet the Library Group was ready to move on to something new after the fifth lesson. On the other hand, the Drama Group seemed to build momentum as it moved through the activities of the unit. They were opening up the learning possibilities. In a sense, the funnel in the Library Group was closing in as they were finding out what happened. Their only concern appeared to be the test; "What's going to be on the test?" they often asked. Conversely, in the Drama Group, as the students discovered more about the situation,

the funnel opened further as they wanted to know more and showed a desire to continue in their learning. It did not become focused on learning for the test, but instead it appeared to become more about co-creating the curriculum with one another as a pursuit.

Both teachers shared similar teaching characteristics: outgoing, dynamic, creative, good rapport with the students, and good grasp of content and teaching approaches. However, the teaching approaches for the unit had the Library Group rely on desk work, with teacher in front, and mostly individual and some group work. A sense of structure was apparent. Learning was emerging, but students appeared to share their discoveries with the teacher only, to show the teacher (versus their peers) that they had learned something. Conversely, in the Drama Group, students were consistently in small groups, standing or sitting, with the teacher walking around or providing direction from various areas of the room. The learning was almost entirely collaborative and always shared within groups, often with the rest of the class. Learning was emerging from the students and shared amongst them. It was often quite loud and, at times, very busy, but never out of control. The Drama Group took opportunities to bring attention to themselves, such as trying to be funny, whereas the Library Group focused more on the topic and less upon themselves.

Students felt the presence of the observer in the Library Group and would often ask him questions. In some ways, the observer became another

source of knowledge for them. It was quite different in the Drama Group, as they were too busy playing and being Acadians to be too concerned with an observer; they hardly noticed someone else was there. In this sense they were creating their own knowledge, instead of relying on the teacher or other so-called knowledgeable resources.

Teacher Responses

The comments of the teachers from their journals and the interviews were grouped into four areas.

Awareness of teaching role The Library Group teacher said, "The project added a new dimension, awareness to my teaching." In fact, both teachers had an acute awareness of their teaching approach and became conscious of the types of learning they were targeting. For example, they deliberately taught to a number of learning styles (visual, musical, kinesthetic …) and varied them throughout each lesson. Both teachers commented on how they were equally aware of their teaching approach and the content, whereas they are generally more preoccupied with the latter, forgetting about the former.

Teacher as facilitator and teacher as source of information The different role(s) of the teacher in each group were shared in various fashions. The Library Group teacher said, "I felt compelled to entertain the students to keep their motivation and interest," whereas the Drama group teacher had an opposite comment: "As the lessons progressed, role playing

became a natural way for us to communicate and discover together." In the initial stages, both teachers felt the responsibility to provide the information and context. However, as time went on during the teaching of the unit, it became clear that the students in the Drama Group were co-creating history as fictional Acadians. The teacher provided the context and a few guidelines, but, from there, the students were constructing what may have happened in Acadia. Conversely, in the Library Group, some independence developed as the lessons progressed, but there was a sense that students were trying to find the right answers. This created pressure on the teacher who declared, "There were so many facts to share and I don't know if I shared them all." The distinction appears to be a search for what happened versus an inquiry toward what may have happened. In the Drama Group, it felt natural for the teacher to become a facilitator and allow the students to explore. In the Library Group, exploration took place but more on an individual basis.

Worthwhile time spent on drama teaching Drama takes time, and in the Drama Group, the later lessons took longer as the students immersed themselves in their roles and, to a certain extent, as they were becoming responsible for their curriculum. The people/characters (Acadians) were becoming more than one-dimensional, which required more space and time. As their teacher said, "The lessons took more time because the students were so enthused." In the Drama Group, the students would step in and out

of role. At times they were also dialoguing with one another, trying to convince each other in role on which path to take, as the Acadians were forced to make decisions. They were using persuasion skills and creating/sharing their life histories. The focus shifted to a genuine student-centered learning model. As the drama group teacher said, "the discussion became amongst them in role, on task!"

More writing with drama "I was pleasantly surprised how much students wrote, and they wanted to write more. One student in particular, who rarely writes, wrote two letters," commented the Drama Group teacher. In both groups the students responded to the work through writing. In the Drama Group, a number of students found the voice of their created Acadian and felt more at ease to write … copiously. In many ways the dramatic role playing provided ample opportunity to prepare their writing. The experiential fed into their writing.

In summary, the Library Group was organized around structured learning, and lessons were teacher-centered. In fact, the students saw the teacher as their source of knowledge, or, said another way, the teaching and the learning were linear. On the other hand, the Drama Group, under appearance of chaos, noise and a lot of movement, was student-centered. The learning was cooperative and collective and students showed signs of high motivation and enthusiasm. A sense of intrinsic motivation gradually built and permeated throughout the Drama Group, and learning for

learning's sake was quite apparent. In contrast, a number of students in the Library Group lost focus as the lessons progressed, with only a handful of keen students looking for the right answers so they could get them right on the test‵ they were thus motivated extrinsically by grades.

Discussion and Conclusion

When we conceptualized this research study, the experiential and multi-modal nature of drama had us anticipating that students in the Drama Group, in comparison to those in the Library Group, would be more motivated, express a greater sensitivity toward French culture, and display stronger results in their writing. We came to this hypothesis from our review of the literature and our experiences as classroom teachers. However, as researchers in our various fields (modern languages, second language learning, and drama education), we recognized that no formal studies had traced the implications of using drama in a FI context. Therefore, this pilot study is our contribution to begin to address this gap in the research. Our results strongly suggest the benefits to students and teachers of using drama within FI classrooms to increase motivation, cultural awareness and literacy.

This study builds on a growing body of related literature that highlights the positive impact drama in the classroom has on creating meaning and developing literacy skills for students (Booth, 1994; Catterall, 2002; Gallagher, 2001; Schneider, Crumpler, Thomas, & Rogers, 2006). In her

research using drama in the classroom, Gallagher (2001) notes how students express themselves with "more clarity, passion, and eloquence than they have been able to unleash before"(Gallagher, 2001, p. 67). She also found through her research that "even among those students with obvious difficulty with the written word, drama can feature a context in a way that encourages them to connect with their own internal motivation to write" (p. 72). Our findings, both quantitative and qualitative, support these notions of enhancing student motivation and literacy development, particularly writing, when drama was used as an intervention.

Another finding, articulated by the teachers and students within our study, relates to how the Drama group personalized history through their role playing, making their learning more engaging, fun and meaningful. One of the primary goals of using drama with students, according to O'Neill (1995), is to help students better understand themselves and the world they live in. Using drama as a means to explore a unit such as the one on the Acadians can stimulate student sensitivity toward the issues and allow them to reflect critically on cultural understandings (Basourakos, 1998). Henry (2000) suggests that, by improvising and role playing, students develop emotional intelligence and cultural appreciation. The increase in cultural appreciation, motivation, and literacy (writing) found in our study extends existing research literature in drama education and second language

learning, and, equally important, explores notions of interculturality and innovative curricular development.

Despite the limitations of the pilot study, preliminary data help establish protocols for such research and accentuate a number of benefits of using drama in a FI context. A need for further work and, in particular, a more comprehensive study, involving more classrooms and schools, different teaching units, and varying grade levels would allow for greater insight to our questions.

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