

Running head: A READING INTERVENTION IN A N.B. GRADE 6 PIF

**A READING INTERVENTION IN A N.B. GRADE 6 POST INTENSIVE FRENCH
CLASSROOM: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY**

by

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the implementation of a reading intervention within a grade 6 Post Intensive French (PIF) classroom. The intervention was comprised of introducing recent research-based literacy practices for middle school learners of French as a second or alternate language while focusing on the development of the lower level processing skills (the skills needed to learn to read). The goal of this study was to discover the impacts of the recent practices on the growth of the students' reading skills, and if the development in reading skills would help close the gap between the students' reading skills and the expectations of the PIF program. The results of this study showed that the existing gap did close, and that the recent literacy practices used in this reading intervention were effective, a significant gap remains.

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this study to my father, Gérard Joseph Drapeau, whose support and pride was felt throughout this process, and whose physical presence is greatly missed. I also wish to dedicate this study to my daughters, Maya Charline and Grace Audrey. *Que ce soit une personne, un événement ou un diagnose, n'ose jamais autre que toi-même dicter ce que tu peux accomplir dans la vie.*

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Chapter 1 – Context of the Study

1.1 Research Problem and Purpose of the Study

The impetus of my action-research study about reading in Post-Intensive French (PIF) stems from my experience as a teacher. In March 2008, the Government of New Brunswick announced the introduction of the Intensive French (IF) program for students in its anglophone sector to replace the previous Core French program deemed ineffective by the commission mandated to study its French as a second language programs (Government of New Brunswick, 2008). This IF program entails a five-month intensive focus on French language skills in grade 5 and is followed by PIF in grades 6 to 10 where students attend French class for a total of 120 hours per year in grades 6 to 8, and for 90 hours per year in grades 9 & 10. The purpose of the IF program and its follow-up, the PIF program, was to “create a universally accessible system that will better serve all students, create equal learning environments which will improve scores in literacy, math and science, and put New Brunswick on track to having the best education systems in the country” (Government of New Brunswick, March 2008, para. 1).

As a francophone, I feel that teaching French as a second language in an Anglophone school district supports the New Brunswick official language policy where, since the 1993 amendment to the *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, English and French are considered to have equality of status and equal rights and privileges in New Brunswick (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages for New Brunswick, 2019). In addition, throughout my career as a teacher, inclusion was a priority in my practice for both personal and professional reasons. I therefore welcomed the introduction of the IF and PIF programs which promoted universal accessibility to

French as a second language. I have been teaching PIF for the past 8 years, and have been assigned up to 4 PIF classes per school year. As a teacher in the PIF program, I observed, year after year, a significant gap between many of my students' ability to read and curricular reading expectations. I also noticed that the 2014 PIF guide was not reflective of the skillsets of most of the students, thus rendering many students unsuccessful within the program. It is my belief that students' sentiments towards the language highly correlates with the level of success they feel they have had within the program, and how functional they feel their skills are outside of the school environment. These observations led me to become particularly interested in how students learn to read in French as a second or additional language. Looking for answers, I explored current literature about reading in the PIF program. I became aware that studies regarding this topic were very limited. In fact, to my knowledge there are no studies about reading in the PIF program. The only one I found about reading in the IF program (the program preceding the PIF program) is the study conducted by Dicks and Bourgoin in 2015.

Determined to find answers and to improve my practice as a PIF teacher, I decided to conduct a study about reading in the PIF program. The purpose of my study was to identify ways to close the gap between the students' reading skillset and the PIF curriculum reading outcomes by implementing a reading intervention based on current best reading practices while respecting the values for which this program was implemented – to be inclusive of as many students as possible.

In this context, inclusion pertains to giving a greater number of students following the English Prime program the opportunity to succeed in French Second Language (FSL) education. I adopted an classroom action research methodology since I felt it was aligned

with the purpose of my study. Indeed, classroom action research is often used by teachers who want to improve classroom practices in order to improve student success in a data-driven fashion (Burns, 2010). I will further discuss classroom action research in Chapter 3.

In the following sections, I will describe the IF and PIF programs in more details as well as the reading PIF curricular expectations. I will then conclude with a brief description of the content of the subsequent thesis chapters.

1.2 Context: IF and PIF in New Brunswick

Since 1974, the New Brunswick Department of Education has consisted of two distinct education sectors – Anglophone and Francophone sectors. Within the Anglophone sector, French as a Second Language (FSL) instruction is now offered in two main programs: IF/PIF program and French Immersion (FI). The FSL programs were developed as a way for Anglophone students to learn French and New Brunswick's school policy 309 (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2018) states that all students enrolled in the Anglophone sector will be exposed to French as a second language. In terms of FSL programming, there are different routes that New Brunswick students can embark upon. In kindergarten, all students enroll in the English Prime program where students receive their education in English. In Grade one, parents can choose to keep their child in the English Prime program or to enroll them in French Immersion (FI). In the English Prime program, starting in Grade 4, French is taught as a subject in the IF/PIF program while in the FI program, French is the language of instruction for most academic subjects. In other words, students registered in the English Prime program follow FSL instruction offered as a subject, and not as the

language of instruction of other subjects. In the next paragraphs, I will briefly describe the IF and the PIF programs in order to provide further context for this study.

IF consists of a five-month block in Grade 5 of intensive exposure to and practice in the French language. Instruction is thematic-based and delivered in French. Mathematics, art, and physical education continue to be taught in English through a compacted curriculum approach. The second five-month block in Grade 5 is reserved for subjects, such as science and social studies, and are taught in English. Mathematics, art, and physical education continues throughout the second five-month block. The PIF program is a follow-up to IF, and French is taught as a subject from Grades 6 to 10 (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2018). The IF/PIF program is based on the neurolinguistic approach which promotes balanced literacy (the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing), meaning and project pedagogy, authenticity, and social interaction to help students develop an internal grammar of their second language. I will expand upon this approach in Chapter 2.

On April 21, 2009 revisions to Policy 309 *French Second Language Programs* came into effect (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood, 2009). The amendments included specific amounts of time districts and schools are to dedicate to each FSL program. As previously mentioned, the English Prime program offers French as a subject, and not as the language used to learn other subjects, as does the FI program. Within a school year, 30 minutes per week are to be dedicated to learning about the French culture from kindergarten to Grade 3 through a cultural experience; 150 minutes per week are to be dedicated to the Grade 4 Pre-Intensive French; 345 hours per year are to be dedicated to the Grade 5 IF; 120 hours per year are to be dedicated to the

grades 6 to 8 PIF and 90 hours per year is to be dedicated to the grades 9 and 10 PIF (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood, 2018). The overarching broad objective of IF/PIF is for students to attain the Intermediate level on the French oral proficiency interview (OPI) scale at the end of the program, and to expose them to the French culture. The Intermediate OPI level is defined as a general ability to speak in school and everyday contexts, but still with some awkwardness when communicating spontaneously (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, n.d.). Although this overarching IF/PIF program goal does not refer to reading skills, the PIF curriculum does outline reading-related outcomes as well. The following section will focus more specifically on the PIF reading curricular expectations.

1.3 Reading Expectations in PIF

The IF/PIF program integrates the productive and receptive oral as well as reading and written competencies. This section will focus on the reading expectations and suggested practices linked to the neurolinguistics approach to reading in Grade 6 PIF. There are two main documents IF/PIF teachers utilize. The first, *Post-Intensive French: Grades 6, 7 & 8*, is also known as the 2015 Interprovincial Teacher's Guide. The second, *Approche neurolinguistique, guide pédagogiques: Post-français intensif I, II et III*, is the 2014 pedagogical guide given to New Brunswick teachers to help guide the students to reach curricular expectations.

The Interprovincial Teacher's Guide states that, in order to read, "students must recognize the graphic forms of the sounds of the target language" (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood, 2015, p. 85). It also states how students must "develop their internal grammar before they start to learn to read [...] so that they

can read [...] without translating word for word” (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2015, p. 87). Although the curriculum guide does acknowledge that some review of certain grapheme-phoneme relationships explicitly may be necessary, it also states how “it is no longer necessary to spend much time working on such fundamental steps as how to read a text or the relationships between sounds and how they are written” (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood, 2015, p. 102). Such a statement is reflective of a reader in transition, which is a reader who has mastered all of the phonemes associated with the graphemes of the target language (Fountas and Pinnell, 2017). Given the assumption that PIF Grade 6 students should be readers “in transition”, the pedagogical guide explains how students in PIF are able to detect nuances from text (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2014). This section served to provide context for the study as well as to further explain the gap mentioned in the Research Problem and Purpose of the Study section.

1.4 Conclusion

As an experienced PIF teacher, it is my belief that the grade 6 PIF reading expectations are simply unattainable for many students, thus diminishing its inclusive nature, one of the touted features of this particular FSL program. By putting into practice recent research-based literacy practices, this study attempted to close the gap between students reading skillsets and PIF expectations in reading. This gap was significant for many students I taught in my PIF classes to date. The reading interventions used in this action-research study aimed at teaching students how to read, thus focusing on lower level processing skills. These skills include, amongst others, vocabulary knowledge,

phonological and orthographic processing. Although not restricted to these authors, I draw on the works of key reading researchers, William Grabe (2009) and Keiko Koda (2005), to further describe these skills in the next chapter.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the results of Dicks and Bourgoin's 2015 study pertaining to New Brunswick students reading skills at the end of the IF program, Germain and Netten's Neurolinguistic Approach (NLA) and the New Brunswick PIF approach to the NLA. In addition to expanding upon lower-level processing skills necessary for learning to read (e.g., Grabe, 2009; Koda, 2005), I will also review certain research-based literacy practices (e.g., Peregoy & Boyle, 2017; Clay, 2003), such as read-alouds and guided reading, and how these could be integrated within a grade 6 PIF class. In terms of guided reading, I draw on the works of Fountas & Pinnell (2017) and Dicks & Bourgoin (2018).

In Chapter 3 I discuss classroom action research – drawing upon the works of, amongst others, methodologists Anne Burns (2010), Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion & Keith Morrison (2007) and Stephen Kemmis & Robin McTaggart (2005). I also describe the participants as well as the study's timeline. I then explain my reading interventions which are based on recent theories about how students learn to read in a second language and the research-based practices on how to teach these skills. I also include in this chapter information about how data were collected and analyzed within the action research cycles. Finally, I discuss the validity, reliability, and ethical considerations pertinent to this study.

Chapter 4 commences by presenting the baseline data, which includes results from 2 evaluations: (1) basic French graphemes both out of and in context, and (2) Running Record. I then present the various types of data collected and the data that were

collected within the cycles of analysis. These included data gathered from the whole-class and literacy centers as well as teacher observations. Finally, I present the data collected as part of the post-analysis, which included, as was the case with the preliminary analysis, results from an evaluation of the basic French graphemes and an individual running record. Finally, in Chapter 5, I discuss the data collected and analyzed in Chapter 4, and conclude with suggestions related to pedagogy and future research. These include the importance of teaching in context, of explicit teaching of graphemes and their corresponding phonemes, and of guided reading.

CHAPTER 2 - Literature Review

In this chapter I begin by describing the theoretical framework of the study. I then present Germain and Netten's neurolinguistic approach (NLA) followed by the grade 6 Post Intensive French (PIF) approach to the NLA. Next, I discuss the findings from the Dicks and Bourgoin research (2015) conducted with New Brunswick students at the end of the Intensive French (IF) program. Then, this discussion will evolve to include other theories on how second language learners develop their reading skills in order to become readers in transition. Finally, the focus will shift to the suggested best practices to teach these skills and will conclude with the leading questions of the research.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study rests on two key concepts: 1) balanced literacy and 2) explicit teaching of fundamental reading skills. Balanced literacy recognizes the interconnectivity of oral, reading, and writing skills and seeks to develop the skills needed to become proficient in the target language as a whole. A balanced reading literacy program includes read aloud, guided reading, shared and independent reading, and word study (K12 Reader: Reading Instruction Resources, 2018).

The second component of the theoretical underpinnings for this study is explicit teaching of fundamental reading skills. Explicit teaching is the direct instruction of certain key skills or concepts in a systematic manner (Marchand-Martella & Martella, 2019). In the context of this study, explicit reading instruction focuses on the French phonemes and their corresponding graphemes. An explicit reading lesson, for example, would focus on a particular grapheme and its corresponding phoneme(s).

Phonemes/graphemes are introduced and modeled in context, and followed by various integrative activities that target grapheme-phoneme(s) connections.

The reading pedagogy adopted in the PIF guide recognizes the value of a balanced literacy approach, but does not advocate for an explicit approach to literacy teaching. In fact, the PIF approach emphasizes implicit practices for the teaching of oral and reading skills while underplaying the role of explicit teaching. In the following section, I describe this PIF pedagogy (i.e., neurolinguistic approach). Subsequently, I summarize the research related to the teaching of reading. The literature from these two key concepts form the theoretical backdrop of this study.

2.2 The Neurolinguistic Approach (NLA)

The New Brunswick IF/PIF program was conceptualized using the neurolinguistic approach (NLA). It was founded by Netten and Germain. This approach presents a method of teaching languages in which students effectively gain the skills needed to communicate authentically (New Brunswick Government of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2015). When discussing why previous Core French approaches to learning French as a second language were not yielding the desired results, Netten and Germain (2004) expressed how the students had “tend[ed] to develop declarative knowledge about how the language works but not to develop procedural, or intuitive knowledge so they [could] use the language” (p. 276). In other words, the perceived issue was that students only demonstrated declarative knowledge, which refers to the conscious knowledge of the language. Students studied certain elements of the language and, as such, memorized these certain elements, such as verb endings. Students, however, were unable to engage in spontaneous conversation as their procedural

language, which is the unconscious acquisition of language, was not well developed. Netten & Germain's (2004) assertion was that a more implicit approach to teaching language, rather than explicit explanations of language structures, would better promote internalization of language and language use. In other words, they emphasized an implicit pedagogy (i.e., one that does not focus on explicit instruction). As I discuss later, procedural language is best developed in authentic situations, and is used in more spontaneous conversation.

In his book *L'approche neurolinguistique : ANL*, Germain (2017) explained how NLA is based on 5 principles: (1) internal and external grammar (i.e., internalized versus memorized), (2) literacy and sentence pedagogy, (3) focus on meaning and project pedagogy, (4) authenticity, and (5) social interaction. The first principle concerns internal and external grammar. According to Germain, procedural (i.e., knowing how to use the language) and declarative (i.e., knowing about the language) knowledge are separate, independent, and non-transferable from one to the other. In order to illustrate the connection between these two types of knowledge and implicit and explicit teaching approaches, he offered an example of two students who are taught the indicative present form of the verb "marcher" the first is taught explicitly (thereby promoting the development of external grammar) while the second is taught implicitly (thereby promoting the development of internal grammar). The first student would consciously know that the first-person plural ending of the verb is "-ons" because it would have been stored in declarative memory, or conscious memory. During spontaneous conversation, however, the student would not be able to retrieve this information without pausing. The student taught the verb implicitly, through oral practice and use, would not necessarily be

conscious of the grammatical reason as to why ‘nous’ is followed by the verb ending “-ons,” but would be able to use “nous marchons” in spontaneous conversation without consciously thinking about the subject-verb agreement. In this case, the information is stored in procedural memory. Within this approach, oral communication abilities are taught and learned implicitly (Germain, 2017).

The second principle of the NLA concerns literacy. Germain (2017) underscores how this approach is based on both the interconnectivity and order of oral, reading, and writing practices. Netten and Germain (2010) adopted the use of the French expression “boucler la boucle” and applied it to the NLA.

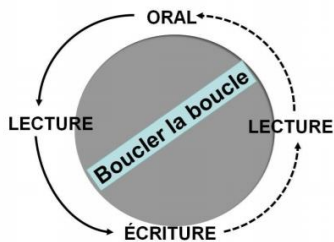


Figure 1. Boucler la Boucle, Balancing Literacy in the NLA. Reprinted from *Le FI: Introduction*, Germain and Netten, revised in 2010, retrieved from <http://www.francaisintensif.ca/media/par-08f-litteratie-intro-guide2012.pdf>

According to this principle, learners must hear and speak the target language before reading in that language. Similarly, learners must be exposed to oral and written models of language prior to writing. Following the writing, students practice procedural memory by reading writing pieces and responding to questions based on what they wrote (Germain, 2017).

The third principle focuses on meaning and project pedagogy. Within the NLA, it is of prime importance to focus on the meaning of the messages and to construct mini-lessons around a final language-based project in order to effectively develop students’

internal grammar. The development of internal grammar is best developed by focusing on the use of language versus the language itself (Germain, 2017).

The fourth principle, authenticity, is based on the Transfer-Appropriate Processing (TAP) theory. In essence, this theory suggests that the closer one is exposed to the language within an authentic context in which the language would be typically used, the greater the chance one will be able to retrieve it procedurally when placed in a similar context later. This principle also underlines the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation by nurturing the desire or need to communicate in the target language. Equally important is the need to allow differentiation for personalized and meaningful responses to further enhance motivation and interest (Germain, 2017).

The fifth and final principle is social interaction. This principle rests on the theory that social interaction contributes to closing the gap between input (what the student hears) and intake (what the student is able to interpret and make sense of). It also rests on the importance of recycling words and language structures within similar contexts in order to foster the development of procedural knowledge, thus supporting the development of skills needed to speak with spontaneity (Germain, 2017).

In the next section, I examine the PIF approach to the development of reading skills. In the following section, I briefly highlight the findings of Dicks and Bourgoin's 2015 study in order to better situate the study, and to root the study as a reading intervention based on the lower level processing skills – the skills to learn to read.

2.3 PIF Approach to Reading Instruction

As previously explained, the NLA recognizes the role of oral communication in the development of reading skills. Students must be able to communicate about the

general content or topic of a reading passage prior to reading it in order to comprehend what is read. The oral component of the NLA is based on implicit teaching and learning through interaction. The PIF pedagogical guide for teachers thus follows a scripted oral communication guideline which commences with a teacher model. PIF teachers, who must always speak in French during instructional times, are encouraged to differentiate by modifying input as needed and by encouraging students to personalize modeled sentences. For example, a teacher teaching within unit 1 in grade 8 PIF might say the following to a student, “Je préfère le pantalon à taille haute, à jambes simples et à coupe ample. Quel genre de pantalons préfères-tu?” while asking another student: “Je porte un pantalon bleu. De quelle couleur est ton pantalon?” In this approach, the teacher’s role is to help each student to extend or to develop their ability to communicate by recycling sentence structures and by adding new components to them, or by presenting sentence structures new to the student in order for each student to be able to communicate a desired message based on their present skillset.

Following the development of oral communicative skills, focus shifts to the reading of texts that are relevant to what was practiced in oral communication activities. The reading component of the NLA is based on implicit practices and is highly dependent on listening comprehension and speaking skills. When referring to the “boucler la boucle” figure, reading activities are done on two separate occasions within a single instructional unit of study. There are four units in each grade level. It may be important to note that the second reading activity is the reading of students’ own writing, and thus uses reading to reintegrate what was learned, and not for the advancement of reading

skills (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2015).

The first reading activity is a reading done following the initial oral activities at the beginning of an instructional unit. It includes pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities done with a prescribed book or reading passage. The pre-reading activities include contextualization and making predictions on the content based on the title, subtitles, cover page, and several other pictures. The suggested questions and anticipated answers found within the PIF pedagogical guide related to the oral task of the pre-reading activities. Students who have the vocabulary knowledge associated with that of a reader in transition possess a broader vocabulary knowledge, including high frequency words (Fountas and Pinnell, 2017).

In PIF, reading instruction is broken down into two explorations of a given text. The first exploration focuses on acquiring the general comprehension of the text. It begins with the teacher reading the text aloud while the students follow in their individual copy of the book. After this read-aloud, the teacher asks comprehension questions as a whole-class activity. Next, the teacher reads the text a second time, focusing on the previous predictions made. Finally, the students are expected to read the book in various ways (e.g., in small groups, pair groups, or individually). If the teacher deems it necessary, an additional exploration may be done if she or he notices mistakes in reading accuracy. However, only one grapheme-phoneme relationship may be studied within a reading lesson plan.

The second exploration, which is meant to be done during a separate PIF class, focuses on the explicit learning of one language structure. To commence, the teacher asks comprehension questions as a whole-class activity to serve as a review of the content of the text. Then, students read the text aloud. Next, the teacher explicitly points out one language found within the text. Finally, students read over the text to find other examples of this language structure (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2014).

The post-reading activity targets the use and reintegration of language structures and newly-learned words. Examples of this includes changing the ending of the story, continuing the story, and reading the story as though it was a play. Throughout reading instruction, the teacher models fluent reading and encourages students to read with fluency. The teacher is also to correct pronunciation errors as they occur (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2015).

Although the NLA does acknowledge that explicit teaching within reading lessons has its place, the NLA focuses, in large part, on implicit teaching of reading. Because of the curricular assumption that most PIF readers are readers in transition, the lower level processing skills in reading, or the skills needed to read, are rarely explicitly taught. These include orthographic knowledge, phonological awareness and vocabulary knowledge. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a reader in transition is a learner who is transitioning from learning to read to reading to learn. Additionally, it should be noted that lower level processing skills (i.e., word recognition, vocabulary knowledge) are necessary to become a reader in transition. As previously mentioned, a reader in transition has mastered all of the phonemes associated with the graphemes of the target

language, and also knows many of the high frequency words. In addition, a reader in transition can interpret meaning from text (Fountas and Pinnell, 2017). According to the PIF Curriculum, it is expected that: “[...] students receive help to get meaning from texts that are becoming longer and longer and more difficult to read.” (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2015, p. 102). To engage with texts that are more difficult to read, a reader must have mastered the fundamental learning to read skills.

2.4 Reading Research in the New Brunswick Intensive French Context

In 2015, Dicks and Bourgoïn conducted a study that aimed to discover the levels of reading proficiency attained by students at the end of the grade 5 New Brunswick IF program. This study involved all 4 New Brunswick Anglophone school districts. It included 10 schools and 178 students, all 9-10 years of age. Two instruments were used – the “Indicateurs dynamiques d’habiletés précoces en lecture – IDAPEL” and the Running Records, a resource made by GB+ which evaluates fluency, accuracy and comprehension of text. For Running Records, levels are alphabetized, each level increasing in text complexity. They adopted Fountas and Pinnell’s (2017) gradient levels and descriptors. These include the early emergent reader, the early reader and the transitional reader. The early emergent reader (levels A-D) learns to associate sounds with words and recognizes a small number of high frequency words. The early reader (levels E – F) recognizes most of the high frequency words, and easily recognizes them. The early reader begins to rely on other printed reading skills, such as syntax, in order to grasp meaning rather than on pictures. The transitional reader (levels G – M) has a broader bank of words, including a variety of high frequency words. The transitional

reader is also able to decode accurately as all of the graphemes are mastered. The transitional reader is beginning to read to learn as he or she begins to read texts of various topics. The results of Dicks and Bourgoïn's 2015 research were as follows: at the end of the 5 month program, 47.5% of the students were early emergent readers, and 44.6% were early readers and 7.9% were transitional readers. In the interpretations of the study, amongst other findings, these researchers stated that the results were to be expected given the limited exposure to the target language. They concluded that readers at the end of IF still required some explicit instruction of lower level processing skills.

When comparing the New Brunswick grade 6 PIF reading expectations to the results found in Dicks and Bourgoïn (2015), it is evident that the majority of students in the Grade 5 IF program were not readers in transition. Therefore, it can be surmised that they are not able to meet the expectations with respect to reading as defined in the Grade 6 PIF curriculum. As I explain in the following section, it is for this reason that this study aims to examine the types of reading interventions that focus on the development of the lower level processing skills in order to increase the ability for students to meet curricular expectations with respect to second language reading. Thus it is crucial to explore the research related to the fundamentals of reading in order to carefully construct the theoretical groundwork for the practical applications in the classroom.

2.5 Lower Level Processing Skills

It is clear from the research on reading that some explicit teaching of the lower level skills is essential for students to become readers in transition (e.g., Grabe, 2009; Koda, 2005; Nassaji, 2003). For example, Grabe outlined how reading comprehension is the result of the mastery of the lower level processing skills which he described as

including word recognition, syntactic parsing, meaning encoding, and working memory. Moreover, Nassaji (2003), found that lower level processing skills, such as phonology, orthography, and word recognition are important to have mastered in all levels of reading, and not just for the beginner reader.

2.5.1 Word recognition. Word recognition, or the recognition of the meaning of the word, involves the development of orthography, phonology and decoding, and vocabulary knowledge. In this section I briefly explain the individual components of word recognition. Then, due to the significant amount of time it takes to develop word recognition, I then briefly discuss the time it takes to develop it. Finally, although not directly a component of word recognition, it will add a sub-section on the fossilization of error which is often a worry felt by FSL teachers when incorporating new vocabulary implicitly in hopes to expand the vocabulary knowledge of their students.

2.5.1.1 Orthography and phonology

Koda (2005) suggested that orthography and phonology (awareness and processing) are the main processing skills needed for word recognition, which is “the process of extracting lexical information from graphic displays of words” (p. 29). I will now define each of these processes.

Orthographic awareness, or the ability to identify or retrieve from one’s memory the representation of words to its meaning, is essential in skilled reading (Rakhlin, Cardoso-Martins, and Grigorenko, 2014). Additionally, the development of reading skills involves the memorization/recognition of the spelling of certain words. When reading, the memorized written words are then identified versus decoded; orthographic processing is responsible for rapid recognition of words and graphemes (Koda, 2005). The

memorization of certain words is especially important for words of illicit letter sequences (Rakhlin, Cardoso-Martins, & Grigorenko, 2014). The word *rhythm*, for example, has an illicit letter sequence. In memory, this letter sequence must be connected to its correct phonology, and stored as such. Orthographic processing skills (or the spelling of words) are developed explicitly at first, and are then stored in working memory until they are integrated into procedural memory (Koda, 2005). This point of view differs somewhat with Germain's (2017) assertion that declarative and procedural knowledge are separate and non-transferable.

Phonological processing is the usage of the oral sound structure, thus manipulating what is known of phonology (phonological awareness) in processing oral and written messages (Wagner, 1998). A strong phonological processing ability is a common bond amongst grade-level proficient readers, and readers who read in other languages (Grabe, 2009). According to Wagner, phonological processing can be broken down into two categories – phonological awareness and phonological coding.

Phonological awareness can be defined as knowledge of the phonology of a language whereas phonological coding can be defined as manipulating the phonemes to create meaning (p. 262). In other words, phonological awareness is the knowledge of the phonology while phonological coding is the use of the phonological elements of the language. Phonological awareness leads to the ability to decode text (Grabe, 2009).

Decoding is the ability to translate print into speech by rapidly matching one or more letters (graphemes) to their sounds (phonemes), and to recognize the patterns that make syllables and words (Grabe, 2009). The importance of decoding, as mentioned by Koda (2005), may be as integral as the ability to understand context. As decoding skills become

mastered, semantic knowledge increases, thus enhancing the ability to comprehend meaning of text (Koda, 2005). Phonological coding, which is the voiced pronunciation of words (Golinkoff and Rosinski, 1976) is also an essential component of phonological processing.

A troubling scenario is to witness the proficient decoder unable to extract meaning from its mental lexicon due to a limited mental word bank, or vocabulary. Thus, phonological processing is not independent of vocabulary knowledge. The development of both skills is needed in order to render a reader successful in comprehending text (Wagner, 1988).

2.5.1.2 Vocabulary knowledge. The strong correlation between reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge seems to be a general consensus amongst researchers (Grabe, 2009). Many researchers agree that implicit and explicit (or metalinguistic) learning of language is important in language development (Grabe, 2009; Paradis, 2002). In the context of this study, implicit learning refers to learning done in context while immersed in the language while explicit learning refers to learning while studying the language itself. The role and weight allotted to both within the emergent and beginning stages of oral communication, and reading, however, are often a point of contention. To exemplify, the following paragraphs will shed light on Netten and German's (2005 and elsewhere) perspective based in part on Paradis' research related to implicit and explicit knowledge and to vocabulary knowledge.

Within the NLA, Netten and Germain underlined the need for implicit acquisition only of oral communication skills. From Paradis' (2002) research, Netten and Germain (2005) concluded that "students do not need to be aware of the rules of language in order

to acquire oral language forms in order to communicate. Explicit knowledge is not necessary in order to be able to communicate spontaneously; implicit competence is” (p. 202).

According to Paradis (2002), explicit and implicit learning both play integral roles in the learning of vocabulary. In the beginning stages of learning language, he underscored the need to teach words or language skills explicitly, and explained how the repetition of an explicitly-taught concept within an authentic setting is what develops the acquisition within procedural memory. Similarly, he explained how it is important to use and reuse a limited amount of vocabulary within authentic communication in order to initiate the activation threshold. The activation threshold states that the more a word is used, the easier it is for the speaker to retrieve it (Paradis, 2002). For example, a teacher could explicitly teach the prepositions using pictures and words. Then, through the use of an interactive game that would encourage repetitive exposure to these, students would begin to internalize these. Explicit learning of vocabulary promotes the creation of links between previously acquired words and their meanings, and the word new to them. As I explain later, creating such links efficiently promotes acquisition in long-term memory.

2.5.1.3 Time. Learning a language and learning to read take time. It takes hundreds of hours of meaningful reading to achieve fluency with the lower level processing skills in such a way that the reader reads at his or her reading proficiency level without having recourse to conscious efforts placed on the lower level processing skills (Grabe, 2009). A reader in transition, thus a reader who has mastered the lower level processing skills, no longer needs to place conscious effort in the process of reading itself, but can rather begin to read as a means to accomplish other tasks, such as reading

to learn. Dicks and Bourgoin (2015) also commented on the time needed to reach the reader in transition level when discussing the results of their research in reading skills at the end of the IF program. In this study, Dicks and Bourgoin (2015) noted that the students' levels of reading at the end of the IF program were relatively the same as the levels of francophone students at the end of grade one, and of grade three students after seven months of being in the immersion program (grade three entry point). They concluded that the proficiency results for reading at the end of the grade 5 IF were to be expected. The results of this study point to the need to examine the grade 6 PIF expectations to better reflect the reading levels of the students entering the program.

2.5.2 Meaning proposition encoding and syntactic parsing. Thus far, I have explained the elements of word recognition, thus the processing that occurs with a single word. The following lower level processing skills involve more than one word. In this section, I discuss syntactic parsing and meaning proposition encoding, how these skills develop following word recognition, and connect these concepts to the importance of explicit teaching of these skills in development of the lower level processing skills.

Meaning proposition encoding can be defined as a group of words coming together to form a unit of a meaning. Syntactic parsing is a skill that is used when a word within a group of words (or sentence) is not recognized. Syntactic parsing, or the integration of the chosen lexical meaning extracted from the reader's mental lexicon within the sentence, is essential to reading comprehension. Syntactic parsing includes all parts of speech. Likewise, all parts of speech have the potential to alter the desired meaning of the message (Grabe, 2009). Parts of speech are words that play different roles in speech, such as verbs, adverbs, pronouns, nouns, adjectives, prepositions,

conjunctions, and interjections. Word recognition precedes syntactic parsing and meaning proposition encoding in the development of reading skills. Similarly, word recognition, syntactic parsing, and meaning proposition encoding work simultaneously to construct reading comprehension (Grabe, 2009).

The following example demonstrates how word recognition, syntactic parsing, and meaning proposition encoding work together, and the role of explicit teaching within. As I began to integrate vocabulary related to weather with one of my late immersion classes, a student became increasingly uncomfortable when I said “il fait chaud.” Soon after I spoke those words, she asked me who I was talking about. The student had deduced that I was saying “he is hot.” A possibility for this is the following: Meaning proposition encoding may have been responsible for the word “il” becoming the word “he”; syntactic parsing may have been responsible for the word “fait” becoming the word “is” and vocabulary knowledge may have been responsible for the word “chaud” becoming the word “hot.”

2.5.3 Working memory, short-term and long-term memory. Working memory, short-term, and long-term memory are important to learning. Baddeley (1983) defined working memory as “temporary storage of information in connection with the performance of other cognitive tasks such as reading, problem-solving or learning” (p. 311). The working memory pertains to the information one is consciously thinking of while attempting to perform a task with it (Alloway, 2006). Short-term memory has within it a working memory (Engle, Laughin, Tuholski, and Conway (1999). Exercises that ask students to write a word using their decoding skills is an example of how

students use their working memory as they must consciously think of the possible spelling of the word.

Martinez (2012) explains how information transfers from short-term to long-term memory, and vice versa. While information going from long term to short term memory is often referred to as recall or recognition, information going from short term to long term memory is often referred to as learning. Martin and Ellis (2012) have found phonological working memory (PSTM) to be integral to fluency development and vocabulary learning. In order to learn, the short-term memory has the ability to take complex information and chunk it together in order to render it simple. Meaningful information is transferred from the short-term memory and is linked to what is already known in the long-term memory thus creating a new unit (Martinez, 2012).

Up to this point, this present chapter has focused on theory – the NLA approach, implicit and explicit methodology in the acquisition of oral communication, and definitions and roles of the lower level processing skills. The following sections will focus on practice, on how this theory can be applied within the context of a classroom.

2.6 Implications for the Classroom: Evidence-Based Practices for Reading

Instruction

The development of the lower level processing skills involves vocabulary knowledge, graphemes, and phonemes. As many researchers have demonstrated, the teaching of graphemes and their corresponding phonemes must be done explicitly. The seven-year Clackannanshire study, for example, investigated not only its importance, but also its most efficient methodology. This study was conducted in Scotland by the Reading First program. It showed significant gains in the reading proficiency of young

learners as a result of the synthetic, or explicit phonics approach (Johnston & Watson, 2005). According to the *Get Reading Right* program, synthetic phonics, or explicit phonics, is primarily based on the following characteristics: to begin with the explicit teaching of phonics where all the combinations of letters that make up the same phoneme are studied at once. The order of the phonics studied is chosen with what is believed to be the simplest, or most common, and becomes more complex as the students learn to read. It is also based on making links between the oral, reading, and writing of the phonemes, and the fusion of phonemes orally and in reading. Also important is the integration of the high frequency words in reading and writing (*Get Reading Right*, 2018).

There are many pedagogical programs that are grounded in the idea that explicit teaching of phonetics is essential to the development of lower level processing skills, such as *Raconte-moi les sons* and *Jolly Phonics*. In my study, I will be using Bourgoin and Deveaux's *Villes Bons Sons* (2017), an evidence-based L2 cross-curricular phonics reading program, as a guide in the order of graphemes taught. As does this program, the resource I created for this study is designed for students learning French as an alternate language, and thus also aims at exposing the learners to the high frequency words and the targeted grapheme-phoneme relationships.

2.7 Pillars of Evidence-Based Reading Instruction

There are many practices that have proven to be efficient when teaching students to read. Amongst these are read-alouds, literacy centers and guided reading. This section focuses on each of these, including major works of researchers that have been pivotal in shaping reading instruction.

2.7.1 Read-alouds. Read-alouds can be conducted in several ways (e.g., teacher reading aloud, students read aloud to other students, etc.) Reading aloud allows not only for modeled reading in terms of how to read, but it also allows for greater comprehension if the chosen book to read was at the level of the students in terms of vocabulary knowledge (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017). The books chosen should increase in length and in complexity as the students are developing their lower level processing skills (Peregoy & Boyle). Finally, reading a book aloud allows for targeted mini-lessons as with the books used in the guided reading center.

2.7.2 Literacy centers. Literacy centers offer the students the opportunity to use the language as they interact with one another and as they learn together (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017). In small groups, students are often more willing to take chances in their use of the target language. In these literacy centres, students use previously taught language and skills to do a variety of reading-related tasks in order to internalize language and to enhance their literacy development. In these centres, balanced literacy approaches that combine oral and written language are promoted. In terms of reading, students are presented with various activities that include tasks related to word cards and short read-aloud passages (Peregoy & Boyle).

2.7.3 Guided Reading. The works of Mary Clay (2000, 2016), and Fountas and Pinnell (2017, 2018) are widely used by teachers and reading interventionists today. A brief look at some of this literature will be done in order to emphasize the influence these researchers have had in reading research, reading lessons, and reading interventions.

The Reading Recovery reading intervention is grounded in the works of Marie Clay who sought alternate ways to help children whose reading performance was not

attaining the desired outcomes (Reading Recovery Council of North America, 2018).

Clay developed the running record in order to monitor and assess student reading skills.

Running Records are individual reading assessments where the evaluator writes notes on the reader's accuracy, fluency, and comprehension as she or he reads aloud. The evaluator also comments on the reading strategies used, if any, by the reader.

Fountas and Pinnell (2014, 2016) have published research based on works that have become cornerstones in literacy to many in the teaching field. Their research has resulted in pedagogical programs such as Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) and Benchmark Assessment System (BAS). LLI is an individual targeted temporary reading intervention of lower level processing skills. These interventions aim at bringing the reader up to the targeted reading level of her or his grade by offering small group targeted lessons, sometimes referred to as guided reading groups. Guided reading is aimed at developing reading skills, and not simply for reading practice or leisure (Fountas and Pinnell, 2018). My study will incorporate, amongst others, the use of both Running Records and the practice of guided reading lessons in order to help guide each student in her or his development of the lower level processing skills, and ultimately to see whether this will help close the gap between reading abilities of the students and the curricular expectations.

Fountas and Pinnell's (2018) BAS is a set of 58 books ranging from levels A to Z. These levels are graduated, and each offers a fiction and non-fiction book. The leveled books have 10 characteristics for guided reading. These are: (1) genre/form; (2) text structure; (3) content; (4) themes and ideas; (5) language and literary features; (6) sentence complexity; (7) vocabulary; (8) word difficulty; (9) illustrations/graphics; and

(10) book and print features” (Fountas & Pinnell, 2018, p. 408). In the present study, I propose the use of leveled books and Running Records from the *La trousse GB+* program. Their leveled books and Running Records reflect those of Fountas and Pinnell in characteristics and use, but are in French, and have been constructed to reflect a Canadian French context. One instructional evidence-based practice that has received much attention in terms of laying out the foundation for reading skill development is guided reading.

2.8 Guided Reading in a Second Language

Mary Clay, as well as Fountas and Pinnell, have provided literature that articulates both the theoretical and practical aspects of guided reading in a general sense, guided reading can also be used successfully in the L2 contexts as underscored by Dicks and Bourgoïn (2018). In their report on reading proficiency of IF students, Dicks and Bourgoïn underscored that individual observation and evaluation are at the heart of guided reading targeted for the emergent reader, the reader in transition, the capable, and the advanced reader. They also explained how these individual observations and evaluations of the reader are conducted as the reader reads aloud. In their document, they explained how to analyze and execute these, and the implications of these formative reading assessments on practice and lesson delivery. Rather than bridging the gap between text and student by preparing the class for the text, the authors explained how the observation and evaluation of the learner allow the teacher to cater to the students by finding a text that is at their level of reading. The authors also gave two other reasons why individual observations and assessments are essential. First, it allows the teacher to determine whether or not the reader is receiving the most effective lesson, and a text that

is reflective of what she or he needs for efficient learning. Second, it allows the teacher to differentiate the skill level of each student in terms of accuracy and fluency, and in terms of ability level for reading comprehension. Both researchers also emphasized the importance of nurturing precision and fluency skills as these correlate with the ability to comprehend text. Ultimately, the goal of guided reading is to help the learner develop their processing skills needed to further develop their ability to read independently (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017).

While Fountas and Pinnell (2017) designed their guided reading model for students learning to read in their L1, other researchers, such as Dicks and Bourgoin (2018) have focused on modifying the guided reading structure to better suit the needs of students learning to read in an L2. The following section will focus on Fountas and Pinnell's guided reading structure while integrating adaptations suggested by Dicks and Bourgoin.

Fountas and Pinnell (2017) suggested that 15 to 25 minutes per day be reserved for classroom guided reading activities. Both authors stressed the need for differentiation in both teaching and text complexity in order to meet each student's needs. In order to do so, students are grouped with peers that are close to their reading abilities. Each guided reading session has pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities, and both the teacher and the learner have role in the process.

The pre-reading, or introduction, targets contextualization. The teacher's role is to capture the interest of the students in the book by making connections with past experiences. It is also to give the information needed for the students to experience success in grasping the meaning of the text within her or his first individual exploitation

(Fountas & Pinnell, 2017). The students' role is to ask questions, and share thoughts on the topic with the teacher and the other students in the group. When conducting guided reading in an L2, Dicks and Bourgoïn (2018) add the need to read the title of the book, and review the proper nouns. For levels A and B, they add the need to review key words – to point them out, to read them aloud, and to explain their meaning. For levels C to H, they add the need to discuss certain images.

During the reading activity, the teacher may ask a student to read softly as he or she listens, but for the most part, students read individually (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017). The role of the student is to actively use his or her processing skills to attain meaning. Dicks and Bourgoïn (2018) divide the reading activity into two sections, the “*première lecture du texte*” and the “*lecture en sous-vocalisation*” (p. 11). In the first section, the activity commences with the teacher reading the book while the students follow. Students are then prompted to read with or after the teacher as a group. In the second section, they also emphasize need for the teacher to circulate and listen to each student read individually in order to correct or offer suggestions to the reader.

During the post-reading activity, the teacher's role is to engage students' in sharing their thoughts on what they read, and to discuss the critical points in the text that shows evidence of a general understanding (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017). During this time, the students' role is to participate and to actively listen to the other students as they share their thoughts and understandings of the text. Expansion is also encouraged; thus teacher and students should engage in meaningful discussions that go beyond the text. Dicks and Bourgoïn (2018) added the need to ask the student to retell what she or he read, to ask

reading comprehension questions and to discuss the strong points observed. For levels A and B, they also suggested that a mini-lesson be done based on teacher observation.

In this chapter, I have summarized two major theoretical areas which inform this study: 1) the theories on which PIF approach is grounded and 2) theories related to reading acquisition and reading pedagogy. Based on these theories and on the research problem identified in Chapter 1, I pose the following research questions.

2.9 Research Questions

Based on this review and the need to support more fully readers in the PIF program, the following questions guided this study:

- For the students whose reading level in grade 6 PIF is not at the reader in transition level, how did the reading intervention help close the gap between their reading skills and the grade 6 PIF September expectation?
- What are the impacts of the foundational reading practices integrated into the grade 6 PIF class (i.e., explicit teaching and practice of graphemes and consonants, read-alouds as a class or a small group, guided reading, literacy centers promoting the acquisition of high frequency and thematic words, and reading comprehension)?

2.10 Conclusion

The NLA is designed to foster the development of oral skills through procedural knowledge, meaning that vocabulary knowledge and reading skills develop implicitly, not explicitly. The NLA is also based on a balanced literacy approach that Germain (2017) has called “boucler la boucle,” which promotes a pedagogical cycle of oral-reading-writing-reading-oral and a focus on thematic and authentic contexts for social

interaction. Likewise, the New Brunswick PIF curriculum and accompanying teacher's guide are based on the NLA. Moreover, both documents are clear on the grade 6 PIF reading expectations. Most students are expected to be readers in transition at the beginning of the program, and the content within both documents are reflective of this expectation. As I highlight in the Chapter 1, most students entering grade 6 PIF are not readers in transition meaning that they have not yet mastered the lower level processing skills (thus have not yet learned to read in French).

The development of the lower level processing skills begins with word recognition, which includes orthography, phonology, decoding, and vocabulary knowledge (Grabe, 2009). Classroom practices found to be effective in teaching word recognition include the explicit teaching of the grapheme-phoneme relationships, the explicit study of words that have an illicit letter sequence, and of certain new words. Syntactic parsing and meaning proposition encoding, which are also parts of the lower level processing skills, develop after word recognition, and is essential for reading comprehension (Grabe, 2009). Word recognition is not sufficient in order for reading comprehension to occur – the relationship between words is also essential (Ferreira & Henderson, 1990). These skills, alongside word recognition, were practiced following suggested fundamental literacy practices that focus on the development of these skills.

In order to promote the internalization of the language and of the targeted skills, whole-class, small group student-led, and guided reading activities are important. The classroom practices that are found to be effective when teaching these skills focus on context-based teaching and learning, on explicit teaching, on repetition, on a controlled amount of new knowledge or skills introduced in each teaching period, and on social

interaction. Certain activities, such as read-alouds, guided reading and small group interactive student-led activities have been shown to be effective.

In the next chapter, I describe how I addressed the research questions through an action research methodology. I chose a classroom action research approach in order to examine the implementation of evidence-based literacy practices for teaching the lower level processing skills. I also explain the three phases of the classroom action research, the pre and post evaluations prior to discussing the validity, reliability and ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

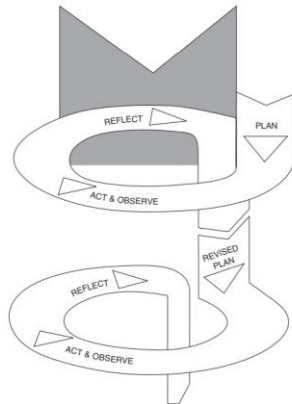
In this chapter I begin by explaining the rationale behind the chosen classroom action research methodology, the methodology itself, and the correlation between the methodology and my research questions. In the second section I describe the participants, school, and timeline. In the sections following I explain the various activities done and the three phases of the actionresearch study. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of the validity and reliability, and the ethical considerations of the study.

3.1 Methodology Underpinnings and Research Design

Gaining popularity in the 20th century, action reseach is used to enhance practice or to find a solution to a raised issue. The practical nature of this methodology results in contributing to the recent theories in the various fields in which the action research is taking place (e.g., healthcare, education) (Baskerville, 1999) as it brings theory and practice together (Reason & Bradbury, 2006). In education, action research is an effective methodology to use in order to gain knowledge about pedagogy or to improve practices (Burgess & Newton, 2008). Teacher-researchers find classroom action research to be effective when seeking to answer specific questions in attempt to improve teaching practices, or to evaluate the effectiveness of a certain practice within their classrooms. It is based on inquiry, colaboration and hands-on methods within the classroom (Ferrance, 2000).

I found it effective to conduct classroom action research, thus to work as a teacher-researcher with my students as participants within my classroom. Action research is a methodology that is cyclical (McMillan, 2008) and is often used by teachers (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; McMillan, 2008). It has a reputation as being “a powerful

tool for change” (Cohen, Marion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 297). Kemmis and McTaggart (2005) describe the cycle, or spiral, as the following: “plan, act and observe, reflect, revised plan and so forth” (p. 564).



*Figure 2. The Action Research Spiral. Reprinted from *Participatory Action Research: Communication Action in the Public Sphere*, by Kemmis, S. and McTaggart, R., 2005, retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.473.4759&rep=rep1&type=pdf>*

This methodological framework has been used by other researchers in the context of second language education. As previously mentioned, Burns (2010) gave examples of many teachers who found success while using the action research methodology. Other examples include Kristmanson, Lafargue, and Culligan (2011) who used the action research spiral to explore teacher use of the language portfolio in their second language learning environments. In this case, the cycles consisted of meetings in professional learning communities, experimentation in their classrooms, and reflections on these experiences in order to revise and adapt practices. O’Shea (2017) also used an action research cycle to explore the use of portfolio-based language assessment in a study set in the adult English as a second language learning context. Based on the success researchers and teacher-researchers have had, and based on my research questions, I chose to conduct action research.

In her book *Doing Action Research in English Language Teaching: A Guide for Practitioners*, Burns (2010) has synthesized comments from multiple teachers whom had conducted classroom action research in order to provide the reader with genuine examples to support the constructs of the action research methodology. Burns explained how action research begins with the identification of a problematized practice or data. In my experience, when teachers suspect a problematized area within their practice and/or in data collected from students, teachers are often inspired to initiate change to improve practice, and thus to ultimately improve student success. My own journey to conduct action research commenced with the identification of a problematic situation – assessment data alongside my own observations led me to notice the extent of the gap between the students’ reading skillsets and the program’s reading expectations. It became evident that the gap did not permit for most students to experience success within the program.

To give direction and purpose to action research, it is of prime importance to establish relevant research questions – questions relating to a specific problematic issue the research will seek to address (Burns, 2010). Burns (2010) discussed the importance of developing questions that are clear and concise. She quotes Mason (2002), while explaining how the “what, why and how” (p. 30) of the study are important. In fact, she suggested eight questions to help her readers develop proper and effective questions in order to optimize the research success. Keeping these in mind, I developed my research questions, which are as follows:

- For the students whose reading level in grade 6 PIF is not at the reader in transition level, how did the reading intervention help close the gap between their

reading skills and the grade 6 PIF September expectation?

- What are the impacts of the foundational reading practices integrated into the grade 6 PIF class (i.e., explicit teaching and practice of graphemes and consonants, read-alouds as a class or a small group, guided reading, literacy centers promoting the acquisition of high frequency and thematic words, and reading comprehension)?

Prior to commencing action research, it is imperative to read the literature related to the context in which the action research will be done. Burns (2010) discussed several reasons why a literature review is necessary, especially for teacher-researchers. These reasons included the importance of refining research questions, of being knowledgeable in the specific subject area, and of attaining models for how to conduct research (p. 39). In order to engage in a problem-solving process, I read recent evidence-based theories on how students learn to read in a second or alternate language. I read literature that explained the development of the lower level processing skills. I also read on suggested best classroom practices to teach students how to read. I then connected these to my own teaching classroom practice and experience, and then determined what the application of these might look like within my own classroom. Once I had both my questions refined, and the understanding of recent literature on how students learn to read in a second or alternate language, I then further studied the action research methodology, and how to use it to address the research questions.

Keeping the cyclical nature of classroom action research in mind, I set out to discover whether or not a reading intervention based on implicit and explicit teaching of the lower level processing skills would help develop the students' reading proficiency,

and if so, to what extent might it make a difference in closing the gap between their reading skills and the program's expectations. Based on what I learned from the literature review, I designed a three phase action research cycle. Phase 1, or the collection of baseline data, included two evaluations. After a preliminary analysis based on the data from these evaluations, I devised a plan for Phase 2 of the cycle which focused on evidence-based learning activities to promote reading development. This phase comprised 3 full cycles of analyses related to the pedagogical interventions. The three step analysis of these data provided insights that allowed for the final phase of the research, which consisted of two evaluations similar to those of Phase 1. More detail of each phase will be provided later in the chapter. In order to situate this action research, I will first describe the context of the study and the pedagogical interventions used.

3.2 Participants, School and Timeline

The 17 participants of the study were from a convenience sample, meaning that I chose one of my Grade 6 PIF classes as the context for the study. The PIF program described in detail in Chapter 1 and 2 focuses on French language learning for students not enrolled in the FI program. Each class is 60 minutes in duration and is offered four to five days per six-day cycles. The class was situated in a public middle school (grades 6 to 8) in an urban area in New Brunswick. The participants were 11-12 years of age. The student body of the school in which the study took place is known for its diversity. Following the action research spiral described previously, my study commenced its preliminary evaluations October 26th, 2018 and ended with the final collection of data December 11th and 12th 2018.

In this following sections, I discuss the role of qualitative field notes and how these were collected and analyzed in this study as well as the data collection of each phase of the study. Phase 1 consisted of the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation and a running record. Phase 2 consisted of observational and individual field notes. Phase 3 consisted of, as in Phase 1, of the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation and a running record. Because the pre and post evaluations did not fully represent the participants' development, 4 participants were chosen as case studies. I discuss the qualitative data of each case study in Chapter 4.

3.3 Qualitative Field Notes

A primary goal of qualitative studies is to deepen understanding of certain phenomena or issues through the perspective of others within their contexts (McGill Qualitative Health Research Group, 2019). Thus, data collection is often comprised of observation and communication, and in the case of most teacher-researchers, evaluation. For this reason, careful and thoughtful use of field notes was essential to making sense of the classroom data I was gathering. In my study, the data were collected from individual participants, but the analyses were based on establishing patterns within my group of participants. I wanted to understand which lower level processing skills had been internalized and which needed more exposure in order to become mastered. As a teacher-researcher, my field notes were collected while the students were working. Phillippi and Lauderdale (2017) state that field notes are essential for qualitative researchers as a way to document data in context. They underscore the importance of field notes as "They create a record of the study unfolding over time and are exceedingly valuable in analysis." (Phillippi and Lauderdale, 2017, p. 383). Descriptive notes

relating to strengths and points to keep working on, as well as evidence of progress were collected. Notes were also taken on my perception of affective factors that students were exhibiting such as motivation, attitude and engagement while conducting the various activities.

3.4 Phase 1 – Collecting Baseline Data

Gathering this initial data was a necessary step prior to the implementation of the pedagogical interventions for the second phase of the action research cycle. Two measures were used to provide insights into the areas that needed to be emphasized or reviewed in order to enhance reading skill development. These data were also used to address the research questions.

3.4.1 Measure 1 - The Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation. The evaluation of the graphemes was conducted October 19th 2018. (See appendix E for evaluation.) The participants completed an evaluation of the basic French graphemes and their corresponding phonemes, which included the following graphemes: |a|; |e|; |i|, |y|; |o|, |au|, |eau|, |ô|; |u|; |é|, |er|, |ez|; |è|, |ê|, |ë|. The evaluation consisted of two parts. In the first part, the basic French graphemes were presented in isolation. Specifically, they were presented at random in three rows of five. Students were asked to read the graphemes out loud. In order to succeed, the students had to read the graphemes with accuracy. In the second part of the evaluation, the students were asked to read five sentences. Each sentence contained high frequency and thematic words seen in class prior to the evaluation. Within these selected words, the targeted graphemes were evaluated to determine if the student could correctly match the grapheme to the appropriate phoneme. Not all words, nor all graphemes within a word, were targeted for

this evaluation (e.g., “La tempête m’a fait peur.” In this sentence the phoneme /a/ in the words la and m’a were targeted as well as the sound /ê/ in tempête. The other graphemes were not assessed). In order to succeed, the students had to read with accuracy more often than not the basic French graphemes found within. If the student scored 50%, the point was given, thus rendering her or him successful. For both parts, the score noted was the average taken from each individual score. The analysis was based on a score to determine the percentage of success for each participant, and to identify the graphemes which had been problematic for a majority of the students.

3.4.2 Measure 2 - The Running Records. Initial Running Records were conducted October 31st and November 1st 2018. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the goal of these assessments is to assign an independent (what students can do alone) and instructional (what students can do with instructional support from the teacher) reading level to the students based on accuracy (decoding), fluency (includes sight word recognition), and comprehension. The analysis of these data was based on the scores and comments written on the running record evaluation sheet provided by GB+. The accuracy was calculated by using percentages. The fluency was noted based on teacher observation and interpretation, and the reading comprehension was calculated by using a numerical score system, where each correct answer was worth a point. The reading comprehension section contains literal, inferential, and in certain levels, application questions. The percentage given to the accuracy measure and the total points accumulated in the reading comprehension section determined whether the level used to conduct the running record reflected whether the text could be read independently by the

participant, could be used as an instructional text with the participant or was simply too advanced for the participant at that time.

The first set of data allowed me to gain a set of baseline data to help shape the lesson plans for the first cycle of Phase 2, and to later use to analyze the impact of the intervention. The second set of baseline data allowed me to gain a starting point in terms of vocabulary knowledge of both the high frequency and thematic words previously studied, and of their abilities to comprehend what they read. It also allowed me to gather baseline data on reading accuracy and fluency. As I revised my plan, I chose to increase the time spent focusing on the graphemes, the ones that proved to be problematic for many of the participants. I also decided upon activities that would enhance vocabulary development, in particular high frequency and thematic words, for both whole-group instruction and center work.

3.5 Phase 2 – The Intervention

The interventions took place during Phase 2 of the action research cycle and lasted 5 weeks; it included whole-class instruction and literacy centers. Literacy centers take many forms in different classrooms and I describe the literacy centers used in the study in section 3.4.2. The tables below briefly describes a typical lesson plan layout. On average, I would deliver two to three whole-class lessons per week followed by two classes of literacy centers. It always took two periods to complete the literacy centers due to the time needed for the guided reading component and the class size.

Table 1.

Whole-Class Lesson Plan

25 minutes	Bell Work
10 minutes	Building Blocks
10 minutes	Individual white board activity or game
10 minutes	Read-alouds
5 minutes	Revision, discussion, closing

Table 2.

Literacy Centers Lesson Plan

5 minutes	Explain centers for the day
45 minutes	Centers
5 minutes	Game (or other activity) to solidify learning
5 minutes	Revision, discussion, closing

The following section will highlight each activity. Please note that two centers focused on writing. These will not be mentioned below.

3.5.1 Whole-class activities

3.5.1.1 Bell Work. At the beginning of each instructional period, students began with a Bell Work activity. Bell Work activities are usually conducted during the first five to ten minutes of an instructional period, and serve to engage students with the upcoming lesson as soon as they enter the classroom. During my study, students began the Bell Work while I tended to other matters (i.e. giving instruction to an educational assistant, taking attendance). Although the Bell Work aimed at activating prior knowledge relevant to the upcoming lesson, if students did not understand the Bell Work, they were instructed to ask other students within their seating group arrangement for peer support until I was ready to commence the instructional period. The Bell Work activity had the following purposes: First, it aimed at developing oral communication skills in a personal,

meaningful, and differentiated manner. One student may be able to produce a one-sentence answer while another could produce a coherent multi-phrase statement. Second, it introduced targeted high frequency and thematic words by giving the students the chance to practice oral, reading, and writing skills in short sessions. Third, this activity focused on authentic social engagement. Fourth, it allowed for differentiated feedback. Data were collected from student work.

Vocabulary knowledge was the primary focus of the Bell Work. This oral activity was done with the Smart Board. It was composed of one or two sentences that served as a written model for the answers, and a question prompt. Each Bell Work activity was accompanied by pictures to support understanding and proper transfer of meaning. Explicit teaching of new sentence structure and vocabulary were conducted. The first step was to ensure student comprehension of both the model sentences and of the question. The second step, following the oral communication steps prescribed by the PIF curriculum (see appendix A), was for students to personalize their answer to the question, and to practice with a partner or in a small group. During this activity, the teacher's role was to help students formulate their personal and meaningful answers. Once the teacher and students themselves felt that they had properly communicated a personal and meaningful answer, students then wrote their own answers down. In order to render this activity inclusive, students either copied the model sentences, question and answers in a scribbler or they were provided with photocopies as to only have their personal answer to copy. (See appendix B to see the first page of the Bell Work used in the study.)

3.5.1.2 Building Blocks. The Building Blocks activity followed the Bell Work activity. It focused primarily on the development of lower level processing skills (thus

the building blocks of reading). The Building Blocks activity had the following purposes: First, it provided a platform for the explicit teaching and practice of certain grapheme-phoneme relationships in short sessions. Second, it gave the students additional exposure to help promote language acquisition, and to transfer from one context to another certain lower level processing skills practiced in the Bell Work.

The French graphemes and corresponding phonemes were the primary focus of the Building Blocks. This activity was also done with the Smart Board. As with the Bell Work, each slide contained many pictures to support learning. The Building Blocks were essentially short texts that aimed at the acquisition of certain grapheme-phoneme relationships while recycling high frequency and thematic words used in the Bell Work. After I read the text, students identified the targeted grapheme-phonemes and then read the text aloud. These short texts were comparable to the word count and content of a B or C level book (i.e., reading texts intended for emergent readers as described in detail in Chapter 2). The order of the graphemes and consonants presented followed the order found in Bourgoin and Deveaux (2016)'s reading-related resource entitled *Ville Bons Sons*. This pedagogical resource focuses on the development of the French graphemes, and their respective phonemes by presenting them in thematic contexts and in a particular order. (See appendix C to view the first page of the Building Blocks activity done in the study.)

3.5.1.3 Individual white board activity. In order to activate working memory and to review previously taught knowledge, the individual white board activity offered an interactive way to review and practice the lower level processing skills (including orthography of certain words with illicit lettering). The French graphemes and

corresponding phonemes as well as vocabulary knowledge were the prime focus on the individual white board activity. This activity was done using individual white boards and dry-erase markers. Following the Building Block activity, students were asked to write certain isolated graphemes (thus the grapheme itself) or words that contained the targeted grapheme on their individual white board. As they finished writing, they raised their individual white boards in my direction and waited for feedback. If the grapheme or word was misspelled, I would read aloud what they had written, thus allowing the students to hear their chosen grapheme to encourage self-correction. The student would then try again and rewrite the grapheme or part of the word that was not correct by consulting the grapheme or word wall.

The individual white board activity, as the Bell Work and the Building Blocks activities, had many purposes. First, it motivated students to consult the grapheme wall, which showed words that contained targeted grapheme-phoneme connections (e.g., for the following graphemes *et/ez/er/é*, which all correspond to the same phoneme, words such as *été*, *école*, *manger* would be listed) . This activity targeted graphemes, consonants, words with illicit lettering (such as the word *yeux*), and high frequency and thematic words as to promote memorization. Untaught graphemes or words containing untaught graphemes were not used in this activity. Second, it promoted movement and social interaction as students discussed what grapheme made what sound as they waited for feedback. Third, it allowed for quick observations of individual student development. Data were collected through observation of individual white board responses.

3.5.1.4 Read-alouds. While the individual white board activity focused on retrieving information from memory, the read-alouds focused on using the previously

learned lower processing skills in context. Fluency, accuracy and vocabulary knowledge were the primary focus on the read-alouds. This activity was done on the Smart Board. The books used were either retrieved from the RAZ A-Z website or composed by myself. To serve as a model, I did the first reading of the book. Following the first reading, students were encouraged to point out the words or the part of the book they did not understand. Then, students read the book as a class (i.e., choral reading). The second reading, presented orally, was followed by reading comprehension questions. These consisted of literal, inferential, and application questions meaning that students were asked to make links between the content of the book and their personal knowledge and/or experiences. Finally, I used the book to deliver a grammatical mini-lesson or a lesson on a particular grapheme using explicit teaching.

3.5.1.5 Game. There are various reasons why games are often used by teachers in FSL classes. In the context of this study, games were most often played to help promote the memorization of certain word banks relating to particular thematic or high-frequency words (e.g., emotions, prepositions, etc.). In order to promote the development of lower level processing skills, the games reviewed and recycled words and were usually played on the interactive SmartBoard. Each game was constructed on a single slide, and had pictures to support learning and/or to provide a prompt for memory retrieval. Some games simply asked the students to describe the pictures. For example, there were game designed to promote the acquisition of the prepositions of place using images (e.g., describe the position of the apple relative to the desk).

3.5.1.6 Revision, discussion, and closing. At the end of each class, time was allotted to review the learning goals and to hold a quick discussion where students were

encouraged to ask questions in French pertaining to the activities of the day. Finally, I explained the plan for the following class.

3.5.2 Literacy centers. For the purpose of my study, literacy centers were small group activities that targeted previously-taught lessons. Repetition of taught concepts and skills through tactile and engaging games, cue card activities or other allowed for internalization of skills to occur. Following the analysis of the running record scores, a reading formative assessment tool, each student was assigned to a group. These groups were reflective of students with comparable reading skills, and thus the reading level attained on the running record. Each group was composed of four students. It is important to reemphasize the fact that student-led work done in centers was all tied to the theme studied, and was composed of content already seen, resulting in increasing the exposure to previously taught content.

3.5.2.1 Guided reading. While the other centers were either student-lead or supervised by the pre-service teacher who was working in my classroom at the time, I led the guided reading center. This center allowed me to model how to read, ask reading comprehension questions, listen to each participant read individually, and conduct a mini-lesson prior to closing. This center offered the opportunity to take field notes on each individual participant. Field notes were taken on reading precision, fluency, and comprehension.

3.5.2.2 Independent or pair reading. With books previously studied in the guided reading center, students were asked to read independently or in pairs. Follow-up questions were used to assess reading comprehension. This center helped solidify what was taught during the guided reading center. If done in pairs, it also allowed for students

to help one another as they discussed and wrote the answers to the questions on a small white board. Observations were made by reviewing responses on individual white boards.

3.5.2.3 Graphemes and phonemes. This center was often supervised by the pre-service teacher. Students were given small cards. On one side, there was a grapheme presented in isolation. The student was asked to read out loud the corresponding phoneme. On the back of each card was a sentence with a high frequency word within which contained that grapheme. As a group, the participants helped each other in solidifying this particular skill.

3.5.2.4 Oral communication. In these types of activities, students are presented with cards. On one side, there was either a picture or a question. On the other side, there was either a word or an answer, if the question was not an open-ended question. (See appendix D for an example of cards.)

3.5.3 The cycles of the classroom action research. Phase 2 had 3 complete cycles. Below, I describe the data collection and analysis of each cycle. In all 3 cycles, field notes extensive field notes were taken. Both the individual and observational field notes were taken on paper during the instructional period, and typed in more detail afterwards.

3.5.3.1 Cycle 2. The whole-class lesson plans and centers lesson plan were based on the data of the preliminary analysis. From these results, I made decisions about how much instructional time to spend on the practice of particular graphemes and the development of targeted high frequency and thematic words. During the whole-class activities, the data collection took the form of artifacts from the Bell Work and

observational notes from the Building Blocks activities. During the learning centers, the data collection took the form of individualized field notes from the guided reading center (i.e., grid on which notes were recorded related to fluency, accuracy, and comprehension) and artifacts from the other centers. The data were analyzed and a revised plan was created.

3.5.3.2 Cycle 3. In cycle 3, the whole class lesson plan and centers lesson plan were, as in cycle 2, based on reflections on and analysis of the data collected in the previous cycle's reflection of the observations of data. Throughout this phase extensive field notes were kept to keep track of the progress made (and gaps remaining) with respect to grapheme and corresponding phoneme recognitions (decoding skills), vocabulary knowledge, and reading comprehension. These data supported the final cycle in the second phase of data collection which involved goal setting related to language acquisition.

3.5.3.3 Cycle 4. Cycle 4 mirrored cycle 3 in terms of following the action research model. However, the reflections based on the data analysis and interpretations from cycle 3 served to revise my instructional plan for cycle 4. Additionally, analyses from both cycles informed future teaching practices outside the context of this study. I will discuss the results of these analyses in the next chapter. For the purpose of this study, cycle 4 of Phase 2 was the final cycle prior to Phase 3, the Final Assessment.

3.6 Phase 3 – Final Data Collection

Phase 3 consisted of the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation and a Running Record. In essence, the evaluations administered in Phase 3 mirrored in format and in administration the evaluation conducted in Phase 1 (see appendix F for evaluation).

However, additional graphemes were evaluated in Phase 3. These included the following \ai\, \ei \, \et, \s\, \ç\, \f\, \ph\, \ch\, \b\, \d\, \oi\, \z\ and \j\. These took place December 10th to December 12th 2018. The running record was conducted using a level D book, as in the preliminary analysis. With the final data collection, analyses were conducted in order to address the research questions. The following table summarizes the three phases of the action research.

Table 3.

Summary of Data Collection

Phase	Timeline	Data Collected and Analyzed
Phase 1: Baseline data collection	October-November 2018	- Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation-Running Records
Phase 2: Instruction and Interventions	Cycle 2: November 2 nd 2018 Cycle 3: November 16 th 2018 Cycle 4: November 28 th 2018	- Artifacts from Bell Work activity (e.g., written work in students' scribbler- see Appendix B) - Teacher observations from Building Blocks activity (see Appendix C) - Teacher observations for the read-alouds activity - Artifacts from centers (Appendix D), including guided reading notes
Phase 3- Final Assessment	December 2018	- Evaluation of graphemes - Running Records

These three data collection and analysis phases allowed me to carefully plan and articulate my research steps by continuing with the practices that were shown to be effective and by modifying or changing those that were shown to be less effective with my group of participants. It is essential that action research be conducted in such a way as to honor each cycle, their respective roles, and the way in which they interrelate with

one another. As explained by Burns (2010), these cycles enable the teacher-researchers to improve practice by replanning lessons and modifying practice based on reflections done with the data collected. Action research is dynamic and is based on data, reflections, and the willingness to continually modify the plan or practice (Burns, 2010).

In order to ensure that this study was conducted effectively, I also examined concepts of validity, reliability, as well as ethical considerations inherent in action research.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

In this section, I will discuss validity in regard to my study. I will start by defining validity in general, then I will describe the threats to validity the study faced, and explain how I addressed these in my study to ensure validity. Next, I will discuss the reliability of my study.

3.7.1 Validity. Within the context of my study, according to Moss, Girard, and Haniford (2006), validity rested on the soundness of the data I chose to gather, the interpretations I made, and the next steps I planned. Golafshani (2003) quoted Joppe (2000) to underscore the correlation between the intent, and what is truly being studied to be a measure of validity. Internal validity stems from the participants while external validity stems from the researcher (Creswell, 2003). In this study, internal validity was more involved with the prior knowledge and experiences of the students while the external validity was more involved with the researcher's ability to correctly gather and interpret the data.

The possible greatest internal validity threat within the study was the background vocabulary knowledge needed to form comprehension. The reading level of a student

will be different when reading on different topics. A student may reach a level F, for example, with a book that talks about plants, but would reach a level J with a book that talks about animals. With the Running Records, all participants were evaluated at a level D because the content of the text correlated with the unit studied. A possible external validity threat within the study was to overlook minor discrepancies in favor of the student or to overscore a student on a running record post-test in order to reflect a more effective intervention. In order to counter this threat, the pre-service teacher which whom I worked was instructed in the use of Running Records and monitored the evaluations as I administered them. Validity was also enhanced due to the fact that I have been formally trained to use the Running Records, and I have also trained two FILA teachers on how to use this resource last year. In terms of reliability, I followed the procedures undertaken by Dicks and Bourgoin (2015) for collecting and analyzing Running Records instrument.

3.7.2 Reliability. Reliability looks at the accuracy of interpretation and observation (McMillan, 2008). Within the educational research context, reliability is also “a synonym for dependability, consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents” (Colhen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 146). In the present study, I attended to reliability through thoughtful reflection through field notes. In particular, I observed strengths and challenges of the students’ reading skills and comprehension abilities, and made careful and detailed notes that would not only contribute to reliability of the data but also to the next steps within the action research methodology. My interpretations were also guided by my 12 years of teaching experience

and by my drive to constantly consider my research questions and the reading-related literature. I was also mindful of my own biases and hopes for this study.

Moreover, to ensure some degree of consistency within the NB IF/PIF context, Running Records were used. This is a common and validated reading assessment instrument used in the province by many teachers and researchers. As noted prior, this instrument was also used in Dicks and Bourgoïn's 2015 study.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Several ethical issues must be taken into consideration prior to undertaking classroom action research. In 2002, the Research Ethics Office at the University of Alberta published guidelines to follow when conducting research with minors. They highlight the pressure to participate, confidentiality of data, anonymity of participants, and educational value as ethical considerations. Within the context of this study, all students participated as I believed the intervention to be best practice, and attention was given to ensure that the interventions corresponded to the communicative functions emphasized by each of the proposed units of the PIF program. The goal of the study was to teach the lower level processing skills in order to close the gap between student reading skills and curricular expectations in reading. However, although they participated in all aspects of the instruction, I needed to obtain permissions in order to use their data for the study as well as in my own teaching practice.

For this reason, parents, guardians, and students were well informed that my main concern as a teacher was and is the success of my students, the development of the French language, and the sharing of the French culture. Guardians, parents, and students were well informed that there would be no negative consequences associated with

choosing to not participate or to withdraw from the study at any point. (See appendix G for parent/guardian informed consent letter.) Additionally, during the data interpretations and discussion sections of the study, data presented were never linked to any particular character trait or person. Names of students were not revealed nor were any disabilities, ethnicities, or any other information that may lead an individual to trace the information to a particular student. Because this was an action research study, the main aim was the improvement of teaching practice and there was no reason students should be identified. Each of these elements listed above was addressed in the Research Ethics Board (REB) application form mandatory for all research involving human participants at the University of New Brunswick.

3.9 Conclusion

This study implemented a reading intervention within a grade 6 PIF classroom in order to attempt to close the gap between the students' reading skills at the end of the IF program and the grade 6 PIF September reading expectations. The research questions driving this study focused on evidence-based interventions related to the development of lower level processing skills required for reading. For this reason, classroom action research seemed to be a good fit. During my study, I engaged in a cyclical problem-solving process in order to increase my students' reading proficiency so that they could be more successful within the PIF program.

The classroom action research adopted in this study consisted of two pre and post evaluations. These were later compared to evaluate the efficacy of the practices used in this study by looking at the development of reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension of each participant. The results from these comparisons were used to answer the research

questions. Phase 2 of the study, or the action research cycles, consisted of teaching the lower level processing skills through whole-class and literacy center activities. During these activities, observational and field notes were taken. These were then analyzed, and based on the data, modifications were made to the lessons and centers of the following cycle.

The action research commenced with the collection of preliminary data in order to establish a baseline from which pedagogical interventions were established. During the action research cycles, data were collected through a variety of means during both whole-class and center activities. The action research concluded with the collection and analysis of post-test data. In the following chapter, I will share the results of the data collection and analysis for each of the three phases. The purpose of the study will frame the discussion of these results in the last chapter.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

In this chapter I begin by describing the three phases of this study while making connections between the data, the components of the action research cycle and the research questions. Then, I discuss and compare the evaluation results of Phase 1 and Phase 3. While doing so, I highlight the progression of 4 participants in order to demonstrate individual development of reading skills. The data presented in percentages in this chapter were collected and noted as the mean scores for the class participants. Although quantitative data is presented, it is done so to reinforce the qualitative data collected and analyzed throughout this qualitative study.

4.1 Phase 1: Collecting Baseline data

As explained in the previous chapter, the basic French graphemes and their corresponding phonemes were taught prior to the commencement of the study as they were part of my regular teaching practice. Due to the time necessary to gather the proper permissions from different stakeholders, my study began on October 19th 2018 with the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation.

4.1.1 The Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation. Below are the results of the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation.

Table 4.

Baseline Data: The Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation Results

Preliminary Analysis	Grapheme-phoneme relationships in isolation	Grapheme-phoneme relationships in context	Date
Basic French graphemes	55%	87%	October 2018

As shown in Table 4, students have a better knowledge of graphemes and their corresponding phonemes in context than in isolation. The participants succeeded significantly higher with the graphemes presented in context. Participant obtained a success rate of 87% on the grapheme-phoneme relationships in context, while attaining 55% in isolation. In addition, the data demonstrated that certain grapheme-phoneme relationships in isolation were more challenging to the participants than others. The graphemes that are non-existent in English and the graphemes that do not share the same phoneme in English and in French were more challenging than the graphemes and corresponding phonemes that are similar in both French and English. The following table will provide further details on the rate of success of each grapheme-phoneme relationship, both in isolation and in context.

Table 5.

Success Rate of the Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation

Graphemes	Results of corresponding phonemes in isolation	Results of corresponding phonemes in context	Graphemes	Results of corresponding phonemes in isolation	Results of corresponding phonemes in context
\a\	79%	100%	\u\	43%	100%
\e\	23%	93%	\é\	57%	93%
\i\	64%	100%	\er\	36%	71%
\y\	71%	100%	\ez\	50%	36%
\o\	86%	100%	\è\	43%	86%
\au\	71%	93%	\ê\	21%	79%
\eau\	64%	64%	\ë\	29%	93%
\ô\	93%	100%			

As indicated in Table 5, in terms of the graphemes presented in isolation, the results demonstrated that the grapheme-phoneme relationships with the highest success rates were \ô\ and \o\. Likewise, in terms of the graphemes presented in context, the results demonstrated that the grapheme-phoneme relationships with the highest success

rates were /a/, /i/, /y/, /o/, /ô/ and /u/. In terms of grapheme-phoneme relationships that proved to be challenging, the results demonstrated that the graphemes /ê/, /e/, /ë/ and /u/ presented in isolation and the grapheme /ez/ presented in context was most challenging. Interestingly, the results showed that the graphemes-phoneme relationships with the greatest margin of difference between the presentation of the same grapheme in isolation and in context involved the graphemes /e/, /ë/ and /ê/, which were amongst the most challenging when presented in isolation. Finally, the success rate of the grapheme-phoneme relationship in reference to the grapheme /ez/ was higher when presented in isolation. A plausible explanation would be that the word “venez” was often spoken in class, but may not have been seen in written form. Moreover, two students read “viens” when reading that word.

Based on my reflections on these data, I decided to increase the time spent practicing the graphemes and their corresponding phonemes both in isolation and in context, specifically those that students found most challenging. This was accomplished by increasing the time spent with the individual white board activity, and by spending more time focusing on these graphemes during other activities, such as the read-alouds. I also decided to increase the frequency of the exposure to these sound-symbol combinations by integrating a literacy center focusing on the particular grapheme-phoneme relationships presented in isolation and in context. Instruction in this center used word cards. On one side of the card, the grapheme was presented in isolation. On the other side, I included a short sentence including a high frequency word or thematic word that was familiar to the students. The targeted grapheme was also highlighted within the word. Such words included “regarde,” “bonjour” and “deux.” This center,

along with the increase in practice of these during the whole-class activities, would potentially allow the students to be exposed to the previously-taught and currently being taught graphemes both in isolation and in context, and thus in several meaningful situations. During the read-aloud activities, for example, I made sure to conduct mini-lessons with the less familiar graphemes.

4.1.2 The Running Records. For the purpose of this study, which was focused on instructional practice and improvements, results from the instructional reading assessment level was considered to be the most useful. It is important to note that, although data relating to specific reading levels for a number of participants will be presented, these numerical data are not as important to the present study as was the analyses and comparisons related to the participants' development of accuracy, vocabulary knowledge, and comprehension. In order to reflect how the Running Records were intended in this study, the method of conducting these was modified. Instead of beginning each participant with a level A text, and jumping by a single level when evidence displayed that the participants' reading level was above that of the last tested level, two levels were used in this study – a level B text during Phase 1 and a level D text during Phase 2. The table below provides a general indication of the participants' reading skills based on the running record results.

Table 6:

Baseline Data: The Individual Running Records

Pre – tests	Score (instructional)	Date
Running Records	Below B – 13/17 B – 1/17 Above B – 3/17 (<i>1 of these is below a level D instructional</i>)	October 31 st – November 1 st

Despite the curricular expectation of students having attained the reader in transition level (levels G to M independent) by grade 6, the results revealed that a minimum of 88% of the participants, according to Fountas and Pinnell (2017)'s descriptors, are early emergent readers (levels AA-D). Of the participants, 12% (or two participants) may have been readers in transition.

4.1.3 Case studies of Phase 1 – Collecting Baseline Data.

From the Running Records, I evaluated reading accuracy, ability to retell and reading comprehension. According to scoring standards, the following was used to determine the levels: In reading accuracy, 90 – 95% is considered instructional thus the level to be used to instruct the student. Over 95% is considered an independent reader, whereas under 90% is considered too difficult. In retell abilities, the student is considered at instructional level if three of the following four criteria are met: 1) without looking at the book, retells in chronological order the main events; 2) adds supporting detail; 3) interprets visual information; and 4) uses appropriate vocabulary. If all four criteria were met, the retell abilities were noted as excellent, whereas if two or less were met, the retell abilities were noted as insufficient for that level. In reading comprehension abilities, both literal and deductive questions are provided. Each level has a set amount of both types of questions and a specific number of answers needed to determine the level of the student. The book used in this phase, for example, contains three literal questions and one deductive question. The student was considered at instructional level if three of the four questions was answered correctly. Four correct answers is considered excellent whereas two or less correct answers is considered insufficient for that level.

In order to provide finer details regarding the results of the participants' reading skills, I have selected four participants. The first two participants, Vanessa and Romeo, scored below a B instructional level on the running record. The third participant, Greg, scored a B instructional level on the running record and the fourth participant, Martina, scored above the B instructional level on the running record. With all four participants, a grapheme evaluation and a Running Record with the same level B book was conducted. Below is a profile of each participant:

4.1.3.1 Vanessa. During the Running Record, Vanessa was below a B instructional level. During the evaluation, she was above the B independent level in reading accuracy. In both the retell and the comprehension questions, she was below a B instructional level. In sum, Vanessa's precision and decoding skills were at a higher level than her ability to retell or comprehend questions at the same level suggesting that attention on vocabulary knowledge might benefit her reading development. On the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, Vanessa scored 53% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 93% with the graphemes presented in context.

4.1.3.2 Romeo. During the Running Record, Romeo was below a B instructional level. During the evaluation, he was below the B instructional level in reading accuracy. In the retell, he proved to be at a B instructional level and in the comprehension questions. In sum, Romeo's ability to retell and to answer questions pertaining to the text were at a higher level than his precision and decoding skills at the same level suggesting that attention to grapheme-phoneme relationships would greatly benefit his reading development. In the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, Romeo scored 60%

with the graphemes presented in isolation and 87% with the graphemes presented in context.

4.1.3.3 Greg. During the running record evaluation, Greg was at a B instructional level, and thus was a B instructional level in reading accuracy, in retell and in reading comprehension. In sum, both Greg's precision and decoding skills, and ability to retell and answer questions were all relatively at the same level. In the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, Greg scored 73% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 93% with the graphemes presented in context.

4.1.3.4 Martina. During the Running Record evaluation, Martina was above a B instructional level. During the evaluation conducted with a level D text, she was at D independent level in her reading accuracy. In the retell, she was at a D instructional level and in the comprehension questions, she was below a D instructional level. In sum, Martina's ability to read with precision and to decode far exceeded her ability to answer questions pertaining to the text suggesting that attention to vocabulary knowledge would greatly benefit her reading development. Martina was chosen as a case study because she scored highest amongst the participants. In the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, Martina scored 73% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 100% with the graphemes presented in context.

Looking at the Running Records, all four participants read with accuracy the words "viens," "ici," "dit," "maman," "les," and "regarde." This indicated the possibility that these are sight words. The only word all four participants did not read with precision is the word "singe." In fact, the words "maman," "les," "des," and "regarde" were read

with accuracy by all participants, and the words “dit” and “ici” were read with accuracy by 88% of the participants.

When looking at the graphemes presented in isolation on the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, the four participants read out loud with accuracy the following graphemes: |i|, |a|, |au| and |y|. When looking at the graphemes presented in context within the same evaluation, the four participants read out loud with accuracy the following graphemes: |o|, |i|, |a|, |è|, |au|, |é|, |y|, |ô|, |u|, |ë| and |e|. In the second part of the grapheme-phoneme evaluation, the following words were read with accuracy by the four participants: “de,” “est,” “sur,” “la,” “rue,” “voir,” “et,” “chien,” “ils,” “ensemble,” “m’,” “a,” “fait,” “il,” “y,” “l’,” “sur,” “ma,” “chaise,” “au,” “j’,” “ai,” “pizza,” “fromage,” “mon,” “père,” “Noël,” “pour” and “chanter.” In fact, the words “sur,” “la,” “m’,” “a,” “ma,” “il,” “y” and “pizza” were read with accuracy by all participants, and the words “et,” “pour,” and “Noël” were read accurately by 94% of the participants.

Based on the analysis of these data, I decided for Phase 2 to increase the focus placed on the acquisition of the high frequency (see Appendix H) and thematic words, and to select within the 200 most frequently seen words about 20 to focus on within an instructional period. Each instructional period was composed of high frequency and thematic words. Amongst others, the following high frequency words were often used: “en,” “j/je,” “aimer,” “manger,” “famille,” “fête,” “dehors,” “jouer,” “aussi,” “parce que” and “pourquoi.” Amongst others, the following thematic words were often used: “automne,” “célébrer,” “tomber,” “souper,” “anniversaire” and “feuilles.”

These words were studied and practiced in the Bell Work, the Building Blocks and the read-aloud activities. Most were also seen in the guided reading center.

In attempts to recycle certain high frequency and thematic words, I chose the books to read for the read aloud activities that were not only following the same theme, but that had certain targeted high frequency and thematic words. November 2nd, for example, the Bell Work focused on the word, amongst others, “anniversaire.” The read-aloud activity was conducted with the book *un anniversaire*. Finally, I chose to create a center that focused on the acquisition of thematic words and made sure to incorporate within it the targeted high frequency words and pictures to support learning. In this center, the participants worked in groups of two or three to support each other’s learning. Although this center was designed for the participants to look at one side of the card and guess what the thematic word was prior to verifying by flipping the card, they mostly chose to conduct this center by adopting the roles of teacher and student(s). I found it to be effective for the students and also for data collection (field notes) and formative assessment as I could listen and observe without disrupting the flow of the activity.

4.2 Phase 2: The Intervention

Following an analysis and interpretation of data of Phase 1, lesson plans for Phase 2 was created. The second phase, entitled Instruction and Interventions, followed three distinct cycles of “plan, act and observe, reflect, revised plan and so forth” (p. 564) the of Kemmis and McTaggart (2005) action research spiral. Each cycle in this phase had two parts: whole-class activities and literacy centers activities.

4.2.1 Cycle 2. Cycle 2 commenced November 1st and ended November 15th 2018. This cycle included eight PIF classes. Following the interpretations, analysis and reflections of my baseline data, I chose to concentrate on the lower processing skills, more specifically on the acquisition of the French grapheme-phoneme relationships and

of the high frequency words. During the read aloud activities and the independent reading center (done individually, with a partner or in small groups), the following books, amongst others, were used: *C'est l'automne* (AA), *Maria compte les citrouilles* (A), *Un anniversaire* (C) and *La météo* (I wrote this text which corresponded to instructional level B). The book *Un anniversaire* was used to highlight the graphemes \s\, \et\ and \ai\. It was also used to highlight the words (or group of words) “on va,” “anniversaire,” “célébrer,” “acheter,” “jouet” and “jouer”. The book *C'est l'automne* was used to highlight the words (or group of words) “c'est,” “l'automne,” “feuille” and “citrouille.” The book *Maria compte les citrouilles* was used to highlight the numbers from one to seven, and the words “a” and “citrouille.” The book *La météo* was used to highlight the grapheme \ei\. It was also used to highlight the words (or group of words) “en automne,” “aujourd'hui,” “il fait” and “c'est.” The Bell Work and Building Block activities contained words that are repeated within these books, thus making these books an additional exposure to the targeted words being studied and used (see table below for details on high frequency words). The following table will list the books and the mini-lessons done during the guided reading center. Please note that not all books were used by every reading group. Once these books had been used in the guided reading center, they were added to the independent reading center.

Table 7.

Guided Reading Center Data Cycle 2

Book	Mini-lesson (grapheme-phoneme relationship)	Mini-lesson (high frequency and thematic words)
<i>Maria compte les citrouilles</i>	\s\ at the end of nouns (thus silent s)	Thematic: “trois,” “quatre,” “cinq,” “six” and “sept”

		High frequency: “a,” “beaucoup,” “un” and “deux”
<i>Le souper de l’Action de grâce</i>	ez , é , s	Thematic: “a vu” and “sont” High frequency: “souper,” “arrivés” and “sauce”
<i>Deux nouvelles bicyclettes</i>	-ent , et , ette	High frequency: “et,” “est,” “sont” and “a”
<i>La météo</i>	é , ê , ei , ai	Thematic: “pluie” High frequency: “c’est,” “aujourd’hui,” “il,” “fait,” “neige” and “soleil”
<i>Quel temps fait-il aujourd’hui?</i>	é , ê , ei , ai	Thematic: “imperméable,” “glacial,” “savoir,” “vêtement” and “choses” High frequency: “lorsque” and “il”

The sources of data included artifacts from the Bell Work activity, observational field notes from the Building Blocks and the individual white board activities as well as the various centers and finally, individual field notes from the guided reading center. In reference to **Question 1**, the data collected in phase 2 enabled analysis and interpretation of the impacts the fundamental reading practices had on the development of the lower level processing skills by shedding light on the participants’ progress in attaining mastery of the graphemes and their corresponding phonemes in isolation and in context, and in the acquisition of the high frequency words. The remainder of this section will describe the data from various sources, such as the artifacts and observational and individual field notes from the whole-class and center activities, the interpretation, analysis, my reflections and the implications of these for the next cycle.

4.2.1.1 Graphemes in isolation. During this cycle, the following graphemes and their corresponding phonemes were studied: |ai-|, |ei|, |et|; |s| and |ç|. During the

individual white board activity, it was noted that grapheme-phoneme relationships corresponding to the graphemes \s\ and \ç\ were easily mastered. It was also noted that the participants' experienced difficulty differentiating between the corresponding phoneme to the grapheme \-et\, and the sound that makes the word *et* (observational field notes, November 1st; November 5th; November 6th). This is why, for example, the book *Deux nouvelles bicyclettes* was chosen as one of the books used for guided reading.

Based on my interpretations and analysis of the data, I determined that graphemes in both French and English that share the same phoneme, such as the grapheme \s\ were quickly mastered. I also determined that the ability to recall a phoneme associated with a particular grapheme is increased when linking the grapheme and its corresponding phoneme to previously acquired knowledge. For example, the students were told that the grapheme \ç\ had a snake tail because the word containing the grapheme \ç\ makes the sound of a snake when in front of the letters 'a', 'o' or 'u' thus changing the hard *c* sound to a soft *c* sound. Another cue that promoted acquisition was to link the grapheme in isolation with a well-rehearsed word. For example, during the study, the linking of the phoneme corresponding to the grapheme \é\ to the pronunciation of the word "école" was often practiced when the grapheme-phoneme relationship associated with that phoneme was identified as challenging. Based on my reflections, when practicing the grapheme-phoneme relationships in isolation, I decided to link particular grapheme-phoneme relationships to well-rehearsed high frequency and/or thematic words prior to revealing the corresponding phoneme to a particular grapheme. This practice served to support the learning, thus increasing the chances of these to transfer from working memory to long-term memory.

4.2.1.2 Graphemes in context and high frequency words. During the guided reading center, I noted that the participants experienced difficulty with particular grapheme-phoneme relationships less encountered in reading activities, such as with the grapheme \ez\ (individual field notes, November 14th). I also noticed that certain phoneme-grapheme relationships associated with graphemes containing accents were challenging to differentiate, such as with the graphemes \é\ and \è\ (observational notes, November 6th, November 14th). Also, for students whose first language is English, accents are not used, so this adds a layer of complexity to the decoding of these sounds.

During the Building Blocks activity, students began orally formulating personal and meaningful answers using words that had been internalized. These included the words “journée,” “école” and “ami” (observational field notes, November 2nd, November 5th). During the guided reading center, for certain words, I also observed that participants sometimes guessed false meanings from prior knowledge regardless of the pictures or content in the books. For example, while conducting a lesson with the book *Le souper de l’Action de grâce*, most reading groups thought that the word “souper” meant a type of soup – a Thanksgiving soup to be precise (individual field notes, November 14th). For other words presented in text, I gleaned that the participants were unable to deduce any meaning from certain words (e.g., words that were not cognates or in familiar word families), which hindered their ability to comprehend the text. During the same lesson, for example, the most common words questioned by the participants were: “sont arrivés,” “venez,” “prêt” and “vu” (observational field notes, November 14th). Three of these words were not cognates or nouns which may explain why gleaning meaning was

difficult. Concrete nouns tend to be more easily associated with mental images and thus easier to memorize than conjugated verbs, for example.

Based on my interpretations and analysis of the data, I determined that certain graphemes less encountered in text and graphemes containing accents would need more exposure through various reading activities and scaffolding in the form of linking these to well-rehearsed high frequency or thematic words in order for the grapheme-phoneme relationship to be transferred into long-term memory. The grapheme \é\, for example, was pointed out in read-alouds, guided reading books, and words containing that grapheme were practiced during the individual white board activity. In reference to the acquisition of high frequency words, I also observed that it was important to question the students on the meaning of these, and to give them the opportunity to question the meaning of unknown words in order to ensure that the students were connecting the correct meaning to these words. I also noticed that small variations of a word does not guarantee a transfer in recognition of that word. For example, participants who recognize the word “voir” may not recognize the word “vu” (Individual field notes, November 14th). The variation of words, such as in this example, was explained during the guided reading mini lesson session. When developing the lower level processing skills, the acquisition of the high frequency words is integral, thus students should be exposed to these in as many authentic situations as possible, and if they forget what they mean, should be provided aural and visual reminders.

Finally, I also found it important to connect the newly acquired word to previously acquired knowledge. At this stage of language development, it was noted that it was an efficient method in terms of time and precision to clarify a specific word

meaning when conducting a lesson in French to simply state in English the meaning of the French word (individual field notes, November 14th). It is important to note, however, that the use of English did not precede other linguistic cues, such as pictures, gestures or examples in attempts to elicit the right meaning from the students.

Upon reflection, I decided to increase the amount of time dedicated to practicing the basic French graphemes containing accents and their corresponding phonemes. I also decided to conduct an additional mini-lesson on the grapheme /ez/ which included its corresponding phoneme and its use as a verb ending. The lesson, which focused on teaching this explicitly seemed to have helped the participants as they were able to connect the grapheme to its use as a verb ending (lesson conducted November 21st). I also decided to allocate time when doing the Bell Work, Building Block, read-aloud and guided reading activities to do comprehension checks for the targeted words that may be misinterpreted and also to allow them to indicate unknown words so that the English equivalent or quick explanations could be given. Finally, I decided to keep the classroom word wall updated with both the thematic words and high frequency words we were working towards transferring into long-term memory.

4.2.2 Cycle 3. Cycle 3 commenced November 16th and ended November 29th 2018. This cycle included 7 PIF classes. Following the interpretations, analyses of, and reflections of cycle 2, I decided to conserve the Bell Work, the Building Blocks, the read-aloud, and individual white board activities as the artifacts and observational data revealed development in acquiring the grapheme-phoneme relationships and acquisition of vocabulary of high frequency and thematic words. New to this cycle was the incorporation of previously taught graphemes and their corresponding phonemes into the

grapheme center and thus, both in isolation and in context. I also decided to allow for some English words and explanations to be used very judiciously in order to ensure the proper interpretations of the meaning of certain words. I also chose to integrate within my center activities the centers that had been used in the unit prior. This would allow for revision of the high frequency words studied prior to the study in order to promote transfer to long-term memory. During the read aloud activities and the independent reading center, the following books, amongst others, were used: *Les nuages* (D), *Les quatre saisons* (E), *L'Halloween de Maria* (D). As in cycle 2, the Bell Work and Building Block activities contained words that are repeated within these books, thus making these books an additional exposure to the targeted words being studied and used. The book *Les nuages* was used to highlight the graphemes \b\ and \oi\. It was also used to highlight the words (or group of words) “regarde,” “que vois-tu,” “je vois” and “nuages.” The book *Les quatre saisons* was used to highlight the graphemes \f\ and \j\. It was also used to highlight the words (or group of words) “les enfants” and the four seasons in French. The book *L'Halloween de Maria* was used to highlight the graphemes \d\ and \f\ and to review the grapheme \ez\. It was also used to highlight the words (or group of words) “regardez,” “farce ou friandises,” “merci pour,” “M.” and “Mme.” The following table will list the books and the mini-lessons done during the guided reading center. It is important to note that some books listed in cycle 2 were also used with certain groups in this present cycle.

Table 8:

Guided Reading Center Data Cycle 3

Book	Mini-lesson (grapheme-phoneme relationship)	Mini-lesson (high frequency and thematic words)
<i>Les jumeaux</i>	Silent \e\ at the end of words \j\ Silent \ent\ at the end of verbs	Thematic: “ensemble” and “jumeaux” High Frequency: “même”
<i>L’Halloween des jumeaux</i>	\s\ between two vowels \j\, \ch\	Thematic : “arrive,” “découper” and “déguise” High frequency: “allons,” “chercher” and “amusant”
<i>Au parc avec grand-papa</i>	\on\, \ou\	High Frequency: “nous” and the relation with the verb ending “-ons”
<i>Allons cueillir des pommes</i>	\ill\	Thematic : “cueillir” and “pomme” High frequency : “viens” and “aider”

As in cycle 2, the methods of data gathering included the collection of artifacts from the Bell Work activity, observational field notes from the Building Blocks and the individual white board activities, as well as the various centers. Again, individual field notes were also gathered from the guided reading center. In reference to **Question 1**, the data collected did, as in cycle 2, enable further analysis and interpretation of the modifications made after the second cycle of the classroom action research, which fundamentally would serve to enhance the impact the instruction of fundamental reading practices had on the development of the lower level processing skills.

4.2.2.1 Graphemes in isolation. During this cycle, the following graphemes and their corresponding phonemes were studied: \ph\, \f\; \ch\, \b\, \d\; \oi\, \z\ and \j\. During the Building Blocks activity, it was noted that the grapheme-phoneme relationships corresponding to the graphemes \ph\, \f\, \b\, \d\ and \z\ were quickly mastered

(observational field notes, November 20th, 21st, 22nd). These graphemes and corresponding phonemes are also present in English. The grapheme-phoneme relationships associated with the graphemes \u, \a and \é remained challenging for the participants while the grapheme-phoneme relationship associated with the grapheme \oi was mastered rather quickly (field notes, November 22).

Based on my interpretations and analysis of the data, I determined that the French graphemes associated to phonemes which are absent from the English language, or that have different phonemes in English than in French proved to be the most problematic. In English, for example, the French phoneme associated with the phoneme \u is non-existent in English. The English phoneme associated with the grapheme \a is the same as the French phoneme associated with the grapheme \é. This would be one explanation as to why these graphemes were challenging (field notes, November 22). The grapheme \oi, which did not seem challenging, was also present in the book *Le souper de l'Action de grâce* which had been previously studied. Moreover, the word *oiseau* was often used in oral communication and seen in text prior to the study of the grapheme. This may explain why, when working with the \oi grapheme in newly introduced words, the participants read and wrote the grapheme correctly (field notes, November 22). Upon reflection, I decided to increase the attention and time spent on the problematic graphemes which were difficult for participants to differentiate from others, and in some cases, to pronounce. This was done through the choice of books as read aloud activities and guided reading center activities.

4.2.2.2 Grapheme in context and high frequency words. It was noted that after several days of studying the prepositions in a center and playing the game as a whole-

class activity, the students experienced success pronouncing and recognizing prepositions (field notes, November 28). Moreover, artifacts from the Bell Work activities highlighted certain words that were being internalized from the unit studied, such as the words “beaucoup,” “aussi,” “parce que,” “j’aime” and “et” (artifacts, November 28th). In the guided reading centers, the words “maman,” “papa,” “beaucoup” had also been noted as having been internalized by several groups (individual field notes, November 26th).

Based on my interpretations and analysis of the data, I determined that whole-class activities and centers based on certain high frequency words that could be organized by category or theme (e.g., words related to family) would enhance comprehension. These words could be practiced as a competitive game as a way to support the acquisition of the lower level processing skills. These sorts of games also served not only as a strategy for internalization of vocabulary, but also as a way to motivate students. For example, the promise of a competitive whole-class game seemed to motivate the students to learn the prepositions. Upon reflection, I decided to incorporate other games that promote the acquisition of a high range of high frequency words.

4.2.3 Cycle 4. Cycle 4 commenced November 30th and ended December 7th 2018. This cycle included 5 PIF classes. This cycle focused on the revision and preparation for Phase 3, the Final Assessments. The data collected, analyzed and reflected upon from cycle 3 shaped the review activities done in this cycle. However, the data collected in this cycle served as data to inform future teaching practices, but not necessarily as data for this study. It is important to note that two of these five classes were dedicated to writing, and thus were out of the scope of this study. Of the three classes remaining, two were composed of organized review activities. The last was dedicated to three large student-

led centers – oral, reading and writing. My role was to assist when asked, or when I felt it was needed. The students chose which center they felt they needed practice or direction with. I noticed that the participants reacted positively to the fact that they had the choice of a center; of working either alone, with a partner, or in a small group; and of how to study or practice. I also noticed that I was in agreement with their choices.

4.3 Phase 3: Final Data Collection

The third phase, entitled Final Assessment, focused on collecting the final data of the study. These mirrored the preliminary evaluations in order to compare results and determine whether or not progress was made. As explained previously, Phase 3 has supporting quantitative data to support the development noted in the qualitative data in Phase 2.

This phase commenced December 10th and ended December 12th 2018. For the purpose of answering **Question 2**, the evaluations conducted in this phase mirrored in format and in administration the Preliminary Needs Assessment evaluations of Phase 1. Thus, such as in Phase 1, the final assessments were composed of the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation and a running record evaluation.

4.3.1 The Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation. The Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation consisted of the graphemes and corresponding phonemes evaluated in Phase 1, and the following graphemes were added: \ai-, \ei, \et; \s, \ç; \ph, \f; \ch, \b, \d; \oi, \z and \j\. Below are the results:

Table 9.

Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation Results

Final Assessment	Grapheme-phoneme relationships in isolation	Grapheme-phoneme relationships in context	Date
Basic French graphemes	87%	90%	December 11 th – December 12 th
More complex graphemes	82%	94%	December 11 th – December 12 th
Basic French graphemes and the more complex graphemes	85%	92%	Graphemes studied from the beginning of the school year – December 10 th

As shown in Table 9, the success rates of the grapheme-phoneme relationship for both the basic French graphemes and the more complex graphemes are higher when presented in context rather than in isolation. The following table will provide further details on the success rates of each grapheme-phoneme relationship evaluated with the graphemes presented both in isolation and in context.

Table 10:

Success Rate of the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation

Graphemes	Results of corresponding phonemes in isolation	Results of corresponding phonemes in context	Graphemes	Results of corresponding phonemes in isolation	Results of corresponding phonemes in context
\a\	94%	100%	\u\	78%	100%
\e\	61%	89%	\é\	83%	72%
\i\	94%	100%	\er\	83%	83%
\y\	100%	100%	\ez\	94%	44%
\o\	100%	100%	\è\	83%	89%
\au\	89%	94%	\ê\	78%	100%
\eau\	89%	78%	\ë\	78%	100%
\ô\	100%	100%	\ai-\	67%	100%
\ei\	67%	100%	\et\	83%	89%
\s\	94%	100%	\ç\	100%	100%
\ph\	94%	100%	\f\	94%	100%
\ch\	94%	94%	\b\	83%	100%

\d\	89%	100%	\oi\	50%	67%
\z\	89%	100%	\j\	50%	100%

As indicated in Table 8, in terms of the graphemes presented in isolation, the results demonstrated that the grapheme-phoneme relationships with the highest success rates were \y\, \o\, \ô\ and \ç\. Likewise, in terms of the graphemes presented in context, the results demonstrated that the grapheme-phoneme relationships with the highest success rates were \a\, \i\, \y\, \o\, \ô\, \ei\, \s\, \ph\, \d\, \u\, \ê\, \ë\, \ai-\, \ç\, \f\, \b\, \z\ and \j\. In fact, looking at the mean scores, the participants as a whole achieved a success rate of 89% or higher on 82% of the graphemes taught.

From these results, the following data helped shape the following cycle, which occurred after the study: the success rates of the grapheme-phoneme relationships corresponding to the graphemes \eau\ and \ez\ were higher when the grapheme was presented in isolation than in context. In the second part of the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, the grapheme \ez\ was the first word of the interrogative sentence. Moreover, the sentences were not accompanied by a picture. It may be that the participants had no reading strategies to grasp the meaning of the word or sentence prior to having read it. This may also mean that more practice in context is needed. Also, the success rate of the grapheme-phoneme relationship corresponding to the grapheme \j\ when presented in isolation versus when presented in context may be reflective of the fact that more explicit teaching is needed. In fact, it was noted that participants were associating this grapheme with its English phoneme (individual field notes, December 11th – 12th). Finally, the data showed that practice over time is important. Certain graphemes, such as \oi\ and \e\ for example seemed to have been mastered, yet were quickly forgotten when focus was placed on other phoneme-grapheme relationships.

In reference to the graphemes in context and to the acquisition of high frequency words, notes were taken on accuracy. The correlation between the high frequency and thematic words most recycled throughout the various activities and the success rate of accuracy is very strong. The following words were read with precision by all participants: “automne,” “le,” “la,” “les,” “école,” “neige,” “Noël,” “va,” “de,” “sol,” “à,” “je,” “me,” “en” and “mon.” The words read by precision by over 85% of the participants include the following: “dans,” “il,” “y,” “a,” “dans,” “pendant,” “fête,” “de,” “glaçons,” “se aller,” “je,” “suis,” “zèbre,” “et,” “ami,” “est,” “fantôme,” “sommet” and “des” (individual field notes, December 11th-12th). With the exception of the word “zèbre,” all of these words were seen frequently throughout the previous instructional phase.

4.3.2 Final running record evaluation. As a post-evaluation, a running record with a level D text was used with each participant. Below are the results:

Table 11.

Final Assessment: The Running Records

Post-tests	Score (instructional)	Date
Running Records	Below D – 11 D – 3 Above D – 3 <i>Two of three are above F independent</i>	December 11 th – December 12 th

In terms of the running record level in general, 14 of the 17 participants are, according to Fountas and Pinnell (2017)’s descriptors, early emergent readers (levels AA-D independent) and 3 participants are either early readers (levels E-F independent) or

readers in transition (levels G to M independent). In terms of reading accuracy, 5 of the 11 participants who were below a D instructional scored above 95%, and 3 of the 11 scored at an instructional D level. Therefore, 8 of the 11 students were D instructional or high in terms of reading accuracy. In terms of recall abilities, 2 of 11 participants scored at a D instructional. In term of answering literal and deductive questions, 2 of 11 participants scored a D instructional. All 3 participants that scored above F instructional scored above 95% in terms of reading accuracy, retell and ability to answer literal and deductive questions

4.3.3 Case studies of Phase 3: The Final Assessment. In the first section of this chapter, individual case studies were conducted in order to represent the participants. Below is a description of the post evaluation results of the same four participants.

4.3.3.1 Vanessa. During the Running Record assessment, Vanessa was below a D instructional level. During the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, she was above a D instructional level in reading accuracy. In her retell skills, she was at a D instructional level and in reading comprehension questions, she was below a D instructional level. With the basic French grapheme present in the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, Vanessa scored 93% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 87% with the graphemes presented in context. With the grapheme-phoneme relationships taught during the study, she scored 85% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 92% with the graphemes presented in context. Vanessa is an early emergent reader. According to Fountas and Pinnell (2017)'s levels and descriptors, an early emergent reader is still working on acquiring the grapheme-phoneme relationships and is reflective of a learner who has internalized a small number of high frequency words.

4.3.3.2 Romeo. During the running record, Romeo was at a D instructional level, thus at an instructional level in reading accuracy, retell, and reading comprehension. With the basic French graphemes present in the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, Romeo scored 87% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 73% with the graphemes presented in context. With the grapheme-phoneme relationships taught during the study, she scored 92% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 85% with the graphemes presented in context. Romeo is an early emergent reader.

4.3.3.3 Greg. During the running record, Greg was at a D instructional level. With the basic French graphemes present in the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, Greg scored 87% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 100% with the graphemes presented in context. With the grapheme-phoneme relationships taught during the study, he scored 92% with the graphemes presented in isolation and 100% with the graphemes presented in context. Greg is an early emergent reader.

4.3.3.4 Martina. During the running record, Martina was at or above an F independent level, and thus was at or above the F independent in reading accuracy, retell, and reading comprehension. With the basic French graphemes present in the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, Martina scored 100% with the graphemes presented both in isolation and in context. With the grapheme-phoneme relationships taught during the study, she scored 100% with the graphemes presented both in isolation and in context. Martina is either an emergent reader or a reader in transition. According to Fountas and Pinnell's (2017) levels and descriptors, an emergent reader recognizes most of the high frequency words and is able to use certain reading strategies, such as syntax, to comprehend text. On the other hand, the reader in transition (or transitional reader) has

internalized the high frequency words and has mastered all of the grapheme-phoneme relationships.

When looking at the Running Records, all four participants read with accuracy a great number of words. The most common mistake (made by three participants) was with the word “êtes” – all three said “été.” A plausible explanation would be that I often used the word “était” when describing events in the past. Martina read the level F text with 100% accuracy. She autocorrected the word “mieux”; thus it did not count as a mistake.

When looking at the graphemes presented in isolation on the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, the four participants read out loud with accuracy the following graphemes: |eau|, |a|, |u|, |y|, |i|, |o|, |ez|, |ô|, |er|, |è|, |au|, |d|, |-et|, |z|, |b|, |ç|, |j|, |ei|, |ch|, |f|, |s|, |ph|. When looking at the graphemes presented in context within the same evaluation, both Greg and Martina scored 100%. Romeo accurately read all of the graphemes except the graphemes |eau|, |er|, |oi|, |é|, |ez| and |-et|. Vanessa accurately read all of the graphemes except the graphemes |au|, |oi|, |er|. In the second part of the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, the following words were read with accuracy by the four participants: “en,” “automne,” “le,” “les,” “arbres,” “il,” “y,” “a,” “d,” “école,” “dans,” “une,” “neige,” “souvent,” “pendant,” “la,” “de,” “Noël,” “glaçons,” “quand,” “l’,” “va,” “aller,” “sol,” “à,” “je,” “me,” “suis,” “et,” “mon,” “ami,” “est,” “fantôme,” “au” and “des.” In fact, the words “Noël,” “les,” “la,” “sol,” “à,” “je” and “neige” were read with accuracy by all participants, and the words “en,” “automne,” “dans,” “il,” “y,” “a,” “d,” “école,” “fête,” “de,” “se,” “va,” “me,” “suis,” “mon,” “ami,” and “des” were read with accuracy at 88% or more.

4.4 The Pre and Post Discussion and Comparison

The present section will compare the results from the pre-assessment and the post-assessment in order to answer **Question 1**:

- For the students whose reading level in grade 6 PIF is not at the reader in transition level, how did the reading intervention help close the gap between their reading skills and the grade 6 PIF September expectation?

4.4.1 The graphemes-phoneme relationship comparisons. With the preliminary and final grapheme-phoneme evaluations, a comparison was conducted with the basic French graphemes presented in isolation and in context in Phase 1 and in Phase 3. The 13 graphemes and corresponding phonemes taught during the study were evaluated in isolation and in context in Phase 3 only. Below is a table to help visualize the results of the basic French graphemes and their corresponding phonemes presented in both evaluations.

Table 12.

Comparison of the Basic French Graphemes-Phoneme Relationships

Basic French graphemes	Phase 1 (in isolation)	Phase 3 (in isolation)	Phase 1 (in context)	Phase 3 (in context)
\a\	79%	94%	100%	100%
\e\	23%	61%	93%	89%
\i\	64%	94%	100%	100%
\y\	71%	100%	100%	100%
\o\	86%	100%	100%	100%
\au\	71%	89%	93%	94%
\eau\	64%	89%	67%	78%
\ô\	93%	100%	100%	100%
\u\	43%	78%	100%	100%
\é\	57%	83%	100%	89%
\er\	36%	83%	80%	83%
\ez\	50%	94%	33%	44%
\è\	43%	83%	87%	89%

\ê\	21%	78%	73%	100%
\ë\	29%	78%	100%	100%
Total:	55%	87%	87%	90%

As the results show, repeated practice over time increases the success rate. From Phase 1 to Phase 3, the success rate of the graphemes-phoneme relationships in reference to the graphemes presented in isolation increased by 32% while the success rate for the grapheme-phoneme relationships in reference to the graphemes presented in context increased by 3%. Also, with the exception of the grapheme \é\ presented in context, all of the grapheme-phoneme relationships evaluated both in isolation and in context saw an increase in success rate. As the study progressed, my perception of the roles the teaching of graphemes in isolation and in context had in the acquisition of the grapheme-phoneme relationships shifted from one that perceived these as independent skills to be developed individually to one that perceived the teaching of the graphemes in context with well-rehearsed words to be a scaffold in the acquisition of the graphemes-phoneme relationships of the graphemes presented in isolation.

4.4.2 The running record comparison. Below is a table describing the results of the Running Records conducted in Phase 1 and in Phase 3 of the study:

Table 13.

Pre and Post Running Record Results

Level (instructional)	Phase 1 (/17)	Level (instructional)	Phase 3 (/17)
Below a B	13	Below a D	11
B	1	D	3
Above a B	3	Above a D	3

The results show that three participants were above the B instructional in Phase 1 while six participants were above the B instructional in Phase 3. In fact, three of these six participants were above the D instructional in the Phase 3.

4.4.3 Case study comparison of results in Phase 1 and in Phase 3. This section will look at the results from Phase 1 and Phase 3 for the four case studies described in this chapter.

4.4.3.1 Vanessa. Vanessa was chosen because in Phase 1, she scored below a B instructional level and in Phase 3, she scored below a D instructional level. In this respect, she represents herself and 11 other participants. In Phase 1, Vanessa was at a B instructional level in reading accuracy while being above a D instructional in phase 3. When comparing the basic French graphemes presented in isolation from both grapheme-phoneme evaluations, she has acquired during the study the grapheme-phoneme relationships corresponding to the following graphemes: \o\, \è\, \er\, \ô\, \u\, \ë\ and \e\. When comparing the same relationships with the graphemes presented in context, Vanessa demonstrated that she acquired during the study the grapheme phoneme relationship corresponding to the following grapheme: \au\.

In the retell, she was below a B instructional level in phase 1 while being at a D instructional level in Phase 3. In the reading comprehension questions, she was below a B instructional level in both Phase 1 and Phase 3. However, she was unable to answer any of the questions in Phase 1. In Phase 3, she answered correctly two out of three literal questions and one out of two deductive questions. In Phase 1, she mentioned that she did not understand when I began asking her the questions. In Phase 3, however, she was able to produce answers that were reflective of significant development in

vocabulary and syntax. When asked, for example, why the dogs wanted the branches, she responded by saying “Les chiens aiment play le branche.”

4.4.3.2 Romeo. Romeo was below a B instructional level in Phase 1 and in Phase 3, he was at a D instructional level. In Phase 1, Romeo was below a B instructional level in reading accuracy while being at a D instructional level in Phase 3. When comparing the basic French graphemes presented in isolation from both grapheme-phoneme evaluations, he has acquired during the study the grapheme-phoneme relationships corresponding to the following graphemes: \eau\, \ê\, ez\ and \er\. Romeo did not read accurately the graphemes \e\ and \é\ in both Phase 1 and in Phase 3. When comparing the same relationships with the graphemes presented in context, Romeo demonstrated that he acquired during the study the grapheme-phoneme relationships corresponding with the following graphemes: \er\, \é\ and \ez\. Romeo did not master the relationship with in Phase 1 or Phase 3 of the following grapheme: \eau\.

In the retell, he was at a B instructional level in phase 1 while being at a D instructional in Phase 3. In the reading comprehension questions, he was at or above a B independent in Phase 1 while being at a D instructional level in phase 3. Although he was unable to do so without looking at the pictures, he did retell the story of a D level text in the right order of events and with supporting details. When looking at the reading comprehension questions, he was able to answer two of the three literal questions and both deductive questions.

4.4.3.3 Greg. Greg was chosen because in Phase 1, he was at a B instructional level and in Phase 3 he was at a D instructional level. In this respect, he is representative of improvements measured by using the running record levels. Greg jumped two levels

from Phase 1 to Phase 3. When comparing the basic French graphemes presented in isolation from both grapheme-phoneme evaluations, he has acquired during the study the grapheme-phoneme relationships corresponding to the following graphemes: *ez* and *er*. Greg did not read accurately the graphemes *e* and *ë* in both Phase 1 and in Phase 3. When comparing the same relationships with the graphemes presented in context, Greg demonstrated that he acquired during the study the grapheme-phoneme relationship corresponding with the following grapheme: *ez*.

In the retell and in the comprehension questions parts of the evaluation, Greg demonstrated a growing understanding of the language. In both Phase 1 and Phase 3, the use of English was present when answering the questions (which were asked in French). In Phase 3, for example, when asked why the girl wanted the dogs to walk away from her snowman, he replied “Parce que la fille scared les chiens attack the bonhomme de neige.”

4.4.3.4 Martina. Martina was chosen because in Phase 1, she was at or above a B independent level and in Phase 3, she was above an F instructional level. She is representative of two other participants. When comparing the basic French graphemes presented in isolation from both grapheme-phoneme evaluations, she has acquired during the study the grapheme-phoneme relationships corresponding to the following graphemes: *ê*, *u*, *ë* and *e*. When comparing the same relationships with the graphemes presented in context, Martina was unable to show improvements with the basic French graphemes as she scored 100% success rate in both Phase 1 and Phase 3.

In the retell and in the reading comprehensions questions in Phase 1, Martina was below a D instructional. She was able to retell the main parts of the story, but was unable to provide supporting details to the main ideas. She was able to answer one of three

literal questions but was unable to answer either deductive question. In the comments, I wrote that she did not have the vocabulary necessary to support reading comprehension. In Phase 3, Martina was not only able to retell the story with supporting details, but was also able to do so by using the proper French words. During the reading comprehension questions, Martina answered correctly in French all five questions.

4.5 Conclusion

The development of the lower level processing skills takes time. In order to become a reader in transition, a reader who has mastered the lower level processing skills, the reader must have knowledge of the high frequency words and must have mastered all of the French graphemes and their corresponding phonemes to be able to decode with precision and with a certain fluency. There is a significant amount of French graphemes and corresponding phonemes that do not exist or are different than those in English. These take more exposure to internalize. In the next chapter, I will reflect on these results and connect them to the literature. Based on these results, I will also offer implications that will impact my own teaching as well as offer considerations for others teaching in similar contexts.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss my results in reference to other studies related to foundational practices for reading skill development. This chapter will consist of three parts. In the first part, I discuss the results related to **Question 1**, which is: For the students whose reading level in grade 6 PIF is not at the reader in transition level, how did the reading intervention help close the gap between their reading skills and the grade 6 PIF September expectation? In the second part, I discuss the results related to **Question 2**, which is: What are the impacts of the foundational reading practices integrated into the grade 6 PIF class (i.e., explicit teaching and practice of graphemes and consonants, read-alouds as a class or a small group, guided reading, literacy centers promoting the acquisition of high frequency and thematic words, and reading comprehension)? In the third part, I summarize the implications of this study. I conclude this chapter with a description of the limitations of this study and directions for future research.

5.1 Closing the Gap

This study was influenced by Dicks and Bourgoïn (2015) concerning the reading skills of students at the end of the IF program. These researchers examined a sample of IF students across New Brunswick and concluded that at the end of grade 5, the students' reading skills were as follows: 47.5% were early emergent readers, 44.6% were early readers and 7.9% were readers in transition. In the present study, while expecting a regression due to the summer months, I anticipated that these Grade 6 students would have retained more of their reading skills developed in Grade 5 IF. However, the gap was greater than expected. According to the Fountas and Pinnell (2018) reading levels,

only two of my students were at a level F independent or higher; a reader in transition is a level G independent or higher. The grade 6 PIF expectations are that all students are readers in transition. Based on the results of the present study, I believe that the grade 6 PIF curricular expectations are not realistic for the students they serve and should be revisited. The results of this action research study revealed some practices that may support the early reading development of Grade 6 PIF students.

5.1.1 Results revealing success in closing the gap. Results revealed that the development of word recognition had a positive impact on partially closing the gap between the participants' reading skills and the expectations of the grade 6 PIF curriculum. When comparing the running record results from Phase 1 and Phase 3, data shows that in Phase 1, three participants were at a level B independent or higher. In Phase 3, six participants were at a level D independent or higher. The running record levels are based on 10 graduate characteristics, which includes sentence complexity, vocabulary, and word difficulty (Fountas & Pinnell, 2018).

When comparing the grapheme-phoneme evaluations from Phase 1 and Phase 3, data showed that participants increased their knowledge of previously taught grapheme-phoneme relationships as well as those that were targeted during the intervention. Increases were noted when the graphemes were presented in isolation (e.g., 57% to 87%, an increase of 30%) as well as when these were presented in context (87% to 90%, an increase of 3%). These results reflect that learning time spent focusing on specific graphemes and their corresponding phonemes influenced the participants ability to acquire them. The increase of 30% is reflective of the increase in ability to decode new words, thus an increase in fluency, which in turn increased comprehension (e.g., Koda,

2005). Considering the length of the intervention (seven weeks and four days, which includes five days of evaluations in both Phase 1 and Phase 3) and the increase in success rates of the evaluated grapheme-phoneme relationships in isolation, it seems that instruction in fundamental reading practices did have an impact on the development of reading skills. The success rates for graphemes in context were already high at the onset of the study, while the graphemes in isolation were more challenging. The participants, for the most part, had been exposed to a large array of vocabulary and texts in IF which would explain the success rates of the grapheme-phoneme relationships when the graphemes were presented in context. The increase in success rates thus reflects that the wider gap was reduced the most.

5.1.2 Results revealing less success in closing the gap. It is important to point out the potential factors at play that may have impacted the effectiveness of some of the pedagogical interventions: students being new to the district, possible summer regression, levels of L1 literacy, previous experience in FSL, and time missed by four participants to attend EAL (English as an Additional Language) classes. Some participants were unable to retell or to answer any of the reading comprehension questions in the Running Records done in both Phase 1 and Phase 3. For this reason, it was important to describe some specific cases in the previous chapter to demonstrate that development had occurred on an individual level. These were evident in the comparisons made between both grapheme-phoneme evaluations conducted in Phase 1 and in Phase 3, and in the comparison of the running record field notes in both phases. Although results of the pedagogical interventions conducted as part of the action research did not close the gap to

the degree I had hoped, this study did point to some individual successes and a narrowing of the gap between achievement and curricular expectations.

5.2 Impact of Fundamental Practices

Results revealed that explicit teaching of lower level processing skills (namely word recognition which includes orthography, phonology, decoding and vocabulary) is crucial to the development of PIF students' reading skills. Indeed, both orthographic processing and phonological processing need to be learned explicitly and stored in working memory prior to being stored in procedural memory (e.g., Koda, 2005). The results of the present study demonstrated that explicit teaching of lower level processing skills is fundamental to PIF reading pedagogy.

5.2.1 Orthography, phonology, and decoding. This study demonstrated that repetitive exposure of targeted grapheme-phoneme relationships through various activities (e.g., the whole-class activities, guided reading) that targeted the reading and writing of graphemes and words supported the development the orthographic skills of the participants. Moreover, it helped students to internalize and retrieve from memory with greater ease the targeted words, including those with challenging grapheme-phoneme relationships, such as the word “yeux.”

This study also demonstrated that orthographic processing skills are responsible for rapid word recognition when reading thus increasing the fluency of the reader as decoding is no longer needed for these words (e.g., Koda, 2005). During the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation in Phase 1, eight words were read precisely and quickly by all of the participants suggesting that these had been internalized. In Phase 3, the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation saw 15 words that were read with accuracy by

all participants, and another 20 words were read rapidly and with precision by 85% of the participants. In both cases, these words had had repetitive exposure in various whole-class and center activities. It is important to note that the internalization of many other words were noted in both individual and field notes.

5.2.2 Vocabulary knowledge. This present study confirmed several points concerning the development of vocabulary knowledge. During this study, the focus placed on internalizing the high frequency words and thematic words was found to greatly benefit the participants (e.g., Peregoy and Boyle, 2017). Recycling the targeted high frequency and thematic words through whole-class and small group activities, and thus creating opportunities to recycle these in various meaningful contexts proved to be effective (e.g., Germain, 2017). Through such activities, it was noted that the participants were able to quickly retrieve the high frequency words that were often recycled, which confirmed Paradis (2002)'s activation threshold theory.

This study also demonstrated that the teaching of vocabulary words and language skills explicitly within context will create links between new knowledge or skill to pre-existing knowledge or skill in long-term memory (e.g., Paradis, 2002). The word “anniversaire,” for example, was first taught explicitly. This word was recycled several times in various activities. During the guided reading session, it was noted that the participants had internalized the meaning of the word, and had retrieved it from memory without needing to decode it.

5.2.3 Time. The results of the present study confirmed the fact that ample time should be devoted to the attainment of word recognition (e.g., Grabe, 2009). The case studies demonstrated that students made progress in the development of the lower level

processing skills after the intervention concentrating mainly on word recognition (which includes orthography, phonology, and vocabulary knowledge). The time needed was further demonstrated by the fact that only 13 of the 75 French graphemes and their corresponding phonemes in Bourgoin and Deveau's 2016 resource *Ville Bons Sons* were covered during my study which took place from November 1st to December 7th. After nearly three months, students had studied a total of 28 graphemes and their corresponding phonemes when taking into account the 15 grapheme-phoneme relationships taught prior to the study. Furthermore, time is also a factor depending on the complexity or commonality of the grapheme and/or corresponding phonemes. The more these differ from the first language, such as graphemes with accents when comparing to the English language, the more time should be devoted to these.

In order to provide explicit teaching of the lower level processing skills, particular pedagogical interventions were used in this study. While these reading interventions supported some of the aspects of Germain's (2017) neurolinguistic approach such as project pedagogy, authenticity, and interaction, specific practices were added in order to augment the development of reading skills. The added practices were grounded in explicit teaching. In this action research study, read-alouds, guided reading, literacy centres, and contextualized meaning-focused practice were the four explicit instructional techniques that had the most positive impact on reading skills. In this section, I will elaborate on these most impactful practices, but it is important to acknowledge that this study also uncovered less impactful practices.

5.2.4 Less impactful practices. One of the goals of this action research was to incorporate within my own practice other suggested best practices in order to develop the

participants' reading skills effectively in hopes to close the gap between students' reading skills and the grade 6 PIF curricular expectations. Unfortunately, not all of the activities attempted in this present study were found to result in the improvements envisioned. The assignment of a book with reading comprehension questions to answer in writing did not have the anticipated impact. In fact, intrinsic motivation seemed to have increased when I chose to remove the writing component and allowed the participants to choose a book to read it individually or in small groups. As a result, motivation was shown to increase when giving the students choice of text, and in flexibility of how to demonstrate understanding (e.g., Peregoy and Boyle, 2017).

5.2.5 Impact of read-alouds. In the present study, the read-aloud activity was found to be effective in several ways. First, it modeled reading precision and fluency as it modeled proper decoding. After modeling, I noticed how students mimicked my expressions and intonation while reading aloud. Second, it gave the chance to the participants to ask question on words they did not understand thus promoting vocabulary acquisition. Following my modeled reading, students often asked me what words meant prior to them reading the text. Third, it offered the opportunity to ask reading comprehension questions, commence short spontaneous conversations, and conduct mini-lessons. Field notes taken during guided reading related to graphemes or words needing more exposure were instrumental in choosing and designing mini-lessons during the read-aloud activity. In these ways, the read-aloud activity was shown to be effective. Although it was most effective in terms of everyone receiving these types of exposure and lessons at once, it was not found to be as effective as guided reading in terms of offering differentiated lessons based on the level of stillset of each participant.

5.2.6 Impact of guided reading. The fundamental practice of guided reading was found to be very effective. This study demonstrated how collaborative work in small groups that includes sharing of thoughts and discussions of the text read plays a crucial role in reading development (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017). The participants were more willing to take risks in small groups. They attempted to speak more and asked questions. I also noticed an increase in engagement while working with a small group. As stated by Fountas and Pinnell (2017), the intent of guided reading is to help develop the skills needed to become an independent reader. The data of the study suggested that guided reading had several effective aspects. As shown in the previous chapter, the group formations of the participants based on similar skill sets provided the opportunity for the differentiation of books (thus of level of complexity), of the type of questioning (e.g., literal, inferential, deductive), and the mini-lesson given at the end of the session to best cater to the skillset of the groups. It also provided opportunities to support vocabulary knowledge and to monitor and assist in the development of individual decoding skills. It was noted that the participants felt safer to ask questions in small groups. As mentioned by Peregoy and Boyle (2017), “guided reading provides a scaffolding routine – a predictable routine with which students become comfortable and secure” (p. 429). As the intervention progressed, I noticed how the participants were eager to ask questions and to take risks in their reading and in their answering questions as it became apparent to them that the other members of their group were of similar skillset. Lastly, the guided reading activity gave me insight into individual and general strengths and weaknesses, which often led to mini-lessons during one of the whole-class activities.

5.2.7 Impact of other literacy centers. The student-led centers made guided reading sessions possible, which on its own is important to note given the impact of the guided reading practice. The goal of the small group student-led activities was to solidify or internalize skills that had been previously taught and practiced through repetition and recycling of vocabulary, concepts, or skills; and thus, practiced in a social interaction setting. Although I was unable to monitor the student-led centers as much as I would have liked, the results showed how Germain's (2017) first, third, fourth, and fifth pillars of the NLA are effective in internalizing and storing in long-term memory the skills and concepts taught. These include use of language and focus on meaning, on authenticity, on recycling, and on social interaction. As shown in Phase 3 of the study, the participants showed development in their internal grammar throughout the study.

The use of word cards was also shown to be effective. In fact, the present study demonstrated how the use of word cards promotes the learning of vocabulary, and that such language-focused learning is beneficial to then use the word in context and to retrieve its meaning out of context (e.g., Nation, 2001). It was noted that the participants engaged with the cards. It also permitted them to play the roles of teacher and student, a game that was often played in the centers that had word cards. The center focused on the learning of the prepositions, for example, was very effective. During a game, it was noted that these had been learned.

Lastly, it was also noted that the participants seemed to respond positively to changing activities within one teaching period. On average, the participants rotated to another center every 20 minutes. A variety in tasks in terms of complexity and skills used play a role in maintaining motivation (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017).

5.2.8 Impact of contextualized meaning-focused practice. Activities that offer learning and practice in meaningful contexts are important in the internalization of language (Germain, 2017). The Bell Work activity, for example, introduced and recycled targeted vocabulary words while offering the students the chance to form personal and meaningful answers to one or two questions. Moreover, establishing form-meaning connections (i.e., contextualized practice) during the adopted practices proved to be necessary for the students (e.g., Germain, 2017). The student-led centers that focused on learning the grapheme-phoneme relationships were embedded into the thematic context. On one side of the card, the grapheme was presented in isolation. On the other side of the card, the grapheme was presented within a targeted word, which in turn was presented within a sentence relevant to the theme “L’automne,” (*fall/autumn*). In fact, all of the whole-class and center activities revolved around the same theme. Finally, the study demonstrated the importance of blending the two practices. During meaning-focused activities, such as the guided reading center, it was found to be effective to take the opportunity to conduct a mini-lesson that was focused on form prior to closing the session.

In terms of mastering the grapheme-phoneme relationships, the present study demonstrated how acquiring these in context through explicit instruction and practice was an important scaffold to acquiring these in isolation. It was also an important differentiation tool. When asking the students to write the corresponding grapheme(s) to a particular phoneme on an individual white board, for example, it was possible to provide a context (i.e.: /a/ - “ami”) for those who did not write the correct grapheme(s).

In terms of vocabulary acquisition, the present study demonstrated that incidental learning, or learning implicitly and in context, is of prime importance in the development of vocabulary (Nation, 2001). Although certain words needed to be taught explicitly, it was noted that many words were acquired incidentally. In sum, this study reinforced the fact that both incidental and explicit learning are essential in the development of vocabulary (e.g., Nation, 2001).

5.3 Conclusion: Summary of Implications.

As a teacher-researcher, I was able to conclude through the pre and post evaluations that the gap between the participants' reading skills and the program's expectations had been narrowed. However, my own learning came from the process – primarily Phase 2 of the study. The implementation of some of the research-based practices within my PIF classroom yielded better results in reading. Moreover, in my experience in teaching PIF, the implementation of some of these learning activities yielded the most development I have ever observed in spontaneous conversation as well, which is the primary goal of the PIF program. Whether it be in a primary class with students learning literacy skills in their first language or in a middle school with students learning a second or additional language, this study has shown that the recent research-based reading practices are applicable and effective in the development of language skills.

Upon close examination of the results of my study, I propose five implications. The first four implications are classroom and pedagogy focused as this is the primary goal of classroom action-research.

A first pedagogical implication concerns the importance of understanding the students' reading levels prior to planning and delivering lessons. Formative assessment should support instructional practice. Although the gap between achievement and expectations with respect to reading was not completely closed for the participants in this study, progress was noted. The goal of this study was to continuously look at reading skillsets prior to modifying the next reading lessons. In order to obtain a detailed sense of each student's reading skills, Running Records were used. Although these were found to be very effective in terms of gathering useful data, these took a significant amount of time. In fact, in both Phase 1 and Phase 3, I dedicated one preparation period to conducting Running Records while the students and participants' were working independently in another class. It would have been very helpful to have had another FSL teacher assist in ensuring that these got done in one instructional period. Given their efficiency in terms of collecting preliminary formative assessment data and their usefulness in terms of planning for instruction, I would strongly suggest that additional time be allocated to FSL teachers at the beginning of each reporting period to collect reading-related data as baseline data on which to construct units that are reflective of student skillsets.

A second pedagogical implication relates to the importance of incorporating the explicit teaching of the grapheme-phoneme relationships and new vocabulary in the PIF pedagogy. In terms of reading skills, implicit instruction is not sufficient and the need for explicit teaching of the lower level processing skills should be made clearer to reflect current knowledge about how students learn to read in a second or additional language. I would suggest that some school-based FSL professional development focus on

developing teaching materials that take into account the explicit teaching of the lower level processing skills and the age of the students.

A third focuses on the practice of guided reading and intentional instruction in during small group interactions. This study underscores the usefulness and effectiveness of these particular pedagogical practices. Students need monitoring and guidance when learning to read. The guided reading activity is designed to accompany the students in the development of their reading skills until they have learned to read, and are able to read independently. Naturally, the teaching of the lower level processing skills should be supported with guided reading activities. Additionally, this action research study reinforces the importance of center activities. Center activities permit movement, social interaction, and the opportunity to internalize what has been taught. Student-led center activities should focus on recycling the knowledge and skills previously taught and practiced to foster internalization.

A fourth implication relates to the the importance of contextualization. Of particular note is the necessity to teach the lower level processing skills within context. The contextualized learning of orthography, phonology, and decoding allows for the incidental and explicit learning of vocabulary, which is an integral part of the lower level processing skills. Moreover, contextualization serves as a scaffold to acquiring certain skills, such as the mastery of the grapheme-phoneme relationships in isolation, which is essential to decoding unknown words. This being said, it is also important to ensure that student internalize the graphemes in isolation as it is important when decoding new words. Lastly, contextualization makes possible meaning-focused lessons, which in turn increases motivation.

Upon reflection, I should have provided more opportunity for the participants to build texts to read, to create meaningful messages. Perhaps creating a A-level type book with the most challenging graphemes could have been attempted rather than adding drill-type activities. More emphasis on comprehension-based activities that use thematic context that also reinforce lower-level processing skills is an implication that follows from this action research project.

The last implication is broader in scope and speaks to the gap that exists between reading ability and expectations. This final recommendation speaks to the problematic gap between the actual reading skillsets of the students entering grade 6 PIF and the programs' reading expectations. Because this action research was conducted with only one particular class, the reading skillsets of the students entering grade 6 should be further studied on a wider scale. Following such a study, the grade 6 PIF curricular expectations may need to be revisited to reflect the actual skillsets of the students. It is of prime importance that the students experience success in the development of their French skills. Equally important is that the teachers experience success in supporting learners to reach curricular expectations. At present, this study suggests that the gap between the students' skillset and the reading expectations of the program is simply too wide for either the students or the teachers to feel successful.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

As previously explored, there exists a gap between the students' skillset entering grade 6 PIF and the program's expectations. I would highly suggest that further research be conducted to shed light on the skill sets of our NB students at the beginning of grade 6 PIF so that the curricular outcomes and guide be adapted to the needs of the students.

Although there is always room for improvement in practice, the gap between curriculum expectations, the PIF pedagogical guide and the students' reading abilities after the study was still too wide to make success possible. This situation highly deflates motivation for both teachers and students.

Moreover, it would be beneficial to conduct this study over a longer duration, perhaps one that would include the teaching and practice of all the French grapheme-phoneme relationships, and one that would encompass the duration of a school year. This would allow insight into the time it takes to acquire the lower level processing skills. It might also be beneficial to conduct a study which would focus on the use of the Running Records in such a way as to enable comparison of levels between the pre and post analysis. Such a study may be revealing to teachers and curricular developers when suggesting books to accompany units of study.

5.5 Possible Limitations of the Research Design

In this study, five possible limitations were noted. These were found within the following: the use of the Running Records, the research design itself, my own teaching practice in the classroom, the design of both the Basic French Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation and the Final Grapheme-Phoneme Evaluation, and the duration of the study. The Running Records were used to gather data in both the preliminary and final phases of my study. These allowed me to gain insight into the participants' skills in reading accuracy and fluency, retell capabilities, and abilities to answer both literal and deductive questions. Although much was revealed through careful analysis, the modified version of the Running Records conducted in this study limited the amount of direct comparisons with the Dicks and Bourgoïn (2015) research that utilized the running record.

By design, the classroom action research is very context-driven and context-situated. Playing the role of the teacher-researcher meant that I was conducting the guided reading center while the other student-led centers were left with limited observation. Additionally, during the center activities, I found it challenging to collect data from the other centers. However, when the students were reading the text individually during the guided reading center, it was possible to briefly observe the other centers while I transitioned from one reader to another within the guided reading center.

In terms of the second part of both grapheme-phoneme evaluations, and with the knowledge I have gained through this action-research study, I now realize that each targeted grapheme should have appeared the same number of times and in different places in the words (i.e., at the beginning, in the middle and at the end). In addition, with respect to the graphemes “eau” and “au”, these should have appeared as a part of words, rather than words unto themselves.

Lastly, the duration of the study was a limitation. From the pre and post assessments of the basic French grapheme-phoneme relationships, there were seven weeks of instructional time. Perhaps the results would have been more robust given a longer duration. When presented with certain graphemes and their corresponding phonemes, the participants were quick to demonstrate understanding during the lesson. However, the participants needed repetition in various activities to internalize the French graphemes not present in English, or the graphemes that do not share the same corresponding phoneme in French as in English. During Phase 3, it was noted that some participants who had demonstrated learning of certain grapheme-phoneme relationships made mistakes when being evaluated due to an increase in anxiety. It would be insightful

to gain knowledge on the actual time needed for a greater number of participants to master these skills.

5.6 Conclusion

This study, or this reading intervention did help narrow the gap between students' reading skills and the grade 6 PIF expectations (although most of them still are not meeting curricular or the PIF guide's expectations). The qualitative data presented in this chapter demonstrated that the literacy practices, such as the explicit teaching of the graphemes and their corresponding phonemes, focus on high frequency and thematic words, read-aloud activities, guided reading and other centers did have an impact on the development of reading skills. This study also demonstrated how continuous exposure through various activities that focused on recycling vocabulary words in various meaningful ways to be effective in the acquisition of vocabulary and the development of procedural memory. It also revealed the impact of intentional practices such as guided reading, as well as student-led small group activities that focus on internalizing the skills and concepts through meaningful repetition, and of social interaction to foster meaningful output.

Although conducting classroom action research as a teacher-researcher has its limitations, the experience facilitated the enhancement of my skills as a teacher, a learner, and an innovator. The experience has also left me feeling motivated to share with colleagues what I have learned. Regardless of the scale, I highly recommend teachers to conduct classroom action research – to learn from the students how to enhance their own learning, thus how to become a more efficient teacher.

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Appendix A: The Post – Intensive French 8 Steps to Oral Communication

**Français post-intensif : ENSEIGNEMENT DE L'ORAL - 8 stratégies
(ANL - approche neurolinguistique, de Germain et Netten)**

STRATÉGIES CONSÉCUTIVES (en suivant cet ordre)

- 1. P modélise une ou des phrases authentiques, liées au thème et à son expérience**
P donne à l'oral *seulement* le modèle de phrases liées au thème, à partir de ses expériences personnelles (éviter « C'est un/une... », qui n'est pas authentique).
- 2. P questionne quelques élèves qui adaptent la réponse à leur situation personnelle**
Pour cela, les élèves utilisent le modèle qui vient d'être donné.
- 3. a) Quelques élèves questionnent d'autres élèves**
Les réponses sont adaptées à leur situation personnelle.
- b) Deux élèves modélisent (devant la classe) la tâche à venir**
Cela se fait sous forme de « conversation » (questions et réponses). P s'assure que le modèle langagier est repris correctement (la question et la réponse).
- 4-I. Les élèves se questionnent mutuellement, en dyades (durée limitée)**
- 5-I. P questionne quelques élèves sur les réponses de leurs partenaires**
Cela se fait sous forme de conversation naturelle (spontanée), afin de rapporter ce que leur partenaire vient de leur dire.
Puis, P réagit (Qui d'autre a... ?) et questionne les élèves sur les réponses données.

SI NÉCESSAIRE : 4-II. Répétition de la stratégie 4-I, avec de nouvelles dyades

5-II. Répétition de la stratégie 5-I, au sujet des réponses des nouveaux partenaires

STRATÉGIES QUI SE SUPERPOSENT AUX PRÉCÉDENTES (en même temps)

- 6. P fait toujours produire des phrases complètes (pour l'aisance)**
- 7. P corrige toujours les erreurs et fait utiliser la phrase corrigée (pour la précision)**
- 8. À l'occasion, P questionne un élève sans qu'il s'y attende (pour stimuler l'écoute, pour avoir une conversation plus naturelle et pour faire réutiliser la langue).**

NOTE 1 : Lors de ces stratégies portant sur l'oral, **ne pas écrire** de mots ou de phrases au tableau mais, au besoin, recourir à des illustrations ou photos.

2. À la suite de ces stratégies, P propose une activité-synthèse (voir le Guide pour des suggestions)

Appendix B: Page 1 of the Bell Work Activity

Travail à la montre

1. En automne, j'aime célébrer l'Action de grâce. Je mange un gros souper avec ma famille.

Qu'est - ce que tu aimes faire pendant l'Action de grâce?

2. L'anniversaire de M. VanSnick est en automne. Il ne fête pas son anniversaire.

Qui dans cette classe a un anniversaire en automne?

Est - ce que cette personne va fêter son anniversaire?



Appendix C: First Page of the Building Block Activities

8: "ai-, ei, -et"

C'est l'automne! Le matin et le soir, il fait froid dehors.

Aimes - tu l'automne?

En automne, on sait que la neige arrivera bientôt.

Aimes - tu la neige?

Parfois, on voit la neige au sommet des montagnes,
même en automne.



Mets ton crayon sur ta chaise.

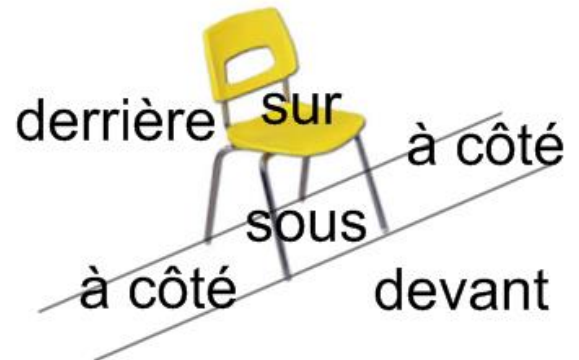
Mets ton crayon sous ta chaise.

Mets ton crayon à côté de ta chaise.

Mets ton crayon devant ta chaise.

Mets ton crayon derrière ta chaise.

le sommet →



Appendix D: Oral Communication Cards

Quel temps fait - il?



Aujourd'hui, c'est ensoleillé.
Il fait soleil.

Quel temps fait - il?



Aujourd'hui, c'est venteux.
Il vente.

Quel temps fait - il?



Aujourd'hui, c'est pluvieux.
Il pleut.

Appendix E: Grapheme Evaluation

Évaluations en lecture

Nom : _____

Classe : _____

Les graphies de base

o	i	a	eau	ê
è	ez	au	é	y
er	ô	u	ë	e

1. L'hôpital de Frédéricton est sur la rue Priestman.
2. Venez voir le chat et le chien. Ils aiment jouer ensemble.
3. La tempête m'a fait peur.
4. Il y a de l'eau sur ma chaise. Au dîner, j'ai mangé de la pizza au fromage.
5. Mon père va venir à Noël pour m'écouter chanter.

Targetted graphemes:

1. L'hôpital de Frédéricton est sur la rue Priestman.
2. Venez voir le chat et le chien. Il aiment jouer ensemble.
3. La tempête m'a fait peur.
4. Il y a de l'eau sur ma chaise. Au dîner, j'ai mangé de la pizza au fromage.
5. Mon père va venir à Noël pour m'écouter chanter.

Appendix F: Final Grapheme Evaluation

Français

Nom : _____

Classe : _____

EAU	E	A	È	U	Y
I	O	EZ	Ê	Ô	ER
È	AU	É	D	-ET	Z
OI	B	Ç	AI-	J	EI
CH	F	S	PH		

1. En automne, le vent siffle dans les arbres.
2. Il y a 5 journées d'école dans une semaine.
3. Il neige souvent pendant la fête de Noël.
4. Les glaçons se forment quand l'eau gèle.
5. L'oiseau va aller chercher de la nourriture au sol.
6. À l'Halloween, je me suis déguisé en zèbre et mon ami Philippe s'est déguisé en fantôme.

Due to the amount of targeted grapheme, I took notes of all of the mistakes. However, only those associated with the targeted graphemes were taken into account.

Appendix G: Parent/Guardian and Student Informed Consent Form

November 2018

Parent(s) or Guardian(s) of _____,

My name is Janic VanSnick. During the 2018/2019 school year, I will be teaching your child PIF, and I will also be conducting my Master's thesis research from October to December 2018.

The goal of the research is to incorporate a reading intervention within the program in attempts to discover whether or not my research on how students learn to read in French as an alternate language and on best practices in teaching students to read will have an impact on student reading skills. Because this study is intertwined with the program, it will not take away, but add to it. Therefore, each student will be undergoing the reading intervention.

I am asking for your consent to add your child's data to my research. It is of primordial importance that you and your child understand that her or his identity and individual scores will remain anonymous. If you do not feel comfortable with giving consent and would like to further discuss the intervention with me, please let me know and I will be happy to make contact with you. If you simply choose to not have your child participate, please know that your child's wellbeing and success will always remain my main priority, thus no one in the class will know whose data will be included in the research.

If you have any questions or concerns which you would like to address with me or one of my supervisors at any time prior, during or after the intervention, please do not hesitate to make contact. If you would like to receive information on how to access the thesis research upon completion, please let me know.

janic.vansnick@nbed.nb.ca

George Street Middle school: 453-5419

Paula Kristmanson (506) 453-5136

pkristma@unb.ca

Josée LeBouthiller (506) 453-5136

josee@unb.ca

Thank you,

Janic VanSnick

Yes, I give permission for _____ data to be used for the research.

No, I would rather _____ data not be used for the research.

Appendix H: High Frequency Words

Liste de mots fréquents de la langue française

(À noter : affichez aussi les couleurs, les jours de la semaine, les mois de l'année et les nombres fréquemment utilisés)

a	bien	déjà	fais
à	bientôt	demain	fait
à côté	bois	depuis	famille
aime	bon	derrière	femme
aimer	bonbon	des	fête
ainsi	bonjour	dessous	fille
aller	bonne	dessus	finir
alors		deux	fleur
ami	cache	devant	fois
amuser	ce	devoir	fort
an	ceci	dire	frère
animal	cela	dit	froid
animaux	celui	dix	
à peu près	cependant	doigt	garçon
après	certain	donne	grand
à propos	ces	donner	grande
arbre	c'est	dormir	gros
au	cet	douce	grosse
aujourd'hui	cette	doux	
au revoir	chacun	du	haut
aussi	chacune		heure
aussitôt	chaque	eau	heureuse
autant	chat	école	heureux
auto	cher	écouter	hier
autour	chercher	élève	histoire
autre	chez	elle	homme
aux	chien	elles	
après	combien	en	ici
avais	comme	en arrière	il
avait	comment	encore	ils
avant	côté	enfant	ils ont
avec	courir	enfin	il y a
avoir	cours	ensuite	
		entre	j'ai
bas	d'abord	est-ce que	j'aime
beau	d'accord	et	jamais
beaucoup	dans	est	je
hébé	danse	être	je suis
belle	de		jeu
besoin	dehors	faire	joue

jouer	monter	plaisir	ton
jour	mot	plus	toujours
journée	musique	plusieurs	tous
jusqu'à		pour	tout
juste	ne	pourquoi	toute
	neige	pouvoir	train
la	nez	porte	trop
large	noir	premier	trouver
le	nom	prendre	très
lecture	non	près	tu as
lequel	nos	presque	tu es
les	notre	puis	
leur	nous	propre	un
lever	nouveau		une
lire	nouvelle	quand	
livre		que	va
loin	œuf	quel	vais
long	oiseau	qui	venir
longtemps	on	quoi	vent
longue	oncle		vers
lorsque	ou	rien	veut
lui	où		veux
lune	oui	sa	vie
	ouvrir	sac	vieille
ma		sage	vient
main	page	sans	viens
mais	pain	se	vieux
maison	paire	semaine	ville
maintenant	papa	ses	visage
malade	par	seulement	vite
maman	parce que	si	voici
manger	parfois	sœur	voilà
marche	parler	soir	vois
matin	partout	soleil	voit
me	pas	son	voir
même	pauvre	sont	vos
merci	pays	sous	votre
mère	pendant	souvent	vouloir
mes	père	sur	vous
mettre	personne		vraiment
midi	petit	ta	vu
moi	petite	tableau	
moins	peut	te	y
mon	peut-être	temps	yeux
monde	peux	tes	
monsieur	place	toi	

A READING INTERVENTION IN A GRADE 6 PIF

Janic Maryse VanSnick

PROFILE :

- October 9th - 11th: English oral and written proficiency evaluation
- October 11th: French written proficiency evaluation
- Certified elementary, middle and high school teacher (as of 2009)
- Superior French oral proficiency (OPI in 2011)
- Certified French Immersion teacher (UNB, 2005)
- Dean's List student in 2003

SELF-MOTIVATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- ASD & Behavioural Intervention course (2012-2013)
- "Grammaire nouvelle" (Course offered by Ottawa - East school board in 2010)
- "Enseignement efficace de la litt ratie" (Course offered by Ottawa - East school board in 2010)
- "Comment et pourquoi  valuer" (Course offered by Ottawa - East school board in 2009)

EDUCATION:

- 2016 to present Master of Education in Curricular Studies (UNB)
- 2009 "QBA  l mentaire" and "QBA moyen" (Ontario)
- 2007 Certified teacher in Ontario
- 2004 Certified teacher in New Brunswick
- 2003 Bachelor of Arts and Education, UNB

EXPERIENCE:

- September 2018 – present George Street Middle School
B contract, grade 6 FI, FILA, PIF
- 2013 – 2018 George Street Middle School
B contract, grade 8 FI, FILA, PIF, SS
- April – June 2013 Priestman Street Elementary
D contract, grade 5 FI
- September 2012 – April 2013 George Street Middle School
D contract, grade 7 FI, FILA, PIF, SS
- 2011 – 2012 George Street Middle School
D contract, grade 8 FI, FILA, PIF, SS
- 2010 – 2011 Centre Scolaire Jeanne – Lajoie
Long – term supply, grade 7
French, Geography and History
- August 2009 to Oct. 2009 Centre Scolaire Jeanne – Lajoie
Long – term supply, grade 1
- November 2008 to June 2009 Centre Scolaire Jeanne – Lajoie
Long – term supply, grade 1
- August 2005 to April 2006 Gesner Street Elementary School
Long – term supply, grade 1 FI
- March 2005 to June 2005 George Street Middle School
Long – term supply, grade 7 FI