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A Case Study in How French Teachers Understand Purpose in Educating Immigrant Students

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A CASE STUDY OF HOW FRENCH TEACHERS UNDERSTAND PURPOSE
IN EDUCATING IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

By

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of the Requirements for
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THESIS SUMMARY

In the fall of my junior year, I worked with my mentor, Dr. Kara Brown, to develop a research question I wanted to explore during my semester abroad in France. Together, we generated the question, “How do French teachers understand their purpose in educating immigrant students?” As a future educator, I knew the question of how to educate foreign and immigrant students would be important to my professional life. This research project worked to unite my interests in French and equal education, and it challenged me to add another level of depth to my study abroad experience.

My goal in undertaking this research was to explore how two teachers understood their roles in educating immigrant students at a French middle school. However, my time in the field and months of reflection afterwards complicated this research question and pushed me to explore pressing questions in immigrant education today, both in France and the United States. Some of these questions include whether students should be able to use their home languages in the classroom, whether schools are responsible for assimilating students into mainstream culture, and whether tensions exist as students navigate between their past identities and the new ones they develop in the school setting.

In this thesis, I will fully explain my interest in conducting this research and how I went about it. I will provide background information on the evolving system of educating immigrants in France and the development of the most recent program, CASNAV. I will discuss my understanding of qualitative research and how I pursued it in a methodologically sound manner. I will discuss my results, which are drawn from synthesizing my observations, field notes, interviews, and previous knowledge concerning immigrant education in France. Finally, I will present my conclusion and

thoughts about future projects. This research had a profound effect on my undergraduate experience, and I believe it will shape my professional career as an educator in the United States.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to comprehend how two French teachers understood their roles in teaching immigrant students. To achieve this goal, I observed classes at a middle school in Pau, France over the course of three months. I recorded extensive field notes and conducted two in-depth interviews with both of the teachers I observed. After returning to the United States, I coded my notes, identifying and analyzing patterns in the data. Among other conclusions, I discovered that these teachers emphasized students' individual identities, including their diverse national and cultural backgrounds, while at the same time pushing the students towards eventual integration into mainstream classes with native French-speakers. This case study is pertinent to my future career as a high school English teacher, during which time I am bound to encounter immigrant students whom it is my job to encourage and educate.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION

In the last ten years in France, there has been an increasing and diversifying immigrant population. In 2009, there were an estimated 5.4 million immigrants in France, composing 8.4% of the nation's population ("Population," 2013). Schools play a role in educating and acculturating this vast group of people. The traditional Republican model of schooling, which prioritizes neutrality and the building of French citizenship, appears to be less effective at educating this more heterogeneous population. Immigrants who have been educated in France traditionally occupy lower-status jobs like security, cleaning, and construction, and many are severely affected by unemployment, with 16.3% of adult foreign workers between the ages of 15 and 64 looking for jobs ("Nombre de chômeurs..." 2011). About 60-70% of prisoners in France are Muslim, usually North African or Arab immigrants, even though Muslims only make up about 12% of France's population (Moore, 2008). There is also noticeable racism towards certain immigrant groups, especially Maghrebis (Algerians, Moroccans, and Tunisians) and other Africans (Cosgrove, 2010).

The duty of molding immigrant students into responsible French citizens as well as successful individuals falls heavily on the educational system and specifically on teachers. There has been little research done on immigrant and foreign pupils in France or on the school's role in acculturating these pupils (van Zanten, 1997). My initial goal in undertaking this research was to explore how French teachers understand their purpose in educating immigrant students; however, my time in the field and months of reflection afterwards opened up this research question to explore the most pressing issues in immigrant education today, both in France and the United States. Some of these issues

include whether students should be able to use their home languages in the classroom (“home” meaning the language spoken in their home or community), whether schools are responsible for assimilating students into mainstream culture, and whether tensions exist as students navigate between their past identities and experiences and the new identities they must take on through schooling.

In this paper, I will explain my interest in conducting this research and how I went about it. I will provide background information on the evolving system of educating immigrants in France and the development of the most recent program, CASNAV. I will discuss my understanding of qualitative research and how I pursued it in a methodologically sound manner. I will discuss my results, which are drawn from synthesizing my observations, field notes, interviews, and previous knowledge concerning immigrant education in France. Finally, I will present my conclusion and thoughts about future projects.

MY PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THE RESEARCH

In spring 2012, I was enrolled in my first education course at the University of South Carolina. I was surprised and disappointed to learn that in the United States, minority students were underrepresented in higher tracks, including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes in high schools. There were also proportionately higher levels of high school dropout among minority and immigrant populations. One reason for this is that some students have trouble learning if classes are not taught in their home language. Certain schools attempted to create curricula that taught about the native culture of immigrant students. However, some of these programs, like one about

Mexican-American culture in the Tucson Unified School District, were discontinued because they were seen as anti-American and potentially dangerous to American ideals (Zehr, 2010).

A major player in immigrant education is of course the teacher. Teachers around the nation try to help immigrant students succeed while recognizing differences among ethnic, racial, and religious lines through their teaching practices. In reality, it's a mixed bag; some teachers do everything in their power to assist immigrant students, including providing opportunities for the student to use his or her home language in class, holding one-on-one tutoring sessions, or even learning some of the student's home language, while other teachers operate within a system that privileges students whose families have been in the United States for more than one generation. During this class, I decided that I wanted to be a teacher who celebrated the diversity of her students, and I never wanted to make any child feel like speaking another language or coming from a different background was a deficit. Even so, I wanted to maintain high expectations for my students and make sure they would succeed in the school system and beyond.

Since my freshman year at the University of South Carolina, I have been an English major with a cognate in Secondary Education and a minor in French. This research project was a way to unite all of my interests while working under the guidance of an admired professor, Dr. Kara Brown. After taking Dr. Brown's educational foundations course, I was interested in how French schools compare to schools in the United States and whether immigrants there faced the same difficulties as immigrants here. This research is important to me because it may shape how I approach teaching students of diverse backgrounds in my future career.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The current education system in France is based on the Republican model, named because it was constructed during the Third Republic (1871-1944) (van Zanten, 1997). The French nation-state was founded on principles of neutrality, liberty, equality, and secularity, and the school system was meant to support these principles (Limage, 2000). In regards to education, neutrality is defined as a system of instruction free of outside influence in which all participants have access to a body of knowledge based on the truth (Limage, 2000). Of course, truth is a problematic and contentious term. Yet in the Republican model, teachers are viewed as civil servants, and they remain the best neutral judges of what to include in the body of knowledge being communicated to the students (Limage, 2000).

Equality before the law means that, legally, no distinction can be made between citizens based on race, religion, or natural origin (Limage, 2000). As in the United States, France's underlying documents purport equality of all people. Ironically, in both countries, the concept of equality has had little impact on reducing economic, social, and cultural inequalities, many of which extend to schools. Because modern French schools were established on the basis of equal access, it was not until the 1970s, nearly a century after their founding, that they began practicing "positive discrimination," which distributes more educational resources to disadvantaged areas (Limage, 2000). This is around the same time when programs were put into place to help the increasing immigrant population integrate more successfully into French schools.

Immigrant students, as all others, "were expected to assimilate culturally and to integrate socially and economically into French society through the common school"

(van Zanten, 1997, pg. 357). It is important to note that all special measures implemented, including French language courses designed specifically for immigrant students, must lead back to the mainstream view of equality (Limage, 2000). In other words, all programs for immigrant students have the purpose of preparing those students for full enrollment in mainstream courses with their French peers. They are meant to be temporary and effective.

It is one of the teacher's responsibilities to acculturate the student within the French school. Acculturation is the adoption of the behavior patterns of the surrounding culture. So, teachers are charged with the duty of molding a diverse group of students into citizens who value the French ideals of equality, neutrality, secularity, and liberty.

In the past couple of decades, however, there have been challenges to the Republican model of integration and acculturation, especially how the model functions in schools. A reason for this is that France's immigrant population is including more people from non-European Union countries. In 2009, there were an estimated 5.4 million immigrants in France, 8.4% of the total population. Of that group, 37.7% were from European countries, 42.7% were from African countries (29.9% were Maghrebi), 14.2% were from Asian countries, and 5.4% were from America and Oceania ("Population," 2013).

An increasingly diversified immigrant population is difficult to acculturate through state institutions because of vast cultural and linguistic differences (van Zanten, 1997). There is also the question of how to approach difference in the school setting. Because of the determinedly neutral Republican model, there is no place for the examination of cultural, religious, or linguistic diversity or tolerance in the formal

curriculum (Limage, 2000). However, the formation of identity is crucial for all students, especially those of foreign origin, and especially during middle school (Sabatier, 2008). The teacher is a source of identity affirmation and acculturation.

It was my goal to discover how middle school French teachers work within the school structure to both educate and acculturate students, and whether there is room for the affirmation of individual identity. I wanted to know if the teachers felt obligated to communicate a neutral body of knowledge based on the truth, and if they indeed viewed themselves as civil servants. On the other hand, I also wanted to know if the teachers felt more prone to engage the students' individual differences, which is a theme that is emphasized in many of my teaching courses at the University of South Carolina.

The area in which I conducted my research, the Aquitaine region, had an immigrant population of 197,000 in 2009, 6.1% of the total population. Of this population, 34% were from Spain and Portugal, 22% were Maghrebi, 15% were from other European Countries, 9% were from Asia, America, and Oceania, 8% were from other African countries, 8% were from England, and 4% were from Italy ("Six natifs d'Europe," 2009).

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Since the mid-1970s, France has grappled with finding the best way to welcome and educate young, immigrant students. In 1975, the state government created *Les Centres de formation et d'information pour la scolarisation des enfants de migrants* (CEFISEM) with the purpose of ensuring the training of teachers charged with welcoming their immigrant students. This organization was restructured in 2002, and

renamed *Centres pour la scolarisation des nouveaux arrivants et des enfants du voyage*. Its new mission was to help integrate newly arrived immigrants and nomadic children within the school, through the school itself. In 2012, the organization was renamed *Centre Académique pour la Scolarisation des enfants allophones¹ Nouvellement Arrivés et des enfants issus de familles itinérantes et de Voyageurs* (CASNAV). Even though the name changed in 2012, the organization's intent remained the same. This is the system that was in place during the time of my research.

A regional sector of CASNAV consists partly of an administrative staff at the *inspection académique*. The administrative staff is responsible for the reception and registration of minors on French territory. Officially, all foreign children not yet in school are considered newcomers or newly arrived, and any person under the age of 16 present on French territory has the right and obligation to attend school. At these administrative centers, the new students take language tests and have an interview with a staff member to determine their level in French. This evaluation divides students according to level and also takes into account any previous schooling they have received in French (“Casnav,” 2014).

After these evaluations, the students are sent to the local schools where they encounter the other key aspect of CASNAV, the teachers. Teachers of immigrant students often have the same certification and status as their colleagues who teach only native French students, and are usually volunteers who are chosen based on their motivation and their experience. Although it is not required, many of these teachers decide to obtain a graduate degree in teaching French as a Second Language (FSL). There is one CASNAV program within each region in France, meaning there are 27 total programs throughout

¹ Allophone is any person whose native language is not French.

the nation. The school I observed was located within the Aquitaine region in southwest France (“Casnav,” 2014).

There are a couple different types of classes within the CASNAV program. One is a *Classe d'accueil* (CLA), which translates to a welcoming class. This is an accelerated course for learning FSL. This type of course separates immigrant students from other students in the school, and they stay together during the day. They are learning FSL exclusively, so while they are enrolled in these classes they are often missing instruction in other subjects, such as math. The reasoning behind this approach is that students cannot learn other subjects if they do not fully understand the language they are taught in. Students are expected to graduate from this type of course in no more than a year.

Another type of class within the CASNAV program is the *Classe d'initiation pour non-francophones* (CLIN), which translates to initiation class for non-francophone students. In this type of course, students are also taught FSL, but they are simultaneously enrolled in regular classes with native French speakers. Students may remain in CLIN classes for up to two years. The school where I conducted my research had both types of courses, as I will explain later on.

METHODOLOGY

During the summer of 2012, I decided to study abroad in Pau, France with the program University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC). I applied to the program and gained acceptance in early September of that year. At this time, I was working with Dr. Brown to put together grant proposals to conduct research abroad. I knew that I needed to make contact with a middle or high school with an immigrant population that was near

my university in France, so I sent an email to one of the USAC directors, Robina Muller, to ask her for assistance. Ms. Muller had completed an internship at a local middle school, Collège Jeanne D'Albret, so she gave me the contact information of the principal there. I emailed the principal in October, and she graciously agreed to let me conduct my research at Collège Jeanne D'Albret.

Once I had guaranteed a research site, I needed to learn how to proceed in a methodologically sound manner. Seeing as I had never completed research before, Dr. Brown sent me a chapter from James H. McMillan's textbook *Educational Research: Fundamentals for the Consumer* on how to conduct qualitative research. From this chapter, I learned some core elements of methodologically sound research that I then applied to my own experience. I knew that I wanted to observe behavior that occurred naturally, and that I wanted to collect data directly from the source (i.e. within the classroom). I wanted to engage in moderate participation, meaning that I identified myself as a researcher, but I did not participate in what I was observing. I learned that I would be working with an emergent research design, which means that the research evolves and changes as the study takes place. And finally, my mode of analyzing data would be inductive, meaning that I would pull conclusions from the synthesis of my data (McMillan, 2011, pg. 272).

I also learned ways to make sure that my data would be reliable. One technique was to use various methods of data collection, which for me included direct observations, detailed field notes, and interviews with the teachers. I categorized my direct observations as the classes I witnessed and the brief notes I jotted down during those classes. I differentiate them from my field notes, which were more fleshed-out reflections

that I completed shortly after the direct observations, usually later that day. Because I was conducting a case study, meaning I was only using one site as a source for data, using three types of data collection provided more depth to my study. My research mentor encouraged me to record my interviews on a digital recording device. This allowed me to revisit the interviews multiple times to clear up misunderstandings, and it provided two more points of view (the French teachers) that I would not have had access to if I had relied solely on observations and field notes. I also had to make sure that I was legally allowed to conduct research with human subjects. Right before I left for France in January, I applied for clearance to work with human subjects through the Institutional Review Board, which I received during the first week of my stay in France.

From mid-February to the end of April, I visited Jeanne D'Albret about twice a week for two hours each visit. During field visits, I observed classes of immigrant students taught by two different teachers, Madame Dubois and Madame Lafond. As an observer, I took field notes on the happenings of the classroom and on the teacher behavior and interaction with the students. I remained mostly a passive observer, but, when prompted by the professors, I introduced myself to the classes and occasionally would give my input on different topics. I conducted an in-depth interview with each of the two professors I was observing. I recorded these interviews with a digital recorder, and I kept these recordings in a locked desk at my host family's house. I emailed Dr. Brown throughout the semester to give her updates on my progress and to send her copies of my field notes. I have changed the names of all the teachers and students involved in my study.

I am aware that I constructed my own understanding during this study. It is impossible to remove the observer from the observation, so I know that I am looking at these French teachers through the lens of a young, white, female, American student.

There was also a language barrier that must be acknowledged. Before I left for France, I had taken one 100-level and two 200-level French courses at the University of South Carolina, receiving As in each of the classes. I judged that I had an intermediate understanding of French and that my listening and reading skills were better than my speaking and writing skills. I acknowledge that some of my understanding of what occurred in the classroom and during interviews might not be entirely accurate. However, I have tried not to make any unnecessary assumptions, and have utilized French dictionaries and French professors both during the research and while reflecting on it.

Although this language barrier existed, in a way it served as a bridge between the students I was observing and myself. My French language skills were on a similar level with these students', especially those in the NF3 class. When speaking exclusively with adults, as I did during initial meetings and in-depth interviews, I felt overwhelmed by how fast they spoke and how much of the language I was actually taking in and processing. This made me feel sympathetic towards the students I was observing because I understood first-hand how intimidating it was to be in situations where the language of communication was foreign. This only increased my passion for the research because I understood how disabling it was to be in France without having French as a first language; these children were in desperate need of teachers who cared about them and were committed to their success.

MY INITIAL CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL

I had initially emailed Madame Dupont, the principal of Collège Jeanne D'Albret, back in October 2012. She had, at that time, given me permission to conduct my research at her middle school. I arrived in Pau, France on January 6, 2013. I emailed Madame Dupont once again, and we scheduled a meeting for January 21. Instead of meeting with Madame Dupont, I spoke with the assistant principal, Madame Sauvage. We had a brief interview in her office, during which she asked me what my research was about, and why I had decided to come to Pau. I had had my French host family help me prepare a statement in French, which read:

Hello, my name is Dana Doggett, and I am a student with the program USAC at the Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour. I am also a student at the University of South Carolina. This semester, I would like, if you accept, to lead research at Collège Jeanne D'Albret. For this research, I have received two scholarships from the Ceny Walker Undergraduate Fellowship association, as well as the Magellan Research Office. The object of my research is to discover how French teachers understand their roles in the education of foreign and immigrant students. I would like to observe certain classrooms and also interview professors. I can volunteer for the middle school as an English tutor during my stay in France, just until the end of April. Thank you for your time.

During our meeting, Madame Sauvage told me that there are three teachers who work within the CASNAV program at the middle school: Madame Dubois, Madame Lafond, and Madame Pierre. She introduced me to Madame Dubois, who is one of the teachers I observed throughout the semester. Madame Dubois gave my contact

information to Madame Lafond, who is the other teacher I observed. Madame Pierre was out on leave, and had a substitute teacher in her place; for this reason, I did not observe her class. I explained to each teacher I came into contact with that I was an American student studying English, French, and education. I explained that I wanted to become a teacher in the United States, and that the education of immigrants is a very important issue in our nation.

Before I observed any classes, I had a meeting with Madame Lafond in the teacher's lounge to talk a little more about how CASNAV functioned in the school. She told me that as of that morning, February 12, the class breakdown was like this: Madame Dubois had 29 students in the beginner level, Madame Pierre had 14 students in the intermediate level, and Madame Lafond had 16 students in the advanced level, for a total of 59 students. She did, however, mention that this number changes all the time. She gave me a document to read explaining the goals of CASNAV, and we also determined regular times when I could come and observe classes.

From this initial meeting and from our in-depth interviews² at the beginning of April, I started compiling profiles of Madame Dubois and Madame Lafond. I learned that Madame Dubois had taught foreign students at Collège Jeanne D'Albret for two years, and before that she had taught French students for fourteen years. In her interview, she said that teaching immigrant students was something she had wanted to do for a long time, and that despite everything, she had found that foreign students are "just like the rest." Madame Lafond had taught foreign students at Collège Jeanne D'Albret for ten years. She told me that her teacher training did not specifically prepare her to teach

² Transcripts and translations of the interviews can be found in the Appendices (39-56).

foreign students, so she learned her pedagogy through experience; then, after her first two years, she earned her master's degree in French as a foreign language. Both teachers welcomed me warmly to the school and into their classrooms.

The classes that Madame Dubois and Madame Lafond taught were called NF1 and NF3, respectively (NF stands for non-francophone). NF1 is a CLA³ or welcoming course for newly immigrated students. Students enrolled in NF1 remain together for the entire day, and they stay in this level for two to six months depending on each student's level of acquisition; if a student's home language is close to French, that student will probably move up more quickly. There is a good amount of repetition in this course because new students are always arriving, but Madame Dubois says this is a good thing. During our interview, she said when a new student arrives it provides an opportunity for other students to review what they have already learned and then introduce new elements into their existing knowledge.

NF3 is a CLIN⁴ course and functions as a supplement to immigrant students who are already enrolled in some mainstream classes. Students in this level are in the last stage of the program and are generally older than the NF1 students. NF3 students do not remain together for the entire day, but rather flow in and out of Madame Lafond's classroom based on their individual schedules. Both of these levels are meant to be

³ A CLA is a "welcoming class" or accelerated learning course for French as a Second Language. It separates immigrant students from other students in the school, and they stay together throughout the day. They are learning FSL exclusively, so while they are enrolled in these classes they are often missing instruction in other subjects.

⁴ A CLIN is an initiation class for non-francophone students. In this type of course, students are also taught FSL, but they are simultaneously enrolled in regular classes with native French speakers.

temporary; the ultimate goal of each is to fully integrate students into mainstream classes with native French speakers.

In the NF3 class, each student's schedule was different, varying based on how immersed he or she was in mainstream courses. Madame Lafond called roll from a thick binder during some of my observations. Even so, I understood that it was largely the NF3 students' responsibilities to know which classes they should be in and at what time.

There was a great amount of demographic diversity in both the NF1 and NF3 levels. Although I did not observe the NF2 course regularly, I observed them once at the beginning of the semester and heard their introductions. Out of the ten students present that day, five were Portuguese, one was from the Congo, one was from Honduras, two were from Morocco, and one was from Sri Lanka. At one point, the teacher (who was from Tunisia) wrote the known languages in the classroom on the board: they were Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, and Arabic.

The NF1 and NF3 classes were just as diverse as the NF2 class. The students in Madame Dubois's NF1 class were Moroccan, Albanian, Nigerian, Iranian, and Russian, all between the ages of 11 and 14. In March, she gained a handicapped student from Romania, and the week after that, she gained a student from Algeria who had previously attended school in Paris. This gave him an advantage over some of the NF1 students who had never spoken French before coming to Collège Jeanne D'Albret. Madame Lafond's NF3 class had students between the ages of 12 and 16. These students were from Portugal, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the United States, and Morocco.

With my initial contacts made, I felt more comfortable coming to the school, observing classes, and asking questions. All of the staff members with whom I came into

contact were very welcoming and accommodating, especially Madame Lafond. She had a real desire to help me understand what was happening at the school, and wanted to know how I would use this information in my own life and career.

While I was making these initial contacts within the school, Dr. Brown sent me an article that discussed navigating access negotiations within schools. The article was titled “Ideologies and Issues of Access in Multilingual School Ethnography: A French Example” by Florence Bonacina. Bonacina is an educational researcher, and, like me, she wanted to learn more about classes taught to immigrant students in France. In this article, Bonacina discusses the difficulties she faced gaining access into a French school.

Bonacina states, “[The] teachers categorized [me] not just as a teacher and a researcher, but first and foremost, as an evaluator closely associated with the CASNAV” (Bonacina, 2012, p. 270). She had a significant amount of trouble getting the French teachers to trust her because they thought that she would report their performance to the state education system. Bonacina also felt that the French teachers were less willing to use their students’ native languages in the classroom while she was observing because, according to the standards set by the national education system, French was to be the sole language used in educating immigrant students.

I had a much easier time gaining access into my research site and gaining my teachers’ trust than Bonacina did. I believe that Madame Dubois and Madame Lafond saw me as a young American student who was genuinely interested in their work as educators because I aspired to be an educator myself. They saw me more as a student than as a teacher or evaluator, which, in my opinion, allowed them to trust me.

RESULTS

I collected data through observations, field notes, and interviews from mid-February to the end of April. When I returned to the University of South Carolina in the fall of 2013, I started to code my data in an attempt to find patterns that I would discuss in my thesis. I laid the short, jotted-down notes from observations, the more extensive field notes, and the translated copies of my interviews on my desk. After reading through each set of documents once, I developed a theme such as “relationships between teachers and students” and then highlighted all data that fell into that category in a certain color. I repeated this process with different colors until I had coded for six major themes. The generated themes are as follows: 1) relationships between teachers and students, 2) student-centered pedagogy, 3) interactions with CASNAV, 4) the use of students’ home languages, 5) the direction of future schooling, and 6) cultural identity in the classroom.

These six themes start to answer my original research question, which was trying to see how French teachers understood their role in educating these students. They show how the teachers interacted with the students, what their methods looked like, and the objectives they were establishing for their students. The themes also explore some of the pressing questions at the center of immigrant education, shedding light on how these specific teachers dealt with home languages, cultural identity, and assimilation. Eventually, I will present a conclusion that unites all the elements of my thesis and reflects on where to go next; but first, I will discuss the results of my research in the framework of these six themes.

Relationships between teachers and students

Although it might seem obvious, it is important to note that both teachers made an effort to build relationships with their students. From my reflections, it seems especially important to build relationships with immigrant students because they are far more likely to experience alienation and oppression than native-born students. The relationship a teacher has with her student might be one of the only positive ones in a student's life. Madame Lafond emphasized this during our interview; she said that the most important thing to her is that she develops relationships with her students.

During my observations, I noticed that both Madame Dubois and Madame Lafond had habits that communicated to the students that they cared about them. Madame Lafond would often touch students' shoulders and smile at them. She would also ask questions to make sure that they were doing okay, both in terms of class work (i.e. "Do you understand?") and their personal lives (i.e. "Are you feeling all right today?"). Madame Dubois had a gentle disposition; in all of my observations, I never witnessed her raise her voice to her students. She gave her students a lot of verbal praise, especially when they answered a question correctly or were working hard. Small acts of kindness also showed the students their teachers cared; for example, Madame Lafond let a student use her personal phone to remind his father of a meeting they had at school later that day.

The teachers also attempted to gain insight into circumstances in their students' personal lives. On February 14th, Madame Lafond asked a student why he was late to class (he had walked in about 15 minutes after everybody else). He told her that he had taken the bus, and she asked him why he hadn't ridden his bike. He said that his bike was broken and she asked him why. Their conversation lasted for about five minutes. In the moment, I wondered why Madame Lafond took the time to ask this student about

something seemingly trivial. When I was reflecting on the situation later, I wondered if Madame Lafond was instead trying to understand if there were other issues going on in this student's life and if she would need to offer him assistance in the future.

A similar situation occurred in Madame Dubois's class about two months later, on April 11th. The new student from Romania had arrived late to class, and he told Madame Dubois that he had arrived by car. Madame Dubois was confused because he was supposed to have arrived by bike. Her questioning of the situation led me to believe that these teachers care about what happens to their students outside of class; they are concerned if their students are accepting rides from strangers or if they do not have reliable transportation to get to school.

By building relationships with their students, the teachers were able to know more about their interests and then advise them on their options for the future. On February 19th, I witnessed a meeting between Madame Lafond, a Polish student named Marek, Marek's father, and a school guidance counselor. The purpose of the meeting was to give Marek some options for his high school career. Madame Lafond suggested that Marek apply for a special boarding school for students with handicaps. She told him that he was a good student and that he tried very hard, but his schoolwork was not good enough for him to continue on the academic track in high school. She wanted him to find a place where he was interested and comfortable. Marek said he was not very happy at school and liked with the idea of applying to this boarding school. This meeting demonstrated to me that these teachers want their students to succeed and do not try to make their students fit into certain molds.

Developing a relationship with students meant that these teachers established safe classroom environments that were conducive to learning. The day in Madame Dubois's class when I had to translate Fatima's bullying situation was significant to me. It showed me that students felt comfortable bringing their conflicts to Madame Dubois and asking for her guidance in resolving them. Madame Dubois was able to listen to both sides of the conflict and then give instruction to everyone: she told students that we never call others stupid or idiots, and that everyone in the class is equal.

Having good relationships with the students also makes managing the classroom an easier task. On April 11th, Madame Dubois had an NF1 student who was having trouble paying attention in class. Instead of reprimanding him, she gently teased him into paying attention. At one point, she said, "Isaac, he's dreaming." At this, Isaac smiled and began working again. A little later in the class, she said, "Isaac's looking behind him, and I'm not sure what he's looking at... a pretty woman, perhaps?" This got a laugh from the students, and Isaac was able to laugh at himself as well. This technique might have embarrassed some students, but Madame Dubois effectively used it to bring Isaac back to the activity.

During our interview, Madame Dubois said that she uses a number of oral exercises with her students, especially when they first arrive. These activities help students become comfortable speaking in class, starting with simple linguistic structures and moving to more complex ones. She always presents her oral exercises within a certain context so that they are easier to understand. Madame Dubois said that this interaction with her students builds a rapport between the student and the teacher, and eventually it becomes a rapport between students.

Even with good teacher-student relationships, these students, like most middle school students, liked to push boundaries. On February 19th, Madame Lafond started her class with a firm talking-to because the students were not treating the NF2 sub very well. Because of their behavior, certain students in NF3 would be switched around to NF2. During this same class period, Madame Lafond left the class for about five minutes. The students took advantage of her absence to ask me questions like, “Why are you here?” and “What are you studying?”

On February 26th, the atmosphere in NF3 was very disorganized and disruptive. Some students were kissing each other when Madame Lafond turned her back, and one was drawing in his notebook, completely ignoring the assignment on his desk. Madame Lafond left the room again, and students started asking me more questions, including questions about how to say bad words in English. It was an interesting situation to be in because I was neither student nor teacher, and although I was older than the students, I was not a rule-enforcer. I tried to remain a passive observer as much as possible, although I know that my presence was enough to alter student behavior to some extent.

Student-Centered Pedagogy

When I asked her to share some of the methods she found effective when teaching immigrant students, Madame Lafond said that she could not because there is not a tried and true method of teaching French as a Second Language to young, foreign students. France does not have a framework for teaching language through direct immersion, so Madame Lafond constructs the methods that she uses. A method I noticed during my

observations of both the NF1 and NF3 classrooms was providing instruction for individuals rather than for the class as a whole.

One of the ways in which teachers catered to individual students' needs was by having a number of different activities for students to work on during class time. This was especially evident in Madame Lafond's NF3 class. On February 14th, the NF3 students were working on one of three activities: one group was a "Story of the Frog" worksheet in which they had to rewrite the story using different forms of adjectives; another group was working on a simpler worksheet that had fill-in-the-blank questions; and a third group was working on a verbal exercise with the professor. All groups were learning about adjectives, but they were split up based on how much guidance each student needed on this topic.

This classroom structure was a pattern for Madame Lafond. On February 19th, the students were split up similarly while learning how to conjugate verbs. One student was sent to the board to conjugate a verb, most others conjugated a list of verbs on a worksheet, and Madame Lafond was working individually with a student at the back of the room. Sometimes this organization seemed ineffective to me. During this class period, for example, one student was reading a novel and another was doing work from a science workbook. Regardless, all students were participating in some sort of active learning, even if it was not directly related to the day's topic.

These patterns were present in Madame Dubois's NF1 class as well. On March 21st, the new student from Romania arrived in her class. Instead of asking him to do the activity the rest of the students were working on, correcting a quiz they had taken the day before, she provided him with a coloring worksheet to do on his own. On April 11th, this

student still had not caught up to what most other students were doing, so Madame Dubois spoke to him quietly to figure out what he should do next. She was assessing his knowledge, identifying the gaps, and providing him with activities that would help him grow.

Although much of the time students worked individually or in groups, there were times when the class worked together as a whole. On March 19th, Madame Lafond posed the question to her NF3 students, “Where does one sleep?” From this question, the whole class had a discussion about all the places a person can sleep and created a collaborative list on the white board. Two days later, the NF3 class was working on conjugating the verb “to understand” as a group, with every student focused on the same lesson directed by Madame Lafond. Sometimes Madame Dubois would lead class-wide activities as well, like one where she held up puppets and asked the students to describe the puppets with new adjectives they had learned (blond, brunette, man, woman, etc.). Even though these collaborative activities were less frequent, they did exist in both the NF1 and NF3 classrooms.

A teaching strategy Madame Dubois often used with her students was using gestures to help them understand new vocabulary. During one class period, she wrote down “rire” on the board, which means “to laugh,” and then put her hands on her stomach and mimed laughing. Once the students understood the meaning of the verb, they recorded it in their journals. She did the same thing with the verb “ecrire,” which means “to write.” This technique of using personal gestures is one that Reyes (2006) identifies as being especially effective with English Language Learners (ELLs). Clearly its effectiveness translates across different languages and cultures.

It was not explicitly stated how the teachers assessed the individual needs of their students, but there were times when I saw certain strategies that would let the teachers know which students needed instruction in distinctive areas. On February 28th, Madame Dubois was reviewing the sounds French vowels make. She called on one girl who had been there for about a month and asked her to give the five French vowel sounds; the girl could only recite three. By directly questioning her, Madame Dubois was able to figure out the girl's lapses in understanding. She also assessed students' understanding by administering quizzes. During that same class period on February 28th, Madame Dubois had a small listening quiz during which she read out ten syllables and ten words and asked her students to write down what they heard. This exercise allowed Madame Dubois to figure out which sounds were more difficult for certain students to decipher and could guide her to give these students worksheets that dealt with these particular sounds.

Interactions with CASNAV

The teachers' desire to help individual students even had an effect on how the school interacted with national administration. During our interview, I asked Madame Lafond what it takes for a student to succeed in the CASNAV program, and she said that she could not speak to the CASNAV program because Jeanne D'Albret does not work with CASNAV. She said that in the national education system, each region has a Board of Education. The capitol of Pau's region is Bordeaux, and so the CASNAV administrative center is located in Bordeaux. According to Madame Lafond, the program in Bordeaux is a welcoming center for immigrants in that city, but it is different in Pau.

The structure of the program in Pau has been developing for about 30 years, and she thinks that it is the only program in a regional education authority that functions like it does. She said it is true that sometimes CASNAV gives Jeanne D’Albret a funny look (“le CASNAV nous regarde de travers”), but the school is making significant progress in educating its immigrant students. At Jeanne D’Albret there are three professors committed solely to the welcoming and education of non-francophone students; she said this structure is not found anywhere in France, except for possibly Paris or Marseille. Madame Lafond said she and her colleagues have constructed their own method of working as well as their relationships with the students, the administration, and the Board of Education, and it works. She said that they do not have a direct link with CASNAV, and in reality, they do not want a direct link with CASNAV because they function in two different ways. CASNAV follows national guidelines about how long students should be in certain classes and what they should have learned by definitive points. At Collège Jeanne D’Albret, the teachers have more control over what they teach the students and when they think the students are ready to progress to the next level.

I was fascinated that Collège Jeanne D’Albret was able to work in such a decentralized fashion in France. This was especially intriguing because when I first met with Madame Lafond at the beginning of February, she had presented me with information on CASNAV and its function in France. It was only after I had observed her class for a few months that she told me Jeanne D’Albret does not really associate itself with the program. Perhaps she felt that she could trust me with this information now that she knew my character and purpose better.

The use of students' home languages in the classroom

There were times in the NF1 classroom when the students' home languages were used. On February 14th, for example, Madame Dubois had a new student, Salma, who had just arrived from Italy three days before. She explained to Salma in French that Madame François was the school social worker, and that Salma should go see her if she was unable to pay for lunch. Because this was an important piece of information that she wanted Salma to understand, Madame Dubois asked an Italian-speaking student to translate. Once she was sure Salma understood, Madame Dubois moved on with the lesson.

Another instance where Madame Dubois allowed the use of students' home languages is when she had to cancel a future class due to an appointment she had in Bordeaux. She wrote a sentence on the board in French that said, "Madame Dubois has a meeting in Bordeaux on Friday, March 1, 2013. NF1 students will not have class." She read through the sentence slowly, and then had one student explain the situation to another in their home language of Italian.

A final case where I witnessed the use of students' home languages in the NF1 class occurred on March 28th. A conflict occurred the day before between two NF1 students, James and Fatima, on the playground. James, a Portuguese student, apparently pushed Fatima repeatedly and called her "black" in a derogatory tone. Fatima, an English-speaking Nigerian student, told me what happened and I translated the situation for Madame Dubois. Madame Dubois talked to the class about how we are all equal and that race does not make anybody inferior or superior. She turned to me at the end of class that day and said, "Sometimes we have to explain things in the students' first languages."

From these three situations, it seemed to me that at times when important practical or personal information needed to be communicated, it was appropriate to use students' home languages. This is especially important for newly arrived students who need to orient themselves in the school and local culture. The NF3 students, on the other hand, understood both French and the school culture better than their NF1 peers, so they had less of a need to use their home languages in class.

During our interview, I asked Madame Lafond if there was a place for students' home languages in the classroom. She explained that when she teaches part of the French language, such as a particular grammar structure, she often makes comparisons with their native languages. For example, French uses many determinants, but determinants do not exist in Russian, and Madame Lafond has had a handful of Russian students. In these instances, she highlights the differences between the languages as well as the similarities, like the fact that every language has action verbs and state verbs. In this way, students' home languages are present.

However, Madame Lafond also said that she could not completely use students' home languages in the classroom because they must come to detach themselves. She said teachers should not "copy and paste," meaning that they should not directly translate for students. According to Madame Lafond, "language is a mentality"; it's a way of perceiving the world and the environment. Even with languages that are close to French, like Portuguese, the perceptions are different. This implies that teaching her immigrant students French is a way of acculturating them and assimilating them into French society. Here lies the tension that is at the heart of immigrant education: the teacher must assimilate the student into the dominant culture while still preserving that student's

individual cultural identity. Leaning towards the former means silencing individuals' unique voices and participating in a system of oppression; leaning towards the latter could mean bringing up students who are not able to successfully function in the dominant culture. I will explore this point further in the conclusion of my paper.

Direction of future schooling

The ultimate purpose of these NF1 and NF3 classes is to integrate the immigrant students into mainstream classes with their French-speaking peers. While she worked towards this objective, however, Madame Lafond presented a number of different ways for her students to figure out whether they wanted to pursue an academic or vocational track in high school. One way her students were able to explore options was through mini-internships that were required of each student in NF3. During a short period of time, usually a month, students observed someone in the workforce for a couple hours each week and participated in some of the work. One student had her internship in a bakery and learned how to make pastries.

Madame Lafond led a class-wide discussion on February 28th about the students' options for high school and for future careers. She explained to her students that a former student of hers was attending a vocational high school in Bordeaux for cooking and was thoroughly enjoying it. She also talked about the one vocational high school for hairdressers that is located in the department of Pau. In order to attend these high schools, a student has to submit an application. There are public and private vocational high schools, and the private ones have tuitions.

During this conversation, Madame Lafond told her students that for some, vocational high schools are much more agreeable than academic ones. She said that in France, one must work for 43 years of his or her life, and therefore each person must find a job that is interesting to him or her. This discussion brought to mind the meeting I witnessed on February 19th between the Polish student and his father during which Madame Lafond advised him to apply to a school for students with special needs. I found it interesting that in both of these situations, Madame Lafond was emphasizing vocational or alternative forms of schooling rather than highlighting the academic track. Because I did not witness any mainstream classes in the school, I am not sure how often the vocational track is mentioned to the rest of the student population. I suspect that this might be an instance of hidden curriculum where the teachers emphasize a vocational track to students they perceive as being lower achieving, but I do not have enough evidence to confirm or deny this suspicion.

Cultural identity in the classroom

Although the purpose of these courses was to integrate students back into mainstream classes, both teachers made space to emphasize students' individual and national identities in the classroom. On the wall in Madame Dubois's classroom was a world map that included all the countries' flags. When new students arrived in her class, Madame Dubois would ask them to go to the map and point to their home country and its flag. There were also student-made flags that corresponded to their home countries hung up around the room. On a bookshelf in the corner there were a number of different dictionaries including Portuguese to French, Spanish to French, English to French, etc.

During an interview, she told me that the students love seeing their home language dictionary on the shelf.

The décor in Madame Lafond's class was similar. Hanging on her walls was a map of the Pyrénées-Atlantique region as well as more student-made flags. During a class on March 21st, Madame Lafond told me about a project the students would be working on for the school's website. All students in the immigrant education program would record their voices in their home languages, speak about their countries, and maybe even sing traditional songs. She was enthusiastic about the project, which would most certainly build a bridge between students' home cultures and their developing identities in the French school system.

There were multiple times throughout the semester when the teachers led discussions about diversity, which were well received by their students. On March 19th, Madame Lafond opened a conversation on the different types of food we eat by asking students who had eaten at McDonald's, KFC, or Kebab before. During this discussion, one student asked why some people did not eat pork, and another student answered why her family did not eat pork, which was for religious reasons. Madame Lafond said that everyone in the world eats different foods based on adaptations and cultural traditions; she encouraged her students not to judge others based on what they eat, but to respect other groups and their beliefs. Although the students were young, the conversation was mature and respectful.

Madame Dubois also allowed time for conversations about diverse practices among different cultures, especially those represented in her class. On April 11th she was talking about vocabulary words related to clothing and objects in the house. One student

from Morocco said that for Moroccans, mothers usually work in the home. Madame Dubois built on this statement and asked her students, in their homes, who worked more, their mother or their father? She also asked the question, does your mother have an apron at the house? Instead of dismissing her student's comment, Madame Dubois used it as a way to explore her students' lives and their perceptions about roles in the home. During our interview, she said that it is important for her students to hold onto their cultures and nationalities because, for the most part, they did not want to leave their home countries. Teachers must be aware of this and allow a time and place for students to speak about their countries.

On my last day of observations, April 25th, Madame Lafond was leading a whole class discussion on what it means to be multilingual. She said that every student in the class was multilingual and listed all the languages they knew on the board. She insisted that their knowing multiple languages was an asset as opposed to a deficit, and furthermore encouraged her students to not be afraid of speaking French with an accent. At this point, she turned to me and asked me to speak a little French to demonstrate my accent. I said a few sentences about my experience learning French in Pau, and one student responded by saying, "Her accent is so cute!" Madame Lafond said that accents are charming and no one in her class should be afraid or embarrassed about speaking with one.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

From my results, I can conclude that the teachers' understanding of their role in educating their students is far more complex than that of a civil servant passing on a

neutral body of information. There is no doubt that the ultimate goal of these classes was to introduce immigrant students back into mainstream classes with their francophone peers. However, that did not mean that Madame Dubois and Madame Lafond totally disregarded their students' individual, diverse cultural and language backgrounds.

Both teachers recognized the importance of building relationships with their students, which included getting to know their individual backgrounds and needs. In this way, they did make distinctions based on natural origin and language background, violating the principle of neutrality that is emphasized in the Republican model of schooling. However, the teachers did not make these distinctions in order to discriminate; instead, they encouraged students to embrace their diverse backgrounds as an inspiration for schoolwork and as a way to affirm personal identity. The student-made flags in the NF1 classroom were projects that helped students learn new French vocabulary while drawing on material that was familiar to them. As they created their flags, they learned how to introduce themselves in French, which began that interesting relationship between students' past identities and their new French ones. They learned how to talk about themselves and their origins in the language of the culture they would be assimilating into.

The teachers recognized the importance of making a space for cultural identity, but they were hesitant to allow the use of home languages outside of emergency situations. Madame Dubois allowed translations of important information, such as class cancelations, but otherwise expected her students to speak entirely in French; Madame Lafond never used home languages in her class, except to explain grammatical structures, and even then she never spoke in the home languages but only referenced them. Madame

Lafond's comment that "language is a mentality" is especially significant because it implies that she understands that an aspect of her role as educator is that of assimilator. It is her job to instill a French mentality into her students through language instruction, and this mentality will help them be successful in French society, whether they enter it via a vocational track or an academic one. It is possible she believes that if her students are not fully immersed in the French mentality, they will face the challenges that many adult immigrants in France struggle with: high unemployment rates, lower-status jobs, and open discrimination, to name a few.

The interaction between the school and the national education system was interesting because it further complicated the idea that teachers are civil servants. Madame Lafond denounced any connection Collège Jeanne D'Albret had to CASNAV, insisting that they functioned in two different ways. Both she and Madame Dubois emphasized the student over the system and focused on the individual more than the group in their daily teaching styles. Both the teachers and CASNAV essentially wanted the same outcome, which was to educate immigrant students and successfully prepare them for life in the French workforce. The teachers at Collège Jeanne D'Albret simply wanted more freedom in what they taught and how they taught it. Even though they did not follow national procedures, that did not mean they were operating without high expectations and standards for their students. Madame Dubois would not advance any of her students to NF2 until she judged them to be ready, and when I asked her what it took for a student to be successful in her class, her answer was simple: hard work.

This research encouraged me to reflect on my own future teaching career and consider the ways I would interact with immigrant students. As I stated before, I am still

committed to embracing the diversity of each student and seeing their differences as advantages rather than deficits. However, now I have a deeper understanding of the issues Madame Dubois and Madame Lafond had to grapple with, including how to affirm students' identities while simultaneously assimilating them into American culture and preparing them to be responsible, successful members of society.

If I had immigrant students in my classroom, I would begin the school year with a unit on identity that encouraged students to tap into their personal experiences and ways of viewing the world. We would create family trees, draw maps of our hometowns, and write poems based on the "Where I'm From" poem by George Ella Lyon. That way, from the very beginning of the year, students would know that their personal stories and identities were subjects worth studying. Even while exploring their diverse cultural backgrounds, these immigrant students would still be developing English Language Arts skills deemed necessary for success according to the Common Core Standards.

If I were to continue my research, I would turn to the United States and study the different forms immigrant education is taking in our public schools. I am especially intrigued by the conflict that occurred in the Tucson Unified School District over the teaching of Mexican-American culture and how it was deemed "dangerous" to American ideals. I am interested in learning more about the actors in this dispute and the effects it had on immigrant students in the district. I wonder if it had an impact on the formation of identity for students of Mexican-American heritage in the area; I am also curious about how teachers in the Tucson Unified School District understand their roles as these students' educators. However, seeing as I will most likely begin my teaching career on

the East Coast, I could also see myself conducting research closer to home and examining the issues of immigrant education in either South Carolina or Washington, D.C.

It is a fine line to walk between fostering students' cultural identities and making sure they will be successful, contributing members of the larger society. It is the teacher's responsibility to be aware of the implications behind his or her teaching methods and style. As I begin my career in education, I will constantly be working to educate myself on the hidden narratives of power and literacy that are at play in my classroom, through both professional development and individual research. Regardless of national, state, or school decrees, it is within my power as a teacher to have a true and lasting effect on an immigrant student's life.

So, how did Madame Dubois and Madame Lafond understand their roles in educating immigrant students at Collège Jeanne D'Albret? From my data and reflections, I conclude that they saw themselves as cultural identity affirmers, individuals within a larger bureaucratic body, experts on teaching French as a second language, assimilators of immigrants into French society, encouragers, mediators, and French citizens. Similarly to their students, they had to navigate the multiple facets of their identities, emphasizing one aspect over another depending on the situation. Despite the somewhat contradictory elements of their identities, they were, above all, deeply committed to the success of their students in class and in their future endeavors.

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APPENDIX A

Transcript of Interview with Madame Lafond – April 4, 2013

Moi : Est-ce que vous pouvez parler un peu ?

Lafond : Oui, oui oui oui. Bonjour, je m'appelle [Madame Lafond]. Je suis professeur au Collège Jeanne D'Albret à Pau en France, et j'enseigne des élèves étrangers depuis 10 ans maintenant.

M : Mon premier question : est-ce que vous vous souvenez la première fois où vous avez enseigné des élèves étrangers ?

L : Oui. Oui, je m'en souviens très bien. C'était la première année où je suis arrivée dans ce collège, et j'ai fait la demande d'enseigner les élèves étrangers pour être sur un poste particulier comme celui-là, il faut être volontaire. Donc je demandais à venir travailler avec ses élèves, mais je n'avais jamais travaillé au part avant avec des élèves étrangers, donc j'ai passé les vacances d'été, qui sont assez long en France, deux mois,... et m'a demandé comment j'allais enseigner... tous nouveaux, inconnu pour moi, et j'ai découvert un monde complètement appart dans l'éducation national. Parce que, euh, j'en savais pas comment... mais j'avais la chance d'avoir un collègue travailler a deux en ce moment-là et j'ai un collègue dit-moi tout expliqué comment on aller faire ... comment on ouvrait nos relations avec l'élèves, parce que la première chose c'est d'abord la relation avec l'élèves. Et ensuite, on peut passé un apprentissage de la langue et encore, et encore.

M : Et il y a 10 ans, oui ?

L : Oui, c'est ça, c'était il y a 10 ans déjà.

M : Comment est-ce que votre formation de professeur vous prépare pour enseigner avec des élèves immigrés ?

L : La formation de professeur ne prépare pas. La formation de professeur en France prépare enseigner des élèves français sur de discipline au choisi donc par le professeur qui se spécialise dans une discipline. Pour enseigner des élèves immigrés en fait, ce n'est pas reconnu par l'éducation nationale parce que il existe au diplôme universitaire qui s'appelle des licences français langue étrangère des mastères français langue étrangère, mais il n'y a pas de concours correspondant pour entrer dans le métier enseignant. Donc, ça n'est pas reconnu. Ce qui fait que lorsque je suis arrivée ici dans le licenciement pour enseigner les élèves étrangers et que je n'avais jamais côtoyer ce publique là, j'enseignais deux ans avec le collègue qui était présent, et ensuite, j'ai présenté une maîtrise à l'époque c'était encore la maîtrise que c'est à dire mastère un spécialisé dans le français langue étrangère. Voilà, j'ai fait ma formation de façon personnelle, privée et après avoir commencer à travailler.

M : Est-ce que vous pouvez partager quelques exemples de méthodes que vous trouviez efficace quand vous enseignez avec des élèves étrangers ?

L : Alors, partager des méthodes que j'ai trouvé efficace ? Non, parce que de la même façon que la discipline n'est pas reconnue par l'éducation nationale, il n'y a pas réellement une véritable production de la méthode pour enseigner les français en temps que langue étrangère à des jeunes gens, élèves du collège du lycée qui sont en France. Il est méthodes qui existe pour enseigner le français comme une langue étrangère pour des élèves étrangères qui apprennent le français, comme en France

on apprend l'anglais, l'espagnol, l'allemande, l'italien, mais il n'y a pas l'idée d'immersion directe dans le pays. Donc, les méthodes, je les ai construit. Um, actuellement les éditeurs commencent à proposer des méthodes pour cette immersion parce il y a de plus en plus d'élèves étrangers qui arrivent en France. Et une de preuve, c'est le DELF en France, le rectorat (Local Education Authority, Board of Education) va propose depuis 4 ans le DELF aux élèves étrangers qui sont scolarisé en France. Les quatre premières années, il y avait 300, 320 élèves. Cette année, cinquième année, il y a 560 élèves. Donc il y a une explosion d'élèves qui sont étrangers, qui ont inscrit en collège, et les éditeurs commencent à prendre compte de ce publique-là. Mais jusqu'à présent, pas de méthodes, il s'en construit des méthodes pour des années qui passent.

M : Est-ce qu'il y a une place pour des langues maternelle des élèves étrangers dans la salle de classe ?

L : Oui. Alors, en schéma concerne, la place est une place je dirais, euh, technique. C'est à dire que quand j'enseigne un fait de langue, un grammaire en particulier, je fais très souvent le rapprochement avec leur langue étrangère. Par exemple, sur le fait en France on utilise les déterminants. On a besoin de déterminants. Certaines langues n'ont pas des déterminants, le russe, par exemple, et j'ai beaucoup d'élèves russes, il n'y a pas des déterminants. Et, c'est le, la marque du féminin et la marque du genre, la marque du nombre, sont inscrit sur la fin du nom en fin d'adjectif qualificative. Donc, ça je la fait comprendre, comme je la fait comprendre que un sujet, un verbe, même si ce n'est pas le même vocable, il existe en toute les langues il y a un verbe d'action, un verbe d'état, et que chaque

verbe un sujet. Dans ce sens, la langue maternelle est présente. En suite, ce n'est pas exactement, je ne sais pas si ca c'est l'objet d'une question suivant, mais si je ne peux pas utiliser complètement leur langue maternelle, c'est aussi parce que il faut qu'ils arrivent à se détacher. A ne pas faire copier collé, comme on dirait maintenant, c'est à dire traduire directement, ce que font les élèves qui ont des langues très proches du français. Les élèves portugaises, c'est une traduction direct qui ne fonction pas, parce qu'il n'ont pas dans la mentalité. Une langue est une mentalité, c'est une façon de concevoir le monde, de concevoir l'environnement, et même des langues proches, nous concevrons notre monde et notre environnement des façons différents. Dans ce sens là, je la laisse un petit peu le côté la langue maternelle en revanche, je ne coupe surtout pas avec les racines d'origines, c'est à dire qu'on fait toujours un travail dans la courant de l'année sur la pays d'origine. Soit sur l'hôpital, les maisons, dans quelles genres de maisons ils habitent, dans quels types de maisons ils habitent, soit sur la description de leur pays, ce qu'on fait maintenant, et il vont parler un petit peu dans leur langue, voilà. Donc, il y a toujours un lieu, mais qui est plus moins sérieux suivant le besoin du moment.

M : Qu'est-ce qui contribue à succès d'une élève dans le programme CASNAV ?

L : Alors, je ne peux pas parler du programme CASNAV. Euh, on ne travaille pas, voilà, avec le CASNAV. Donc, le CASNAV en fait, c'est une structure qui *apparti* complètement à l'éducation nationale, mais qui est différent suivant les régions. Dans l'éducation nationale chaque région a un rectorat. C'est à dire ne *tout a* ... Administrative ... Et donc, pour la quitale, pour le rectorat de Bordeaux, le

CASNAV est emplanter à Bordeaux et, comment on dire, ils ont comme approche, le publique conseil, l'accueille, les élèves étrangers à Bordeaux, et n'absolument pas le même que celui que nous nous avons. Nous avons ici à Pau une structure, particulière très spécifique, qui a été construit au fille des ans, je pense que maintenant ca fait trentaine d'années qu'elle existe, cette structure là, et je pense que nous sommes la seule structure dans l'académie a fonctionner comme nous fonctionnons. Alors, c'est vrai qu'on pose ce question, c'est vrai que parfois nous regardons un petit peu de travers, le CASNAV nous regarde le travers, parce que... dans une facilité d'action parce qu'on a dit moyen, nous sommes trois professeurs qui accueille des élèves non francophone, on vous ne trouverais ça nul part dans l'académie peut-être Paris ou Marseille, l'académie Bordeaux... vous ne trouverais nul part un établissement avec trois professeurs entièrement d'étier à accueillir des élèves non francophone. Donc, nous nous sommes construit notre méthode de travail, notre relation avec des élèves, notre relation avec l'administration, avec l'inspection académique avec le rectorat, et nous fonctions comme ça, et ca marche. Voilà, on n'a pas de ligne avec le CASNAV, et en fait nous ne nous souhaitons pas réellement avoir de ligne avec le CASNAV parce que nous n'avons pas la même façon de fonctionner.

M : L'atmosphère dans la salle de classe, c'est difficile ? Parce qu'il y a toujours des élèves différents qui vient, qui aller, est-ce que ça change beaucoup ?

L : Ah, oui. Sur la méthode d'enseignement, oui, ça change beaucoup. Avoir des élèves qui entre, qui sort, alors il y a deux façons entre il des sortir en fait. Il y a les élèves qui entre dans la fille de l'année, c'est a dire qu'ils arrivent en autre

structure, commencent la classe du Madame Dufau, NF1, et là il faut tous la répondre le français mais aussi la vie au collège, le fonctionnement du collège, les règles de la société française, on doit tous le répondre c'est ce que fait Madame Dufau, c'est ce que fait Madame DuLeau, ensuite ils arrivent dans ma classe, tous ça, ça peut-être dans une seule et même année, d'abord Madame Dufau, puis Madame DuLeau, puis moi, Madame Larrouy, et c'est vrai qu'il leur rentre ces élèves là ... les ameneurs un objectif qui est la langue scolaire, voilà. La langue de scolarisation. Ça peut être pour Madame DuLeau et pour moi-même, et plus commun pour Madame Dufau, les élèves qui sortent la classe pour aller dans une classe générale en mathématiques, en histoire, en anglais, une autre discipline, qui êtes une immersion partiel, dans une classe générale avec des élèves français, ou qui ont de français comme langue maternelle. Donc c'est vrai que ce sont des fonctionnements très lourdes parce que a chaque eux on doit sur fait adapter a l'entrer et a la sortie. Et a chaque moment ou sa adapter nouvelle élément qui entre dans un groupe qui a déjà équilibré, qui déjà fonction, qui a sa progression, et up ! un petit élément plus, et on partie, et on reprend du temps, et on recommence. C'est vrai que c'est fatigant. Ca rachi beaucoup.

APPENDIX B

Translation of Interview with Madame Lafond – April 4, 2013

Me: Can you speak a little?

Lafond: Yes, yes yes yes. Hello, my name is [Mrs. Lafond]. I am a professor at the Collège Jeanne D'Albret in Pau, France, and I have taught foreign students for 10 years now.

M: My first question: do you remember the first time when you taught foreign students?

L: Yes. Yes, I remember it very well. It was the first year when I arrived at this middle school, and I completed the application to teach the foreign students, to have a particular post like I have now, it was necessary to volunteer. So, I asked to come work with these students, but I had never worked with foreign students before. I spent my summer vacation, which is pretty long in France, about two months, and I asked myself how I was going to teach. It was all new, all unknown to me, and I discovered a world completely separate from the national education system. Because, uh, I didn't know... but I was lucky to have two colleagues to work with now, and one colleague explained what to do, what not to do, and how to open up relationships with the students, because the first and most important thing is the relationship with the students. And then, one can do an apprenticeship with language, and again and again.

M: And you've been there 10 years, yes?

L: Yes, that's right, it's been 10 years.

M: How did your teacher training prepare you to teach immigrant students?

L: My teacher training didn't prepare me. The teacher training in France prepares you to teach French students in a discipline of choice chosen by a professor who specializes in that discipline. To teach immigrant students, in reality, it's not recognized by the national education system because a university diploma exists that's called a license for French as a foreign language, and a master's for French as a foreign language, but there is not a corresponding exam to enter the teaching profession. So, it's not recognized. At the time when I arrived here to teach the foreign students, I had never mixed with this group of people. I taught two years with my colleague who was here, and then I earned a master's in the specialization of French as a foreign language. So, I completed my training in a manner that was personal, private, and after having started working already.

M: Can you share some examples of methods that you find effective when you teach foreign students?

L: So, share methods that I have found effective? No, because in the same way that the discipline isn't recognized by the national education system, there isn't really a true creation/production of the method to teach French as a language to young, foreign students who are in the middle and high school levels in France. There are methods that exist for teaching French as a foreign language, like how in France one learns English, Spanish, and Italian, but there isn't an idea of teaching language through the direct immersion in a country. So, I construct the methods that I use. Actually, the editors (of the national education system) are beginning to propose methods for this immersion because more and more foreign students are arriving in France. Some proof of that is the DELF in France, the Local Education

Authority has proposed for the past four years that foreign students who are educated in France take the DELF. The first four years of this, there were about 300 to 320 students. This year, the fifth year, there were 560 students. So, there is an explosion of foreign students that are entering into middle schools, and the editors are beginning to take count of this population. But up to this point, there aren't set methods, and we have constructed our own methods in the years past.

M: Is there a place in the classroom for the foreign students' maternal languages?

L: Yes. So... the place is a place I say is, uh, technical. That means that when I teach part of the language, a particular grammar structure, I often make the comparison with their foreign language. For example, in French, one uses determinants. We have need for determinants. Certain languages don't have determinants, Russian, for example, and I have many Russian students, but they don't know determinants. Also, there's the mark of femininity, the mark of gender that is written at the end of the noun and at the end of a qualifying adjective. So, I make that understood, like I make understood that a subject, a verb, even though it's not the same language, it exists in all languages, there are action verbs and verbs of state, and that for each verb, there's a subject. In that sense, the maternal language is present. Then, it's not exactly, I'm not sure if this is the objective of a following question, but if I can't completely use their maternal language, it's also because they must come to detach themselves. One shouldn't copy and paste, as we say now, which means translate directly, which is what some students do who have a language close to French. The Portuguese students, a direct translation doesn't work, because it's not in the mentality. A language is a mentality, it's a way of

perceiving the world, of perceiving the environment, and even with languages close to French, and we perceive our world and our environments differently. In that sense, I leave a little bit of the maternal language, on the other hand, I definitely don't sever the students' ties to their roots, that means always doing work in the flow between their original country and France. Being in the hospital, the houses, in what types of houses they live, giving descriptions of their countries, that's what we're doing now, and they're going to speak a little bit in their own language, so there you go. There's always a place, but it is less serious following the need of the moment.

M: What contributes to the success of a student in the CASNAV program?

L: Well, I can't speak to the CASNAV program. We don't work with CASNAV. So, CASNAV, in reality, it's a structure that complements the national education system, but it's different depending on the region. In the national education system, each region has a Local Education Authority or Board of Education. So, for the Board of Education in Bordeaux, CASNAV is situated in Bordeaux... it's a center of welcome for the immigrant students in Bordeaux, and it's not exactly the same as what we have here. We have here in Pau a structure very specific, that's been constructed over a number of years, I think now it's been about 30 years since it was founded, and I think that we are the only structure in a regional education authority that functions like we function. So, it's true when one asks the question, it's true that sometimes CASNAV gives us a funny look, because we have an ability for action. We are three professors who welcome non-francophone students, and you won't find a place like us anywhere except for Paris or

Marseille. You won't find an establishment like us anywhere, with three professors dedicated entirely to welcoming non-francophone students. So, we have constructed our own method of working, our relationship with the students, our relationship with administration, with the school inspectorate, with the Board of Education, and we function like this, and it works. So, we don't have a direct link with CASNAV, and in reality, we don't with to have a link with CASNAV because we don't have the same way of functioning.

M: The atmosphere in the classroom, is that difficult? Because there are always different students coming, and leaving, does it change often?

L: Yes. In the method of teaching, yes, it changes a lot. To have students who enter, who leave, there are two ways... There are students who enter in the beginning of the year, that's to say they arrive in a different structure, beginning with Madame Dufau's class, NF1, and there they must always answer in French, but also must learn the life and culture of middle school, the functioning of middle school, the rules of French society, one must always comply with what Madame Dufau does, and that's what Madame DuLeau does, then they arrive in my class, all of that, that's maybe in the span of just one year, beginning with Madame Dufau, then Madame DuLeau, then me, Madame Larrouy, and it's true that they return their students there. The objective is the language of education. It's a language of schooling, education. It's maybe for Madame DuLeau and for myself, and less common for Madame Dufau, the students who leave the classroom to go in the general classes for math, history, English, another discipline, that is a partial immersion, in a general class with French students, or who have French like a

maternal language. So it's true that the workings a very... because each class must adapt to coming and going. At each moment you must adapt to a new element that enters into a group that was already balanced, that was already functioning, that was making progress, and up! One more element, and one begins again, one takes more time. It's true that it's tiring.

APPENDIX C

Transcript of Interview with Madame Dubois – April 9, 2013

Moi : Premier, est-ce que vous pouvez dire ton nom et combien des années tu as travaillé avec des étrangers ?

Dubois : Oui. Je m'appelle [Madame Dubois], et j'enseigne avec les élèves étrangers depuis deux ans.

M : Ok. Alors, le premier, est-ce que vous vous souvenez la première fois où vous avez enseigné avec les élèves étrangers ?

D : Je me souviens de ma première expérience parce que elle est récente... C'était une expérience que j'ai trouvé très positive. J'ai enseigné avec des élèves étrangers a toute suite, mais aussi... depuis très longtemps. Donc, qu'est-ce que je peux te dire ? Malgré tous, j'ai trouvé, c'était des élèves étrangers mais des élèves comme des autres. Voilà.

M : Comment est-ce que votre formation de professeur vous prépare pour enseigner avec des élèves étrangers ?

D : Alors, ma formation... D'abord, d'enseigner avec des étrangers, j'avais enseigné avec des élèves français pendant quatorze ans. Ensuite, j'ai fait, j'ai suivi des cours à faculté de Pau, et j'ai obtenu un DU. Et ensuite, j'ai vu la poste pour la Jeanne D'Albret. Alors, ma formation, elle m'a bien préparé sur le plan pédagogique. Voilà. J'ai reçu de bons cours, et ... Et en revanche, sur le plan psychologique, on n'est pas, il a rien préparé ma formation voilà. Faire fasse à la difficulté sociale et psychologique de nos élèves. Et là, il faut cuise notre propre expérience, notre propre personnalité, pour s'il comprendre, voilà.

M : Est-ce que vous pouvez partager quelques exemples de méthodes que vous trouviez efficace ?

D : Avec des élèves étrangers ?

M : Oui.

D : Alors. Moi, je m'en poupe de niveau d'oralisation. Je fais beaucoup d'oral. Donc, je suis une méthode en générale, je parle l'orale, pour petit à petit, à l'écrit. Voilà. Donc, toujours je commence par une situation langagier simple, une structure langagier simple, que j'enrichi au feu ... Voilà. Le matin commence, on fait l'orale, en contexte. J'interagir avec des élèves, donc c'est d'abord professeur élève, et ensuite, petit à petit, entre élèves. Voilà. Et puis ensuite, une fois que nous sommes approprie y est a l'orale une structure langagier en regarde commence fasse à l'écrit. En générale, ca c'est le principe de basse. Ensuite, l'organisation de mes cours... par exemple, en ce moment je travaille sur leur nouvelle maison, parce que ce sont des élèves ont tous qui quitter leur pays, donc leur maison est qui ménager en France sera ça manque, donc une nouvelle maison c'est un thème commun, qui est familier en quelque sort. Voilà, je sais de trouver un thème comme ça, et autour de ce thème, j'avais travaillé la compréhension orale, je ferais un petit dialogue, la compréhension écrit, on va garder la dialogue des images, l'expression écrit, et voilà. Je faire du vocabulaire simple... je vais faire de la grammaire, je faire de la conjugaison, on va utiliser des verbes... et je vais faire beaucoup de phonétiques.

M : Est-ce qu'il y a beaucoup de répétition, parce que il y a toujours des nouveaux étudiants.

D : Oui. Ce qu'il me gêne pas parce que comme je fonctionne aspirant que je revoir tous nouveau je reviens sur ce qu'on a vu et j'apporte des éléments nouveaux. Je me travaille comme ça. Donc, comme ta nouvelle élèves arrivent, c'est l'occasion de revoir ce qu'on a vu et d'apporter des éléments d'approfondi ou d'apporter des éléments nouveau. C'est comme ça que je fonctionne.

M : Et c'est bon pour les élèves, la répétition pour les traductions ?

D : Oui. Ensuite, il y a de la répétition et pas trop long plus puisque ils ne sont pas, le but ce n'est pas de ... la fin. Donc, quand ils ... le niveau a un plus ils vont à NF2. C'est un niveau à deux. Donc, ils répètent, mais pas trop long plus.

M : Quel est le temps normal pour une élève dans le NF1, ou ça dépende à élève ?

D : C'est très variable en fonctionne des élèves et on est en ... en ça. C'est à dire que on essaie vraiment d'apporter de son élèves a besoin. On prête des individuels, ici ils n'ont pas de groupe, donc ce que je peux dire c'est qu'un élève qui n'a pas des difficultés intérieur, et qui a une langue pas trop loin de français, en générale entre quatre, cinq mois avec moi. Et ça peut être, ca période un peu de trois mois plus que il y a entre très vite dans la langue.

M : Est-ce qu'il y a une place pour la langue maternelle dans la salle de classe ?

D : Alors, dans la salle de classe. Il y a... Il y a des drapeaux de leur pays, ils ont très attaché. Il y a des activités culturelles que je fais régulièrement, en c'est à dire la, actuellement chacun a très en thème personnage ou célèbre de son pays. Donc il en apporter, il a le nom, pourquoi il est célèbre, avec un peu de vocabulaire... Voilà. Parfois je fais de travaille sur... je me fais tous le temps... J'ai un fiche

aussi le paysages. On travaillait aussi avec les portraits et sur les paysages.

Chacun a représenté leur paysage en arts plastiques, un paysage de son pays. Je les réfléchis en classe.

M : Est-ce que c'est important des élèves de garder leurs cultures, leurs nationalités ?

D : Oui. Parce que pour ... même n'arrache, ils sont pas parti par plaisir de leur pays.

Donc il faut obtenir compte dans notre enseignement. Il faut faire une place à leur culture, origine, j'enseigne cours aussi comme j'ai entraîné qui est la présentation de soit. Donc là, il viennent, ils peuvent parler de leur pays, viennent de leur pays. Ils aiment bien comme même. C'est important. Des dictionnaires aussi. J'en ai là, il en a beaucoup. Tu vois des dictionnaires à portugais, en espagnol, en polonais. Ce qu'ils aiment aussi, de leur langue.

M : Qu'est-ce qui contribue au succès d'une élève, pas dans le CASNAV nécessairement, mais dans votre classe ?

D : [pause] euh, le travail. À ce sont des élèves, il faut qu'il le soit, parce qu'il y a la journée double le travail. Où le triple. Donc ça, c'est vrai. Et... il faut comme même qui sont bien accueilli. Ils n'arrivent pas en train des apprentissages. Il faut qu'ils se sentent sécurisés quand ils arrivent, accueilli, il faut leur parler génialement, c'est vrai, il faut vraiment leur parler du travail parce que si non, ça n'arrive pas très, dans la langue, ils se bloquent, voilà.

M : Pour vous, vous vous-même, quel est l'objectif avec les étudiants étrangers ? C'est pour accueillir des étudiants, c'est pour enseigner le français, quel est le plus important pour vous ? C'est un peu vague, je sais.

D : C'est une question délicat, parce que qu'est-ce que je préfère, aôttons que le l'autre.

J'aime beaucoup le côté humain, aventure, parce que il faut beaucoup d'une ... de couper ses élèves-la, et moi c'est que un métier, donc j'aime ca, et j'aime beaucoup s'enseigner les élèves. Donc, j'aime ses élèves parce que ils ont envie de parler le français, c'est pas le même pour les étudiants français. Donc, j'aime ca. Puis, j'aime enseigner la base de français. Ici de comprendre comme une langue fonctionne, c'est intéressant.

APPENDIX D

Translation of Interview with Madame Dubois – April 9, 2013

Me: First, could you say your name and how many years you have worked with immigrant students?

Dufau: Yes. My name is Madame Dufau, and I have worked with immigrant students for two years.

M: Okay. So, my first question, do you remember the first time you taught immigrant students.

D: I remember my first experience because it was recent. It was an experience that I found very positive. I taught immigrant students straight away, but it was something I had wanted to do for a long time. So, what can I tell you? Despite everything, I have found that immigrant or foreign students are students just like the rest. Voila.

M: How did your teacher training prepare you to teach immigrant students?

D: Well, my teacher training... First, before I taught immigrant students, I had taught French students for 14 years. Then I took a course at the University de Pau, and I obtained [some qualification]. And then, I saw the posting for the job at the middle school. So, my teacher training prepared me very well for the pedagogical plan. I had good classes. On the other hand, in the psychological program, it didn't prepare me to teach. You must tie in your own experience and your own personality to understand your students.

M: Could you share some examples of teaching methods that you found effective?

D: With foreign students?

M: Yes.

D: So. Me, I begin with a level of oralization. I do a lot of oral exercises. So, I have a general method, I speak a lot, so that little by little, they can write. Voila. So, I always begin with a linguistic situation that is simple, a simple linguistic structure that I enrich. The morning begins, and we do oral exercises, within a context. I interact with the students, so that at first it's between the student and the teacher, and eventually, little by little, it's an interaction between students. An then later, at a time when we are deeper into our understanding, and there is an oral linguistic structure I begin to see them write it. In general, that's the founding principle. Then, with the organization of my course, I go more in depth. For example, currently I'm working on the topic of their new houses, because all of these students have left their countries, so their new house in France is a common theme, one that is familiar in some way. So, I know to find a theme like that, and after I have worked with oral comprehension, I do a little dialogue, written comprehension; we complete a dialogue with images, and complete written expressions. I do simple vocabulary, I will do grammar, I will do conjugations, we will use verbs, and we will do a lot of phonetics.

M: Is there a lot of repetition, because there are always new students?

D: Yes. That doesn't bother me because I work as I see the need and I bring new elements. That's how I work. So, when new students arrive, it's an occasion to go back over what we have already seen and to bring more complicated elements or to bring new elements. That's how I work.

M: And that's good for the students, the repetition?

D: Yes. Then, there's the repetition, and not for too long since they're not in my class for too long. So, when they no longer need the repetition, they will move to NF2.

That's the next level. So, they repeat, but not for too long.

M: What's the normal amount of time for a student to spend in NF1, or does it depend on the student?

D: It varies by student and how they function. That means that we really try to bring the students what they need. One gives [material] to individuals, because in here we are not a group, so with that in mind I can say that if a student doesn't have interior difficulties, and who has a maternal language close to French, in general he will spend four to five months with me. And it's possible for him to spend three months with me, if he comes into the language very quickly.

M: Is there a place for students' maternal languages in the classroom?

D: Well, in the classroom. Three are... There are flags of their countries, to which they are very attached. There are cultural activities that I do often, like the one on the board, for which each student must find a personage or celebrity from his or her country. So the students bring in the name, why that person is a celebrity, and a little bit of vocabulary... I also have a worksheet with landscapes. We have worked with portraits of their countries. Each person represented their landscape in art class, a landscape of their country. We reflect on these in class.

M: Is it important for the students to keep their cultures and their nationalities?

D: Yes. Because... they didn't want to leave, they didn't leave their countries happily. So

they must make that count in our teaching. We must make a place for their culture, their origins... So when they come, they can speak about their country, they all like to do that. That's important. The dictionaries also. I have them, I have a lot of them. You can see the dictionaries in Portuguese, in Spanish, in Polish. They like that also, the dictionaries in their language.

M: What contributes to the success of a student, not necessarily in CASNAV, but in your class?

D: [pause] Um, the work. In regards to the students, they must do that, there's a lot of work, sometimes double or triple what they're used to. But that, that's true. And they must feel welcomed. They must feel secure when they arrive, and welcomed, and it's necessary to speak to them kindly, because if we don't, they won't come to an understanding of the French language, they will have a mental block.

M: For you, you yourself, what is the objective with immigrant students? Is it to welcome the students, to teach them French, what is the most important for you? It's a little vague, I know.

D: It's a sensitive question, because what do I prefer, one to the other? I like the human side of things. For me it's a career, and so I like that, I really like teaching students. And, I like these students because they have a desire to speak French, it's not the same as teaching French students. So, I like that. And what's more, I like teaching the base of the French language. Here we can understand how a language works, and that's interesting.