

30+ years of immersion

Louisiana French Immersion Alumni



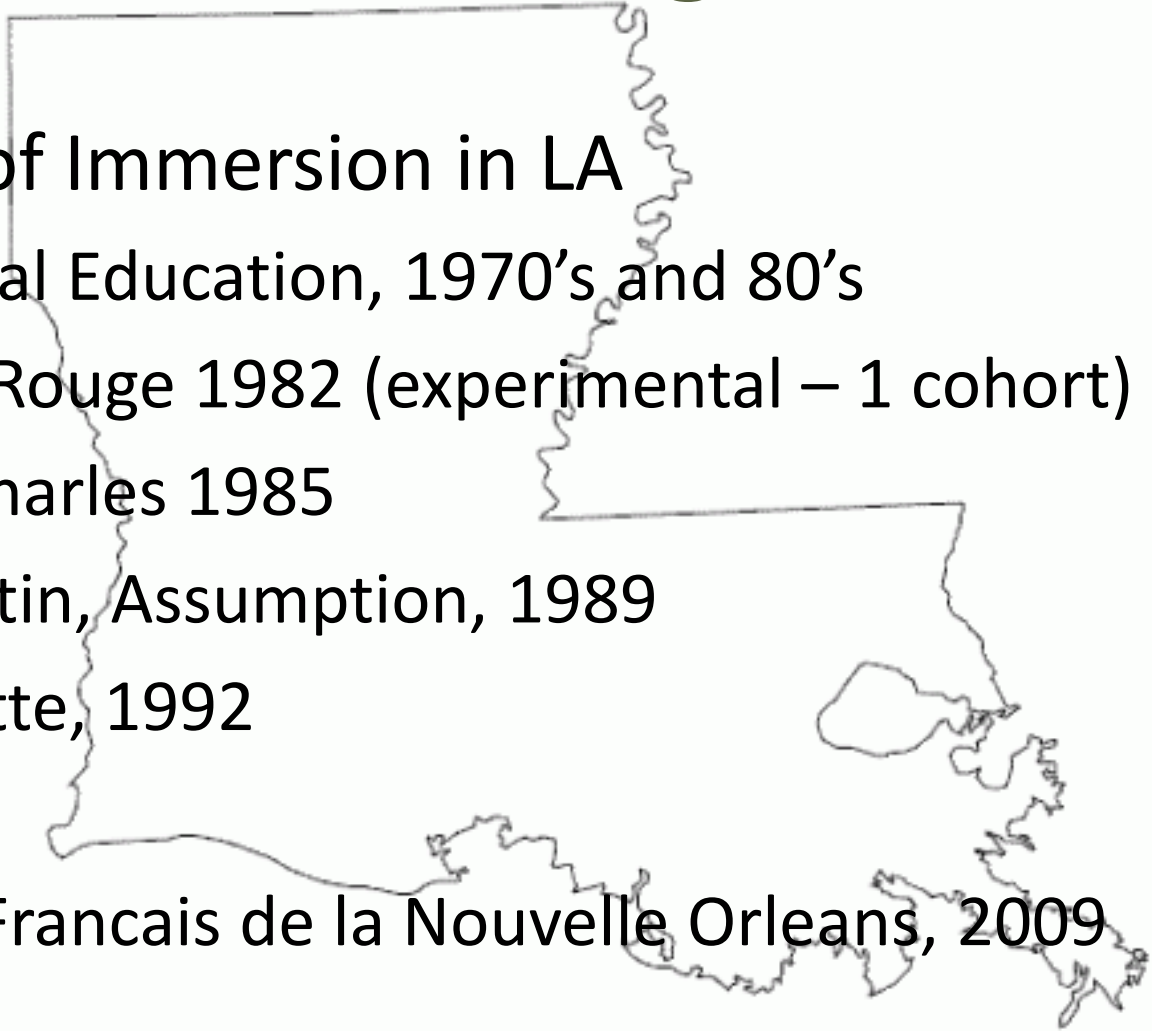
Michelle Haj- Broussard
drhajbroussard@mcneese.edu

Nicole Boudreaux
nsboudreaux@lpssonline.com

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Historical Background

- History of Immersion in LA
 - Bilingual Education, 1970's and 80's
 - Baton Rouge 1982 (experimental – 1 cohort)
 - Lake Charles 1985
 - St Martin, Assumption, 1989
 - Lafayette, 1992
 - ...
 - Lycee Francais de la Nouvelle Orleans, 2009



Background of study

- Legislative needs (recent immersion laws)
- Changes in CODOFIL mandate (Council for the Development of French in Louisiana)
- New understanding of the importance of marketing
- Grassroot Facebook groups
- Simple curiosity 😊



Purpose

- To examine former French Immersion students' practices;
- To examine their beliefs about how French Immersion has affected their lives;
- To determine the educational and social success of the program.

Sample and Method

- Sample:
 - Convenience sample
- Method
 - Through social networking (online)
 - Through real time social networking (face to face)
- Measure
 - Online and hard copy Google survey
 - Unpublished link
 - Based loosely on Mellgren & Somers survey (2008)

Limitations

- Voluntary participation
- Social media (limited scope)
- Participation verified through names and names of immersion sites
- Based on participant's perspectives
- Validity and reliability of this initial survey not verified

Preliminary Findings

Demographics of participants

- Gender : 104 females (83.2%)
21 males (16.8%)
- Age:
1 over 30 yrs old (.8%)
33 between 26-30 (26.4%)
74 between 21-25 (59.2%)
17 between 18-20 (13.6%)



Education History

- Length of immersion experience:
 - Through High School: 50 (40%)
 - Into High School: 14 (11.2%)
 - Through Middle School: 22 (17.7%)
 - Some middle school 2 (1.6%)
 - Not after 5th grade 22 (17.7%)
 - No answer 1 (.8%)



- High School French experience : 96 (77%)

Education Level

- Self-reported GPA while in immersion
 - Over 4pt GPA: 4 (3.2%)
 - 3.5 to 4.0 GPA: 76 (60.8%)
 - 2.5 to 3.4 GPA: 39 (31.2%)
 - Below 2.5: 5 (4%)
 - No answer: 1 (.8%)



Education level

College: 100 out of 125 (80%)

Terminal Degree: 3 (2.4%)

Graduate Degree: 10 (8%)

Some graduate school: 4 (3.2%)

Bachelor Degree: 45 (36%)

Some college: 38 (30.4%)

Associate Degree: 7 (5.6%)

No college: 25 out of 125 (20%)

High School Diploma: 16 (12.8%)

GED: 2 (1.6%)



Intended Education Level

College: 122 out of 125 (98%)

Terminal Degree: 18 (14.4%)

Graduate Degree: 36 (28.8%)

Some graduate school: 0 (0%)

Bachelor Degree: 54 (43.2%)

Some college: 8 (6.4%)

Associate Degree: 6 (4.8%)

No college: 1 out of 125 (less than 1%)

High School Diploma: 0 (0%)

GED: 1 (.8%)

No answer: 2 (less than 2%)



Education Choices

Major or minor in language or cultural studies

- International Studies: 2 (1.6%)
- Languages: 21 (16.8%)
 - French or French Education: 14 (11.2%)
 - Other languages: 3 (2.4%)
 - Modern languages: 4 (3.2%)
- None: 102 (81.6%)



Global Experience

- Study abroad: 24 (19.2%)
 - France: 10 (France, Paris, Angers) (8%)
 - Canada: 7 (Canada, Ste Anne, Moncton) (5.6%)
 - Belgium: 1 (Liege) (.8%)
 - United Kingdom: 2 (London, Scotland) (1.6%)
 - Others: 4 (Brazil, Morocco , Costa Rica) (3.2%)



Global Experience

- Travel abroad: 72 (57.6%)
 - In 6 continents and in 23 countries (some unexpected)
 - Many to multiple countries: 32 (25.6%)
- French Speaking countries: 53 (42.4%)
 - France: 33 Belgium: 5 Canada: 13
 - Morocco: 1 Switzerland: 1
- Spanish speaking countries: 20 (16%)
- No travel: 53 (42.4%)



Current level of language

Self assessed French fluency level:

- Advanced: 33 (26.4%)
- Intermediate: 63 (50.4%)
- Beginner: 27 (21.6%)
- Novice: 2 (1.6%)



Current use of language

- Utilization of French today:
 - Everyday: 15 (12%)
 - Often: 59 (47.2%)
 - Once in a while: 46 (36.8%)
 - Never: 5 (4%)
- In which context(s):
 - In multiple contexts: 51 (40.8%)
 - No answer: 8 (6.4%)



Current use of language

- In which context(s):
 - At home: 68 (54.4%)
 - With friends: 57 (45.6%)
 - At work: 55 (44%)
 - When traveling: 47 (37.6%)
 - With family/grandparents: 8 (6.4%)
 - Leisure, cinema, reading: 6 (4.8%)
 - At school: 4 (3.2%)
 - In public: 1 (.8%)



Studies of other languages

- Third language : 50 (40%)
- Including 4 fourth language learners
 - Spanish: 40 (80% of those studying additional language(s))
 - Less commonly taught languages: 8 (16%)
(Arabic, Pashtu, Chinese, Greek)
 - Italian: 3 (6%)
 - ASL: 2 (4%)
 - Latin:1 (2%)



Perceptions

- French Immersion has been valuable in my life:
 - Strongly agree: 100 (80%)
 - Agree: 23 (18.4%)
 - Disagree: 2 (1.6%)
 - Strongly disagree : 0



Perceptions

- Immersion for my child?
 - My child will be in immersion: 76 (60.8%)
 - I wish my child could be in immersion: 20 (16%)
 - I do not want my child in immersion: 4 (3.2%)
 - No answer: 25 (20%)



Perceptions

- My French immersion education helped and still helps me to accept and understand the culture of others:
 - Strongly agree: 90 (72%)
 - Agree: 26 (20.8%)
 - Disagree: 7 (5.6%)
 - Strongly disagree: 0
 - No answer: 2 (1.6%)



If you could have changed anything?

- Nothing!: 17
- More opportunities:38
 - Continuing through middle school and high school
 - Starting earlier
 - Adding elective high school classes and college credits
 - Summer camps, field trips, study abroad
- Teaching issues: 7
 - More consistency, better screening
 - More local teachers
- Pedagogy: 7
 - More tools for parents
 - More grammar and writing
 - Insistence on speaking French
- Sites: 5
 - Better choice of school
 - More sites
 - One-track school/immersion centre

Additional Comments: Major Themes

- Heritage language and culture: 17
- Gratefulness: 7
- Life changing: 18
- Personal Development:19 (job skills, thinking skills)
- Multiculturalism and social skills: 16
- No negative comment

“French Immersion taught me from a very early age that the world is much bigger than what is directly around me. It opened my eyes to different cultures, people, traditions, and beliefs. Because of both my knowledge of the language and experiences in French Immersion, I was able to become a linguist for the Air Force and learn one of the hardest categorized languages. French Immersion has changed my life.”

“The French Immersion program not only affected my ability to learn and understand languages, it also molded how I think and interact socially. I learned to think critically and to solve problems based only on the information I had. Growing up I couldn't ask my parents for help with my homework because they don't speak French. I learned to be self-reliant and disciplined. I also learned to move easily from different social circles. I had different sets of friends in my English classes, French classes, sports, church, etc. I learned to adapt and relate to all of them in different ways.”

“I love French with a my heart. Being able to participate in the French immersion program during all my years of school has impacted my life in such a positive way and given me so many cool opportunities . When I start a family I plan to put my children into French immersion. French will forever hold a place in my heart.”

“I am in debt to the French immersion program and am beyond grateful to have been a part of it.”