

Switching to English: Effects on Motivation to use L2 French in Montreal

Stephanie McNaughton

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By: Stephanie McNaughton

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Signed by the final Examining Committee:

_____ Chair

Sara Kennedy

_____ Examiner

Pavel Trofimovich

_____ Examiner

Walcir Cardoso

_____ Supervisor

Kim McDonough

Approved by _____

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director

June 19, 2014 _____

Dean of Faculty

ABSTRACT

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Stephanie McNaughton

Anecdotal information has suggested that individuals who use French as a second language in the Montreal public domain sometimes experience switches to English despite having initiated the conversation in French. Although this anecdotal information suggested that experiencing switches might have had a negative effect on motivation to use French, the effect of these switches in the Montreal context had not been addressed in previous literature. The current study explored whether or not the phenomenon of switching exists in Montreal as well as the possible effects it may have on motivation to use French as a second language. Data was collected from 13 French-as-a-second-language participants who documented their experiences using a web-based questionnaire. Although results suggest that the phenomenon of switching happens less frequently than the amount of non-switches experienced, it was found that, for intermediate users, not experiencing switches suggested a positive effect on motivation to continue the use and practice of French.

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Contribution of Authors

As first author of the included manuscript, Stephanie McNaughton was the major contributor to the study's conception, design, data collection, and write-up. Stephanie McNaughton developed the organization of the manuscript in conjunction with the guidance of Kim McDonough. Stephanie McNaughton developed drafts for this manuscript, while Kim McDonough provided feedback on organization, content, re-wording some passages and discussing possible interpretations of the data. Stephanie McNaughton developed the majority of this manuscript's conception and content. This contribution is reflected in her status as first author.

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Chapter 1

When I first moved to Montreal I believed that simply living in a French province, within a city where the majority of people (90.9%) speak French (Statistics Canada, 2012), would provide the ideal environment for me learn and practice French. As an Anglophone from an English speaking part of Canada I had taken French-as-a-second-language courses throughout primary and secondary school, but had never had the opportunity to experience the immersion environment. Since recent study abroad literature suggests that immersion environments lead to greater advances in the L2 and greater numbers of opportunity to engage in discourse with native speakers (Hernandez, 2010; Hernandez, 2010; MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Donovan, 2003; Shively, 2013) it is not surprising that I firmly believed that the decision to study, work, socialize, and make a life in Montreal would lead to continuous opportunities to practice French and thus the opportunity to become a more proficient bilingual.

Most of the first encounters I had after moving to Montreal involved purchasing goods or requesting assistance in various customer to service provider environments. Even though I was not living with a host family and I was attending an English school, research supports that service encounters can be a part of a meaningful immersion experience (Shively, 2013), and I expected my experiences to be meaningful. Initially, I felt extremely motivated to engage in these service encounters, to test my knowledge of French in various environments, to order food in French and have the correct plate placed in front of me. But, in the context of Montreal, most of the time when I first attempted to practice in the public sphere, I did not need to use French to purchase goods. I did not need French to request assistance. In fact, much of the time when I attempted using French the service provider would recognize that I was not a native speaker, likely either through my accent or lack of proficiency, and would switch to English.

These experiences made me very aware of the fact that my ideal-self and my actual self were farther apart than I had first realized (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009). Even though I had been made aware that I could likely continue life in Montreal without speaking French, I still recognized that I was living in a province whose sole official language was French. My sense of obligation, or my ought-to-self (Higgins, Crowe, & Hymes, 1994; Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009) recognized that continuing a pursuit of L2 French was not only in my best interest professionally, but that it was something that I just needed to do in order to properly integrate. I was motivated both instrumentally and integratively (Gardner & Lambert, 1959). I believed that my abilities and my determination would allow me to persevere. This belief is likely why I initially had such a desire to communicate in my L2 (MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement, & Noels, 1998).

Unfortunately, despite my continued efforts these ‘switching’ experiences continued to occur and I found myself feeling deflated. I had moved to Montreal, Quebec with a purpose and an understanding that it was a French environment and the environment had not met my expectations. I had thought I would have a romantic experience with the French language where I would get to practice requests and perhaps even engage in short dialogues in a real-life context. Instead I felt rejected, which was not ideal considering that negative feelings or perceptions of one’s L2 self can have adverse effects on motivation and willingness to communicate (Douglass, 2007; Pellegrino Aveni; 2007). In second language contexts such as this, these feelings of rejection can lead to not only demotivation, but also to what Dornyei (2001) calls “amotivation”, which is more closely related to apathy toward the use of French as opposed to a temporarily lower level of desire to use French as an L2. I began to feel as though I would never be accepted and started to wonder why I should even bother to try and speak French if I would continue to experience these switches to English. I practiced and studied, and I believed that I had made

several improvements in my ability to speak and understand French since moving to Montreal. I didn't understand why when I initiated discourse in French my interlocutor switched to English. Sometimes these switches would be accompanied by eye-rolls, scoffs, or heavily French-accented, broken English responses that made me question who was better off in their L2: them or me?

Experiencing switches to English while trying to use French in the public sphere affected my feelings toward French as a second language and toward the L1 community which is perhaps even more important in the immersion environment as “attitudes toward the other group” and a desire to integrate are important factors for motivation (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Furthermore, whereas when I first moved to Montreal I was excited to try and practice French in service encounters, after experiencing several switches I became nervous before any potential French-speaking event. When I experienced a switch the feeling of rejection was perceived as a personal attack; it was as though I was being left out of a secret club and I wasn't allowed to use the ‘members-only’ code. If I knew that a situation in the near future would necessitate that I use French, I would start to feel nervous. Although I would mentally prepare prior to the encounter, sometimes the anxiety would lead to my avoiding the interaction altogether. Some of this anxiety even changed the way that I would go about my day. For example, I would purposefully go out of my way to find a post-office, in an English speaking neighborhood, where I knew that I would not have those same feelings of rejection – the reminders that my ideal self was still not within my grasp. My perception of my actual-self, and perhaps truly my actual level, of proficiency surely had an impact on the level of anxiety I had when speaking French and my subsequent willingness to use French to communicate (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

I had developed the kind of behavior that reinforced the literature that suggests that motivation may play a role in the amount of communication that takes place between Anglophones and Francophones in Quebec (Bourhis, 1984). The feelings of anxiety and subsequent changes in behavior meant that I went through a period of time where I didn't practice French as much as I had been in the beginning. The number of opportunities I had to speak French went down, as did the opportunities I had to listen to others speaking French. Without opportunities for input (Krashen, 1980) my vocabulary stagnated and even my inquiry process into the French language halted. That being said, I did not always feel deflated after experiencing every switch. I often created scenarios and justification as to why the switch happened. If the person who had switched spoke English without an accent I assumed that they must have switched because they recognized I was Anglophone, and it would make sense for two Anglophones to speak English together – in fact, this recognition was an important part of maintaining the Anglophone 'we-group' and the part of my English identity that I wanted to maintain (Gatbonton, Trofimovich, & Magid, 2005; Gumperz, 1982). Similarly, if I perceived my interlocutor to also be a French L2 speaker, but from another L1 group than English, I also did not feel as letdown. I would tell myself that they too, were a part of the 'they- group' and that, perhaps they even preferred to speak English which may have motivated their switch.

Fortunately, not all of my service encounter experiences resulted in switches. When I would initiate discourse in French that did not result in a switch I found myself feeling proud, feeling more a part of the Quebecois society, and I was eager to have another French conversation. I realized that even in my own mind I had set up the concepts of 'we' and 'they' (Gumperz, 1982; Seba & Wootton, 1998) and I recognized that I desperately wanted to be a part of the 'we' (Francophone) group. If I had an interaction that didn't result in a switch I would

congratulate myself on having ‘passed’ as a French speaker and consider myself one-step closer to being a true part of the ‘we-group’ and thus my ideal self (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009; Gumperz, 1982; Seba & Wootton, 1998).

Sometimes I also considered the possible alternative motivations for my interlocutors switching to English. It was possible that by switching to English the service being provided could be fulfilled in a more efficient manner, or possibly the interlocutor wanted to take the opportunity to practice his second language: English. I also considered, especially in the beginning stages of my French L2 development that the individuals who switched to English were just trying to be nice. This consideration could, in part, be explained by the accommodation literature that exists (Beebe & Giles, 1984; Bourhis, 1984; Giles, Taylor, & Bourhis, 1973; Simard, Taylor, Giles, 1976; Ylance, 2008); however, the current literature does not account for situations where the language of initiation is not the language of accommodation. This specific type of encounter is neither entirely convergent nor divergent (Beebe & Giles, 1984) in behavior. All of this considered, ultimately the reason behind the switch didn’t really matter to me. Regardless of intent, I still felt that each switch somehow meant I had failed as an L2 user and this perceived failure to use French meant that the L1 community did not accept me, and that I was nowhere near the goal I had initially set.

My personal experiences were not the only experiences that may have suggested that experiencing switches to English while trying to speak L2 French would have been undesired. Colleagues, friends, and peers have shared several similar experiences with me. A French teacher at the school where I teach told me that her students confronted her about her switching to English, stating that when she switched to better explain a French concept or vocabulary word, that it hurt their feelings. Additionally, peers of mine in one of the French classes I took in

Montreal also shared stories about how they experienced switches to English while trying to practice their French. These peers were not limited to Anglophones either. Among other L1s, there were speakers of Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Romanian, and Arabic who confirmed that sometimes when they tried to practice French the service providers would switch to English. One of my classmates, who was from Brazil, said that she pretended not to understand English so that she could continue to speak in French.

It is through these stories that the inquiry process for this study began. The anecdotal evidence seemed to suggest that L2 speakers of French in Montreal were trying to speak French, but were being faced with switches to English, which not only robbed them of their opportunities to practice and hear the language, but also perhaps resulted in negative feelings about the experience and perhaps even then contributed to lower levels of motivation. This study aims to establish if the phenomenon of ‘switching’ does occur, and if so in what ways does motivation differ?

In chapter 2 of this manuscript you will be first introduced to the previous relevant literature including concepts of immersion environments and motivation to study and use a second language. The context of the study will be further explored prior to the review of the methodology including the analysis and a detailed discussion of the results. As this study is one of very few existing related studies, and is perhaps the only recent study to explore the possible issues with experiencing ‘switches’, there are several implications that will be reviewed and discussed as well as the limitations that this study faced.

Chapter 3 focuses on the precise implications that this study might have for the specific context of Montreal, Quebec and its current and proposed language legislation. This chapter

makes connections between the current language laws and the rights and responsibilities of French second language users in Quebec.

Chapter 2

Introduction

The acquisition of a second language (L2) has been shown to be facilitated by being immersed in an environment where the language is widely used (Lambert 1974; MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, Donovan, 2003; Swain, 1993; Swain, 2000). The facilitation that immersion provides is linked to the belief that input plays a large role in the acquisition of second language (Krashen, 1980). Likewise, it is also recognized that output plays an important role in linguistic development (McDonough, 2005; Swain, 1993; Swain, 2000). Without opportunities for input and output, it is feared that L2 learners will not be able to internalize language structures or process meaning at a deeper level (Swain, 2000). Study abroad programs claim to be providing these necessary opportunities in an authentic target language environment, but these opportunities are often reliant upon individual learner motivation (Bourhis, 1984; Hernandez, 2010; MacIntyre et al., 2003). That being said, recent research has shown that L2 users in a study abroad program still have had significantly greater improvement than students learning at home (Hernandez, 2010; Shively, 2013). If individuals who study at home are not provided with the opportunities to develop the advanced language competence that study abroad contexts offer, then more L2 learners may seek out study abroad environments as a way to improve their L2 competencies. Perhaps the most obvious encounter for second language users in an authentic environment is the service encounter. These encounters, although brief, have been found to make a meaningful contribution to the immersion experience (Shively, 2013).

Despite Shively's (2013) findings, the positive contribution of service encounters to L2 development may not be realized when the immersion environment is bilingual. In many bilingual environments code-switching, or the use of two or more linguistic varieties within the

same conversation (Bourhis, 1984), is a complimentary and even necessary skill for effective communication. If the L2 speaker welcomes the switch then appreciation for the switch may result. However, if the switch occurs during an inappropriate context or as a part of a presumption that a person would like to, or should switch languages, a negative perception of the interaction may ensue.

One possible explanation for service providers' switches is that they are attempting to accommodate the customers. Previous literature has shown that accommodation by switching to the assumed language of the speaker has been positively received by the recipient (Beebe & Giles, 1984; Bourhis, 1984; Giles et al., 1973; Simard et al., 1976; Ylanne, 2008). However, there is also a small body of literature that suggests that accommodation, when provided through switching languages, is not always invited or appreciated (Callahan, 2009; Heller, 1982, 1992). Furthermore, many of the studies that demonstrate an appreciation for accommodation were conducted within a context where no switching took place, such as Anglophone approaches Francophone using English, and the Francophone accommodates by responding in English.

By initiating a service encounter in the L2, the L2 users are demonstrating that they want to use the language and are in fact accommodating (or at least attempting to) the target language group. This *convergence* (Beebe & Giles, 1984; Bourhis, 1984; Giles et al., 1973; Ylanne, 2008) may be suggestive of the L2 user's desire to be accepted by the community. The concept of 'we-code' vs. 'they-code' is strongly tied to identity and may imply that by using the L2, the language learner may be trying to access the we-code of the in-group (Gumperz, 1982; Seba & Wootton, 1998).

Another possible explanation for the switch through the lens of accommodation can be explained through the concept of conversational inference (Gumperz, 1982), which is explained

as a “situated or context-bound process of interpretation, by means of which participants in an exchange assess others’ intentions and on which they base their responses” (Gumperz, 1982, p. 171). In this case, the context would be considered the environment of providing a service as a service provider. The service provider who switched, if approached with the same utterance in a non-work context, may not have switched, however, under the pretense of work, may have misinterpreted the intentions of the L2 user.

Service encounters usually provide a plethora of opportunity to practice a second language (Shively, 2013). However, service encounters in a bilingual context are complex when considering that ‘in-group’ and ‘out-group’ motivations (Dornyei, 2001; Gatbonton et al., 2005; Gumperz, 1982; Seba & Wootton, 1998), and a desire to please the customer may come into conflict. In addition, sometimes an L2 service encounter may be made through the use of a script (Schau, Dellande, & Gilly, 2007). If the interlocutor goes off-script a communication breakdown may occur and cause the service provider to switch in order to successfully provide the service. For an L2 user, a successful interaction during a service encounter may be interpreted as a successful hurdle in the attempt to integrate or navigate a rite of passage (Siehl, Bowen, & Pearson, 1992) into the target language group society. In contrast, an unsuccessful language attempt may be interpreted as a rejection. It is possible that these switches even impact the motivation that L2 users have to continue the use of the second language within the public domain. In light of the importance of motivation in L2 learning, as is outlined in the following section, it is important to consider the impact that switches may have on L2 users’ motivation.

Motivation. If L2 users are losing motivation by the switches they encounter, then there are many implications for L2 study and practice. Motivation has not only been tied to playing a role in cross-cultural communication (Bourhis, 1984), but also to the desire to acquire a language

at all. Dornyei (2001) explores the terms *demotivation* and *amotivation* in his work as two possible opposing attitudes to motivation. A *demotivated* learner is described as “someone who was once motivated but has lost his or her commitment/interest for some reason” (Dornyei, 2001, p.142). In contrast, *amotivation* is a lack of motivation as a result of a realization, and is not necessarily tied to any particular catalyst (Dornyei, 2001). The distinction between these two terms is important in L2 contexts because if switches have a demotivating effect, it is possible that they could lead to *amotivation* which could manifest in beliefs such as, “Why bother?”, which would have adverse effects on integration into an L2 environment. It is therefore important to look at the possible demotivating factors that are relevant in these kinds of environments. The possible demotives, as explained by Dornyei (2001) fall within attitudes of group members and attitudes toward the L2 community (p. 152). Within the former group, ‘group members’ refers to the in-group or the target language group. If there is a general attitude held by the in-group about out-group individuals using the language as an L2 then these attitudes could manifest as possible demotives for L2 learners. Likewise, if the attitudes of the in-group reflect those of accommodation and a desire to seek approval of *their* L2, it is also possible that this could become a demotive for the L2 speakers even though it’s not necessarily a rejection from joining the in-group. In this context, it is not the intent of the service provider in his/her switch that matters, but rather the perception and internalization of the act by the L2 user.

Within the body of motivation literature there is a discussion that involves the idea of an ideal or future self (Dornyei, 2001; Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009). This self is a projection, or an imagined potential version of oneself. Motivation is tied to this potential self through the concept of trying to limit the gap between the ideal self and the present self (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009; Higgins, Roney, Crowe, & Hymes, 1994). If L2 users begin to internalize switches as a

negative portrayal of their current selves, it may widen the gap between the two selves and therefore also lessen the level of motivation. Furthermore, their sense of duty or their ought-self (Higgins et al., 1994) in learning the L2 may also lessen, furthering the decline of L2 acquisition. Gardner and Lambert (1959) suggested that language motivation might be enhanced by the desire to be valued by members of the linguistic community. If members of the desired linguistic community are switching it is possible that this switch is being perceived as a rejection, which then also affects motivation in the L2.

If L2 users truly desire acceptance from the target language group then it is possible that their motivations are integratively rooted (Gardner & Lambert, 1959) and thus would be susceptible to demotivation from language switches during interaction. It has been suggested that integrative motivation is linked to greater levels of L2 acquisition (Bourhis, 1984; Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009; Gardner & Lambert, 1959) yet comparatively, other studies suggest that the strong desire to integrate or be accepted can have devastating effects on motivation (Douglas, 2007) and perhaps even an individual's willingness to communicate in the L2. The impact that switching could have on motivation to use the L2 has yet to be explored and if there is indeed a relationship, it could provide insight into L2 users' willingness to communicate.

Willingness to Communicate. If previous attempts at communication in the L2 have resulted in an undesired switch, the perception of one's ability in the L2 may falter possibly leading to lower willingness to communicate. Willingness to communicate (WTC) has been linked to factors including personality to attitudes about a particular individual or group (MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement & Noels, 1998). It has been argued that an individual's willingness to communicate in the L2 is specifically tied to a combination of their perceived competence in the language and levels of apprehension about communication (MacIntyre et al.,

1998). MacIntyre and colleagues (1998) explored the idea of intergroup motivation as a possible variable that could influence WTC. The exploration of intergroup climate (MacIntyre et al., 1998) as a possible variable that influences a person's willingness to communicate provides interesting insight into the bilingual context. The idea that positive attitudes about a group lead to positive interactions with that group (MacIntyre et al., 1998) has three possible outcomes: that L2 speakers positively view the target language group and that the target language group positively view the L2 speakers (thus leading to a positive interaction), that L2 speakers negatively view the target language group, or the target language group negatively view the L2 speakers (both leading to a negative interaction). If the view of either party is not positive a potential breakdown in the communication presents itself. This breakdown then further develops into a lower level of WTC with one another (MacIntyre, 1998), which then leads to fewer opportunities to produce and practice the second language, possibly stagnating the acquisition process.

If the L2 acquisition process is becoming stagnated in the immersion environment because L2 users are experiencing switches, then there are many implications for the field. To this date a study has not been carried out to identify if this phenomenon is widespread or if it is only the anecdotal evidence. Therefore, this study investigated (1) how often L2 users experienced switches and non-switches during service encounters and (2) whether there was a difference in their motivation after experiencing switches compared to non-switches during service encounters.

Method

Context of Study. Quebec is a Francophone province in central Canada. French is the sole official language of this province and as such, even though Anglophones hold a majority

position in the rest of Canada, within the borders of Quebec they make up only 8% of the total population (Boberg, 2012; Bourhis, 1984; Dickinson, 2007). Due to their past economic and political power, Anglophones did not consider themselves as minorities in Quebec until after language legislation, including Bill 101, was implemented in the late 1970s (Boberg, 2012; Bourhis, 1985; Dickinson, 2007). This legislation marks the beginning of the promotion of French in the public domain, including places of government, public administration, industry, commerce and other aspects of civic life (Boberg, 2012). Merely two months after the implementation of Bill 101, it was suggested that French was already increasing in its status as the language of communication (Bourhis, 1984) and Anglophones reported that Francophones were less likely to speak with them in English (Bourhis, 1984). Furthermore, immigrants who had previously been enrolled into English schools were now mandated to educate their children in French (Dickinson, 2007). Despite the many changes that took place in Quebec during the 1970s nationalistic movement that may have left Anglophones feeling threatened, a Sondagen survey conducted in 2000 found that 73.6% of Anglophones felt that it was important to preserve the French language (<http://www.vigile.net/00-12/sondage-langue.html>). With this in mind, it is not surprising that many Anglophones living in Quebec want to learn and practice French.

The area of Quebec with the most linguistic diversity is the city of Montreal. In 2012 it was reported that 90.9% of Montreal's population could speak French, either as a first or other language. Only 7.4% of the total population of Montreal reported speaking English only, with 1.7% reporting not being able to speak English nor French (Statistics Canada, 2012). Although these statistics suggest that the large majority of Montreal is capable of conducting public interaction solely in French, Montreal is still perceived by both the layman and the academic as a hub of French-English bilingualism (Bourhis, 1984; Giles et al., 1973; Heller, 1982, 1992;

Simard et al., 1976). This perception may be in part due to the frequent instances of cross-cultural, and regardless of language legislation, cross-linguistic contact.

Since the implementation of language legislation in the 1970s there have been numerous cases of anecdotal evidence showing that service providers switch to English despite having had the conversation initiated in French. Some of this anecdotal evidence has been documented (Heller, 1982, 1992), but much of it remains a possible urban legend. Selecting Montreal as a location to conduct this study is related both to the previous research conducted there, its perceived 'bilingual' status, and the possible implications that the results could have regarding both L2 pedagogy and language policy.

Participants. The original participant pool consisted of 18 participants, however only those who submitted the minimum number of service encounter questionnaires were included in the final data set. The final participant pool consisted of 13 L2 French speakers (M =5, F=8), living in the city of Montreal who had lived in Montreal for a minimum of 7 months. They had an age range of 24-61 (mean age=32.9). Their first language (L1) backgrounds varied, and consisted of the following L1s: English= 6, Bulgarian = 1, Spanish = 5, English/Cantonese simultaneous bilingual = 1. Participants provided insight into their proficiency levels by providing scores for each of the language competencies (reading, writing, listening and speaking). These scores used a scaled ranking system of 0-9, where 0 was a true beginner and 9 was an advanced user. Participants were also asked to supply achievement scores for any official French second language exams they had taken). Through this self-reported proficiency the participants were classified into two proficiency groups (intermediate = 8; advanced= 5). Participants who identified as having higher than 7 in most or all of the areas of language competency or who had identified they had successfully completed an official French exam at

the advanced level, were grouped as advanced L2 users of French. Those that identified as having scores between 3 and 7 in most or all of the areas of competency or who had identified as having successfully completed exams placing them at the intermediate level, were grouped as intermediate. The participants were living in Montreal for reasons that included place of birth, study, work, and/or having moved from somewhere else for personal reasons.

Materials.

Service encounter questionnaire. It has been suggested that an ideal way of tapping into the dynamic nature of motivation is through online questionnaires during various phases of completing a task or achieving a goal (Dornyei, 2001). Therefore, the service encounter questionnaire was conducted using a short online format that was completed by the participants every time they had a service encounter in which they initiated discourse in French. This process was modeled after a recent study that also relied upon self-reported data (Surtees, 2012). The format of the questionnaire allowed it to be completed on an electronic device and took approximately 45 seconds to complete. The questionnaire was kept short so as to not interrupt the process of interaction or daily-life (Boekaerts, 1988 as cited in Dornyei, 2001). The questionnaire consisted of ten multiple-choice questions and one optional question for anecdotal information. The number of questions in this questionnaire reflected the amount that was successfully piloted by Julunen in 1989 (Dornyei, 2001). The questions included: the type of location where the participant engaged in the service encounter (pharmacy, grocery store, etc.); whether or not the service provider switched to English after being spoken to in French; if the service provider did switch to English, at which point in the conversation did the switch occur; if the service provider sounded like a Francophone, Anglophone, or Allophone; whether or not the participant continued in French or English. The last question “Did this encounter affect your

desire to speak French again?” was used to address the motivation inquiry. Participants responded using a multiple choice Likert-scaled response with the following choices: “I definitely felt discouraged to speak French in my next encounter; I felt somewhat discouraged to speak French in my next encounter; This encounter does not affect my encouragement to speak French; I felt somewhat encouraged to speak French in my next encounter; I definitely felt encouraged to speak French in my next encounter.” Participants were also provided the opportunity to provide additional comments through an optional text box. The service encounter questionnaire has been provided in the Appendix.

Design. This study adopted a within-groups design to first examine how often L2 users experience switches and non-switches when attempting to use French in Montreal during service encounters. The study also used a within-groups design to compare the L2 users’ motivation following switch and non-switch service encounters. The independent variable was language switch (switch or non-switch) and motivation was a dependent variable. Motivation was operationalized as a five-point Likert-scale question within the service encounter questionnaire that targeted motivation by asking participants what kind of encouragement they felt to speak French in their next encounter based on their most recent encounter experience.

Procedure. Participants were recruited through promotional posters that were advertised on and around the Concordia University campus as well as through the use of online social media. Each volunteer participant was contacted by email and given instructions on how to access and utilize the online questionnaires. Participants were also provided with the researcher’s email and telephone number so further clarification could be provided if needed. Each participant was instructed to fill out and submit a service encounter questionnaire each time they engaged in a service encounter in which they initiated discourse in French. For the purpose of this study,

service encounters have been operationalized as encounters that involve the exchange of services between the participant and another his interlocutor. The participants were told that the expectation for the service encounters in this study would necessitate that the encounter be more than simple greetings or rote expressions. They would need to attempt at having interactions with their interlocutors that involved at least a few turns within the discourse. The questionnaires were made available online so that participants could complete the questionnaire at their earliest convenience and were therefore made compatible for computer screens, tablets, and smart-phones. Although the number of encounters and the time to complete the expected number of questionnaires varied by participant, they were asked to complete 28 questionnaires within a two week period (two encounters per day). Only participants who completed a minimum number of service encounter questionnaires (n=10) were included in the analysis. Once data collection was completed, they were thanked for their participation and provided with the opportunity to provide feedback to the researcher. All questionnaires for this study were completed online using a secure online data collection website (surveygizmo.com).

Analysis. In order to answer the first research question participants were asked to answer a service encounter questionnaire each time they initiated discourse in French. The participants' responses to the question "At some point did the service provider switch to English?" were summed. The total number of switch and non-switch encounters per person were entered into SPSS and compared using a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test in order to identify if there was any significant difference in the occurrence of switches and non-switches.

To address the second research question about the participants' motivation, their response to the Likert-scale questionnaire item about motivation was scored. The responses were coded using numbers that pass through zero (-2, -1, 0, 1, 2) so as to numerically recognize the

possible neutral response to the question being asked. A negative motivation score was represented with a negative integer: a positive motivation score with a positive integer. A mean motivation score was calculated for all switches/non-switches per participant and compared using a nonparametric Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test in SPSS.

Results. The first research question investigated how often L2 users experienced switches and non-switches during service encounters. The data set consisted of a total of 331 service encounter questionnaires, which represents a mean of 25.46 encounters per person ($SD = 7.39$). The participants reported engaging in service encounters at restaurants (18.7 %), grocery stores (22.7 %), and merchandise stores (18.4 %), with the remainder taking place over the telephone, in medical offices, and with strangers on the street. In terms of language switch, the participants reported more non-switches ($n = 215$) than switches ($n = 116$). When switches occurred, the participants reported that 46 service providers switched right away, while 70 providers switched after a few turns. A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that there were significantly more non-switches than switches: $Z = 2.485, p < .013, r = .56$.

Although there were several possible mitigating factors, such as sex, age, location of encounter, and proficiency that could have influenced the participants and would suggest dividing the groups for further study, it was decided that only proficiency would be further explored. This decision was made in part to maintain some of the statistical integrity as well as due to the lack of diversity within the small participant pool in this other variables. Additionally, the raw numbers supported the intuitive inclination to divide the group by proficiency. In order to explore whether the participants' proficiency was an important factor in the service encounters, the number of switches and non-switches experienced by intermediate and advanced

participants were compared separately. The comparison between proficiency groups can be seen in table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Comparison by proficiency for number of switches and non-switches in service encounters

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intermediate Switch encounters	11.13	3.44
Intermediate Non-Switch encounters	16.38	7.482
Advanced Switch encounters	5.40	3.58
Advanced Non-Switch encounters	16.80	6.22

In order to account for the two comparisons, alpha was adjusted to .025. Advanced speakers demonstrated no significant difference between the number of switches experienced compared to the numbers of non-switches ($Z = 2.023$, $p < .043$, $r = .75$). Similarly, for the intermediate speakers there was no significant difference between the number of switches and non-switches that were reported, $Z = 1.332$, $p < .183$, $r = .41$.

The second research question explored whether there was a difference in the participants' motivation after experiencing switches compared to non-switches during service encounters. The results for the whole group ($n = 13$) demonstrated a mean motivation score of .17 ($SD = .41$) when there was a switch and 1.23 ($SD = .46$) when there was not a switch. The mean scores for each proficiency group can be viewed in table 1.2.

Table 1.2

Comparison by proficiency of Mean Motivation Scores for switch encounters and non-switch encounters

	Motivation Mean	Std. Deviation
Intermediate Switch encounters	.20	.35
Intermediate Non-Switch encounters	1.24	.49
Advanced Switch encounters	.12	.54
Advanced Non-Switch encounters	1.21	.48

The Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test in this case indicated that there was a significant difference between the levels of motivation reported when encounters involved a switch compared to encounters that did not involve a switch, $Z = 3.181$, $p < .001$, $r = .77$. The participant group was again split into groups in order to further analyze if proficiency was a mitigating factor in the data. As such, alpha was adjusted to .025. The intermediate results found that motivation was significantly higher when there was no switch compared to the level of motivation reported when a switch did occur, $Z = -2.521$, $p < .012$, $r = .78$. For the advanced speakers of French there was no significant difference in their level of motivation following both switch and no switch service encounters, $Z = 2.023$, $p < .043$, $r = .73$.

Discussion. To summarize the results for the first question, with the combined proficiency groups there were significantly more non-switches than there were switches. However, with further inspection of the data it was found that within the individual proficiency groups there was no significant difference between the number of switches and non-switches suggesting that both intermediate and advanced speakers experienced roughly equal amounts of

switch and non-switch encounters. That being said, all of the participants with the exception of one, experienced switches. These results suggest that the phenomenon is frequent enough to be considered as a possible influence on language learning.

The other possible mitigating factors (age, sex, location of encounter) may have provided further insight into these switching experiences, however the majority of participants were between the ages of 24 and 30. Having only one participant in the age bracket of 40-50 and one other over the age of 60 would not have provided any trending information. A larger, and more diverse, participant pool would allow for this possible factor to be explored. Although a division by sex was as equally dividable as proficiency in terms of numbers of participants, only one follow-up test was conducted for this study in order to preserve statistical results; due to raw number counts proficiency was chosen. The location of the encounters may have had influencing factor on the number of switches experienced by participants, but the data collected regarding geographic location of the participants was sometimes reported vaguely suggesting that conclusions drawn based on this data would not necessarily accurately describe what was happening.

Given the previous research that has shown that study abroad contexts, and even specifically the service encounters that take place within study abroad contexts, provide meaningful opportunities to practice and develop second language ability (Hernandez, 2010, Shively, 2013), the findings may be somewhat surprising. The results may suggest that the benefit from service encounters, in bilingual environments, may not be entirely reflective of the findings in the previous literature (Hernandez, 2010, Shively, 2013) and may more greatly benefit advanced speakers in this context.

This contrasts slightly with a previous study in Quebec (Lapkin, Hart, & Swain, 1995), which found that participants studying in a French environment, especially those with lower level proficiency, in a study abroad program made great gains in the L2. However, these participants were placed with host families, attended French schools, and had several opportunities for discourse to take place outside of the classroom, and outside of service encounters. This suggests that opportunities for L2 input and output may need to be supplied for learners who are neither advanced nor have access to additional forms of L2 interaction.

The findings for the first research question indicate that language switches do occur, which leads to an interesting follow-up question: why do service providers switch? The switch may be prompted by a perceived level of proficiency, but it is also possible that the number of switches experienced is dependent upon other factors, such as visual or auditory cultural markers, such as race and/or accent (Callahan, 2009; Heller 1982; Heller, 1992), service efficiency, (Holmqvist, 2011; Holmqvist & Gronross, 2012) or the desire to accommodate the L2 user (Beebe & Giles, 1984; Bourhis, 1984; Simard, Taylor, Giles, 1976).

Within the existing literature, the behaviors that are referred to as ‘accommodation’ have been explained using the Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT), which explains the changes that an individual makes in his or her speech or speech style during social encounters (Beebe & Giles, 1984) and could, by definition explain part of the switching phenomenon in Montreal. Given that the L1 is usually more readily assumed to be a symbol of identity, the use of English is unlikely to be a chosen identity marker. Since Francophone interlocutors are switching to English even when discourse has been initiated in his L1, it is difficult to see why he or she would choose to respond to this speaker in English if differentiating or *diverging* himself from the L2 user is the interlocutor’s intention. Therefore, since the interlocutor’s switch does not

seem to be motivated by a desire to distance himself from the Anglophone speaker, as it is expected in classic speech accommodation theory, it implies that the only other accommodating behavior, *convergence*, may explain what is happening. But, since the interlocutor is also not seeming to change in the direction of making their speech or speech style more similar to that of the L2 user, where an avoidance of a language switch would be expected (Beebe & Giles, 1984; Bourhis, 1984; Giles et al., 1973; Ylanne, 2008), it is possible that Speech Accommodation Theory will need to be modified to account for this other, seemingly accommodative behavior.

A third explanation for switching, which is also related to the notion of accommodation has to do with the literature that explores the ideas of ‘we-code’ and ‘they-code’ (Gumperz, 1982; Seba & Wootton, 1998), as was implied to be the case in Heller’s Montreal-based studies (1982, 1992). In Heller’s studies the negotiation of which language to use for interaction was largely based on identity and perceptions of who belonged to the ‘in-group’. If a Francophone perceived his interlocutor to be Anglophone then he preferred to speak English, however if he perceived the interlocutor as Francophone then the conversation would continue in French. The ideas of ‘we-code’ and ‘they-code’ were so blatant in these studies that Francophone patients actually told their interlocutor that they would only speak French with them if they were actually Francophone (Heller, 1982, 1992). Given the context of the current study, it is possible that some service providers are maintaining the status of the ‘we-code’ by withholding opportunities for non-Francophones to speak French.

In regard to the second research question, which involved the motivation scores for participants when they experienced switches compared to when they experienced non-switches, the results countered what had been expected. It was expected that participants would report that after experiencing a switch to English they would feel discouraged to speak French in their next

encounter. The results suggest, however, that intermediate participants' motivation is not lower when they experience switches, but their motivation is higher when service encounters do not involve a switch.

These results support the literature that explores the L2 motivational self-system (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009), which is centered on the idea that integrativeness or integrative motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1959) is an important contributing factor to a person's motivation to acquire and use a second language. This can be further understood when it is considered that participants who rated themselves as being more encouraged to speak French did so more frequently when they experienced a non-switch in their encounter. It suggests that 'passing' as a French speaker has encouraged them to continue the development of their 'ideal self' (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009), possibly due to feelings of being accepted into the 'we-code' (Gumperz, 1982; Seba & Wootton, 1998) of French speakers and of feeling more 'integrated' into Quebecois society. If the advanced speakers are experiencing less switches overall, which this study suggests is the case, it is possible that they are not as affected by the phenomenon simply because it does not happen to them as frequently, and as a result have developed a more confident "actual self" (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009) that is resistant to isolated switching instances that may, by an intermediate speaker, otherwise be taken as a denial of accessing the "we-code" (Gumperz, 1982; Seba & Wootton, 1998).

Given that proficiency seems to play a role in how motivation is affected in encounters, it is possible that intermediate speakers, who may rely more heavily upon rote phrases and memorized expressions, may be affected by encounters that go "off-script". It is possible that "rules of interaction," which implies that encounters will vary from place to place and may not match the learner's expectations for the encounter (Douglass, 2007), may have also contributed

to the intermediate participants' reports of encouragement to speak French after an encounter. If a participant feels he is prepared for certain types of encounters but experiences an encounter where the interlocutor goes "off-script" (Schau, Dellande, & Gilly, 2007) it might contribute to widening the gap between their ideal and actual selves (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009). In this study, one participant said, "It was a "pretty routine check-out experience, which I'm usually prepared for, but then the clerk asked me if I'd like to make a donation to a charity. I didn't understand at first so she switched to English. I kept going in French, but she used English for the rest of the time." As the participation in the study continued and participants, became more accustomed to expecting various kinds of responses and reactions from their interlocutors, it is possible that this created a change in their encouragement to speak French thereafter, possibly allowing them to recognize that the expectations for the encounter are not necessarily a direct commentary on their acceptance into the 'we-code' of using French.

The influence of the perceived L1 of the interlocutor on the participants' reported level of motivation after having an encounter is an additional issue for exploration. Participants tended to report better motivation scores when they did not experience a switch with an interlocutor who was perceived as being either Quebecois-Francophone or an Anglophone. When the interlocutor was a Francophone it could be perceived as additional support for the previous literature involving the concept of 'we-code' (Gumperz, 1982; Seba & Wootton, 1998). For the instances when both the L2 initiator and the interlocutor were Anglophone it is possible that the higher motivation scores are also reflective of 'we-code' acceptance, but at a different level since the L2 initiator 'passed' as a French speaker, even when the interlocutor shared the same L1. This may be because the L2 initiator was invested in his L2 identity, which was demonstrated through his initiation of French, and since the concept of 'we-code' is flexible it was not necessary for the

interlocutor (who may have also been invested in his L2 identity) to switch (Seba & Wootton, 1998).

Another interesting trend was the participants' use of the optional comments section of the service encounter questionnaire. In this study several participants seemed to utilize the comments section in the questionnaire as a space to justify why they had experienced a switch to English. One participant said, "The supermarket was super busy. I got the sense that the cashier switched so she could get me through the line as fast as possible," while another shared that, "My girlfriend was with me in the cab speaking English to both me and the driver. I think this was the reason he switched to English". Another participant even jumped to the conclusion that perhaps it was his interlocutor's level of proficiency in French that was the reason for the switch, "Maybe because this area is more Anglophone they do not know how to speak French". These justifications may be a reflection of the L2 user trying to minimize the gap that exists between their ideal L2 self and the way that the switch forced them to view their actual selves (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009). Additionally, these comments could be explained through the motivational concept of 'attribution theory' which suggests that learner's perceptions of the causes of their success or failure influence their future performance (Spratt, Humphreys, & Chan, 2002), and thus by using the comments section as a medium of justification for experiencing a switch, they have demonstrated that they are placing the cause of the switch on an external catalyst rather than on their proficiency or their status of being able to access the 'we-code'. They may have done this as a way to maintain their L2 confidence for the next encounter rather than allow their confidence to suffer and consequently remain silent in the fear that speaking their L2 might put their self-image or their perception of their actual self, at risk (Pellegrino Aveni, 2007).

Although the linguistic, communicative, and social psychological variables involved with willingness to communicate (MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement, & Noels, 1998) were not intended to be the focus of this study it could be interpreted that the drop in numbers of willing participants (began with 18, could only maintain 13) could be reflective of their willingness to communicate in the L2. The same could be interpreted from the participants who submitted fewer numbers of service encounter questionnaires in comparison to their peers who completed at least the minimum requested for the study. Some participants even exceeded the minimum number of requested encounters, which may suggest that they had higher levels of willingness to communicate than their peers in the study.

Implications. The implications of this study are plentiful. Firstly, this study, by suggesting that intermediate speakers may have motivation that fluctuates more in response to L2 experiences, reinforces the body of literature that explores the role of motivation in second language learning and study abroad or immersion contexts. This information can be used to inform L2 users about how their motivations may be influenced in service encounters so as to better prepare them for discourse in the public sphere.

The findings in this study may have also brought awareness to an additional accommodative behavior that is not accounted for in the present Speech Accommodation Theory. Since there is little previous literature that explores the switching phenomenon future research may provide possible explanations for the frequency of switches to English as a possible new aspect of accommodation that takes place within the context of bilingual or multilingual environments. It is possible that what would have been previously defined in the literature as accommodation (Beebe & Giles, 1984; Bourhis, 1984; Callahan, 2009; Giles et al., 1973; Gumperz, 1982; Heller, 1982, 1992; Seba & Wootton, 1998; Simard, Taylor & Giles, 1976;

Ylanne, 2008) may not fully encapsulate and include the situation that is unfolding for L2 users of French in Montreal. Accommodation, as explored by previous literature, was perceived favorably, however in this context where the L2 user desires to use his L2, the process of accommodation may not contribute to greater levels of motivation. Although *overaccommodation* (Ylanne, 2008) has a similar effect on the perceptions of the L2 user, the full switch of languages suggests that something different is taking place in these speech encounters. The term *presumptuous accommodation* is suggested as it allows for the recognition that a switch or change in the speech took place, but rather than slowing pace or making simple word choices so that the French initiator may continue in his L2, the interlocutor switches languages entirely perhaps under the *presumption* that the L2 user of French would prefer to speak in English, or that the encounter would be more efficient if English were the language of communication.

Thirdly, information from this study can be used to inform those who develop and implement the language policy in Quebec, which asserts that French be the language of interaction in the public domain (Boberg, 2012; Bourhis, 1984; Dickinson, 2007). If L2 speakers of French are wishing to use and practice French in Montreal then existing policies can be used to support L2 users in the Montreal context. L2 users of French will be able to utilize the existing policy as a way to empower their second language learning during encounters where the service is provided in French. Additionally, policy makers will be able to use the results from this study as a justification for further research into how L2 users of French are using their second language skills and integrating into Quebec society.

Furthermore, since encounters that did not involve a switch reported higher levels of motivation than encounters that did involve a switch, it is suggested that there be an

implementation of a public awareness campaign. This campaign would demonstrate L2 users' desire to practice French in the public sector in order to support their integration into the French language and the Quebecois society. This campaign would benefit L2 users of French, language policy, the promotion of Montreal as a place to learn and practice French, as well as for inter-group communication. An example of a possible campaign could involve L2 users of French who wear pins that symbolize and demonstrates their desire to use and practice French, which would signal to service providers that they should not switch to English.

Another implication for this study lends itself to second language pedagogy or classroom teaching. Since the results show that L2 users are more motivated to use the second language when their interlocutors do not switch to English, classroom teachers can teach their students coping strategies for the scenarios in which they do experience switches or how to avoid experiencing switches altogether. By raising awareness and providing strategies (see Savignon & Sysoyev, 2005 for suggestions) students will be better prepared to enter and react to L2 speech encounters where their interlocutors switch to English (Callahan, 2009).

Limitations and future research. The first limitation in this study is the small sample size ($n= 13$). Although great effort was made to recruit and choose a sample size representative of the L2 French community in Montreal the final group of participants spoke primarily English and Spanish as a first language. Additionally, participants were either intermediate or advanced speakers of French. This leaves the possibility that L2 users at the beginner level may demonstrate different results than what were suggested in this study. As such, these results cannot assume any generalization to all L2 French users in this context. Further studies should aim at addressing this limitation by conducting research that involves a greater sample size. This would allow for clearer differentiation between L1 groups and proficiency levels, which would

provide the opportunity to further investigate the possible variations on motivation that exist across the spectrum of L1s and proficiency levels.

The data itself may be subject to scrutiny since it heavily relies upon the self-reporting of participants. Although online versions of participant training were offered to encourage greater participation by catering to participant convenience, as well as to facilitate ease of data collection for the researcher, it is possible that some participants found the need to submit information in electronic format burdensome. Future studies could address this issue by providing participants with the option of completing online questionnaires, or by supplying participants with a questionnaire booklet that they can submit in person or by mail.

This study's measure of motivation was also a limitation of the study. The question used in the service encounter questionnaire asked the participants about their willingness to communicate in future encounters. In an attempt to keep the questionnaire brief this was the only question used in the service encounter questionnaire that linked to future levels of motivation. This indirect measure of motivation, through addressing willingness to communicate in future encounters, was heavily relied upon for drawing conclusions. Future studies should aim at addressing motivation in a more cohesive manner by conducting pre and post motivation tests as well as including questions that specifically target motivation in the service encounter questionnaire.

Given that the current study focused on the initiations of the service encounter as opposed to the service providers, future research might focus on the service providers to gain more insight into why they switch. Some possible motivations for switching include wanting to practice English as a second language, impatience with L2 speakers, accommodation, and protectiveness of the target language group's language usage. In regard to the latter, intentions for language

switching, code-switching, or accommodation may be deeply rooted in political incentives and personal ideas of identity. While conducting a hospital-based study in Montreal, Heller (1982) found that service-encounters were halted in order to negotiate identity before continuing in either English or French. It was suggested that the fierce negotiation of identity was related to the notion that Anglophones speaking French are providing a ‘favor’ and for a “Quebecois to accept that ‘favor’ lets the Anglophone keep his position of power in the conversation” (Heller, 1982, p. 114). Similarly, in the United States, Callahan (2009) found that service-encounters initiated in Spanish by perceived non-Hispanics often resulted in a switch to English by the service provider, even if the first and preferred language of the customer was Spanish.

Since the study suggested that motivation is increased when no switch takes place, but did not explore any possible interventions or intervention effectiveness, possible future research could be conducted that explore the possible interventions or strategies that could take place in classrooms or during the actual encounters and their respective effectiveness. This research would provide insight into the practical application of ‘switch’ knowledge into the language classroom and in regard to L2 practice.

It is also possible that the results in this study were impacted by the actual participation in the study. As time passed, participants seemed to rank their encouragement to speak French more favorably and one participant even commented that, he “definitely felt encouraged to speak French in [his] next encounter” because while he usually requested deliveries in English, “partially because of this study [he] decided to try in French”. Future studies could administer pre and post-motivation questionnaires that would allow for testing the impact of participation in the study. Future studies could also explore the impact of participating in a study on motivation to use a language by comparing two groups. One group, the control, would not participate in

‘the study’ but would complete a single motivation questionnaire, whereas the test group would participate in an ongoing study. They would document their encounters, and then complete the motivation questionnaire. The comparison between these two groups would provide insight into if participating in language studies, such as the current one, has an effect on motivation to use the L2.

Conclusion

The present investigation is one of the only studies that aimed at collecting information regarding the phenomenon of switching to English when discourse is initiated in a non-English language. The results highlight two important points. Firstly, although non-switches are more frequent, switches to English do occur within the context of Montreal, and there is no difference in the frequency of their occurrence in comparison to non-switches for intermediate users. In comparison, the advanced users of French experienced more non-switches than switches demonstrating that they do not experience as many switches during service encounters. The second point is specific to the intermediate speakers of French and how experiencing switches affects their motivation to continue using French thereafter. The results showed that experiencing switches did not suggest any demotivating effect, but when non-switch encounters were compared to the motivations reported when a switch did take place the participants reported an increase in motivation. Although this data supports previous literature having to do with study abroad or immersion’s impact on L2 acquisition in regard to opportunities to have L2 interaction, it also added that there may be a proficiency divide on the meaningfulness of service encounters as language practice for L2 users. This study also supported previous motivation and WTC literature by suggesting that the level of L2 confidence (Clement, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003) as well as the impact of how close the perception of one’s abilities to one’s desired level of abilities,

is influential upon the level of motivation he feels. The finds of this study suggest that, for intermediate speakers who are trying to use and practice French in the public sphere, it is motivating to experience non-switches. Future research may be able to identify, by exploring possible motivations for switching, if the phenomenon of switching belongs in the existing Accommodation literature, or if the existing literature needs to be adapted so as to account for a new type of switching or accommodative behavior.

Chapter 3

Given the language policies of Quebec, I had always been under the pretense that even if I wanted someone to speak English with me in a service encounter I would surely be unable, or at least rarely be able, to have such a request granted. When I first began experiencing switches to English, I often found myself asking, “They’re allowed to do that? I thought I would *have* to learn French here. Maybe this only happens to me.” I believed that the switch to English likely only happened to me because I was too low in French proficiency. Although the current research suggested L2 users of French are experiencing far fewer switches than non-switches, both intermediate and advanced L2 users of French in Montreal did experience switches to English, at least some of the time, when they initiated discourse in French with a service provider. The occurrence of these switches to English may be in conflict with current and proposed provincial language legislation as well as the goals of the French language learner.

Even though the sample size in the study was relatively small, the occurrence of switches across most participants is surprising when considering that switching to English, when discourse is initiated in French, is contrary to language policy in the public sphere of Quebec. That being said, the number of non-switches encounters reported by participants is encouraging for second language learners within the context of Montreal. Utilizing the existing legislation as a form of L2 user empowerment could further encourage second language learners in Montreal.

The overall expectation of the Charter of French language (1976; 2014) is that “Quebecers wish to see the quality and influence of the French language assured” through the making of French as the “language of Government and the law, as well as the normal and everyday language of work, instruction, communication, commerce and business” (Charter of French language, 2014 p.1). It could be interpreted that the occurrence of switches to English

when L2 users of French have initiated discourse in French is infringing upon their rights as consumers of goods and services to be informed and served in French (Charter of French Language, 2014). Furthermore, the proposed amendments to the Charter of French language would also suggest that the rights of those who wish to speak French, including immigrants and those domiciled in Quebec, have the right to not only receive services in French, but to also receive training and opportunities to better their knowledge and use of French in order to better integrate into Quebec society (Bill 14, 2012).

The implementation of this amendment would likely suggest that all employees would at least be proficient enough in French to always offer all services in a quality level of French, which would provide quality discourse opportunities to L2 users in these contexts. If the service provider's proficiency in French is not the reason for switching to English it is possible that despite the current and proposed language legislation, when service providers suspect a lack in French proficiency on behalf of the customer, they switch to English in order to better facilitate the transaction (Holmqvist, 2011). If this is true it may be something that language legislators want to take into consideration when modifying the expectations of service providers in a multi-lingual context, such as Montreal. Legislation will have to either reflect the needs of the economy or enforce the expectations of the legislation. The following example has been provided to contextualize a possible scenario where the goal of providing customer service and language legislation could come into conflict:

An electronics store in downtown Montreal has advertised an extensive sale on many of their products. As such, the store is incredibly busy and a line of customers waiting for service extends out through the doors into the street. One customer, a French L2 speaker is at the front of line and is asking several questions about the specifications and quality of the product that he

wishes to purchase. This customer seems to struggle with forming questions, demonstrating several pauses and incorrect language structure, including mispronounced and misplaced vocabulary words, but has nonetheless continued to speak French with the service provider.

It has been reported that sometimes in these kinds of situations the service provider has switched languages as a way to make the interaction more efficient and to provide the customer with the services in a quicker and more comprehensible way (Schau, Dellande, & Gilly, 2007). However, under legislation, since the customer did not request to have services in English (either by speaking English or by asking in French if being served in English was possible) the service provider would be in direct violation of the language laws and thus he, and the company he works for, would be subject to any of the consequences related to this kind of offense. Additionally, it is difficult to predict how the customer would react in a situation like this given that it is a possibility that the switch was unwelcome, and since language has been shown to influence how the customer perceives the service encounter (Holmqvist & Gronross, 2012), the perception of the service quality could also have been affected. A visual marker, such as a pin worn on the lapel, could signal to service providers which customers would prefer to continue their interaction in French.

If this legislation is held to its truest form then L2 speakers of French could use the law as a way to empower themselves by asserting an environment that would be more conducive to the development of their ability to learn and practice French and integrate into the Quebecois society. As is suggested in the current study, such requests would be rare for advanced speakers and even intermediate speakers have the opportunity to engage in some non-switch encounters, but since it is yet to be explored how beginners experience service encounters it is possible that this concept may help to empower their attempts at L2 discourse in service encounters. Within

the proposed legislation, the act is “intended to foster the francization and economic, social and cultural integration of immigrants (Bill 14, 2012, p.28). Individuals who have made a decision to move to Quebec, for whatever reason, and who do not already possess the necessary skills in the French language, still maintain the right to speak French in Quebec.

Since “every person who settles in Quebec has a right to learn French and to benefit from reasonable measure to welcome him and to facilitate his integration into life in Quebec” (Bill 14, 2012, p. 26) it can likely be deduced that requesting services in French while engaging in a service encounter would fall into the category of “reasonable measures”. However, in the current study, one of the participants initiated discourse with a service provider in French and her encounter was not perceived as being reflective of the philosophy that Quebec has legislation that encourages the use and practice of French as a way to integrate into Quebec society. In this encounter the service provider did not switch to English, but she did demonstrate body language that suggested she was irritated with the speed of the L2 user’s speech and instead of speaking to the L2 participant, directed her speech at the participant’s Francophone boyfriend. The participant reported, “When I was slow to search for words she rolled her eyes and looked to my boyfriend and started speaking to him. I felt down about that experience.” Although this was one very specific incident, in situations like this, second language users of French in Montreal, who are aware of their rights might be able to confidently continue their encounter in French under the pretense that it is their right, under Quebec law, to not only receive services in French, but to learn and benefit from opportunities to integrate into the society. Within this context, the legislation could be used as a way to foster learning, and empower the second language learner in his immersion environment. Within the current context, this specific participant may have benefited from knowing what her rights were as an L2 user of French in this kind of situation.

If second language speakers of French maintain that they have the right to learn and practice French in Quebec then this may be something that French second language pedagogy should include. A section in the course could be set aside to introduce, explain, and elaborate upon the section of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Charter of the French Language that maintains that every person who settles in Quebec has this right, and that as a second language user of French it is their right, and perhaps duty, to enforce that language learning opportunity.

Before this research was conducted I was not aware enough, or confident enough in my L2 self, to assert my rights as an L2 speaker when I first began my usage of French in Montreal. When I first had a ‘switch to English’ while trying to practice French I felt as though I was being rejected from the French speaking population. When I made inquiries into the experiences of my friends, peers and colleagues that suggested I was not the only one to have ‘switching’ experiences, I was further intrigued by this potential phenomenon and as such, the research questions that focus this study were born. In the current study it was found that L2 users do experience switches to English when initiating discourse in French. Participants reported no significant change when experiencing switches, but intermediate speakers did report increased levels of motivation when they had encounters that did not involve switching. This may suggest that in order to improve motivation to use L2 French in Montreal, intermediate speakers need to have encounters where their interlocutors do not switch to English. Since there were several instances of non-switch encounters reported by participants, this is encouraging for L2 users in Montreal. These findings can be used to inform those interested in the realm of applied linguistics, and also those interested in language pedagogy, motivation and those interested in the

use of and opportunity to learn, not only French but also any second language being learned in a bilingual environment.

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Internet Sites

<http://www.vigile.net/00-12/sondage-langue.html>

APPENDIX

Service Encounter Questionnaire

- 1) Enter your participant ID or first and last name. *

- 2) In what part of Montreal did the service encounter happen? (Street intersection, quarter, or neighborhood. If interaction took place on the telephone state: telephone). *

- 3) Who was your service encounter with? *

 - Grocery store employee
 - Deepener employee
 - Waiter/waitress/food or beverage counter staff
 - Customer service representative (Hydro-Quebec, Video Ron, Rogers, etc.)
 - Government service employee
 - Merchandise store employee (clothing store, hardware, electronics, etc.)
 - Other (please specify): _____

- 4) How did the service provider greet you?

 - English
 - French
 - Both

Didn't greet you

5) How did you respond to the greeting, or if there was not a greeting how did you initiate conversation with service provider?

English (skip to question 9)

French (continue with questionnaire starting with question 6)

6) At some point in the conversation did the service provider switch to English?

Right away

After a few sentences

Didn't switch (if he/she didn't switch skip to question 9)

7) How long was the conversation before the switch? (min:seconds)

8) After the service provider switched to English did you continue in French anyway?

Yes

No

9) Did you have a sense of the service provider's language background?

A native speaker of Quebecois French

A native speaker of another variety of French

- A native speaker of English who also speaks French
- A native speaker of another language who also speaks French
- I don't know

10) Did this encounter affect your desire to speak French again?

- I definitely felt encouraged to speak French in my next encounter
- I felt somewhat encouraged to speak French in my next encounter
- This encounter does not affect my encouragement to speak French
- I felt somewhat discouraged to speak French in my next encounter
- I definitely felt discouraged to speak French in my next encounter

11) Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your service encounter?

Thank You!