Research Title: Engaging Reluctant Readers in an Immersion Classroom

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Proposal

As a classroom teacher, I had found that many of my grade one reluctant readers—those students who could read but chose not to—lacked the motivation to engage in the reading process. My study was designed to investigate how reluctant English readers in a French immersion setting responded to classroom practices that were especially intended to increase their motivation and engagement in reading. Additionally this research was simultaneously intended to inform my own teaching practices. I am an early year’s French immersion teacher who works with readers of various capabilities and attitudes towards reading.

Using a qualitative-oriented action research approach I introduced and taught seven classroom practices—Read Aloud, Self-Selected Reading, Literacy Circles, Drama, Reader’s Theatre, Author’s Theatre, and Inquiry—to see which ones helped my reluctant readers increase their motivation to read. Action research, which is cyclical and ongoing, allowed for me to be both teacher and researcher and to work within a ‘real-world’ situation, which was my own classroom. By applying this method of research I was able to create a research environment that encouraged co-learning between myself and my students, and the opportunity to learn and apply my findings to my own teaching as it occurred.

By applying multiple methods of data collection and organization—a questionnaire; learning conversations; observations; journaling; and recording sheets—I was able to record what reluctant readers had to say and show about these seven classroom practices.

The findings provided that classroom practices that allowed for social interactions, freedom of choice, and the use of voice and movement were the best ways to motivate my young
reluctant readers in reading. Finding which classroom practices most motivate reluctant readers leads to a greater understanding of their reading engagement. It also decreases not only the number of students who are reluctant readers in the primary grades, but the gap between those who do read and those who do not read.

I would be using a power point format to present my research findings at the symposium.