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‘Picking Up’ a Second Language from Television: an autoethnographic L2 simulation of L1 French learning

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Abstract

This thesis recounts my own two-stage journey of learning French as a second language as an adult independent learner. During the first stage, I 'picked up' the meanings of thousands of French words and sentences by watching approximately 1300 hours of television programs without the use of subtitles, dictionaries, textbooks, teachers or French speaking. During the second stage, I sat a DELF B1 exam, lived in France for 5.5 months where I practiced French speaking, watched an estimated 500 further hours of television and began learning to read French, and then sat another DELF B1 and a DELF B2 exam. The thesis aimed to build on and extend previous L2 research which sought to investigate L2 learning based on characteristics of L1 learning, namely, building listening comprehension prior to speaking without direct language instruction. It differed from previous research in that I studied my own learning as it occurred, I was an independent learner outside of a classroom, both my 'silent period' and the quantity of language input I utilised were vastly greater, and I focused primarily on observing conversational language presented within a video context. The thesis aimed to examine a variety of topics: the role of television and listening in language learning; Noam Chomsky's 'language acquisition device' and 'poverty of stimulus' arguments; Stephen Krashen's 'monitor model'; Richard Schmidt's 'noticing hypothesis'; Elizabeth Bates' and Brian MacWhinney's 'competition model'; subconscious and conscious language processing; the value of second language tests; and autoethnography as both a humanising research methodology and a tool for capturing the personal mental world of a language learner. The main aim of the project was to draw attention to the value of listening to conversations when learning an L2 and the assistance that a visual context can provide in this endeavour. The project also aimed to support the qualitative research perspective that one's own lived experiences are an extraordinarily rich environment for data collection and analysis. In what is now an electronically connected, globalised world, where the possession of an L2 can open many doors to life opportunities, this research may offer hope and insight to L2 learners who are seeking an alternative to traditional second language learning approaches.

Declaration by author

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

I have clearly stated the contribution of others to my thesis as a whole, including statistical assistance, survey design, data analysis, significant technical procedures, professional editorial advice, financial support and any other original research work used or reported in my thesis. The content of my thesis is the result of work I have carried out since the commencement of my higher degree by research candidature and does not include a substantial part of work that has been submitted to qualify for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. I have clearly stated which parts of my thesis, if any, have been submitted to qualify for another award.

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Publications during candidature

No publications.

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None.

Research Involving Human or Animal Subjects

No animal or human participants were involved in this research" Ethics approval letter (Appendix A).

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Keywords

Autoethnography, French, silent period, television, YouTube, cartoons, language acquisition, language learning, conscious language processing, audio-visual

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Dedications

I dedicate this thesis to my mother Anne Pisarski, the kindest person I have ever known. A woman who has achieved so many things during her lifetime despite facing numerous obstacles and who has still been able to maintain extraordinary patience and compassion throughout.

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Introduction

In line with the autoethnographic nature of this research project, I will begin with an attempt to describe who I am and where I have come from. Through no choosing that I can recall, I entered this world with qualities that prevented me from experiencing noticeable negative discrimination - I was born of white skin with a fully functioning male body, with English as my first language. I was also born in a land devoid of the kind of war that my grandfather experienced first-hand as a child in Poland during World War II.

Throughout my life I have encountered a lot of people whose stories of hardship and suffering have always left me feeling that I was never 'hard done by'. Yes, my parents got divorced when I was around 3 years of age. I was raised by a single-mother who struggled to make ends meet with two young children in a land where there were less opportunities for women to work, to study and to be free from sexual harassment. For a long time, I did not know how to handle my mother's preference for female partners. Somehow though, I escaped most forms of abuse - there are so many I have met that didn't. I did cop my share of teasing and bullying, suffered from low self-esteem and went to many different schools, but otherwise I was given many advantages with which to live this life.

Perhaps these advantages allowed me to coast through primary and secondary school with minimal effort. This did catch up with me however, when I failed my first semester of IT at university. After being aimless for a year or two and then becoming a primary school teacher. I quickly found that my personal philosophy was at odds with the education system within which I worked. Although the education system did have many positive aspects, my young mind could only see the indoctrination, classification and punishment of students that were staples of an everyday schooling life. I had no desire to perpetuate such things. So, I studied language education to find greater fulfilment with the aim of teaching adults who required far less teacher control. As I gained more English as a second language (ESL) teaching experience, I realised that the schools in which I had worked based their education on nothing but tradition – the tradition of teacher tells, students do, no questions asked. Prescribe a textbook, give out worksheets and then grade the students with subjective tests passed off as objective ones, with no part of the school's contribution being acknowledged in the grades.

I was bullied by my 'boss', in one of my teaching positions, to either take a job with more hours and less money, or risk having no work at all. That made me determined to escape

the ESL industry and so I studied again with the aim of gaining entry to a PhD. The plan worked and I was fortunate to have almost four years out of the industry thanks to the scholarship that I received. I was still in the education system however, where education based on tradition still reigns. This project is perhaps a good reflection of both my unwillingness to perpetuate poor education and my desire to help students who are sick of receiving it.

This is the story of my learning of French as a second language from the 5th of January 2016 to the 24th of May 2018. Being concerned with what I saw in second language (L2) teaching, learning and theory as an overemphasis on reading, writing, grammar and speaking, I sought to bring attention to the much neglected value of listening. Being convinced that most first language (L1) learners 'pick up' language primarily through the use of the senses of hearing and sight within an animated world, I embarked on a language learning journey of 'picking up' French in a form of artificial immersion from television programs available on YouTube. This research aimed to build upon and extend previous research which had investigated the use of L1 learning techniques for L2 learning, namely in the form of a 'silent period' and allowing learners to make meaning for themselves. While studying from home in Australia, I underwent 1295 recorded hours of audio-visual language learning and an additional estimated 200 unrecorded hours, and during this time I adhered to a set of self-imposed bans on how I was allowed to learn - I had banned myself from any intentional use of grammar, writing, reading, dictionaries, teachers or French speaking. Once I had lifted the bans, I did my first French speaking, sat a formal DELF B1 examination, lived in France for almost 5 months, continued learning from television, learned to read French, and then sat both a DELF B1 and a DELF B2 examination.

Chapter 1, *Literature review*, begins by presenting the personal experiences and beliefs that led to my undertaking of this research project. It then presents an overview of L1 language learning and the concept of L2 ultimate attainment, in order to highlight that differences between L1 and L2 learning may be related to the utilisation of different language learning techniques. The chapter continues by examining previous research that focused on learning L2s in ways that are based on L1 learning, and then outlines other ways such simulation could occur through exposure to audio-visual L2 media. The chapter then highlights how extremely little research has focused on L2 learning from listening or on L2 learning from television, despite the former being an emphasised component of L2

assessment and instruction, and the latter surely having worth for serious research consideration. The chapter then reviews literature on historical approaches to L2 education as a potential way of explaining the lack of research attention to L2 learning from listening and television. The chapter concludes by examining three language learning theories which were influential in the undertaking of and interpreting of this research project.

Chapter 2, *Research design*, begins with a historical review of 'Western' philosophy followed by a review of this thesis's methodological lens, 'autoethnography', in order to demonstrate autoethnography's epistemological and ontological position. The chapter proceeds by examining two personal beliefs about language learning that drove this project and then discusses the importance of trustworthiness in research. The chapter continues by describing how French was chosen as the L2 for this research project, my prior learning of French, how L2 AV media was selected, and gives an overview of the project stages. Outlines are then given of the data collection techniques and methods of data analysis.

Chapter 3, *The beginning of French exposure*, aims to familiarise the reader with the codes used throughout the first 83 days for data collection and analysis. This is achieved by providing extensive examples of 'mental events', AV exposure sessions, AV program titles, AV program time lengths, and selected journal entries, during the first three days of AV exposure.

Chapter 4, *The first 83 Days*, presents and discusses the analysed data from the first 83 days of AV exposure that occurred over a four-month period from January to April 2016. The chapter is divided into four, monthly sections and then subdivided into quantitative and qualitative data analysis sections. The quantitative subsections present the analysed data as tables and graphs concerning the AV media viewed, the hours of AV exposure, the mental event rates, the mental event triggers, the ways that mental events were parsed, and the characteristics of the mental event 'word strings' that were recorded. The qualitative subsections present selected journal entries aimed at giving the reader a 'first-hand' chronological insight into my language learning journey.

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Chapter 5, *French exposure beyond the first 83 days*, entails a month by month presentation of my language learning journey from the cessation of mental event recording

in May 2016 to September 2017 (just prior to my first French speaking). Each month is divided into quantitative and qualitative subsections, with the analysed quantitative data providing both a table of the programs viewed with hours of exposure, and a graph of the daily hours of viewing by AV program. The qualitative subsections again present the story of my language learning journey through selected journal entries.

Chapter 6, *All bans lifted. Off to France*, qualitatively and chronologically recounts the journey of my first French speaking, my first DELF B1 examination, my experiences living and working in France, and my final DELF B1 and B2 examinations.

Chapter 7, *Discussion*, begins with a review of the research project and a call for greater research attention to 'L2 learning from listening and television'. The next section focuses on the main quantitative findings from the research project, emphasising the gradual growth in listening comprehension from vast numbers of single words to longer and longer word strings. The subsequent qualitative section readdresses my beliefs about early L2 phonological development, how I was able to overcome the 'segmentation' and 'invariance' problems normally associated with L1 acquisition, how I made meaning and developed 'grammatical' understanding in French, and then revisits the first belief driving this project concerning listening comprehension. The discussion then shifts to the development of my French speaking ability and confronts the second belief driving this project. Attention is then given in the next two sections to the development of my French literacy and my DELF test taking experiences. The chapter continues by comparing both Stephen Krashen's 'Monitor Model' and Bates' and MacWhinney's 'Competition Model' to my own L2 journey. To complete the discussion, I present both my personal position on the role of 'grammar' in language acquisition, and ways in which the project could have been improved in hindsight.

Chapter 8, *What does it all mean?* discusses ways in which this study contributes to language learning research and potential ways that my own experience might inform and/or be of assistance to other language learners, theorists and educators.

Chapter 1 – Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

While many people embark on the journey of learning another language, it is not uncommon for many language students to struggle in communicative situations even after years of dedicated effort. Perhaps as a result of such struggles, a wide variety of language teaching and learning methods have been proposed, each potentially claiming a new way forward, yet with none seeming to have found a way that produces significantly better outcomes. Whether or not the story told in this thesis is any different is for each individual reader to decide. I embarked on a journey of learning French as a second language by watching French television as I believed that I could develop better communicative abilities, more quickly than typically results from common language learning techniques. I've met and heard about other people who have learned another language from television and who spoke highly of its merits, especially in comparison to classroom learning, so the idea is not mine alone. It is simply that the use of such a method is absent in the academic literature and so I endeavoured to have it included. Since the language learning journey told here represents only an individual human's experience, neither claims of generalisability nor of having found a new way forward for others are made. At best, this thesis offers readers an insight into what kind of language learning is humanly possible from concentration during exposure to extensive audio-visual (AV) media presented in a second language.

1.2 Personal interest in this project

My first attempt at language learning was with high school French at 12 years of age in 1986. I loved the teacher and managed to get my only ever 'A' in high school. I don't recall ever being able to speak much French at that time and on commencement of this project could only recall a handful of expressions (see Section 2.7). The next year, I didn't like the teacher and I quit the subject. As tempting as it is to suggest that this early French learning experience was influential in my French learning during this project, I can confidently state that it was not.

My second attempt at learning a second language was with Korean, while living in South Korea for a year working as an ESL teacher. The techniques and resources that I used to learn Korean were memorising the sounds of the Korean alphabet based on similar sounds in English, flashcards, bilingual dictionaries, textbooks, memorisation, phrasebooks, reading, writing, and trying to engage in conversations with Korean people. While I became quite good at ordering food and asking standard phrasebook questions, I was never able to engage in deep and meaningful conversations in Korean, I always struggled to create the sentences I wanted to say, and I couldn't understand what most Koreans were saying. This remained true even after living in Korea on two separate occasions for a total of 3.5 years.

My third attempt was with Mandarin, while I was living in China for 2 years working as an ESL teacher. Although, I used a pocket phrasebook and a pocket bilingual dictionary for survival, I attempted to learn Mandarin by watching between one and three hours of television daily. Every program on the television always had Chinese subtitles and so while listening I switched between watching the pictures and the subtitles. Over time, I was able to guess the meanings of many sounds and match them to the written characters. My learning began by 'picking up' individual words, then pairs of known words and then longer and longer word strings until after one year, many of the expressions I had learned enabled me to hold quite lengthy conversations in Mandarin despite still not knowing the majority of the language. In addition, my communicative ability, the speed with which I could comprehend and produce speech, and my ability to retain words in memory was far superior to my ability in Korean. This experience convinced me that exposure to AV input of an L2 could not only be used to learn language, but to learn language that was encountered in daily life. If the Korean that I had learned from written materials was being used in daily South Korean life, I was rarely able to hear it.

During all of my ESL teaching career, I observed how much of the schools' curriculums allowed students to experience English the way it occurs conversationally in everyday life – almost never. Instead, students were offered opportunities to experience English through grammar instruction, worksheets, reading, writing, tests, classrooms full of speakers whose L1 was not English, conversations read from transcripts, and occasional brief listening excepts from CD's or tapes. Many of the hundreds of ESL students that I taught from a wide range of countries reported having experienced similar methods of schooling, as well as their dissatisfaction with such methods.

I theorised that because L2 learners were receiving limited audio L2 input and spending a considerable portion of their study with written words without sounds, the sounds they were producing while reading, writing and speaking were from their own L1 sound system. Furthermore, I theorised that doing so repeatedly for years resulted in mentally storing the L2 in an audio format that did not match the sounds of the target language (TL) speakers they encountered, hence contributing to some students' disillusionment with comprehending the spoken L2. I also theorised that because many, if not most, L2 written materials were of a non-conversational format, students had limited opportunities to experience the myriad of directions that conversations could take, hence giving them a limited source of conversational language in memory to draw upon when creating their own conversations with TL speakers. I theorised that a mental language source such as this may be forcing students to create spoken sentences that differed from the ones native speakers themselves would choose to communicate the same ideas (an interlanguage). In cases where such interlanguage still resulted in productive communication, L2 learners might be re-using the same interlanguage expressions whenever the need for expressing the same ideas arose and hence making such expressions very difficult to change due to repeated use (fossilisation). As Phillips (2006, p.94) cited in Miller (2011) states, "Repeated exposure to the new pronunciation reinforces its memory trace and eventually leads to its becoming the default pronunciation."

Put more simply, I hypothesised that L2 classroom learners have been and are typically receiving minimal amounts of L2 listening input and are being denied the opportunity to develop an L2 acoustic resource upon which to base their L2 comprehension and speaking, unlike L1 learners and L2 learners enrolled in primary and high schools in countries that speak the L2 as an L1.

Numerous students approached me over the years asking me how they could improve their pronunciation, speaking and listening, and whenever I encouraged them to watch a lot of television, most did not believe that it would work. Since my own anecdotal experience was unconvincing and I may have in fact been misguided, I endeavoured to complete this doctoral research, where I could more fully examine the potential benefits of language learning from television.

Although research often begins with one or more research questions (Neuman, 2006), at the beginning of this project I found that I was instead being driven by two very strong personal beliefs:

> *Regarding L2 listening comprehension: I believed that through extensive audio-visual exposure to a foreign language combined with concentration on the audio-visual media, any person whose eyes, ears and ability to concentrate were functioning could develop the same degree of aural comprehension as an L1 speaker in that language.*
>
> *Regarding L2 speech production: I believed that if speech production in the second language was delayed until the aforementioned comprehension level had been reached, any person capable of speaking would rapidly develop the ability to speak the L2 as though they were an L1 speaker, provided that extensive speaking opportunities for practice were available.*

In order to fully explain these beliefs it is necessary to place them within the context of language learning literature.

1.3 L1 learning

According to Owens (1996), from the womb until 12 months of age, L1 development is said to begin with prosodic understanding. In this early stage, infants are able to discriminate between prosodic features such as: sound duration, pitch, consonants, intonation patterns, pauses and rhyming. Before infants say their first word, they are able to babble in syllables, imitate the intonation patterns of caregivers, show selective listening to known words, produce consistent sounds with consistent meanings and have both these sounds and meanings understood by caregivers (Owens, 1996). Around 12 months of age, L1 learners say their first word and then single word utterances are typical for the next 6 months (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). At around 18 months, children begin using two-word utterances and can say approximately 50 words (Akmajian and Demers, 2010). A vocabulary explosion then occurs where by the age of four children can say around 1800 words but are said to understand about five times as many (Akmajian and Demers, 2010). ‘Grammatical’ development also begins at around 18 months, using word inflections around age two, questions and negatives at 2 years and 3 months, and rare or complex constructions by age five (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

All children are said to achieve mastery of their L1 between the age of four (Lightbrown & Spada, 2013) and six (Ortega, 2014), provided that they have fully functioning physiological abilities. There is also 'evidence' of variation in syntactic and lexical complexity in children's language dependent upon the primary caregivers' education and socioeconomic status (Serratrice, 2012). Although language simultaneously contains morphological, syntactical, lexical, semantic, pragmatic and phonological information (McGregor, 2009), these categories are an abstract construction (Akmajian & Demers, 2010) and L1 learners are said not to acquire all of these features simultaneously (Owens, 1996) or consciously (Andrzej & Szczesniak, 2013).

Chomsky (1980) argued that there is insufficient input in the environment to explain L1 acquisition, a belief known as the 'poverty of stimulus' (POS) argument (discussed further in Section 1.12). However, according to Bannard and Lieven (2012), recent research suggests this may not be accurate based on the volumes of data collected on child directed speech (CDS) from caregivers. In one example given by Bannard and Lieven (2012), 1.9 million words of a mother's CDS were recorded and analysed with the results showing that the CDS is highly repetitive with the most common word occurring 70,000 times and the 100th occurring 10,000 times. In addition to counting single words, repetitive word strings between 2 and 5 words in length were counted and a high correlation between the frequency of word strings in CDS and children's ability to insert novel items into these strings during production was identified. According to Saxton (2009), there still exist researchers who claim CDS plays no role in L1 acquisition and that "three studies have been cited numerous times by authors who seem not to have read the original sources, leading to considerable misrepresentation of the findings that were originally reported. Collectively, they have inspired the myth that certain cultures exist where CDS is absent (p.74)."

On many occasions I have asked people how they learned their first language. On almost every occasion the first response was, "Listening." When I then asked if that meant a second language could be learned in the same way, the response was almost always, "No." In enquiring as to why that would be, when considering that listening was a skill they still possessed, the answer was usually something like, "Because children learn better. They are younger. Their brains are developing. Their brains are like sponges." Similar answers are represented in language learning literature.

1.4 L2 ultimate attainment

‘Ultimate attainment’, ‘end state attainment’ and ‘asymptotic attainment’ are synonymous terms sometimes used to describe the level of proficiency achieved by second language learners (Birdsong and Paik, 2007). According to Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson (2001, pp.157-158), “published studies have still not identified a single adult learner who is indistinguishable from a native speaker in all relevant aspects of the L2”. Challenging this statement is Marinova-Todd’s (2003) doctoral thesis, which identified two ESL learners who were assessed as performing within the same ‘range’ as L1 English speakers in all of the nine areas under investigation, including spontaneous speaking. Although not all L2 learners have the desire for their L2 oral mastery to be the same as the native speakers of the TL (Lightbrown & Spada, 2013), it is still considered difficult for L2 learners to achieve even ‘nativelike’ proficiency, with some estimates ranging from 3 to 45 percent, to a more conservative 10 to 15 percent (Birdsong & Paik, 2007).

During the L2 learning process, it is generally accepted that all L2 learners develop and use an ‘interlanguage’, which is a separate linguistic system where the spoken and written forms of the L2 they produce differ from the forms of both the L1 and L2 (Al-Khresheh, 2015). As learners progress, their interlanguage more closely aligns with the L2, but in very few cases does it ever become native-like (Skehan, 2007). Instead, a phenomenon known as ‘fossilisation’ occurs, where despite further study or years of involvement with the L2, the interlanguage plateaus and no longer moves towards the L1 (Lightbrown & Spada, 2013). The causes of fossilisation are attributed to combinations of: transfer of training, strategies of L2 learning, strategies of L2 communication, overgeneralisation, and language transfer (Al-Khresheh, 2015), with the latter having received the most attention in research (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). Language transfer, or crosslinguistic influence, is a multidirectional phenomenon where each language that a person possesses or is learning can have an effect on the other language(s), and can be seen as positive when it assists learning or negative when it hinders it (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008).

One very influential theory once used to explain differences between L1 and L2 learner outcomes was the critical period hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967), which stated that ultimate attainment in an L2 was determined by the age at which the learner commenced language learning. For pre-pubescent learners, it was deemed possible to achieve the same proficiency as L1 speakers, while for older learners it was not. Since that time, age related

influences on L2 learning have featured prominently in research (Abrahamsson, 2012). The idea of a critical period has since been superseded by what are known as ‘sensitive periods’, which have less defined cut-off points and the ability to affect only certain areas of language acquisition (White, Hutka, Williams & Moreno, 2013). It is generally agreed that the earlier a person starts learning a foreign language the more native-like abilities they will achieve and the better their mastery of the L2 will be in comparison to older learners (Ortega, 2014). However, older learners sometimes outperform younger learners in the early stages of learning and a number of cases exist where both early-start and late-start language learners differ from the norm (Ortega, 2014). When older learners are the exception, it is attributed to exceptional teaching and extremely high motivation, whereas exceptions with young learners are due to limited use of the L2 (Ortega, 2014). This anomaly is known as the ‘adult language learning paradox’ (Sokolik, 1990 cited in Otto & Nikolov, 2012). Some studies that investigate age related influences on ultimate attainment use quantitative measures, such as the length of residence in an L2 country, in order to make comparisons between learners (Munoz & Singleton, 2011). Yet such measures remain subjective, since neither the total number of hours of exposure, the qualitative characteristics of the input, nor the range of exposure environments are examined.

Other factors said to influence ultimate attainment are individual learner differences. According to Gardner (2008), the most commonly investigated individual learner differences are language aptitude, attitudes and motivation, language anxiety, and language-learning strategies. Studies of language aptitude have suggested that people with a high language aptitude (measured on MLAT or similar instruments) can learn languages better than those with a low aptitude based on their: phonetic coding ability, grammatical sensitivity, rote learning ability and inductive language learning ability (Sasaki, 2012). Language aptitude has consistently been viewed as a ‘talent’ and therefore something that remains stable over time (Sparks, Patton, Ganschow & Humbach, 2011). However, the concept of language aptitude may need to be reconsidered as a skill, since it can change over time and be improved with training (Safar & Kormos, 2008). Schultz (1991) questioned the entire validity of language aptitude measures because her 22 year old daughter was diagnosed as ‘lacking foreign language learning aptitude’ despite being successful in acquiring three languages in ‘natural acquisition environments’, while only having problems learning language in formal school settings.

Attitude and motivation are considered as a single individual difference by Gardner (2008) because of their interconnected nature. In a general sense, attitude refers to a learner's interest in the language as a subject and/or attitude towards the culture it is embedded in, while motivation refers to the reasons why a particular language is being learned (Heinzmann, 2013). Positive attitudes and a high motivation correlate with improved learning, while the opposite is true for negative attitudes and low motivation (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011). However, Ehrman, Leaver and Oxford (2003) argue that a whole range of interconnected affective variables exist such as defence mechanisms, self-esteem, self-efficacy, alertness, self-management and beliefs, making the identification of one particular variable's influence problematic.

Language anxiety describes the situation where a learner experiences stress in particular L2 situations (Horwitz, 2010). The three most common situations where language anxiety occurs are fear of communication, fear of tests, and fear of being negatively evaluated by other people (Al-Shboul, Ahmad, Nordin, & Rahman, 2013). Furthermore, the research suggests that it always has negative consequences (Gardner, 2008).

According to Ortega (2014), language learning strategies are the techniques that learners consciously use in order to improve in the L2, e.g. mnemonics. Research in this area initially focused on understanding the strategies used by competent or 'good' language learners in the hope that teaching these strategies to students would increase their progress (Ortega, 2014). However, as research into this area progressed it was determined that many 'poor' language users also utilised the 'good' learners' strategies, that the choice of learning strategy was often determined by the curriculum, i.e. assessment, and that what a researcher deemed as 'good' was culturally embedded, e.g. asking the teacher questions.

Sadly for me, all of these explanations gave me little hope of becoming as able in an L2 as an L1 speaker, as was my goal. The critical period and sensitive periods hypotheses, suggested that biologically, particularly because I was well beyond adolescence (aged 42 to 44 during this French learning experience), I may have had no choice in the matter. If I had any affective learner characteristics and/or individual differences that were not seen as conducive to L2 learning, I was likely to struggle. Similarly, language transfer from my L1 English, which I could not change, may also have been putting obstacles in my way. While I acknowledge that any of these explanations may explain the phenomenon of

ultimate attainment, I always found it surprising that the differences between L1 and L2 learning techniques did not feature as an explanation, since for me, L2 learners typically receive language ‘input’ and ‘output’ in fundamentally different ways to L1 learners. Thus making research conclusions which compare L1 and L2 learners questionable.

1.5 Some L1 and L2 differences

Because most L2 research has been conducted on learners in classrooms (White, 1995; Benson, 2011; Cole and Vanderplank, 2016), it is there that I looked to make comparisons between L2 and L1 learning. Firstly, in a classroom you can generally find four walls, a blackboard or a whiteboard and lots of people sitting at desks. By contrast, L1 learners often get to move and explore a much more engaging world outside of a single room. Secondly, L2 spoken input in a classroom comes from technology like CDs, from the teachers (who are not always L1 speakers of the L2), and from other L2 learners. For an L1 learner, spoken input comes from caregivers and community members who are quite often L1 speakers of the language. Thirdly, L2 learners often receive non-spoken L2 input in the form of writing, a symbolic communicative system that lacks any sound, while L1 learners only utilise writing if their caregivers expose them to it. Fourthly, L2 learners are often taught the grammar of the L2, which consists of complex written rules that require the additional learning of complex terminology. Conversely, L1 learners are not exposed to grammatical rules at all. Fifthly, L2 learners can immediately find the meanings of written and spoken words through dictionaries or by asking teachers or classmates, whereas L1 learners have to work out which sounds are words and what their meanings are until such time as they are able to ask direct questions about word meanings (Clark, 2009). Finally, L2 learners often begin their learning experience with speaking in the L2 and continue to speak throughout learning, while L1 learners do not usually speak for the first 12 months of life and then only gradually increase the amount of speaking they do over the next few years (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Akmajian and Demers, 2010). Could any of these differences be contributing to different learning outcomes between L1s and L2s?

If existing research that explains differences between L1 and L2 outcomes was based on L2 learners who had used the same or similar learning techniques to L1 learners, then I could have more trust in the research because learning techniques could no longer be considered to be an ‘uncontrolled variable’. However, since this has not been the case, I

was able to maintain my own belief that L1 learning might still be replicable for L2 learning and might also produce outcomes more similar to L1 outcomes.

1.6 L2 research on learning like an L1

Although not directly addressing the concept of 'ultimate attainment', Postovsky (1974) stated that a significant difference between L1 learning and L2 classroom learning was that L1 learners develop listening comprehension prior to production, while schools teaching L2s often emphasise speaking from the beginning of language education. He argued that this difference meant that most of the L2 audio input classroom learners receive is actually from their own voices and from other students in class. He argued that this might explain why many students struggle to understand and be understood by L1 speakers of the L2 being learned. He suggested that L2 learners were practicing comprehension and speaking with sounds that were dissimilar to the ones L1 speakers of the L2 would use and suggested that in the initial phase of language education, it might be beneficial for students to develop their L2 listening comprehension prior to L2 speaking.

The idea of simulating L1 learning in an L2 situation is not new, but the topic has received minimal research attention. McLelland (2017) points out that there were many language educators prior to the 20th century who claimed to have created a 'new' method for language teaching based on the idea of learning like children, such as the 'natural method' in the 1870s. During the 1960s and 1980s, a handful of L2 researchers became interested in the features of L1 learning where learners begin their language experience with comprehension, have no direct instruction in grammar, and commence speaking when ready (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006; Clark, 2009). Such approaches went by a variety of names: delayed oral practice (Postovsky, 1974; Gary, 1974), comprehension approach (Winitz, 1981), and initial listening or listening first (Rost, 2002). In addition, a number of specific learning techniques were developed and experiments conducted which fit under a 'comprehension first' umbrella such as 'Tan Gau' (Gauthier, 1963 cited by Nord, 1980; Postovsky, 1974), Total Physical Response (TPR) (Asher, 1969), a study of matching of pictures and German sound chunks via computer (Winitiz & Reeds, 1973), a study of delaying the initial speaking of Russian (Postovsky, 1974), and the 'natural approach' (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Krashen (1981) also promoted the idea of a 'silent period' at the beginning of L2 learning, but his view was based on observations of how 'early L2 learners' often say very little at the beginning of learning. Gibbons (1985)

examined literature that supported the existence of a ‘silent period’ and criticised it on the grounds that because the children in the research did actually speak, then the period could hardly be called ‘silent’, that there was great individual variation amongst the research subjects, that the number of research subjects was too small to make generalisations, and that the length of the reported silent period was inaccurate.

The concept of comprehension before production was applied in different ways by the aforementioned researchers, yet their approaches still differed from L1 learning. Guthier’s (1963) study involved the use of bilingual French-English teachers, who taught lessons in French (the students’ L2) while allowing students to respond in English (the students’ L1) until they felt ready. It would however be quite unusual for a monolingual L1 learner to respond in a different language to the one in which they were spoken to. Asher’s (1969) TPR approach allowed learners not to speak until they had been exposed to ‘sufficient’ input, which consisted of teachers addressing students in the grammatical imperative (with commands and instructions), whereas L1 learners are addressed in many more ways than a single grammatical pattern. Winitiz and Reeds’ (1973) experiment involved English speakers learning German as an L2 by pairing pictures, written words and written word strings to L2 sounds via computer - L1 learners are not typically taught language with writing or computer programs. Postovsky’s (1974) experiment involved English speakers spending their first four weeks of a Russian language course using writing and reading, without speaking Russian, and then compared the results to students who had done the same course, but who had spoken Russian from the beginning - L1 learners do not speak for around 12 months and do not do coursework. In Krashen and Terrell’s (1983) natural approach, students were presented with TL sounds which were paired to visual aids and to TPR actions - L1 learners learn from an animated world more than from still images on cards.

These comprehension first approaches all applied two L1 learning characteristics to L2 learning: no initial speaking in the L2 and no direct instruction in grammar. The differences from L1 learning are understandable when considering that all of the researchers were concerned with how to *teach* L2s in classrooms. Although caregivers might try to teach language to their children, caregivers are not under the same pressure as L2 classroom teachers and L2 researchers to produce ‘results’, because caregivers can take comfort in the fact that almost all children eventually master an L1. Because my goal was to ‘master’ French, if possible, I looked further to the ‘masters’ to try and identify additional L1 learning

characteristics which I could simulate, in addition to comprehension before production and no direct instruction in grammar.

1.7 What other L1 learning characteristics could be utilised in L2 learning?

Clearly, I was not an infant, and so I couldn't return to an infant's body, experience the world anew, or be cared for by caregivers, but what I did and do have in common with infants is being human - a uniting point for us all (Briggs, 2017). So in trying to fulfil my desire to learn a language more like L1 learners, I was looking for human learning characteristics they had that I still possessed, as well as characteristics of their learning environment which I could utilise. In terms of learning characteristics, it was the senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste and feeling to which I looked, all of which would be necessary for L1 learners to learn the vocabulary to which they correspond, such as 'blue', 'loud', 'stinky', 'bitter' and 'painful' respectively. In order to learn all words in their spoken form, the sense of hearing must be essential, and therefore one that I needed to utilise. The next most important sense for me was vision. Although L1 learning still occurs for children who can hear but cannot see (Smeds, 2015), having access to vision would only make it easier for identifying what many words are referring to in the world around. Because I had greater experience of the world and language than an L1 learner, I decided that I might only need the senses of hearing and sight in order to 'pick up' language from 'the environment'. For example, if I saw someone smell an old sock, make a face of disgust and then exclaim something in another language, I could guess that they had said something like, "Yuk," or, "That stinks." Were the same exclamation used in similar circumstances on multiple occasions, then over time I could develop familiarity with the sound of the exclamation, it's meaning and contextual use, without ever having used my sense of smell.

In terms of environment, L1 learners are exposed to an animated world, for a long period of time, without any external pressure to speak before being ready, nor of learning to read and write, nor of having to focus on grammar. A possible L2 simulation of this could have been what numerous people have said to me, "The best way to learn a language is to live in a country where it is spoken." As logical as this sounded, I was wary of doing that for this project. Had I immediately gone to France to try and pick up the language, I would have had no choice but to speak, mainly so as not to be impolite by being mute all the time, but also as a matter of survival for things like shopping, using public transport, and

socialising. Furthermore, it was not realistic to sit around and just observe people talking - it could be construed as ‘creepy’.

The best thing in my eyes was television because it allowed me to receive L2 input from French L1 speakers in a conversational format within the context of visual storylines, without the need for speaking, reading, writing or grammar. In addition, it allowed me a ‘fly on the wall’ perspective and hence avoid any effects that my presence might have had on the people I was observing and the conversations they were holding. While the scripted language of television and movies differs from speech in the real world (Beach, 1974; Shrum, 2004), as does the portrayal of people and society (Gunter, 1995; Reid, 1979; Morey & Yaqin, 2011), it still contains the same semantic, lexical, pragmatic, morphological, and phonological properties that L1 speakers utilise in comprehension and speaking (Gordon, 2014). There was never any guarantee that a ‘silent period’ was anything more than part of biological development and hence served no purpose for L1 learners or for me. However, having a silent period did allow me to focus on comprehension before speaking.

One characteristic of L1 learning that could have been simulated but was impractical to do so was to receive ten or more hours of exposure per day over three to six years (a conservative estimate by Clark, 2009). However, in my eyes, I had an advantage over L1 learners in not having to learn all of the concepts which language can refer to. While I still believed that I needed vast quantities of L2 AV input, I thought that my adult knowledge might allow me to learn French words at a much faster rate than L1 learners and hence in much less time than three to five years. In order to achieve my goal, I decided that I needed to practise the one skill that I thought all L1 masters have – the ability to comprehend spoken language in real time. If I could achieve that, I thought the rest would follow. Speaking would be easier for two reasons. Firstly, I would already be skilled in one half of what is required in a conversation – the ability to know what people are talking about. Secondly, in memory I would have numerous examples of language in use upon which to draw. Reading would also be much easier because I would have access to the pronunciation of words and phrases in my memory (a phenomenon hypothesised to occur in L1 learning (Clark, 2009)) and after reading a lot, I could then advance to writing, drawing on my reading experience and the language sounds in memory.

Throughout this project, I randomly encountered people and told them about this research. Some people reacted positively stating things like, ‘Oh. You’re learning like children do,” or, “That’s how I learned to speak English.” At other times, the reactions have been something negative like, “That’s stupid,” or “That will never work.” Sadly, there is little research to determine the value of extensive listening or the use of television for L2 learning.

1.8 L2 listening research

According to Vandergrift (2007, p.191), “Listening comprehension lies at the heart of language learning, but it is the least understood and least researched skill,” a sentiment also expressed in 1965 by Belesco (cited in Postovsky, 1974). Conversely, Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor (2006) state that the skill of listening is seen to be of central importance in modern pedagogical practice and in research. According to Renandya and Farrell (2011) the vast majority of research on L2 listening has focused on the teaching of L2 ‘listening strategies’, and for Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) the majority of listening research has focused on measuring improvements in L2 listening by manipulating variables such as the rate of speech or the use of subtitles.

Listening strategies that are often promoted in L2 pedagogy include: pre-listening, making predictions, listening for the gist and making inferences (Hinkel, 2006; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). There has been some debate in the literature concerning the effectiveness of L2 listening strategies with some authors claiming there to be no evidence to support their inclusion such as Renandya and Farrell (2011) and Blyth (2012) who support an ‘extensive’ listening approach, and others claiming the opposite such as Siegel (2014) and, Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010).

Extensive listening, is a new area of research described by Chang and Millett (2014, p.31) as, ‘learners doing a lot of easy, comprehensible, and enjoyable listening practice such as listening to audio books or radio programmes’. Chang and Millett (2014) and Stephens (2011) recommended that extensive listening is most effective when it simultaneously occurs with reading, with Stephens (2011) arguing that doing so developed familiarity with intonation and hence facilitated better comprehension in reading. Renandya and Farrell (2011) cite a number of studies showing the benefits of extensive listening through dictation and reading aloud activities, and argue in favour of an array of listening activities

in order to help L2 students overcome problems that they have with ESL listening such as: speaking rate, being distracted by unknown words in the audio input, and an inability to recognise already ‘known’ words.

One aspect of L2 listening that has also received minimal research attention is known as incidental vocabulary acquisition, which aims to examine the quantity and quality of vocabulary that can be ‘picked up’ *unintentionally* from listening excerpts (Van Zealand & Schmitt, 2013). In a review of literature in this area, Van Zealand and Schmitt (2013) were only able to cite three studies, Vidal (2003), Brown, Waring, and Donkaewbua (2008), and Vidal (2011), with the latter two making comparisons between reading and listening. The findings of the latter studies were that reading led to more vocabulary learning than listening, the retention of vocabulary from listening was better for listening than reading and that less repetitions of vocabulary were required for learning from reading than listening. Van Zealand & Schmitt (2013) concluded from their own study that word recognition is acquired easily from listening while word meaning is not, but recommended that more research in the area is needed with higher quantities of input and a wider array of content type.

Considering that spoken language is fundamentally an acoustic phenomenon in constant change (McGregor, 2009), has sounds that frequently vary from the fixed written representations of them (Zsiga, 2012; Brown, 2014), and that interpreting spoken messages often requires interpreting the ‘tone of voice’ (Schmitt, 2010), the neglect of L2 listening practice in language education appeared to me to be a huge oversight and hence a justification for this project, where an individual L2 learner did receive extensive practice in the skill of listening.

One of the strongest arguments I am trying to make in this thesis is the value of listening when learning an L2. However, my research and the studies just cited differ in many ways. Firstly, except when listening to the radio, all of the L2 audio I received was paired with video images, whereas for the cited studies it was paired with writing. Secondly, the cited studies were concerned with how to utilise listening within a classroom context, whereas I was concerned with learning outside of the classroom as an independent learner. Thirdly, in terms of listening strategies, I had one only: concentrate while watching and listening to enormous amounts of conversational French within a video context. I didn’t do any pre-listening, and I didn’t intentionally make predictions, listen for the gist or make inferences.

Rather, the latter three occurred naturally provided that I was concentrating while watching and listening. Fourthly, unlike Chang and Millett's (2014) suggestion of extensive listening being easy, comprehensible and enjoyable, my experience was almost the complete opposite. From the very beginning of this project, most of the French I heard was incomprehensible, only gradually becoming comprehensible. In addition, although I enjoyed a few of the programs I watched, the vast majority of them were boring, even more so because I couldn't understand the language in them for a long time. Furthermore, although watching French television and listening to the radio like I did was easy in the sense that all I had to do was sit there and watch and/or listen, it was difficult to make myself sit through hours of listening, day after day, month after month, especially because the whole time, I was unsure of how much the listening I was doing was going to benefit me in the end and because I was suffering from isolation and depression. Finally, although almost all of the French I learned from television was 'picked up' as is also the focus in incidental vocabulary acquisition (IVA) research, my 'picking up' always occurred consciously and also focused on sentences, whereas the IVA research was concerned with what vocabulary was picked up unintentionally, i.e. subconsciously.

1.9 First language learning from television

An influential study conducted by Sachs, Bard and Johnson (1981) rejected the idea that language could be learned from television. Their evidence was a young boy born with normal hearing ability, who was raised by 'deaf' parents that chose not to sign to him throughout his infancy. According to his parents, his only exposure to English came from his frequent watching of television and with limited contact with children near his home and a few visits to a playgroup. The number of hours spent in these activities was not reported. The boy was referred to the researchers at age 3 years and 9 months, where he was identified as having delays in his language development. The research group spent some time with him over the next five months, however the entire quantity of time spent was not recorded. The researchers only said that some of the visits were for 30 minutes between two and four times per week. At the end of five months, the researchers reported that Jim's language development was 'normal'. The researchers concluded that Jim's language development had not come from television, but was instead a direct result of interaction with the researchers.

To me, this conclusion seems illogical. Firstly, when the researchers first met Jim, he had already acquired a considerable amount of English, evidenced by the speaking transcripts of interaction with him. If Jim's parents are to be believed, this could only have come from television (an argument supported by Rice, 1983) and the minimal interactions that he had had with other children. Secondly, although the researchers' interactions with the boy would have provided Jim with some much needed language interaction and L1 input, I am surprised that this alone could account for him suddenly having 'normal' language development because Jim had reached the same level in 5 months that 'normal' children had achieved with far higher amounts of interaction over their entire lives. It could be argued that Jim had higher than normal 'intelligence' by supporters of this concept, but the study made no such report of this. It seems then that this study is evidence that L1s can be learned through exposure to television.

Au, Chan, Cheng, Siegel and Yip Tso (2015, p.325) stated that "Hearing-children-of-deaf-parents cannot learn to speak simply by watching TV with the sound on." To support this statement they cite Sachs et al. (1981) and Todd and Aitchison (1980). In Todd and Aitchison's (1980) study there is not one mention of the word *television* or *TV* and so should not be used to rebut the idea of TV as a language learning tool. Au, et al. (2015, p.325) also state that "children cannot learn a foreign language just by watching TV programs in that language." The source they cite for this claim is Snow, Arlman-Rupp, Hassing, Jobse, Joosten and Vorster (1976). In their one mention of television, Snow, et al. (1976, p.2) state that

> there are cases of Dutch children in eastern Holland who watch German television programs regularly and in preference to similar Dutch programs, but who neither achieve appreciable control of German nor really understand what the programs are about (T. van der Geest, personal communication). Such anecdotal evidence is of course inconclusive, but it suggests strongly that being addressed in an appropriately simplified register of a language may be prerequisite to its acquisition by children.

Perhaps the observations made by Mr. Geest were accurate, but Snow et al. (1976) themselves admit that it is anecdotal and inconclusive. This makes it all the more strange that Au et al. (2015) should use such a strong phrase as *cannot learn*.

According to Krcmar (2007), the limited amount of research that exists regarding first language learning from television suggests that from the age of two and upwards learners can only acquire vocabulary not grammar. Furthermore, below the age of two it is suggested that no learning can occur from television, only from interaction with people. Multiple studies cited by Webb (2011) also confirm that vocabulary can be learned from incidental television viewing for both L1 and L2 learners, but at the time of his research no studies existed on the effects of language learning from extensive viewing.

1.10 Research on L2 learning from television

> Overall there is little that can be called research on television, video, films and language learning and teaching. (Vanderplank, 2016, p.23).

The idea of learning language from television has been around since at least the 1950s (see for example Kumata, 1956 cited in Moscowitz & Amidon, 1962, and Kern, 1959). Yet, according to Umino (2002) very little empirical research has been carried out on the use of television for language learning. Instead Umino (2002) identified research interests aligning with trends in technological development with the majority of L2 research concerning TV being conducted in the 1960s and 70s. However, according to Vanderplank (2010), the main period of L2 video and television research was in the 1980s and early 1990s. Vanderplank's (2010) 'state-of-the-art review' examined the use of language laboratories, television, and video for L2 learning between 1999 and 2010. In it, he cited four studies concerning students using video/TV for L2 learning as part of the school curriculum, with generally positive results reported for this kind of input. The quantities of video exposure in the studies cited respectively were: 20 minutes, 44 minutes, 8 full-length films, and two episodes of a TV show for 8 weeks – tiny in comparison to the project undertaken here.

In a review of all of the articles published in the Modern Language Journal which referred to the use of technology for L2 learning and teaching since 1916, Salaberry (2001) cited the following five studies concerning the use of films and television for L2 learning. Firstly, Lottmann (1961) who recommended organising classroom lessons around films, using viewing, discussions and written transcripts. Secondly, Gottshalk (1965) who investigated the use of video-recorded lectures for university students, reporting inconclusive results due to problems with the research design. Thirdly, Borras and Lafayette (1994) who

concluded from their own study that watching videos with subtitles may be more effective for learning than without subtitles. Fourthly, Hanley, Herron and Cole (1995) who investigated the effects of text versus text with still images used as ‘advanced organisers’ prior to watching films, finding the latter to be more effective for students’ comprehension of the films. Fifthly, Swaffar and Vlatten (1997) who recommended the use of films in classrooms following the sequence: watch the film to understand the story, re-watch the film with a focus on culture, class discussion of themes in the film, discussion of language features in the film, and roleplays and further discussions based on the film.

One study, conducted by Wang (2012), reported on five Chinese nationals who claimed remarkable gains in ESL from the extensive watching of English television dramas (ETD). The aim of the research was to identify the participants’ explanations for their own progress in English and the learning strategies they used. All of the participants identified the systematic viewing of ETD as the primary cause of their English development. To reiterate, Webb (2011) confirmed that L2 vocabulary can be learned from television, but at the time of his research he said that no studies existed on the effects of extensive viewing on L2 learning – a gap that it is hoped this project addresses.

This project further develops our understanding of the contribution AV media makes to L2 learning. Firstly, the research was designed to isolate the effects of AV exposure by removing the potential contributions to my learning from reading, writing, speaking and instruction. Secondly, the data collected was able to give insight into the amount and types of vocabulary that could be acquired by an individual adult learner. Thirdly, it contributes to our understanding of grammatical development through vocabulary acquisition. Finally, it contributes to understanding of the importance of social interaction in language learning, since it was entirely absent during my language learning journey in Australia.

I am unsure as to why little research had been conducted on L2 learning from television. Perhaps, it is under-utilised in classrooms and so there are few examples to observe. Perhaps, few researchers or teachers believe it has any value, or not as much value as other learning methods. Perhaps when students are watching videos the teacher’s role is limited. Perhaps, because the mental world of L2 learners is considered unobservable and this makes data difficult to collect. Perhaps, it is connected to historical positions on language learning and teaching.

1.11 Western European approaches to language learning

According to McLelland (2017), bilingual dialogues from the 3rd century of ancient Greece are the earliest evidence of the learning and teaching of European languages. In Western Europe from roughly the 11th to 17th century, Latin was the primary second language taught for the educated elite (Weisheipl, 2005) and remained the common language used in commerce, education, and communication until grammars and printed books in the locally spoken languages became more widely available in the 16th century (Musumeci, 2009; McLelland, 2017). Latin was also taught informally through full immersion, teaching in the student's L1, and by using bilingual picture books (Musumeci, 2009). There is also evidence from German/Italian manuscripts containing useful vocabulary, expressions and dialogues that the spoken languages of Europe were being taught without the use of direct grammar instruction (McLelland, 2017)

In the 19th century, as more language learning materials were published and as foreign languages became subjects in schools, an emphasis on teaching language through grammar, translation and associated exercises, as opposed to dialogues and vocabulary, eventually became established as 'the grammar-translation method' in Europe (McLelland, 2017). However, alongside this remained authors whose popular textbooks, while still formulaic and containing unauthentic speech examples, did not explicitly teach using grammatical rules, but were designed in the hope that through carefully sequenced text, students would come to understand the grammar inductively (McLelland, 2017). In the USA in the 1870s, two men began teaching languages by what they called the 'Natural Method', whereby students were expected to 'pick up' the language from lessons that utilised authentic questions and answer sequences, pictures, objects and actions for teaching, with only the L2 being used in the classroom (Mitchell & Vidal, 2001; McLelland, 2017). This method was utilised by Maximilian Berlitz in the USA in the 1870's where it was branded as the 'Berlitz Method', then becoming popular in Europe and remaining popular today (McLelland, 2017). This method of teaching in the TL was then relabelled as the 'Direct Method' which was utilised early into the 20th century (Mitchell & Vidal, 2001; McLelland, 2017).

Around the turn of the 20th century, a way of learning French, German and English through picture books accompanied by phonograph recordings of the text, known as the 'Linguaphone Method', was made available to the public by mail order (McLelland, 2017).

Also, in the 1920s and 1930s, schools in Britain began using phonographs and radio broadcasts as a way for language learners to access the sounds of the L2 (McLelland, 2017). An alternative short-lived method called the ‘Reading Method’ sprang up in the USA in the 1930s, arguing that reading was a more practical goal of language teaching and learning, as opposed to speaking (Mitchell & Vidal, 2001). In 1942, the US government contracted 55 US universities to develop a method for training army personnel in second languages, known as the ‘Army Specialised Training Program’ (ASTP), ‘Army Method’ or ‘Intensive Method’, which was based on ‘scientific’ linguistic principles modelled on another approach called the ‘Linguistic-Informant Method’ (Mitchell & Vidal, 2001). The Army Method involved small groups of students working with a TL speaker and a qualified linguist, and involved intensive drill practice for up to 10 hours a day, 6 days a week (Mitchell & Vidal, 2001).

Due to the development of structuralism in linguistics and behaviourist theory in psychology, the army method was transformed into what is commonly known as the ‘audiolingual method’, but also as the ‘Structural Approach’, ‘Oral Approach’, ‘Oral-Aural Approach’ and the ‘Aural-Oral Approach’ (Mitchell & Vidal, 2001). In structuralism, language was seen to be a system composed of a multitude of interconnected parts, all of which required learning, and since languages could be learnt without any use of writing or reading, they were essentially considered to be an oral/aural phenomenon (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006). In behaviourism, the goal of language teaching was to learn the elements and structures of an L2 by following the three-step process of stimulus, response and reinforcement (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006). The audiolingual method required students to listen to, repeat and memorise single words and short phrases in the target language in the belief that they would develop their language skill through habit (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006).

During the 1960s, further paradigm shifts occurred in both linguistics and psychology and hence so did approaches to research and practice, leading to the new ‘innatist’ school of thought (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006). Led by Noam Chomsky, linguistics went from focusing on external features of a language (production) to a focus on the subsurface features of language (syntactical competence) (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006). In psychology, a new school of thought known as psycholingusitics, saw learners as having an innate mental capacity to learn language that required their active involvement in the learning process as opposed to the passive habit formation view of behaviourism (Uso-

Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006). During this shift, a variety of innatist teaching approaches developed: Total Physical Response, the Natural Approach, the Silent Way, Suggestopedia or the Lozanov Method, and Community Language Learning (Mitchell & Vidal, 2001; Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006).

During the 1970s, new schools of thought arose in both linguistics and psychology referred to as the interactionist approach (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006). Within linguistics, a greater focus was placed on the way language was used by people for particular purposes in particular contexts, and how this affected the language structures that were chosen for communication (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006). In psycholinguistics, interest developed in the kinds of mental processes that were utilised in language use, with 'information processing' and 'constructivism' being the two major approaches (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006). In the information processing approach, researchers became interested in cognitive qualities of learners that influenced their language learning such as attention, perception and memory (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006). In the constructivist approach, interest developed in how individuals personally constructed their experiences and language based upon their cognitive stage of development and knowledge base (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006). In sociolinguistics, interest developed in the area known as 'communicative competence', which focused on the social 'rules' involved in language use and how individuals understood and applied such competence (Mitchell & Vidal, 2001; Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006). The two main teaching approaches that developed within interactionism were the 'Task-Based Approach' and the 'Interactive Approach'. In the former, students are generally required to listen to 'authentic' language samples and then perform a task based on what was heard, e.g. follow directions. In the interactive approach, learners are required to hear something said by another student in the classroom, process that information and then create a spoken response (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006). These interactive teaching/learning methods are commonly known under the umbrella term of 'communicative language teaching' (Mathews, 2014). During the communicative language teaching movement there was also an emphasis on the teaching and learning of the four skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking, with less emphasis on direct grammar instruction because communicative success is held in higher regard than correcting student errors (McLelland, 2017).

Communicative language teaching combined with an emphasis on assessment developed into what Mitchell and Vidal (2001) call the 'Proficiency Movement' beginning around the

early 1980s. In essence, it involved describing particular characteristics of an L2 that students should be able to achieve at different levels of development without prescribing the teaching or learning techniques required to achieve those targets.

It appears clear to me that language teaching and learning have been approached in a variety of ways, with many cases of 'out with the old and in with the new'. I am uncomfortable with the idea that I may also be contributing to the same phenomenon. In addition to the variety of pedagogical approaches to language learning, there are also numerous theories about how L2s are, can or should be learned. Schultz (1991) discusses five theories: acculturation/pidginization theory, linguistic universals theory, discourse theory, cognitive theory and the monitor model. Van Patten and Williams (2014) discuss a much larger range of theories, models and hypotheses: behaviourism, the monitor model, universal grammar, a functional approach, usage based-approaches, skill acquisition theory, input processing, the declarative/procedural model, processibility theory, the interaction approach, sociocultural theory, and complexity theory. There are far too many to give a detailed account of in this thesis, and so my focus is on the theories that were influential to me both before and throughout this project.

1.12 LAD, UG, POS

In *Syntactic Structures* (1957), Chomsky said that the grammar of a language can be viewed as a device from which all of the grammatically correct sentences of that language (as judged by native speakers) could be generated. Over time, this idea led to the concept of an innate language learning mechanism present in the human brain known as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). In *Aspects of Theory and Syntax* (1965), Chomsky brought attention to the idea of universal grammar (UG). UG was the idea that the LAD contained innate syntactical rules common to all human languages, such as 'all languages differentiate between nouns and verbs'. Furthermore, some of these rules were seen as binary switches that would be set to one of two positions dependent on the features of language input the LAD had identified. In *Rules and Representations* (1980), Chomsky coined the term Poverty of Stimulus (POS) as an argument to support both the LAD and UG ideas. According to Chomsky, the POS refers to the 'fact' that the language input children receive is insufficient to allow a child to determine all of the grammatical rules of a language in the short amount of time that they do and so some kind of innate mechanism must be in operation. UG is seen as preventing language learners from drawing

inaccurate conclusions about the languages they were exposed to and thus ensuring that at least one language would be learned. Chomsky also made a distinction between performance (what a speaker says) and competence (what a speaker knows) and was only concerned with competence, which he saw as a set of syntactical rules (Blackburn, 2014). For him, performance was basically irrelevant to the study of language because not only did he see it as full of errors, but also he saw it as merely the product of underlying competence. The original instantiation of Chomsky's theory has changed several times over the past 50 years, with the current theory being known as the Minimalist Program (Chomsky, 2014).

Within linguistics there are four main positions with regards to the availability of the LAD in L2 acquisition (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). The first position is that the LAD is no longer available due to a critical period after which it is basically switched off. After this period, languages can only be learned, i.e. studied, as opposed to being acquired. The second position is similar in that the LAD is no longer operational, but that the L1 model can be used in order to learn subsequent languages. The third position is that the LAD is partially available whereby an L2 learner can use a combination of their LAD and learning strategies. The fourth position is that the LAD is completely available for L2 acquisition.

My understanding of the LAD may have been incorrect, but as I understood it at the beginning of this project, L1 learners did not consciously 'learn' the grammar of language, they subconsciously 'acquired' it. I therefore thought that I could classify my learning of French grammar through AV media as 'acquisition', since I wasn't intending to 'learn' it through any form of explicit instruction. As such, the first two positions in linguistics of the LAD, which I consider to be the same position, seemed to predict that I would not be able to learn any French grammar, while the second two positions suggested that the LAD could be considered operational in me, if at some point, I became aware of French grammar that I possessed, which I had never consciously learned. Through the autoethnographical lense and the data collection techniques used, I was able to examine these positions of the LAD first-hand and thus contribute further to knowledge in this area.

1.13 Monitor model

In 1982, Stephen Krashen created a theory of L2 acquisition known as the Monitor Model, which is aligned with the fourth position of the LAD in linguistics as described in the

previous section. This model is composed of five interrelated hypotheses: the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis.

In the acquisition learning hypothesis, acquisition is seen to be a subconscious process where the LAD automatically analyses the language input, whereas learning is seen to be a conscious process where the individual studies things like grammar and vocabulary. In the monitor hypothesis, only acquired language is used in fluent speaking and is automatic, whereas learned language can only be used to monitor acquired knowledge and make modifications to it prior to speech. The monitor can only be used successfully when the learner has ample time to apply it, so it is frequently unavailable in everyday conversational interactions. The natural order hypothesis states that morphemes are acquired in a developmental sequence, although this sequence differs from what is observed in L1 acquisition. The input hypothesis states that when comprehensible input is provided to a learner in sufficient quantities, acquisition will naturally occur. However, the input, must be only slightly beyond the learner's current level of acquisition. To describe this process, Krashen (1982) used the expression 'i + 1', where 'i' is the learner's current level of understanding and the 'plus one' is the new comprehensible input slightly beyond that level. The affective filter hypothesis states that there are affective factors, such as motivation or interest, which can influence how successfully the comprehensible input enters the LAD.

In many ways, I was able to examine the monitor model in relation to my own French learning since it made predictions about what should have occurred for me. Firstly, since I wasn't 'learning' French directly, I was presumably subconsciously 'acquiring' it and should have therefore been unable to observe my own learning. Secondly, during French speaking, any observable instances of fluency that occurred for me must have come from the LAD and I should have therefore been unable to explain how they occurred since their workings were at the subconscious level. Thirdly, by keeping a record of all of the French programs that I watched and all of the unique mental events that occurred during the first four months, correlations between programs targeted at adults and those targeted at children in relation to 'i + 1' events could be made, since the latter should have presumably been more fertile for them. Fourthly, because I was the subject of my own research I was able to observe my own affective states and ways that they influenced my learning.

1.14 Competition model

According to MacWhinney (2013), the first instantiation of the competition model was published in two parts by Bates and MacWhinney (1982), and MacWhinney (1987). The first model sought to explain L1 acquisition, while the second sought to explain both first and L2 acquisition (MacWhinney, 2008). In the CM, the first stage of language acquisition is the acquisition of experience. Experience is the observation of worldly phenomena through the senses. Upon birth, infants experience a range of phenomena through their senses, but over time some experiences reoccur and consequently become observable patterns of experience. In the CM, this distinction between individual experiences and patterns of experience is known as *semantic properties* and *semantic concepts* respectively. As the infant's semantic understanding increases, they slowly become aware of the language in use around them and the fact that language can be used to communicate the semantics/ideas/functions within their mind. The language that infants first acquire is that which matches the concepts they have formed, that can be most easily picked up from the context, and that is frequently present in the speech they hear. However, because a child initially has no way of knowing whether a chunk of sound is a word or many words, the speech sounds that they map to the concepts within their mind are guesses that are either correct, approximate or incorrect. Correct guesses are reinforced, since in every context the use of the word matches the concept or function in the child's mind. However, the other two kinds of guess will need to undergo modification over time. This modification is known as competition and gives the model its name.

In the CM, the first concepts that infants develop are seen to be nouns and verbs. In normal speech, nouns and verbs occur relative to each other. In the most basic form in English, they occur together in a simple sentence such as *Trees grow*. In this sentence the noun comes before the verb. After ample input and frequent repetition, the brain is able to notice the syntactical pattern of 'object then verb' and hence allow the child to understand any sentences using this pattern that contains words that they have acquired. If the child only knows one of the words, they may be able to guess the meaning of the other word from both the context and the syntactical pattern and acquire a new lexical item. However, most language is far more complex than the use of a simple noun and a simple verb. Therefore, the brain must be using some kind of competitive processes to resolve such conflicts. Although the speech we hear is a linear stream, in the CM, ambiguity is resolved in a non-linear fashion before reaching our perception. When a speech stream enters the

brain, all possible meanings are activated and then through competitive processes one meaning is chosen based on: relationship to the verb, intonation, context, probability, or previous activation. Over time, through the acquisition of lexical items and through mental competitive processes, the child eventually becomes a competent language user. The unified competition model seeks to describe language learning for L1, L2 and bilingualism. It is essentially the same as the original model, but adds the idea of resonance, whereby multiple cognitive processes activate each other in the competition (MacWhinney, 2005).

This study aimed to contribute to our understanding of the conscious learning processes hypothesised in the CM. Firstly, unlike an infant, I had already developed a conceptual understanding of the world and of the function of language, prior to AV exposure. Through autoethnography, I was able to record and consciously observe any advantages or disadvantages that this difference offered. Secondly, direct mental observation of the use of guessing as a learning strategy was possible, as well as instances of both correct and incorrect guesses. Thirdly, during data analysis it was possible to examine the ratio of acquired nouns and verbs, their relationships to each other and how they both allow the development of syntactical awareness. It was also possible through the autoethnographic lense to observe and record instances of competition for semantical meaning, although the CM hypothesises that this occurs in a non-linear fashion before reaching perception. Fourthly, this project aimed to provide insight into the role that ample input and frequent repetition played in my own L2 development.

1.15 Conclusion

This project developed out of my own personal beliefs concerning language learning that came through my own attempts at language learning, my experience as an ESL teacher, discussions held with many of my previous ESL students and engagement with language learning literature. I have argued that differences in outcomes between L1 and L2 learners may be attributable to the significant differences between L1 and L2 learning techniques. Before commencing this project, I theorised that many characteristics of L1 learning could be simulated for L2 learning, particularly the use of the senses of vision and hearing through the presentation of conversation language within an audio-visual context. I have aimed to demonstrate that the fields of research to which this project contributes have been under-researched, namely, L2 listening research and L2 research on learning from television. I explained this lack of research in terms of a history of approaches to language

pedagogy and in relation to Chomskian linguistics, Krashen's monitor model and Bate's and MacWhinney's competition model.

Globally, this project comes at a time where proficiency in an L2 is often a prerequisite to employment, career advancement and to gaining residency in a foreign country. It also comes at a time when many nations are trying to accommodate and assimilate refugees who speak languages other than their own. This project provides insight into the feasibility of such people directing their own language learning without the use of course materials, fees, teachers, schools or travel. This project also contributes to multiple research areas including: prosodic, semantic, syntactical, and morphological development; learning methods that simulate L1 acquisition; language learning strategies; applicability of theories of language learning; the silent period; learning from AV media; and, methodological theory on autoethnography.

CHAPTER 2 – RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Introduction

Writing a research methodology involves engagement with epistemological and ontological philosophies, and so in order to place 'autoethnography', the methodology utilised in this thesis, within its philosophical context, I found it necessary to discuss many of the conflicts that have occurred throughout 'Western' philosophical history. I embarked on this thesis unware of the 'wars' that have been going on in academic, philosophical circles since at least the beginning of ancient Greek philosophy and ended up with the view that much more unification is needed.

2.2 A brief historical overview of Western philosophy

The oldest Greek writing used mythology to explain the natural world in terms of gods, demi gods, divine kings, monsters and heroes (Hard & Rose, 2014). The first acknowledged Greek philosopher, Thales of Miletus, then shifted the focus by explaining the natural world according to reasoning (Vamvacas, 2009). Over a century later, Plato described nature as existing in two parts - the world we live in, which was an 'imperfect', constantly changing manifestation of an innate, 'perfect' eternal world (Sedley, 2016). Plato's student, Aristotle, instead saw the whole universe as made of earth, water, wind and fire, or matter than changes, and aether, matter that remains the same (Macauley, 2010).

Centuries later, with the decline and collapse of the Latin speaking Western Roman Empire, much of the philosophical literature written in Greek became inaccessible to the Latin speaking West until its 'rediscovery' in the 12th and 13th centuries (Spade, 2016). Medieval philosophy developed roughly between the mid-2nd Century and the latter half of the 15th century (Spade, 2016) and during this period a Roman Catholic, philosophical mode of education developed, known as scholasticism (Bruce, 2011). Three medieval schools of thought arose during this time known as realism, conceptualism and nominalism (Klima, 2013). All of them disagreed with Plato regarding the mind-independent existence of universals (the 'perfect' matter) and they also disagreed with each other - realists saw universals as existing in the world, conceptualists saw them as existing in the mind, and nominalists saw them as existing as names in a language (Klima,

2013). Until the completion of the translation of all of Aristotle's philosophies in the 13th Century, platonic philosophy was the major Greek philosophy of interest in the West - after that, it was Aristotelian philosophy (Spade, 2016).

In 1543, Nicolaus Copernicus published *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, where he proposed that the Earth revolved around the sun (Freely, 2014). Although apparently uncontroversial at the time, the model came under attack from the Roman Catholic Church when it found support from Galileo Galilei who was found guilty of heresy in 1633 and placed under house arrest for the remainder of his life (Grego & Mannion, 2010). Both Francis Bacon and Rene Descartes then challenged the dominance of Aristotelian scholasticism both calling for a reformation of all forms of knowledge (Klein, 2016; Hatfield, 2016). Descartes sought to describe the workings of the entire universe according to mechanistic principals of stationary and moving three dimensional infinitely divisible matter that operated according to three laws of motion, aiming to replace the Aristotelian concept of physics (Hatfield, 2016). Descartes also argued for another type of matter called 'mind' which through the utilisation of 'thought' could discover the 'essence' of matter, which could only be partially known through the senses (Hatfield, 2016).

Debate then continued into 'modern' philosophy, much of it centring on the epistemologies of rationalism and British empiricism (Markie, 2015). Rationalists believed that some or all of our knowledge was innate and hence gained without sensory experience (a priori), whereas empiricists believed that all of our knowledge first came from sense experience (a posteriori) (Markie, 2015). Immanuel Kant tried to resolve these differences by arguing that sense experience only allowed for observation of external features, while reasoning allowed for contemplation of their inner workings (Rohlf, 2016). Georg Hegel also tried to unite divisions within philosophy by arguing that one-sided positions eventually resulted in philosophical puzzlement because they required rejecting or ignoring their opposite position and hence the chance to learn from what the other perspective had to offer (Stern, 2002).

In the 1920s and 1930s after World War I, despite Kant and Hegel's attempts at unification, the 'logical empiricist movement', beginning with two European philosophical organisations known as the Vienna Circle and the Berlin Circle, sought to maintain a divide (Creath, 2014). The movement aimed to turn philosophy into a 'scientific' enterprise by removing 'metaphysics' from philosophy, which was seen as an obstacle to 'science', and

to find a place for logic and mathematics which was empirically unverifiable (Creath, 2014). One of the core principles of the logical empiricists coming from Ludwig Wittgenstein was ‘verificationism’, which was the idea that the only philosophically meaningful statements were those that could be verified through empirical inductive observation (Van der Schaar, 2012). Karl Popper then argued that all observation is theory-laden, that an inductive verificationist methodology could not be used to distinguish science from ‘non-science’, that science begins with problem solving not observation, and that verificationism should be replaced with the concept of ‘falsifiability’ (Thornton, 2016).

Thomas Kuhn then argued that the history of science went through periods of normalcy, where consensus amongst scientists existed, and revolutions, where crises occur due to unexplainable anomalies within currently accepted theory (Bird, 2013). When scientists were working within a normal period, they were working within what Kuhn called a ‘paradigm’. After a revolution had occurred and a new paradigm had been established, the two paradigms could no longer be viewed as being philosophically in-sync, and thus scientific paradigms were qualitatively incompatible and relative in nature (Bird, 2013). Kuhn’s perspective meant that traditionally held notions of science, such as scientific theories consistently building upon predecessor theories or newer theories being closer to the truth than older theories, were potentially untenable (Bird, 2013). Conversely, Kuhn saw the social sciences as being ‘pre-paradigmatic’ because no single philosophical perspective had been adopted by the research community (Roth, 2011). In 1967, John Passmore stated that, “logical positivism, then, is dead, or as dead as a philosophical movement ever becomes (p.57)”. Yet the ‘legacy’ of the logical empiricist movement remained (Franklin, 2012; Passmore, 1967). For example, a study by Hunter and Leahey (2008) found in their examination of two leading sociology journals between 2000 and 2005, that 60% of single author articles and 80% of multiple author articles were quantitative. Breen and Darlaston-Jones (2010) claim that in Australian modern psychology, quantitative research, and particularly experimental design, is privileged over qualitative research, which is marginalised. According to Mirhosseini (2017, p.1), “Qualitative research continues to remain a relatively small stream rather than a major trend of inquiry in the area of language education.”

Staunch opposition to the philosophy of logical empiricism/positivism in the first half of the 20th century marked the development of qualitative research in the social sciences in what is referred to as the ’interpretive turn’ (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005), ‘critical turn’

(Anderson, 2017) or ‘blurred genres’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). For these philosophers, known as interpretivists or anti-positivists, the social world does not simply exist neutrally outside waiting to be observed and discovered as the positivists believed, but is instead seen as a mental construction by both individuals and groups of people (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005). In this sense, it is impossible for the social world to be viewed and studied objectively, because no researcher is ever removed from society, from the influence of their own constructions, or from society’s constructions (Mottier, 2005). Social and personal worlds are seen as highly contextual, and often determined by hidden thoughts, experiences and feelings and as such, subjective aspects are the targets of interpretivist research (Neuman, 2006). Furthermore, language is seen as a carrier of socially constructed ideas (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005) and therefore interpretivist researchers intentionally examine themselves and their own subjectivity in order to understand in what ways their own beliefs affect the knowledge they produce (Neuman, 2006).

Following the rise of interpretivism, other qualitative approaches to social science developed. One approach, known as Critical Theory (CT), is similar to interpretivism in that it is critical of positivist thinking and embedded in social constructionism (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005), but it also criticises positivism for being antidemocratic and responsible for perpetuating existing power and social structures (Neuman, 2006). However, CT criticises both interpretivism and positivism for being too subjective and passive on the grounds that they simply study society as opposed to changing it (Neuman, 2006). CT on the other hand is focused on studying and improving society and is therefore a form of activism or praxis (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005), that aims to empower people (Neuman, 2006). CT researchers believe that meaning is represented on different levels. The surface level, or empirical level (Neuman, 2006), hides “deep structural conflicts, contradictions, and falsities that function to maintain the status quo” (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005, pp.37-38). The researcher’s job is to identify the hidden social structures that are causes of what can be observed, to explain how these structures perpetuate oppression, and to participate in reciprocal, non-subservient relationships with research participants to bring about democratic social change (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005).

Another approach that developed from the interpretive turn is postmodernism. According to Neuman (2006), postmodern research developed in response to the modernist philosophy which was characterised by logical reasoning, confidence in science and

technology, and a belief that scientific progress improved society (Neuman, 2006). Postmodernism is aligned with critical theory in aiming to identify hidden structures within society (Neuman, 2006) and is also aligned with the critical theory of the Frankfurt School by focusing on the role of oppressive power in society (Bohman, 2016). However, it differs from both critical theory and interpretivism in that the research may be presented in a variety of styles including narratives, films, plays and artworks (Neuman, 2006).

Instead of aiming to empower people, postmodernism seeks, "to expose the possibilities and consequences of various discourses, with their attendant ideologies, practices and preferences" (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005, p.53) in the hope that this will lead to new ways of examining and understanding the social world. For Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2005), postmodern researchers see knowledge as *always* connected to power and this view in turn is connected to Michel Foucault's view of power,

> Foucault…showed how what is considered true or false is dependent on specific "games of truth" or "regimes of power" upon which the possibilities of making any and all knowledge claims depend. Different games of truth afford and allow different knowledge claims (p.45).

Foucault saw power as a repressive network running through society that everyone was complicit with (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005), but also saw power as beneficial and productive (Wickham, 2008). Rouse (2006) describes Foucault's view of power and knowledge as being in an inescapable relationship, constantly present, and changing and shaping individuals and populations. Foucault saw all epistemic claims to truth as being justifiable only within the enormous and highly complex power-knowledge networks in which they existed.

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There was a missed opportunity for unification between the 'logical empiricist movement' and 'metaphysics' after 'World War 1 (Creath, 2014). At that time in physics and mathematics, Einstein's theory of special relativity had shown that the observer's perspective makes a difference (Faraoni, 2013). The double-slit experiment had shown that researcher's observations 'affect' the behaviour of sub-atomic particles (Brezin, 2017). Mathematics was known as empirically unverifiable (Creath, 2014). If the members of the logical empiricist movement had described the social world according to these same 'scientific' principles, they would have been in agreement with what members of the

‘qualitative movement’ acknowledge (Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) and we mightn’t have the quantitative-qualitative divide that persists in academia today (Franklin, 2012).

If the events recorded in the Times Atlas of World History (Barraclough, 1978) actually occurred, then war and suffering have persisted on this planet for at least 5000 years with two ‘world wars’ in recent times and the possibility of a third being frequently discussed throughout my lifetime. We’ve also had continual debate about what exists, what can be known and who should be in charge of ‘educating’ everybody about it. Surely, enough is enough. Can we all just agree that when we travel in different directions we go to different places, and that these places are part of one world?

2.3 Autoethnography

Definitions of autoethnography (AE) vary (see for example Reed-Dunahay, 1997; Muncey, 2010), but for one of the seminal AE authors, Art Boechner, AE is “an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural” (2013, p.53). For me, a literal translation of the term’s components is also of assistance: *auto*- meaning *self*, *ethno*- meaning *culture* and -g*raphy* meaning *study of* (Harper, 2015). According to this definition, this thesis represents: *a personal study of the cultural phenomenon of human language learning.*

In autoethnography, who the researcher is as a person is considered to be inescapably intertwined with the research ‘knowledge’ they produce (Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013; Gannon, 2013). Researchers are expected to reflect upon and acknowledge this ‘entanglement’ in relation to academic literature (Chang, 2008), as opposed to producing research which presents knowledge as ‘fact’ and the researcher as ‘neutral’, ‘objective’ or ‘unbiased’ (Gannon, 2013). As most research is presented in the form of writing, written words and expressions are considered to be conveyers of a researcher’s underlying opinions and values and so autoethnographic researchers are expected to reflect upon the words they use (Berry, 2013). The autoethnographic approach thus challenges traditional norms of research by incorporating the researcher, and challenges it in other ways by allowing informal expressions, direct ‘conversations’ with the audience, and by removing the need for definitive conclusions (Holman Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013; Hunter & Leahey, 2008; Breen & Darlaston-Jones, 2010; Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013; Mirhosseini, 2018).

Autoethnography fights against the dominance of ‘positivist assumptions and practices’ (Grant, 2018). Many autoethnographies focus on deep, personal suffering that the researchers have experienced on subjects in great need of attention on this planet – child abuse (Ronai, 1995; Murray, 2016), rape (Spry, 2011; Gregory, 2009; Duncan, 2017), violence (Scott, 2011), gender characterisation (Mai & Laine, 2016; Benova, 2014; Young and McKibban, 2014), sexuality (Ettore, 2010; Crawley & Husakouskaya, 2013), power struggles (Taber, 2010; Purdy, Potrac & Jones, 2008) and environmental destruction (Raynes, Mix, Spotts & Ross, 2016), to name but a few. Such perspectives are seen as providing opportunities for researchers to present perspectives of cultural phenomenon in ways that traditional research cannot achieve - statistics may shock me, but numbers don’t bring tears to my eyes like Ronai’s (1995) autoethnography about child abuse did. Autoethnographic research is therefore seen as capable of stirring emotion and connecting with the audience in order to facilitate discussion and present the reader with a deeper understanding of the subject being addressed (Adams, Holman-Jones, & Ellis, 2013).

Autoethnographic research is more than just an autobiography or an ethnography. It is a synthesis of the two approaches with a subjective examination of the researcher’s own cultural perspective and experience in relation to the wider body of literature regarding the topic in focus (Chang, 2008). While AE shares many similarities with autobiographies and personal stories, it differs in four ways according to Holman Jones, Adams and Ellis (2013). Firstly, AE researchers often intentionally position their own cultural experience in relation to other non-personal research about the same phenomenon to offer alternative insider perspectives and/or critiques. Secondly, AE researchers intentionally publish in scholarly books and journals to engage in scholarly debate and challenge accepted norms of research. Thirdly, AE researchers intentionally open up their personal lives for scrutiny in order to show a side of a cultural phenomenon in need of attention that does not receive acknowledgement in more traditional forms of research. Fourthly, AE researchers intentionally present their research to audiences in ways that stir emotion, generate interest, and encourage response. For Allred (2016), another difference is that autobiographies focus purely inwards on the individual, while AEs, in addition to focusing inwards, simultaneously extend outwards to the wider social and research communities.

Philosophically, autoethnography is a relatively modern qualitative approach to research that shares and embraces features of interpretivism (Conway, 2003; Doloriert &

Sambrook, 2011), constructivism (McIlveen, 2008), critical theory (Holman Jones, Adams and Ellis, 2013) and postmodernism (Ellis, Adams & Boechner, 2011; Babbie, 2013; Letherby, Scott & Williams, 2013; Le Roux, 2017). Autoethnography embraces subjectivity, argues against the idea of a fixed, objective truth (Short, Turner & Grant, 2013), and contends that cultural knowledge is self-constructed (Chang, 2008).

Many autoethnographies have been written with an aim of activism in the vein of critical theory. Young and McKibban's (2014) collaborative autoethnography described their experiences as instructors of Safe Zone programs which seek to combat negative forces against LGBT students and staff within universities in the United States. Raynes, Mix, Spotts and Ross (2016) wrote a collaborative autoethnography about their own antifracking activism in a hostile environment in Oklahoma and the emotional turmoils this caused them. Their hope was to provide insight to others engaged in activism and contribute to activism discourse. Mai and Laine (2016) also did a collaborative autoethnography about how they used blogging in Vietnam and Tunisia as a way of creating their own identities of gender in the face of traditional national identity pressures. Their aim was to demonstrate to other women and girls in similar situations how to empower themselves through blogging. Benova (2014) wrote an autoethnography about her own non-research-based activism on gender issues in her community and on her research-based activism aimed at making the voices of the PhD student community stronger.

Similar to postmodernism, autoethnographies have been presented in many formats such as Blair's (2015) autoethnographic video presentation at the University of Colorado describing his prolonged traumatic struggles with bi-polar disorder; Golviczki's (2016) poem of a January morning; Chen's (2016) autoethnography of being a step-child presented with pictures, writing and music; and Smith's (2016) performative autoethnography where she dances her adoptive identity. According to Rosenau (1992), many postmodernists believe that there are no methodological procedures that they must follow because an infinite number of interpretations are possible for any discourse and no interpretation can be privileged over another.

Some autoethnographic literature also addresses issues of power. Taber's (2010) article describes how her efforts to do research on women in the military were hampered by the organisation's insistence that males had to be given equal treatment in her project and that

she would be confined to using positivistic quantitative research methodologies. Her way of circumventing this was to conduct an autoethnography on herself as the research subject as a representative of women in the military. Purdy, Potrac and Jones (2008) focused on the power relationships between elite athletes and their coaches and on the transient nature of power between Purdy, a rowing coxswain, and her coach. The aim of the study was to increase theoretical knowledge of the concept of power in the coaching process by highlighting the complexity of power struggles through personal experience.

The autoethnography of this thesis focuses on my attempt to learn French utilising a method of learning known to many people, but absent in the language learning literature. Through semi-successful attempts at language learning, through years of being an ESL teacher, through discussions with many ESL learners, through engagement with language learning literature and according to my own philosophies, I came to the conclusion before this project began that human characteristics of L1 learning could be further utilised in L2 learning to potentially achieve 'mastery' of an L2. I believed that by concentrating while watching enormous quantities of French television, I could gradually work out the meanings of words and phrases, train my ears to comprehend the rapid speech of adult French speakers, and eventually learn to speak French as though it was my L1. It was with such belief that I underwent the learning of French via TV during the last two and a half years of this PhD experience. This research examines my personal experience of second language learning: how it began, why it was important to me, the 'highs and lows' of learning through AV media, the insights gained, and the physical and emotional stresses that occurred. While much L2 research is conducted by researchers who are observers of other people's experiences of language learning, this project examines L2 learning autoethnographically from the inside. It thus contributes to the limited but growing body of knowledge on autoethnographic language learning.

One such study was by Winkler (2014), who gradually developed his ability in Danish over several years through participating in language classes and interacting with Danish colleagues. His autoethnographic narrative focuses on the pressure to learn Danish from colleagues and administration and how this led to struggles between his self-identity and social-identity. Another is Garbati and Rosthchild's (2016) collaborative autoethnography describing both authors' experiences of learning French as an L2 through full immersion in university courses for a year in France after having studied French previously in high school and university in Canada. Their study contributed to knowledge both about how

collaborative autoethnographies could be achieved, as well as on the long lasting impacts of study abroad experiences on their own lives both positively and negatively. A third contributor is Ryan (2012) who autoethnographically describes his negative experiences of studying French in a language school in France, where rote learning, memorisation and teaching to the test were common learning methods employed by the school. His paper discusses the complexities of language learning and being a language teacher in learning environments whose practices are traditional, uncompromising and do not make decisions based on learner preferences. Fujieda (2008) wrote an autoethnographic paper discussing the struggles she faced as a Japanese person studying in a US university. Despite years of dedicated effort she struggled with understanding academic terminology and writing assignments in an US cultural style which differed significantly from the writing requirements in Japan both structurally and culturally. Lopez's (2008) autoethnography describes the impact that her ESL teaching experience in the USA had on her development as a teacher and as a person. As a Colombian, she worked with Spanish speaking children in the USA where she encountered a system of education that failed students by not being set up well enough to acknowledge many of the problems students faced in learning English, often through no fault of their own. Her experiences made her aware of inadequacies in her knowledge of both English and the communities within which her students lived. Wijayatilake's (2012) autoethnography briefly describes conflicts he had as an ESL teacher with the principal of a Sri Lankan international school due to differing ideologies. He also discussed challenges he faced with parents and staff while working as a principal in another international school. He promoted the use of autoethnography as a way to express the personal side of these experiences. For other autoethnographies referring to language learning see Canagarajah, 2012; Allread, 2015; Suhr, 2014; Lapidus, Kaveh, & Hirano, 2013; Mirhosseini, 2013.

Although I personally benefitted from learning another language, the aim of this project was to draw attention to the value of listening as a language learning tool for other L2 learners, and also to the value of television. Although L2 listening is commonly acknowledged as beneficial, it, and the value of television, are very much underrepresented in L2 research and pedagogy (Vanderplank, 2016; Vandergrift, 2007). While my L2 learning journey possibly represents an 'extreme' case of learning an L2 from television, it is hoped that the findings presented in this thesis may offer hope and insight to other L2 learners who may be unable to attend language classes or who are in need of a learning method that differs from traditional approaches. This research represents a

'French acceptance' of Mirhosseini's (2018) invitation to teachers and researchers engaged in teaching English to students of other languages (TESOL) to engage in autoethnographic research. To the best of my ability, I have tried to write this thesis according to Ellis, Adams and Boechner's (2011, p.viii) advice that, "the right thing to do is to let it go".

2.4 Personal beliefs driving this project

This project was driven by the two following personal beliefs regarding language learning that I had formed and held for many years prior to this study:

> *Regarding L2 listening comprehension: I believed that through extensive audio-visual exposure to a foreign language combined with concentration on the audio-visual media, any person whose eyes, ears and ability to concentrate are functioning can develop the same degree of aural comprehension as an L1 speaker in that language.*
>
> *Regarding L2 speech production: I believed that if speech production in the second language is delayed until the aforementioned comprehension level has been reached, any person capable of speaking will rapidly develop the ability to speak the L2 as though they were an L1 speaker, provided that extensive speaking opportunities for practice were available.*

Although stated as generalisations, the beliefs driving this project could never have been 'proven' for all humans even if they were 'true'. They could however have been proven false in their entirety or true for an individual human simply by one person attempting to do as they stated. These beliefs were driven by a genuine interest in improving the conditions for L2 learning, and throughout this study I had to confront them on numerous occasions. In order to examine and explore these beliefs in this thesis, I chose to personally engage in the self-directed L2 learning of French through extensive exposure to French AV media, while abstaining from speaking in French for the duration. To ensure that my L2 learning was not directly attributable to alternative self-directed L2 learning techniques, during this period I also intentionally avoided all use of assistive written materials such as textbooks, dictionaries and subtitles, as well as avoided instruction in French from people familiar with it. Furthermore, I placed a condition on the project that if after 3 months of extensive AV input no learning was evident, the beliefs would have been immediately reassessed and I

would have allowed myself to use other self-directed learning techniques. However, as significant L2 learning had taken place during this time, I continued with the project as originally planned.

Although I intentionally avoided using many other self-directed L2 learning techniques, I did not do so in order to suggest that they are not useful for L2 learning. In fact, I believe that I would have learned French far quicker with the use of subtitles, dictionaries and interaction with French speakers. My purpose in avoiding such techniques was to specifically focus on the potential value of listening to a L2 within a visual context, if such potential existed, and I believed that by using the other self-directed L2 learning techniques I would have been unable to emphasise this.

The quantity of AV input required to examine these beliefs was always an unknown, as no such research had been documented, but there were several factors that influenced my target. Firstly, in 2003, I learned a considerable amount of Mandarin by watching Chinese television shows for approximately two hours a day, and based on the quantity of my learning at that time, reasoned that I would need much more AV exposure for this project. Secondly, having met and heard about L2 learners who had become almost fluent in an L2 by either living in an English speaking country for a year or by watching extensive amounts of television, I wanted to receive as many hours as I possibly could to give myself the best chance at a similar outcome. Thirdly, I reasoned that since fulltime L2 learners in some of the language schools I had worked at spent 1200 hours in the classroom during a 48 week year (four weeks for holidays), I would do the same and a little bit more ‘for good measure’ in the hope that comparisons between myself and such learners could be considered.

2.5 Trustworthiness

According to Le Roux (2017), although the issue of ‘trustworthiness’ is significant in quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research, the term itself has been used in the qualitative research tradition to replace the more traditional concepts of ‘validity’ and ‘reliability’. She adds that assessing trustworthiness is problematic due to competing paradigms, the methodologies used, and varying perspectives on both how and whether it should be assessed. In regards to autoethnography, Le Roux (2017, p.200) states that,

> It is difficult to propose a specific set of rules or criteria for the evaluation of the rigour of autoethnography, since autoethnographic research can be approached using diverse orientations which each has a specific goal or purpose for the research in mind.

Such variation in the application of the concept of trustworthiness in autoethnographic research may be evident through examination of how various authors have addressed the issue. Lahman, Geist, Rodriguez, Graglia, Richard and Schendel (2010) discuss trustworthiness in autoethnographic and other research poetry and state a preference for assessing poetry based on the feeling it gives readers. In Pillay, Naicker and Pithouse-Morgan's (2016) book on academic autoethnographies, only a brief mention is made of trustworthiness by De Beer (2016) where he claims his research as trustworthy using the concept of 'crystallisation'. He claims his research has 'crystalised' out of both critical self-reflection and interaction with others such that, like the facets of a crystal, his research is multi-faceted. Minowa, Visconti and Maclaren (2011) describe how trustworthiness in autoethnographies can be achieved by focusing on others connected to the research, and by discussing how the researcher has reflectively examined their own research from other points of view.

Long before commencing this study, I was extremely concerned with how readers of this thesis could trust that I had actually done what I said I had done. In order to provide evidence of my AV viewing, I wanted to video record every hour of me watching the AV media using time-lapse photography and make a hard copy of my internet browsing history available. Even had I done this, there would have still been issues of trust regarding the hours of my daily life when I was not being recorded. Who besides me could ever trust that during my daily life I was not studying French from books or teachers or that I was not speaking French? Who could ever trust that I did not know French before this project began? I believe that only those people who know me well could have such trust. I also struggle with trusting that research has been conducted as described. All I have at my disposal to make judgements of the trustworthiness of research is a 'best guess' based on the author's data and writing style, and critical reflection relative to my own knowledge base and experience.

2.6 Selection of target language

The ultimate decision of which L2 to study in this project was never of any great importance to me, as the beliefs driving this project were related to language learning in general. The aspects of language that I was always particularly concerned with were audio-visual. Therefore, provided that ample and suitable AV media could be found in a language, any language was a possible candidate for this project. Between initially choosing Polish and eventually choosing French, a number of other languages were candidates with Hindi, Japanese and Basque being the primary ones. I had originally wanted to choose a language randomly from a group of languages that were not of the same language family as English, so that any L2 learning which did occur could not be attributed to language similarity and also to avoid being accused of choosing a language that I already knew. I soon came to realise that although many fields of knowledge such as physics and chemistry can be seen as paradigmatic in terms of embracing the concept of scientific objectivity, the social sciences are divided on this issue. With autoethnography's stance of embracing subjectivity and personal experience (Boechner, 2013; Chang, 2008), I was ultimately free to choose a language based purely on interest.

French was never a language under consideration for me because, although not a cognate of English, due to France's historical connection to England, many French words had influenced the English language (Thomas, 2003), and I didn't want this to assist my language learning. In the end several factors led to my choosing French. Firstly, I had been considering the idea of working for the United Nations in my future and knew that French was one of the languages that they accepted in potential employees. Secondly, I had studied French for one year in Grade 8 of high school and had thoroughly enjoyed it due to my love of the teacher, but had then discontinued it due to my dislike of the next teacher. I suppose then that since Grade 8, I had always had a desire to get that love of the language back. Thirdly, because France shares many borders with other European countries, I could see myself living there in the future and exploring the countries around it. Finally, upon discovering that a considerable amount of French AV media was available on YouTube, it became a good candidate for this project.

Once the decision of French was finalised, I realised that because autoethnography "can vividly illuminate the relationships between an individual and the different cultures they

inhabit" (Short, p.103, 2013), I would be able to add an entirely new cultural aspect to this project – living in France.

2.7 Prior learning of French

Giorgio (2013) stated that personal memories of lived experiences are often a primary data source in autoethnographies, while Chang (2008) warned against using them exclusively. In this project, my own recollections were used sparingly, but since I had studied French as an L2 in Year 8 in 1986 (30 years prior to commencement), it seemed relevant to reflect upon some of that here.

From what I remember, in 1986, I was attending an Australian high school where it was compulsory to learn either French or German. My French classes occurred once or twice a week for 30 minutes or an hour and consisted of working through a textbook and repeating the pronunciation of the vocabulary. I had no contact with French speakers during that year or until I was about 28, although my French teacher may have been French. It is probable that I and other students from the French classes tried to communicate with each other in French outside of class, but I am only able to remember using the expression (phonetically presented here from my memory of what it sounded like) *fermay la boosh=shut your mouth* (although I only recalled this months later into this study, it was something that a classmate said often and may not be correct French). At the beginning of this project, I phonetically wrote down the French that I could remember from 1986: *Je suis fateegay=I am tired, beurre=butter, common tally voo=how are you, je mapelle Pierre=my name is Peter, the numbers from 1-10, Mercredi and Samdi* (days of the week but I couldn't recall which ones). In addition, I was aware of French words commonly used in English such as *restaurant*, *aurevoir*, baguette, and *bonjour*. For me then, my knowledge of French was virtually zero and of almost zero influence upon my learning of French during this project.

That I had forgotten almost all of my Grade 8 French learning is consistent with research conducted by Farr (1987, p.S5) who stated that, "In general, the longer the period of non-use [of knowledge and skills], the greater will be the [memory] decay," and with more recent research on highly motivated medical students who were said to only retain 15-20% of their studies after 25 or more years (Custers & ten Cate, 2011). Also relevant here is a study of Pallier, Dehaene, Poline, LeBihan, Argenti, Dupoux and Mehler (2003) who

investigated eight people who were born and lived in Korea, who between the ages of 3 and 8 were adopted by French speaking families, and who consequently lived in Paris and were denied of further Korean language input. When examined as adults, it was found that none of them had any further knowledge of Korean, despite all having been of the age to become masters or near masters of Korean as an L1.

2.8 Selection of learning resources

There are many differences between the language presented on television and that experienced by L1 learners. Beach (1974) mentions that: the conversations are not directed at the learner; TV language is not spontaneous, it is fictitious and has been scripted; TV presents a narrow range of predictable speech acts; and, TV language may not be an appropriate model of language interaction. The language presented on television may also be a reflection of the way in which culture is portrayed. Shrum (2004) lists a number of social constructs presented on television that occur with a higher frequency than in the real world, such as crime, violence, affluence, marital discord, and particular occupations. Television is also described as stereotyping many aspects of culture such as gender (Gunter, 1995), race (Reid, 1979) and religion (Morey & Yaqin, 2011).

Despite these differences, the L2 learning method chosen for this project was based on the assumption that the language used in AV media, particularly media containing a large quantity of conversations, would still present language using the same syntax, semantics, vocabulary and prosody as used by people in real-life communication and was therefore a usable source of L2 input. One characteristic of L1 learning that I attempted to simulate in this project was the development of familiarity with the prosody of a language prior to vocabulary comprehension (Owens, 1996). Because I also had the goal of being able to eventually engage in French conversations, I thought that I could receive both prosodic awareness and conversational models through L2 AV media. These considerations contributed to the decision to begin my L2 learning experience by watching French soap operas. This seemed to be a reasonable decision at the time in line with Webb's (2011) suggestion that watching programs with familiar storylines might aid in L2 comprehension by reducing the lexical burden and by providing background knowledge that can assist with comprehension.

Although I was able to learn a lot of language from soap operas, only partway through the period of exposure to French as an L2 did I discover for myself that clearly spoken, conversational programs involving young children as characters participating in daily family life, were far superior for my L2 learning. Such programs modelled many features of child-directed speech that uses simplified intonation, delivery speed, longer pauses, restricted vocabulary, emphasis on concrete versus abstract referents, shorter utterances, simplified syntax, and high levels of repetition (Foster-Cohen, 2009).

Almost all of the French AV media that I received as language input was available on YouTube. Having put a restriction on myself not to engage with French writing, I initially found AV media by searching YouTube with phrases such as ‘French TV program’ or ‘French film’. This however was not a fruitful method for finding suitable programs. Therefore, I found a list of television programs that had been produced in France since 1949 (“List of French Television Series”, 2016) and copied the French titles of programs into the YouTube search engine.

Although this description of finding AV media opens me up to scrutiny, because it openly acknowledges that my beliefs changed and that I made mistakes during the research process, this is considered to be a normal part of doing autoethnographies and a part of humanising research (Harreveld, Danaher, Lawson, Knight & Busch, 2016).

2.9 Project stages

The whole project involved two stages. The first stage, which was aimed at examining the first belief driving this project, was the journey of learning French through AV media. The second stage of the journey involved me speaking French, immersing myself in French culture, learning to read, and sitting formal French examinations in order to examine the second belief driving the project. Numerous experiences from the second stage were recorded as journal entries (see Section 2.10.3 below), many of which form the narrative in the later findings chapters. As a matter of curiosity, I thought it would be appropriate to begin the second stage simply by allowing myself to say any French that came to mind in the form of a random monologue to see what kind of French speech came out after being ‘bottled in’ for so long (see Section 6.2). This speaking event aimed to give the first indication of what effects extensive AV exposure and delayed oral production had on my initial individual speaking ability. In addition, in line with the autoethnographic

methodology, it allowed me to reflect upon and critically engage with (Anderson, & Glass-Coffin, 2013) the first belief driving this project. Furthermore, writing about this process opened myself up for scrutiny because I had to publically admit in writing to any problems with the beliefs driving this project (Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013).

The next step in the second stage of the L2 learning process involved me travelling to France and immersing myself in French language and culture with several aims in mind. The first aim was to observe and record my assimilation into the culture by focusing on my ability to comprehend and speak in French, as well as to observe French speakers' abilities to comprehend and interact with me. My second aim was to practise speaking as much as possible to provide myself with an opportunity to reflect upon the second belief driving this project – the rapid development of my L2 speaking ability. A third aim was to critically reflect upon my personal interpretations of French culture from AV media in comparison with my personal interpretations of French culture from the immersion experience, and to discuss any differences and similarities in the analysis chapters.

I lived in four places in France over a period of 5.5 months. I spent four days in Paris, two weeks in Lyon, six weeks in one small village and three months in an even smaller village, both in the Savoie department of France. My reason for not naming the last two places in which I lived is to protect the identities of some people which have been referred to in some of the journal entries. Not long before going to France, I randomly encountered a friend that I had not seen or spoken to in 20 years. During this meeting, I spoke to my friend's partner about living and working in France and was offered the opportunity to live with a French family and also to work in a ski school for children. I took up both of these opportunities.

Throughout my time in France, I observed and recorded many of my language and cultural interactions and reflections in a journal. In doing so, I was guided by the position that although autoethnography is focused on the researcher as subject, the researcher must intentionally comment on and critique cultural practices in relation to their own personal experiences (Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013; Spry, 2001). My aim was to remember to acknowledge that my research is itself a representation of culture that has been culturally constructed (Berry, 2013).

2.10 Data collection and proposed analysis

2.10.1 Journals

Journals are one method of qualitative data collection used by autoethnographers (Campbell, 2016). According to Chang (2008), they are used to collect data of the lived experience of the natural environment that the researcher is participating in. As such they may record self-observations and contextual information that is either in the researcher's present or from their past and that is both internal and external to them. This data is then available for later use in autoethnographic narratives. According to Somekh and Lewin (2011), journals have a long history of use in many fields of qualitative research, are used to capture researcher observations and are called by many names such as research diaries, log books and field notes. The range of content within a journal varies according to the research process, but may include direct observations, interviews, informal conversations, reflections on research methods, plans for subsequent research and the collection of artefacts such as photographs and video recordings. Furthermore, when consistently used, journals may act as a companion to the researcher, capturing as much of the research process from start to finish as is possible. Neuman (2006) notes that journal entries should be recorded as soon as possible to avoid the degradation of memories and that journal entries related to the human subjects of research must either be kept as confidential or identified only with the permission of participants. On another note, although there may be personal information concerning the researcher that is private in nature, within autoethnography it is often precisely this information that forms part of the researcher's narrative (Holman Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013). An example of this is Crawley and Husakouskaya's (2013) narrative of research they conducted 'in drag'.

Many of my journal entries in my own research were of a personal and private nature and at times I struggled with which of them to share and what the consequences of doing so would be, both personally and academically. Other entries, particularly in relation to language learning provided a rich insight into the life of an individual, adult, second language learner and of the development of my French comprehension and production over time.

2.10.2 Mental event journal

Because one of my major interests in this project was the development of my L2 listening comprehension over time, I decided to record all of the conscious French learning that occurred at the beginning of my L2 experience. By doing so, I hoped that during analysis I would be able to identify any L2 learning patterns that emerged, examine changes and growth in my lexical, semantic, phonological and grammatical development, and explore any similarities between my L2 learning, and literature on both French L1 and L2 learning. In order to collect this data, I created a spreadsheet journal (Appendix B) that would enable me to capture a range of language phenomenon in an as easy-to-use format as possible.

During all AV exposure of the first four months (on 83 days) of my learning experience, I recorded details (described below) about what I called 'mental events'. I defined a 'mental event' as: *any consciously observed comprehension of French or French culture that occurred while the French media was being observed that had not been previously recorded.* Because these internal mental events occurred as a result of the external phenomenon of L2 AV media, autoethnographically I was capturing both my internal and external lived experience (Chang, 2008). Capturing mental event data in this way allowed me to avoid the degradation of memories as mentioned by Neuman (2006).

The collection of mental events occurred from 5/1/2016 to 30/4/2016 and resulted in 5305 mental events being recorded. The recording of mental events was stopped at this point because it was negatively impacting on the amount of AV input I was able to receive due to the extensive amount of time required for recording. After this point, the only mental events that were recorded were those related to vocabulary, grammar and culture that were of particular interest to me. Specifically, I was interested in recording the following types of language phenomena: vocabulary that had proven difficult to map a meaning to or that were paradoxical in some way; use of auxiliary and modal verbs; common affixes; the acquisition of prepositions; syntactical formation of negatives, questions, relative clauses, conditionals, comparatives, superlatives, and reported speech; homonyms, synonyms and false cognates; and representations of cultural phenomena that struck me as surprising or vastly different from my own experiences. All such observations were recorded in another journal (Appendix D described in the next section). For the remainder of the language learning experience, information about the AV media, duration of AV exposure and journal

data continued to be collected in the spreadsheet journal. My aim in continuing to collect this data was to contribute to my qualitative autoethnographic narrative in L2 learning through AV media.

For each 24 hour period in which French AV exposure occurred, the following information was recorded in the spreadsheet journal:

Column A was used to record a unique day number during which any kind of AV viewing occurred between 12:00am and 11:59pm of a calendar day.

Column B was used to record the AV viewing calendar dates.

Column C was used to assign a unique number to each viewing session, which is defined as ‘an individual program or a viewing session without a rest break’.

Columns D and E were used to record the length of each Column C session in minutes and seconds respectively. These time measurements were recorded using either an online stopwatch or a wristwatch stopwatch. The stopwatch was stopped every time the AV media was stopped in order to record information in Appendix B. It was restarted when viewing recommenced.

Column F was used to record the name of each piece of media viewed or listened to. This data was collected by copying and pasting the media title from YouTube.

Column G was used to assign a unique sequential number to each new ‘mental event’ (defined above).

Column H was used to assign each ‘mental event’ as either a ‘language event’ (V) or a ‘culture event’ (C).

Column I was used to record the English meaning of a ‘language event’ or a description of a ‘culture event’. Throughout the AV exposure experience many French sound chunks activated English words, which I was able to observe. Particularly during the earliest stages of the language learning experience, I had no way of knowing whether or not an activated English word had the same or a similar meaning to what a French L1 speaker

would assign to that sound chunk. Therefore, I did not concern myself with the accuracy of translation during AV exposure, only with recording the English word that ‘came to mind’. ‘Culture events’, while particularly infrequent during my AV exposure experience, were mainly activated by visual observations. For example, I saw a high school student in a French TV show that had a tattoo. This struck me as strange, because it is something I rarely saw during my own high school years and to the best of my knowledge is illegal in Australia until the age of 18.

Column J was used to record a phonetic description of the French language sound chunk that triggered a ‘language event’. These transcriptions were not done using the International Phonetic Alphabet, but were my own creation based on how I thought the chunk could be written in English. The aim was to record the sound chunk as quickly as possible, so as to continue with the AV experience.

Column K was used to record any qualitative information about the context in which the mental event occurred. For example, on Day 1, I recorded the English word ‘kiss’ and the French sound chunk as ‘bi:za’. In Column L, I then wrote, “I heard it and then someone kissed a woman on the cheek. Complete guess.” On day 4, I recorded the English word ‘that’ and the French sound chunk as ‘sa’. The Column L description was, “Girl was introducing other girls to guys e.g. sa cathy.”

Columns L to Q were used to assign codes to the type of ‘learning mechanisms’ that facilitated the mental events. I was not concerned with predicting the way in which I would learn and so I did not determine the codes in advance according to a paradigmatic view of learning mechanisms. My main interest was in capturing a ‘quick guess’ at why a particular ‘mental event’ occurred while it was still ‘fresh’ in my mind. I did this in the hope that trends might be observed during later analysis and my observations compared to literature regarding learning mechanisms. Over time, the number of codes increased to reach a total of 58. To give two examples, for the ‘language events’ *kiss=bi:za* and *that=sa*, in Column M, I wrote *UT=uncontrolled thought* and *LR=logical reasoning* respectively.

Column R was used to record any other miscellaneous information pertaining to a ‘mental event’. For example, for ‘mental event’ 56 on Day 1, I recorded: ‘goodbye’ (English), ‘salut’ (French sound chunk), ‘A woman said it when she was leaving’ (context), and ‘LR’

(learning mechanism). In Column S, I wrote, “I thought it meant hello, but it may also be used for goodbye”.

Column S was used to record the first time a new code was created and used in columns M to R. This data was collected in order to later examine how my own perspective of learning mechanisms was changing over time. For example, for ‘mental event’ 654 on Day 14, I created the new ‘learning mechanism’ code *SHE=sounds half English* and in Column L, I wrote, “New code introduced for words that activate an English word but they’re only sort of half alike”. The word/sound chunk referred to here was ‘disappear’ (English) and ‘disparoo’ (French sound chunk).

Column T was used to record any instance when a journal entry was made during viewing. The unique number used matched the same number used in the personal journal (Appendix D).

During analysis of the numerical data, I counted and graphed the hours of AV input received and the mental events that occurred by month, week, day, and session. I also created tables for the AV media used and the recorded learning mechanisms that occurred. This was done in order to create a visual context for the selected journal entries which were aimed at telling the story of my language learning journey. The first findings chapter presents a detailed account of analysed data from the first few days of AV exposure in order to familiarise the reader with the analysis used.

At various times throughout the intense period of mental comprehension event collection, I questioned whether or not my comprehension was improving at all, and so I decided to do what I called ‘the 100 hour test’. After the first 100 hours of AV exposure had passed, I decided to re-watch the very first program of this AV experience (*Hélène & les garçons Season 1 Episode 1 La rencontre*) and to re-record ‘language events’. My thinking at the time was that if I understood more words in the second viewing of the program than in the first, my French comprehension had improved. On the 22nd of January, 2016 (Day 18) after 103 hours of AV exposure I did my first 100 hour test. I repeated this process four more times on Day 35 (203 hours), Day 55 (309 hours), Day 79 (402 hours) and Day 215 (947 hours). The conditions that I set for the test were: just listening, no viewing; no replaying during the test, one exposure only; recording of all unique mental comprehension events; and, recording of salient sounds for which I had no comprehension. I had put these

conditions on myself as a way of examining my listening comprehension in real time. In every 100 hour test, the number of ‘language events’ had increased and the Day 215 test was stopped early because there were far too many comprehension events occurring to justify the time spent doing the test. These tests confirmed for me that despite there being considerable amounts of language which I did not understand in the TV show I had watched, my French comprehension was improving. The 100 hour test data was used in conjunction with the journal data (Appendix D described in the following section) to autoethnographically and qualitatively describe both my struggles of learning an L2 through AV media and the maintainability of the beliefs driving this project.

The 100 hour test data was recorded on a spreadsheet (Appendix C) using the following columns similar to Appendix B:

Column A – a unique number for each new word comprehended.

Column B – the English ‘language events’ activated by French sound chunks.

Column C – a phonetic transcription of the French sound chunk that activated the ‘language event’.

Column D – a list of salient sounds for which I still had no corresponding ‘language event’.

The types of analysis performed on this data included: counting and comparing both the words comprehended and the salient sounds for each test; comparing the sequence of comprehension between tests; and, graphing the changes in comprehension over time.

2.10.3 Personal journals

Throughout the period of abstinence from speaking in French, a second purely qualitative journal was kept (Appendix D). The journal entries were recorded on a spreadsheet and in most cases occurred during AV exposure. For each 24 hour period during which AV exposure occurred, a day number and unique, sequential journal entry numbers were recorded which corresponded to the same numbers in Appendix B, Column T. The qualitative journal data was used to narrate the following stories autoethnographically: the AV language learning journey, my PhD process, and data of a personal and affective

nature related to the project. Following the same format, I also kept a journal of my experiences from my first French speaking to my final formal French exam.

2.10.4 DELF tests

Because autoethnographic research is considered open-ended and without definitive conclusions (Anderson, & Glass-Coffin, 2013), there was no requirement for me to undertake any formal French examinations. Nevertheless, I sat three standardised French DELF tests. I sat the B1 test one week after lifting my self-imposed ban on speaking French, which was also on the same day that I left for France. One month after returning from France, I sat the B1 test again as a way of making comparisons to the first test. The next day, I sat the higher level B2 test, which meets the entry requirement for an undergraduate degree at a French university. Although I personally have no faith in the objectivity of these or many other kinds of tests, I sat them for three reasons. The first reason was simply to satisfy my personal curiosity about whether or not I could pass them after having learned French in the way I had. The second, was to provide an example to other L2 students who had a desire or need to sit these same tests about what was humanly possible through the learning method I had adopted. The third reason was to provide some ‘evidence’ of my learning for readers with a desire for such data.

It appears that there is almost no autoethnographic literature on second language testing, which is perhaps not surprising since there is also little autoethnographic literature concerning second language learning. In Winkler’s (2014) autoethnography of learning Danish as an L2 he mentions only that he passed three language tests. Garbati and Rosthchild (2016) describe undertaking initial placement tests at French universities abroad and their anxieties before the high-stakes tests, which would determine whether or not they would receive credits in their home universities. They also mention how they could have been better prepared for the tests. In Ryan’s (2012) autoethnographic master’s thesis he only describes being enrolled at a French language school in France that consistently and boringly taught to the DELF/DALF test.

2.11 Ethical considerations

Due to the fact that the proposed test subject is myself, and I have endeavoured to protect the identities of all people referred to in this thesis, there are no ethical or political concerns of consequence (NHMRC, 2018).

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter began by framing autoethnography within the context of historical philosophy in order to highlight the continual debate that has continuously existed and still exists today, particularly in the form of the quantitative-qualitative divide. It then examined the similarities between autoethnography and other qualitative schools of thought to provide a context for the present study on language learning. The two main beliefs driving this project were then discussed, as well as issues of trustworthiness. The chapter then continued by discussing the reasons for choosing French, my prior French learning, the way that French AV resources were chosen and gave an outline of the project stages. The methods section then outlined the different types of journals used to collect data, the standardised French tests undertaken and ethical considerations. This research was based on my beliefs that advanced foreign language comprehension and production were achievable for at least one human being through extensive exposure to target language AV media combined with concentration on the media and an extensive delay in speaking of the target language. Autoethnography was chosen as the methodology as it allowed me to be the subject of research and encouraged a reflexive and personal style of writing. It has been argued that the skill of L2 listening is in need of greater attention in L2 learning practice and research and this argument has been used to justify the autoethnographic approach taken in this project. It is hoped that by providing an account of my personal experience of learning a second language, further insights into the complicated and intriguing nature of language learning will be gained. The aim of the following analysis chapters is to explore and discuss these insights in detail.

Chapter 3 – The Beginning of French Exposure

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses some of the data that was collected during the first three days of my exposure to French through AV media. It begins with an examination of the mental event data that was collected during the very first exposure session on Day 1 in order to explain the meanings of table headings and codes used in data entry and to discuss some potential shortcomings of the data collection techniques used. The chapter then takes a broader look at data from the first day by focusing primarily on what I perceived to be the triggers of the mental events that had occurred. Finally, the chapter takes an even wider view of the first three days of exposure by examining the way that exposure time and mental event data were used as both personal motivators and indicators of improvements in learning. The overall aim of this chapter is to familiarise the reader with the data collection techniques used in order to facilitate the discussions in subsequent data analysis chapters.

3.2 Day 1: The first session

Date: 5th of January, 2016
Location: Home
Setup: On a lounge chair with a laptop and headphones.

Previous French Exposure: Up to several minutes in the previous few weeks when first examining potential French episodes to watch. A week in France 10 years ago. Have occasionally met a French speaker in my adult life. Grade 8 French in 1986. French commonly used in English.

Journal Entry 1:

> *I am about to begin my experiment with learning French from AV media. I'm a bit nervous and a bit daunted by the amount of TV I'm going to watch, but I'm also excited to finally do this. I have been thinking about learning language this way for about 12 years and have been telling my ESL students about it, without having any supportive evidence. I think I'll just get started.*

Table 1 below shows both the raw mental event data that was collected during the first French AV exposure session and the typical manner in which mental event data was collected throughout the first 83 days of the project. Table 1 is one component of a much larger spreadsheet. The remaining components of that spreadsheet concerning day numbers, dates, exposure lengths and program titles are discussed in the following section of this chapter.

MEN	MET	E	F	EM	JEN	EC
1	v	boy	ga:son	we, pl	1	When copying the title of the the show to youtube from wikipedia, I saw the show title translation which was boy. I've heard the word garcon used for waiters.
2	v	Miss	madamoiselle	pl, lr		3 boys approached a woman they found attractive and said it. I'm guessing miss instead of madam because she is young.
3	v	thank you	merci	pl		Just heard it
4	v	incredible		sle		Just heard it
5	v	tired	fatigei	pl		Just heard it
6	v	Joanna		sle		A girl walked in the room and another girl said it.
7	v	terrible	teri:bl	sle		The girl that entered started crying and said it
8	v	telephone	telefeuni:k	sle		Just heard it. Probably a derivative of telephone
9	v	concierge		sle		Just heard it.
10	v	cuisine/food		sle		Just heard it. It might be another word but cuisine came to mind.
11	v	three	trois	pl		Just heard it
12	v	imagine	imazhina	sle		Just heard it
13	v	musician		sle		Just heard it
14	v	guitar		sle		Heard it immediately after musician.
15	v	Christian (man's name)	kristi:on	sle, lr		Heard it a few times. It's one of the boy's names
16	v	Fender		sle		Saw it on the guitar strap while girl was playing guitar, then someone said it.
17	v	hello	salut	pl		Someone entered and said it.

Table 1: Day 1, Session 1 – Raw mental event data

Session 1 on Day 1 involved me watching Episode 1 of a French sitcom called Hélène et les Garçons (HELG). The length of my French exposure was 20m 40s and resulted in the recording of 17 unique mental events. Each mental event was recorded in Table 1 with a unique sequential number in the first column headed MEN (Mental Event Number). My goal for collecting data was to record every instance when something in the media I was exposed to triggered some unique form of comprehension in my mind that I was able to observe. A mental event was classified as unique, and hence recorded, if to the best of my knowledge at the time, I had not previously recorded it. For example, on multiple occasions I heard the French sound chunk ‘ga:son’ but this was only recorded as an individual sound chunk once (as MEN 1). However, on numerous occasions during the project similar or identical mental events were recorded. Sometimes these were still classed as unique events and sometimes they were not. If for example a French sound chunk triggered an English word that was different from the English word that was previously recorded for the same French sound chunk, it was classified as a unique mental

event. Furthermore, a French sound chunk such as ‘ga:son’ also had the potential to be recorded as part of a unique mental event if it immediately preceded or followed another sound chunk that I also comprehended. For example, ‘ga:son’, ‘le ga:son’ and ‘le ga:son avec’ would each have been recorded as three unique mental events the first time that I observed them because each full sound chunk would have been different from the others. Doing this also allowed me to collect data on my growing ability to understand longer and longer sound chunks over time (discussed in subsequent chapters). During analysis, I also identified numerous identical mental event recordings, coded as AR (already recorded), in which case only the first recording could be counted as unique. 5305 mental events were recorded in the first 83 days, 160 of which were already recorded, giving a total of 5145 unique mental events used during analysis.

MET, the second heading in Table 1, stands for Mental Event Type. At the beginning of data collection three codes were used to classify mental events: V=Verbal, C=Culture, and W=Writing. ‘Verbal events’ were those triggered by spoken French, ‘culture events’ were those triggered by visual stimuli in the media that I observed as something different from my own Australian culture or different from my existing conceptions of French culture, while ‘writing events’ were those triggered by either written English or French. Both on Day 1 and throughout the project, the vast majority of mental events were coded as V=Verbal.

Of the 5145 unique mental events, 5093 were classified as verbal events, 47 as culture events and 5 as writing events. However, the last writing event was coded on Day 19, MEN 775, and coincided with the decision to no longer use the W code in the MET column. I decided that because I was also recording mental events triggered by writing in the fifth column of Table 1 (discussed below), the data in the MET column was redundant. This decision effectively changed what the V code in the MET column stood for. Instead of just representing spoken/verbal language, it represented any mental event triggered by either verbal or written language. Despite this decision, I did not change the letter used to code language events, i.e. V was still used as the code for both verbal and written language events. This change in what the V code stood for was taken into account during further analysis of the first 18 days.

The third and fourth columns of Table 1 are headed as E, meaning English, and F, meaning French. For language events, the E column recorded the English word or words that I observed in my mind that were triggered by French sound chunks or by French and

English writing, while the F column was used to collect Romanised phonetic representations of the French sound chunk triggers. For culture events, only the E column was used in which I described my cultural observations in sentences. For almost every mental event, some form of data was recorded in the E column. However, the F column, in addition to having no data for culture events, had no data if the way I would have represented the French sound chunk was identical to the English word I had just recorded, or if I was unable to hold the French sound chunk in memory long enough to record it. At the beginning of data collection, I used a colon in some of the phonetic representations in the F column to represent long vowel sounds. For example, in MEN 1, I wrote ‘ga:son’ with a colon following the letter ‘a’, meaning that the ‘a’ was identical to the long ‘a’ in the word ‘dark’ as opposed to the short ‘a’ in the word ‘pack’. The last recorded entry in the F column that used a colon in this way occurred on Day 32, MEN 1447. However, I made no mention of why I stopped this usage at that time.

The heading EM in Column 5 of Table 1 stands for Event (learning) Mechanism. In this column I used a variety of codes to capture quick immediate impressions of how or why I thought the event had occurred. The speed and immediacy with which I recorded these codes was a reflection of both my desire to spend as much time as possible with French exposure and of my desire to avoid the degradation of memories respectively. Table 1 shows that during Session 1, four different codes were used: WE=Written English, PL=Prior Learning, LR=Logical Reasoning, and SLE=Sounds Like English. To elaborate, a mental event was coded as WE if written English was deemed to have influenced the mental event. Cases of this occurred for example when I was copying and pasting titles from YouTube, and when episode titles popped up on the screen. Concerning the PL code, in the methodology chapter I acknowledged the French that I could remember before I started French exposure. However, sometimes during French exposure, upon hearing a sound chunk, I realised that I already had awareness of that sound chunk’s meaning. Some of these were from Grade 8 French, but most of these were from French words that I had frequently heard informally throughout my life in Australia such as *restaurant*, *au revoir* and *bonjour*.

Although somewhat self-explanatory, the LR code was essentially used when I had put some thought into working out the meaning of a sound chunk and in many cases, this also resembled guessing because I often had no certainty about the recorded English meaning

being ‘correct’. It was therefore necessary during analysis to examine LR codes in detail (discussed in subsequent chapters).

In order for a mental event to be coded as SLE, it either had to sound completely like English or sound similar enough to trigger the English meaning that was recorded. As discussed further below, SLE was the most frequently used code throughout the first 83 days. Although I had created some of these codes prior to Session 1, I allowed myself to add or change codes as time passed if the previously used codes were unable to capture my immediate impression of why I thought a mental event had occurred. In most cases, I also made a note of when new codes like this were added.

JEN, the heading in the sixth column of Table 1, stands for Journal Entry Number. The unique sequential numbers in this column served as a reference for each time that I made a new journal entry. On most occasions, these journal entries were made during French exposure and thus also served as indicators of my thoughts at specific times throughout the project. On other occasions, journal entries were made before any French exposure had begun on a given day and even less frequently on days when no French exposure was received. In such latter cases, the date of the journal entry was usually recorded.

EC, the heading for the final column of Table 1, stands for Event Context. This column was used to add any extra information regarding the mental event that I deemed valuable at the time of recording. On most occasions, some form of data was entered into this column for every mental event over the first 83 days. As time progressed, some comments became monotonous to write frequently, e.g. “Just heard it” as seen in Table 1. In such cases, I eventually found shorthand ways to record the same information. “Just heard it” for example changed to “heard” and then simply to ‘h’ over the first week of this project.

It’s important to note that Table 1 highlights some of the irregularities that were made during data collection. The first of these was briefly addressed above in regards to the V code initially referring to verbal mental events, but then undergoing a change of meaning to also incorporate the effects of French and English writing. The second irregularity in relation to the first is that MEN 1 was recorded as V=Verbal despite no indication in the EC column that audio was a factor in the event. This is strange because I have phonetically recorded ‘ga:son’ in the F=French column. One potential explanation for this ambiguity concerns a present recollection (22/5/2017) I have about being a bit overwhelmed while

making my first data entries. I wasn't expecting the first mental event to be influenced by writing, but because I was determined to record data, I recorded the French sound chunk based on the previously present Australian English pronunciation of garcon=waiter in my mind. A third irregularity is the omission of the code WE=Written English in MEN 16 despite clear indication in the EC column that writing was a factor. Another group of irregularities is visible in the EC column of MEN 1 in regards to punctuation and grammar. I repeated the word 'the' twice and 'YouTube' was not capitalised. However, although irregularities of this type were frequent, they were only of concern if I was unable to understand my meaning during analysis. Furthermore, the need to record data quickly in the EC column so that I could return to AV input, outweighed the need for accurate grammar, spelling and pronunciation. One matter that also requires discussion concerns some of the French sound chunks I recorded. For MEN 1, I wrote 'ga:son' in the F column, while in the EC column I wrote 'garcon'. Also for MEN 17, I wrote 'salut' in the F column despite now knowing that it would have been better represented phonetically as 'saloo' without the 't' and by showing the long vowel sound at the end. These two examples imply that I was aware of the correct spelling of both of those words at the time of recording (although at the time of this writing I haven't checked their spelling to confirm this).

The fact that the irregularities mentioned above occurred during the very first session suggests that many others occurred throughout the data collection process. Although I have aimed to identify and acknowledge such cases during analysis, I still consider it likely that many examples exist which I did not find. This can be seen as both positive and negative. By acknowledging these features of my data collection, I have the potential to build trustworthiness amongst readers of this thesis who have also had similar occurrences in their research. I also open myself up for scrutiny, which is part of the autoethnographic research process. Identifying irregularities also means that I have to seriously reflect upon what I say the data I have collected and analysed actually means.

3.3 Day 1: The first twelve sessions

Day	Date	Sess. #	Exposure Time		Media Name	MET				EM (Event Mechanisms)										# of EM codes		JE	
			min	sec		v	c	w	Total	sle	pl	lr	wf	we	ut	cfe	ee	vo	Totals	1	2	# of	JEN
1	Jan	1	20	48	HELG EP1	17	0	0	17	11	6	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	20	14	3	1	1
	5th	2	21	23	HELG EP2	13	2	0	15	6	6	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	16	14	1	0	
	2016	3	20	59	HELG EP3	12	0	0	12	7	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	10	2	0	
		4	25	36	HELG EP4	4	0	0	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	
		5	22	56	HELG EP5	16	1	0	17	7	6	8	0	1	0	0	1	0	23	11	6	1	2
		6	25	2	HELG EP6	5	0	0	5	3	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	3	2	0	
		7	22	10	HELG EP7	7	0	0	7	5	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	8	6	1	0	
		8	22	29	HELG EP8	7	1	2	10	6	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	12	8	2	1	3
		9	23	27	HELG EP9	2	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	
		10	25	55	HELG EP10	6	0	0	6	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	4	2	0	
		11	23	59	HELG EP11	12	0	1	13	9	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	13	13	0	2	4, 5
		12	65	12	Fondu au noir - Coeur de pirate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
			313	416	Totals	101	4	3	108	64	27	21	5	3	2	2	2	1	127	89	19	6	
	In Hours		5.3																				

Table 2: Day 1 AV media data and corresponding mental event and journal summaries

The first six columns of Table 2 show another set of data that was collected on Day 1. This data differs from the actual recorded data in three ways. Firstly, the actual date recorded was in the US format ‘mm/dd/yyyy’, which was an error on my part as I had intended to use the Australian format ‘dd/mm/yyyy’. Therefore, to resolve any ambiguity, Table 2 uses the shortened month name, ordinal day number and year format. Secondly, the full YouTube titles of each HELG episode were actually recorded, but have been shortened here for presentation purposes. Thirdly, the totals at the bottom of the first six columns and all of the remaining data was created during data analysis.

Table 2 shows that on Day 1, I watched the first 11 episodes of HELG for approximately 23 minutes each for a total of 4.25 hours and I also listened to 1.09 hours of music (Session 12). This brought my first day’s French exposure total to 5.3 hours. Because I stopped the program each time data was entered, the actual time taken to amass 5.3 hours was considerably longer. Although I did have rest breaks, 10.5 hours elapsed before I got close to my daily goal of 6 hours. At no point during the day did I replay any part of the episodes as my original aim was to develop familiarity with the sounds (phonology) of French, more so than to learn words.

The four columns headed MET of Table 2 show the mental event types that were recorded during each session of exposure and the total number that occurred both in each session and on Day 1. The bottom of these columns shows that during the 5.3 hours, 101 mental

events were recorded as verbal events, 4 as culture events and 3 as writing events for a total of 108 mental events - none of which occurred while listening to music.

The columns headed EM of Table 2 show that a total of nine different event mechanisms were coded for during Day 1 and that a total of 128 EM codes were recorded. In order of frequency these were: SLE=65, PL=27, LR=21, WF=5, WE=3, UT=2, CFE=2, EE=2 and VO=1. Clearly, words that sounded like English (SLE) were the most frequent triggers of mental events. Some examples include, *test, pessimist, problem, consider* and *reaction.* The next most frequent were those coded as prior learning (PL) and included examples such as *merci=thank-you* and *belle=beautiful*. The third most frequent were those coded as logical reasoning (LR). One example of this concerns the French sound chunk recorded as 'salut' in both MEN 17 and MEN 56. In the former, I recorded 'hello' in the E column with PL as the event mechanism, while in the latter it was recorded as 'goodbye' with LR as the event mechanism. For the latter I also recorded, "*A woman said it when she was leaving*," in the EC column and, "*I thought it meant hello, but it may also be used for goodbye*," in the Notes column (a column not present in Table 1 because no Notes were made during Session 1).

The WF=Written French code was used anytime that French writing influenced the mental event. As previously stated, most of these events came from copying and pasting program titles or when titles 'popped up' on the screen. To avoid this, I started using peripheral vision when copying and pasting and also closed my eyes at the beginning of programs. However, due to French having the same alphabet as English, mere glimpses of words were usually enough for me to know what the word meant, especially as I learned more French words. Two such French words were *exposition* and *amphitheatre,* but these two words actually appeared within the backdrop of the programs themselves.

UT, which stands for Uncontrolled Thought, was used when I had no explanation other than an English word simply came to mind. For example, for MEN 77, I coded *komon sa va=How are you?* as UT. At that point, I didn't know whether the sound chunk was one or more words, but having described the event in the EC column as '*One woman said it to another who she was happy and surprised to see,*' indicates that '*How are you?*' was triggered because in English it is a common expression used in such situations.

The CFE code stands for Common French Expression, meaning that it was something that I had frequently heard used in English. The two data entries coded as CFE were *Tour de France* and *ciao*. The first of these is clearly French, but at the time of this writing (23/5/2017) I am doubtful that the second is French. At present, I recall encountering this word and being surprised to hear it in French, as until that point I had thought it was an Italian word. I still think this is true because it has rarely occurred during the hundreds of hours of French that I have heard. A possible explanation for me coding it as CFE is that I really meant 'foreign expression commonly used in English' and with the desire to get back to French exposure on Day 1, I was lazy and didn't create a new code. Alternatively, I may have been influenced by the stereotype of French people being so proud of their language and culture that they fight against foreign inclusions into their culture and so I thought *ciao* must be French. I like to think of myself as being able to identify a stereotype and hence not be influenced by one, but I do remember meeting some French people in China many years ago and being surprised that they were so friendly. That was definitely due to the combination of frequently hearing a stereotype throughout my life that French people were arrogant and didn't like foreigners, my lack of encounters with French people, and my immaturity.

The EE code stands for English Expression and was used for expressions I had heard that I thought were from the English language, but were being used in French, e.g. the word *ok* and the 'happy birthday song'.

The final code used on Day 1 was VO, meaning Visual Observation. In MEN 82, a culture event occurred concerning manners that was coded this way. In the EC column, I wrote, "*saw a boy grab a chair from another customers table without saying excuse me or asking. It may be acceptable in France*." Although the VO code may seem redundant here because earlier in this chapter I described culture events as being triggered by visual observations, my aim was to record my impression of a mechanism and I did not want to put rules upon myself for how this was done.

Although the codes I used for event mechanisms were mostly self-explanatory, in hindsight, I should have recorded a definition for each code with the date it was first used, so that I didn't have to speculate now (29/5/2017) about my intended meaning in the past. The columns headed '# of EM codes' show the number of times per session that a mental event was recorded with either a single EM code or two EM codes. Of the 108 mental

events that were recorded, 89 of them were coded with a single event mechanism (the clear majority), while 19 of them had two codes.

The final columns of Table 2 headed JE (Journal Entries) show both the number of journal entries that were made during each session (# of) and the corresponding journal entry numbers (JEN). On Day 1, a total of six journal entries were made. JEN 6 is shown later in this chapter, and in journal entries 2 to 5, I mentioned that wearing headphones was uncomfortable, that I had a desire to orally copy the French I was hearing, that some sound chunks were becoming familiar, and that I didn't feel like watching any more television. I also wrote some ideas for using AV media in language classes.

One final point to mention is the use of writing in data collection. Although during exposure I was able to limit the effects of writing on my learning by averting my eyes from the screen when writing appeared, by not using subtitles and by avoiding dictionaries and textbooks, in order to collect data about how French learning was occurring I did create phonetic representations of French. It is difficult to say what effects doing this may have had. All phonetic representations of French were made quickly and were essentially based upon English sounds that I heard in French. At the beginning of this project, I almost never reviewed the mental events that I had recorded. However, as the list of mental event entries grew longer I became less certain about whether or not a freshly recorded mental event was indeed 'unique'. Therefore, on roughly Day 10, the 15th of January (according to JEN 52, Session 233), whenever I had any doubt about this I would apply the following process: First, I would record the new mental event. Then, I would use the Excel search function to check if the new mental event in the E column matched any previous recording in the E column. If it did not, I would keep the new recording and continue with AV exposure. If it did, I would then check to see if the data in the F column also matched for both mental events. If it did not, I would keep the new recording and continue with AV exposure. If it did, I would delete the new mental event recording and continue with AV exposure.

Going through this process meant that in addition to receiving written input from the initial phonetic recording of French, I was also receiving non-audio French input from mental event searches. One potential effect of this form of French input concerns a phenomenon that has been ongoing since the beginning of French AV exposure. Every time that I have heard a salient French sound chunk, I have simultaneously seen it written in English in my

mind. Whether or not this would have still happened had I not collected mental event data is unanswerable in this thesis, but it is possible that the occurrence of written English in my mind in response to French audio is a result of simply being literate in English.

It is worth mentioning that the search process described above had at least two limitations. One limitation is that sometimes the search function returned no matches even though I could clearly see a match written on the spreadsheet. I have no explanation for why this occurred, but I was able to resolve it by closing the file and reopening it. A second limitation with the search function is that it didn't return a match if I had made a spelling error in previous E column recordings. These are two explanatory factors for why my data had duplicate recordings.

Journal Entry 6:

> *I fell 40 mins short of 6 hours of input on my first day. It's 11:30pm and I started around 1 pm with some time off in between. Must start earlier tomorrow. Anyway, I'm happy to have this project underway*.

3.4 Days 1 to 3: Timesheet

Additional quantitative project data was also collected on a spreadsheet called 'Timesheet'. This spreadsheet was primarily used to count daily and total French exposure time, daily and total mental events, and to calculate the frequency of mental events over time. It was also used to determine how I was placed in relation to my goal of six hours of French input per day and to keep track of how much TV/movie input I was receiving in relation to radio/music input. Because the Timesheet spreadsheet is wider than a page, it has been broken sequentially into Tables 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D below for presentation purposes. Data from the first three days of the project has been included in these tables to facilitate explanation. In Tables 3A to 3D, data was entered manually only into Columns A, B, C, F, G, O, Q, S and T. This manually entered data, except for Column B, was then used to calculate the remaining data in Tables 3A to 3D through the use of cell formulas. Day 3 examples of these cell formulas can been found in Appendix E. As a matter of preference, the numerical data in the tables has been represented with zero, one or two decimal places often as a result of rounding. However, it should be noted that Excel makes

calculations based on the actual values stored in memory rather than the values that are visually displayed.

It is hoped that the headings of Tables 3A to 3D are sufficiently descriptive such that the discussion below need only focus on the specific data that was of importance to me in the earliest stages of French exposure.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	Day #	Date (2016)	Number of Sessions	Total Project Sessions	Average Sessions per Day	Daily Minutes of Exposure	Daily Seconds of Exposure	Daily Minutes of Exposure (min + sec)	Total Project Minutes	Daily Hours of Exposure	Total Project Hours	Daily Minutes Over or Under 6 hours	Project Total Over or Under 6 hours	Average Hours per Day	Daily Unique Mental Events	Total Project Mental Events
2	1	5-Jan	12	12	12	313	416	320	320	5.3	5.3	-40	-40	5.3	108	108
3	2	6-Jan	15	27	14	393	448	400	720	6.7	12.0	40	0	6.0	81	189
4	3	7-Jan	17	44	15	352	482	360	1080	6.0	18.0	0	0	6.0	71	260

Table 3A: Daily and total - sessions, exposure time, 6 hour target and mental events

	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB
1	Daily Unique Mental Events	Total Unique Mental Events	Daily Minutes of Exposure	Daily Seconds of Exposure	Daily Minutes of Exposure (min + sec)	Total Project Minutes	Daily Hours of Exposure	Total Hours of Exposure	Average Hours per Day	Unique Mental Events per Session	Unique Mental Events per Day	Average Unique Mental Events
2	0	0	65	12	65	65	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.00	0.00
3	0	0	109	73	110	175	1.8	2.9	1.5	0.0	0.00	0.00
4	1	1	33	48	34	209	0.6	3.5	1.2	0.5	0.03	0.00

Table 3B: Radio/music daily & total – mental events, exposure time and mental event freq.

	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI	AJ	AK	AL	AM	AN
1	Daily Unique Mental Events	Total Unique Mental Events	Daily Minutes of Exposure	Daily Seconds of Exposure	Daily Minutes of Exposure (min + sec)	Total Project Minutes	Daily Hours of Exposure	Total Hours of Exposure	Average Hours per Day	Unique Mental Events per Session	Unique Mental Events per Day	Average Unique Mental Events
2	108	108	248	404	255	255	4.2	4.2	4.2	9.9	0.43	0.43
3	81	189	284	375	290	545	4.8	9.1	4.5	6.4	0.29	0.35
4	70	259	319	434	326	871	5.4	14.5	4.8	4.8	0.22	0.30

Table 3C: TV/movie daily & total – mental events, exposure time and mental event freq.

	AO	AP	AQ	AR	AS	AT
	% of Total Mental Events		% of Daily Exposure		% of Total Exposure	
1	Radio	TV	Radio	TV	Radio	TV
2	0	100	20	80	20	80
3	0	100	28	72	24	76
4	0.4	99.6	9	91	19	81

Table 3D: Percentage of mental events and exposure for radio/music and TV/movies

Of the data shown in Table 3A, the most important to me both on Day 1 and throughout the early stages of this project was in Columns L and M. This is because I had set myself the goal of receiving six hours of French exposure per day and these columns allowed me to see how well I was placed in relation to that goal on a daily basis. In Column L for example, it is evident that on Day 2, I managed to make up the 40 minutes I was short on Day 1. I also frequently referred to Columns K and P to determine how close I was to my target of 1500 hours and how many mental events had occurred respectively. The remaining data became more or less important to me over time.

Tables 3B and 3C show two sets of additional quantitative data that were collected for both radio/music and TV/movies, respectively. The Day 1 data on both tables differs from the raw data that was collected on Day 1 because until Day 2, both sets of data were combined and recorded in Table 3C. In order to explain the reason for the separation of the data sets, it is necessary to examine the data that was most important to me at the time – Column AM, Table 3C. Using cell AM2 as an example, the Day 1 mental event rate per minute (0.43, cell AM2) was calculated by taking the number of mental events that occurred on that day (109, cell AC2) and dividing it by the number of minutes of exposure on the same day (255, cell AG2). In plain English, this equated to saying that on Day 1, I was experiencing a mental event during TV/movie exposure roughly every 2 minutes and 20 seconds. By contrast, the daily mental activity for radio/music (Column AA) was 0.0 for the first two days and only 0.03 on Day 3, which equated to one mental event every 33 minutes and 48 seconds. Had I kept Table 3B and 3C data together, the daily mental event rate would have been quite different and I would not have been able to show that almost all of the mental event activity was occurring during TV/movie exposure. Furthermore, although in reality mental events did not occur with the clockwork precision described above nor could all AV media be counted as having identical amounts of language, the daily mental event rates of both types simply gave me an indication of the mental event frequency for each day of exposure, and over time, allowed me to examine if there were any identifiable trends in mental event activity. Although Column AM above shows that the mental event activity for TV/movie exposure decreased over the first three days of French exposure, the following chapter examines how over the first 83 days of this project there was a steady and sometimes dramatic increase in the frequency of mental events. One final point of mention regarding Tables 3B and 3C is that the data in Columns Z and AL differ from the raw data collected because I made an error in the original formulas. This is discussed in Appendix E.

Table 3D shows another set of quantitative data that was used to keep track of other differences between radio/music input and TV/movie input for the first three days. Columns AO and AP show that of all of the mental events that occurred during Days 1 to 3, only a minor percentage of mental events came from radio/music exposure on Day 3. Columns AQ and AR show the daily difference between radio/music exposure time and TV/movie exposure time with the majority of time being spent watching TV/movies. Columns AS and AT show the total project difference between radio/music exposure time and TV/movie exposure time, also with the majority of time being spent watching TV/movies. The Table 3D data that was most important to me in the early stages of the project was Columns AS and AT because, while I did allow myself to receive radio/music input, I wanted to ensure that the majority of my time was spent in TV/movie exposure due to the significantly higher number of mental events that were occurring.

3.5 Conclusion

This preliminary chapter has aimed to familiarise the reader with the types of data collection and analysis that occurred during both the first three days of French exposure and throughout the first 83 days of French exposure. In addition, it has highlighted a number of themes that will be discussed in more depth in the following chapters. The first and most important of these for me is that second language learning is possible through exposure to extensive quantities of audio input with the assistance of a visual context, much more so than the literature discussed in preceding chapters suggests. Secondly, although the language learning technique I used required extensive amounts of time, it was more intensive than it needed to be due to my having to collect extensive amounts of data, my decision to avoid other forms of assistance such as subtitles and dictionaries, and the need to work on other aspects of my PhD thesis. Thirdly, errors in data collection are a reality, at least for myself, and are things that need to be intentionally identified and acknowledged in order to bring trustworthiness into the final products of research. Finally, hindsight is an excellent tool for examining ways in which research can be improved and for identifying shortcomings in my own thinking.

Chapter 4 – The First 83 Days

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the data that was collected during my first 83 days of French exposure. Each of the first four sections of this chapter has been dedicated to an individual month, beginning with January 2016 and moving to April 2016, while the fifth section examines the 83 days as a whole. Each of these sections examines: programs viewed, quantities of viewing time, mental event rates, mental event triggers, language parsing, word strings and journal entries.

4.2 January 2016

4.2.1 Quantitative data

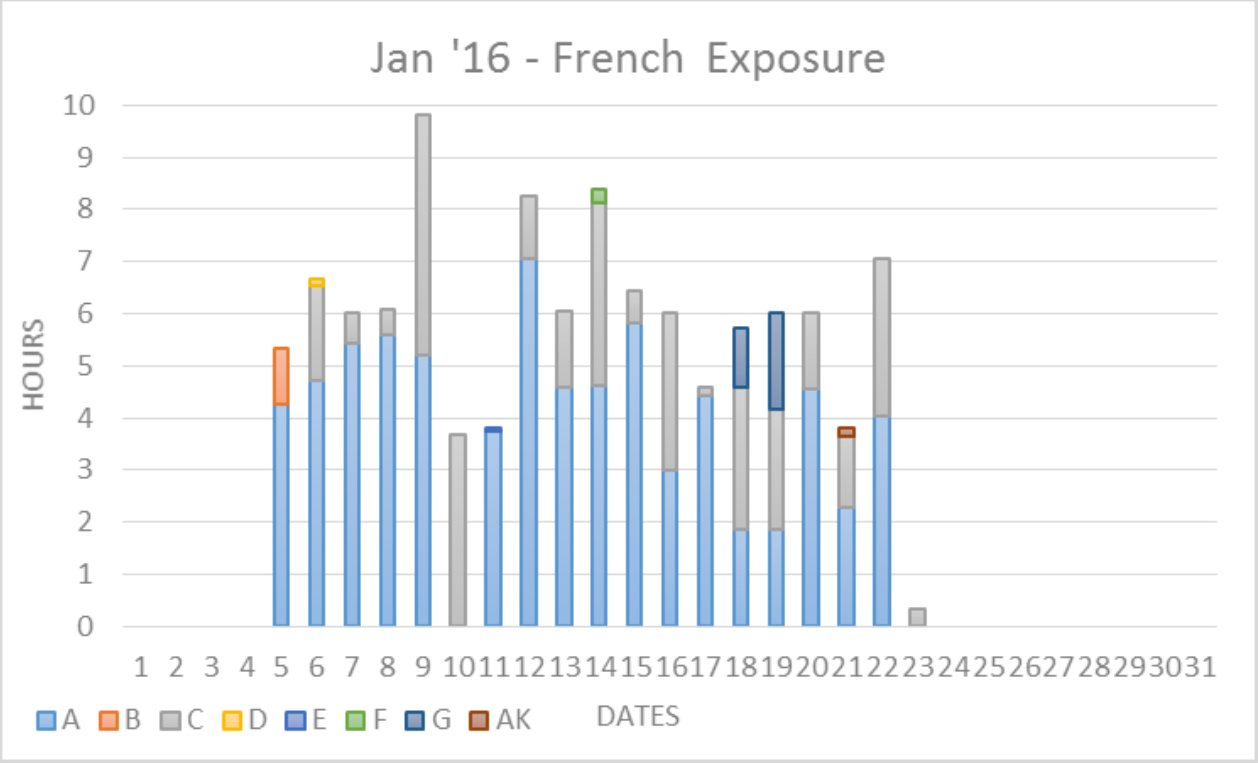
4.2.1.1 Learning media and hours of exposure

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	TV	Helene et Les Garcon	73.02	66.4
B	Music	Fondu au Noir	1.09	1.0
C	Radio	Chante France	32.32	29.4
D	TV	Ma Vie Est Un Enfer Comédie	0.13	0.1
E	TV	Blague À Part 01 Crémaillère	0.04	0.0
F	Music	Carla Bruni - Venus sings beautiful songs	0.28	0.3
G	TV	Plus Belle La Vie	2.95	2.7
AK	TV	Searching	0.17	0.2
		Total	109.99	

Table 4: Jan ‘16 French exposure by media type

Table 4 shows summarised data of the French exposure that occurred during January 2016. A total of eight different types of media were experienced, each given a unique program code. Five of these media types were audio-visual (AV) and three of them were audio only (AUD). Of the 109.99 hours of exposure, two-thirds were made up of the TV program coded A, a little under a third came from listening to the radio program coded C and only minimal exposure to the remaining five programs occurred. The media coded AK in Table 4 is out of sequence with the other codes because the amendments that were

made in order to include the AK data here were not done until after the AK code was first used in May 2016. The AK code refers to exposure experiences where I was searching for and sampling new French programs to watch on YouTube.



Graph 1: Daily French exposure by program Jan ‘16

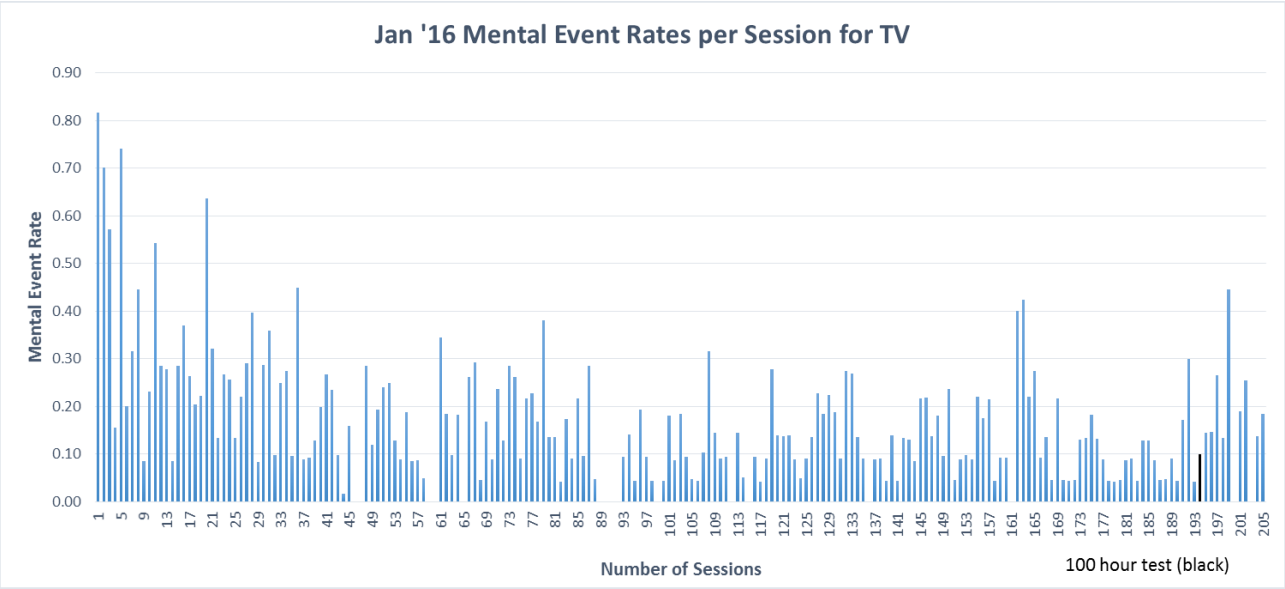
Graph 1 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of January 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 19 consecutive days, with 16 days of input from both AV and AUD, two days of input through AUD only and one through AV only. The highest amount of daily exposure was 9.8 hours on the 9th of January, while the lowest of the 19 days was 20 minutes on the 23rd of January. The graph also shows that on 12 of the 19 days I reached or exceeded my daily goal of 6 hours of exposure, while on seven days I fell short of my target.

4.2.1.2 Mental event rates

Exposure Type	Hours	Number of Recorded Mental Events	Number of Duplicate Recordings	Number of Mental Events	Average Mental Event Rate	Number of Exposure Sessions	Number of Sessions with No Mental Events	Number of Sessions with Mental Events	Percentage of Sessions with No Mental Events	Percentage of Sessions with Mental Events
TV	76.31	758	24	734	0.160	205	16	189	7.8	92.2
RADIO	33.68	15	0	15	0.007	38	29	9	76.3	23.7
BOTH	109.99	773	24	749	0.117	243	45	198	18.5	81.5

Table 5: Jan ’16 exposure time, mental event occurrence and session occurrence

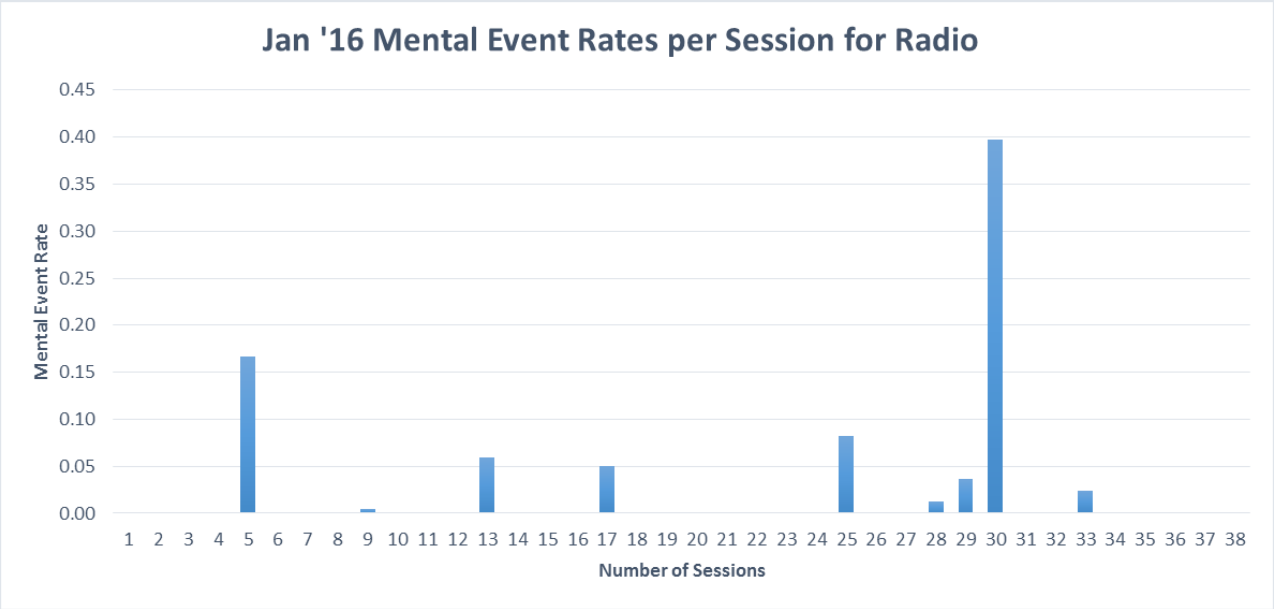
Table 5 shows a summary of exposure time, mental event data and exposure sessions for January 2016. It can be seen from the table that the amount of time spent watching AV media was more than double the amount spent listening to AUD input and that the vast majority of mental events occurred during AV exposure. The table also shows the average mental event rates for both types of exposure with a mental event occurring approximately once every six minutes for AV (0.160) and once every two hours and 15 minutes for AUD (0.007). The mental event rate was calculated by subtracting the number of duplicate recordings from the number of recorded mental events and then dividing the result by the number of minutes of French exposure (hours x 60). The table also shows that even during the first month of French exposure, over 90% of AV exposure sessions resulted in the occurrence of one of more mental events, while for AUD it was just under 25%.



Graph 2: Jan ‘16 mental event rates per session for AV

Graph 2 shows the mental event rate for each of the 205 AV exposure sessions in January 2016. The graph shows that the mental event rate fluctuated throughout January ranging from a high of 0.82 (one event every one minute and 13 seconds) in the very first session to a low of zero on multiple occasions. The graph also shows that a general decrease in the mental event rate occurred at the beginning of January with a generally steady rate of fluctuation for the remainder of the month. Since the majority of these sessions were from individual episodes of the HELG TV series, the graph also shows considerable mental event rate variation between episodes which are roughly the same length each. Graph 2 also shows the first of the '100 hour tests'. Finally, in Graph 2 and for all mental event rate graphs in this chapter, duplicate mental event recordings were removed during analysis.

When I first made Graph 2, I was surprised that the highest mental event rate of January occurred during the first session and that higher mental events rates occurred at the beginning of the month compared to the end. My surprise came from my expectation that the opposite would have occurred because my knowledge of French was practically zero at the beginning. It is possible that had I watched different media, or was in a different mood, it may not have happened, and was hence a result of chance. Alternatively, because my motivation and concentration levels were extremely high at the beginning due to being excited about the project finally being underway, I was perhaps able to notice words better. However, I was sick during the first four days of exposure and this may have contributed to counteracting such an effect. A third alternative is that because cognates were extremely common throughout my French learning experience (discussed later in this chapter), at the very beginning, the chance of me encountering a common French word that I already knew was higher than at later stages of the month and so such occurrences increased my overall mental event rate.



Graph 3: Jan ‘16 mental event rates per session for AUD

Graph 3 shows the mental event rate for each of the 38 AUD exposure sessions in January 2016. The graph shows that the occurrence of mental events was sporadic and that only on two occasions did the mental event rate go over 0.1 (one event every 10 minutes). Although the highest of these two occasions had a mental event rate of 0.4 (one event every two and a half minutes) and the lowest a rate of 0.17 (almost one every six minutes), both of these actually occurred during the two shortest radio exposure sessions (5 min 2 sec and 6 min respectively) with only two mental events occurring in the former and one in the latter. In addition, the third and fourth shortest exposure sessions had the third and fourth highest mental event rates respectively, while the lowest mental event rate above zero occurred during the longest radio exposure session in January (one mental event in 234 minutes). What Graph 3 does not show is that the vast majority of radio mental event triggers were coded as SLE (sounds like English) and occurred during exposure to speaking (DJs, news reports and commercials) rather than while listening to songs. In consideration of this and Graph 2, it can be confidently stated that during January, mental events occurred almost exclusively during exposure to spoken language

4.2.1.3 Mental event triggers

Codes Used to Describe Perceived Triggers of Mental Events - January 2016					
Codes Used	**Code Meanings**	**Freq. of Usage x/886**	**Code Categorisation**	**Freq. of Usage x/886**	**Percentage of Total Usage**
sle	Sounds Like English	503	Cognate Triggers	522	58.9%
spe	sounds Part English	10			
she	sounds Half English	9			
lr	Logical Reasoning	147	Reasoning Triggers	174	19.0%
cg	Complete Guess	22			
pn	Person's Name	4			
ir	Intentional Replay	1			
pl	Prior Learning	55	Prior Learning Triggers	72	8.1%
cfe	Common Foreign Expression	8			
ee	English Expression	3			
sef	Said in English and French	3			
ue	Used in English	2			
fwue	French Word Used in English	1			
lec	Like an English Conversation	21	English Pattern Triggers	27	3.0%
fs	Familiar Situation (wiws)	4			
wiws	What I Would Say in That Situation	1			
fi	Familiar Intonation	1			
uffw	Understand From French Words	27	Targeted Triggers	27	3.0%
wf	Written in French	14	Translation Triggers	22	2.5%
we	Written in English	5			
tr	Translated	2			
se	Said in English	1			
ro	Repetitive Observation	11	Reinforcement Triggers	20	2.3%
pr	Positive Reinforcement	8			
nr	Negative Reinforcement	1			
vo	Visual Observation	6	Immediate Observation Triggers	11	1.2%
bl	Body Language	3			
n	Noticing	2			
ut	Uncontrolled Thought	6	Unknown Triggers	6	0.7%
mh	Misheard	1	Non-Triggers	5	0.6%
ws	Word String	1			
fla	Feels Like an Achievement	1			
fc2	Finally Clicked	1			
ao	Audio Observation (phonetic)	1			

Table 6: Codes Used to Describe Perceived Triggers of Mental Events - Jan ‘16

Table 6 shows all of the codes that were used in January to describe my immediate beliefs about what had triggered each mental event. The first column lists the actual codes used, while the second column gives a basic description of the meaning of each code. The third column shows the number of times that each code was used in January out of a total of

886 code usages. The fourth column shows the category names into which individual codes were grouped during analysis, while the fifth and sixth columns show the total number of codes used in each category and the percentage of all codes made up by each category respectively.

Table 6 shows that almost 60% of mental event triggers were classified as English cognate triggers, meaning that on 522 occasions a French sound chunk contained sounds identical or similar enough to English words such that those English words were automatically triggered in my mind. The frequency of such events was surprising for me because prior to this experience I had made an uneducated guess that English cognates in French would have been no more than about 10%.

The next most frequent kind of mental event triggers were classified as reasoning triggers, meaning that rather than a French sound chunk automatically triggering an English meaning, the English meaning came to mind after some form of thinking about a given sound chunk (within the visual context in which it had occurred for AV). Of the almost 20% of mental event triggers classified this way, the majority were coded as LR. The next most frequent were those coded as CG (complete guesses) meaning that although some reasoning had occurred about a potential sound chunk meaning, I had a much lower confidence in the guessed meaning being correct than I did for the events coded as LR. The events coded as PN were basically used to refer to the fact that in conversational contexts, working out that a sound chunk referred to a person's name was usually easy to ascertain because those sound chunks often occurred in situations identical to those I am familiar with in my life such as greetings and introductions. The IR code was used once to refer to a time when I guessed a sound chunk meaning after replaying the sound chunk multiple times and examining the context in which it occurred. It was used in MEN 599 for the sound chunk 'zhu' interpreted as 'remember'.

Table 6 also shows that just over 8% of mental events were classified as prior learning, meaning that upon hearing a given sound chunk I was immediately aware that I already knew the word or phrase's meaning, generally because it was commonly used in English, but also because I remembered it from Grade 8 French. Examples of such expressions for each of the individual codes are shown in Table 7.

CODE	MEN	ENGLISH	FRENCH
PL	127	speak	parlei
CFE	151	father	papa
EE	445	show business	
SEF	473	souvenier	(souvenier) de moi
UE	133	on the contrary	au contraire
FWUE	653	baguette	

Table 7: Examples of PL code usage

3% of mental events were classified as English pattern triggers. The most frequent of these, coded LEC, is perhaps best described by a comment I wrote the first time this code was used for MEN 420, "*It's hard to describe how it happened, but I think it is that the whole situation seemed familiar and my interpretation is what I would expect to hear in English in the same situation."* In other words, it wasn't the sound chunk itself that triggered a meaning, rather that the visual/situational context was one I am familiar with in my life and in which I would expect specific English sentences to occur. A good example of this is MEN 517 where I heard the sound chunk 'kes kee feh' and interpreted it as 'What are you doing?' I had no idea at the time what any part of the sound chunk meant, but the situation that gave me the English meaning I described as, "*Kristian finished playing drums and then started standing on his stool. One of the other guys then said it*." The codes FS and WIWS were both used to describe this kind of mental event, and so the use of three codes rather than one was a result of me either forgetting the code I had normally used or my desire to return to viewing and to record the mental event as quickly as possible. The last code used in this category, FI (familiar intonation), was used for the word 'flashback' which was also coded as SLE. Unfortunately, the notes that I recorded weren't enough for me to fully understand now why I needed this code for an English cognate, having written, "*My only explanation is the combination of a cognate sound and the cognate intonation*." However, I classified the code as an English pattern because the intonation was a non-lexical feature of the event.

The next individual code in Table 6, UFFW, was classified as a targeted trigger, meaning that it was the kind of trigger I thought was necessary to develop fluent comprehension in French. The UFFW code was used to indicate that one or more non-cognate French words had contributed to triggering the English meaning. One example of this is for MEN 783, where I recorded 'se ki yoyo' interpreted as, 'Who is Yoyo?' By this stage I had an

understanding that ‘se’ meant ‘is’ or ‘its’ and that ‘ki’ meant ‘who’ thus helping me understand that ‘yoyo’ was referring to a person.

The next group on Table 6 were categorised as reinforcement triggers. The first of the three codes classified this way was RO and referred to the occurrence of a mental event after multiple observations. One example of this is MEN 353, where I concluded that TV characters only answered the telephone using the expression ‘allo’ as opposed to other possible French greetings such as ‘salut’ or ‘bonjour’. An example of the use of the PR code is MEN 192, where after multiple previous observations I noted that in expressions saying how many of a particular type of thing there were, the number always preceded the thing being counted. In this particular instance the French sound chunk was ‘du garson’ meaning ‘two men’. In the one use of the NR code for MEN 183, I recorded that a previous guess about the sound chunk ‘trois’ being a form of ‘you’ for men as opposed to women was wrong, because I had just seen a woman say ‘et trois = and you’ to another woman.

Translation triggers was the next group of recorded triggers which referred to mental events occurring as a result of the observation of writing or of a TV character saying both a French word and its meaning in English. An example of the use of the WF code is MEN 626, when I saw ‘Partie 2’ in an episode title and immediately realised it meant ‘Part 2’ (of a series). An example of the WE code was MEN 356, where I mention looking through a list of TV shows and seeing ‘formidable’ translated into English as ‘wonderful’. In MEN 428, I used the code TR after hearing a character say ‘nouvel azh’ in French, immediately followed by ‘New Age’ in English. Similarly, the one use of the SE code was for MEN 303, where a TV character said both ‘Richard’ in English and ‘rishar’ in French, multiple times.

The next group of codes were categorised as visual observation triggers because in my opinion at the time of recording, something within the immediate visual context had assisted in triggering the mental event. In regards to mental events coded as VO, four of them were coded as cultural events, while two of them were classified as language events. To give an example of each, in MEN 630, I made a cultural observation that, “They sell coffee and beer in the same shop,” which is quite rare in my experience of Australian culture, while in MEN 395, a language event occurred in relation to the word ‘madam’ where I wrote that it must refer to older women since I had observed it being said to a lady considerably older than the speaker who had addressed her with this title. For the three recorded examples coded as BL, each of them was both a cognate of English and hence

dual-coded as SLE, and was accompanied by some form of body language. For example, in MEN 672, upon hearing the sound chunk ‘calm’ which I interpreted as ‘calm’ the speaker also moved both hands downwards. The final kind of events coded as N were both grammatical observations. For example, in MEN 355, I recorded the French sound chunk ‘mes amies’ interpreted as ‘my friends’ but also noted that, “*I haven't heard ‘mes’ before, but I've heard ‘mon’ which I thought might mean ‘my’ as well. Just wondering if the plural is carried on the pronoun unlike English where it’s on the noun.”*

The second last category of mental event triggers called unknown triggers contained only one type of coding labelled UT. This code was used when I had no explanation for why the event had occurred. For example, in MEN 740, I heard the sound chunk ‘don vu croissant’ interpreted as ‘instead of croissant’ said by a person who brought a croissant over to another person.

The final category labelled non-triggers were classified as such because they didn’t describe a perceived cause of the mental event, but something I thought might be interesting to look at during analysis. In hindsight, they should have been recorded in a separate column. The first of these, coded as MH, happened in MEN 594, where I interpreted ‘borkoo’ as ‘why’, did a replay to check the sound again and found that it was ‘por kwa’ instead. The WS code was used to show that I had parsed a single sound chunk into multiple words and became an area of focus during later analysis. The single use of this code was for MEN 21 with the sound chunk ‘si vl plei’ interpreted as ‘if you please’, which was also coded as prior learning. In MEN 20, I used the code FLA to describe feeling proud that I had learned that the word ‘no’ was similar in both French and English because I had expected it to be a non-cognate like the word ‘oui = yes’. The code FC2 was also used to describe an affective observation in MEN 316, where after 53 episodes of HELG, I was finally able to hear one of the character’s names ‘Etienne’ clearly. In MEN 631, I used the code AO to describe how I had just noticed a ‘z’ sound in the sound chunk ‘lez enfant’.

With the aid of hindsight, there are many cases where the codes I used at the time of recording are different from the codes that I would assign them now (6/8/2017). One example of this is MEN 444, where I noticed someone saying ‘sssht’ instead of the English ‘ssh’ while putting a finger to their mouth. Now I would use the code BL=Body Language, whereas at the time I used VO=Visual Observation. However, my aim was not to change

the codes that were used, because that is how I saw the mental events at the time. In the following section, I discuss another way that I classified all of the mental events during analysis.

4.2.1.4 Parsing and word strings

During my previous experience with learning Mandarin from television, I noticed that over time many words that I knew often appeared with other words that I knew, particularly in strings of two or three words to give me entirely new phrases to comprehend and imitate. As the same phenomenon occurred during this French exposure experience, I wanted to find a way to demonstrate to readers how this had occurred. My first attempt at doing this occurred throughout most of the first 83 days of this project, mostly while I was listening to French music in the background, where I coded each event as being one of the following: a single word which was a cognate of English (S); a single word which was not a cognate of English (N); a single word which was a guess (G); miscellaneous (M) due to difficulties with categorisation; or a string of sounds in a row (WS-word string), each of which was matched to an English word. In addition, for each word string, I counted and classified words it contained that were S, N, G or M. This coding process allowed me to create graphs of ‘learning’ over time and hence served as a source of motivation and interest for me.

After, the first 83 days, I went through the list of mental events to check the coding again and felt confident with the results of the analysed data. However, after I had examined, analysed and discussed the mental event triggers in the preceding section, I started to question how the coding just described meshed with the trigger coding. One of the problems was the G code. Although for some mental events I had recorded enough information to clearly identify that I had guessed the meaning and hence lacked confidence in its accuracy, it is safe to say that in many cases throughout the 83 days I had very little confidence in any recorded English meaning being identical to the meaning intended by the French speaker. The result of this observation was that a mental event classified as G was not always clearly distinguishable from one coded as S or N. To overcome this and other problems, yet still wanting to examine the phenomenon of word strings, I decided that the phenomenon I was trying to examine was parsing (described below). With this concept in mind, I decided to use the seven codes shown in Table 8, which I applied to the mental event data on three occasions for higher accuracy.

CODE	CODE MEANING	EXPLANATION
s	Single	One sound chunk interpreted as a single English word
mwnp	Multiple Words No Parsing	One sound chunk interpreted as multiple English words with no parsing
mwsp	Multiple Words Some Parsing	One sound chunk interpreted as multiple English words with some parsing
ws	Word String	One sound chunk interpreted as multiple English words all parsed
k	Knowledge	A cultural knowledge event, not a parsing event
m	Miscellaneous	Neither a culture event nor a parsing event
ar	Already Recorded	Mental event already recorded

Table 8: Parsing codes

The term parsing refers to a process of "Analysing a sentence into its constituents, identifying in greater or less detail the syntactic relations and parts of speech (McArthur, 2003, p.1).Much like I didn't know anything about English grammar (in the linguistic sense) until becoming an ESL teacher, my understanding of French grammar during the first 83 days of this project was simplistic at best. Rather than understanding French for such reasons as might be explained in a classroom grammar lesson such as 'the subject occurred before the verb' or 'this morpheme on the end of the word identified the tense', in most cases for me, a specific sound chunk triggered a specific English word and so was lexical in nature rather than syntactical. If for example the triggered word happened to be of a particular tense, I was generally unaware of why this was so or of which part of a sound chunk signalled a grammatical tense. For example, in MEN 32, I interpreted the French sound chunk 'fini:' as the simple past tense verb 'finished' but had no idea which part of the French sound chunk referred to the past or if my interpretation of it being past was correct at all. For such reasons, my analysis of the mental event data, rarely involved the use of 'syntactical vocabulary' as is used in the field of linguistics. Rather, it typically involved the matching of a French sound chunk to a whole English meaning and in the case of word strings, it involved the division of a sound chunk into pieces, each of which usually matched a single English word. For example, in MEN 326, I interpreted the sound chunk 'accept moi proposition' as 'accept my proposition', which appears to be a use of the grammatical imperative (commands and requests). However, I may have misheard the sound chunk and/or it may have been said in reference to the past or future, but my level of grammatical understanding at the time was not ready for such inferences.

To clarify how the MWNP and MWSP codes were used, an example of each follows. For MEN 59, during the program I was watching, someone knocked on another person's bedroom window and the person inside the room said the French sound chunk 'ke ske sei', which I interpreted as 'Who is it?' This event was classified as MWNP because I had multiple English words in the interpretation, but I was unable to match any of the English

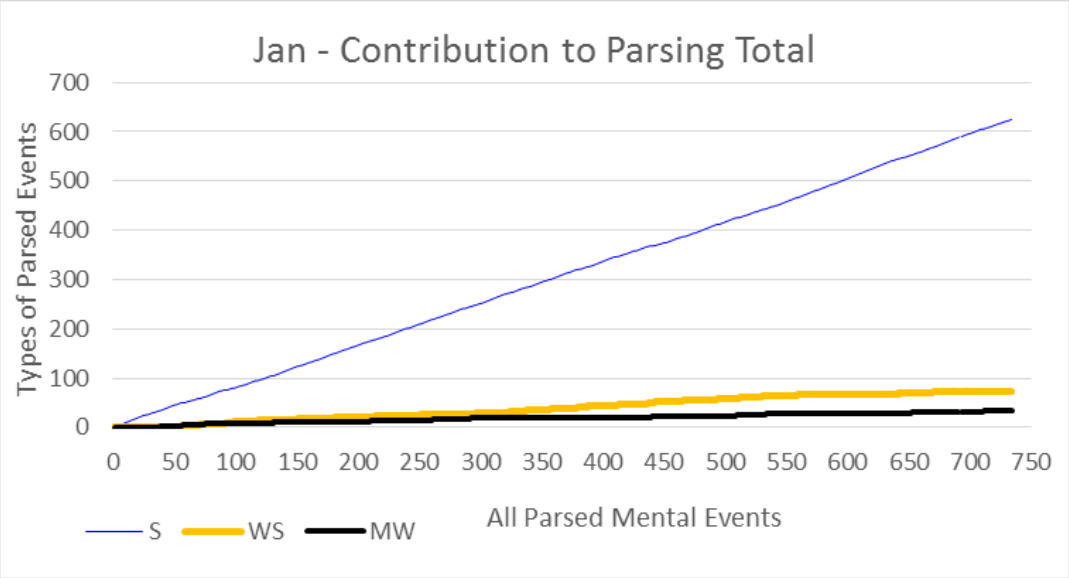
words to a specific part of the sound chunk. For MEN 199, I heard the sound chunk ‘je mapelle Christian’ and interpreted it as ‘My name is Christian’. This was classified as MWSP because only the ‘Christian’ part of the sound chunk was matched with the English word ‘Christian’. At the time of occurrence, I had the sound ‘je’ meaning ‘I’ but this word did not occur in the interpretation and I was confused about how ‘mapelle’ was to be interpreted, if it meant ‘name’ then there would be no verb present in the sentence. I thought it may have been that French does not require a verb.

To return to the codes used for this stage of analysis, each of the 5305 recorded mental events from the first 83 days were assigned one of the seven codes from Table 8 with the tally occurring in the following amounts: S=2981, WS=1971, AR=160, MWSP=95, MWNP=45, K=42, and M=11. My purpose here is to discuss language events and the ways in which they were parsed, and so the codes AR, K and M are only discussed here in regards to reasons for their omission. The AR codes have been omitted from the present discussion because none of them are unique mental events due to their having been previously recorded. The K codes have been omitted because they refer to cultural events, meaning that they did not involve a French sound chunk triggering an English translation. The M codes have been omitted because they refer to neither cultural nor lexical mental events.

	Recorded Mental Events (RME)	Non-Parsing Mental Events			Mental Events with Parsing (=RME-K-M-AR)	Parsing Event Types			% of Total Parsing		
		K	M	AR		S	WS	MW	S	WS	MW
JAN	773	13	2	24	734	626	73	35	85.3	9.9	4.8

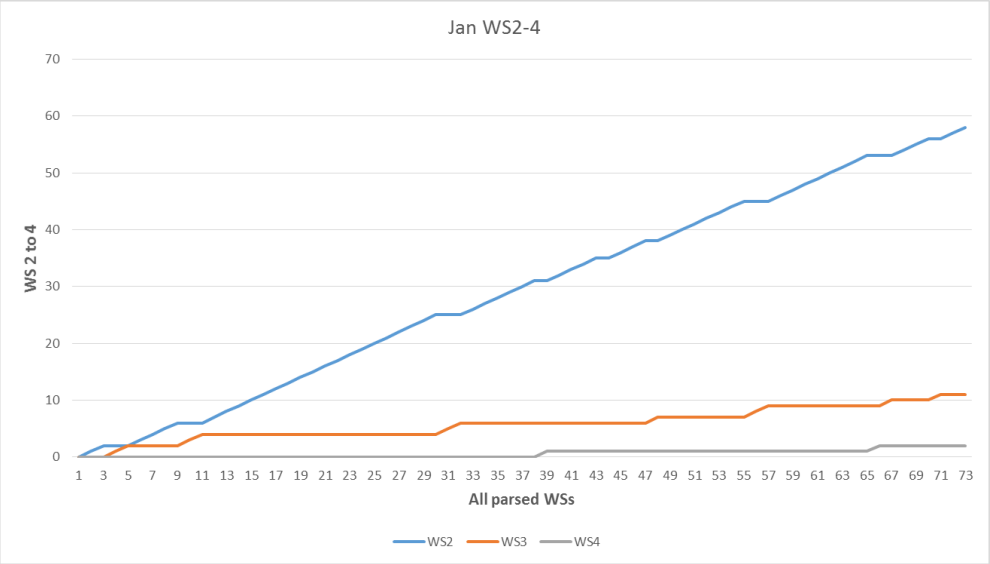
Table 9: Parsing and non-parsing mental events

Table 9 shows the way that recorded mental events were classified into either parsing or non-parsing events, the quantities of each type and the occurrence percentage for each of the three types of parsing event for January 2016. The table shows that S events were by far the most common and made up more than 85% of all parsed sound chunks. The next most frequent were the WS events at just under 10% with the remainder of parsed events categorised as MW.



Graph 4: Jan ‘16 Contribution to parsing total

Graph 4 shows a line chart of the accumulation of S, WS and MW events during January 2016. Although time could have been displayed on the horizontal axis using day numbers, doing so would not have allowed a picture of how language mental event quantities progressed between the start and end of each day. In order to capture such information, the horizontal axis shows the accumulation of all parsed mental events (734) in the sequence that they occurred. As the parsed mental event quantities increased from MEN 1 onwards, each unique mental event was assigned to one of the three categories of language events in Graph 4 to form a picture of the progressive total for each category. Graph 4 shows that all three types of event steadily increased with S events accumulating at the most rapid rate amongst the three. Both the WS and MW events increased slowly relative to the S events with the rate of WS accumulation being slightly higher than the MW accumulation.

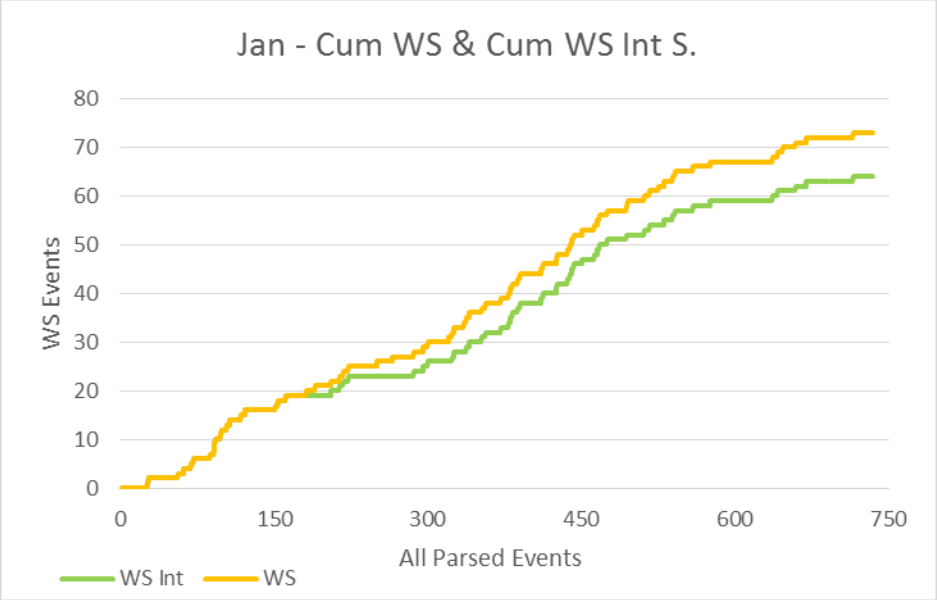


Graph 5: WS2-4 accumulation Jan'16

All of the mental events coded WS for the first 83 days were also followed by a number which represented the number of parsed words they contained, e.g. WS2, WS3.... In January, the 73 WSs were tallied as: WS2=58, WS3=11, WS4=2, WS8=1 and WS10=1. Graph 5 shows the accumulation of the WS2s, WS3s and WS4s during January with WS2s accumulating at the fastest rate, followed by the WS3s and then the WS4s. An example of a WS2 is MEN 153, where I recorded the sound chunk 'konsontre trois' interpreted as 'concentrate you(rself)'. MEN 429 is an example of a WS3, where I recorded 'force de crystal' interpreted as 'force of crystal', while MEN 374 is an example of a WS4, where I recorded the sound chunk 'je deteste le hypocrit' interpreted as 'I hate (the) hypocrites'. Both the WS8 and the WS10 were strings of numbers representing the numbers one to eight and the numbers one to ten, respectively. Although neither of these represented sentences in the traditional sense of having such things as a subject and a verb, they still represented sound chunks that were parsed into individual English words and were hence still classified as WS. Numerical word strings such as these were rare throughout the first 83 days.

For each type of WS, I also counted the number of parsed words it contained that had not been previously recorded. For example, in MEN 100, I recorded the sound chunk 'oui aw naw' interpreted as 'yes or no' and classified it as a WS3 with the internal previously unrecorded word, 'or'. The words 'yes=oui' and 'no=naw' had both occurred as S events prior to event 100 in MEN 23 and MEN 20 respectively. Doing this allowed me to show that I was learning new words both as S events and within WS events and allowed for a count

of all new/unique words 'learned' during the first 83 days of this project. For the month of January, I recorded a total of 101 unique words inside of word strings, taking the total number of new words 'learned' to: 626 (S) + 101 (internal) = 727.



Graph 6: Accumulation of WSs and WSs containing internal unique words, Jan '16

Graph 6 shows both the accumulation of all WSs and the accumulation of WSs with internal new words for January 2016. The graph shows that until MEN 182, all WSs contained new words. At that point, WSs without internal words began to appear in recordings with their frequency increasing gradually throughout the remainder of the month. To give more examples of WSs with internal new words, in MEN 29, I recorded the sound chunk 'scu zi: mois' interpreted as 'excuse me'. Since this was the first time I had recorded either of these words, the event was coded as a WS2 with two internal unique words. In MEN 71, I left the French sound column blank and wrote the words 'Tour de France' in the English column. This event was coded as a WS3 with three internal unique words as it was the first time that any of these words had been recorded. Of the 73 recorded WSs in January, 51 were WS2s, 30 of which contained one internal unique word and 21 contained two. This meant that in January, WS2s made a greater contribution to new internal words (21 x 2 = 42) than WS2s with one internal new word.

4.2.2 Qualitative data

During January 2016, I made 67 journal entries discussing a variety of topics. Rather than attempt to paraphrase what I wrote, I have included those journal entries that I feel best

characterise my thoughts and feelings during this time and presented any further discussions immediately after them. The journal entries given have been edited for punctuation, grammar and spelling, [] square brackets have been used for any writing that needed clarifying, three dots … have been used to indicate that some of the journal entry has not been included and the code NT is used in some entries to signify a new train of thought. For each journal entry three codes are given e.g. JEN51 D18 JAN22 indicates that journal entry 51 occurred on the 18th day of French exposure on the 22nd of January 2016.

JEN7 D2 JAN6

> I had a restless sleep last night. I kept thinking about recording French data - how I should do it, had I done it correctly. Anyway, let's go again. I'll start the morning with French music and while I'm listening I can prepare the spreadsheet, check for errors and eat brekky [breakfast]. I found a few stations, but all of them were playing English songs. I found a great station that offers different streams such as 80's and 70's. That will help me to get to know past music. It's actually a good start to the day. I'm getting language input, before I'm ready to watch TV shows, which are much more intensive. While listening to music I can also do other things like cut my nails and tidy up. It's probably good for doing exercise as well.

JEN8 D2 JAN6

> I'm glad I'm not speaking French. One example is the name Joanna. Although I can recognise the French pronunciation when I hear it, when I try to recall her name it is the Australian pronunciation that wants to come out. I'm hoping after listening to the whole series that the French pronunciation comes out.

JEN14 D3 JAN7

> Another restless night, some of which was caused by thinking about French and data collection. I'm sure it will end soon. I woke up this morning thinking that the intensity of doing a language this way is good. It really pushes the sounds into your head - I can hear some of them floating around. It's really good for sound reinforcement. Every time a word that activates meaning is repeated, it strengthens the word for me. Something new I've decided to do as of today is to record Salient Sounds. I contemplated the idea [before doing the project] and decided against it, but there are so many sounds that are repeated that I instantly recognise. If I just

> had meaning, there would be multiple cases of understanding even at this early stage… It may be the case that a salient sound I recognise today may not receive a meaning attachment for a long time, however maybe that is the way some meanings develop - over time with lots of repetition…

On Day 3, I started a list of salient sounds, which included sounds from the previous two days that I could recall at the time. In January, I recorded 53 salient sound chunks. On Day 1 or 2, I recorded ‘zhe tem’ as a salient sound and on Day 9 had my first mental event with this sound chunk as ‘I love you’. In the notes section for this event, I wrote that I was only mildly confident that my interpretation was correct because I could only understand it as ‘zhe=I’ and ‘tem=love’ and couldn’t understand why a sound for the word ‘you’ was missing. It was only on Day 92 upon hearing ‘zhe em allooween=I love Halloween’ that I realised ‘em=love’ and that the ‘t’ sound in ‘zhe tem’ meant ‘you’, hence then being able to translate ‘zhe tem as ‘I you love’. A second salient sound that caused me great confusion was ‘benedict’. I recorded it as a salient sound and also had my first mental event for it on Day 3, where I interpreted it as ‘traitor’ due to the sound occurring in the name ‘Benedict Arnold’. On Day 4, I interpreted it as ‘two-timer’, then on Day 7 twice as both a man’s name and as a nickname, and finally and correctly as a woman’s name on Day 8.

JEN15 D3 JAN8

> Although I have instant meaning recognition for some sounds, I am certainly unable to reproduce them inside my head with such ease. This is the whole point of delaying speech. I'm waiting until I can hear the sounds clearly in my head.

JEN19 D3 JAN8

> A few times I've said something in French I've heard and then have to reprimand myself. I remember saying something in French as soon as I woke up. **NT** In episode 36 [HELG], I had the biggest chunk of understanding so far. One of the girls was only saying people’s names and the word ‘and’, but while she was saying it, it was registering in real time.

JEN24 D7 JAN11

> I just heard ‘komon tallez vouz’ and although I don't remember what it means, I remember it from Year 8 French. It made me think about how useless a lot of what I learnt in school was. I learned the words for ‘butter’ and ‘eggs’, but I haven't heard

these expressions yet or if I have I don't recognise them. My point is that learning in school should be based on the frequency of occurrence of words, so that you're likely to have frequent reinforcement. I shouldn't be learning words that I may never or rarely hear. At least not in the early stages.

JEN25 D7 JAN11

I've seen people ask others to sit quite a few times, but I can never catch the words they use. I guess the words just aren't ready to be salient.

JEN27 D8 JAN12

I got up early to catch up the 2 hours I was short yesterday, but about 50 min in, I was falling asleep, so I decided to go and sleep again. I slept for about 2 hours and the whole time I had the sounds of French going around in my head. I also remember trying to pronounce the word ‘super’ the French way in my head. How is it that we can hear sound in our head or speak inside our head?

JEN31 D9 JAN13

More dreaming/thinking about both French and watching French TV. Just before I properly woke up I was imagining that I was listening to French TV. I've had a few episodes where no new meaning events occurred, but yesterday there were four in a row, which was really surprising considering the number I'd had previously. This could be explained as just luck of the draw, but I think it is more likely a case of fewer new cognates being available because I've already recorded them in the previous 8 days. I imagine that new cognates will regularly pop up, but I expect to see this reduced amount of new meaning events for the next few weeks or months. I've decided to do the whole 200 episodes straight [one after the other of HELG]. I think the advantage is in getting used to people's voices and getting used to the context or lifestyles of those people…

JEN33 D10 JAN14

As soon as I awoke, French words were popping into my mind. "Chante de France" and "Krikri de amor" in particular, but a couple of others I can't remember. The ‘chante de france’ could be popping in because I've been listening to the radio every morning and my brain is preparing for the routine or because the radio says it a lot and my brain is replaying a frequently heard sound chunk. I think this is what is

happening with ‘krikri de amor’. It is probably the most common expression I've heard in the series I've been watching…

JEN35 D11 JAN15

Whether it's real or imagined, I can hear the sounds better today. They just sound clearer.

JEN36 D11 JAN15

Whenever people discover that I am trying to learn French, they either want to speak the French they know to me or they want to teach me something about French. I have to be very quick to tell them not to do it or quick to block my ears, as I don't want to be taught French. I don't mind listening to their French, but if they say a translation in English, it's too late. I instantly hear it and remember it…

JEN37 D11 JAN15

Watching the entire series to now is useful for understanding what is happening. Right now for example, Christian has produced a piece of paper and the others are upset. If I just watched this episode alone [without previous episodes], I don't think I would understand that Christian has done some kind of deal behind his friends’ backs. He has either sold the song they all made or has signed his own contract. But more likely it’s the first option and the piece of paper is a cheque. I will explore this idea over time, but this is one advantage I see series having over one-off movies: character building, the development of familiarity and the understanding of context assists in understanding new words when they come up. They become more salient in context.

JEN40 D12 JAN16

I'm starting to incorporate the characters from the TV show into my dreams. Yesterday was interesting because I felt that I could hear the sounds better. I was also hearing familiar sound chunks more often. I am motivated to do more hours because I am so interested to see what is going to happen. The way I see it is that there is a large quantity of French that occurs so frequently that it becomes the language that all native speakers first acquire. Once acquired, the frequency of unknown words is diminished. Every time I have a new mental event I come closer to becoming familiar with the pool of common words. At some point I should

become familiar with all of the sounds, all of the frequently used words, and all of the commonly used grammatical patterns…

JEN42 D13 JAN17

I just had a nap and a dream. In the dream, I entered the garage of the TV show and said something like, “Our home,” but I said, “nom ome”. Just out of curiosity I thought I'd write those words to compare to the real French when I come across it. [Incidentally, it’s 11/9/2017, and I know that what I said wasn’t French. They would say something like, ‘Shay noo’=our place].

JEN44 D15 JAN19

Yesterday, was the first day where I felt I wasn't learning much and the goals I have for this project weren't going to work. Mind you, that's one negative day out of 14 days straight. I woke up at 4:15am to watch TV and I had to go to work. So with all of that in mind it might be normal. I changed programs yesterday. I just couldn't watch Helen and the Boys anymore. It's a crap show, but it was good for me to start this project with because a lot of what was going on I could tell from the visual context, body language and the characters' intonation. The new program I'm watching [Plus belle la vie] was immediately more visually appealing simply because it is filmed outside of a studio in many parts, the actors are better and there are a range of different ages. It may be more difficult to understand because it looks like the show will have complex storylines, but I'll give it a go [try to do it]. It really is tough doing six hours a day. It's not that I would recommend so many hours, it is just that I have a limited timeframe within which to collect data. I'm not that interested in the cognates that I'm hearing, but I do feel very satisfied when I learn or think I've learned a non-cognate such as ‘why’ and ‘who’. The first stage of this project isn't really about vocabulary acquisition, it's about intonational acquisition. It is very difficult to determine if intonational acquisition is occurring. One way is through the salient sound data collection. For each day I list all salient sound chunks, so as each day progresses and new sound chunks become salient something is happening because I wasn't noticing them in the previous days…

JEN46 D15 JAN19

From what I understand, 'se' is a ‘be’ verb and in Mandarin 'se' with a schwa is also a ‘be’. The mandarin version interferes with the French one, as in, when I listen

carefully, I hear the French pronunciation, but sometimes if I'm not concentrating, it's like the Chinese one replaces it.

JEN49 D16 JAN20

I just heard 'minion' used again to describe Kristian when he was sleeping. 'Cute' possibly matches this context and I think 'handsome' is out [not possible]… I was also thinking it might mean 'baby', as in a newborn. This gets me thinking about the Competition Model [Bates and MacWhinney] which suggests that the competition happens before perception. But I am mostly certainly aware of the competition going on for meaning. In fact, in order for me to use and understand language, it makes sense that it all has to be processed consciously at some point.

In the Competition Model, MacWhinney (2005) theorised that L1 learners essentially learn word meanings over time by guessing, with the guesses being seen as either correct, approximate or incorrect. Because the correct guesses continually receive reinforcement, they are easily acquired and strengthened by the learner. However, because the other two types of guess are seen as more complex, it is theorised speech sounds enter the brain prior to the learner's awareness of them and the brain activates all of the possible meanings and selects the most likely. This meaning is then given to the learner. Later in this chapter I discuss features of the competition model that accurately describe some of my learning experiences, however, the subconscious component described here does not. For me, as described in the journal entry above, only after I recognise a salient sound do I then start to consciously consider the guesses I've had and any new guesses that arise. And in many cases, I was unable to recall some of my previous guesses. However, it is still possible that subconscious competition occurs prior to my conscious competition and that the brain essentially provides a replay to my consciousness.

JEN50 D17 JAN21

I just heard 'allee aret' = 'come on stop' while the girls [characters from the show] were trying to get into the garage. Jose was on the other side of the door stopping them entering. This is grammar. Just from hearing this expression there is a good chance that this is a fixed word order. It may be that French allows a construction like 'arete allee' but until I come across it I'll presume these words occur together in this order. If I do hear the words in opposite order that is also grammar. I'll know

> that both positions are allowable. Anytime words I know occur together I am learning grammar. Not rules, but sound sequences.

JEN51 D18 JAN22

> I've just done the first 100 hour test. I wanted another way of examining comprehension change, so I thought I would use the very first episode for this test, because it was on that day I wrote all of the new meanings I experienced. If I had chosen another episode it wouldn't be as accurate because I would only have recorded new events not the total comprehension events. I suppose I could just add the metal events from previous days, but at this stage I don't like the idea. From a brief analysis, there were significantly more mental events between day 1 and day 18, about 60 more. However, when I look at how many words I've learned without cognate assistance it only comes to about 10 in 100 hours. It will be interesting to see this data over time.

On Day 18, after 102 hours of French exposure, I decided to do the first 100 hour test, which involved re-watching the very first French episode of this project, HELG Episode 1. In JEN 51, I explained that my purpose in doing the test was to provide another way of examining comprehension change over time. When I watched this episode on Day 1, I had 22 mental events, while on Day 18, I had 92, more than four times the quantity, which gave me some confidence that my comprehension had improved for this episode. On Day 1, only the word ‘incredible’ was not recorded on Day 18, and I also noted in my journal that the majority of new mental events on Day 18 compared to Day 1 were mostly cognates.

4.3 February 2016

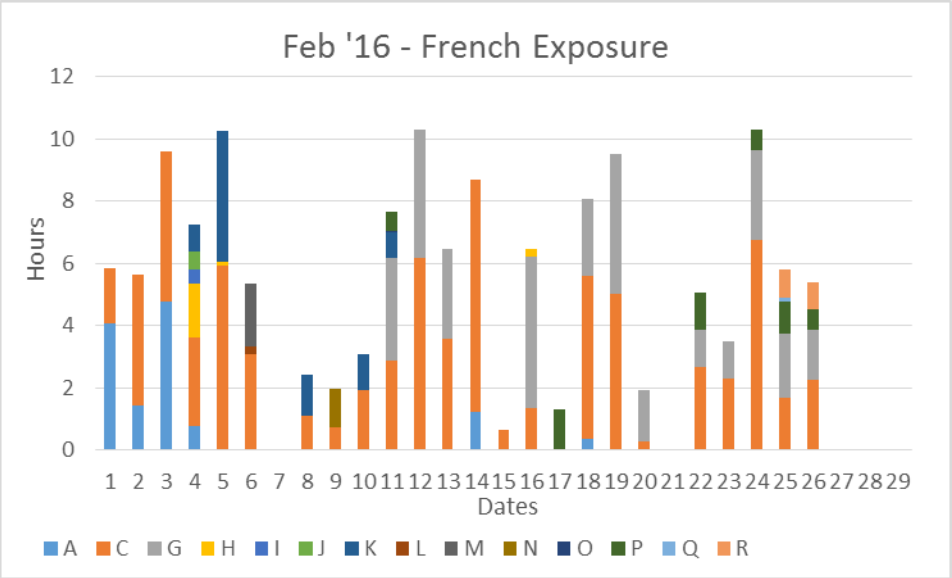
4.3.1 Quantitative data

4.3.1.1 Learning media and hours of exposure

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	TV	Helene et Les Garcon	12.6	8.82
C	Radio	Chante France	74.8	52.45
G	TV	Plus Belle La Vie	32.8	23.01
H	TV	Titeuf	2.1	1.46
I	TV	Vive la colo	0.5	0.32
J	TV	Vous les femmes	0.6	0.42
K	TV	Sous le soleil	8.3	5.83
L	Movie	Des Hommes Et Des Dieux	0.2	0.17
M	Movie	16.Ans.Ou.Presque	2.0	1.42
N	Movie	Dikkenk	1.3	0.88
O	TV	Code Lyoko Evolution	0.1	0.04
P	TV	TinTin	5.5	3.86
Q	TV	Josephine Ange Gardien	0.1	0.09
R	TV	Les Revenants	1.7	1.22
			142.53	

Table 10: Feb ‘16 French exposure by program

Table 10 shows summarised data of the French exposure that occurred during February 2016. A total of 14 types of program were experienced, each given a unique program code, with only three of these programs having been experienced in the previous month (A, C & G). This much wider variety of programs was a reflection of both my desire to find new exposure experiences and of the difficulty in finding one that I wanted to watch regularly. Ten of these programs were TV programs, three of them were movies and one of them was radio. Of the 142.53 hours of exposure, just over 52% came from AUD exposure, while the remainder came from AV. This was a dramatic reversal on the previous month where AV exposure significantly outweighed that from AUD. This increase in music exposure was a direct result of an increase in data entry and analysis, which was when I was spending my time listening to the radio. Table 6 also shows that I spent considerably less time viewing program A than I had in January and that the majority of my TV viewing came from program G.



Graph 7: Daily French exposure by program Feb ‘16

Graph 7 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of February 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. The graph shows that I received exposure to French on 24 days out of a possible 29 and that there were three periods of consecutive exposure: 5 days, 13 days and then 5 days, with two one day breaks in between. The graph also shows considerable variation in both the types of programs viewed and in the daily number of exposure hours. It can be seen that on 12 days I exceeded my 6 hour daily goal and that on 7 days I received more than 8 hours of exposure.

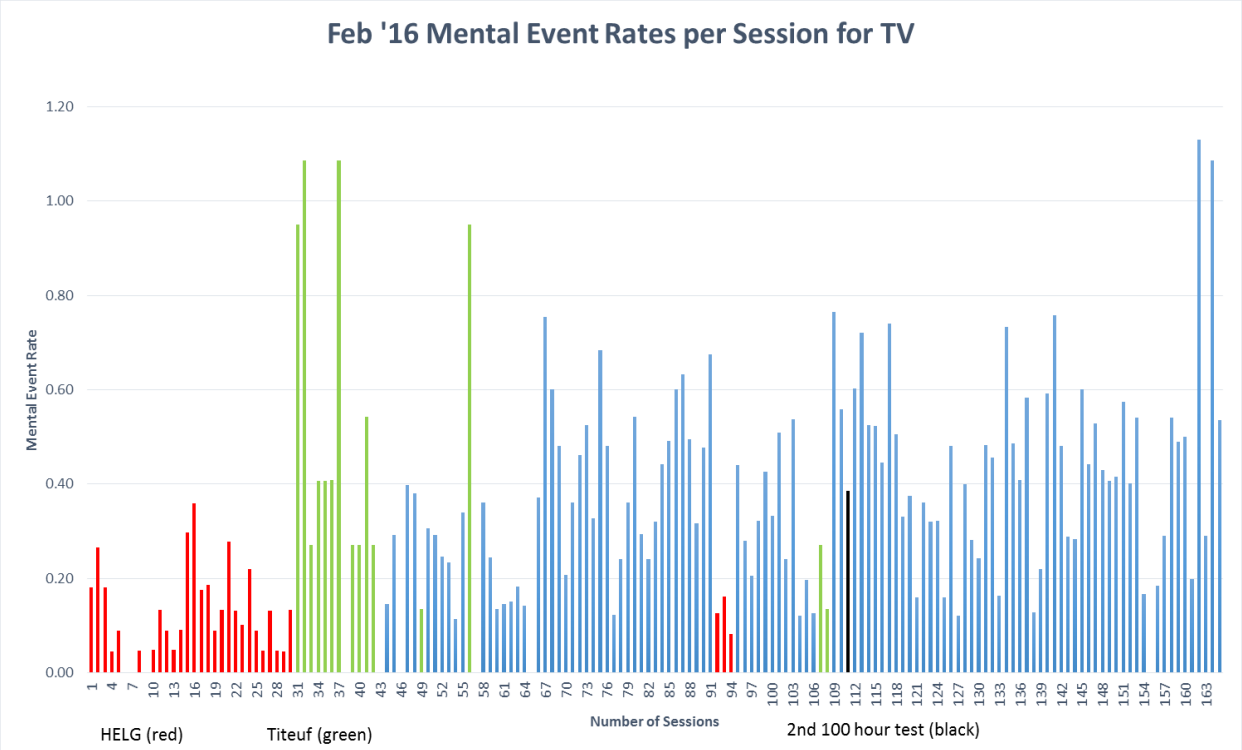
4.3.1.2 Mental event rates

Exposure Type	Hours	Number of Recorded Mental Events	Number of Duplicate Recordings	Number of Mental Events	Average Mental Event Rate	Number of Exposure Sessions	Number of Sessions with No Mental Events	Number of Sessions with Mental Events	Percentage of Sessions with No Mental Events	Percentage of Sessions with Mental Events
TV	67.77	1429	61	1368	0.336	165	9	156	5.5	94.5
RADIO	74.76	99	6	93	0.021	61	39	22	63.9	36.1
BOTH	142.53	1528	67	1461	0.179	226	48	178	21.2	78.8

Table 11: Feb ’16 exposure time, mental event occurrence and session occurrence

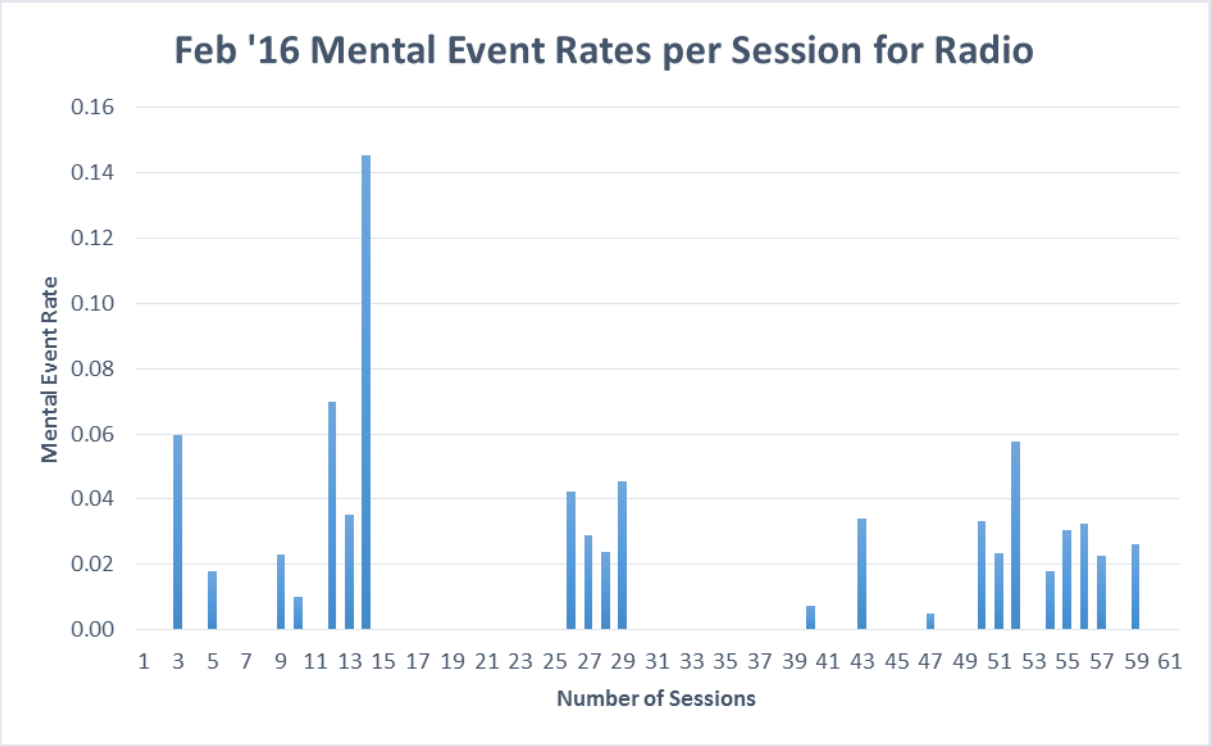
Table 11 shows a summary of exposure time, mental event data and exposure sessions for February 2016. The table shows that despite a dramatic increase in the amount of AUD exposure on the previous month (41.9 more hours), the majority of mental events still occurred during AV exposure. In addition, both the number of AV mental events and the

average AV mental event rate were almost double what they were in January, even though the amount of AV exposure was 8.4 hours less than in January. However, although the February AUD mental event rate was lower in comparison to AV, the February radio mental event rate was more than three times greater than it was in January, which was also evidenced by an increase in the percentage of radio sessions in which mental events occurred (up 11.8%). This overall increase in mental event rates in February for both AUD and AV suggests that my comprehension of French was improving as my total French exposure was increasing, albeit very slowly for AUD.



Graph 8: Feb ‘16 mental event rates per session for TV

Graph 8 shows the mental event rate for each of the 165 TV/movie exposure sessions in February 2016. The graph shows that until the 31st session of February (Session 284, Feb. 4th, Day 23), the mental event rate fluctuated and reached similar heights to January. However, from the 31st session onwards, although the mental event rate still fluctuated, there is a dramatic increase in both the frequency of higher mental event rates and the heights that the metal event rates reached. The 31st session coincided with a switch to a cartoon called Titeuf.



Graph 9: Feb ‘16 mental event rates per session for AUD

Graph 9 shows the mental event rate for each of the 61 AUD exposure sessions in February 2016. The graph shows that, except on two occasions, the mental event rate stayed below 0.06 (approximately 1 event every 16 min 20 sec) and that there were fluctuations in the mental event rate during February.

4.3.1.3 Mental event triggers

Codes Used to Describe Perceived Triggers of Mental Events - February 2016					
Codes Used	**Code Meanings**	**Freq. of Usage x/1836**	**Code Categorisation**	**Freq. of Usage x/1836**	**Percentage of Total Usage**
sle	Sounds Like English	965	Cognate Triggers	1213	66.1%
spe	Sounds Part English	241			
slfw3	Sounds Like Foreign Word (Mandarin False Cog)	2			
wle	Typo Should Be sle	1			
slr	Typo Should Be sle	1			
soft	Typo Should Be sle	1			
ufjc	Understood From Just Cognates	1			
slm	Sounds Like Mandarin	1			
ws	Word String	133	Non-Triggers	214	11.7%
nw	New Word	55			
nws	New Words	11			
ccs	Couldn'T Catch the Sound	4			
fla	Feels Like an Achievement	4			
hc	Hearing Clearer	3			
na	New Affix	1			
fw1	Unknown Code Meaning	1			
ao	Audio Observation (Phonetic)	1			
uw	Unknown Word (In Word String)	1			
lr	Logical Reasoning	107	Reasoning Triggers	192	10.5%
g	Guess	43			
pn	Person's Name	15			
ast	After Some Thought	10			
ir	Intentional Replay	9			
mr	Multiple Replays	6			
p	Pondering	2			
uffw	Undestand From French Words	85	Targeted Triggers	113	6.2%
uffa	Understood From French Affix	14			
uffc	Understand From French and Cognate	11			
slfw2	Sounds Like French Word (French Cognate)	1			
uffwf	Understand From French Word Family	1			
sp	Sound Prediction	1			
bl	Body Language	18	Immediate Observation Triggers	35	1.9%
vo	Visual Observation	14			
n	Noticing	2			
avo	Audio Visual Observation	1			
pl	Prior Learning	15	Prior Learning Triggers	21	1.1%
slfw	Sounds Like Foreign Word (Heard In English)	4			
ee	English Expression	2			
wiws	What I Would Say In That Situation	10	English Pattern Triggers	16	0.9%
lec	Like an English Conversation	6			
ut	Uncontrolled Thought	16	Unknown Triggers	16	0.9%
pr	Positive Reinforcement	4	Reinforcement Triggers	7	0.4%
ro	Repetitive Observation	3			
wf	Written in French	7	Translation Triggers	8	0.4%
we	Written in English	1			
pa	Prior Activation	1	Prior Activation Triggers	1	0.1%

Table 12: Codes Used to Describe Perceived Triggers of Mental Events - Feb '16

Table 12 shows the codes that were used during February to describe mental event triggers. Like January, the most frequent individual trigger code used was SLE, which was

used more than all of the trigger codes in January put together. Also like January, the cognate trigger category contained the most number of trigger codes used and made up around two-thirds of all trigger categories in February. Table 12 also shows that three typing errors were made with codes which should have been coded as SLE and that three mental events triggered sound chunks that sounded similar to Mandarin. One of these occurred in MEN 1909, where I recorded the sound chunk ‘hai pa’ interpreted as ‘scared’, which is the meaning of this sound chunk in Mandarin according to my memory. At no point in such instances did I believe that any French sound chunk was a cognate of Mandarin, I was simply aiming to record all mental events in whatever form they occurred. The one use of the UFJC code occurred in MEN 2176, where I recorded the sound chunk ‘absooloomon fantasteek’ interpreted as ‘absolutely fantastic’ with both words clearly being English cognates.

The next category in Table 12 contains 10 individual codes all classified as Non-Triggers. MEN 1379 is where I first used the NW code and added in the notes section that, “…sometimes I learn new words in word strings but I don’t want to miss them in analysis.” Only ‘police matter’ was recorded for this event in the English column with ‘matter’ being the new ‘internal word’. The NWS refers to the same idea and was used in cases where more than one word was ‘new’. The CCS code was used on four occasions with English cognates, where I had noticed a difference in pronunciation of a sound chunk, but was unable to hold it in short term memory for recording. The HC code was used to indicate that I was noticing something new in a sound chunk I had heard previously. For example in MEN 801, I recorded a man’s name as ‘Jozay’ and noted that until that point I had been hearing ‘Josee’. The single use of the NA code occurred in MEN 1487, where I recorded the English word ‘charmer’, as in a person who charms another, and made a note that, “I’ve now heard the ‘er’ ending the same as English for director and charmer” (director ends in ‘-or’, so my reference may have been to both ‘-or’ and ‘-er’ endings). The FW1 code was used in MEN 986 for the sound chunk ‘maree manu’ interpreted as ‘marry Manu’. Having made no mention of the code in the notes section, I am unsure why it was used for this event. The UW code was used in MEN 2108 for the sound chunk ‘tantan ist on la tran’ interpreted as ‘TinTin is on the train’. Despite having a matching English word for each piece of the sound chunk, in the notes section I wrote that I didn’t know what the ‘ist’ sound meant.

As for January, the largest portion of reasoning triggers were coded as LR with those coded as G being the next highest. The three codes that were not used in January were AST, MR and P. Essentially, both the AST and P codes are synonymous with the LR code as they all involved taking a little time to work out a potential meaning for the sound chunks in question. The MR code was used on six occasions, one example of which is MEN 2023. The sound chunk for this event was recorded as ‘liberay lu emmedietmon’ interpreted as ‘liberate (free) him immediately’. It was said after a thug had tied up the wrong person and I replayed the sound chunk several times in order to identify the pronoun ‘him’ (my first recording of this word after 41 days of exposure).

The overall percentage of Targeted Triggers was almost double what had been in January with the UFFW code being used the most frequently. Unlike January however, a further five codes were used in this category. An example of the UFFA code is MEN 862, where the sound chunk ‘perfecmon’ was interpreted as ‘perfectly’ with a note mentioning that the ‘-mon’ suffix acted as the ‘-ly’ suffix in English. One use of the UFFC code was MEN 2075, where the sound chunk ‘tray riskay’ was interpreted as ‘very risky’ with a note mentioning that one word was an English cognate (risky) and the other was not (very). The slfw2 code was used in MEN 1900 for the sound chunk ‘atonday’ interpreted as ‘wait’ with a note mentioning that I was guessing ‘atonday’ was a long form of the word ‘aton’ meaning wait, which I already understood. The UFFWF code was used similarly in MEN 989 for the sound chunk ‘malad’ interpreted as ‘sick’ with a note mentioning that I had previously heard the two similar sounding chunks ‘maladiction’ and ‘malady’ and hence thought that all three may have been part of a French word family. The one use of the SP code was in MEN 1175 where I noted that after hearing the sound chunk ‘eeegza’ I correctly predicted the next sound that followed as ‘kdemon’ to give the full sound chunk ‘eegzakdemon’ interpreted as ‘exactly’.

The individual codes categorised as immediate observation triggers had increased in frequency of usage compared to January with a further two new codes being used. The first of these was the AVO code used in MEN 1229, a cultural mental event, where I recorded that one person had said ‘bee beep’ and other people responded by saying ‘ooh ah’ over and over again. I also noted that I thought it might be a French version of the English chant ‘hip hip hooray’. Although this event did involve the recording of a sound chunk, the attached notes indicate that I did not translate the sounds into ‘hip hip hooray’ rather I was using that expression as a similar example in English.

The number and percentage of codes categorised as prior learning triggers was lower than it had been in January with only one new code being used, SLFW. The four usages of this code referred to words that I had heard before conducting this study and that I considered to have come from languages other than English. Those words were: kamarade (Fr.)/comrade (Eng/Russian), commondont (Fr./Germ.)/commander (Eng.), mama mia (It.) and sol (Fr./Lat.)/sun (Eng.). After each word I have indicated the country where I believed the word is in common usage.

The next four categories, English pattern triggers, Unknown Triggers, Reinforcement Triggers and Translation Triggers, used individual codes from the month of January and so no examples of them are given here. All of these categories, except for Unknown triggers, were recorded in quantities less than in January, with Unknown Triggers showing a slight increase in frequency.

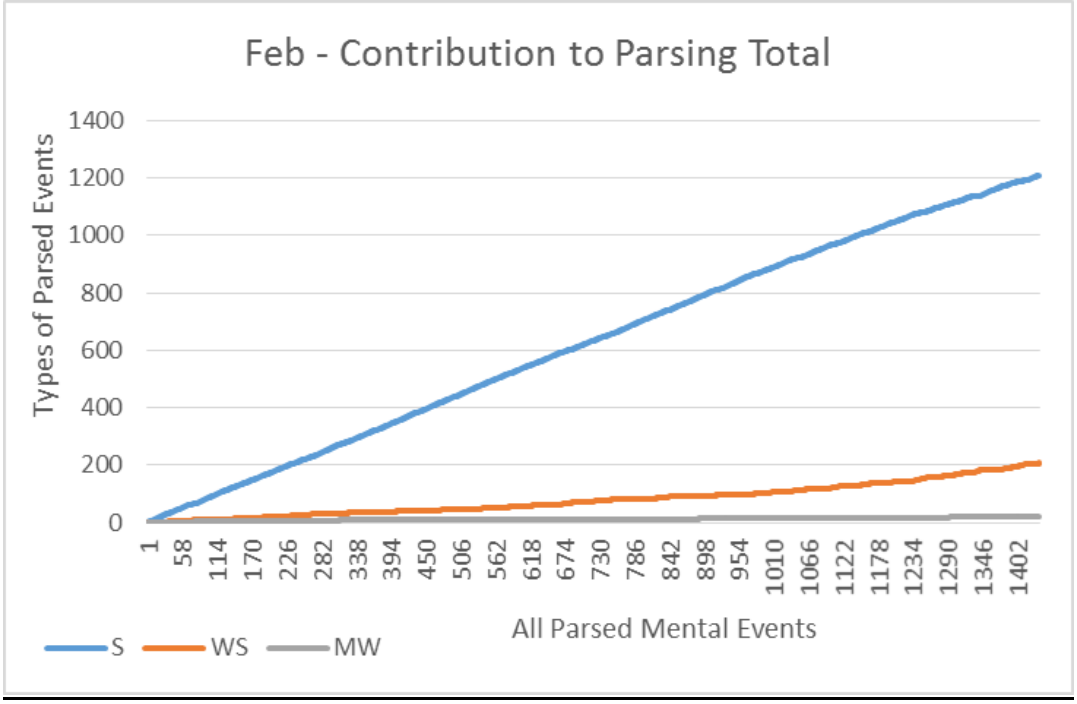
The remaining category used for February, which was not used in January and was used only on a single occasion, was Prior Activation Triggers. In MEN 925, I recorded the sound chunk ‘proncess’ interpreted as ‘princess’ but noted that prior to hearing the sound chunk I had seen a princess in the show that I was watching. The use of this code perhaps suggests that seeing a princess ‘activated’ or prepared me to hear the sound chunk, although I suspect that I may have heard it anyway since it appears to be a cognate of English.

4.3.1.4 Parsing and Word Strings

	Recorded Mental Events (RME)	Non-Parsing Mental Events			Mental Events with Parsing	Parsing Event Types			% of Total Parsing		
		K	M	AR	(=RME-K-M-AR)	S	WS	MW	S	WS	MW
FEB	1528	15	8	67	1438	1209	208	21	84.1	14.5	1.5

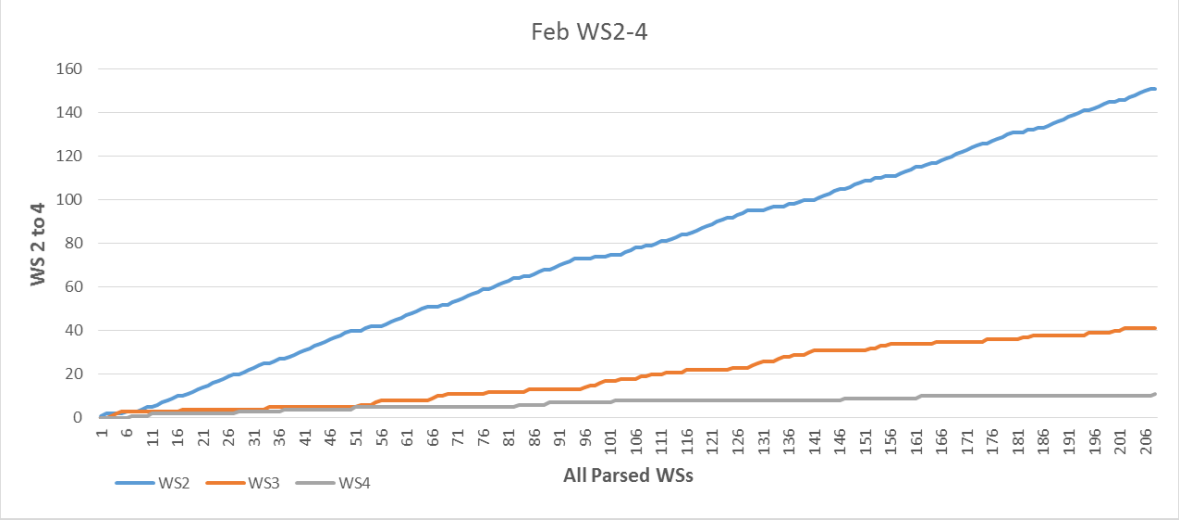
Table 13: Feb ‘16 parsing and non-parsing events

Table 13 shows the number of mental events (1438) used for parsing calculations for February 2016. Like January, S events were easily the most frequent and made up almost the same percentage of all parsing events as they had in January (85.3%). On the other hand, WS events made a greater contribution in February than they had in January (9.9%), while MW events made a lower contribution than the previous month (4.8%).



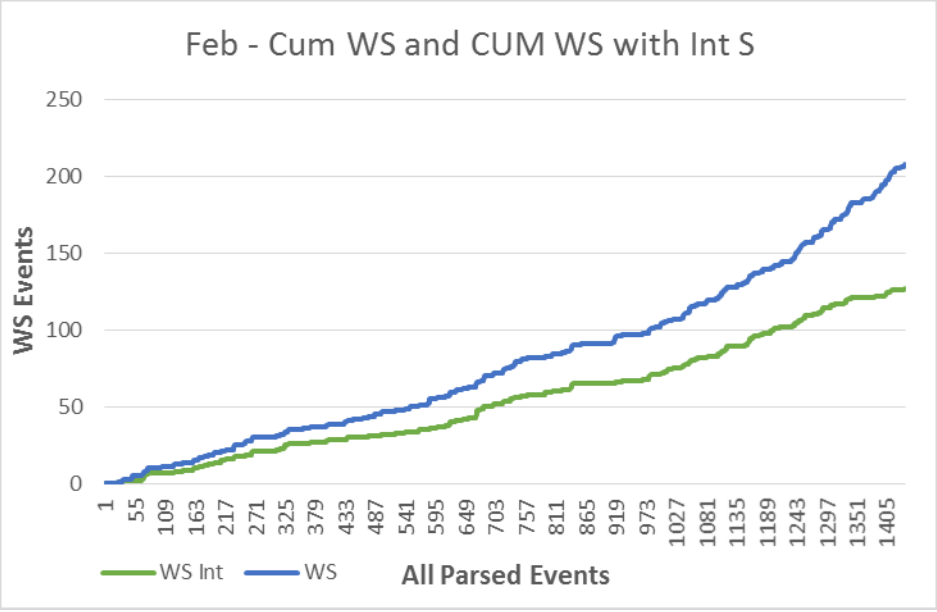
Graph 10: Feb ‘16 contribution to parsing total

Graph 10 shows the accumulation of mental events during February for S, WS and MW events. It can be seen on the graph that a similar trend to January occurred, with S events continuing to accumulate at a much higher rate than the other two categories with the quantity of S events being almost double what it had been in January (626). Although the WS events continued to climb at a much lower rate than the S events, the actual quantity of WS events was almost triple what it had been in the previous month (73) with the WS accumulation rate increasing towards the end of the month. The MW rate of accumulation was again the lowest of the three types and increased at a rate lower than in January.



Graph 11: Feb ‘16 WS2-4 Accumulation

In February 2016, the WS tallies were: WS2=151, WS3=41, WS4=11, WS5=3, WS7=1 and WS11=1. Graph 11 shows the accumulation of the WS2-4s for February 2016. The WS2s were by far the most frequent of all of the word strings, as they had been in January (58), and accumulated at rates higher towards the end of the month than at the beginning. The WS3s followed this same trend of accumulation with a total count of 41 as compared to the 11 that were recorded in January. Although only eleven WS4s and three WS5s occurred in February, these amounts were both much higher than in the previous month at two and zero respectively. February was the first time that a WS5, WS7 and a WS11 were recorded. An example of a WS5 was MEN 823, where I recorded 'zhozay et moi se trminay' interpreted as 'Jose and I are terminated (broken up)'. The single WS7 occurred in MEN 1681, where I recorded 'wee le celeste hello bonjour ah english' interpreted as 'Yes. The Celeste. Hello. Hello. Ah. English' which was said by the receptionist upon answering the phone at a hotel called The Celeste. The WS11 occurred in MEN 2026 while listening to a song on the radio, where I recorded 'I need a shoulder. I need a bell to settle down' in the English column only. In the notes column for this event I wrote that I was sure my interpretation was wrong, which I am assuming is because all of the words sounded like English in a French song. I also copied and pasted what I think is the name of the song as 'LES AVIONS NUIT SAUVAGE'.



Graph 12: Accumulation of WSs and WSs containing internal unique words, Feb '16

Graph 12 shows the accumulation of both WSs and WSs with internal new words in January 2016. The graph shows that like January, WSs (208) often contained internal new

words (127) and also that the gap between the two gradually widened in the favour of WSs without internal new words. Also like January, while more WS2s were recorded with one internal year word (92) in comparison to those with two (52), the overall contribution to new words was greater for WS2s with two new words (52 x 2 = 104) than it was for those with one. However, this same trend did not occur for the longer WSs.

4.3.2 Qualitative data

J54 D20 FEB1

> It really is good to be back listening. It's funny how I can be so confident this will work when I'm not doing it. It seems impossible to learn this way, at least logically. Anyway, the words I could recognise 9 days ago are as easily recognisable today.

J66 D23 FEB4

> It's funny. Just this morning or yesterday I was saying to myself how French was the right choice and then just now I'm saying it’s the wrong one. Yesterday, I'm feeling confident about learning a language this way and then today I'm not. While I was watching this episode [HELG] I was thinking that I need to change shows. This one has been good because they are constantly talking and there are men’s and women's voices to listen to, but because they are mature aged characters they don't do much with their days. They just talk a lot. I need to watch something with more action, so I can learn some verbs and nouns…

J68 D24 FEB4

> Yesterday was the highest number of mental events since Day 1 and the highest mental event rate overall. It is probably just one of those days that is bound to happen every now and then rather than being of any significance, but it may be connected to the change of media. Perhaps the brain picks more up with novel stuff…or maybe those programs were easier (most of the new events occurred with the cartoon). It was annoying in fact when I started watching the cartoon because I was stopping it to record every couple of seconds…

J69 D24 FEB4

> …I've started lying down to watch TV with the computer on my stomach, because I was getting a sore back sitting on the chair for too long. No sore back today. Yay.

J73 D25 FEB5

There are some noticeable spikes on the graph of mental event rates per session for the last 2 days. And while listening to the radio this morning, I've had a huge number of mental events compared to any other day and yesterday's radio had more events than before. Possible explanations include: change of program (newness), new program provides more stuff to pick up, after about 130 hours my listening got better, it's just randomness and it won't be maintained, I've slightly increased my total hours per day, or the nine day break was influential although not immediately…

J81 D31 FEB13

There has clearly been a significant spike in the number of mental events and almost all of them are words that sound like English words. I suspect it is a combination of a change of programs and better listening. The new programs are more interesting, more realistic and have more variety of content, [and] I'm pretty sure I'm hearing these words at a speed I wouldn't have earlier.

J82 D32 FEB14

The activity spike has stayed at an increased level, so I'm going to switch back to Helene and the boys [HELG] for three episodes to see if it drops back to pre-spike levels.

J83 D32 FEB 14

That was extremely painful. It is such a boring show. They just talk and nothing happens. I was ready to stop after one episode. It was pure determination just to get through over 200 episodes. I wasn't concerned with learning words though, I was just trying to get lots of conversational input in, in the hope of gaining intonational information. Although it was only three episodes, the new mental event rate dropped back to pre-spike levels, suggesting that the event rate is connected to the program being viewed…

J86 D36 FEB18

I've been unmming and ahhing [indecisive] for a while now about whether or not to do the hundred hour test. I was thinking of changing it to a 75 hour test. The reason for all of this was that the amount of music I've been listening to has increased in

> comparison to TV and so the 100 hour tests would not be comparable. Anyway, I noticed this morning that I was at the next hundred hour mark and so decided to do the test anyway…

On Day 36, in Session 394, I conducted my second 100 hour test following the same conditions for the first test. The mental event rate for this test can be seen in black for the monthly session number 111 in Graph 8. Although the mental event rate for the second test (0.38) is slightly under half of what it was in the very first session in January for the same program (0.82), it must be remembered that these rates only record new/unique mental events, not all mental events. To illustrate this further, in Session 1 on Day 1, 22 mental events were recorded, all of which were new. In the first 100 hour test, 92 mental events were recorded, only three of which had not previously been recorded as mental events. In the second 100 hour test, 130 mental events were recorded, only 8 of which were new. In terms of comprehension, the 100 hour test was starting to suggest that for Episode 1 of HELG, my overall comprehension was improving. However, it is unknown to what extent watching the same episode repeatedly had on my ability to comprehend this episode.

J89 D39 FEB22

> A successful afternoon, even though I'm tired and really don't feel like doing this. I got to learn 'after' a preposition and 'us' a pronoun. They will be useful words for comprehending other words. The best part is they aren't cognates.

J91 D41 FEB24

> Just finished an episode and I said to myself, "I'm starting to enjoy this." It's really interesting to experience a language this way. It's exciting to discover non-cognates and it’s good to understand some things ever so gradually. I'm so keen to see what can be achieved in a year. It's what drives me.

J102 D42 FEB25

> I'm curious as to why there are pretty much always words I know. It’s likely that it’s just because there are so many English words that are French, but still, it not implausible to think that a few days should pass without any new mental events. Perhaps a time will come in the future when I've heard all of the cognates, that the rate of mental events will drop.

J105 D43 FEB26

Well, I've just had five days off TV…My current plan is to do as many hours of French as I can from about 5am onwards, have lunch and a nap and then read at least one article and write about it. I don't want to sacrifice the [learning experience] and I will need to rest before reading to get my motivation back….I'll do a recap of my time to now.

The hardest part is collecting data…Or in other words, if I was just doing this purely for the sake of learning it would be unnecessary to record mental events. It's difficult because every stoppage adds up and on some days there is easily more than an hour of stoppage time, which is time I can't record as exposure. It's also just annoying to keep stopping and starting. [My] writing and recording body position is also different from [my] watching body position which means frequent shifting.

The most enjoyable part is the music. It's just easy because it’s input without the need for concentration. Well at least that is how I'm doing it. I'll make that clear here. I am not focusing on the music like I am on the TV. With the TV, I'm watching everything that's happening and listening more intently to all of the speech. With the music I'm able to do other things, like do my data analysis in the morning or maintain input exposure while having a mental rest from the TV…

In my everyday life, it is French music that pops randomly into my head with far greater frequency than words even though the input quantity is the other way around...

In regards to the experience of watching TV, I'm very motivated in the morning and so it’s not a problem to get going. I can comfortably do the first hour. The second hour I need to push myself to stay focused, but I can pretty much do a 2 hour session first thing in the morning no problems [but] by that time I need a little break. I usually have a 10 to 20 minute break during which time I usually listen to the [French] radio and have a small stretch. When I go back, I try to do at least another hour and often do an hour and a half until the next break. This is how the days usually go.

In the beginning I was sitting on a couch all day but my back was getting sore. When I then started lying on the bed with my head on about 4 pillows and the laptop on my belly, I was much more comfortable. With the pillows I also don't have to move in order to type. Even though the TV programs are not something I'd watch in English, they are bearable…

Because I start my day anywhere between 4 and 6am I can finish about six hours of exposure between 12 and 2pm. Every day I say I'll do more TV and more than 6 hours, but when I reach my quota. I want to stop. It's like a job and when work is finished I don't want to stay any longer…

4.4 March 2016

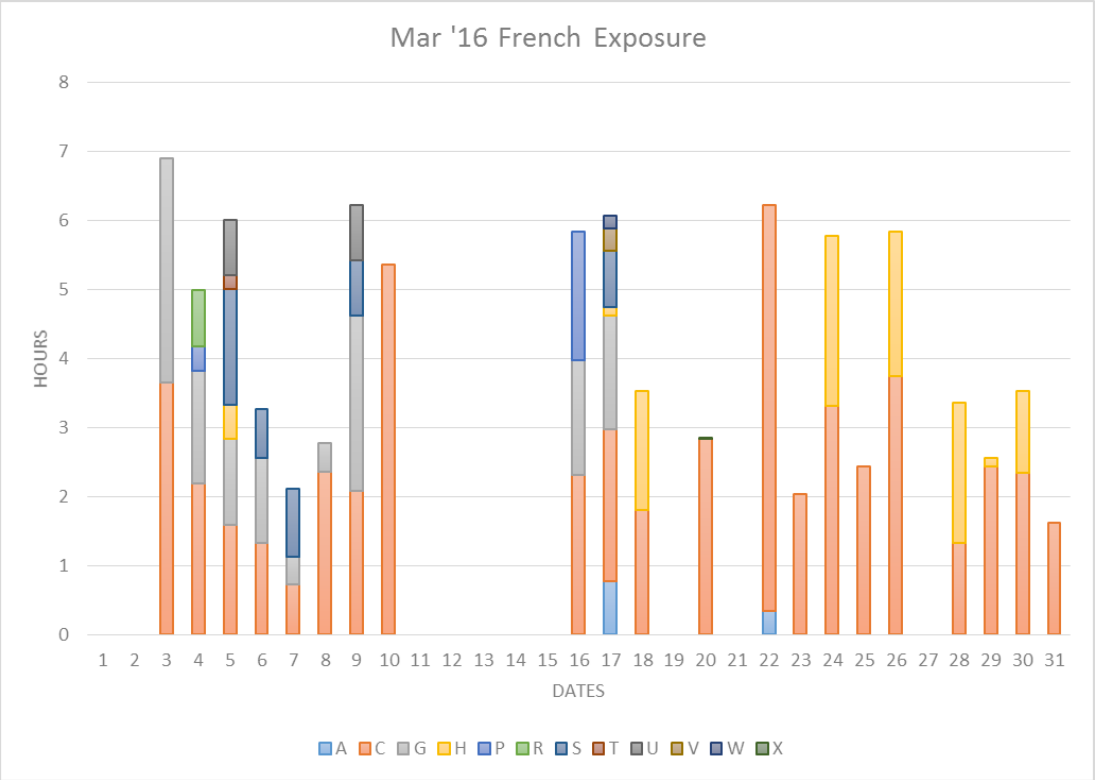
4.4.1 Quantitative data

4.4.1.1 Learning media and hours of exposure

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	TV	Helene et Les Garcon	1.12	1.2
C	Radio	Chante France	53.57	60.0
G	TV	Plus Belle La Vie	14.04	15.7
H	TV	Titeuf	10.22	11.4
P	TV	TinTin	2.21	2.5
R	TV	Les Revenants	0.81	0.9
S	TV	Les beaux mecs	5.01	5.6
T	TV	Arsène Lupin	0.19	0.2
U	TV	Mafiosa	1.60	1.8
V	TV	Fort Boyard	0.32	0.4
W	TV	Kaboul Kitchen	0.18	0.2
X	TV	Debate Noam Chomsky & Michel Foucault - On human nature	0.007	0.01
			89.29	

Table 14: Mar ‘16 French exposure by program

Table 14 shows summarised data of the French exposure that occurred during March 2016. A total of 12 types of program were experienced, each given a unique program code, six of which were experienced in the previous two months. The table shows that almost 60% of my French exposure was received from the radio program Chante France, an increase on the previous month, with the remaining 40% made up of a variety of TV programs. The three programs that I watched the most were Plus Belle la Vie, Titeuf and Les Beaux Mecs.



Graph 13: Daily French exposure by program Mar '16

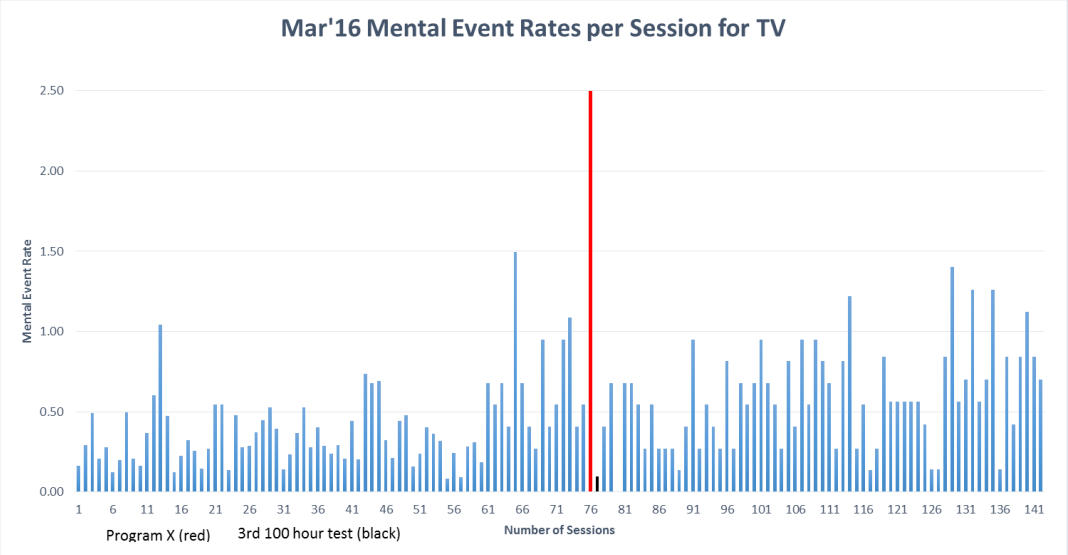
Graph 13 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of March 2016 and which programs were experienced on what days. The graph shows that I received exposure to French on 21 days out of a possible 31 with a four-day break and three one-day breaks in between. The graph also shows that my exposure to French radio was consistent throughout the month and that my TV viewing in the first half of the month was made up of a variety of TV programs while in the second half it was dominated by the program Titeuf. It can also be seen that on only five occasions I achieved my daily goal of six hours of exposure and on many occasions fell well short.

4.4.1.2 Mental event rates

Exposure Type	Hours	Number of Recorded Mental Events	Number of Duplicate Recordings	Number of Mental Events	Average Mental Event Rate	Number of Exposure Sessions	Number of Sessions with No Mental Events	Number of Sessions with Mental Events	Percentage of Sessions with No Mental Events	Percentage of Sessions with Mental Events
TV	35.72	855	33	822	0.384	142	1	141	0.7	99.3
RADIO	53.57	68	6	62	0.019	60	34	26	56.7	43.3
BOTH	89.29	923	39	884	0.172	202	35	167	17.3	82.7

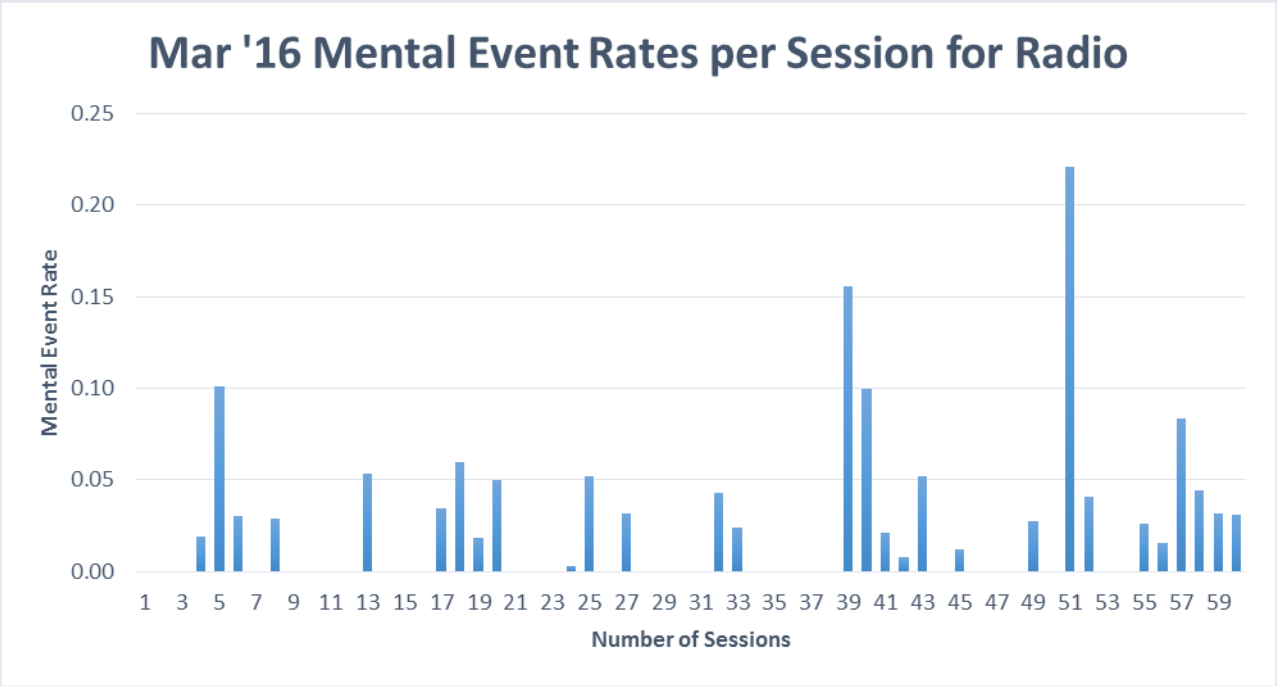
Table 15: Mar '16 exposure time, mental event occurrence and session occurrence

Table 15 shows that, like January and February, the majority of mental events occurred during exposure to French TV and that the mental event rates for both TV (0.351) and radio (0.022) were roughly equivalent to what they had been in February. Table 15 also shows that mental events were occurring in almost every TV exposure session, which was an improvement on the previous month. The table also shows that the percentage of radio sessions with mental events was almost equivalent to the percentage without mental events. This was a significant improvement on both January and February, where the percentage of radio sessions with mental events was 24.3% and 36.1% respectively.



Graph 14: Mar '16 mental event rates per session for TV

Graph 14 shows the mental event rate for each of the 141 TV/movie exposure sessions in March 2016. The graph shows that for the first 60 sessions the mental event rate fluctuated around 0.25 (one event every four minutes) and only on a few occasions got above 0.5. However, from Session 61 (17th Mar.) onwards there is a noticeable increase in the frequency of higher mental event rates, a large portion of which were considerably over the 0.5 mark (one event every two minutes). Session 61 coincided with the viewing of the TV program Titeuf, which was to be the only TV program viewed for the remainder of March, except for the 3rd 100 hour test and 24 seconds of viewing for the program coded X. This 24 seconds of viewing resulted in the occurrence of one mental event, giving the extremely high mental event rate of 2.5 in the 76th session of March. The reason for such a short viewing was that the program contained a considerable portion of spoken English and English subtitles and my desire was to avoid such programs.



Graph 15: Mar ‘16 mental event rates per session for radio

Graph 15 shows the mental event rate for each of the 60 radio/music exposure sessions in March 2016. The graph shows that the mental event rate fluctuated throughout March with the majority of mental event rates being on or below 0.05 (one every twenty minutes). The graph also shows that on four occasions the mental event rate was on or over 0.1 (one event every ten minutes), which was a slight improvement on the previous month.

4.4.1.3 Mental event triggers

Codes Used to Describe Perceived Triggers of Mental Events - March 2016					
Codes Used	**Code Meanings**	**Freq. of Usage x/1270**	**Code Categorisation**	**Freq. of Usage x/1270**	**Percentage of Total Usage**
sle	Sounds Like English	362	Cognate Triggers	641	50.5%
spe	Sounds Part English	279			
ws	Word String	145	Non-Triggers	242	19.1%
nw	New Word	66			
fla	Feels Like an Achievement	13			
ccs	Couldn't Catch The Sound	6			
nws	New Words	5			
uw	Unknown Word (in Word String)	5			
s	Surprising	1			
fw2	Fantasy Word	1			
uffw	Undestand From French Words	208	Targeted Triggers	232	18.3%
uffa	Understood From French Affix	24			
g	Guess	29	Reasoning Triggers	85	6.7%
pn	Person's Name	19			
lr	Logical Reasoning	21			
ir	Intentional Replay	7			
mr	Multiple Replays	5			
ast	After Some Thought	4			
wiws	What I Would Say in That Situation	18	English Pattern Triggers	21	1.7%
lec	Like an English Conversation	1			
lii	Like English Intonation	1			
lef	Like an English Frame	1			
vo	Visual Observation	10	Immediate Observation Triggers	15	1.2%
bl	Body Language	5			
ut	Uncontrolled Thought	13	Unknown Triggers	13	1.0%
wf	Written in French	9	Translation Triggers	9	0.7%
pl	Prior Learning	4	Prior Learning Triggers	6	0.5%
slfw	Sounds Like Foreign Word (Heard In English)	2			
pa	Prior Activation	2	Prior Activation Triggers	4	0.3%
pwa	Previous Word Activated It	2			
pr	Positive Reinforcement	2	Reinforcement Triggers	2	0.2%

Table 16: Codes Used to Describe Perceived Triggers of Mental Events - Mar '16

Table 16 shows the mental event triggers that were recorded during March 2016. Like the previous two months both the individual SE code and the Cognate Trigger category made up the majority of all codes used. However, both of these also occurred in lower frequencies than in the previous two months.

The Non-Trigger category made up a larger percentage of all codes used compared to the previous two months and contained three individual codes that were not used in the previous two months, NU, S and FW2. The NU code was used in MEN 3077, where I recorded 'fabreek' interpreted as 'fabric' and noted that, "fabric may also mean linen" as a teacher had said the word to a boy wearing a sheet. This is strange because my only

previous recording of this sound chunk was also interpreted as ‘fabric’. It is possible that I was trying to differentiate between ‘fabreek’ meaning ‘make’, as in ‘fabricate’, but no prior recording exists to indicate that this was true. The S code was used in MEN 2875, where I recorded ‘zha mapelle poleese’ interpreted as ‘I’ll call the police’. In the notes section I recorded that, “sounded strange because I thought ‘mapelle’ meant ‘name’, but if it is used like ‘call’ it’s the same as English. I'm called peter. I'll call the police”. The FW2 code was used in MEN 2819, where I recorded ‘capeetan megakill’ interpreted as ‘Captain Megakill’ in reference to a computer game character’s name. It was described as a fantasy word because I thought that it was a made-up name, i.e. one not found in the language outside of the television show.

The Targeted Trigger category was made up of more individual codes than the previous two months with no new codes being used. Although the UFFA code was used on 24 occasions, the codes referred to very few affixes. On 16 occasions they referred to the ‘-mon’ suffix translated as the English ‘-ly’ suffix. Seven referred to an ‘-ay’ suffix, all of which described verbs, four translated as the English ‘-ate’ suffix, e.g. radeeay (Fr.) / radiate (Eng.), and three with different suffix endings: prostechuay (Fr.) / prostitute (oneself) (Eng.), deklaray (Fr.) / declare (Eng.) and retarday (Fr.) / retard (something) (Eng.). The final use of the UFFA code was in MEN 2447 with the sound chunk ‘revolutionair’ interpreted as ‘revolutionary’.

The Reasoning Triggers were used considerably less in March than they had been in the previous two months, with the LR usage being significantly reduced. One example of a Reasoning Trigger was MEN 2715, where the sound chunk ‘zheenyal’ was said after someone had opened a present and which I interpreted as ‘awesome’.

The English Pattern Triggers were used slightly more than in the previous month with two new codes being used, LII and LEF. The LII code was used in MEN 2714, where ‘soovray’ was interpreted as ‘really?’ with a rising intonation in a similar situation to how I have experienced it in English. In MEN 2224, the code LEF was used in reference to the concept of ‘frames’ where I recorded in the French column, ‘oui _____, oui _____, oui _____ and oui _____’ and in the English column, ‘yes this, yes this, yes this and yes this’. Unfortunately, no additional notes were recorded and so the fact that I used lines instead of letters suggests to me that I wasn’t able to catch [hear] the sounds being said but had used the word ‘this’ to mean that they were all things near to the French speaker.

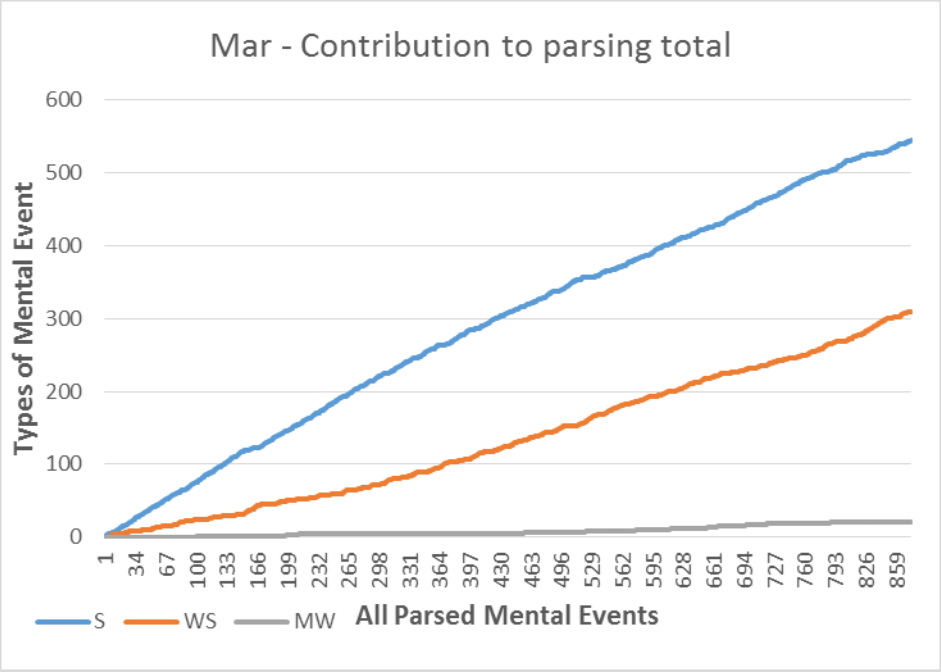
For the remaining trigger categories in March, only the code PWA was new with no dramatic changes in the category totals. The PWA code was used in MEN 2256 for the sound chunk 'prevnju police' interpreted as 'contact police'. In the notes section, I mentioned that a lady entered a hotel saying 'disparoo' interpreted as 'disappear' and that this word in combination with the visual context had allowed me to interpret 'prevnju' as 'contact'.

4.4.1.4 Parsing and word strings

	Recorded Mental Events (RME)	Non-Parsing Mental Events			Mental Events with Parsing (=RME-K-M-AR)	Parsing Event Types			% of Total Parsing		
		K	M	AR		S	WS	MW	S	WS	MW
MAR	923	8	1	39	875	545	310	20	62.3	35.4	2.3

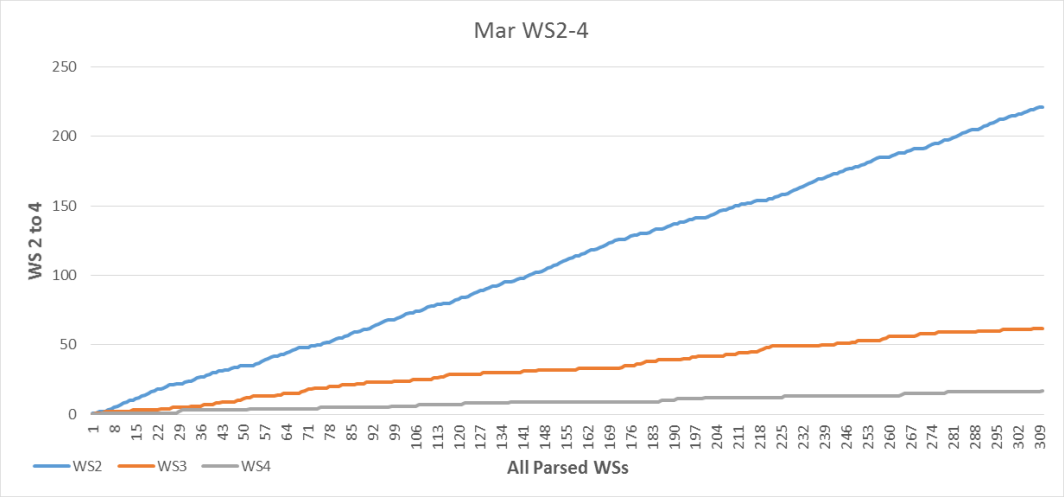
Table 17: Mar '16 parsing and non-parsing mental events

Table 17 shows the number of mental events (875) that were used for parsing calculations in March 2016. A notable difference between March and the previous two months is the increase in contribution WSs made to parsing events. In March, WSs made up over 35% of all parsed events, whereas in January and February the WS contribution was 9.9% and 14.5% respectively. This difference is also reflected in the contribution of S events at 62.3%, down from the previous two months at roughly 85% each. While MW events made a higher contribution than the previous month, it only amounted to 0.8% increase.



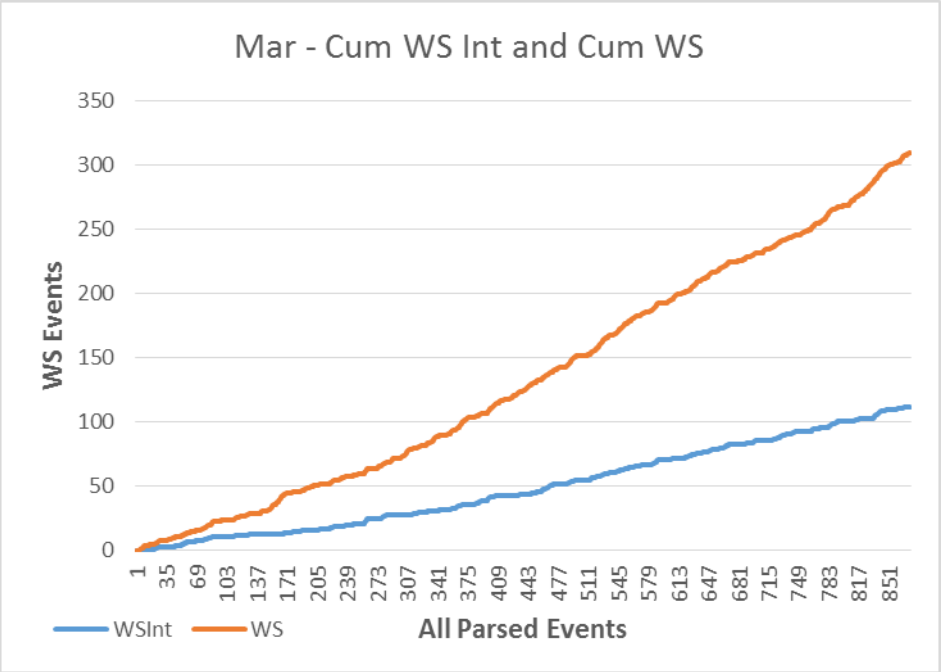
Graph 16: Mar '16 contribution to parsing total

Graph 16 shows the contribution each of the three parsing categories made during March 2016. Like January and February, the S events were still the most frequent and continued to steadily increase throughout the month. Although WSs were still the second most frequent type of parsing event and showed a steady increase throughout the month, their rate of increase began to approach that of the S events towards the end of the month. The MW events showed only a slight increase during March, as they had in both January and February.



Graph 17: Mar ‘16 WS2-4 accumulation

In March 2016, WSs were tallied in the following amounts: WS2=221, WS3 =62, WS4 =17, WS5= 7, WS6=2 and WS7=1. Graph 17 shows the accumulation of the WS2s, 3s and 4s during March. The majority of WSs were once again the WS2s, with the rate of accumulation increasing further towards the end of the month. Similarly, the WS3s were the next most frequent and showed a frequency increase towards the end of the month. Although both the WS4s and the WS5s did increase during March, their rate of increase was slight in comparison to the WS2s and WS3s. An example of a WS6 was MEN 3053, where I recorded ‘la condeeshon feezeek se trez important’ interpreted as ‘the physical condition is very important’. The sole WS7 was in MEN 2677, where I recorded, ‘se boo se tray boo. Melody sjooper’ interpreted as ‘It’s wonderful. It’s very wonderful. Super melody.’



Graph 18: Mar '16 WS and WSint accumulation

Graph 18 shows the accumulation of all WSs (310) and WSs with internal new words (112). In March, the gap between WSs and WSs with internal new words had widened rapidly enough such that by the end of the month, WSs with internal new words no longer made up the majority of WSs. In regards to WS2s, those with single new words (73) once again occurred more frequently than those with two (14) and for the first time made a higher contribution to all new words (73) than those with two internal words (14 x 2 = 28).

4.4.2 Qualitative data

J109 D45 MAR4

> I need to write more about the experience of language learning in this way. Firstly, it's interesting. For me this is a far more interesting way to learn a language than via reading and grammar. Most importantly, I'm experiencing the actual language. The way it exists. Although grammar and the written word exist, they are not how language began and they are not how we naturally socialise with each other…
>
> Secondly, perhaps for me it's different than for other people, but this is not difficult. Nothing is difficult about it. I just need to receive exposure and watch what is going on. That's easy. I don't think difficult is an accurate description. It simply requires patience. Like almost every skill in life, it will take time to improve and excel, but if

you persist rewards will flow. That's how I see this. It's a matter of patience and persistence…

Thirdly, the autonomy and freedom are wonderful. I've seen the way many teachers treat students as inferiors or people to be controlled… if I want to eat, answer my phone, go to the toilet or have a break, I can do it whenever I please. I also don't need to travel to work or get dressed nor sit in an uncomfortable chair. If I want to work early in the morning, late at night or on weekends I can. Again though, this kind of freedom suits my personality.

Fourthly, occasionally there is some frustration/curiosity regarding words that I frequently hear yet am unable to understand. They are so common, but no context allows me to get them. This surely happens with first language learners. A word can't be understood until exactly the right situation allows it. Concrete nouns more than likely require the object to be present with the sound of the word and often they'll be picked up. Adverbs however that modify single words or whole sentences, however frequent, won't be understood until the sentence or word is. Such words are really more advanced than concrete nouns. However, I'm learning a language with a huge amount of cognates. For me this is both good and bad. It's good because it should accelerate my learning in comparison to a non-cognate language. Bad because it interferes with my main interest, which is non-cognate learning. Nevertheless, I think French is the right language for this project because it gives me oodles of data for analysis and the accelerated learning is necessary for a project such as this with extreme time constraints.

In summary then, this learning experience is quite nice. I just wish I had better TV programs to make it more interesting, but otherwise it is just a matter of patience and persistence…

Oh yeah. I better also say something about what it’s like not to speak in French. It's actually easy. I can't really say anything yet anyway, other than single words and common greetings. There has been no real urge to speak either, but there has been with songs. Quite often, I really want to sing the songs I hear and sometimes [a song’s lyrics] just pop out my mouth briefly before I stop it. I guess the urge to speak may be stronger if there were people speaking French around me. But still, it's kind of like I understand why small children, who can speak a little, won't speak around new people…

J120 D53 MAR17

Probably the hardest part of this experience is continuing. I can imagine that if it were anyone else but me, you'd give up and go back to more familiar learning methods. At least subtitles and some books and a dictionary. I continue because I have to. Every day I switch between thinking this will work and it won't work, but I have to persevere in case it does work and I have to now anyway since if I don't the scholarship and the study are over. It's a strange feeling. I get little bits of understanding, here and there. There has certainly been an increase in word strings and every episode gives me new words I didn't know, so you'd have to think I'm progressing in the right direction.

J128 D56 MAR22

I've just finished another 100 hour test…I don't like doing the test because an hour of time is used up for only 24 minutes of input, but I think it is gathering interesting data. Now, I'm going to look at the event difference between this and [the] last test. I'll be back..... 145 this time vs 130 last time…At least there were some more events, but nothing awesome.

J136 D60 MAR26

This is the best day I've had in terms of rate of mental events. I'm tired and it's Saturday, but I've put in some hours and just graphed today's viewing. The graph is starting to show that 'Titeuf' provides more opportunities for mental events than the other two programs I've spent a lot of time watching [HELG and PBLV]. When I first watched Titeuf, I was against it because I didn't want to watch cartoons, but they are simply more interesting than dramas, well at least this one is…

4.5 April 2016

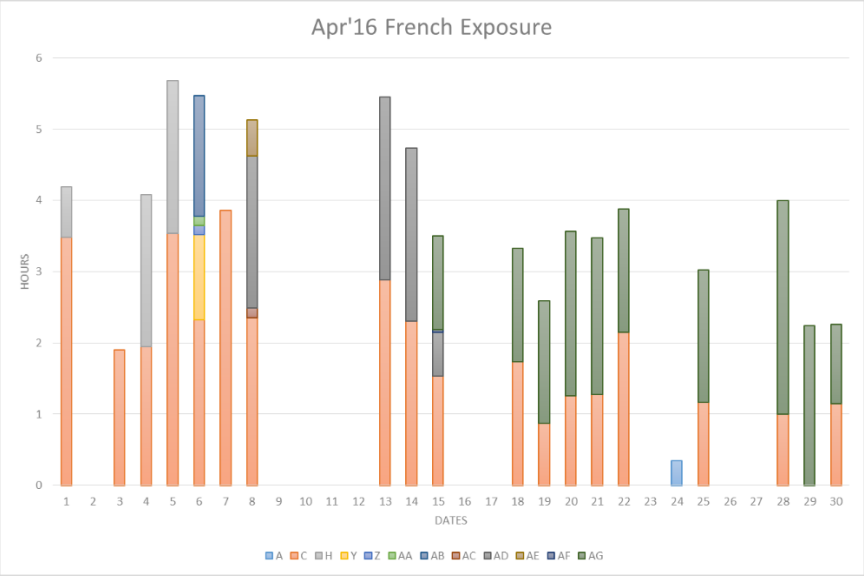
4.5.1 Quantitative data

4.5.1.1 Learning media and hours of exposure

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	TV	Helene et Les Garcon	0.35	0.5
C	Radio	Chante France	36.73	50.5
H	TV	Titeuf	4.99	6.9
Y	Movie	Despicable me	1.20	1.6
Z	Movie	Minions	0.13	0.2
AA	Movie	Toy Story	0.13	0.2
AB	Movie	Escape from Planet Earth	1.70	2.3
AC	TV	Le vent se lève En Français Animation Dessin Animée	0.14	0.2
AD	TV	Zou Episode 1 - Zou Cuistot	7.73	10.6
AE	Movie	Bienvenue chez les Robinson - Film D'animation Français Complet	0.51	0.7
AF	TV	Batman Français Animation Dessin Animée	0.04	0.1
AG	TV	Caillou	19.08	26.2
			72.725	

Table 18: Apr ‘16 French exposure by program

Table 18 shows summarised data of the French exposure that occurred during April 2016. A total of 12 types of program were experienced, each given a unique program code, three of which were experienced in the previous three months. The table shows that almost 50% of my French exposure was received from the radio program Chante France, a decrease on the previous month, with the remaining 50% made up of a variety of TV programs and movies. The most viewed program during April was Caillou at almost 30%, followed by Zou at just over 10% and around 5% of viewing time spent on Titeuf, my most favoured program from the previous month.



Graph 19: Daily French exposure by program Apr '16

Graph 19 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of April 2016 and which programs were experienced on what days. The graph shows that I received exposure to French on 19 days out of a possible 30 with two one-day, two two-day and one four-day break in between. The graph shows that there was variation in the number of daily hours throughout April and that on no occasion did I reach my daily six hour goal. The graph also shows that for the first half of the month I watched a variety of TV programs, while in the second half, the program called Caillou was the most watched.

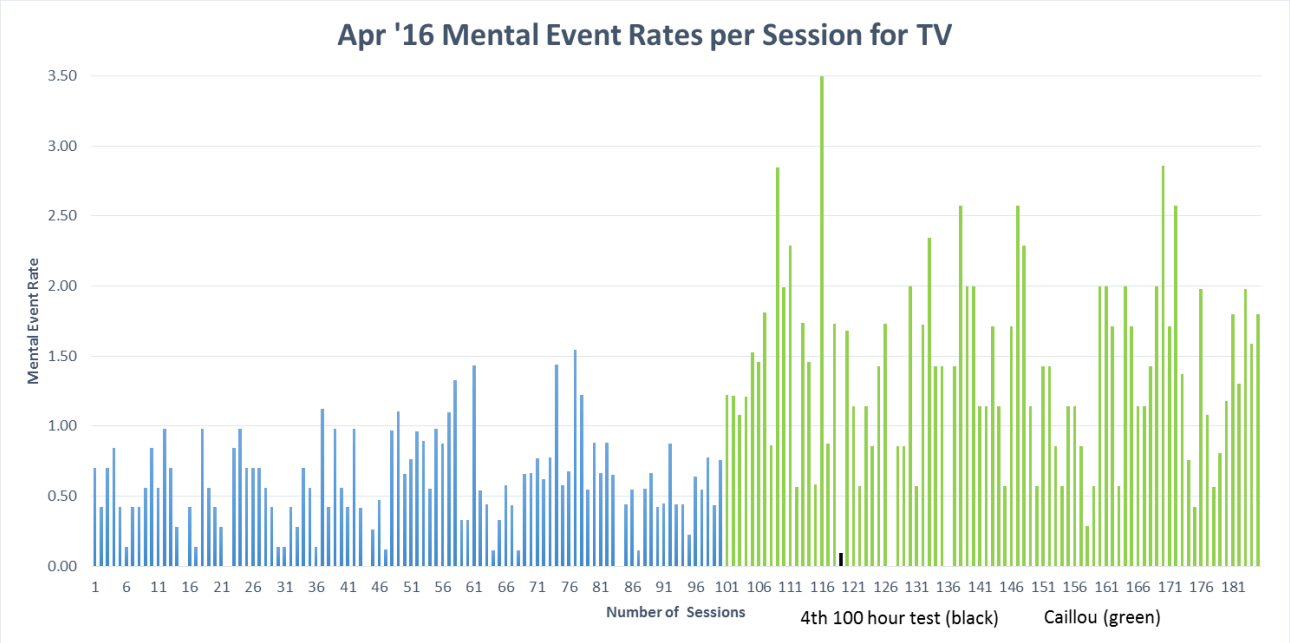
4.5.1.2 Mental event rates

Exposure Type	Hours	Number of Recorded Mental Events	Number of Duplicate Recordings	Number of Mental Events	Average Mental Event Rate	Number of Exposure Sessions	Number of Sessions with No Mental Events	Number of Sessions with Mental Events	Percentage of Sessions with No Mental Events	Percentage of Sessions with Mental Events
TV	34.88	2030	27	2003	0.957	185	6	179	3.2	96.8
RADIO	35.59	51	3	48	0.022	35	14	21	40	60
BOTH	70.46	2081	30	2051	0.492	220	20	200	9.1	90.9

Table 19: Apr '16 exposure time, mental event occurrence and session occurrence

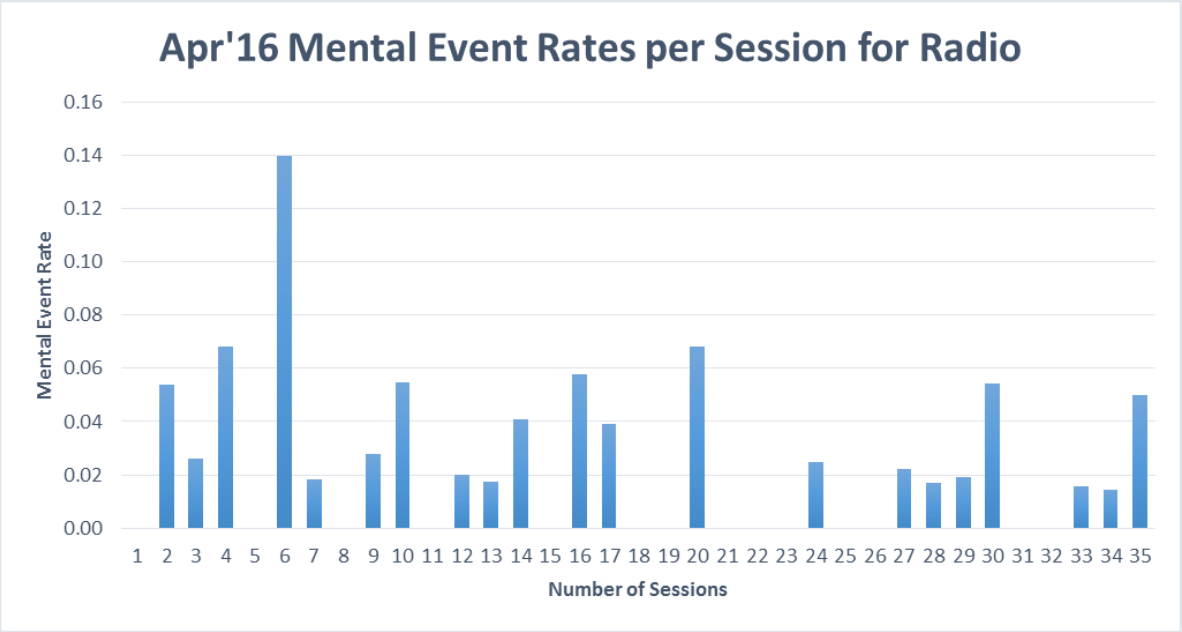
Table 19 shows a summary of exposure time, mental event data and exposure sessions for April 2016. It must be noted that the total hours shown in Table 19 are 2.265 hours less than the total hours shown in Table 18 because on April 30th I did not record mental event data and so the hours for that day were not used in mental event calculations. Table 19 shows that the amount of exposure time for both TV and radio was relatively equal and

that once again the majority of mental events occurred during exposure to TV. The table shows that the number of mental events that occurred during TV exposure was more than double the number of the previous month (855) despite almost the same amount of exposure being received (35.72 hours). This increased number of mental events is reflected in the rate of mental events, which was slightly under 1.0 (one event per minute). The table also shows that mental events occurred in most TV sessions and that the percentage of radio sessions with mental events was, for the first time, greater than the percentage without.



Graph 20: Apr '16 mental event rates per session for TV

Graph 20 shows the mental event rate for each of the 185 TV/movie exposure sessions in April 2016. The graph shows that for the first 100 sessions the mental event rate fluctuated roughly between 1.5 (one event every 40 seconds) and 0.25 (one event every four minutes). However, from the 101st session (Sess. 796, 15th Apr.) onwards there is a noticeable increase in the frequency of higher mental event rates, a large portion of which were considerably over the 1.5 mark. The 101st session coincided with the viewing of the TV program Caillou, which was to be the program from which a large portion of my future learning would come.



Graph 21: Apr ‘16 mental event rates per session for radio

Graph 21 shows the mental event rate for each of the 60 radio/music exposure sessions in March 2016. The graph shows that the mental event rate fluctuated throughout March with the majority of mental event rates being on or below 0.05 (one every twenty minutes). The graph also shows that on four occasions the mental event rate was on or over 0.1 (one event every ten minutes), which was a slight improvement on the previous month.

4.5.1.3 Mental event triggers

Codes Used to Describe Perceived Triggers of Mental Events - April 2016					
Codes Used	**Code Meanings**	**Freq. of Usage x/2649**	**Code Categorisation**	**Freq. of Usage x/2649**	**Percentage of Total Usage**
uffw	Understand From French Words	1373	Targeted Triggers	1425	53.79%
uffa	Understood From French Affix	27			
fc	French Cognate (Another French Word Influences Me)	16			
stfw	Similar To French Word	4			
pfwh	Preceding French Words Helped	3			
slfw2	Sounds Like French Word (French Cognate)	1			
fgh	French Grammar Helped	1			
spe	Sounds Part English	437	Cognate Triggers	593	22.39%
sle	Sounds Like English	154			
c	Cognate	2			
lr	Logical Reasoning	241	Reasoning Triggers	448	16.91%
g	Guess	166			
ast	After Some Thought	28			
ir	Intentional Replay	11			
mr	Multiple Replays	2			
fla	Feels Like an Achievement	30	Non-Triggers	69	2.60%
uw	Unknown Word (in Word String)	16			
pe	Partly Excited	12			
nw	New Word	4			
ccs	Couldn't Catch The Sound	3			
ve	Very Excited if Right	2			
stmfw	??Sle/Spe (Disparet)	1			
nws	New Words	1			
wiws	What I Would Say in That Situation	23	English Pattern Triggers	32	1.21%
less	Like English Sentence Structure	5			
see	Similar to English Expression	3			
lec	Like an English Conversation	1			
ut	Uncontrolled Thought	27	Unknown Triggers	27	1.02%
wf	Written in French	22	Translation Triggers	26	0.98%
we	Written in English	4			
bl	Body Language	10	Immediate Observation Triggers	15	0.57%
vo	Visual Observation	5			
pl	Prior Learning	9	Prior Learning Triggers	10	0.38%
fwue	French Word Used in English	1			
pa	Prior Activation	1	Prior Activation Triggers	3	0.11%
da	Double Activiation	1			
pwa	Previous Word Activated It	1			
pr	Positive Reinforcement	1	Reinforcement Triggers	1	0.04%

Table 20: Codes Used to Describe Perceived Triggers of Mental Events - Apr '16

Table 20 shows the mental event trigger codes used in April 2016. The 2649 uses of trigger Codes was the highest for any of the first four months and slightly more than double the previous month's usage (1270). In contrast to the previous three months, the Targeted Trigger category had the highest use of codes, making up just over 50% of all codes used. Within this category, the UFFW code was used 1373 times, more than all of the codes used in the previous month, and four new targeted trigger codes were used, FC, STFW, PFWH and FGH. An example of the FC code is MEN 4584, where I recorded the sound

chunk ‘cashet’ interpreted as ‘hiding place’ and made a note about its similarity to another word I knew ‘cashay’ meaning ‘hide’. The STFW code was used in the same manner as the FC and so no further examples are given here. One use of the PFWH code was in MEN 3791, where I recorded ‘vash’ interpreted as ‘cow’ and noted that seeing the cow and hearing the preceding sound ‘regard’ meaning ‘look at’ assisted in interpreting the ‘vash’ sound. The single use of the FGH was in MEN 3417, where I recorded ‘avec zhway de baby’ interpreted as ‘with a baby’s toy’. In the notes section, I mentioned knowing the meanings of ‘avec, ‘de’ and ‘baby’ and that knowing ‘de’ was used as an indicator of possession helped me understand ‘zhway’ as ‘toy’ for the first time. I also noted that ‘zhway’ might have meant ‘rattle’.

Although the percentage of Cognate Trigger codes was less than in the previous month, more individual codes were still recorded with only the C code being new. It is surprising to me that I used the C code when the SLE code would have sufficed and I made no mention of why I started to use it. One example of C code usage was while listening to music in MEN 4026, where I recorded ‘pyano bar’ interpreted as ‘piano bar’.

Reasoning Trigger codes were used almost as much as they had been in the entire three months with no new codes being used. One example of the LR code is MEN 4078 where I recorded ‘tray treest’ interpreted as ‘very sad’ noting that it was said when a person looked sad.

Considerably less codes were used in the Non-Trigger category than in the previous two months with three new codes being used, PE, VE and STFMW. One example of the PE code was MEN 3201, where I recorded ‘toot la zhornay’ interpreted as ‘enjoy the trip’. A note concerning the partial excitement said that, “I'm doubtful, but this is the first chance I've had at understanding ‘toot’, so I'll see how it goes”. One use of the VE code was in MEN 4141, where I recorded ‘me la problem’ interpreted as ‘but the problem’. The excitement concerned the word ‘but’, which at that point I still did not know the sound for in French. In the notes section I wrote, “Probably intonation and the same structure as English made it happen.” Prior to this event, I had made two other guesses at the word ‘but’. The first was in MEN 273 where I recorded ‘mair’ as ‘but’ noting that the situation in the show I was watching reminded me of a situation where I would expect to hear ‘but’. The second was in MEN 697 where I recorded ‘mei por kwa’ as ‘but why’. I now know that this interpretation was correct, but at the time I had doubts since in the notes section I

wrote, “Been trying to get the meaning of 'mei' in English. ‘but why’ is the first thing I thought of, but ‘mei=but’ still doesn't work for ‘mei wee’.” The STFW code is probably a typing mistake and I am unsure of exactly which code I had intended to write. It was used in MEN 4211 for the sound ‘disparet’ interpreted as ‘disappeared’. In the notes section I mentioned that ‘disparet’ was a possible past tense form of ‘disparoo’.

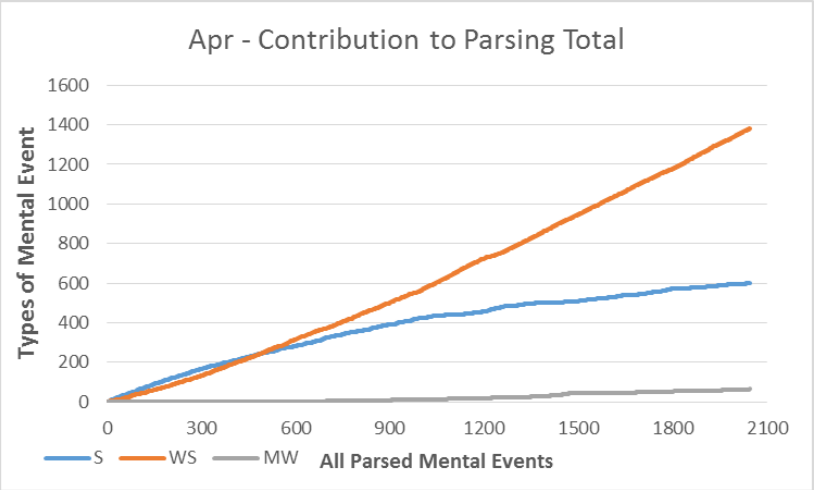
The English Pattern Trigger category used more individual codes than it had in the previous month with the two new codes LESS and SEE being used. An example of the LESS code was for MEN 4839 where I recorded ‘igzaktemon kom twa eh mwa’ interpreted as ‘exactly like you and me’. The LESS code referred to the fact that each of the French words was in exactly the same order as English, a phenomenon that I found occurred frequently throughout this experience. The SEE code was used like the LESS code with one example being MEN 3442 where I recorded ‘on generale’ interpreted as ‘in general’.
The remaining six categories of Table 20 saw no substantial changes from the preceding month with only the DA code being new in the Activation Triggers category. The DA code was used in MEN 3115, where I recorded ‘flesh’ interpreted as the two English words ‘flesh’ and ‘flash’. By double activation, I think I was referring to the activation of two English words as opposed to one, although no additional notes were made to make this code clearer.

4.5.1.4 Parsing and word strings

	Recorded Mental Events (RME)	Non-Parsing Mental Events			Mental Events with Parsing (=RME-K-M-AR)	Parsing Event Types			% of Total Parsing		
		K	M	AR		S	WS	MW	S	WS	MW
APR	2081	6	0	30	2045	601	1380	64	29.4	67.5	3.1

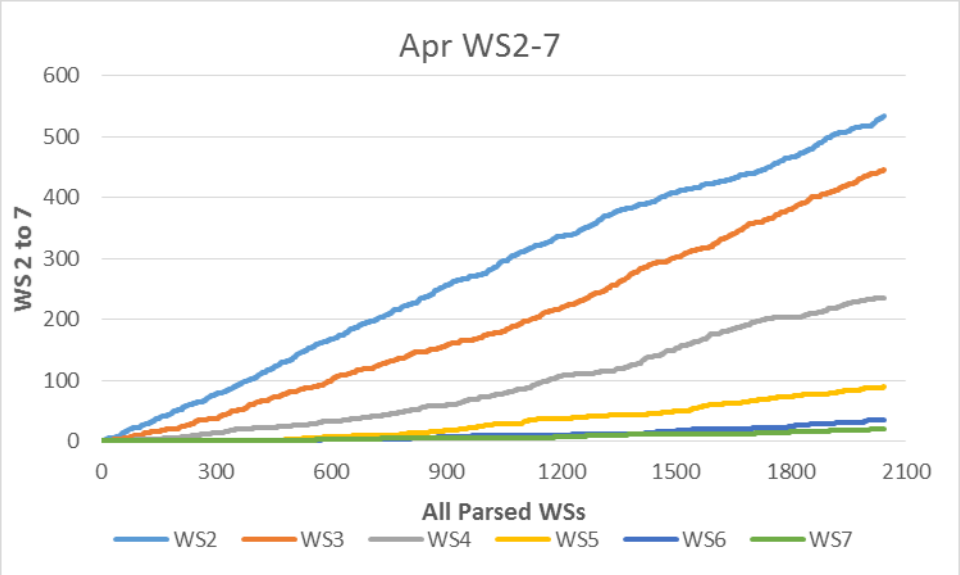
Table 21: Apr ’16 parsing and non-parsing mental events

Table 21 shows the number of mental events (2045) that were used for parsing calculations in April 2016. The most noticeable values in Table 21 are the contribution of WSs to all parsing events in comparison to S events. For the first time in four months, not only were WS events more frequent than S events but their contribution to overall parsing was more than double that of the S events. By contrast, there was only a slight increase (0.8%) in the contribution of MW events to total parsing compared to the previous month.



Graph 22: Apr '16 Contribution to parsing total

Graph 22 shows the contribution of S, WS and MW events to the parsing total during the month of April. The graph shows that at the beginning of the month S events were more frequent than both WS and MW events as they had been in the previous three months. However, even during this time, the graph shows that WS events increased at a rate almost identical to the S events. On the 13th of April, MEN 3580, the quantity of WS events overtook S events for the first time on the 72nd day of French exposure and then proceeded to increase with a rate of accumulation noticeably higher than the S events. Unlike the previous three months, the S events no longer accumulated at a steady and increasing rate, but instead began to level out towards the end of the month. The MW events continued to accumulate at a slow rate in comparison to the S and WS events, in the same manner as they had in the previous three months.

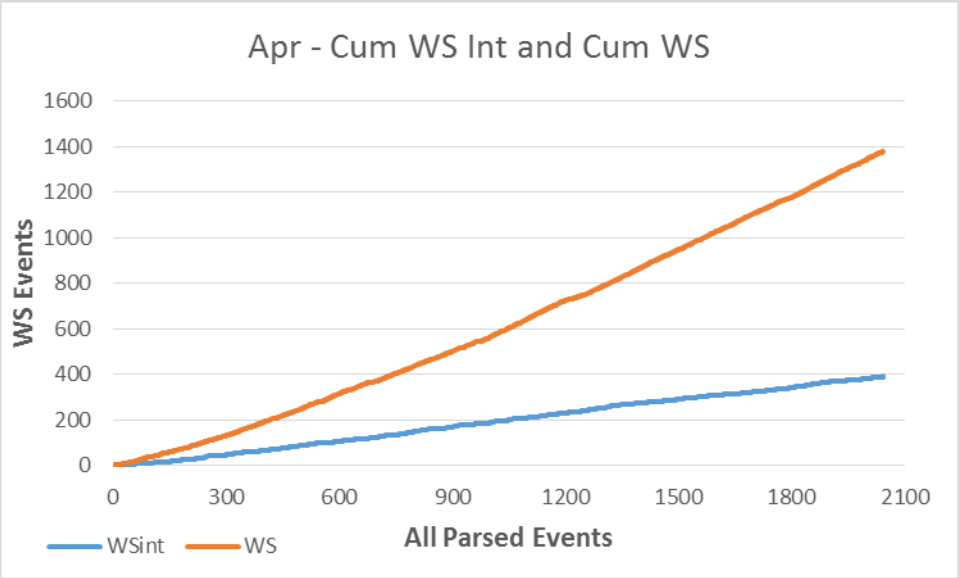


Graph 23: Apr '16 WS2-7 accumulation

In April 2016, the WS tallies were calculated as: WS2=534, WS3=445, WS4=235, WS5=89, WS6=35, WS7=20, WS8=8, WS9=4, WS10=5, WS11=3, WS14=1 and WS15=1. These tallies were significant in a number of ways. Firstly, April was the first time that any WS9s, WS14s or WS15s had occurred. An example of a WS9 is MEN 3679, where I recorded ‘le kloon papee eh son comarade le kloon zou’ interpreted as ‘The clown, grandad, and his friend the clown Zou’. The single WS14 occurred in MEN 4241, where I recorded ‘cayoo regarda match de bazball ala televeezhon avek son papa eh son gronpair’ interpreted as ‘Caillou watched [a] match of baseball on the television with his dad and his grandad’. In MEN 4750, the single WS15 and also the longest WS recorded in the first 83 days was ‘ton peejama. Mon peejama. Ta brasadon. Mon brasadon eh ton noos. Oh no obleegay nonoos’ interpreted as ‘Your pyjamas. My pyjamas. Your toothbrush. My toothbrush and your teddy. Oh no. [I] forgot teddy’.

Secondly, not counting the WS9s, WS14 or WS15, the quantity of each of the other WS lengths in April was greater than the sum of the same WS length for the preceding three months by the following factors: WS2s (x1.2), WS3s (x3.9), WS4s (x7.8), WS5s (x8.9), WS6s (x17.5), WS7s (x10), WS8s (x8), WS10 (x5) and WS11 (x3).

Thirdly, except for the WS10’s, there is a trend for the shortest WSs to accumulate in higher quantities than the next longest WS, demonstrated visibly by Graph 23 for WS2-7s. This graph also shows that towards the end of April the WS3 rate of accumulation was approaching that of the WS2s and perhaps indicates that, just like the accumulation of WS2s eventually overtaking the accumulation of S events, the WS3s would eventually accumulate at a higher rate than the WS2s. However, since mental event data collection was ceased at the end of April, I have no evidence to support this suggestion.



Graph 24: Apr '16 WS and WSint accumulation

Graph 24 shows the accumulation of WS events and WSs with internal new words. Graph 24 shows a similar trend to the previous three months, with the gap between both types widening in favour of the WSs, but with both types accumulating at steady rates.

4.5.2 Qualitative data

J141 D65 APR1

> I'm going to count the number of songs I don't know [on Chante France] because it feels like I know them all. After 45 minutes, the first came. The second at 54 mins and the 3rd at 68min. In 2 hours, there were 3 songs I didn't know. I suppose it's because songs are so short that you can hear a lot of them in one day and radio stations like to play the same songs over and over.

J142 D67 APR4

> I'm being very negative in my head while I'm watching. I'm thinking there is no way this project can work. I'm a fool. Although I'm picking up words, they're almost all cognates. I'm not learning any function words. But this is what I predicted before embarking on this project. Comprehension will come later slowly over time. Part of me is wishing I'd used subtitles…

J148 D70 APR7

I feel like it’s starting to happen. I'm getting quite a few 3 and 4 word strings. It feels awesome to understand them especially because I knew I couldn't at the beginning.

J151 D73 APR14

Last night I told a guy in a bar that I was learning French from TV and he said, "I've met quite a few people who've done that and they've all got excellent speaking ability". I've heard the same thing many times. It's all anecdotal though. That's why I want to do this - to have some research to support it.

J152 D73 APR14

Also last night at the same bar I met 4 people, three of whom were Chinese and the other had an accent that reminded me of Einstein, so maybe German. After I spoke some Chinese the ‘German’ guy asked,

> “How did you learn it?”
> “I watched a lot of Chinese TV,” I told him.
> “With subtitles?” he asked.
> “Only with Chinese subtitles,” I said.
> “But how did you understand anything? When I watch I can't understand.”
> I said, “Just keep watching and you will understand.”
> “It wouldn't work for me.” he said. “You must be clever.”
> “If you watched as much TV as me, you'd learn the same,” I said.

I've met many people who think like this guy. Anything that you can't do well immediately is too hard, or takes some kind of talent. Trust me, there is no talent involved. It is purely, time, patience and practice. The difference between this man and myself is belief. He is a believer in talent and probably intelligence, whereas I'm a believer in human potential and practice. Many people do not agree with me about this - I've met tons…

While I was just watching TV, I was imagining an analogy for what I think is happening. If you imagine a Petri dish filled with a liquid with some kind of bacteria or fungus [inside] that is microscopic and hence invisible to the naked eye. For quite some time the bacteria or fungus will remain invisible, but over time it will begin to become noticeable until eventually it fills the entire dish and becomes visible on the

macroscopic scale. At the beginning of this experiment the liquid is my knowledge of French (essentially zero). Now, there has been a considerable amount of French growth, but it is still invisible. Over the remainder of the year, the French I don't know [the liquid] will reduce in volume in relation to the French I do know [the bacteria], which will increase. At some point, and I don't know when that will be, I will know more French than I don't know. Anyway, this is the theory. Time will tell.

J154 D75 APR18

I'm up early and for the first time I'm excited about what I am going to watch and I what I will learn. On Friday, I watched an hour of Caillou and had the most number of mental events for watching TV (excluding anomalies e.g. 2 mins of a program with 6 hits). I know there will be a lot of stoppage time, but to have 99 hits in the hour and 18 mins I watched, is more than I get in most days… Also today, I will hit 800 sessions and 4000 metal events…

J155 D76 APR19

Starting Caillou at 7:18am. Break at 9.12 after 1 hour of vid. Start again 9:38. Finished at 11.00, so 103 min of viewing and 194 mins total. About 1.5 hours recording.

J157 D76 APR19

So it seems that the more I understand the less I can watch. Sux but at least I'm learning heaps.

J158 D77 APR20

Woke up at 3 and couldn't sleep, so got up at 4 and started music and data entry. Still excited to watch this program. There are about 5 seasons so hopefully I can find another big block of shows. Watching Caillou so far is rapidly increasing my understanding… Very disappointed about the number of hours getting viewed. If I could watch 5 hours of this straight, I'd probably have hundreds of mental events in a day. Anyway, I'm up early and I'll get as many hours done as I can.

J163 D78 APR21

…Last night I had a conversation about this project with someone from Canada who speaks French. She asked me to say some things in French, so she could check if

I'm right or not. I reminded her again that I was unwilling to speak yet and she replied with something like, "That's stupid." For her, this project will not work or at least the French I acquire simply won't be adequate enough. But she also said that she was frustrated because she really wanted to know what my speaking would be like…

J166 D79 APR22

…What an amazing day. Huge numbers of events and word strings. It gives me great hope. When I was learning Chinese from TV, there were two times that I had level ups. The first came after 6 months. Just one day I could speak and understand a whole lot more than all of the time prior. The second was the same effect and came at around 9 months. Not sure if this is the same kind of thing or not…Can't stress enough how important context is. Instead of a textual reminder, I get a visual one and having a visual context and known words together makes the guessing of an unknown word so much easier…On another note, it took approximately 60 hours to have my first 500 mental events and I've just had around 500 in about 7 hours. So hope it keeps going. I expect it will at least with this TV program.

J176 D84 APR30

…I think I have enough quantitative data to show that learning language from TV from scratch [from nothing] is possible and how it can be learned. I really would love to have full documentation of the entire process, but it is far more important now to learn than it is to record the same kind of quantitative data…I'm going to stop all quant data today. I've just looked at how I will record new quant data and since it doesn't really match up with previous quant data so I think I'll just stop. I just want to focus on learning now. Well, I will still record episode names and time lengths.

4.6 83 day quantitative overview

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	All
Exposure Days	19	24	21	19	83
Days without Exposure	12	5	10	10*	27
% of days with Exposure	61.3	82.8	67.7	65.5	68.6
Hours of Exposure	109.99	142.53	89.29	70.46	412.27
Avg. Hrs (Exposure Days Only)	5.8	5.9	4.3	3.7	5.0
Avg. Hrs (All Calendar Days)	3.5	4.9	2.9	2.4	3.7
Highest Hours on a Single Day	9.8	10.3	6.9	5.7	10.3
Lowest Hours above 0 on a Single Day	0.3	0.7	1.6	0.3	0.3

Table 22: 83 day French exposure summaries

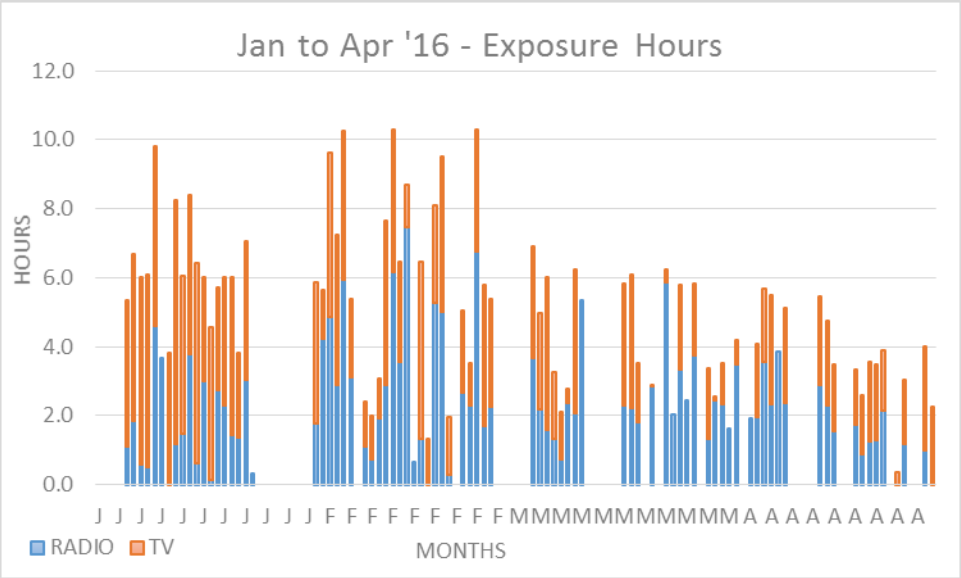
Table 22 shows summaries of exposure hours during the first 83 days on which exposure occurred. During this time, a total of 412.27 hours of exposure were recorded, made up of both radio and TV input. Counting only days on which exposure occurred, my average hours for the 83 days was 5 hours per day. Hypothetically, had I received the same daily and total exposure on every possible day during the first four months, my average daily input would have been around 3.7 hours per day. The table shows that my highest single day of exposure during this period was 10.3 hours while the lowest was approximately 20 mins, for days on which exposure occurred. The asterisk on the table indicates that the final day of April was not included in the table calculations because that was the first day on which I did not record mental events.

Prg. Code	Program Name	Mental Events	Fr. Exp. Hrs	Mental Event Rate (decimal)	Mental Event Rate (analog)		% of Total Hours	% of Total Mental Events
					min	sec		
AG	Caillou	1432	18.0	1.33	0	45	4.4	27.8
G	Plus Belle La Vie	1127	49.8	0.38	2	39	12.1	21.9
A	Helene et Les Garcon	809	87.1	0.15	6	27	21.1	15.7
H	Titeuf	579	17.3	0.56	1	48	4.2	11.3
AD	Zou Episode 1 - Zou Cuistot	315	7.7	0.68	1	28	1.9	6.1
P	TinTin	241	7.7	0.52	1	55	1.9	4.7
C	Chante France	218	196.2	0.02	54	0	47.6	4.2
K	Sous le soleil	124	8.3	0.25	4	1	2.0	2.4
S	Les beaux mecs	70	5.0	0.23	4	18	1.2	1.4
AB	Escape from Planet Earth	48	1.7	0.47	2	7	0.4	0.9
M	16.Ans.Ou.Presque	44	2.0	0.36	2	46	0.5	0.9
Y	Despicable me	30	1.2	0.42	2	24	0.3	0.6
R	Les Revenants	26	2.5	0.17	5	53	0.6	0.5
U	Mafiosa	21	1.6	0.22	4	34	0.4	0.4
J	Vous les femmes	14	0.6	0.39	2	34	0.1	0.3
N	Dikkenk	11	1.3	0.15	6	50	0.3	0.2
AE	Bienvenue chez les Robinson - Film D'animation Français Complet	10	0.5	0.33	3	2	0.1	0.2
I	Vive la colo	6	0.5	0.22	4	35	0.1	0.1
V	Fort Boyard	6	0.3	0.31	3	15	0.1	0.1
T	Arsène Lupin	3	0.2	0.26	3	53	0.0	0.1
D	Ma Vie Est Un Enfer Comédie	2	0.1	0.26	3	48	0.0	0.0
W	Kaboul Kitchen	2	0.2	0.18	5	28	0.0	0.0
AA	Toy Story	2	0.1	0.26	3	51	0.0	0.0
AF	Batman Français Animation Dessin Animée	2	0.0	0.75	1	20	0.0	0.0
AK	Searching	1	0.2	0.10	10	0	0.0	0.0
X	Debate Noam Chomsky & Michel Foucault - On human nature	1	0.0	2.50	0	24	0.0	0.0
AC	Le vent se lève En Français Animation Dessin Animée	1	0.1	0.12	8	28	0.0	0.0
B	Fondu au Noir	0	1.1	0.00			0.3	0.0
E	Blague À Part 01 Crémaillère	0	0.0	0.00			0.0	0.0
F	Carla Bruni - Venus sings beautiful songs	0	0.3	0.00			0.1	0.0
L	Des Hommes Et Des Dieux	0	0.2	0.00			0.1	0.0
O	Code Lyoko Evolution	0	0.1	0.00			0.0	0.0
Q	Josephine Ange Gardien	0	0.1	0.00			0.0	0.0
Z	Minions	0	0.1	0.00			0.0	0.0
		5145	412.3	0.21			100	100

Table 23: 83 day program exposure list ranked by most number of mental events

Table 23 shows the total number of mental events, hours of exposure, mental event rate, percentage of total hours and percentage of total mental events for each of the French programs experienced throughout the first 83 days of this project ranked highest to lowest by total mental events. The program from which I experienced the most number of mental events was coded AG. Despite the total exposure hours making up less than 5% of the total 83 days hours of exposure, the AG program provided the highest mental event rate of all programs at 1.33 (one event every 45 sec), when not including program X, which was only 23 seconds of exposure with one mental event. By contrast, the program to which I received the most exposure, program C, had by far the lowest mental event rate, 0.02 (1 event every 54 minutes), for any program during which one or more mental events

occurred. At least during the first 83 days, it is safe to conclude that exposure to French TV was considerably more conducive for language learning than the radio.



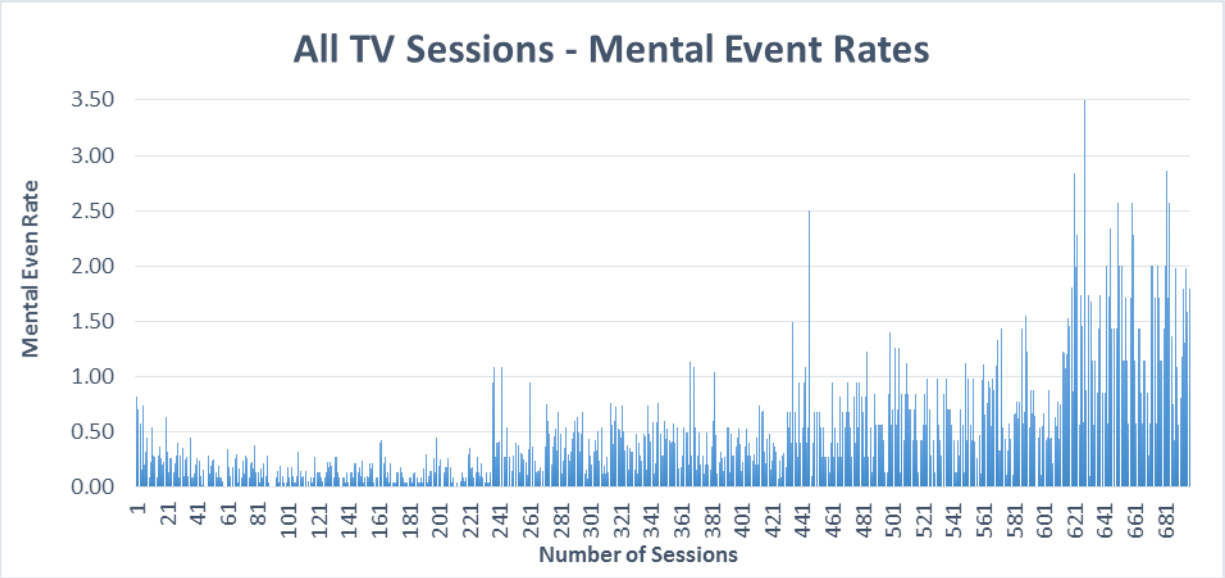
Graph 25: 83 Day Radio and TV French exposure per day per month

Graph 25 shows the total exposure hours for both radio and TV during the first 83 days of this project. The graph shows that during January I achieved my daily goal of 6 hours more consistently than any other month and also that considerably more TV was experienced in comparison to radio. During February, it can be seen that I exceeded my 6 hour goal on the most occasions during a single month and also that my radio input had increased in comparison to the previous month. In March, it can be seen that my daily goal was achieved on only five occasions and that radio exposure occurred more often than TV input. In April, it can be seen that I received French exposure on the least number of days for any month, that the daily input amounts were generally less than any of the previous three months and that radio and TV input amounts were relatively similar.

Fr. Exposure Type	Months	Hours	# of Recorded Mental Events	# of Duplicate Recordings	# of Unique Mental Events	Average Mental Event Rate	# of Exposure Sessions	# of Sessions without Mental Events	# of Sessions with Mental Events	% of Sessions without Mental Events	% of Sessions with Mental Events
TV	J	76.31	758	24	734	0.160	205	16	189	7.8	92.2
	F	67.77	1429	61	1368	0.336	165	9	156	5.5	94.5
	M	35.72	855	33	822	0.384	142	1	141	0.7	99.3
	A	34.88	2030	27	2003	0.957	185	6	179	3.2	96.8
	ALL	214.68	5072	145	4927	0.383	697	32	665	4.6	95.4
RADIO	J	33.68	15	0	15	0.007	38	29	9	76.3	23.7
	F	74.76	99	6	93	0.021	61	39	22	63.9	36.1
	M	53.57	68	6	62	0.019	60	34	26	56.7	43.3
	A	35.59	51	3	48	0.022	35	14	21	40.0	60.0
	ALL	197.59	233	15	218	0.018	194	116	78	59.8	40.2
BOTH	ALL	412.27	5305	160	5145	0.208	891	148	743	16.6	83.4

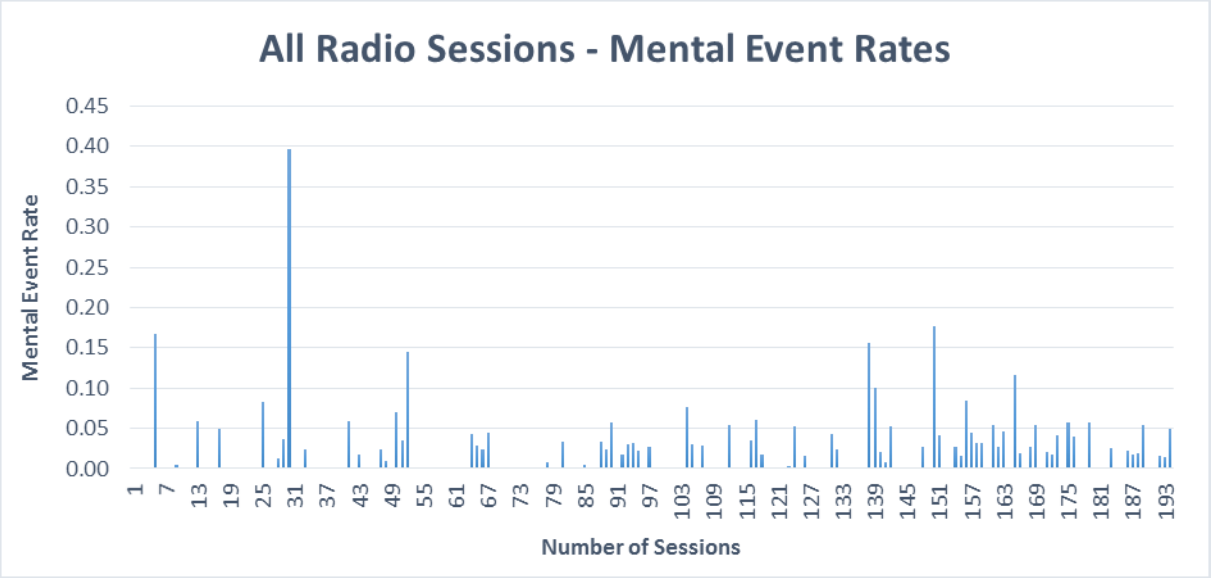
Table 24: 83 Day, hours, mental events and sessions

Table 24 shows monthly and overall summaries of exposure hours, mental events and session data for both radio and TV during the first 83 days. The table shows that around 17 hours more TV input was received than for radio even though radio input outweighed TV input for the last three months. The table also shows that the clear majority of recorded and unique mental events occurred during TV exposure throughout the 83 days and that the number of duplicate recordings for both types of input was roughly the same. For TV, there was always an increase in the average mental event rate, with a substantial increase from January to February and another from March to April. For radio, there was an increase in February, followed by a slight decrease in March and then another slight increase in April. The table shows that for TV, there were mental events in over 90% of sessions for each month, whereas for radio, only in the last month were there more sessions with mental events than without.



Graph 26: 83 Day Mental event rates for all TV sessions

Graph 26 shows the mental event rates for each TV session during the first 83 days. The graph shows that the mental event rate decreased at the beginning and remained relatively consistent until a noticeable increase occurred around session 241. At this point the mental event rate increased reaching over 0.5 (1 event every 2 minutes) on numerous occasions. A similar pattern occurred starting at around session 441, but not as dramatically as the change around session 241. From around session 621, another dramatic increase in mental event rates occurred in comparison to the previous mental events rates.



Graph 27: 83 Day Mental event rates for all radio sessions

Graph 27 shows the mental event rates for all radio sessions during the first 83 days. The graph shows that the majority of mental event rates stayed on or below the 0.05 mark (1 event every 20 min) throughout the 83 days with a much smaller portion of mental event rates getting over this mark. Until around session 151 there were many sessions without any mental events, and only towards the end of the 83 days did the frequency of sessions with mental events increase.

GROUP CODE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	Four Month Code Totals	% of all Codes Used x/6641	% of all Trigger Codes Used x/6111
Cognate Triggers	522	1213	641	593	2969	44.71%	48.58%
Targeted Triggers	27	113	232	1425	1797	27.06%	29.41%
Reasoning Triggers	174	192	85	448	899	13.54%	14.71%
Non-Triggers	5	214	242	69	530	7.98%	NA
Prior Learning Triggers	72	21	6	10	109	1.64%	1.78%
English Pattern Triggers	27	16	21	32	96	1.45%	1.57%
Immediate Observation Triggers	11	35	15	15	76	1.14%	1.24%
Translation Triggers	22	8	9	26	65	0.98%	1.06%
Unknown Triggers	6	16	13	27	62	0.93%	1.01%
Reinforcement Triggers	20	7	2	1	30	0.45%	0.49%
Prior Activation Triggers	0	1	4	3	8	0.12%	0.13%
	886	1836	1270	2649	6641	100.0%	6111

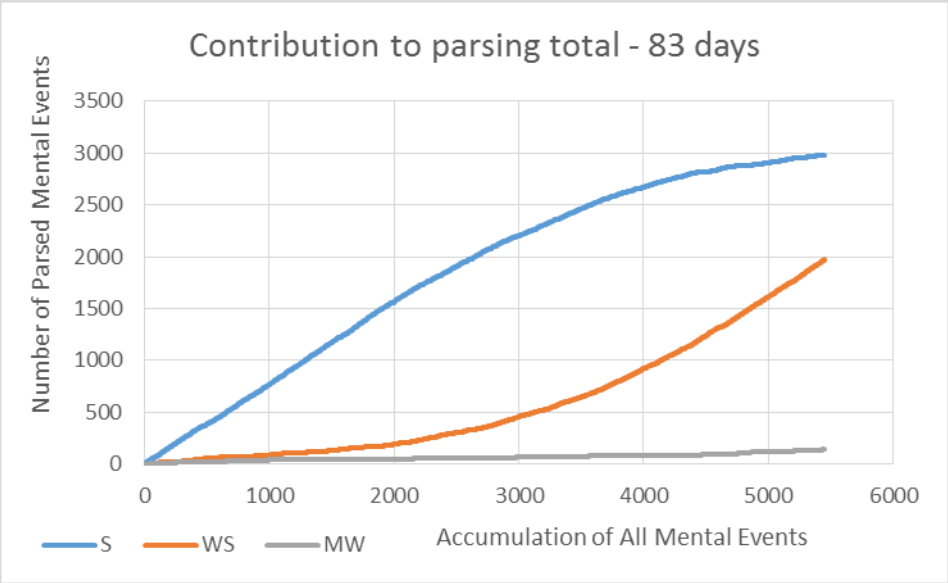
Table 25: 83 day code category totals and percentages

Table 25 shows the quantities and percentages of trigger codes used in each category for each month and overall during the 83 day period. Excluding non-trigger codes, almost 50% of all codes used were cognate trigger codes, around 30% were targeted trigger codes and nearly 15% were classified as reasoning triggers. By contrast, the remaining trigger codes all stayed under 2% of total code usage throughout the 83 days. The table shows that prior to April, cognate triggers were easily the most frequent, while in April targeted triggers eclipsed even the cognate trigger category. Also in April, reasoning trigger codes were used much more than previously and for the first time came close to the quantity of cognate trigger codes used.

	Recorded Mental Events (RME)	Non-Parsing Mental Events			Mental Events with Parsing (=RME-K-M-AR)	Parsing Event Types			% of Total Parsing		
		K	M	AR		S	WS	MW	S	WS	MW
JAN	773	13	2	24	734	626	73	35	85.3	9.9	4.8
FEB	1528	15	8	67	1438	1209	208	21	84.1	14.5	1.5
MAR	923	8	1	39	875	545	310	20	62.3	35.4	2.3
APR	2081	6	0	30	2045	601	1380	64	29.4	67.5	3.1
Totals	5305	42	11	160	5092	2981	1971	140	58.5	38.7	2.7

Table 26: 83 day parsing and non-parsing event totals

Table 26 shows mental event data for both parsing and non-parsing mental events. In comparison to mental events with parsing, non-parsing mental events occurred relatively infrequently. The table shows that overall, S events occurred more often than WS and MW events. However, the percentage of all parsing events that S events made up, decreased every month, starting at a high of 85% and reaching a low of almost 30%. This decrease was connected to the increase of WS events each month, with WS events making up over two-thirds of all parsing in April. The MW events remained infrequent throughout the 83 days with their highest frequency occurring in January.



Graph 28: 83 day contribution to parsing

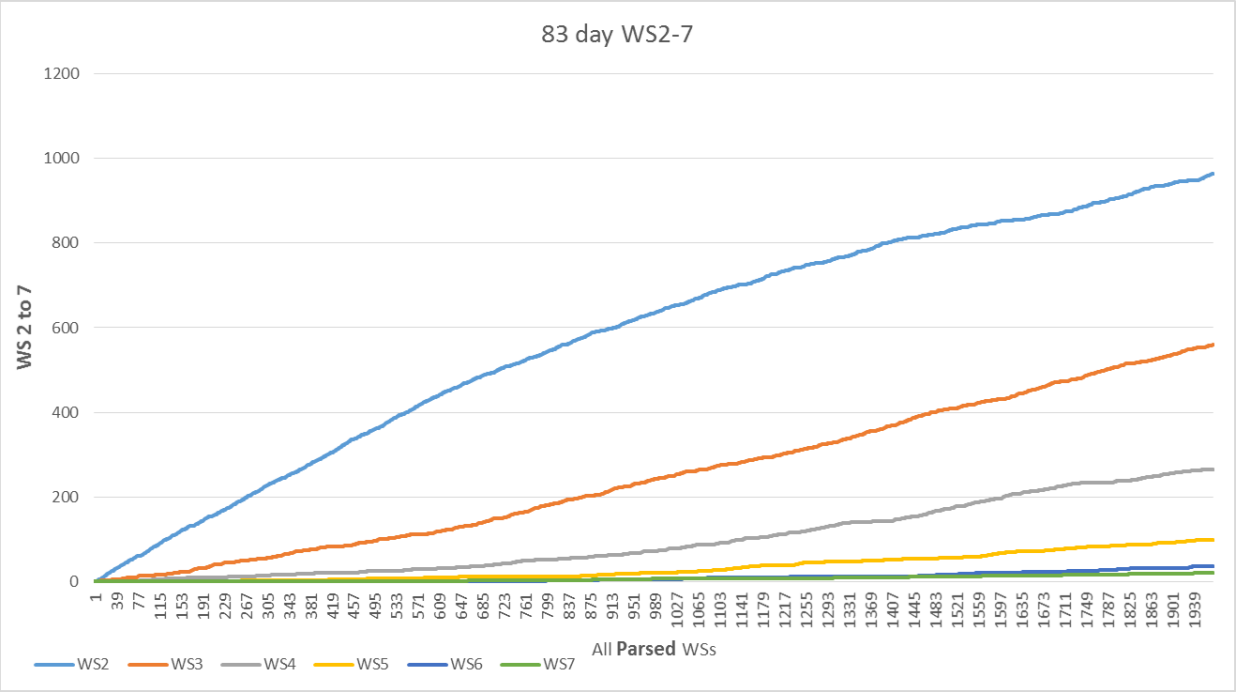
Graph 28 shows how mental events were parsed as parsing events occurred from the first to the last mental event. The graph shows that at the beginning of the 83 days, S events accumulated at a much higher rate than WS and MW events. However, towards the end of the 83 days, the S event accumulation rate began to level out. The accumulation of WS events was relatively slow at the beginning of the 83 days, but this rate increased quite

dramatically as time passed, accumulating at a much higher rate than S events. By contrast, the accumulation of MW events showed only a slight increase over the 83 days.

	WS2	WS3	WS4	WS5	WS6	WS7	WS8	WS9	WS10	WS11	WS12	WS13	WS14	WS15	Totals
JAN	58	11	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	73
FEB	151	41	11	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	208
MAR	221	62	17	7	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	310
APR	534	445	235	89	35	20	8	4	5	3	0	0	1	1	1380
Totals	964	559	265	99	37	22	9	4	6	4	0	0	1	1	1971

Table 27: 83 day WS totals

Table 27 shows the totals for each type of WS event for each month and overall. Overall, the table shows that WS2s were by far the most common, followed by WS3s, WS4s and so on, with WS10s and beyond breaking this trend. The table also shows that as each month passed the number of WSs increased, the most significant of which occurred in April.



Graph 29: 83 day WS2-7 accumulation

Graph 29 shows the accumulation of WS2-7s during the first 83 days. A general pattern can be seen where each WS begins with a period of slow accumulation followed by a period of an increased accumulation rate. It also shows that the shorter the WS, the quicker it was to accumulate.

4.7 Conclusion

In summary, the first 83 days of French exposure were the most difficult because it was the time when I had to progress from almost no knowledge of French to an understanding of French that, although far from complete, was much improved upon Day 1 of this experience. This research only suggests that I was able to learn a considerable amount of French from TV under the restrictions that I had placed upon myself. I do not know whether or not, the same kind of learning would occur for another individual undergoing a similar experience, but I suspect it may. Although some people may explain the data presented here as being a result of some kind of intelligence or talent, I would argue that it is a result of patience and commitment. Throughout the 83 days, I struggled with myself about the beliefs driving this project, I was confused and frustrated by not understanding what I was hearing and often I did not want to continue. The data presented to this point covers only the beginning of my language learning journey. From Day 84 onwards, I no longer recorded mental event data, but still recorded the names of the programs to which I received exposure, the lengths of time for each exposure sessions and journal entries about the experience. The chapter that follows discusses the experience from Day 84 until just before my first experience with speaking French.

Chapter 5 - French Exposure Beyond the first 83 Days

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the story of my language learning journey from the cessation of mental event recording until just prior to my first French speaking. The story is told chronologically on a month by month basis, with quantitative details only of the programs viewed and the hours of exposure until September 2017 where all quantitative data collection was stopped. Throughout this journey the story is told mostly from qualitative journal entries. At the end of the chapter is a discussion of what I learned about my AV exposure experience with the value of hindsight.

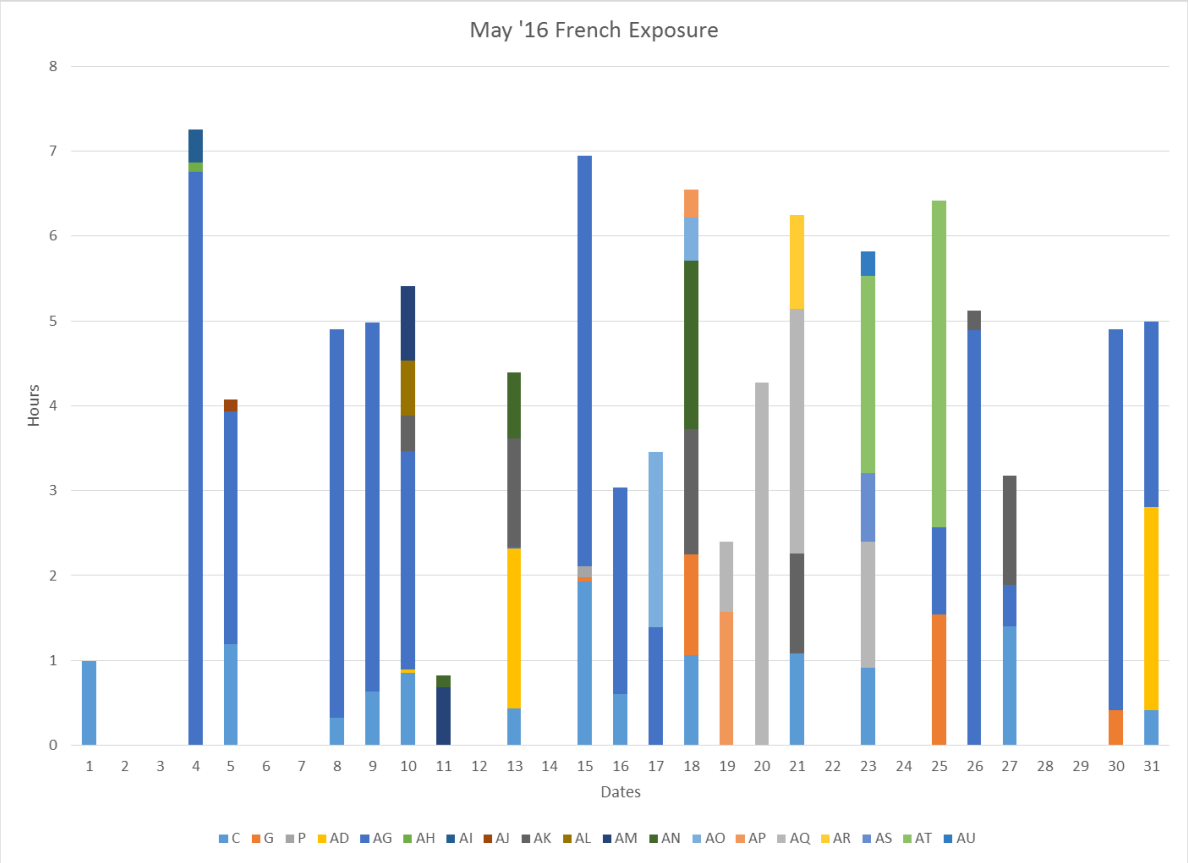
5.2 May 2016

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
C	Radio	Chante France	11.8	12.3
G	TV	Plus Belle La Vie	3.2	3.3
P	TV	TinTin	0.1	0.1
AD	TV	Zou	4.3	4.5
AG	TV	Caillou	42.7	44.4
AH	Movie	Barbeque	0.1	0.1
AI	TV	FRANCE 3-0 BRÉSIL - Finale Coupe du Monde 1998 - Commentateurs français !	0.4	0.4
AJ	Movie	Astérix Et Obelix FILM COMPLET EN FRANÇAIS nouveau 2014	0.1	0.1
AK	TV	Mixed - searching for new programs	5.8	6.1
AL	TV	Bob le Train	0.7	0.7
AM	TV	Wakfu	1.6	1.6
AN	TV	de Milo le Lapin	2.9	3.0
AO	TV	Franklin the turtle	2.6	2.7
AP	TV	Leo et Popi	1.9	2.0
AQ	TV	Toupie et Binou	9.5	9.8
AR	TV	TroTro	1.1	1.2
AS	TV	Tchoupi et Doudou	0.8	0.8
AT	TV	Petit Nicolas	6.2	6.4
AU	TV	Les Dalton	0.3	0.3
			96.15	

Table 28: May 2016 French exposure by media type

Table 28 shows the French programs experienced during May 2016, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that a total of 18 programs were experienced, one of which was audio only, and 14 of which were cartoons. The AV programs to which I received the most exposure were Caillou at 42.7 hours, Toupie and Binou at 9.5 hours, Petite Nicholas at 6.2 hours and Zou at 4.3 hours, all of which were cartoons. The table also shows that I

spent almost 6 hours searching YouTube for new programs to watch and that I watched a soccer match (my first experience with AV exposure from a sporting genre).



Graph 30: Daily French exposure by program May 2016

Graph 30 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of May 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 21 days out of a possible 31. The highest amount of daily exposure was 7.2 hours on the 4th of May, while the lowest of the 19 days was 48 minutes on the 11th of May. The graph also shows that on only 5 days did I reach or exceed my daily goal of 6 hours of exposure.

JEN177 D84 APR30

> Well, I've just watched my first episode without recording mental events. It was strange. I felt guilty for not recording. Writing stuff down probably assisted me in cementing my learning, just because it gave me a second kind of input, the written form, and a third [form], the coding. However, words still have to be acquired without writing…. I couldn't believe how quickly the episode went. It's so nice.

JEN182 D87 MAY5

I just laughed at something that was said [in French]. One girl at kindy was copying [Caillou] all day and at snack time she asked to see his lunch and he said something like, "Why? Do you want to copy my snacks?" Just made me laugh…

JEN183 D88 MAY8

…Wow. After all this time I think I have found ‘he/him/his=il’. I've heard it twice today where it made sense. Never even noticed it before. Oooh and I think ‘vwa’ means see… Funny, I am watching an episode where I heard the word ‘branch’ in the title. When I opened my eyes, the first thing I saw was a branch and so this positively reinforced my idea that ‘branch’ meant ‘branch’. But as the episode progressed I realised that ‘branch’ meant ‘brunch’. Just interesting how everything can conspire to give a meaning, yet still be wrong…

JEN190 D90 MAY10

Just searching for new shows. I try them for a while, but if they are irritating or boring or just not what I want, I change. It's very hard to find new shows probably mostly [because] I don't know how to write French and hence search. I've had to learn the spelling of a few words for searching though: en francais [in French], seri [series], saison [season].

JEN200 D93 MAY15

It’s funny. Sometimes I hear something and I replay it a few times, but it doesn't stick or make any more sense. I much prefer to just listen without stopping, but if there is something I'm interested in, I'll replay [it] just to see if I can make sense of it…I’ve heard ‘FAIR=make’ again, so what is it? ‘make’ or ‘do’? Or both? Or a collocation? Aaarrrgggghh…As a rough estimate and I can't believe I'm saying it, I reckon I understand at least 30% of what I'm hearing and it may well be more..,.

JEN202 D95 MAY17

… Although I went through a period in the last week or so where I just didn't want to watch Caillou anymore, I'm gonna at least watch all the seasons this one more time… This series is giving me the ability to comprehend and it’s too valuable to waste. Thank you creators of Caillou. Oooh. Exciting. CON=WHEN.... Possessive pronouns are interesting. I hear a bunch of them and I'm still not quite sure how

they work, but I can hear ‘sez’ or ‘son’ or ‘sa’ and I think of HIS/HER because of its position in the sentence even though I haven't worked out each sound. Same with TA/TO/TON they are all just YOUR to me…

JEN204 D96 MAY18

…I just checked Wikipedia because I suspected Franklin [the turtle] might also be Canadian [in addition to Caillou] because I saw an episode where they were draining sap from trees and eating it. Yep. It's Canadian. I wonder if I'm developing Canadian French comprehension and how easily that will transfer to mainland French. I've only managed 3 hours today [of TV]. Started at 7 am with reading and writing. I'd hoped for more TV, but I've just [got to] get in early. I'm exhausted. I'm aging rapidly or at least visibly around my eyes due to this project.

JEN217 D101 MAY25

…As an example of how you can learn grammar, I've just heard the sentence ‘ZHE VOO FELEESIT = I CONGRATULATE YOU’. I can understand all three words and I can see that the object pronoun comes before the verb as opposed to English where it comes after. I've heard other similar examples, but I didn't need a grammar book to learn this…

JEN221 D102 MAY26

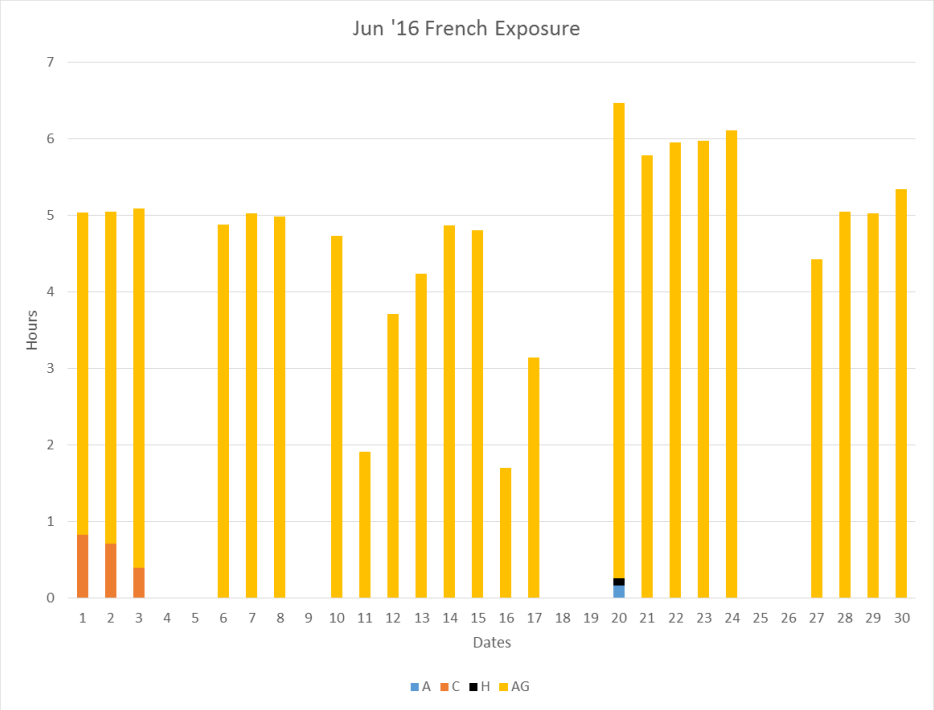
I'm starting to understand negatives. There is often an ‘N’ sound prior to the verb and followed by ‘PA’. e.g. ZHE NE SAY PAY=I don't know. But if it’s not a verb. so maybe an adjective, the ‘N’ sound isn't there, only ‘PA’ e.g. SE PA FASEEL= it’s not easy.

5.3 June 2016

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	TV	Helene et Les Garcon	0.2	0.1
C	Radio	Chante France	1.9	1.8
H	TV	Titeuf	0.1	0.1
AG	TV	Caillou	107.1	98.0
			109.33	

Table 29: June 2016 French exposure by media type

Table 29 shows the French programs experienced during June 2016, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that a total of four programs were experienced, one of which was audio only, and two of which were cartoons. The table shows that 98% of my French exposure came from the program Caillou at 107.1 hours.



Graph 31: Daily French exposure by program June 2016

Graph 31 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of June 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 23 days out of a possible 30, with one 1-day break and three 2-day breaks in-between. The highest amount of daily exposure was 6.5 hours on the 20th of June, while the lowest of the 23 days was 1.7 hours on the 16th of June. The graph also shows that on only two days did I reach or exceed my daily goal of 6 hours of exposure.

JEN235 D106 JUN1

> It is a really useful technique now, replaying a lot, because so many of the sentences are filled with words I know, but they sound quite different at speed. It's helping me notice that if I was speaking French now with words I know I would still be using my Australian intonation. I can hear it in my head and I can notice the way that it's really pronounced [after] multiple repetitions. This should help me understand quick speaking eventually and also build my vocabulary…

JEN238 D107 JUN2

> …collocations are extremely hard to get stuck in my head because my English resists the change. For example, [when I hear] FAIR or FET I think of DO, but it is used in ways that we don't and so I'm constantly flicking between different meanings or competing for understanding in my own brain. I just noticed that when I'm replaying a chunk of speech I'm also writing it in my head. I can't see the letters, but I can…. There's a residue rather than an image…

JEN241 D108 JUN3

> It's amazing that whenever written French enters my vision accidently, which is usually in the program's title, I usually instantly recognise what word it is, even if it isn't an English cognate. Reading is likely to be quite simple to learn, when I eventually begin I think.

JEN242 D110 JUN7

> …just want to explain a process [that I use] when I come across a speedy string I can't instantly [understand]. I replay it multiple times and then can often understand the first word. I continue to replay until I also understand the second and third and so on. I continue until I hit a word I don't know or can't work out and then just play [the program] as per normal. It's amazing how many sentences I know every word of, but can't understand until I use this technique…

JEN255 D116 JUN14

> … sometimes I repeat and repeat but I can't make sense of the sentence. In such cases I just let it go. Based on everything so far, I will eventually understand, so I don't let myself get angry or caught up over a sentence. There are so many words I understand now that I once struggled with…

JEN260 D118 JUN16

> …I've had a lot of interesting discussions with people I know and meet about this project and it's amazing how many people disagree with the idea and even some people get upset. Yesterday, I was talking to a friend who lives in China and he had recently told some English teachers about this project and got the same reaction: disbelief and anger. Why is that?? I guess language is something almost everyone has an opinion about because they've all got one… about one week ago I was in a

bar and I was telling a guy about this project. He then said to me that it didn't work for him. He had tried for 3 years to learn Thai from TV and basically learned nothing. He said he had done 3-5 hours a day. I was very surprised by this and interested. For me, it simply wasn't possible unless, in my view, he simply hadn't concentrated on it. I saw him later and asked how well he had concentrated and his face changed to one of embarrassment. And he said that he hadn't really concentrated. It was just on in the background… About 2 weeks ago I was talking to another man who said that this project would work because he had learned Hindi only from watching TV from about the age of 15 to 22. He said it took a while, but in the end he became fluent and hadn't used any books or teachers. Two days ago I was talking to two people. One of them said, "No. You are stuck with an accent. You can't change that. No, what you are doing won't work". And another woman said, "I think you can't change you're accent and I think children learn better because their brains are developing".

JEN264 D120 JUN20

I'm still very glad I'm not speaking French. It is so difficult to hear the sounds in long strings. I'm just not able to copy [them] as accurately as I would like. There are so many tiny little sounds that are words and so catching each word/sound while still not having fully developed lexical and grammatical understanding takes time. However my understanding is truly growing and I think there will come a time when I can copy the sounds faithfully. Even the intonation. It takes time to pick up which syllables are stressed. I really think I need full comprehension and then lots more listening, before I can copy [Australian] accent free, if it is possible.

JEN265 D120 JUN20

…another example of the smallness of words. In ZHE PERL FAIR TOOSOL [I can do it by myself], I think the L after PER means IL/IT/HE. I may be wrong, but it's a very faint sound…

JEN272 D122 JUN22

…I have no idea how students can understand language without listening to it carefully like I am doing. It takes practice. Before there was a word I had never heard but as I listened more carefully it turned out to be three words I knew, but with

the speed and intonation I couldn't pick them up at first. I suppose that listening takes many years for students who don't practice listening…

JEN283 D125 JUN27

… Wow. My understanding is so much clearer. I just understood a really long sentence spoken quickly (Caillou, rainy day episode). In English [it meant] something like AND THE CLOUD WAS WET BECAUSE THE GIANT WAS WASHING HIS CAR AND FORGOT TO SHUT OFF THE WATER. Wooohooo. This is getting fun. I'm so happy. It's working!!!! This is a level up day.

JEN290 D127 JUN29

…I've just gone through a few sentences that I couldn't understand [after] hearing several times, but after hearing the [whole] conversation I got more information to help me understand the earlier parts and it turned out I knew most of the words. That's the thing, knowing the words is not enough, I have to be able to hear them at speed in varying combinations, but again it's like a fog lifting. At first I don't understand, but with thought, patience and repetition often the fog lifts and the obscure becomes clear...

JEN292 D127 JUN29

I've just heard the word for DRIVE as KONDJWEEA, which is different from what I previously thought, KONDJOO. This is my problem with speaking before comprehension, it takes a lot of time to hear many words precisely and if I don't hear correctly and then speak, I am pronouncing incorrectly. If I continue to do this, I am forming a bad habit. Furthermore, it may be the case that I become unable to hear the correct pronunciation because what I've noticed is that it's possible for me to block out actual sounds with my own imagined ones… This has happened many times and only slowly fades to become more accurate over time.

JEN293 D127 JUN29

I just understood my [second] joke…The joke in English was WHICH ANIMAL CAN JUMP HIGHER THAN A HOUSE? ALL ANIMALS. HOUSES CAN'T JUMP...

JEN294 D128 JUN30

> …It feels like I'm learning a new word in almost every sentence and it now means that I'm making more written observations and hence getting through less of the program. I may have to stop writing so much but there is so much stuff that I find is valuable to record. I can see my short term memory or auditory loop in action. I can see myself not comprehending on the fly, but then moments later the meaning registers and I can understand what I heard and still understand what I am hearing…

JEN297 D128 JUN30

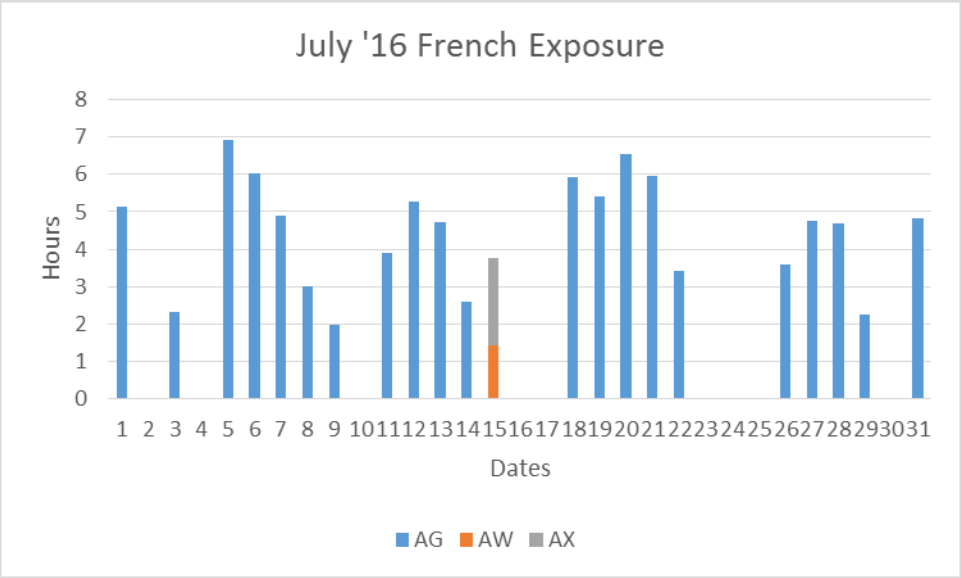
> I'm starting to notice what I think is called elision. Where the final sound of a word sounds like the start of the next word. It's a perception shift I suppose similar to the picture that can be seen in two ways either the [duck head] or the rabbit head. I can shift my perception to have the sound at the end or beginning of a word. Naturally, the final sound actually sounds like it's part of the next word, so it takes a bit of practice to perceptively notice and shift the sound to the word it's really a part of.

5.4 July 2016

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
AG	TV	Caillou	94.2	96.2
AW	TV	Un Ticket pour l'Espace	1.43083	1.5
AX	TV	Le Petit Nicolas - film	2.3	2.4
			97.95	

Table 30: July 2016 French exposure by media type

Table 30 shows the French programs experienced during July 2016, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that a total of three programs were experienced, none of which were audio, and two of which were cartoons. The table shows that just over 96% of my French exposure came from the program Caillou at 94.2 hours, a similar trend to the previous month.



Graph 32: Daily French exposure by program July 2016

Graph 32 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of July 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 22 days out of a possible 31, with six breaks of varying length in between. The highest amount of daily exposure was 6.9 hours on the 5th of July, while the lowest of the 22 days was just under two hours on the 9th of July. The graph also shows that on only three days did I reach or exceed my daily goal of 6 hours of exposure.

JEN311 D133 JUL7

> Although it seems that faster learning can take place with the assistance of books, writing, memorisation, etc…that doesn't help with comprehension on the fly. I'm confident that my understanding is correct for many full sentences but hearing on the fly is blurry. I don't see any other way to get that except for extensive listening.

JEN317 D136 JUL11

> Well, that concludes my experimentation with replaying almost all of the sentences of every episode for 5 seasons of Caillou. I'm guessing that took about 6 weeks. Looking at what I can recall from my understanding at the beginning of this period compared to now, I'm certain that I've increased my comprehension immensely…It's very easy to fall into the belief that because I don't understand everything, I'm still no good, but in honesty to have come from no comprehension to understanding so many of the sentences and even questions, I've made a lot of progress…

JEN319 D137 JUL12

> … Although I comprehend, the words don't have the same reality as English words. When I hear the English word TREE for example, it is as real as a tree in some ways. I have no hesitation and I don't even need to think. It means what it is, but with French words there is still some uncertainty surrounding the words and I still need to concentrate. The advantage of doing what I'm doing i.e. no stopping and repeating, is that familiar words are reinforced much quicker because they're coming in at a faster rate, the bad part is I miss stuff that interests me…

JEN327 D140 JUL15

> My Internet is still down, so I'm going to watch a movie…I've basically been avoiding high level language because I've been learning so much, but this will be a good chance to see how well the language I've learnt so far transfers… I'm guessing it will take time to adjust to new voices and what may well be faster speech full of new words I haven't encountered… Overall I surely understood less than 10% which is saddening but quite expected…

JEN330 D141 JUL18

> …I still feel disheartened because I was unable to understand much of the movies I watched, so I'm either gonna watch more Caillou to get my confidence back or I'll watch the cartoon Petite Nicholas to give me the opportunity to learn more vocab. I may do both. I wonder if kids go through a similar thing in first language learning where at home they understand heaps and then they get introduced to a context where a lot of the language is unfamiliar and they suddenly feel some sort of hope/helplessness…

JEN331 D141 JUL18

> … What I think are tenses, are extremely hard to comprehend. In many cases they make perfect sense and in others they seem to change roles… I'm not surprised that children learn tenses much later than vocabulary, nor that my past ESL students have struggled greatly with them. It seems that the French tense system has some similarities, but many differences. It's like you have to understand the whole system as one to get it. Before that it's just a rough gist.

JEN340 D144 JUL21

I can clearly hear some sounds that we don't make in English. I don’t think they're phonemes exactly, but more like a flap or a trill or a guttural sound. Many phonemes have this and although I really want to try and make them, I'm still holding back from speaking. I do wonder though if I'll be able to make them. I don't think I will be able to when I first start speaking, but perhaps with practice I'll get them…

JEN347 D146 JUL26

I've been depressed for a couple of weeks. It doesn't happen to me often, but when it does, it’s a terrible time. I'm still not out of it and my viewing hours have been affected… That I continue to improve is undeniable and so it only makes sense that I'll improve with more exposure. I feel confident that by the end of next year I will have an advanced listening ability and as a consequence excellent speaking ability, but I may still be wrong and only then will I know. I imagine that my comprehension now is similar to a 3 year old native speaker and by the end of this year it may be around a 5 year old. If that is correct then I should have most of the vocab and grammar necessary to understand common family conversations. At some point though, I must start watching other TV programs so that I can pick up more advanced vocabulary, expressions and slang. Hopefully, that time is soon, but it may not be until around November. Continuing with Caillou feels like the best way of learning the most right now. I'm pretty good at understanding the gist, but it’s only over time that I notice many new words that are there which I didn’t even notice before…

JEN350 D147 JUL27

…Wow. This my best and clearest understanding yet. It’s like I know almost every word and I can comprehend on the fly. This is the goal I’ve been chasing. I'm sure that eventually almost all, if not all, of Caillou should be comprehensible to me, but I was expecting it much later. It’s not here yet of course because immediately after writing this there'll be sentences I don’t know or there are bound to be much more difficult episodes, but right now I’m experiencing what I’ve been trying to achieve all along, which is full comprehension on the fly. Yippeee…

JEN351 D147 JUL27

> …The tenses will take some time to get, which makes me wonder why they are taught from Day 1 in ESL classrooms and texts and why so many students struggle with them for a long time. Extensive vocabulary and exposure to immense numbers of combinations of that vocabulary are prerequisites for fully understanding tenses. At least that is what I am experiencing…

JEN355 D147 JUL27

> … Sometimes I am unable to hear words I already know the first time I hear them and I think sometimes this is caused by me and/or my brain predicting or expecting a particular intonation pattern. Just now I missed the first syllable of babysitter, but it was clearly there on replay. Someone said TWA BAYBEESITTAIR and when I first heard this my mind was expecting the next stress to fall on the BEE syllable and so the BAY syllable came to me as a muffled DE sound. Another thing about intonation, although its improving, there are times when I don't quite understand something because the stress or intonation doesn't match the word that would be stressed in English for the same meaning, but when I replay sometimes the intonation does become right, but not always. It may be caused by a delay, a slight one, in my word comprehension versus my intonation comprehension.

JEN363 D150 JUL31

> One thing I think I was definitely wrong about was how this would work. Prior to this…I thought that a lot of the language processing would occur through automatic pattern recognition, but that is definitely not the case. There is nothing which I am aware of knowing about French that did not require my attention. Every single word that I know, I worked out and became familiar with over time. I think this is also true in regards to sounds. I originally thought that over time sounds would become more and more familiar, things like phonemes and intonation. While I guess this is true in some ways, the only sounds that become easier are those that I have attached meaning to. There many occasions where I can't hear [a sound], immediately or even after replays, that I have heard a gazillion times. What I think I was right about is the importance of quantity. As I'm proving to myself, it takes an enormous amount of input to acquire the meaning of words and to recognise them in different sentences. What I didn't give enough credit to however is the importance of quality. This show [Caillou] is heads and shoulders above all of the other shows I've seen -

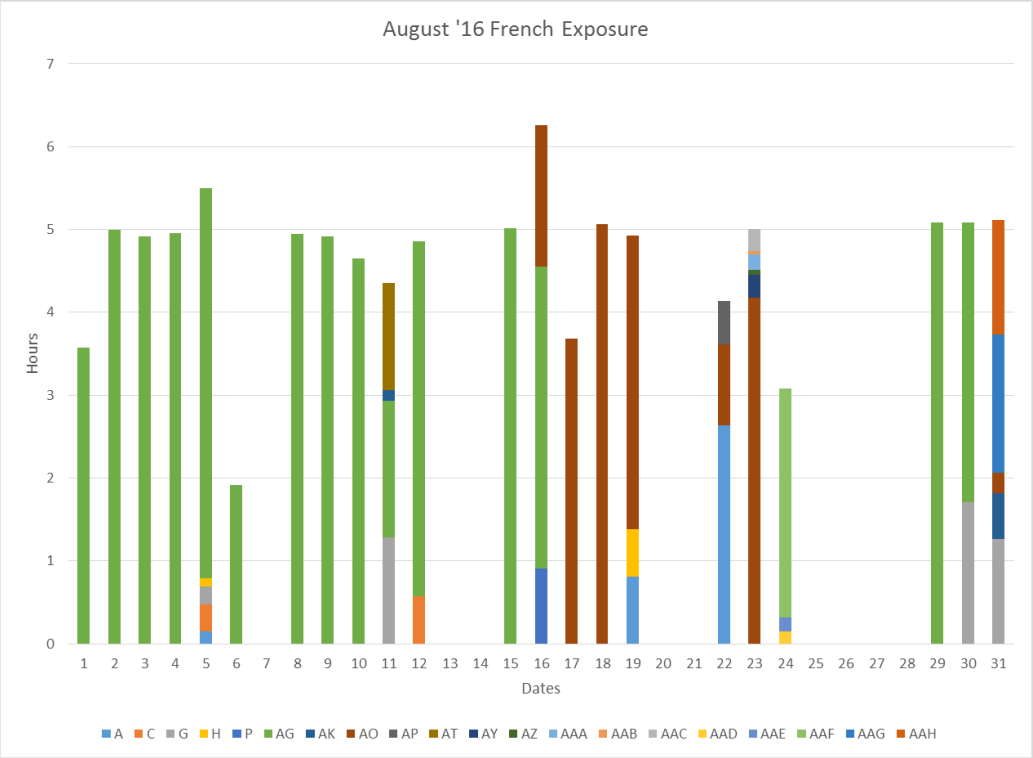
hence the amount of time I'm spending on it. It's fantastic because there is always something new going on and the conversations are generally about the immediate context. Also the sounds are clear and the storylines are things I can relate to. I am very fortunate to have found this program. Without it, I think my comprehension would be far worse than now.

5.5 August 2016

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	AV	Helene et Les Garcon	3.6	3.5
C	AUD	Chante France	0.9	0.9
G	AV	Plus Belle La Vie	4.5	4.4
H	AV	Titeuf	0.7	0.7
P	AV	TinTin	0.9	0.9
AG	AV	Caillou	62.6	61.4
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	0.7	0.7
AO	AV	Franklin the turtle	19.4	19.0
AP	AV	Leo et Popi	0.5	0.5
AT	AV	Petit Nicolas	1.3	1.3
AY	AV	Les nombres de 0 à 1000 II Numbers from 0 to 1000	0.3	0.3
AZ	AV	Les fruits en français II Fruits in French	0.1	0.1
AAA	AV	Les aliments en français II Foods in french	0.2	0.2
AAB	AV	Apprendre le vocabulaire de la maison	0.04	0.0
AAC	AV	105 minutes to learn French	0.3	0.3
AAD	AV	Garfield	0.2	0.1
AAE	AV	armour sucre	0.2	0.2
AAF	AV	Cedric	2.8	2.7
AAG	AV	Une famille formidable - L' enfer au paradis	1.7	1.6
AAH	AV	Les Années Fac Episode 1 - Installation	1.4	1.4
			102.03	

Table 31: August 2016 French exposure by media type

Table 31 shows the French programs experienced during August 2016, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that a total of 19 programs were experienced, one of which was audio only, nine of which were cartoons and four of which used human actors. In addition, for the first time, I watched five programs covering French vocabulary. Discussion of how such programs fit within the language learning restrictions placed upon myself are presented in journal entries in the following section. Over 80% of French exposure during August came from the two cartoons Caillou and Franklin the Turtle, with the remaining 20% being shared over the remainder of programs.



Graph 33: Daily French exposure by program August 2016

Graph 33 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of August 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 22 days out of a possible 31, with four breaks of between one and four days. The highest amount of daily exposure was 6.9 hours on the 5th of August, while the lowest of the 22 days was just under two hours on the 9th of August. The graph also shows that on only three days did I reach or exceed my daily goal of 6 hours of exposure.

JEN373 D153 AUG3

> …I do think I understand most of what I hear now though. It's as though some sounds don't become salient until other sounds are learnt. It may be connected to the speed at which utterances are said. It has taken me a lot of time to be able to understand long and short sentences that are spoken rapidly and it is only once I know most of the words that I can pick out words or that other words become salient. I was thinking yesterday that even if I was using writing to learn or I was in class and studying grammar, I don't see how that can help me understand words as sounds. You'd still have to do copious amounts of listening as I am, to get used to the words in their sound contexts…

JEN387 D157 AUG8

A thought on how this works. A meaningful sound chunk enters my ears and remains in my auditory loop (don't like this name coz it's not looping) or remains in my short term memory and then slowly fades… Some sounds that I can't comprehend immediately, may still be understood if I comprehend the following words and the unknown sound chunk hasn't yet faded from memory…

JEN409 D163 AUG16

… I've probably said it before, but there are a whole bunch of words that are similar to English modal and aux verbs that I am now coming to terms with. But tenses are still troubling. There are many affixes or sound chunks that seem to have the meanings I have assigned them most of the time, but then I find them in situations where they seem to be other words and this holds me back from cementing a meaning. The normal verb AREEV comes in a few forms and sometimes means ARRIVE, HAPPEN, COME, ACHIEVE, but also seems to have a passive form which I wouldn't use in English. That's confusing… There are other meanings like NEED that I have about 10 words for and no way as of yet to distinguish them. When I interpret them all as NEED they make sense. Pronouns are still quite tough. I'm pretty confident with first and second person, but third person and inanimate pronouns are troubling. As are possessive pronouns…There are also those sound chunks, which despite numerous repetitions and contextual, help I am unable to obtain a meaning for e.g. EY BYEN, DONK, KESKE, SAIYEAH, and then of course the good old MAKE and DO. Sometimes I hear FAY, sometimes I hear FAIR, sometimes they can only mean DO or MAKE and sometimes both are fine. I'm starting to notice differences when affixes are attached or in different tenses, but still can't figure them out. There is also the good ol' DE/DOO sound which is often OF, often SOME and often I cannot find a meaning for it. In addition, there are numerous similar sounding words [homophones], way more than in English I think, but there may be more in English I don't know. Fortunately, I can still comprehend many of these similar sounding words because the context, both aural and visual, helps me. It's probably surprising also that I still have days or moments where I think this is working or isn't going to work. That's silly of course because I've clearly gone from nothing to a whole lot and at no stage did learning ever stop. I guess I just always want to be better no matter how good I am…

JEN413 D164 AUG17

Before I start the day's viewing, I thought I'd say that in the last couple of days I've had a much wider variety of French words and sentences popping into my head. Previously, it was often one single expression looping around for a long time with the words changing seldomly. Yesterday there were heaps of different ones. I have no control over what pops in. When they do pop in I say them in my head a few times and sometimes I try to come up with sentences I know. This was a little better yesterday. Again, I think I am still not ready for speaking. I suspect that these random sentences will increase to a point that resembles thinking, but I have no idea how long that will take. On another note, I'm quite confident that if I spoke now, I would be able to copy the pronunciation of many sentences quite accurately, but there are some things that I'm confident I couldn't copy, which are the trill phonemes or rolling kind of German sounding phonemes. I think that may change but we'll see. Also, I've noticed that while I'm watching I am able to remember the sentence I've just heard and repeat the whole thing back to myself in my head. Previously this was much more difficult. This is only really possible when I fully understand the sentence despite the speed that it enters at.

JEN418 D166 AUG19

Wooohoo. While watching Franklin today I was aware that I was comprehending a lot and that the speed of speech was quite rapid... I watched over 200 episodes of [HELG] at the start of this project and could never understand the speech, only the pictures. This has been my goal, to understand adult rapid speech. I thought it may be months more, but this is very encouraging. Only a week ago I tried some more advanced shows and they were too tough, but today I'm getting it. It's very exciting.

JEN426 D168 AUG23

That was a good episode [Franklin the Tortoise] because it was about stopwatches and timing, so I got to hear some numbers. I might find the numbers 1-100 and listen to them next without looking.

JEN427 D168 AUG23

It took me a while to find numbers presented the way I wanted, which was without English, and at a decent speed. What a strange way of making numbers, when it comes to the 70s, 80s and 90s. 60 +10 is 70 and then add the teens to 60. What

they couldn't come up with a new word for 70? I'm guessing it was based on some base 6 number system like Babylonian or something. And then 80 is 4 lots of 20 plus the numbers one to 10 and 90 is 4 lots of 20 plus the teens. Weird. Anyway I need to learn these...

JEN428 D168 AUG23

After doing the numbers, I noticed some vocab episodes [on YouTube] and looked at a few. The current one [105 minutes to learn French] is huge, but very, very boring. It's good for a bit of reinforcement, but I'd have to say that I learn much quicker or at least I'm hearing more language and being more entertained by the cartoons and action. I will flick through and see if there is any interesting vocab or phrases though. Unfortunately, they have French writing for all vocab, it's not a big problem, because I am quite good at averting my eyes now, but occasionally one gets through. Really boring. That's enough.

JEN429 D169 AUG24

Cedric is a tough show to understand. I think the pronunciation is different and so tough for me, but it may just be vocab. I still understand a lot, but there is plenty I don't and I'm not learning that many words. I wonder if I really have tuned my listening in better to Canadian French. It's funny after all this time I still wonder if I'll manage to learn enough French to be usable, despite having already learned so much. It felt great with Caillou and even Franklin to understand so much and then when I watch a show where I don't have the same understanding, I get disheartened. I'm gonna fall short of my quota today intentionally, coz I'm feeling sick and just don't wanna do anymore. Even though I think I've been very disciplined with my watching, I always feel like not doing the full quota is slack.

JEN430 D170 AUG29

Well, I just had a mini holiday and it was so nice not thinking about the study or watching French TV. In a way, that feels like a halfway point. If I do the same number of hours again, surely I will manage to comprehend a sizeable chunk of the French language, but who knows. Over the break, very little French popped into my head suggesting that it's more frequent when the input is frequent. I've decided to go back to Caillou today and continue with the remainder of the series. I enjoy understanding most of the conversations and further reinforcement this way seems

like the most effective way to consolidate my existing comprehension, while picking up a few more words and really tweaking my understanding of grammar… I have so much study to do that in the near future the TV is gonna have to take a back seat or at the very least be done at night…Do I really understand French or am I just kidding myself? It's funny how I can even ask that question, but I remember lots of my students feeling like they weren't improving despite lots of study. The way I explained it to them was it's a matter of relativity. In the beginning all of your current learning is relative to the quantity you've already learned, so its feels like you're learning a lot. But when you know a lot, the amount you learn feels rather small…

JEN438 D172 AUG31

Going through a mini-crisis. I simply can't find a new program that satisfies the following requirements: made for 7-8 year olds, clear audio, constant conversations, conversations about the immediate environment, faster speaking speed than Caillou, but less quick than adult programs, and interesting to watch. If I could find such a program then I could do what I did with Caillou, which is to replay every sentence and slowly pick out new words while reinforcing already learned vocab. I was right that language can be learned from any AV, but I was wrong that this would eventually make listening to quick speech easier (at least in the timeframe I want to achieve it in). The speech in Caillou is rapid but it's slow compared to the adult stuff…

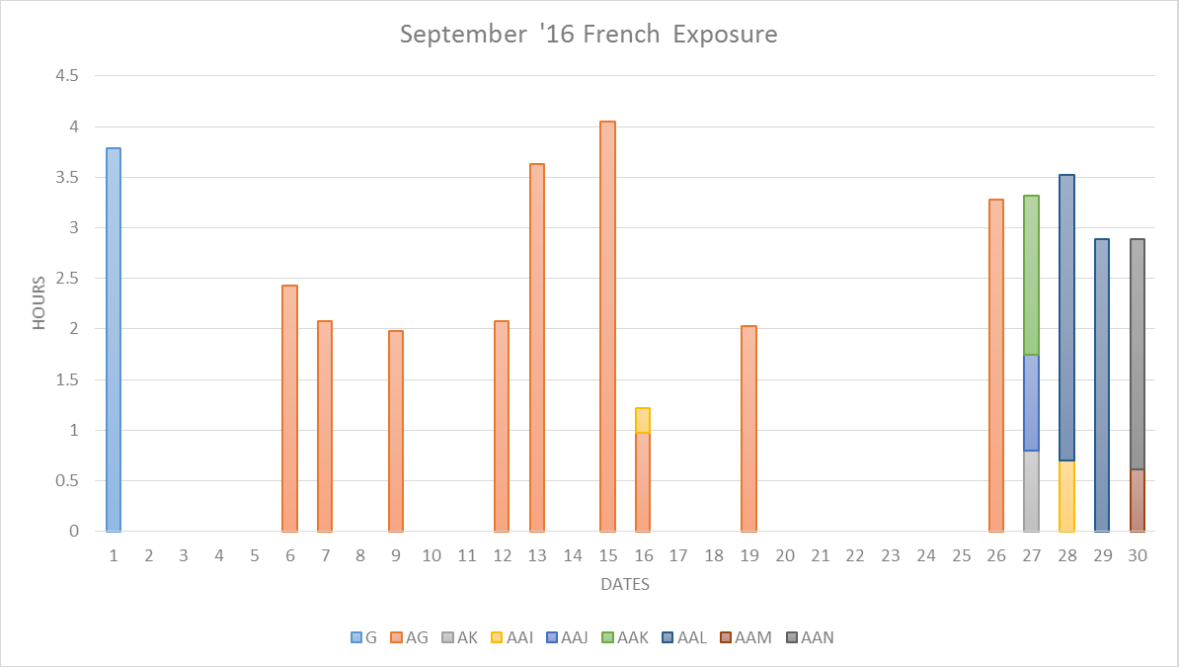
5.6 September 2016

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
G	AV	Plus Belle La Vie	3.8	9.7
AG	AV	Caillou	22.5	57.5
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	0.8	2.0
AAI	AV	sbs 1 french news	0.9	2.4
AAJ	AV	watatatow	0.9	2.4
AAK	AV	Les aventures de Dino le dinosaure	1.6	4.0
AAL	AV	Légende de Tarzan	5.7	14.6
AAM	AV	Corneil & Bernie	0.6	1.6
AAN	AV	X-men Evolution	2.3	5.8
			39.20	

Table 32: September 2016 French exposure by media type

Table 32 shows the French programs experienced during September 2016, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a

percentage. The table shows that a total of 8 programs were experienced, all of which were AV with 5 cartoons, two with actors and my first ever news program. The four most watched programs were Caillou at almost 22.5 hours, Legende de Tarzan at 5.7 hours, PBLV at 3.8 hours and X-Men Evolution at 2.3 hours. The 39.2 hours of French exposure was the lowest of any month up to this point of the French learning experience.



Graph 34: Daily French exposure by program September 2016

Graph 34 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of September 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 14 days out of a possible 30, with six breaks of between one and six days. The highest amount of daily exposure was just over 4 hours on the 15th of September, meaning that on no days did I reach my target of 6 hours, while the lowest of the 22 days was just over one hour the following day.

JEN445 D174 SEP6

> I ended up having a few days off both TV and study, which was lovely. During that time I decided that it was time to put my study (reading and writing of academic material) ahead of my research (watching French TV). I'm actually pretty happy with where I have managed to get to with the French. I have done over 800 hours and I am able to understand most things (or at least I feel I can) from Caillou. I will continue to watch French TV but more often than not after I have done some study.

This will probably mean a drop in the number of daily hours but I can watch a couple of hours a day for the next 1.5 to 2 years and on top of the foundation I have built, I am confident my learning will progress well.

JEN457 D180 SEP16

… Last night I was at a bar and there was a Belgian guy there and I asked him if he could ask me a couple of questions in French and let me answer in English. He asked me two questions and although I knew many of the words, in both questions there was a word that I hadn't heard or least am unaware of hearing and so I couldn't answer the questions. Thus ended the mini experiment…

JEN459 D182 SEP26

I met a woman the other day who spoke French and who asked me 3 questions in French to which I answered in English. I could understand all 3 questions but not tenses, mind you it was at a bar with a lot of noise and I had to ask her to repeat. Each time she repeated she spoke slower. She ask me something like, How are you? What did you do on (unknown day of the week)? What did you do on the weekend? And something about dessert. I had to quickly explain to her not to translate for me.

JEN461 D183 SEP27

…I think I've been through all of the seasons of Caillou 3 times trying to pick up grammar and although I'm having some success in developing my understanding of grammar, I'm not really picking up any new words and the grammar is taking much longer than expected I think because I can't directly translate it like I can vocab…

JEN467 D184 SEP28

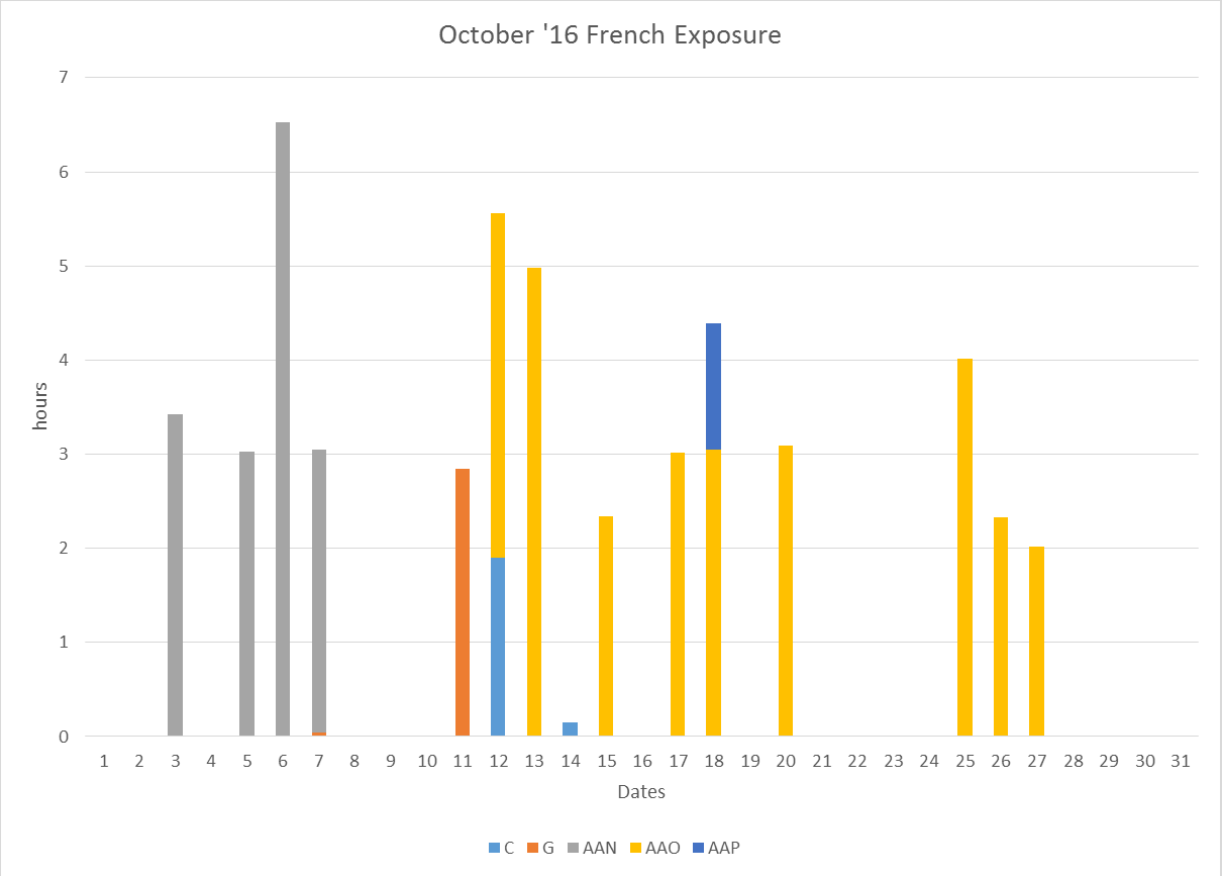
Well how wonderful. I understand a lot of what is said and I'm not replaying [in Tarzan]. I even laughed a couple of times. It's so refreshing to watch something new. I think I'll stick with Tarzan for a while. Oh and I learned quite a few new words and expressions too.

5.7 October 2016

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
C	AUD	Chante France	2.0	5.2
G	AV	Plus Belle La Vie	2.9	7.4
AAN	AV	X-men Evolution	16.0	40.8
AAO	AV	TMNT	28.5	72.7
AAP	AV	Les Profs (movie)	1.3	3.4
			50.76	

Table 33: October 2016 French exposure by media type

Table 33 shows the French programs experienced during October 2016, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that a total of 5 programs were experienced, one of which was audio only, two with actors and two cartoons. The two most watched programs were TMNT at 28.5 hours and X-Men Evolution at 16 hours.



Graph 35: Daily French exposure by program October 2016

Graph 35 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of October 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I

received exposure on 15 days out of a possible 31, with seven breaks of between one and four days. The highest amount of daily exposure was around 6.5 hours on the 6th of October, the only occasion where I achieved my goal, while the lowest of the 15 days was well under one hour on the 14th of October.

JEN476 D188 OCT5

> I so happy with my comprehension. I understand so much of what they [X-Men Evolution] say on the fly and most of the sentences are ones I haven't heard. It is really working.

JEN482 D192 OCT12

> Don't know if I've mentioned it before or not, but when I look for new shows, one of the techniques I use is to type "dessin anime en francais" and then look to see what's available. Despite me wanting to avoid writing, this is an example of where I don't. I'm guessing that I first started searching with expressions like "cartoon in French" and then noticed the writing in some of the suggested programs [in YouTube]. I didn't really think about what the words meant, but because I'm used to Romanised letters, I immediately interpret something when I see French writing…

JEN484 D192 OCT12

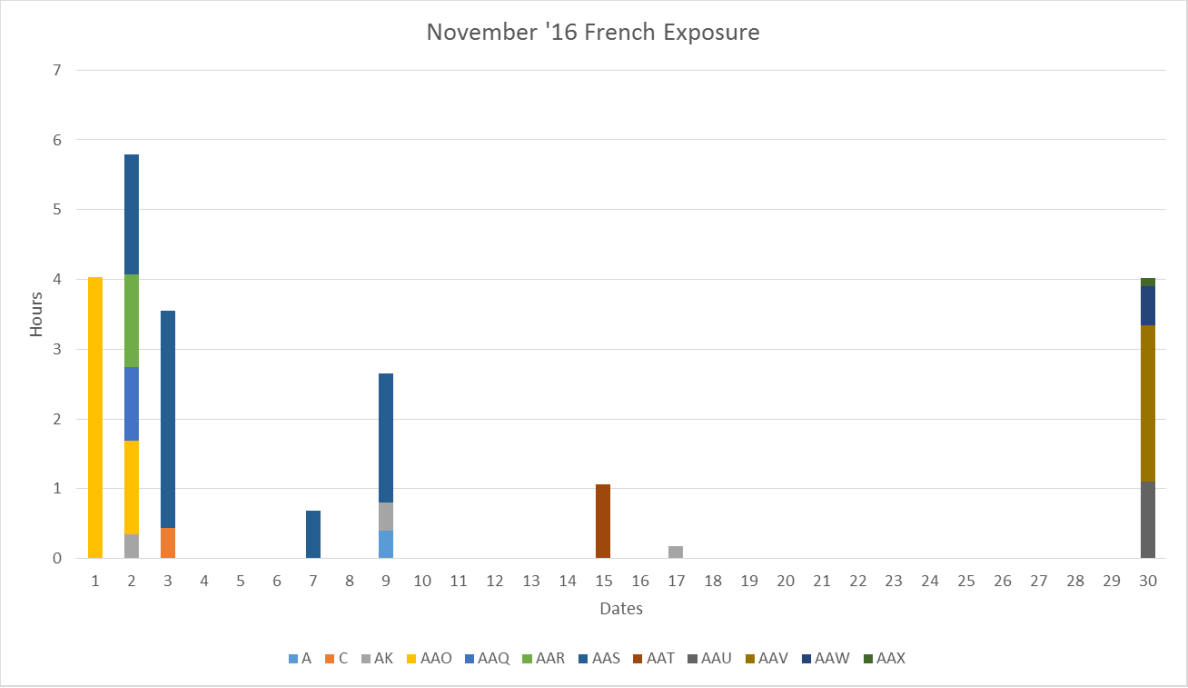
> First song I understood a few sentences of DON ME BRA = IN MY ARMS. NT. I'm understanding a song. It's awesome. PINK MARTINI I think it's called. Heard DON ME BA in another song. I understood heaps in the ads. NT. Just heard NOVOMBRA = NOVEMBER, easy guess.

5.8 November 2016

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	AV	Helene et Les Garcon	0.4	1.8
C	AUD	Chante France	0.4	2.0
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	0.9	4.2
AAO	AV	TMNT	5.4	24.5
AAQ	AV	Nana	1.0	4.8
AAR	AV	angel's friends	1.3	6.0
AAS	AV	slugterra	7.4	33.6
AAT	AV	SAISON 1 Episode 1 HD Invisible Man	1.1	4.8
AAU	AV	Mouk	1.1	5.0
AAV	AV	Les Mystérieuses Cités d'Or	2.2	10.1
AAW	AV	Code Lyoko	0.6	2.6
AAX	AV	Mademoiselle Zazie	0.1	0.5
			21.99	

Table 34: November 2016 French exposure by media type

Table 34 shows the French programs experienced during November 2016, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that a total of 11 programs were experienced, one of which was audio only, two with actors and eight cartoons. The two most watched programs, both of which were cartoons, were Slugterra at 7.4 hours and Les Mysterieuses Cities d'Or at 2.2 hours. The 21.99 hours experience were the lowest of any month to this month.



Graph 36: Daily French exposure by program November 2016

Graph 36 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of November 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 8 days out of a possible 30, with five breaks of between one and twelve days. The highest amount of daily exposure was just under 6 hours on the 2nd of November, the only occasion where I achieved my goal, while the lowest of the 8 days was well under one hour on the 17th of October.

JEN497 D203 NOV2

> That is the end of the TMNT seasons available in French. I'm extremely happy that I was able to watch all of those episodes and to be able to both learn and understand a lot. If I now went back and replayed segments of speech I would probably learn even more, but the desire to see fresh programs is stronger than the desire to watch the same ones again. So, I'll try some other shows. There are still clearly many words I do not understand, but I think my ear is now quite well tuned to picking up cognates. Remembering them on my own is still difficult but when I'm listening to them I can make sense pretty quickly. Grammar still offers some problems but it is slowly coming.

JEN500 D203 NOV2

> It's interesting. When speech is super quick, like in this show [Slugterra], it's seems much harder to pick up new words, but the reinforcement of words I know, happens more quickly. I'm just curious about whether slow is better or not. At least with slow speech there is a bit more time to notice and guess…

JEN503 D204 NOV3

> After all this time, the word PLOO is very puzzling. Sometimes it means MORE and sometimes it means NO MORE. It's like a few other words that seem to have two kinds of opposite meanings like TOOZHOUR meaning ALWAYS and STILL and PERSON sometimes meaning NO ONE or ANYONE or PERSON. It's all very puzzling.

JEN511 D209 NOV30

> …I've reviewed philosophers from Thales to Kant and I am totally confused by both their philosophies and the fact that they have been influential. All that these guys are doing is coming up with an idea to describe humans and the universe without

any way of proving what they are saying. Worse than that, their philosophies are so cryptic. This is because they use so many words in their explanations that are technical. Why can't they speak like normal people… I've had to neglect my French because after battling with trying to understand philosophy, I just don't have the drive to watch French…

JEN512 D209 NOV30

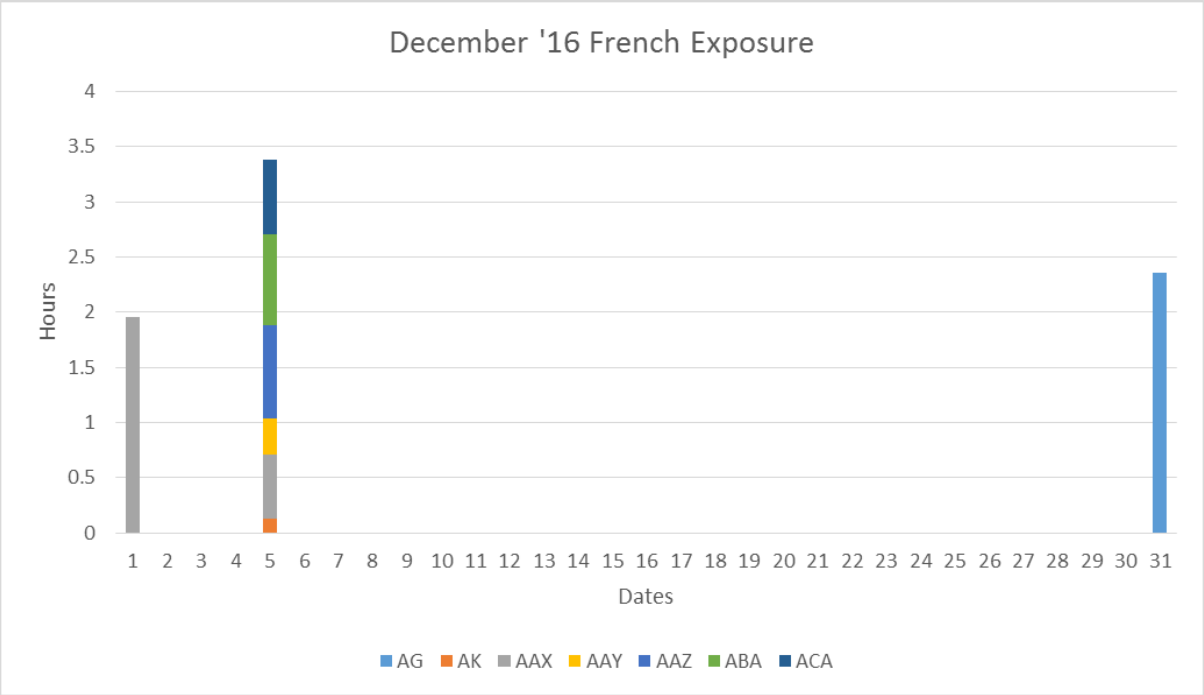
…The way I'm trying to find cartoons now is to type in ANIMATED TELEVISION SERIES into Wikipedia and it lists cartoons from all over the world by decade and year. I type the name and then EN FRANCAIS.

5.9 December 2016

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
AG	AV	Caillou	2.4	30.7
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	0.1	1.7
AAX	AV	Mademoiselle Zazie	2.5	32.9
AAY	AV	Pokemon	0.3	4.3
AAZ	AV	L'histoire des Sumériens, 1ère civilisation au monde, dans le croissant fertile ou Mésopotamie	0.8	11.0
ABA	AV	Il était une fois la Mésopotamie	0.8	10.7
ACA	AV	L'Homme Depuis la Préhistoire	0.7	8.8
			7.69	

Table 35: December 2016 French exposure by media type

Table 35 shows the French programs experienced during December 2016, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that a total of six programs were experienced with three being cartoons and three being documentaries (the first time I had watched such programs). The total hours for December was the lowest of any month during this project at just under eight hours.



Graph 37: Daily French exposure by program December 2016

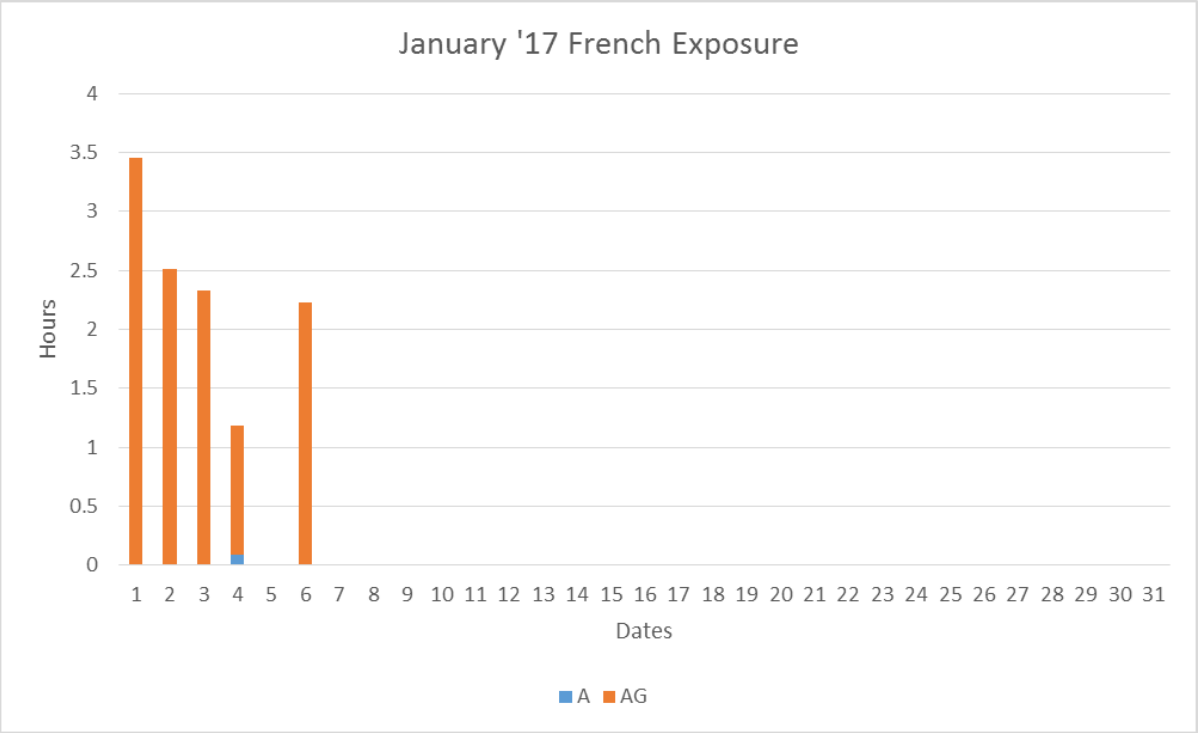
Graph 37 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of December 2016 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on three days out of a possible 31, with one three day break and one 25 day break. All three days were well under my goal of six hours.

5.10 January 2017

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	AV	Helene et Les Garcon	0.1	0.8
AG	AV	Caillou	11.6	99.2
			11.71	

Table 36: January 2017 French exposure by media type

Table 36 shows the French programs experienced during January 2017, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that only two programs were experienced with over 99% of exposure coming from the program Caillou.



Graph 38: Daily French exposure by program January 2017

Graph 38 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of January 2017 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 5 days out of a possible 31, all occurring at the beginning of the month. On no occasions did I do more than 3.5 hours on a given day.

JEN524 D216 JAN4

> Today will be the end of 1 year since I started watching French. I haven't done French every day, but I started on the 5th of Jan 2016. I didn't know any French at the beginning and now I know, I'm guessing, thousands of words and can hear a lot of them on the fly. I was just thinking though that if I watched the first show that I started with [HELG] would I understand it much better? From my experience it would be a yes and a no. There would be tons of words I would know, but equally as many or more words I don't know. I'm contemplating doing a 100 hour test, which I haven't done for months. I hate doing them because I spend so much time writing and so little listening and listening is what I need, but I am curious.

JEN525 D216 JAN4

> I had to stop the [100 hour] test because I understand too much and have too much to write. In 45 mins I only watched 5 mins of show. The last time I did this was day

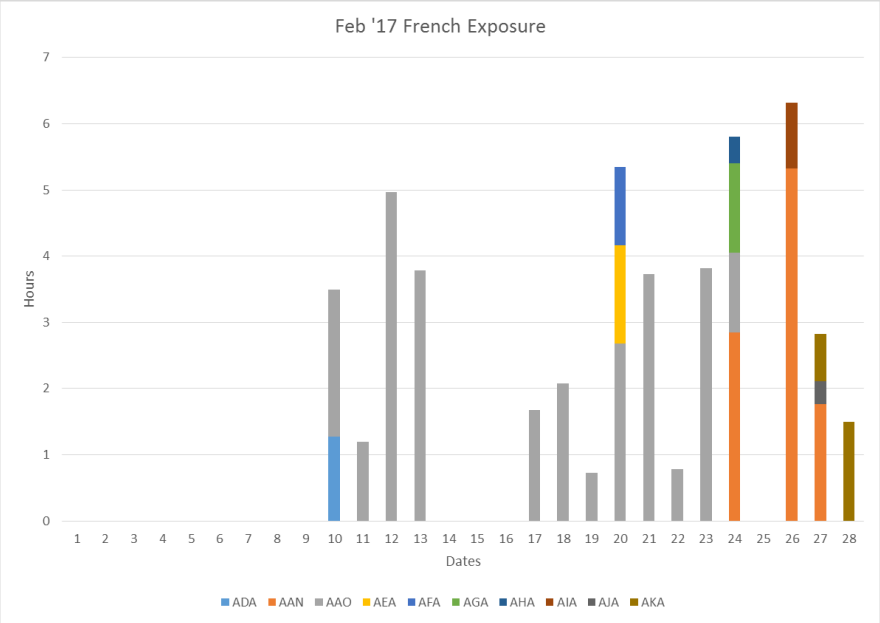
> 79 and I [just now] absolutely flogged [did a lot better than] my last effort. I had about 200 comprehension events and many I didn't write and all of these occurred before the first ten that I had on day 79. I'm very pleased. I understood almost all of the conversation…

5.11 February 2017

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
ADA	AV	Le miracle de l'amour	1.3	2.7
AAN	AV	X-men Evolution	9.9	20.7
AAO	AV	TMNT	28.9	60.1
AEA	AV	Proteger et servir (movie)	1.5	3.1
AFA	AV	Intouchables	1.2	2.5
AGA	AV	RTT (movie)	1.3	2.8
AHA	AV	supercondriaque (movie)	0.4	0.8
AIA	AV	Au coeur de la Legion etrangere (French Foreign Legion) (a Aubagne)	1.0	2.1
AJA	AV	kaamelott Livre 1 Tome 1	0.3	0.7
AKA	AV	fais pas ci fais pas ca	2.2	4.6
			48.02	

Table 37: February 2017 French exposure by media type

Table 37 shows the French programs experienced during February 2017, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that 10 programs were experienced, the majority of which were not cartoons. Despite this, over 80% of total viewing time was spent on the X-Men and TMNT cartoons.



Graph 39: Daily French exposure by program February 2017

Graph 39 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of February 2017 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 15 days out of a possible 28 and that my exposure didn't begin until the 10th of February. Only on the 26th did I do more than six hours.

JEN539 D218 FEB10

> …I was in Melbourne last week visiting my family and I was out at a bar with my cousin and his French girlfriend. I explained to her that I couldn't speak French, but was happy to answer in English. I could understand at least half of what she was saying, but again, not knowing even one word in a sentence can cause communication breakdown. She then started speaking French to another girl who was there, who had done a couple of subjects or semesters in French previously. That girl understood almost nothing, while I was able to get a lot.

JEN556 D232 FEB28

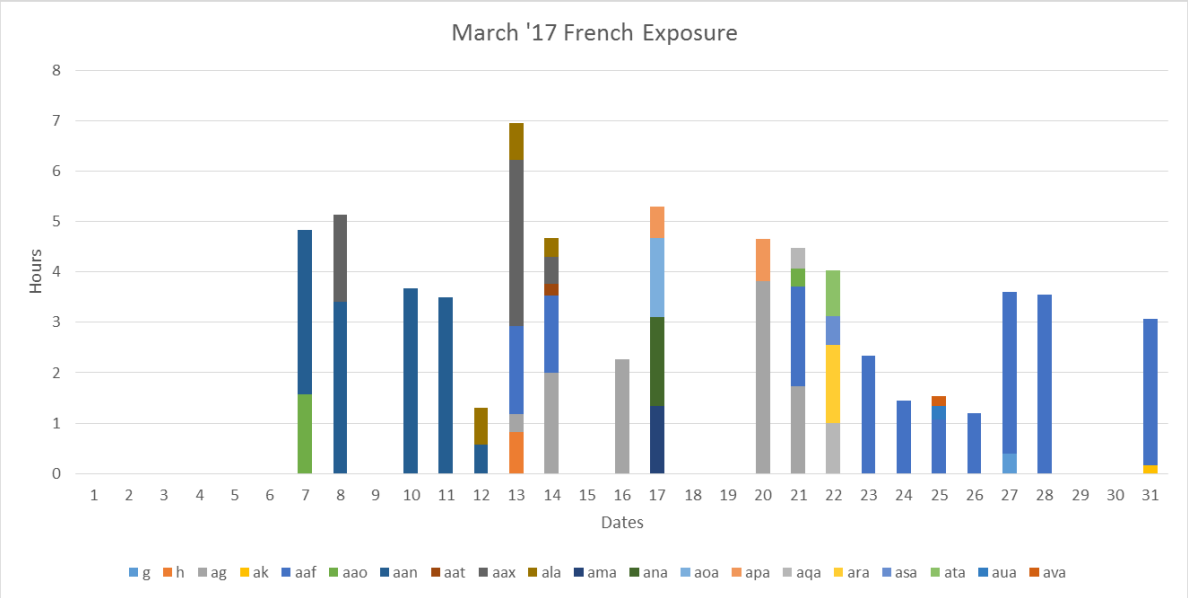
> That is the first adult program [Fais pas ci, fais pas ça] that I have understood a significant portion of. Heaps I didn't understand, but I was actually following the conversations and they were speaking quickly, very quickly and their voices were slurred from my point of view, but I was following it. That is a level up for me and confirmation that I am on track. It is a pity that I may yet not pass this course, but that is the world for you. The interesting thing about their pronunciation is that I can't see how I can copy it. There is some sound that is just the sound of a language [not words] that I certainly haven't been able to pick up yet. It's like the core sound. Possibly it will come when I have much better comprehension. I hope so, but anyway, that's a great thing to happen for me after all this time. I actually enjoy the show too. That is a first for a show with actual people in it.

5.12 March 2017

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
G	AV	Plus Belle La Vie	0.4	0.6
H	AV	Titeuf	0.8	1.2
AG	AV	Caillou	10.2	15.1
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	0.2	0.2
AAF	AV	Cedric	20.9	31.0
AAN	AV	X-men Evolution	14.4	21.4
AAO	AV	TMNT	1.9	2.9
AAT	AV	SAISON 1 Episode 1 HD Invisible Man	0.2	0.4
AAX	AV	Mademoiselle Zazie	5.6	8.3
ALA	AV	Les 4 Fantastiques saison 1 ep 01	1.8	2.7
AMA	AV	Tarzan 5 COMPLET EN FRANCAIS	1.3	2.0
ANA	AV	Les trois frères Film Complet	1.8	2.6
AOA	AV	Les Rois Mages film complet	1.6	2.3
APA	AV	L Extraterrestre Les Inconnus (didier bourdon bernard campan 3729	1.45	2.2
AQA	AV	Le Clone film complet	1.4	2.1
ARA	AV	La Balance ; EXCELLENT POLAR film entier en français Nathalie Baye, Léotard, Berry	1.6	2.3
ASA	AV	Au Revoir Les Enfants 1987 - full movie	0.6	0.9
ATA	AV	Voyance & Manigance (Dieudo 2001)	0.9	1.3
AUA	AV	6 Les nombres de 0 à 1000 II الأرقام بالفرنسية	0.3	0.4
AVA	AV	1 à 100,000, Juli Powers	0.2	0.3
			67.56	

Table 38: March 2017 French exposure by media type

Table 38 shows the French programs experienced during March 2017, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that 19 programs were experienced, all of which were AV with most being a mixture of cartoons and movies. The four most watched programs, all cartons, made up over 75% of viewing with Cedric being the one most viewed. March was the second time during the entire experience that I attempted to learn French numbers.



Graph 40: Daily French exposure by program March 2017

Graph 40 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of March 2017 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 19 days out of a possible 31, starting on the 7th of March, with four one or two day breaks in between. Only on one day did I reach six hours of exposure.

JEN557 D233 MAR7

> I took my time with these two episodes [X-Men] to try and understand what they were saying. I think I can comfortably say I understood or could work out more than 80% of all of the speech. In some cases, some of the sentences were REAL, as in they seemed as clear and easy to understand as English. It's an interesting feeling when that happens. I'm so happy to have reached this point. It should only be better and better from here on in. I learned a few new words and expressions and I noticed that some new words get repeated a lot in the conversations and so gave me that reinforcement in a short amount of time. Woooohoooo. Oh yeah and I think that takes me over the 1000 hour mark. I was doing some analysis today and worked out that I've done 360 hours of Caillou, which is equal to nine 5-day weeks of work of 8 hours a day without breaks. That's huge, but it's what really helped me along…

JEN558 D235 MAR10

> It's about 1:30 in the morning. This has been happening a bit over the past two years where I just wake up and can't sleep, so I might do some telly… Yesterday, I

taught and in class I was explaining to the students about my project. There happened to be 2 French women in class and one of the students asked me to understand a conversation of theirs. I told them to speak normally, but without intentionally trying to make it difficult for me. They spoke for about a minute and although I could understand some good chunks, I wasn't able to follow the conversation. A little disappointing and embarrassing, but not unexpected. Adult speech is still a target of mine, but I'm not there yet…

JEN561 D241 MAR17

That was the most I've understood in a movie [Les trois frères]. Its super quick and all the words are blended in. Also, the pronunciation was quite different from what I've been hearing. Radically different. Nevertheless, I could still make out a lot. Although I'm sure I still have a lot of vocabulary to learn I don't think that is my biggest problem anymore. Now its accent and speed. I need to get better at recognising the words I already know at speed. Anyway, I enjoyed that movie.

JEN566 D245 MAR23

I've been wondering for a while about the normal verb HAVE=POSSESS. I now think that after ZHE=I it is EE and after other singular nouns it is AH. I missed the EE sound for a long time because it blended with the ZHE and sounded almost non-existent with whatever word that followed. There are other HAVES I am trying to work out, but I'm feeling confident with those two.

JEN571 D249 MAR27

From the moment I started watching [PBLV] I understood heaps of what they were saying. I decided I needed a break from Cedric and YIPPEEE I can finally understand this show [PBLV]. In fact, it seems that Cedric is what prepared me for it because the speech sounds identical between the two shows, whereas with Caillou the pronunciation was so much clearer and crisper. I have more of this episode to watch, but it's so exciting, I feel I'm on the verge of getting this language. Just some more practice and pick up more words then clarify the grammar and ooooh it feels so close.

JEN573 D250 MAR28

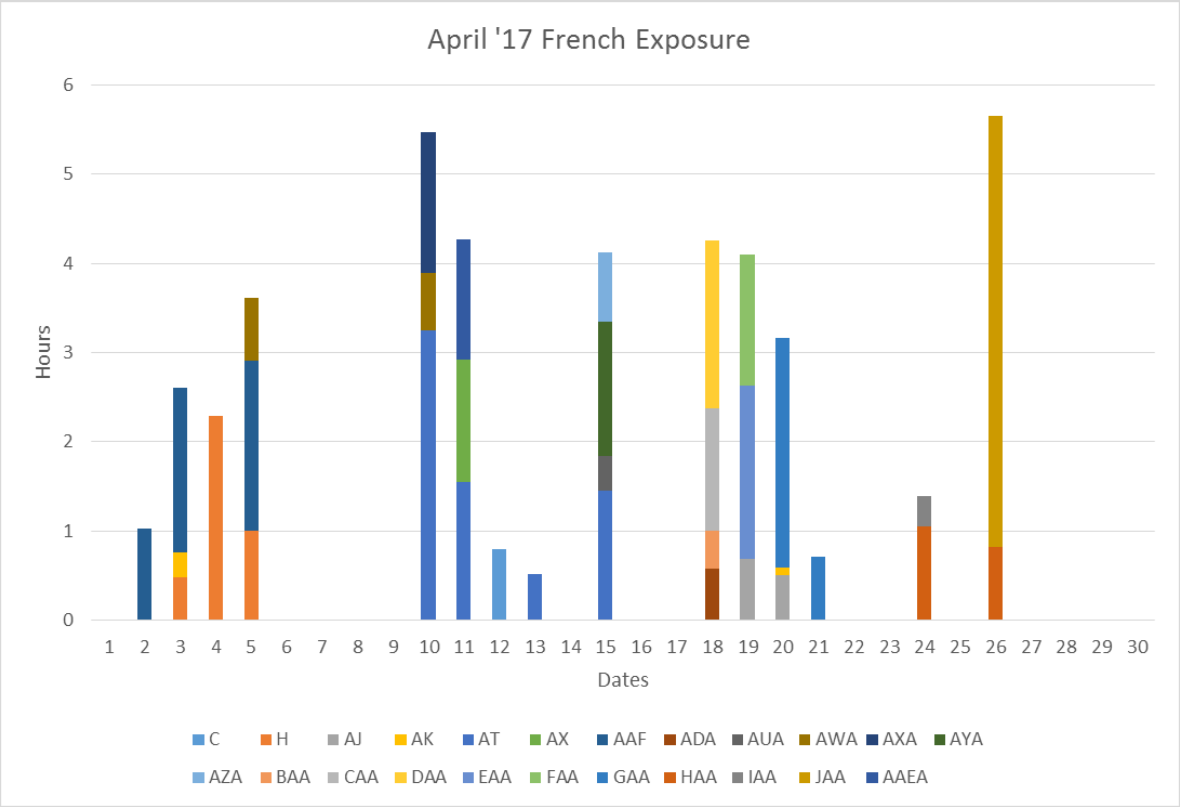
> …It seems that I have reached a point where I can now learn new words much more rapidly due to my listening speed, familiarity with the sounds of French and a large vocabulary. Even some new words that I pick up I only need to hear once to get.

5.13 April 2017

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
C	AUD	Chante France	0.8	1.8
H	AV	Titeuf	3.8	8.6
AJ	Movie	Astérix Et Obelix FILM COMPLET EN FRANÇAIS nouveau 2014	1.2	2.7
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	0.4	0.8
AT	AV	Petit Nicolas	6.8	15.4
AX	AV	Le Petit Nicolas - film	1.4	3.1
AAF	AV	Cedric	4.8	10.9
ADA	AV	Le miracle de l'amour	0.6	1.3
AUA	AV	6 Les nombres de 0 à 1000 II الأرقام بالفرنسية	0.4	0.9
AWA	AV	La Grande vie ! film complet français avec Kad Merad et Eric Cantona	1.3	3.1
AXA	AV	Deuxieme vie film complet avec gad elmaleh	1.6	3.6
AYA	AV	L'enfant du secret	1.5	3.4
AZA	AV	Une maman pour un coeur	0.8	1.7
BAA	AV	Les Schtroumpfs	0.42	0.9
CAA	AV	Aladdin - Les Sushis [Fandub Film Complet]	1.4	3.1
DAA	AV	knack le film complet en francais	1.9	4.3
EAA	AV	Les Aventures du Chat Potté	1.9	4.4
FAA	AV	Les Pingouins de Madagascar	1.5	3.3
GAA	AV	SHREK	3.3	7.5
HAA	AV	Lego Ninjago	1.9	4.3
IAA	AV	totally spies	0.3	0.8
JAA	AV	Beyblade Metal Fusion	4.8	11.0
AAEA	AV	Film pour les enfant 7 der bte zwerg	1.4	3.1
			43.99	

Table 39: April 2017 French exposure by media type

Table 39 shows the French programs experienced during April 2017, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that 22 programs were experienced with one audio only program and the remainder being almost all cartoons. The three most watched programs were Petite Nicholas, Beyblade and Cedric. April was the third month in which I watched a program about French numbers. The last program on Table 12 is out of sequence with the other codes because I forgot to assign it a code at the time and so it was done after all program exposure totals were calculated.



Graph 41: Daily French exposure by program April 2017

Graph 41 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of April 2017 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 15 days out of a possible 30, with seven breaks of between one and four days. On no days did I reach 6 hours of exposure.

JEN576 D253 APR3

> When I just did the AK=searching I checked out 3 programs to see how my comprehension was - Helene et le garcons, Titeuf and Plus belle la vie. In all three, I was able to understand like never before, which is very promising. Previously, every time I watched these shows I couldn't follow the story at all, but now I can. There are of course still many words I don't understand, but when I listened previously the speed was just too rapid. I still suspect that Cedric is the main reason, it kinda got my listening speed up and got me used to less clear speech…

JEN577 D254 APR4

> What I'm now noticing happening a lot is that I am using my short term memory to comprehend on the fly. Sometimes I notice that I understand a sentence after it's

been said and while I'm understanding a new sentence. It's like being able to have your attention in two places.

JEN583 D256 APR10

I am understanding this show [Le petit Nicholas] so clearly and easily. I'm pretty sure I didn't last time I was watching it…

JEN584 D256 APR10

Well what is happening??? I understood [Le petit Nicholas] so well and hardly needed to stop. I just knew almost all of the words and they made sense on the fly. It's not a program for little kids like Caillou and that one about the turtle. Why would I understand this so clearly, yet earlier today I struggled with that film [La Grande vie]? Is it accent? Vocabulary? Speed? Slang? Adult topics vs kids topics??? [Le petit Nicholas] was extremely clear…

JEN591 D263 APR20

A few days ago I was walking past a mum and her son and thought I heard some French. I stopped to eavesdrop and heard the mum say to her son, "Regard mwa byen don lezure. Je swee pa contont," meaning LOOK ME IN THE EYES. I AM NOT HAPPY…

JEN593 D264 APR21

It's very disheartening. I don't understand most of what they're saying [in Shrek 3]. In Shrek 1, I had the same thing and Shrek 2 was better. The whole time I'm thinking, maybe everyone is right in that I am wrong. It's a ridiculous way to learn and perhaps impossible. I've been through this many times before. When I understand, I feel encouraged and when not, very disheartened. There are just so many words. At least I know I was wrong about how quickly I would learn. I would have thought that by now I'd be killing it [be very good at it] but shows like this make me realise I'm not. Is it just that this is an adult program language wise? How do I explain the learning I have already done and the programs I can understand…

JEN594 D264 APR21

…If I went to France now, I could probably understand a lot of what was being said around me and with a little practice I would probably get good at speaking quickly.

However, if I went now I would surely have to create sentences that I'd never heard and this may create for me an interlanguage which I'm doing my best to avoid. If I continue for several more hundred hours, I should be better at comprehension and speaking. But the question is at what point do I stop learning this way? Ideally, it is a point where I feel I'm understanding most of what I'm hearing and I'm only at that point with kids cartoons, but not all of them. There are always tons of words floating around that I haven't heard or can't recognise. It is overwhelming how many there are. Yet, I've managed to acquire enough to understand lots of full length conversations, so I've clearly improved…Grammar is extremely tough and strange. On many occasions I translate grammar and it makes sense without having the ability to explain or translate the grammatical element with complete confidence. This should be normal though since it is unnecessary or rare to know grammar when L1 learning. You just eventually know how to use it and based on what I've done this just comes from repeating commonly heard phrases in the right contexts and this is what I'm guessing is happening with L1 learners who are said to be masters. They have no idea about grammar they just have enough models inside of them to participate as though they understand it…For me this grammar [that I want to learn] is mainly modal/aux verbs and tense affixes/morphemes. Prepositions are still a bit weird for me and these need more work too.

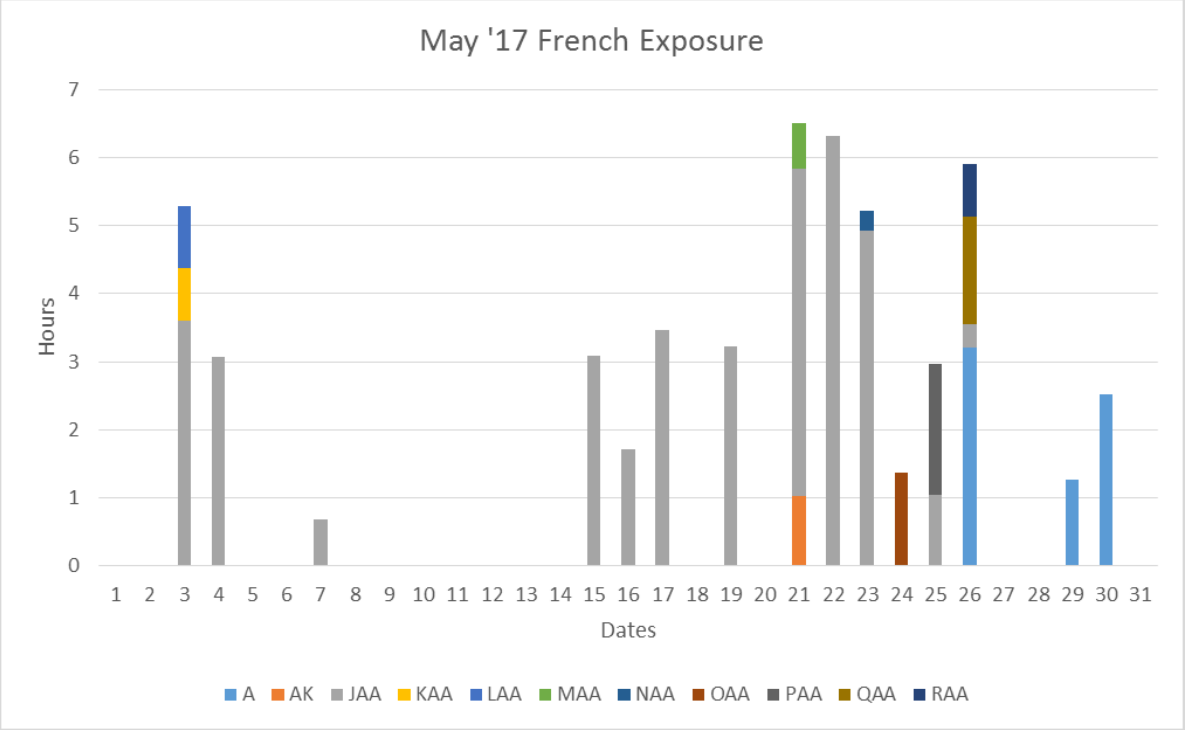
5.14 May 2017

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	AV	Helene et Les Garcon	7.0	13.3
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	1.0	2.0
JAA	AV	Beyblade Metal Fusion	36.3	69.0
KAA	AV	UN PARFUM DE CARAIBES	0.8	1.5
LAA	AV	Asterix at the Olympic Games Bluray 720p	0.9	1.7
MAA	AV	Bouboule le film entier en français !	0.7	1.3
NAA	AV	Film Francais Meurtres à la Rochelle	0.3	0.6
OAA	AV	Dette d'amour	1.4	2.6
PAA	AV	Rugby World Cup 2007 : France- New Zealand (french commentary)	1.9	3.7
QAA	AV	Amours et Turbulences 2013 FRENCH BDRip	1.6	3.0
RAA	AV	Pour l'amour d'Elena	0.8	1.5
			52.59	

Table 40: May 2017 French exposure by media type

Table 40 shows the French programs experienced during May 2017, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that 10 programs were experienced, all of which were AV

and most of which were dramas. The most watched program was the cartoon Beyblade at over 36 hours, while the second most watched was HELG at 7 hours.



Graph 42: Daily French exposure by program May 2017

Graph 42 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of May 2017 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 15 days out of a possible 31, with seven breaks of between one and seven days. On two days I reached my goal of 6 hours of exposure.

JEN600 D270 MAY15

> 1 week ago I had my 2nd milestone meeting and passed second year!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Extremely happy about that… Anyway, I was so happy. I decided to have the week off, which was almost true except I made a start on the first analysis chapter. Other than that, I partied a bit, did some Karaoke… Anyway, I'm back into fulltime study as of today. My goal is to rack up another 300-400 hours of telly and get a good solid chunk of analysis done…

JEN605 D275 MAY22

> Last night my mind was filled with French while I was sleeping and continued right up until I woke up. They were all expressions from the cartoons…I'm pretty sure now that SOORA means WILL BE and is followed by nouns adjectives and

probably prepositions. I don’t know if SOORA is one or two words, but that is the meaning that always comes to mind. Also ORA which comes at the ends of verbs means WILL…. Wow!!! That is the longest single session I've ever had. Just under 5 hours. I didn't take the headphones off the whole time and just had my breaks while still listening. I enjoyed it. It’s a cartoon [Beyblade], but there is so much banter and talk and I can understand so much of it. It’s enjoyable…

JEN609 D279 MAY26

Wooooohoooooo!!!!!!!! I just understood most of that program [HELG Ep.39]. I just thought I’d have a look like I do sometimes and I understood it. I watched over 200 episodes of this at the beginning of the project and only understood bits and pieces, but now. You beaudy!!!!! As much as that show was boring I might give the series another go. This was one of my goals. I thought if I can one day understand this show then my French has become good. Of course it’s not that simple and I still need more listening but this is a program fully fluent teenagers would watch.

JEN610 D279 MAY26

Wow! I have just watched the very first show I started this project with and I followed the story. I knew what they were saying. I laughed at the right moments, except a big one. I enjoyed it. I liked the story… Oh and this is the day when I finally started to understand French…

JEN612 D280 MAY29

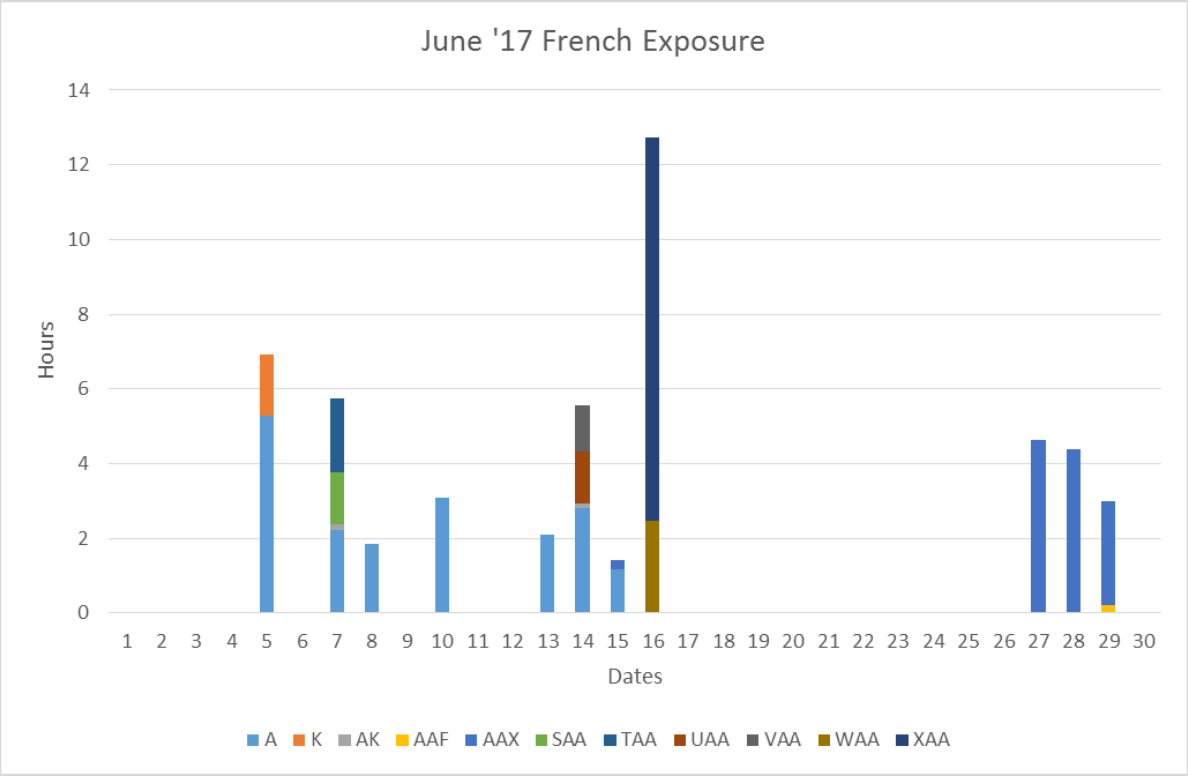
… Yeah!! I understood the majority of the conversations that I heard [in HELG]. It was like when I'm understanding the cartoons, but better because they're adults. So happy, it is finally here. The beginning of the understanding of adult language.

5.15 June 2017

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	AV	Helene et Les Garcon	18.6	36.1
K	AV	sous le soleil	1.6	3.2
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	0.3	0.5
AAF	AV	Cedric	0.2	0.4
AAX	AV	Mademoiselle Zazie	12.0	23.4
SAA	AV	J.K. Rowling - la magie des mots (film entier 2011)	1.4	2.7
TAA	AV	shaolin (HD): le film en entier et en français	2.0	3.9
UAA	AV	Film d'action en francais Film complet Jet Li	1.4	2.7
VAA	AV	Gotti Film Complet VF	1.2	2.4
WAA	AUD	Mums music cds	2.5	4.8
XAA	AUD	podcasts	10.3	19.9
			51.42	

Table 41: June 2017 French exposure by media type

Table 41 shows the French programs experienced during June 2017, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that 10 programs were experienced with two being AUD and eight being AV. The three highest amounts of exposure came from HELG at 18.6 hours, Mademoiselle Zazie at 12 hours and some podcasts that I download at just over 10 hours.



Graph 43: Daily French exposure by program June 2017

Graph 43 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of May 2017 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 11 days out of a possible 30, with six breaks of between one and ten days. On two days I reached my goal of 6 hours of exposure.

JEN615 D285 JUN10

> I think I've just learned my first slang word or at least the first that I think is slang. FLEEK means COPS. I think its slang because the normal word is a cognate of POLICE something like AZHENPOLEECE.

JEN616 D285 JUN10

> I'm really understanding the conversations well today [in HELG] and some of what they are saying is shocking. One of the guys just cheated on his girlfriend and a friend of the girlfriend advised her not to break up with him and just stay angry with him for a week. And the girls often say, "You know how men are, they're all like that" as in they all cheat and that it's normal. And what it makes me think of is the teenage girls who would watch this program and believe this advice. It really surprises me, but then knowing the media it shouldn't.

JEN619 D289 JUN16

> I'm driving a mate's car up to Cairns and so I'm listening to French on the way up. Just listened to mum's French CDs she made for me and understood almost nothing. Gonna switch now to some podcasts that I downloaded.

JEN624 D291 JUN28

> Well some words/expressions are still extremely frustrating: NAPORTAKWA, DU/DE/DES that sometimes seems to mean THE and sometimes SOME, and all of the FET/FAS/FAIR group. However, it's still an interesting phenomenon that I can't work them out after all of this time, especially when there are so many other words I have managed to find a meaning for. My guess is that I'm just not ready to understand them, but one day will be, but I have to accept the possibility that I may never work them out until I study writing and allow myself to use a dictionary. Hopefully it is the former that will occur. Also, there is the ON in the expression KES KE CHU ON PONS, which I can't work out other than it refers to this exact moment, but I have no translation for it. Also, I still don't know some of the pronouns. Right

now I don't have a word for HER. All I have is LOOEE which I know means HIM, but may be used for both HIM and HER.

JEN628 D292 JUN29

Wooooooooohooooooooo!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I've reached 1000 hours of telly… What a long ride to get that far. After a 1000 hours, I can comfortably say I understand bucket loads of French. Clearly there is still more to learn, but I have come a long way and I surely can't be too far off where a native speaking 5 year old French child is. Of course I may be way off, but my guess is I'm not far off. I still will do 200 more hours but that's still a significant milestone for me. Let the count down to 1200 commence.

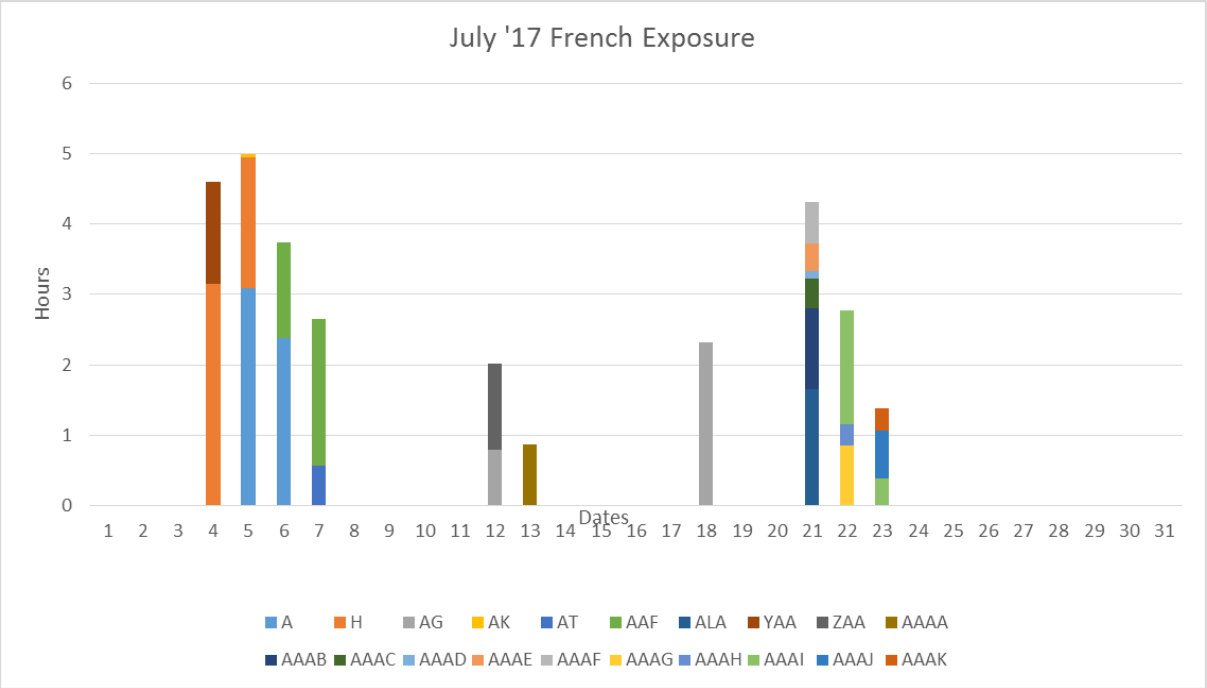
5.16 July 2017

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	AV	Helene et Les Garcon	5.5	18.5
H	AV	Titeuf	5.0	16.8
AG	AV	Caillou	3.1	10.5
AK	AV	Mixed - searching for new programs	0.1	0.2
AT	AV	Petit Nicolas	0.6	1.9
AAF	AV	Cedric	3.4	11.6
ALA	AV	Les 4 Fantastiques saison 1 ep 01	1.7	5.6
YAA	AV	La Remplaçante - Film Complet en Français (HD 1080p)	1.4	4.9
ZAA	AV	Voyage dans l'univers - Documentaire 720p - 1H30	1.2	4.1
AAAA	AV	Le Mataf	0.9	2.9
AAAB	AV	L'histoire de France - Parts1-4 Alberto Basile	1.1	3.9
AAAC	AV	La vérité sur les annunaki nibiru Les Portes de Lenfer ☼ Documentaire 2015 Documentaire st	0.4	1.4
AAAD	AV	L'histoire des Sumériens, 1ère civilisation au monde, dans le croissant fertile ou Mésopotamie	0.1	0.4
AAAE	AV	Il était une fois la Mésopotamie (Le pays entre les deux fleuves)	0.4	1.3
AAAF	AV	Civilisation disparue il y a 12 000 ans, Gobekli Tepe, Documentaire Historique	0.6	2.0
AAAG	AV	Mohenjo Daro, la colline des morts Documentaire Film	0.9	2.9
AAAH	AV	Egypte les plus grands secret des Pharaons Documentaire Complet	0.3	1.0
AAAI	AV	L'Univers est Vibration 33 43	2.0	6.8
AAAJ	AV	L'histoire des religions	0.7	2.3
AAAK	AV	Emmanuel Anati, Des origines de l'écriture (Musée de l'Homme "hors les murs") 19 02	0.3	1.1
			29.65	

Table 42: July 2017 French exposure by media type

Table 42 shows the French programs experienced during July 2017, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that 19 programs were experienced, all of which were AV, with a mixture

of cartoons and documentaries. The four highest amounts of exposure came from HELG at 5.5 hours, Titeuf at 5 hours, Cedric at 3.4 hours and Caillou at 3.1 hours.



Graph 44: Daily French exposure by program July 2017

Graph 44 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of July 2017 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 10 days out of a possible 31, with five breaks of between two and eight days. On no days did I reach my goal of 6 hours of exposure.

JEN636 D299 JUL18

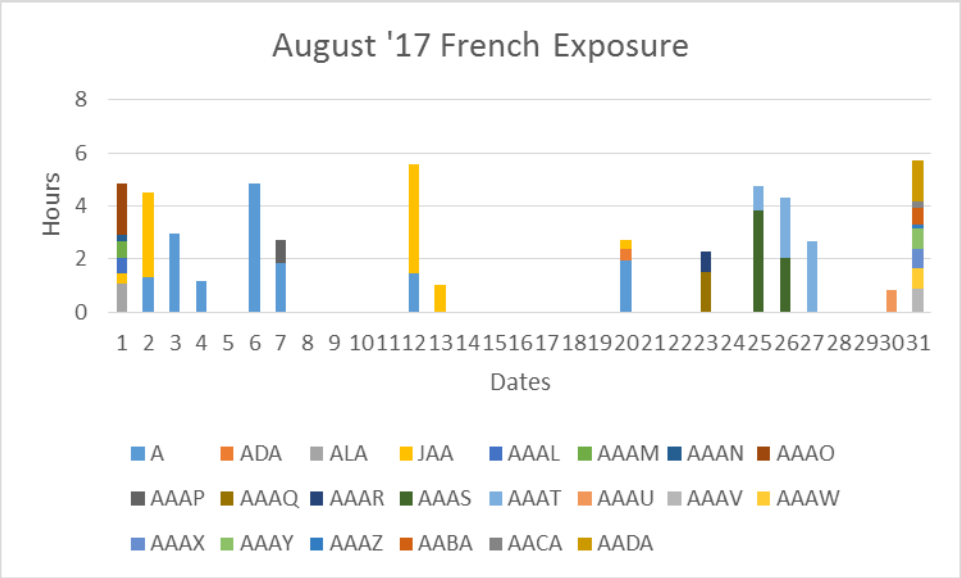
> July has been a bad month for study. I went to Cairns for a week and got some study done, then I helped my mum for a weekend got almost nothing done. While helping mum, I injured my back and couldn't study because I was too drugged up and in pain…

5.17 August 2017

Code	Type	Program Title	Hours	% of Total
A	AV	Helene et Les Garcon	15.6	30.5
ADA	AV	Le miracle de l'amour	0.4	0.9
ALA	AV	Les 4 Fantastiques saison 1 ep 01	1.1	2.1
JAA	AV	Beyblade Metal Fusion	9.1	17.8
AAAL	AV	L'évolution de la pensée	0.6	1.1
AAAM	AV	Un Fabuleux Voyage au cœur d'un TROU NOIR identifié dans l'UNIVERS DOC SPECIAL	0.6	1.2
AAAN	AV	L'humanité vue de l'espace	0.3	0.5
AAAO	AV	La Grande Histoire de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale - Episode 1 - Hitler attaque	1.9	3.8
AAAP	AV	J'irai dormir chez vous S08E01 Nicaragua 15 06 2017	0.9	1.7
AAAQ	AV	nos jours heureux film en complet en francais	1.5	3.0
AAAR	AV	LA PREMIERE ETOILE Film Entier	0.8	1.5
AAAS	AUD	MC Solar	5.9	11.5
AAAT	AUD	shurik'n	5.9	11.5
AAAU	AV	Les éléphants du désert - Documentaire entier HD 2014 Film Français Complet || HD docu	0.9	1.7
AAAV	AV	La Girafe - l'histoire de la dernière Girafe	0.9	1.8
AAAW	AV	LE RHINOCÉROS D'ASIE | DOC HD	0.7	1.4
AAAX	AV	ANACONDA D'AMÉRIQUE DU SUD | DOC HD	0.8	1.5
AAAY	AV	LE ROYAUME DE KING KONG ! | DOC HD	0.7	1.5
AAAZ	AV	# 1 - DES ANIMAUX RARE ! | DOC HD	0.2	0.3
AABA	AV	Les petites créatures du desert - doc animalier	0.6	1.2
AACA	AV	Kheiron - "Stand-up et Impro sans limites !"	0.2	0.5
AADA	AV	BEST OF - Humour STAND UP #1	1.6	3.1
			51.04	

Table 43: August 2017 French exposure by media type

Table 43 shows the French programs experienced during August 2017, the hours of exposure for each program and the overall contribution to the month's exposure as a percentage. The table shows that 22 programs were experienced, two of which were AUD, with most programs being documentaries. The four highest amounts of exposure came from HELG at 15.6 hours, Beyblade at 9.1 hours, MC Solar at 5.9 hours and Shurik'n at 5.9 hours.



Graph 45: Daily French exposure by program August 2017

Graph 45 shows the amount of daily French input received for each day of August 2017 and which programs were experienced on which days. It can be seen from the graph that I received exposure on 15 days out of a possible 31, with six breaks of between one and six days. On no days did I reach my goal of 6 hours of exposure.

JEN642 D303 AUG1

> There are lots of docos [documentaries] I want to watch, but many of them were made in English speaking countries and so often have English speakers explaining things with a French translator over the top. The problem is I can hear the English well enough to match French words to it and I want to avoid that. In the past when this occurred, I just didn't watch the rest of the program and tried to find one in French. I just tried muting every bit where they talk but they talk so often it's annoying. I know I'm pedantic but I don't want my French learning to come that way. Not that I couldn't learn that way or that it wouldn't be good for me, but I just want to stay as true as possible to the thesis.

JEN649 D311 AUG20

> …A few days ago, not sure how many, I intentionally spoke French. I called my mum's white dog Meeloo in the French way rather than Miloo in the English way, so with a long vowel instead of a short one. This is the [second] intentional French speaking I think I have done. I thought it over for a bit and just decided to say it. I also ran into someone who had something to do with Tahiti and I asked her to

speak French with me. She said a couple of things like "What do you want me to say" and I understood her and then I asked some questions in English and she answered in French. I also understood her answers, which is good. I was drinking, so I don't remember all of the conversation…

JEN650 D313 AUG25

Met an Aussie fella who told me about a French rapper called MCSolar. I thought I'd have a listen.

JEN651 D317 AUG31

…I just learnt that elephants have an excellent sense of smell and can therefore find each other when lost by smelling. Makes sense, but I only ever thought of trunks being used for sucking up water and grabbing branches. But I learnt it in French… Thinking of not recording music hours quantitatively anymore and just using qualitative language to discuss it, e.g. "I watched a few hours this week," and mention any experiences that are of interest. And if I've done the maths right, at 1288 hours (uncorrected) I've done the equivalent of a full ESL in Australia school year of 48 weeks (1200 hours) with an extra 88 hours…

JEN652 D316 AUG30

So clearly I'm thinking about stopping all quantitative recording even for the TV. I think my French is in a pretty good place where I frequently understand many sentences in many contexts in real time with varying speeds of speech and I learn new words quite quickly with new programs. My original goal and still current is fluent comprehension at least to the equivalent of a 5yr old L1 French person, before speaking. Now how am I compared to such a person? Currently I can only guess and imagine. Clearly, I don't have all of the vocab that they do, but I'm not too far off I think and another 100 hours or two is gonna get me there (of listening). In many ways, I'm more advanced than such a child because I can understand many complex adult topics which a 5 year old would struggle with. Speaking wise I'm still not ready for straight out perfect French speech. If I spoke now, I'd be able to communicate I think, but I would struggle with recalling words I needed in the moment. However, how wonderful to have an excellent chance of understanding what people are saying to me. I've met tons of ESL students who struggle to comprehend and speak in a real life English speaking contexts.

JEN654 D316 AUG30

> Well I've finally done it. I've watched a big chunk of telly without recording the time or program name. How very relieving… Anyway, I'm very happy with my comprehension and with what I can learn each time I watch TV. Now I can also just listen to music when I want. Woooohooooo…

5.18 September 2017 to just prior to departure to France

From the start of September until the 2nd of November, I continued to receive French exposure without recording program data.

5/9/2017 JEN654

> It's been wonderful not recording what I watch. Since I have stopped it no longer feels like work. I can listen to music or switch between programs and not be burdened by having to record everything or use a stop watch. I'm really coming into French now. I think soon I'm going to get a lot better.

11/9/2017 JEN655

> I'm watching 'Bien dégagé derrière les oreilles' and I'm loving it. I've been understanding heaps of what they've been saying and I've been laughing. Wanted to say that this movie is perhaps spoken in an accent that I'm most familiar with… Also, have been listening to heaps of music and doing a bit of telly maybe about 20 hours of music and 2 or 3 hours of telly…But this is the most I've ever understood of a film with adult characters…

21/9/2017 JEN659

> …When do I stop learning language the way I am? It is pretty clear to me now that I will not be able to achieve complete adult-like comprehension before going to…France because there are still so many words I don't know and so many genres I haven't experienced eg sports shows, cooking shows, etc.. What does all of this mean in terms of the first belief driving this project? For me, the belief remains and I hate to say that because I can see how it could be interpreted by others as me being a person who simply doesn't want to admit that he is wrong. However, for me this is not the case. I am astounded by how much French I do understand and again for me, if I just continued with AV exposure I'd get better and better and

eventually have the adult-like comprehension that I think is possible with this learning method. In many ways I wish I'd used subtitles from the beginning and had access to French TV stations and started with programs like Caillou. I think that had I done these three things I'd have the adult comprehension that I desire right now…

27/10/2017 JEN662

A little summary of what's been happening. Since having stopped recording the hours of viewing I've listened to quite a lot of Chante France through the day and am able to understand quite a lot of lyrics and even learn some expressions from it. I have done some TV hours, mostly at night, just a few hours here and there. Documentaries in some ways seem rather easy to understand. Not that I understand all of the words but it's just that there are a lot of cognates. Anyway, the study has reached a point now when the end of stage 1 is here. Today or in the next few days I will do my first French speaking and once done, the ban on speaking will be lifted. I have also booked a DELF B1 test for the 10th of November, which I will attempt to do without being literate in French. Once that test is done, the bans on learning to read and write French will be lifted. On the 10th is also the day on which I depart for France…For the last 3 years I have been isolated and depressed with very few social activities occurring in my life. Now I get to go snowboarding in France. It's too good. I have spent the last few weeks getting my flat ready to rent out, working on findings chapters, continuing with French exposure and selling most of my possessions. Last night I flew to Cairns to spend a week with a friend before I go to France and because the speaking may occur today, I thought I had best make a new journal entry…

5.19 The value of hindsight

I was extremely fortunate to have been given the opportunity to learn an L2 in the manner I desired and to have been supported financially to do it by the Australian government and the University of Queensland. Although this research required immense dedication and I went through many personal and scholarly hardships, the fact that I learned enormous quantities of French through my chosen learning method was extremely satisfying and has given me the chance to experience an entirely new world through the language of French. The promising thing about the development of my French listening comprehension is that

there are many ways I believe that it could have been improved within the same amount of AV exposure time or less.

The primary way in which I think my French comprehension could have been improved in approximately 1500 hours is by changing the sequence of programs to which I received exposure. With the aid of hindsight, I would have begun my exposure experience with the program Caillou. Although the data shows that I learned French from all of the programs that I experienced, it was not until I found and began receiving extensive exposure to Caillou that my comprehension began to rapidly develop. Prior to discovering the value of this program, I had received 385 hours of exposure (186 hours of which were radio) to programs which lacked some or all of the features of Caillou that were most beneficial for my learning: excellent audio quality, clearly spoken French, limited distracting background sound effects, character voices which sounded human (as opposed to comical cartoon voices), action-based storylines, a visual context (not counting radio), a higher ratio of speech to periods of no speech, conversations focused on the immediate moment that consistently matched the visual context, and storylines focused on everyday family life. Had the first 385 hours of French exposure been spent on the program Caillou, it is difficult for me to imagine not having a higher French comprehension ability than I had achieved with the programs I actually watched. That being said, I would have still had to begin the AV experience of Caillou with almost zero comprehension of French, and so would likely have had to go through the same early experiences of frustration, boredom and doubt that I did with the other programs.

After beginning the exposure experience with Caillou, I believe it would have been beneficial to receive exposure to the following programs, all cartoons, which were available on YouTube during this project, and which I felt were most helpful for my learning. They have been ordered roughly by increasing level of difficulty for me: Toupee et Binou, Zou, Mademoiselle Zazie, Legende de Tarzan, Les Adventures de Chat Potte, Slugterra, Beyblade, X-Men Evolution, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Le Petite Nicholas and Cedric. Hypothetically speaking, I believe that had I begun this experience with Caillou followed by these programs, I would have had a much higher level of French comprehension in the same amount of time as I did with the sequence of programs. It is also important to mention that although I have suggested a fixed order of programs here, in reality I got bored with every program, particularly when having to re-watch episodes, and when spending entire days watching a single program.

The second way in which I believe my learning could have been improved given the same quantity of exposure is through access to a greater variety of French programs. Undoubtedly, YouTube provided me with access to a huge quantity of French AV media, of which I sampled only a small portion. However, my access to programs on YouTube was limited by factors both within and out of my control. Out of my control, was access to full series of many programs. One example of this is TinTin, from which a high mental rate occurred. Unfortunately, only a small portion of all of the series was available on YouTube during my exposure period. The change of access to programs on YouTube was also an uncontrollable problem for me. For example, at one point during AV exposure I had access to a large number of sequenced episodes of Plus Belle La Vie (a soap opera targeted at teenagers and adults), yet months later these programs became unavailable. Also, whenever advertising material was displayed on YouTube while I was watching a program, it was always from Australia and hence in English. Had this advertising been in French, as it was upon my arrival in France, I would have received further valuable French input. Another way in which my access to a variety of programs was limited was due to being unable to access a number of French television websites due to my geographical location. I tried to access replays of TV episodes from such websites, and consistently received a message saying something like ‘the programs were unavailable in my region’. As soon as I arrived in France, I could access the replays. Two other factors out of my control were the inability to access New Caledonian television due to cabling restrictions in the building in which I lived, and the theft of many potentially useful learning resources from an Alliance France organisation in the city in which I lived.

Within my control were the limitations I placed on myself during this study. Had I allowed myself to learn to read and write French, I would have been more able to find French programs and have hence been able to overcome one of the most frustrating parts of this experience - finding new programs to watch. My refusal to watch programs that contained written or spoken English, combined with my refusal to learn to read and write French, also meant that it was difficult for me to find programs which taught the vocabulary I was rarely able to ‘pick up’ such as numbers, dates, days of the week, and seasons. Whenever I searched for such things on the Internet, they were almost always bilingual French-English lessons.

Another way in which my learning could have been improved given the same quantity of exposure is by having access to more programs on YouTube which were shorter than about 20 minutes. The reason why this would have been valuable is for the replaying of particular segments of speech that I had immediate interest in. In general, on YouTube with programs of about 20 minutes or shorter, it was possible to click on the play bar almost exactly where the speech I was interested in was and hence get an immediate replay as many times as I wanted. With longer programs, I often had to replay from many sentences before the part I was interested in, which quickly became dull and frustrating.

There are also a number of other things which I suspect would have improved my learning. The first of these, to the best of my knowledge, does not currently exist, but could be created. That is to have the program Caillou or a program like Caillou, with many more episodes/seasons, that show Caillou in his everyday life from birth right up to death. Linguistically speaking, this would allow an L2 learner such as myself to begin my learning experience with the most simplistic language and common vocabulary and over time experience more and more complex speech constructions and conversational topics as he and the characters aged. Interest-wise, it would have allowed me to overcome the boredom that arose from re-watching episodes. There is no doubt that I learned an enormous number of words and expressions from Caillou by replaying short segments of speech. However, had the opportunity been available, I would have almost always preferred to watch an episode I'd never seen and without replaying segments.

Both before and throughout my AV exposure experience, I felt confident that having access to French subtitles would have increased the speed at which I learned, given the same quantity of exposure. I believe it would have been important that all French subtitles were verbatim, so that every sound that I heard could have been matched with a written representation, and also that the French subtitles were free of spelling and punctuation errors, so that a high degree of confidence could be held in any visual learning of spelling and punctuation. One of the main ways that such subtitles would have theoretically helped me quickly is by resolving some of the difficulties I had with homophones (the same sound with different meanings). Homophones with different spellings, could be quickly resolved as being homonyms, and those with identical spelling resolved as additional meanings of the same word. Using French subtitles would also have allowed me to determine how in some cases, the same word can have different pronunciations in different sound environments and when spoken at different speeds. Another potential benefit of French

subtitles would have been in granting me the ability to identify which sounds belonged to individual words and which, although sounding like individual words, were instead ones which were a combination of the end of one word and the beginning of the next. Had I allowed myself to use French subtitles and a French-English dictionary, I believe that my learning would have been even quicker because I would have had the opportunity to identify a meaning for a given sound chunk, sometimes hundreds of hours before I was able to do so through guessing and 'reinforcement'. It would have presumably often taken more than one look in the dictionary for a given word to have a meaning triggered instantly whenever I encountered it, but that still would have been theoretically quicker than the time it took learning the way I did for many, many words. Subtitles would have also helped by developing my skill of reading. For an extremely passionate account, and for me a convincing one, of the benefits of subtitles for language learning see Vanderplank (2016).

I am quite confident that subtitles and dictionaries would have allowed me to learn French quicker than I did, due to my experience with learning Mandarin from Mandarin subtitled television and because of the time saving that could have occurred had I used a dictionary while learning French. However, there still may be benefits to learning without such tools. I'm a big believer in practicing the skill I want to be good at. In the case of this experience, that meant practicing listening to conversational language within a visual context without subtitles because for me that was the best approximation of how I was going to encounter French in the real world - people talk and there are no subtitles around. Furthermore, since L1 learners typically do not have access to such resources as dictionaries and subtitles, yet still become masters of a language, there may be advantages to having to patiently wait for key moments to arrive to discover the meaning of words. For example, while waiting for key language elements to be comprehended, already known elements of language are being further strengthened and this strengthened language may be what is needed to understand the key elements.

Another factor that may have affected my language learning is the data collection techniques used. Recording details of every new mental event for the first four months and then continuing to record program information and hours of exposure with a stopwatch for the next 16 months was an intense burden, but one that was necessary for me at the time in order to potentially demonstrate how my learning occurred. Not having done this, would have most certainly made my experience more enjoyable and far less time consuming, and as such may hypothetically have contributed to better learning due to having a

reduced work load, and feeling less fatigued and stressed, but mostly because I could have spent more time on listening. Nevertheless, having this burden, as well as the burden of having to simultaneously and constantly work on this thesis, yet still being able to acquire an enormous amount of French comprehension under difficult self-imposed conditions, encourages me in the thought that language learning from AV media is a field of research that may bear more fruit than I individually was able to achieve.

5.20 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to demonstrate the continual development of my French comprehension after ceasing to collect mental event data. It also demonstrated that my beliefs driving the project fluctuated and also that I was suffering from isolation and depression. Although I had not achieved my goal of fluent comprehension by the end of this stage of the research, I still decided to travel to France where I could observe both my comprehension and speaking skills in French. The story of my journey from my first French speaking to my living and travelling in France is told in the following chapter.

Chapter 6 – All bans lifted. Off to France.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter recounts the story of the development of my French speaking, the continual development of my French listening comprehension, the development of my ability to read French, and the sitting of three formal French tests. All data included in this chapter comes from my qualitative journal entries. Unlike previous chapters which often focused on mental language learning events, this chapter focuses on the development of my speaking, reading and writing abilities both from my own view and from the viewpoints of the L1 French speakers that I interacted with. My aim in selecting journal entries was to provide a broad range of experiences and to avoid repetition.

6.2 My first French speaking

My original aim in this project was to avoid French speaking until I reached my hypothetical level of fluent French comprehension because I had hoped that such a level would provide me with the best opportunity for fluent speaking. It was always unknown whether the comprehension level was achievable or if it would even translate into fluent speaking, but I had hoped 1500 hours of AV exposure was enough. Although I could have stayed in Australia and continued to develop my comprehension beyond 1500 hours in the hope that I would reach fluent comprehension, there were two reasons why I didn't. Firstly, I was seriously struggling with isolation and depression and I needed a change in my life to get some happiness back. Secondly, because the entire point of building my comprehension prior to speaking was to develop a mental acoustic resource upon which to draw when speaking, it was important for me to examine the practicality of the learning I had done when applied in a French speaking environment.

The 2nd of November, 2017 marked the date on which I finished the silent period and hence lifted all self-imposed bans on speaking in French and being able to write in order to improve my French. I had long awaited the moment where I would begin speaking French and had always expected a flurry of French to come out of my mouth, like the releasing of a pressurised drink. I think the reason for this belief was due to being able to observe increasingly random French speech popping into my head during the silent period and I figured that the same would occur once I allowed myself the freedom to talk.

I was staying with a friend at the time of my first speaking because he was also interested in what would happen at this moment since we'd been talking about the project throughout its duration. When the moment arrived to start speaking, I sat at the table with my computer ready to record it. Immediately after the recordings, in JEN664 I wrote,

> So, It's finally been done. My very first speaking was very disappointing. My mind was blank as opposed to a gush of French words coming to my head, and Chinese words wanted to pop in. As predicted, my best ability was to repeat back what I had heard. I was also surprised that I wasn't able to read better - a lot of the spellings were not as phonetic as I had hoped. I am now not confident that I will pass the [DELF/DALF] test next Friday, but I'll still give it a go. However, the bans have finally been lifted so that I can speak French whenever I choose and I can learn from reading… I know that I didn't reach the point that I believe exists where I understand the majority of spoken French I encounter and I wonder if it even does exist and if I had reached it, would I have performed better than I did today? Nevertheless, the way my first speaking occurred is how it occurred. I'm just a little embarrassed by it and I really don't want anyone to hear it if they ask to. However, starting from now, but more so in France, it is time to test the second belief of this project about whether or not I can rapidly develop the ability to speak. Being able to now speak when I want should hopefully accelerate the speaking process.

This experience certainly went against my belief that receiving extensive audio input would immediately translate into accurate speaking. My belief was disappointingly, embarrassingly and immediately shattered upon my first speaking - I froze, no French came to mind, I stumbled through my words and I sounded extremely Australian. That phenomenon is colloquially known as 'stage fright'. When I listened to the recording of my first speaking, I could clearly notice that I was nervous, under pressure and trying to speak too quickly. In hindsight, this was not surprising since I had been building up to that moment for a long time, I had a friend present that I wanted to impress, the recording of the experience was a one-time-only event that other people in the future might hear and I hadn't reached the level of comprehension I desired. For the remainder of the week, I spoke very little French and only briefly looked at some written French.

6.3 My first DELF B1 test

The DELF/DALF test is a language proficiency test acknowledged and supported by the government of France for such things as university entry and citizenship. The test for adults is organised into six levels (A1-A2-B1-B2-C1-C2) of increasing difficulty with each test made up of four parts (listening-reading-writing-speaking). Every component of the test requires the ability to read French. The listening component is made up of written questions requiring either a multiple choice answer or the writing of specific words, while the speaking tests requires the student to read and comprehend 2 of the 3 speaking topics.

I chose to sit the B1 test because in the preceding weeks I had listened to a single listening component of both a B1 and a B2 practice test on YouTube and was able to make most sense of the B1 component. I took the listening, writing and reading components of the B1 test during the morning and did the speaking component in the afternoon, on the 10th of November, 2017, the same day as my flight to France. After the morning tests, in JEN667, I wrote,

> Well, I just finished 3 parts of the DELF B1 test about an hour ago. The first test was listening. It was actually pretty tough to try to read the questions and listen at the same time. In fact I couldn't. I had to just solely listen and then try to work out what the questions said afterwards. Because of the multiple choice questions I think I have a chance of passing. The next test was the reading. I think I may have passed that one. I was able to work out a lot of the writing and there were a few multiple choice and true/false questions. The writing was definitely the hardest because what I wanted to say I didn't know the spelling for. It took me a while to understand the task and there were a couple of bits of it that I couldn’t understand but essentially the task was to write a letter to a friend explaining a difficult choice I was having between a good job with bad pay and a bad job with good pay. First I wrote a letter in English and then I tried to write it in French using words from other parts of the test that I knew. I only wrote about 90 words and the task required 160, so I'm pretty sure I'll fail that one. I'm just waiting for the speaking test at 3pm which will be my first conversation. I think I may struggle based on my first speaking last week.

After the speaking test in JEN668 I wrote,

> Just finished the speaking test and it was hard. In the first part I was required to speak about myself, which I managed to do pretty well by talking about the project I was doing. My speaking wasn't awesome though. In the second part I was required to do a role play where I was an employee talking to the company boss about letting the employees speak more socially around the office. It was pretty tough and I didn't do well, but I managed to talk a fair bit. The third part was a monologue and was easily the hardest part. I had to talk about robots replacing human jobs or something like that. I didn't really understand the topic and I managed to stumble through about three minutes of talking, which was a minute short of the required time. Ultimately, I don't think I'll pass the DELF B1, but as a prediction I reckon my best score will be on the reading, then the listening, then the speaking and lastly the writing. I reckon I'll get about 40% overall and will only pass the reading and listening. We'll see when the results come in. Only 6.5 hours until my flight leaves. Can't wait.

I received the following results of the B1 test on the 22nd of November via email.

Overall:	45.5/100	45.5%
Listening:	8/25	32%
Reading:	23/25	92%
Writing:	10.5/25	42%
Speaking:	4/25	16%

It was quite an interesting result for me. Firstly, I almost reached the 50% pass mark, although in order to pass I needed at least 5/25 for each component. Secondly, I did really well on reading without any reading practice. Thirdly, I almost passed the writing even though I had no idea of how to write in French. Fourthly, I did terribly in listening despite all of the hours of practice I had done and with the one skill that was most definitely my strength in French. Finally, speaking was my worst skill of all, but not unsurprising since I hadn’t practiced it and didn’t understand the topics.

6.4 My first 3 weeks in France

My first three weeks was meant to be both a break from study and a chance to practice French speaking. Prior to arriving in Paris, I booked a room in a hostel for 3 nights, figuring that I would work out what to do next during that time. On the 12th of November in JEN1 for my journal in France, I wrote,

> Well, I made it to Paris and got from the airport to my hostel without incident. I even managed to ask a couple of different people if the train I was on was the train to the North station and a couple of other things. Last night, I decided to do a bit of wandering and went to a Brasserie (café/pub) to get something to eat. Inside I got talking to a guy who took me on a tour of what he called the Arabic and African neighbourhoods. Quite eye-opening. At some point, I gave him my phone to enter his number so that we could catch up the next day and the next thing I know my phone is missing. Not a great start to my trip… Oh but what I wanted to mention is that this guy talked constantly in French with me for about 3 hours and I understood most of what he said, let's say about 70%. My speaking went ok. I was able to pull out a lot of vocabulary and sentences and communicate quite well with him, so that is success for me.

14/11/2017 JEN2

> In order to get over feeling bad about having lost my phone I decided to go out two nights ago and enjoy myself… I then ended up in an indoor Algerian bar, which was pretty empty, drinking with a man there… during the several hours I was talking to that guy in the bar I understood again most of what he was saying and was able to communicate quite well back with him. "Most" is probably an overstatement, but certainly a lot… I think I'm gonna get out of Paris tomorrow, it's just too busy for me and I hate having to watch my back every second I am outside. Perhaps off to Lyon…

16/11/17 JEN3

> I'm now in Lyon staying in my own room in a quiet neighbourhood and feeling much better than I was in Paris. My days of crowded cities and backpackers are behind me. I was just in a bakery wondering what kind of delicacy to purchase and the lady working in the shop was looking at me waiting for me to order. I kind of mumbled

something like "I just wanna look for a moment" and she scurried away calling out to another employee to come because she couldn't understand me. My confidence with language in shopping situations is low, even though I think I actually have the language to produce what I want, but if I don't speak with confidence, it doesn't come out right. In the taxi yesterday the driver asked me if I knew anyone here, to which I replied "rien=nothing". He quickly corrected me with "personne=no one", which I knew was the right response, but it just didn't come out the first time. I have a TV in my room and so can now watch a variety of shows in French. I can also add subtitles, but unfortunately just like in English they are not verbatim. Such a pity. I also bought a comic book for the bus ride from Paris and was amazed that I could read about the first 10 pages understanding almost everything. Some of the stories got harder after that, to the point where I really needed full verbatim audio along…I also ordered an 8 euro pizza, paid with a 10 and got no change back. Eventually I was able to talk with the worker about this and got my change back. It was good to have done that in French…

18/11/17 JEN5

It’s very difficult to strike up conversations with random people. In fact I haven't been trying because I feel rude. I did have a conversation when I went looking for a snowboard yesterday. Unfortunately, I don't need to buy many things and so that's not a great avenue for me. So last night I decided I would go out to a bar because at least I know I can generally find people to talk to. I started at a small local bar with about 5 older gentlemen. Some of them spoke English for a bit, but mostly French. I was able to talk but my comprehension was far superior to my ability to speak. After that I ended up in another bar where 4 French people invited me to sit down. It was great because we mostly spoke French and we did that for hours. I am possibly going to the home of one of them to eat oysters and drink alcohol. It sounds awful to me that combination, but apparently it’s a kind of Saturday tradition and so I will try. I'm extremely happy with my comprehension. It's far from perfect, but still I can understand a lot. My speaking on the other hand is disappointing me a bit. I'm happy with my vocabulary and I'm doing quite well at bringing to mind the words I need but it’s my accent. I can really hear it. Not with every sentence, but definitely with many. I still need to not be so hard on myself with this because my speaking practice has just begun. I am however extremely happy to have access to French TV. I so wish I had had this when I was in Oz, but just having variety and

new programs makes me wanna learn more. TV is still my first choice for language learning. I've looked up a few words in a dictionary but it's boring and difficult and requires remembering things intentionally. From TV, I can just watch and enjoy and learn quickly…Wonderful day. Had brunch with the four people I met last night. Wonderful food and wonderful company. One of them gave me a lift there and I understood almost everything he said during the 20 minute drive. It's such an asset to comprehend French even if my speaking isn't awesome right now….Interestingly though, during the brunch I understood almost nothing of what they were saying.

22/11/17 JEN8

…Almost no opportunities for speaking today sadly, and within seconds of me saying anything most people know I'm a foreigner and want to switch or do switch to English. I'm now wondering about my accent and how I can overcome it since my theory about having sounds in the head doesn't seem to be working. That being said, I may be doing what I was hoping to avoid and that is constructing sentences that I have never heard. But that is definitely not true for all sentences. Even 'si vous pleit' sounds Australian to myself when I say it. Did I not receive enough listening? Is an accent truly permanent? I try to watch what happens when I speak. I think I noticed that say for a word like 'le' or 'la' I say it with the same duration as for the word 'the'. For example, I think I said 'l'homme' as 'le om' where in French it's more like 'lom'. Anyway, my best strategy still is to go to a bar in order to get some speaking practice in, but I don't want to keep drinking…Also I was just saying to myself outside that I feel as far away from having an excellent vocabulary as on Day 1 of this project, even though that's quite untrue.

23/11/17 JEN9

…Anyway, this morning I have been creating some subject verb tables with avoir=have and etre=be. Sadly though, there is no accompanying sound as is usual for language learning materials. If I can't find them I will try to get someone to record their voice of them for me. I need these in order to learn to read and write for the next DELF/DALF test. As per English, the grammatical nomenclature is quite unhelpful, but fortunately I have experience with grammar and I have a knowledge base of French sound. Also, since I arrived at this hotel I have had the TV running almost constantly and so have been getting lots of listening in. Cartoons are the best, conversational ones anyway. I can understand so much.

25/11/17 JEN10

> Found my way to a bar last night, and spent a few hours talking to some French guys. Besides them being very friendly and cool, I got to do a lot of practice with French. I do pretty well at pulling up the vocab I need in the moment, with a few blockages, but last night I had a few moments where I really understood what people were saying. Was awesome. Fortunately, two of the guys corrected my French on quite a few occasions. Equally fortunate is that when they corrected me I could usually hear what they said and repeat it. Wish I was speaking that much French every day and all day.

28/11/17 JEN12

> I woke up this morning speaking French in my head. That feels like the first time I have done that. Not just rambling random words but I was actually kind of thinking…

1/12/17 JEN13

> Well I'm off to [my new city to live] this morning…I'm doing exactly what I was hoping to avoid, which is to create sentences I haven't ever heard or haven't heard enough. I'm butchering it. I think part of the problem is that I am operating in an adult world at the moment, where people aren't talking about the immediate situation generally. So it's kind of like the adult movies and programs which were still difficult for me with the TV. I wonder if the kindergarten will be a different experience and living with the family.

6.5 Living in my first small town

After my stay in Lyon, I travelled to another city in the Savoie region where I was to stay until the end of February 2018. The plan was to receive free accommodation with a French woman and her son in exchange for speaking English around the house with them both. Although this scenario wasn't ideal in terms of being able to immerse myself in French, on a student's income it was too good to pass by, and since outside of the home I had France all around me, it wasn't a terrible option.

1/12/2017 JEN14

> …on arrival I was greeted by my host's father. He was lovely and I was able to understand everything he said and I think he was speaking normally…

2/12/2017 JEN15

> Just finished watching a new cartoon and was able to understand most of it. It's a funny phenomenon. Long periods of understanding as though the language were mine and then little chunks where I simply don't understand. I'm more convinced than ever that what I have done is a path to excellent comprehension. It just either requires more time or better sequencing or both. Speaking, on the other hand, is different. Perhaps I had better start just imitating what I hear in the hope that it sticks better in the brain…

7/12/17 JEN16

> A little recap. Getting very few opportunities to speak French. Was hoping to join a few clubs and still might, but all of them only meet once a week, guess I can join more. Last night my flatmate had a couple of friends over and they spoke French for hours. I understood almost nothing all night, but towards the end I could understand heaps. Wonder if they just started using familiar words or if my ears got used to their voices? Have started reading comics, which I understand a lot of, but it is so sad I can't get audio for them. Would be wonderful. Otherwise I'm left with a computer dictionary voice for words.

9/12/17 JEN18

> …the best thing was me going out tonight. I had three sets of conversations and in each of them I could make myself understood in French and could understand what was said to me. My best French speaking ever and the people I spoke to were impressed with my French.

14/12/17 JEN20

> There's no doubt that when I speak French I sound Australian. Heaps of French people have noticed I have an accent and it's easily noticeable to me. Nevertheless, I ponder what it is exactly that makes an accent. I've been listening to French speakers and thinking about this and there is some sort of softness to the whole speech that I don't think is there in Australian. I read some French to my friend

today and sounded very Australian. I then tried softening my voice, saying it almost like a whisper volume with no voice and I sounded much more French to both of us. I don't think it's the absence of voice that makes a French accent because I can hear voice when French speakers talk. But I'm contemplating the idea that if I begin my speaking with a softer voice that might allow me to find my French accent. Not sure, but I'll try. On another note, my reading is getting better. I just keep reading the comics and put unknown words into Google Translate and I'm making progress. I made some tables a couple of weeks ago of BE verb forms and HAVE and CAN and I'm starting to hear them and make sense of them in the programs. The writing is so deceptive, because the sounds are so different. It's less confusing for me to listen first and then check the tables when I hear one so that I know how to pronounce it when I'm reading. Also checked with the lady I'm living with for the accent of Caillou. It's Canadian. So I wonder what affect that has had on me. It is super clear when I hear it… I wonder if I trained my ear for Canadian French and that caused me difficulties with French French…

17/12/17 JEN21

So I went to the same pub as last week and got to speak French again. It's really nice. A lot of guys try to speak English [with me] and struggle, but with me they can switch to French and I often understand. But last night I was talking to one of the same guys again as last week and he was saying how good my French is. I had been talking French smoothly and fluently and was getting all of the words right. How is that possible? In many situations, like just answering a single question, I speak with hesitation and mistakes, but twice at the pub after a warm up of speaking I got quite good.

20/12/17 JEN22

B'day yesterday and snowboarding all day. Went into one of the kindergartens I will work at and when I arrived the woman in charge said that all the staff speak French and so I need to as well. Was very happy to hear that. She then explained all of the things I needed to do and I understood almost all of it. Went to a bar last night and met some young locals playing pool and got to speak a bit of French with them. I've also been watching lots of French cartoons to make my listening better. The one I'm watching now is called Monster and it's probably the hardest language I've been able to understand. There are always words I miss, but they're speaking rapidly

about a range of issues and I can follow it. It’s strange that I can without having all of the verb tenses worked out, but I can. Just from vocab I can follow it. The woman I live with often says nothing and it’s really uncomfortable for me. I feel like I’ve done something wrong. I'm doing my best to be perfect to avoid such things but she says she is just quiet like that.

30/12/17 JEN24

I've had a good few days. I stayed the night at a friend's place and got to speak and listen to French all night with 4 people. I didn't do too badly. Then I did 3 days work at the ski school for kids and they were pretty hard days. Constantly moving and no breaks from 9 to 5. It is good for my French though because I have to talk to the kids and try to understand them. It’s actually much tougher than I thought. I guess little kids often mumble or don't have their pronunciation right and that might explain why I often struggle to understand them. It's even more difficult when they're crying. All of the staff speak French to me too, which is great. I went out last night and the same thing happened again. I could speak quite well and understand a lot. However I asked one guy if he was modifying his speech for me and he said he was speaking slower but wasn't choosing easier words, so I guess the speed part explains my comprehension. He wasn't speaking noticeably slow for me though…

31/12/17 JEN25

Every time I wake up in the middle of the night I can immediately observe my brain processing French sentences. It's like I wake up and I hear my brain constantly talking in French. Also, writing is so confusing. There are more differences in French writing than there are in the sounds. Many verb endings, while written differently for different subjects, sound the same. It's like the creators of the writing system decided to make it more complex to confuse people.

2/1/2018 JEN26

Last night, my housemate and one of her friends who had visited before were speaking in French all night. I was able to understand lots of what they were saying without being able to follow the topic. But I also had a point where I really did know what one of them was saying. And I thought to myself I think I've reached the speed of [adult] French conversation now or I'm hovering around it. The last two times I

heard them both speak I could follow almost nothing. Also I went out for NYE in town and ended up talking to a few locals and going to a party. It was good. Got to do a bit of speaking. One guy asked me if I had a Belgian accent, which is a mini-compliment for me. There are also times when I can hear whether or not I have a French accent with some of the things I say. I think it may be improving. Also it's amazing how I can read and understand most of the comics that I'm reading with almost no reading practice. Strange phenomenon.

6/1/2018 JEN27

A night out to celebrate being on holidays [after 6 days at the ski school] and it was a good one. I drank with some people from New Years and we talked all night and I ran into other locals I knew. It was French all night and five or more different people told me that my French was really good. I'm really understanding heaps and learning new words and I can express myself quite well, but I also notice mistakes in my speaking and I struggle to find certain words. Interestingly, encore=again and ensemble=together are two that rarely come to mind when I want them. I think its cognate interference.

7/1/2018 JEN28

Another local night out and lots of French speaking. One guy told me my speaking was better than a week ago and also listened to me read a pamphlet about how to protect your home when travelling. He gave me an 8 out of 10. I then met other people and chatted quite a bit and the people I ran into understood me and were impressed. Later I ended up drinking around a circular table with about 7 people who were constantly talking and I was following a lot of the conversations and all of them were commenting positively on my ability to understand and to be understood. All promising signs…

09/01/2018 JEN29

My latest method of study is to read a topic in a Junior/children's picture encyclopedia I borrowed from the ski school and then to watch videos on YouTube of the subject. It's working well. My reading and listening and vocab are improving quickly. I also found a great scientific kids show to watch called C'est pas sorcier. I'm pretty sure that if I continue through the whole encyclopedia and do listening

practice for each subject I'm going to come close to the comprehension I've been seeking all along, but I'm pretty sure I've said that many times before.

19/01/2018 JEN30

It's strange. I've watched heaps of Cest Pas Sorcier and am now understanding heaps of rapid speech while listening. I also started a new cartoon yesterday called Les Sisters and understand most of that. In the past few days I feel like I follow most conversations on television programs which is wonderful. It feels like I'm so close to the comprehension I want but it’s strange because there must be heaps of words I still don't know. Anyway that's the feeling. I'm still a bit slow with the speaking and retrieving some words from memory is quite tough. Nevertheless, when I do speak with people they almost always tell me two things: I have an accent and my speaking and listening are impressive…

6.6 Living in my second small town

24/01/2018 JEN31

For the 6 weeks I was living with the French family I felt very unwelcome from day 1. Whenever I tried to initiate a conversation, the normal response was a simple yes or no and sometimes nothing at all. I'd try every day to start a conversation but the silence got very uncomfortable. As a result, I moved out and am staying in a hotel in another town for the next 3 months. I finally feel like myself again. I've met quite a few locals and had lots of conversations, have been continuing with the telly and doing a little bit of reading. I feel like I'm getting better at listening, speaking and reading, all the time. The other night I spent hours chatting in French to multiple people, did some translation between French and English for some other people and really understand a lot and can make good inputs into conversations. I'm very happy with all of that but still not quite where I want to be. Again, I keep getting complimented on my French, despite my errors…

01/02/2018 JEN32

There has been a noticeable improvement in my comprehension of television. I no longer struggle with adult programs like I have all along. It's not that there aren't words and word strings that I don't comprehend, it’s just that there are more that I do. Long periods of understanding and the ability to recognise new words in rapid

speech. It's interesting that a lot of new words are cognates, kind of like there is a higher correlation with cognates for adult language than for the language I find in cartoons. Speaking wise, I'm still going well. The other night I spoke with a man and although I could understand the gist, I quite struggled to fully comprehend. Minutes later I talked with five French friends and understood almost everything that was said and was able to communicate quite well. I explained it to them that it's possible that due to their actual interest in talking to me and in talking about the present moment that might contribute to explaining why in some situations I function really well and in others I don't. They didn't like the man I was previously speaking too. I suspect he may have been very drunk as he kept repeating the same story. There are definitely situations which I struggle in such as at the bank, but I think that's just because I haven't experienced banking situations on TV and have no experience with the vocab…

07/02/2018 JEN34

I spent hours tonight at a bar understanding almost everything everybody said to me all night and was speaking and being understood the whole way through. One guy told me that it was amazing that I could understand him because he knew of plenty of guys from France who couldn't understand his accent.

10/02/2018 JEN35

I'm really starting to understand lots of TV programs with adults speaking. Right now I'm listening to a program about old apartments and what the owners have done with them and before I watched one about gardening and I've watched lots of political debate shows. The problem I had all along with following adult speech seems to have reached a good state. I can follow and understand large quantities of the speech even at speed. That's been a long term goal. It now comes down to picking up more vocab… Went into a few shops today and I function well. I don't struggle like I did when I first arrived. Also, had another night out after the last one mentioned and I understood so much of what people said to me all night and could communicate back. When I don't try to be grammatically correct, and I can't anyway because I don't know it, I flow. It still takes a little warming up and I have to concentrate on what people are saying but it's all working. I'm happy with my speaking and listening progress. Gotta get that reading better and then writing…

13/02/2018 JEN37

I did my 2nd day of work [during my second stint] at the ski school yesterday, it's a tough job. But on my first day when I was driving up with the boss to work and she and a co-worker were talking, I was understanding most of what they were saying. The first time I was in the car with the same people about 6 weeks ago, I didn't have the same skill. Last night I was watching TV and understanding well, but decided to go out for a while to speak some French. I was sitting at a bar and the two bartenders were talking to each other and I was following what they said. We then talked for about twenty minutes…One of the bartenders also said that my speaking had improved dramatically since about 1 month ago. She remembered my arrival in town. Another guy, who is a teacher of French, then started talking to us and a couple of times in a row he corrected my French. I think he had many more occasions but just left it at a couple…

20/02/2018 JEN38

So I've just been reading a French, kids book. When the language is conversational, I can read in my head pretty darn well. I don't know all of the words but a large majority. Enough to follow the story. I also can read science stuff quite well, probably due to watching quite a few documentaries…

26/02/2018 JEN40

I borrowed a bunch of kid's books from the ski school and I can read them. I don't know every word but I can guess many correctly from the pictures and sentence contexts. The funny thing is, when I read in my head it sounds like French and I can do it quite quickly. When I read aloud I'm much slower and less accurate with the pronunciation.

06/03/2018 JEN41

Well, I just wandered in the local library, randomly grabbed a French book off the shelf and started reading it. It was a sci-fi based on Easter Island and I managed to get through the first chapter understanding most of what I read or at least making sense of it. It's the kind of book I would have read in my late teens early twenties in English. I'm really quite amazed. I was certainly reading slowly but I made it through about 20 pages... Recently, I've been reading kids stories that are published as being made for 7-10 year olds and I was experiencing the same phenomenon, but I

didn't think it'd still happen with a much harder text. It certainly did help that sci-fi and Easter Island are two topics I'm interested in. It's funny, I haven't read a novel in English for many years. It was nice.

16/03/2018 JEN42

It’s not easy to speak of things which compliment yourself because it can appear as though you are arrogant. Tonight I had to get out of the house because I spend too much time alone and it’s not healthy. I went to the nearest bar and chatted in French with the bartender for a while. Later ended up at another bar and could understand what a woman was saying to the whole bar as long as I was concentrating. Went to another bar and met some people who I spoke deeply to about a few things and we both commented on how good it was that we could communicate. I was understanding everything they were saying and vice versa all in French and then later went to another bar and spoke about a range of things, with me understanding almost everything and responding well or at least being understood. My listening practice has paid off. I can get by in a wide range of conversations with most people I encounter and participate well in the conversations... and it's not just me, I keep running into people who say, "You, your French is good. It's not that easy." I say thank you and continue the conversation. Sure beer helps, but I'm not faking comprehension.

25/03/2018 JEN43

Well today I watched a fair bit of TV and for the first time I could understand a large portion of a stand-up comedy show and heaps of some popular sitcoms, all full of ultra-rapid speech. I feel so close to full understanding, which is ridiculous because they'll always be words I don't know but still. It's better than ever.

01/04/2018 JEN44

I struggled with speaking last night. I think I've mostly talked about my speaking going well, but last night, I couldn't put sentences together with any ease, I was getting my pronunciation corrected, people couldn't understand a word that I was sure I was pronouncing correctly. I probably do more of that than I acknowledge. On the other hand, my listening was great. I was in conversations all night, almost always in French. Someone invited me to a BBQ today, so that'll be good. And last night I tried some really good cheeses and cut meats. Still, even though I did

struggle, quite a few people last night told me that my French was a lot better than when I arrived.

07/04/2018 JEN45

I went out tonight and got talking to a French guy. He gave me the option of French or English and I took French. He then talked about a variety of things and I understood almost every word he said. When I tried to speak, I was like a bumbling fool. I'm very happy with the listening though. I then met at least another ten French people and pretty much had no problem understanding what they said, but still struggled a bit with the speaking. It's an excellent ability to have - to understand. It's so helpful for getting more opportunities to speak and great for getting to know people.

19/04/2018 JEN47

Well I am at the airport about to go back to Oz. I could have stayed longer in France but I just had enough and decided to finish the trip. All in all it was an excellent trip. I met so many friendly French people and my speaking certainly improved, as did my listening. I didn't realise my ultimate goal of fluency but I certainly walked away with the ability to hold conversations in French. A lady at the airport said, "English or French?" and I replied that I could speak the two, which is pretty nice to be able to say. She then spoke in French and I understood her.

6.7 Reflections on my French speaking while in France

During the first few weeks after my arrival in France, my journal entries showed that the comprehension practice I had done allowed me to participate in conversations, sometimes for hours. I did speak quite frequently about the struggles I had with: finding the words I needed, stringing them together in comprehensible ways, having a noticeable accent, and speaking in situations which I hadn't experienced in the AV media, e.g. shopping. However, I was functioning in communicative situations. I wasn't sitting there like a 'dummy' who understood nothing at all, like I was in Korea, and often in China. All of that being said, my improvement in speaking was made more difficult by the fact that it was difficult to find conversations anywhere other than in bars. In the place I was living, most people were working six or seven days a week, and there weren't any of the social clubs that I had imagined I could find, nor public transport in order to easily escape. The bars

were wonderful for conversations, and being Australian made me a bit of a novelty in a small town. Whenever I mentioned I was Australian, a lot of people became enthusiastic and wanted to talk to me. However, drinking in bars often meant hangovers, which were not conducive to thesis writing, health or high spirits, and so I tried to limit the time I spent in them.

Although living with a French family could have been good for my French, it wasn't in my particular case. The family I lived with had offered me food and accommodation in exchange for speaking English around the house. I accepted this offer thinking that there would be occasions for speaking French, but they were rare.

Working in the ski school for children provided me with a lot of speaking practice, because all of the staff and most of the children spoke French all of the time. I certainly couldn't understand all of the French that I heard, but most of the time I understood a lot and this allowed me to participate in conversations, even though there were noticeable inaccuracies with my French. Exactly how this experience affected my speaking is difficult to say, but when I started returning to bars after the first two weeks, I was able to engage in many more French conversations and I was frequently told by a variety of people that I spoke French well, albeit often with an accent and with errors in my sentence construction and word choice. When watching French TV, it was easy to separate the skill of listening from the skill of speaking, I just didn't speak. However, when involved in actual conversations both skills were operating. The reason I mention this is that although many French people were impressed with my speaking, it is not easy to state that they were only judging my speaking. It may have seemed like my speaking was better than it was because my listening was good enough for the conversations to flow and so maybe that's what they meant - my communicative ability was good, not necessarily just or even my speaking.

Having my speaking assessed by people that I am having natural conversations with is the ultimate form of assessment of my French speaking because nothing is artificial - no one has created experimental conditions, no one has an ulterior motive to assess me, my future doesn't hinge upon the result, my conversational topics aren't forced upon me and I don't feel under pressure. In the DELF speaking tests I did, I was worried, I was nervous, I spoke too fast, etc… French speakers' judgements of me were simple, "You speak well. I understand you and you understand me." The next best form of assessment for me is self-

assessment because I am there throughout the entire L2 experience observing my performance. Such simplistic assessment doesn't seem to be the norm in research.

Préfontaine and Kormos (2016) state that numerous quantitative studies of L1 French speakers' perceptions of the fluency of L2 speakers of French have been conducted, while qualitative studies are scarce (they were only able to cite one qualitative study prior that investigated both speech production and perception). They say that quantitative studies primarily focus on the speed of speech in order to assess fluency, in addition to other characteristics such as pause rate, and the ability to produce long strings of speech. Préfontaine and Kormos's (2016, p.1) own qualitative study's focus was, "What are the features of L2 learners' oral production that influence perceptions of L2 fluency in French?" The study involved 40 university student L1 English speakers studying French, 30 of whom had studied French for an average of six years in regular classrooms and ten for an average of nine years in immersion settings. The participants were given three French speaking tasks: narrating a story based on six pictures, recounting a short story they had read in English, and narrating a story based on 11-frame cartoon strip. Three French teachers were recruited to give qualitative assessments of the participants' fluency for each of the tasks and were intentionally not given a definition of 'fluency', training or criteria to assess with. The main findings were that assessing fluency is extremely difficult and that a balance between multiple features must be contended with: speed, pausing, lexical retrieval, self-correction, efficiency/effortlessness, and particularly rhythm.

6.8 Return to Australia for the DELF B1 and B2 exams

30/04/2018 JEN48

> Well, back in Oz and I passed the 3rd [university] milestone a few days ago. What a massive relief. I've now basically got 6 weeks to give a polished thesis to my supervisors and study for the two French tests I will do in about 3 weeks. In the last week I did a bit of French reading but I've got to do a lot more for any chance of passing the tests.

10/05/2018 JEN49

> In the past week I've been reading a few Wikipedia articles mostly about humans. I decided that practicing reading was my best chance at being able to perform well in the writing test since I had no one to check my writing. However I found a great website http://www.laits.utexas.edu/tex/index.html (verb tutor under the tools

section) where I can practice typing in verbs according to their agreement with the subject and so am able to learn spelling quickly and much more accurately. The interesting thing was that while working on it, my sound knowledge didn't seem to help me much and also that the hardest verbs for me were BE HAVE DO and GO, ones that I both wanted deeply and ones that have caused me great confusion throughout this experience. Also I noticed that the most difficult amongst those verbs were the third person plural ones, I think because they are such short sounds, they clash with other sounds for meaning, and also because I am still coming to grips with differentiating between IL/ELLE singular and plural which both sound the same except when preceding a vowel in the next word. Nevertheless, this type of exercise where no one is overly explaining grammar to me and where I can just study the wrong answers to quickly see the patterns allows me to learn spelling quickly. After that experience I feel confident of being able to pass the writing test. I shall study this website for reading until the test in about two weeks as well as read more Wikipedia articles and watch documentaries. Also I watched a couple of Bruce Lee films last night in French and understood what they were saying most of the time. Wonderful.

23/05/2018 JEN50-53

Today is the day of my second B1 test. During the last 2 weeks, I spent about 5 days doing about 3-4 hours of French reading. Mostly Wikipedia articles, and a few newspaper articles. I did almost no writing. Only a bit of spelling/typing into some boxes on the verb tutor mentioned in a prior journal entry. I feel pretty confident I will pass today’s test. My prediction is that my best result will be in reading because it is the easiest of the four tests. I expect to get 90-100%. My next best result will be either listening or writing. Writing because there is more time given to perform the task and I'm expecting to be able to write in the present tense, which I feel comfortable with spelling rules. However, it should be my worst score since I've done almost no writing ever. Listening may go ok, which is disappointing because it is easily my best skill. I should do better than last time because now I can read a lot of French and so have a better chance of understanding the written questions. It's still a very tough task however simultaneously reading, listening and writing, with a brief amount of time to hear the audio. Anyway, hopefully I can understand the written questions. Speaking could go either way. I haven't spoken French for a month but whenever I try to in my head it seems to come out quite well. However,

the speaking monologue tasks are difficult and I just hope I can understand the written tasks. So predictions: S-95%, W-60%, L-75%, S-60%. There are two reasons for doing the test - personal curiosity and as a guide to future students who learn French through television. I have absolutely no faith in the tests as being a measure of my or anyone's French ability except for advanced and beginner students…

Ok. I just finished and I passed the first 3, but first I want to talk about the disgraceful nature of the listening test. There were three parts and for the first part I got barely enough time to understand the questions before the audio played. For the second part I didn't even finish understanding the questions before the audio played and so I was frozen, knowing that I could listen but not know what I was listening for, so I decided to stop listening and try to understand the questions in the hope that I could understand them for the next audio replay. Again I only barely got through understanding the questions before the audio played. How can they not know that people need more time to understand the 'written' questions to ensure that they can actually perform in the listening test? They should be ashamed of such a poorly designed listening test… Anyway. I think I've successfully passed the B1 test. My guesses: R 90%, W-75%, L-70%, s-70%.....Yay!!!!! Got feedback on the test on the same day – 80.5%, Pass!!!!! As a possible comparison, I met a guy at the test today who was feeling confident of passing the B1 test after 4 years of study with Alliance Francaise, It makes me feel much more confident of passing the B2 tomorrow. If I take off 30%, I might get around 50%.

24/05/2018 JEN54

Ok. Just finished the first 3 parts of the [B2} test. The listening was extremely hard and I'll be lucky to get 4 or 5 out of 25 and so will likely fail the B2 test overall. For the first part of the test, only after the first listening did I realise that there was a second page to the test and so I didn't have time to understand all of the questions before the second listening. It was a radio interview, extremely fast and with that radio interview kind of bluriness. It was the kind of audio that has always been extremely difficult for me - rapid adult speech. I guessed almost all of the questions in the hope that I might get some partial marks. The second part of the test had only one page of questions all of which I could understand, but the speech itself was another kind of interview, spoken much quicker than the first test. Two or three of

the questions were numerical, one of my difficulties, and I simply guessed the answers, in fact I think I was unsure of any of the answers. The reading test was quite hard, two texts, but I think I definitely passed. With any luck, I just passed the listening and I got enough points for reading to balance it out. There were quite a few words I had never seen in the texts and a few of the answers I just guessed. The writing was very challenging because I didn't understand the task. I was going to stay silent but I asked the supervisor for an explanation on the chance that she might - she did what I've seen many teachers do - basically state that she couldn't aide me. She tried to give some help without helping, which didn't help. Not understanding the task meant that I couldn't perform the task, so I just made up what I thought the text was about and gave it my best shot…

24/05/2018 JEN57

Ok. I've just finished the speaking test. I think I passed because I was able to talk the whole time and explain myself, although I'm sure I made huge numbers of errors. Luckily, I had two friendly examiners which makes doing the test easier and I think they were happy with my speaking. I don't really have much else to say. If I get 5/25 for the listening I think I'll pass the B2. If not it's a fail. This now marks the end of my whole French learning experience. All I have to do now is polish up the thesis, make the changes that my supervisors want and submit. Very relieved.

26/05/2018 JEN58

I passed!!!!! 57/100. 16/25 - L (I don't know how). 24/25 for reading. 11.5/25 for writing, 5.5/25 Speaking. Funny, last night when I looked at this I thought the 5.5 was for listening. I'm really surprised, I spoke a lot during that test and was able to communicate.

6.9 The formal DELF B1 and B2 examinations

During my journey of learning French I sat three DELF examinations, the details of which are shown on Table 44 below. Each test is discussed in the order in which it was taken.

Date	10/11/2017		23/05/2018		24/05/2018	
Level	B1		B1		B2	
Reading	23/25	92%	25/25	100%	24/25	96%
Writing	10.5/25	42%	15/25	60%	11.5/25	46%
Listening	8/25	32%	22.5/25	90%	16/25	64%
Speaking	4/25	16%	18/25	72%	5.5/25	22%
Overall	45.5/100	45.50%	80.5/100	80.50%	57/100	57%
Result	Fail		Pass		Pass	

Table 44: All DELF test results

Prior to taking the first B1 test, I was expecting my highest score to be in listening, since all of my French practice had been listening practice. I then expected speaking to be my next highest score because I thought that much of the language that was addressed to me, would activate appropriate responses that had been stored in memory. I was then expecting to have some ability to read French due to use of the same alphabet as English and due to having often understood written French words that sometimes appeared on the screen while watching French TV programs. Finally, I was expecting to have almost no demonstrable ability in writing, since I had never tried. Clearly, this is not what happened in the first test.

The first B1 test results become more understandable when examining how the test is designed. Although the test is separated into four distinct sections, to complete each section requires more than the skill being tested. Firstly, each section requires the skill of reading: all of the questions in the listening test, the two most difficult of the three tasks in the speaking section, and the task in the writing section, are all written. If a test taker does not have the ability to read, such as myself at the time, their chances of success are immediately limited for the entire test. Secondly, the listening and reading sections both require some written answers and consequently spelling becomes important. This is less of an issue in the reading task since the spelling might be visible in the written text and can be copied, but no such assistance is available for the listening test. However, this still doesn't explain why I performed better in reading and writing than in listening and speaking.

One major difference between the reading, writing and speaking tests, and the listening test is the amount of time available to perform the tasks. In the listening test, you are given one minute to comprehend the written questions and you are allowed to hear the French speaking only one or two times. After that, there is no chance of reviewing the audio. In the

reading test, I could review the text and the questions as many times as I wanted and in the writing test, I could also review the task as many times as I wanted and then copy sections of written text from the entire test paper. In the speaking test, provided that an examinee can understand the two written tasks, time is provided to plan responses. However, the major difference between the listening test and the other three sections is the difficulty of the task. The listening test requires the examinee to simultaneously utilise three skills: two input skills, listening and reading, and one output skill, writing answers. Each of the other sections allows the examinee to focus on input and output separately.

In regards to the first B1 test, I got my highest score in reading because it was the easiest of the four sections of the test. I had time to review the text on multiple occasions, I could compare it to the written questions, and I could copy some of the spelling from the text into my answers. All of this, despite having done no reading practice. I got my second highest score in writing because I was able to re-read the task multiple times to improve my understanding, repeatedly copied sections of the written task into my writing and checked for the spelling of other words in the other sections of the test. This was despite having no idea how to write in French, and having written only 90 words, which was well under the minimum word count required. The listening test was the hardest of the four test components because it required simultaneous use of multiple input and output abilities and review of the audio was not possible, but it wasn't my worst score I think because it was the one area in which I had some skill. In addition, the hardest section on the listening test was a monologue spoken by an adult on a medical topic, which wasn't the kind of topic I had been practicing, i.e. it was non-conversational adult speech. My lowest score was in speaking, but not because I couldn't speak French. In the semi-conversational first section, I think I did fine, but I couldn't understand the written tasks which I had selected for the next two speaking tasks. I selected the ones that I understood best, but when I asked the examiner to read the tasks out aloud for me to improve my chance of understanding them, my request was denied. In addition, from what I did understand of the two written speaking tasks, they were extremely advanced and unrealistic topics. In the first, I had to do a role play where I was an employee talking to the company boss about letting the employees speak more socially around the office. In the second, a lengthy monologue, I had to give my opinion about something like robots replacing human jobs.

These tests could be made fairer, or more socially just, in a number of ways. The most obvious way to do this for me, would be to use titles for each test section which are

honest. The listening test could be called ‘simultaneous listening, reading and writing’, the reading test called ‘reading and some writing’, the writing test called ‘writing and some reading’ and the speaking test called ‘speaking, some reading and some listening’. Alternatively, the test could be designed so that each section, as they are currently named, actually tests what it claims to test. To do this however, would require allowing examinees to use their L1.

In the listening test for example, the questions could be presented in an audio format and the answers given in the L1, so that examinees are not being assessed according to their L2 speaking, reading or writing ability in the TL. In the reading test, if answers were given in the L1, examinees would be tested on their reading comprehension, not their L2 writing or speaking ability (if they were given the option to say their answers). Since the writing and second two parts of the speaking test first require comprehension of the tasks, then the tasks could be presented in the examinees’ L1, so that task comprehension is not an obstacle to task performance.

In order to make the tests more socially just, they would also need to either make the listening test as easy as the other three tests, or make them as hard as the listening test. To make the listening test as easy as the other tests would mean providing examinees with a copy of the audio being tested, so that they could review it as many times as they wanted. To make the other three tests as hard as the listening test would be a little more complex. For the reading test, it might involve only allowing one or two readings of the text that is being examined, while simultaneously presenting the questions in an audio format. The writing test could be made more difficult by presenting the task one or two times in an audio format and then removing the written test so that no written words could be copied. For the speaking test to be made more difficult, might also require the tasks to be presented one or two times in an audio format, without allowing any planning time. Personally, making the listening task easier would be a simpler solution. A possible connection to what I see as unfair tests, is a lack of acknowledgement of ethics in both applied linguistics and second language education (Anderson, 2017).

I am well aware that the suggestions I have made would require more time and more resources, but at least they’d be honest and/or fair, and less biased towards the skill of reading. At the very least, the test could provide both written and audio input formats for the reading and writing sections, so that the examinee is not disadvantaged if their reading

ability isn't as good as their listening ability. Or perhaps they could give a higher weighting to the easier components.

One study that strongly supports my perspective of the DELF tests was conducted by Vandergrift (2015). 117 Canadian students of French sat the DELF tests with the following percentages of students for each test: A1 (33.6%), A2 (34.5%), B1 (12.4%), B2 (19.5%) (as a reminder, the A1 is the lowest level and the B2 is the highest). These students and 32 French teachers completed a questionnaire concerning the DELF test, with one of the questions concerning the difficulty of each component of the test in regards to being 'very difficult', 'difficult' and 'not difficult' (VD, D and ND). The percentages for each of these options reported by the students were: Reading (VD 1.8%, D 30%, ND, 68.2%); Writing (VD 3.6%, D 25.5%, ND, 70.9%); Speaking (VD 10.9%, D 50%, ND, 39.1%); Listening (VD 23.6%, D 35.5%, ND, 40.9%). Almost two-thirds of the students reported that both the listening and speaking components of the test were difficult to very difficult. The French teachers responses were similar – 93% reported that the listening test was VD or D; 53% as VD or D for speaking and reading; 46.7% reporting the listening test as VD or D. Vandergrift (2015) states that very little research has been conducted on the DELF tests in either Europe or Canada, but sites two Canadian studies confirming that students perceived the listening test to be the most difficult component.

I was personally very pleased to have passed the second B1 test. The test still suffered from the problems just mentioned, but the second time around I was more prepared. As soon as I was allowed, I started translating the listening test questions into English so that I could concentrate on them less while listening. It was however still extremely difficult to do the test because of having to simultaneously concentrate on three things. If I was concentrating on listening, then I wasn't concentrating on reading or answering the questions. Conversely, if I was reading a question or writing an answer I wasn't concentrating on the listening. I experienced nothing even close to this artificial situation while living in France. I was also extremely pleased to have passed the writing because prior to the exam I had written in French only about three times (including the first B1 test). As my journal entries show, prior to the test I practised a lot of reading, particularly of Wikipedia articles, in the hope that I would visually be able to remember the spellings. This strategy apparently worked. I was also pleased to have passed the speaking test, simply because it gave some formal indication of what I already knew I could do. I'm still quite surprised about how well I did in reading in all three of the tests, because although I did do

a lot of reading practice, I certainly didn't do anywhere near as much as I could have. Again, the reading test for me was the simplest component because of being given ample time for review, because of the shared alphabet with English and because my aural knowledge of French was of great assistance.

The most important test for me to pass was the B2 because I thought that despite all that I have described in this thesis about my French learning, I believed that a lot of people would only count it as successful with the passing of a formal test. It was also important because I imagined that a 'pass' would allow other students of French who had the desire to enrol in a French university, might be encouraged to try language learning from television. After completing the B2 test, I thought that I had comfortably passed the reading, writing and speaking components and was going to only just pass the listening. Instead, I comfortably passed the reading and listening, almost passed the writing and just passed the speaking.

My results for reading were again a reflection of the easiness of this test component, while the result for writing was actually quite good considering the minimal practice I had done. Once again, the listening test was extremely difficult – I didn't get enough time to review the question and I didn't even notice until after the first audio sample that there was another page of questions. I thought I had failed. When I checked all of the questions, there were only four that I had any confidence in being correct. For all of the other questions I simply wrote in what I imagined were logical answers and guessed the multiple choice questions. I could have therefore easily failed. The speaking test result was extremely surprising because I had understood all of the tasks, had spoken French the whole time and was able to hold a conversation with the examiners. A possible explanation, might be connected to some advice one of the teachers at the test centre gave me before the exam, "Structure is the most important thing". During my experience with teaching both IELTS preparation and EAP (English for Academic Purposes), 'structure' was always given heavy emphasis. This basically means that my test result may have been more a reflection of my lack of ability to speak in a formally academic way, rather than my ability to speak.

6.10 Conclusion

The DELF B2 test represented the end of the French language learning journey told in this thesis. I commenced the project with two very strong beliefs about developing comprehension and speaking like a French L1 learner through extensive exposure to television programs in French. Undoubtedly, I learned enormous quantities of French through television by ever so gradually picking up individual words, and then by having those words gradually appear in longer and longer word strings that I could comprehend. Although neither of the beliefs driving this project became a reality, the French listening comprehension that I did develop allowed me to participate quite well in a wide range of conversations while in France. This comprehension ability, combined with the use of the same alphabet in writing, allowed me to develop an ability to read rather rapidly, which was extremely surprising to me. Although I have little faith in the DELF tests being able to measure what they claim to measure, it was still extremely satisfying to pass them. What all of this means in terms of both my beliefs and the literature that was reviewed is discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 7 - Discussion

7.1 Introduction

This project sought to question the legitimacy of comparing L1 and L2 outcomes based on learners who have learned language in vastly different ways. One of my aims in this project therefore was to provide a documented example of an L2 learner whose learning technique was based on more similarities to L1 learning than had been the case with previous studies. The learning technique chosen was to personally receive exposure to an enormous quantity of French language input via television programs and radio without utilising the traditional L2 learning techniques of grammar instruction, dictionaries, reading, writing, worksheets, teachers or speaking in the L2. By doing so, I was forcing myself to develop familiarity with the sounds of French, work out the meanings of language sounds for myself, and utilise the animated visual context within which the sounds were embedded, with the ultimate goal of developing my comprehension prior to speaking. The study aimed to build on previous research whose purpose was to simulate L1 learning in L2 learning, and also aimed to bring attention to the acknowledged, but neglected utility of developing the skill of L2 listening. This chapter aims to draw together much of the literature that was discussed in the literature review and my reflections about the language learning journey that I underwent and which has been presented in the previous chapters.

7.2 Project review

In order to examine the comprehension-first approach used in this research, the project was organised into two stages: a comprehension development stage based in Australia, and a comprehension/production development stage based in Australia and France. The comprehension development stage was made up of several phases. In the first phase, which involved 412 hours of watching French TV and listening to French radio over an 83 day period, I recorded four sets of data: the length of the audio-visual (AV) media I was exposed to, details of every French program experienced, journal entries deemed relevant to the project, and every new ‘mental event’ that occurred during TL input. A mental event was defined as: *any consciously observed comprehension of French or French culture that occurred while the French media was being observed that had not been previously recorded.* In total, 5305 new mental events were recorded during the first phase.

In the second phase, which lasted for 983 hours over 233 days, I continued to record details and hours of the programs and to make journal entries, but I ceased to record mental events. In the third phase, which lasted for an estimated 200 hours over 2 months, I stopped recording program details and only made journal entries. Throughout the comprehension development stage, I intentionally avoided any use of English or French dictionaries, grammar books, subtitles, or instruction, or French speaking.

The comprehension/production development stage consisted of two phases. During the first phase, which lasted for 1 week, I recorded my first attempts at speaking French, lifted my self-imposed bans from the first project stage, and I sat a formal, French, B1 DELF examination. In the second phase, which lasted for five and a half months, I moved to France and continued with AV exposure, engaged in random French conversations with French speakers, lived with a French family, worked in a French ski school for children, started reading French, and returned to Australia where I sat a second B1 DELF exam and a DELF B2 exam.

7.3 Listening and television for L2 learning – areas in need of attention

Although listening is acknowledged as being an essential skill in L2 learning (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006), the surprisingly little research that has been conducted on it (Vandergrift, 2007) has focused mostly on the teaching of listening strategies (Renandya & Farrell, 2011), the utility of which has been questioned (Renandya & Farrell, 2011; Blyth, 2012), and on the manipulation of variables in experiments (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). While extensive listening has recently been promoted (Chang & Millett, 2014), it has been recommended that it is done in a casual manner and simultaneously in combination with reading (Chang & Millett, 2014; Stephens, 2011). A few studies have also investigated the ‘picking up’ of vocabulary from listening. However, the focus of these ‘incidental vocabulary acquisition’ studies has been on the vocabulary that is picked up unintentionally (Van Zealand & Schmitt, 2013). Conclusions from this research were that sound recognition was easier to pick up than word meaning (Van Zealand & Schmitt, 2013) and that incidental vocabulary acquisition occurred more often from reading than listening (Brown, Waring, & Donkaewbua, 2008; Vidal, 2011).

There are several connections that can be made between that research and this project, which are discussed in greater detail during this chapter. Firstly, listening strategies were

not things that I needed to be taught – they occurred naturally as long as I was listening to extensive segments of French speech. In my view, you don't teach listening, you practise it. Secondly, the use of the word 'extensive' is relative. I have used that word myself throughout this project to refer to around 2000 hours of listening, whereas specific figures such as this were not reported by Chang and Millett (2014). In addition, my extensive listening rarely occurred in combination with reading. Instead it almost always occurred within an animated visual context. Thirdly, in relation to the picking up of vocabulary, all of the vocabulary I picked up occurred consciously and never occurred if I wasn't concentrating on the spoken language. Fourthly, although previous research may suggest that vocabulary is easier to pick up from reading than from listening, I would argue that such results are a reflection of an overemphasis on reading, meaning that reading is the skill which has received a lot of practice.

Like listening, research on L2 learning from television has been minimal (Vanderplank, 2016; Umino, 2002; Salaberry, 2001). Vanderplank's (2016) 'state-of-the-art review' cited only four studies which examined the use of language laboratories, television, and video for L2 learning between 1999 and 2010 with the quantities of viewing ranging from 20 minutes to eight full-length films. Salaberry's (2001) review of all of the articles concerning the use of films and television for L2 learning published in the Modern Language Journal since 1916 was able to cite only five studies. Wang's (2012) study of five L1 Chinese students who self-assessed that their development of L2 English was due to the systematic viewing of English television dramas.

This research hopefully contributes further to filling the gap on research into L2 learning from television. The quantity of viewing that I did far surpasses the studies cited by Vanderplank (2016). It also confirms Wang's (2012) study, with the difference that cartoons were far more beneficial for me during the earliest stage of learning than dramas were. Although I have always argued that listening is a skill that needs to be practised in extensive quantities, I would also argue that the quality of the AV media is extremely important, and the benefit that an animated visual context provides is of the utmost importance. Because L2 research on both listening and television is minimal, and because one of the aims of this project was to more closely simulate L1 learning in L2 learning, reference has been made throughout this discussion to literature from L1 learning.

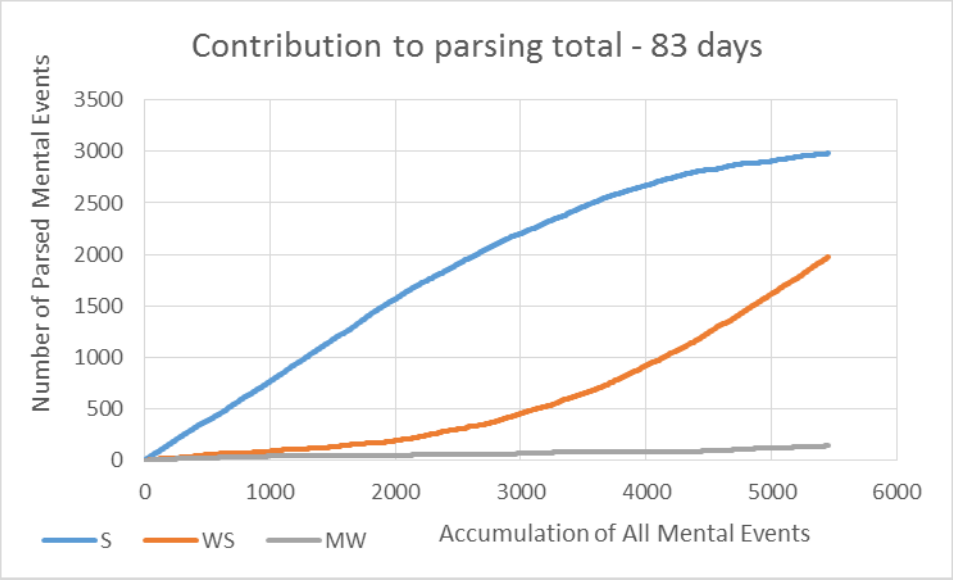
7.4 Quantitative development of my French listening comprehension

The findings from Chapters 3 and 4 show that from the very first exposure to French AV media until 412 hours had elapsed over 83 days (during 4 calendar months), French sound chunks consistently triggered English meanings in my mind for television programs, while during radio exposure (mostly music), mental events were rare. After the first month of exposure and coinciding with a change from a program targeted to teenagers/adults to a cartoon, the rate of mental events continued to increase during TV exposure despite a decrease in the amount of exposure hours that I received during the last two months. The data also shows that during the first four months I described the majority of mental events as being triggered in three main ways: cognates, reasoning, and from understanding other French words. For the first three months the vast majority of mental events were triggered by cognates, but during April (month four), which is when I commenced watching Caillou (a cartoon), most triggers came from understanding other French words.

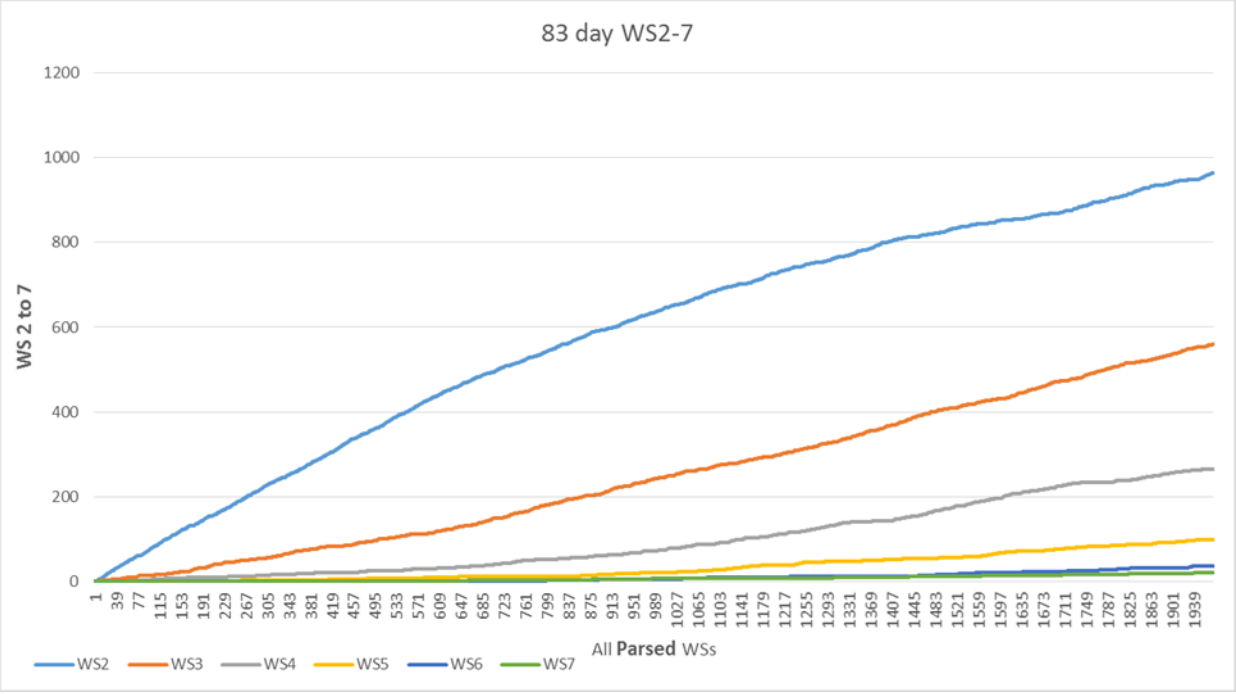
The 5305 recorded mental events collected during the first four months were classified into two types during analysis: non-parsing (213) and parsing (5092). The non-parsing mental events were those not connected to French language: cultural observations, duplicate recordings and those deemed as miscellaneous. The remaining 5092 parsing mental events were all classified according to how I broke a French sound chunk into English words: single words (S), strings of words with each part of the sound chunk matching a word (WS), and strings of words where not every part was matched with a word (MW). The totals for each type were: 2981 (S); 1971 (WS); and 140 (MW). When these three types of language mental events were graphed (Graph 28), they showed that single words were the quickest to accumulate, but as time passed their rate of accumulation decreased as the rate of WS events increased. Conversely, MW events increased steadily, but extremely slowly, meaning that on most occasions sound chunks that triggered mental events were matched to English words.

The WS data was further examined according to the number of words in each string, ranging from two to fifteen to reveal the manner in which my learning was occurring - the rate at which word strings occurred was determined by the length of the word string, with the shorter word strings accumulating at quicker rates than the longer ones (Graph 29).

This was one of the most important findings for me during this project. By using the autoethnographic lense, I was able to observe and record all of the new language mental events occurring in my mind and hence visualise how over time through exposure to AV media in a target language and through concentration on that media, my learning occurred in a gradual and simple manner – large numbers of single words and combinations of these and new words, into larger and larger word strings. This process continued throughout this project.



Graph 28: 83 day contribution to parsing total



Graph 29: 83 day WS2-7 accumulation

In regards to L1 acquisition, Hoff and Naigles (2002, p.418) write that,

> The process of acquiring a lexicon is clearly a process of learning from experience, and the relevant experience must be conversational interaction, because that is the context in which exposure to language occurs. It is not yet clear, however, just how word-learning benefits from participating in or overhearing conversations. What do children find in conversation that is useful to word learning, and what is the nature of the word-learning mechanism that makes those particular things useful?

Hoff and Naigles (2002) explain that two types of answer have been proposed for these questions. The first is a social-pragmatic perspective of conversations whereby children are seen to work out the meanings of words by socially engaging with caregivers and by guessing the caregivers' communicative intentions. The second is a data-driven perspective whereby frequency of word occurrence, quantity of different words, variety of linguistic environments in which words occur, syntactic structure and non-linguistic context are sufficient to explain children's acquisition of a lexicon. Of these two perspectives only the latter can be used to relate to my own learning of French because during all of the language learning I did prior to living in France, I had only a couple of very short interactions with French speakers, none of the characters in the audio-visual media interacted with or directed their speech at me, and until my vocabulary grew significantly I was unable to have any confidence in any guesses I had made about speakers' intentions. Furthermore, particularly with cartoons, I was unable to observe realistic eye movement to be able to perceive where or to what a character's attention was directed.

7.5 Qualitative development of my French listening comprehension

7.5.1 Introduction

Because the first language-related skill that L1 learners are said to develop is the ability to discriminate the phonology of a language (Owens, 1996), my primary goal at the beginning of this project was to attempt to do the same just by listening to a lot of any kind of French rather than focusing on word meaning. I was expecting that any word learning would be minimal at best until my phonological discrimination had improved. Contrary to this belief, word learning occurred immediately upon commencement of exposure to French input and never ceased. Although single word and word string data was able to show how my

comprehension continued to improve, it did not demonstrate how I was able to break the speech stream into words and meanings. By learning an L2 in the way I did, I was confronted with two problems that L1 learners are said to face (Clark, 2009). The first, the segmentation problem, concerns how L1 learners determine which sound sequences in a speech stream belong to such things as words, morphemes and phrases, given that speech streams often lack pauses between such units. The second, the invariance problem, concerns how L1 learners determine that segments of speech, such as words and phrases, are said differently at different times by individual speakers, between different speakers, in different acoustic environments, and at different speeds of speech.

7.5.2 Discrimination of phonological features of French

Although language-related mental events occurred from the very first French exposure session, my initial goal during the first month was to attempt to develop phonological discrimination skills as is said to occur in L1 development (Owens, 1996). Specifically, I was focused on developing my ability to discriminate the prosodic or suprasegmental features of French. Although it always remained a possibility that the ability to develop such a skill was not available for an adult language learner like myself (Moyer, 1999), many of the phonological discrimination skills L1 learners are said to develop, I already possessed at the beginning of this experience. For example, I could frequently notice sound duration, pitch, consonants, intonation patterns, and pauses in the French audio. However, there were numerous occasions on which I could not make out many of these features because the speech stream was often ‘blurry’. This may have been due to the programs that I chose to begin this research with: HELG, a sitcom designed for teenagers and young adults, and Chante France, a radio program. Because I was influenced by the idea of LAD-like subconscious processing and because a lot of my previous Mandarin learning had come from TV dramas, I had convinced myself that any French audio was going to allow myself to develop the skill of phonological discrimination. In hindsight, I may have denied myself the best chance at simulating conditions for the development of the skill of phonological discrimination in the early stages of this project because the L1 input I was receiving was more closely aligned to adult-directed speech (ADS) than child-directed speech (CDS) (Foster-Cohen, 2009), even though no speech was actually directed at me, and so in that sense it was actually just ambient language. This may also explain why later I had significantly more mental events with cartoons, and with Caillou in particular - they shared more characteristics with CDS than ADS.

According to Trofimovich and Baker (2006, p.2),

> Given the important role of prosody…in language learning and use, the scarcity of research investigating second language (L2) acquisition of suprasegmentals is striking…In fact, no studies have to date investigated the effects of both short and extended L2 experience on adult learners' acquisition of L2 suprasegmentals and very few have focused on the acquisition of more than one suprasegmental.

In order to contribute to research on L2 suprasegmental acquisition, Trofimovich and Baker (2006) conducted a study with four groups of 10 people. Three of the groups were made up of L1 Koreans aged between 24 and 36 with the fourth control group made up of adult L1 English speakers. The three Korean groups were differentiated according to their lengths of residence in the United States (3 months, 3 years and 10 years). Two of the findings made were that all of the members of the Korean groups produced accented speech regardless of the time spent living in the USA and that of the five suprasegmental variables investigated (stress timing, peak alignment, speech rate, pause frequency and pause duration), only the stress-timing feature was connected to length of residence, with the remaining variables being determined by age of arrival in the USA. The authors broadly concluded that L2 suprasegmental learning appeared to follow the same trend as L2 segmental learning in that both were gradual processes which required extensive exposure to the L2.

Observing my own phonological discrimination development was extremely difficult. While all of the French that I heard had phonological characteristics, I didn't know how to describe suprasegmental features that I noticed. I was simply hoping that phonological characteristics would become more familiar over time purely through exposure and concentration on conversational exchanges and that if I could achieve the first goal driving this project my 'silent period learning' might translate into unaccented French speech. For me, the best indicators that my discrimination ability was improving at all were the occurrence of days when French just sounded clearer than previously, and the continual appearance of new salient sounds. However, after all of the French listening comprehension that I did during this project (an estimate of around 2000 hours), I am certain that noticing phonological features of French became much easier the closer I got to fluent comprehension of rapid speech, unlike L1 learners who are said to develop that ability at the very beginning.

7.5.3 The segmentation problem

One problem identified by Clark (2009) that L1 learners face in discovering the meaning of language is called the segmentation problem, which seeks to understand how L1 learners determine which sound sequences in a speech stream belong to such things as words, morphemes and phrases. Certainly, one major difference between how monolingual L1 learners approach and how I approached this task was my ability to work out the meanings of cognates. There were undoubtedly many false cognates which caused me confusion or interference, but in many cases the cognates were similar enough for me to identify accurate interpretations for the sound chunks. Another major difference between L1 segmentation and my own was my ability to match French word strings, often word for word, to sentence patterns in English.

How differently my comprehension would have developed from TV exposure with a non-cognate language is difficult to say. According to Kelley and Kohner (2012), cognates 'can assist' with making meaning in another language, but they present more challenges to learning in their spoken form than when written. Otwinowska (2015) states that many people assume that second languages with more cognates are easier to learn than languages with fewer, but the L2 research has shown both positive and negative correlations. My previous experience with learning Mandarin from TV with almost no cognates and the fact that I still learned a huge number of French non-cognates during this project suggests that learning would still have occurred, but whether or not the rate of learning would have been different remains uncertain. In addition, I remain uncertain as to what effect learning an L2 with a vastly different word order would have had. For Mandarin, there seemed to be an even closer alignment of word orders to English for me than there was for French.

In order for me to make meaning of a sound chunk, it first had to be something that I noticed (salient). Although many cognates were immediately salient, there were many others I didn't notice until my comprehension improved. For non-cognates, some sound chunks became immediately salient because they were said in isolation, because they were emphasised or because they just caught my attention, but most other sound chunks became salient over time. The fact that there were always new sound chunks becoming salient was an intriguing phenomenon, because once they had, I often began to notice them more frequently and wondered how I hadn't noticed them before. Perhaps an answer

to this lies in the word string data collected during the first 83 days, which shows that I learned many new words when I knew the other words in the string. In other words, a new sound chunk became salient because it was novel within the context of the less-novel, known words surrounding it and certain sound chunks couldn't become salient until enough words were known.

I cannot overemphasise the importance of sound salience for my learning of French because the sounds were 'objects' to which meanings were attached. Since 1990, Richard Schmidt has argued about the importance of 'noticing' features of language as a prerequisite to learning them. The specific term for 'learning' used as a synonym by Schmidt (1990, 2012) is 'intake' – the portion of 'input' that is 'acquired or learned. "The basic claim is that in order for input to become intake it must be attended and noticed (Schmidt, 2012, p.35)". For Schmidt, an L2 learner will essentially be unable to use a given feature of an L2 until such time as they have noticed it and before they can notice it they must have first been focusing on or 'attending' to the L2. These ideas of Schmidt's are known collectively as the 'noticing hypothesis' and have been controversial since their presentation (Schmidt, 1990; Schmidt, 1995 cited in Hummel, 2013). Much of the controversy is connected to differences of opinion in regards to conscious versus unconscious/subconscious language learning and implicit versus explicit 'everyday' learning (Schmidt, 2012; Hummel, 2013) – controversies which this entire thesis is connected to. Put simply, some people believe that L1 acquisition/learning occurs subconsciously, i.e. the brain does all the learning regardless of what the possessor of the brain is doing, and therefore that 'noticing' and 'awareness' are irrelevant factors in the acquisition process. In a similar vein, some people believe that some general learning can occur without the learner being aware of it (implicit), a view which was argued against by Schmidt (1990, p.129) when he concluded that, "..subliminal language learning is impossible". In regards to these issues and only in reference to my learning of French, I can state that I only ever learned French when I was focused on (attending to, aware of, concentrating on) the French language to which I was exposed, that all of the French I learned I was aware of learning at the time, and that all of the French that I learned aurally I first had to notice. My learning was therefore both explicit and conscious, and my 'French' experience strongly supports the 'noticing hypothesis'. I reiterate however that what I first noticed was *sound*, almost always prior to meaning.

Once a sound chunk had become salient, I was then faced with the problem of determining a meaning for it (although occasionally saliency and meaning determination occurred simultaneously). During the first 4 months of this project where I recorded my immediate perceptions of how specific meanings were triggered, in almost 93% of cases, the triggers were described as occurring in three ways: when the sound chunk sounded similar to an English word, after I had thought about the sound chunk and guessed a meaning, and with the assistance of other known French words in which the sound chunk was embedded. However, these three trigger categories did not fully describe how my learning of French occurred.

One of the most important factors that the trigger codes didn't capture was the meaning that I received from the video. By observing the characters' facial expressions, body language, and interactions with each other and with the environment, I was able to receive information about both immediate and long term situations in the characters' lives and hence make some sense of the storylines and create my own storylines through pictures alone. As my comprehension improved, matches between my interpretations of sound and pictures strengthened my confidence in my French language interpretations. While watching AV media, this visual meaning making was constantly occurring for me provided I was concentrating. This supports Webb's (2011) suggestion that watching programs with familiar storylines might aid in L2 comprehension by reducing the lexical burden and by providing background knowledge that can assist with comprehension. It also supports Wang's (2012) study of five Chinese nationals who identified the systematic viewing of English television dramas as the primary cause of their English development. As pointed out by Umino (2002) and Vanderplank (2016), very little research has been conducted on the use of video and television for L2 learning and so this project represents another piece of research aimed at filling this gap.

Meaning making was also frequently assisted through my possession of a first language. The most obvious way this occurred was through cognates, which often automatically made me think of English words. There were also numerous cases where something was said that I didn't fully understand, but because I knew what I would say in English in a similar situation, I was able to make guesses about the meaning or to have meanings automatically triggered for the language that was used. Probably the most beneficial way that my L1 assisted in meaning making was through the similarity of fixed expressions and sentence structures in French. Although I noticed sentence structures that differed from

English, I comprehended huge number of sentences that were either identical to English or varied in only one or two ways, such as the position of object pronouns or the selection of the verb used to express the same meaning. Before beginning this project I never imagined how similar French word order would be to English, but as Pierce (1992, p.19) points out “French and English are traditionally considered to be equivalent with respect to word order in simple declarative sentences,” and I certainly processed large volumes of these.

7.5.4 Grammar and meaning making

One of the most enigmatic features of L1 learning is how infants are able to make sense of the complex syntactical structures that languages contain, given that the ‘rules’ are not taught directly to them (Narafshan, Sadighi, & Bagheri, 2014; Bannard & Lieven, 2012). As I was also not taught the grammatical rules of French, I was faced with the same problem. My grammatical understanding of French came from a combination of: my knowledge of vocabulary, the sequence in which that vocabulary occurred in word strings, the visual context in which speech streams were said, my already having an L1, and an enormous number of repetitions with which to check for correctness. Simply put, it was through the gradual and simultaneous development of multiple processes. The data shows that in the earliest stages of this project, my grammatical understanding began by understanding adjacent combinations of known vocabulary, i.e. words next to each other. When I noticed for example that a possessive pronoun like ‘my’ always occurred before the noun possessed, I learned a ‘rule’. When I noticed that adjectives could occur both before and after a noun, I learned another. However, learning ‘rules’ like this was rather infrequent simply because many, many examples were needed before patterns could be identified. More often I was learning phrases with specific vocabulary in specific sound sequences. For example, when I heard and understood all of the words in ‘ma petty ser’, I then knew which sound sequence represented the concept ‘my little sister’ and when I heard ‘commissioner transport’ I knew that was how to say ‘transport commissioner’. With such techniques I was gradually able to understand an ever increasing number of sentences.

There were certainly other grammatical features of French that seemed less lexical and for which I struggled to comprehend such as the formation of questions, negatives, tenses and verb conjugations. There were sounds which frequently triggered question meanings in my mind, despite me not being able to parse the sounds into individual words. For

example, ‘keske’ often triggered a ‘What are…?’ or a ‘What is..?’ meaning, and ‘eske’ triggered the idea of a yes/no question, but I was unable to parse the sounds because I was confused by there also being other ways of expressing the word ‘what’, because there were so many other ‘k’ sounds which were competing for meaning in my mind, and because I had a range of ‘be verb’ sounds also competing for meaning.

Similarly confusing were negatives and it wasn’t until Day 102 that I made an attempt at stating a ‘rule’ for a feature of French that wasn’t in English,

> *I'm starting to understand negatives. There is often an N sound prior to the verb and followed by PA. E.g. ZHE NE SAY PAY=I don't know. But if it’s not a verb, [but instead] an adjective, the NE sound isn't there, only PA. E.g. SE PA FASEEL= It’s not easy…*

To complicate matters, there were two other negative expressions which were unlike English. At times I would hear the sound ‘ploo’ or ‘ploos’ which would sometimes trigger the positive meaning of ‘more’ and sometimes the meaning of ‘not more’, and the sound ‘person’ which sometimes triggered the meaning ‘a person’ and sometimes the meaning ‘no person’. In many cases with these sounds, I was unable to identify any other sounds in the sentences to differentiate between the positive and the negative meanings. Growing comfortable with negatives then took an enormous number of repetitions within the context of other known words and the visual images.

Verb conjugation and tenses were probably the most elusive grammatical concepts that I faced, because in many, many cases I had a triggered meaning that made sense within the visual context, but I often couldn’t work out why the specific sounds had triggered those meanings. The verbs that were easy to identify as different conjugations, were those in which the base forms of the verb were identical or similar such as ‘trove’, ‘trovay’ and ‘troveray’ which refer to the concept of ‘finding’, and often I was able to make correct guesses about which pronoun a form was used with or what tense was implied from the pictures. However, in some cases, I did not know that different conjugations were made from the same base verb because their pronunciations were so different. For example, I thought that ‘vey’ meant ‘will’, ‘va’ meant ‘go’ and that ‘allee’ meant ‘go’, ‘will’ and ‘going to’ at different times. However, because I thought such sounds were synonyms, the problem disappeared. I didn’t need to know that they were of the same verb base, just that

they were used to give the same meaning. This is similar to when I started learning English grammar for ESL teaching and was surprised to discover that ‘am, is, are, was, were, be, been and being’ were all grammatically classified as ‘be verbs’. I had previously thought they were all just different words.

One of the main factors assisting me in understanding tenses was knowledge of what tense I would use in the same situations in English, which again was a result of having a visual context with which to make meaning and an L1. However, my confidence in the correctness of my interpretation of many grammatical patterns remained low for a long time for a combination of reasons such as: I still had not acquired all of the pronouns, the differences in conjugation between English and French caused interference, there was competition between a huge number of homophones, I had difficulties in noticing the verbs used in ultra-rapid speech, I had a vocabulary that wasn’t large enough to make these features salient, and most importantly there were long periods of time between hearing a specific verb used in different conjugations, which made noticing them a difficult and slow task. I suppose that is the strange part of learning French in the way that I did - the vocabulary, pictures and repetition in the AV media allowed my comprehension to continually improve, while the nuances in meaning of grammatical things like questions, negatives, ‘be’ verbs and conjugations were developing at a much slower rate, almost in the background. Essentially then, there were two levels of development operating at different speeds.

In *Syntactic Structures* (1957), Chomsky discussed the idea that the study of grammar (syntax) needed to be separated from the study of meaning (semantics) and that the grammar of a language could not be determined from a corpus of utterances nor from grammatical statistical analyses. His suggestion, a transformational generative approach, was envisaged as a set of logical laws or rules which, if discovered and used in computer-like calculations of language, would be able to provide all of the grammatically correct sentences in a given language and none of the ungrammatical ones. To illustrate this, Chomsky (1957) says, “This conception of language is an extremely powerful and general one. If we can adopt it, we can view the speaker as being essentially a machine of the type considered (p.20).” Two years later, Chomsky (1959) famously criticised Skinner’s (1957) ‘Verbal Behaviour’ (a behaviourist model of first language acquisition), and although Chomsky did not offer an alternative theory of L1 acquisition there, some of his ideas that were to become influential in L1 theory were mentioned,

> The child who learns a language has in some sense constructed the grammar for himself on the basis of his observation of sentences and nonsentences…in an astonishingly short time, to a large extent independently of intelligence, and in a comparable way by all children…It is not easy to accept the view that a child is capable of constructing an extremely complex mechanism for generating a set of sentences, some of which he has heard… If this is correct, we can predict that a direct attempt to account for the actual behavior of speaker, listener, and learner, not based on a prior understanding of the structure of grammars, will achieve very limited success… (p.21)

In *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965), Chomsky covered his syntactical theory in more depth, introducing the distinction between underlying competence (what a human 'subconsciously knows' about a language) and performance (what the learner says), stressing that underlying competence of an 'ideal' learner was the primary interest in his linguistics. It was also here that Chomsky stated that a linguistic theory needed to be able to account for L1 acquisition by showing how the brain had an innate ability to identify the grammar of a language. Chomsky's hypothesised biological 'language acquisition device' (LAD), based on principles of universal grammar (UG), was offered as the only viable model to explain L1 acquisition given the 'short' time frame of acquisition, the complexity of grammar and the 'degenerate' (error-laden) language input that L1 learners receive. This latter idea appears again as the poverty of stimulus (POS) argument in *Rules and Representations* (Chomsky, 1980), essentially stating that the language input children receive is insufficient to allow a child to determine all of the grammatical rules of a language in the short amount of time that they do and so some kind of innate mechanism must be in operation, i.e. the LAD operating under UG.

Although the POS argument concerns L1 acquisition and I was not an L1 learner, the POS and my own project were both concerned with learning 'grammar' from spoken language input without direct instruction in syntactical rules. The data I collected shows that during the first 4 months of this project I was able to comprehend numerous French word strings which, while capable of being described by syntactical rules, were not learned from syntactical rules. Rather, my ability to understand longer and longer word strings was a result of first understanding the meaning of individual words, then pairs, triples and so on in whatever order they appeared. The real difficulty for me was in developing the ability to process those meanings in real time and hence why I focused on listening practice.

My ability to understand longer and longer word strings was a result of an increase in my vocabulary, an increase in comprehended word strings, similarities between English and French, and an ability to make sense of storylines in the videos. It was an extremely gradual process to improve my comprehension, but it never stopped improving and I had no need for syntactical rules to do it. Despite there often being many syntactical features that I couldn't understand, my lack of knowledge of their meaning often did not prevent me from understanding because of the assistance from the visual context and my ability to make sense of sentences from word strings.

However, just because I was able to comprehend French without rules, doesn't mean that children can - I already had an L1 and many years of life experience. Yet, Chomsky's main argument was that because the rules of grammar are so complex, children couldn't be working them out. My experience shows that they might not need to work out rules. Children might first 'notice' sounds, gradually form connections with those sounds to things like objects, actions and situations to discover words, slowly comprehend longer strings and discover new words in those strings, and only later discover grammatical nuances as the sounds that represent them become 'novel/salient/noticeable. My knowledge of the nuances of French grammar, and in particular bound morphemes, developed slowly and only became more easily noticeable with an enormous vocabulary and the ability to process rapid speech. Children have three to six years to do this until mastery, with opportunities to learn for 10 or more hours every single day, with child directed and ambient speech in a social environment. They have no pressure to learn the constructed language of grammar, and they are active, conscious and alive.

7.5.5 The invariance problem

Another problem identified by Clark (2009) that L1 learners are said to face in discovering the meaning of language is called the invariance problem, which is the task of determining that segments of speech, such as words, are said differently at different times: by individual speakers, between different speakers, in different acoustic environments, and at different speeds of speech. In trying to determine the meanings of sound chunks for myself, I was also faced with the invariance problem. Initially, I was unaware of how big a problem this was for me because when the acoustic properties of an already salient sound chunk were modified, then either the modified form was no longer salient or I thought the modified form was an entirely different sound chunk. It was only when I started replaying

incomprehensible segments of speech streams while simultaneously thinking about the linguistic and visual context in which it was said, that I began to notice that often I actually already knew all of the words in the segment. This may have been related to how casual speech often differs drastically from more enunciated forms of language through sound change processes such as assimilation, reduction, deletion and intrusion (Tuinman & Cutler, 2010).

The fact that I even started replaying segments of speech streams was the fortuitous result of not being able to find new programs to watch, since I had originally wanted to simulate L1 learning as much as possible, where the opportunity to replay any sound chunk at any time doesn't exist. Be that as it may, replaying segments was extremely beneficial for my learning. When replaying speech segments of cartoons, and particularly Caillou, I found that once I had worked out as many words as possible, I could then play the segment over and over until the meaning of every sound chunk was mentally triggered in real time. I ended up replaying every single sound chunk of every episode of every season of Caillou like this, such that I eventually was able to understand the vast majority of the speech in those shows in real time whenever I played them. It was an extremely tedious exercise, but it allowed me to feel like I was comprehending French like I comprehend English – my goal, and a very satisfying and interesting phenomenon.

There were also many other struggles I faced in working out the sounds that were being said. Sometimes a given sound sounded like two different phones. When I replayed the speech segment and thought of one of these phones, that is what it sounded like and when I thought of the other, it sounded like that. My own thoughts were affecting the sounds I was hearing. There were also cases of one phone sounding like a phone that it shouldn't be able to sound like, yet did. For example, on Day 116, I described incorrectly hearing 'la class' (the class) and then correctly hearing 'la tlas' (the atlas) and being surprised that a 't' could sound like a 'k'. In addition, I sometimes inserted sounds that weren't in the actual speech stream I was listening to. There were also sounds which I know weren't there, but felt like they were. For example, I sometimes 'heard' the English pronunciation of 'question' as 'KWestion' instead of the French pronunciation 'Kestion'.

Probably the most difficult thing for me was understanding adult speech. Not only do adults frequently talk about things other than the physical present, hence denying opportunities to match sounds with elements of the visual environment, but their speech is

often ultra-rapid and hence the speech stream often sounds like one lengthy, speedy, blurry chunk of sound. Of course this isn't unexpected considering the limited amount of listening I did compared to an L1 learner and the number of words and expressions there are to know, but it was quite disconcerting when I could watch a program like Caillou and feel like an L1 listener and then switch to an adult movie and feel like I had learned nothing at all. Upon arrival in France, my ability to understand adult speech was still limited and it was only after about 3 months that I noticed my comprehension skill had improved for adult speech. After 4 months in France, I could change channels on TV and frequently understand whatever people were saying, whether they were adults or not. I could also frequently understand whatever people were saying to me when I was involved in conversations. The findings chapters show that I waited a long time to develop that listening ability and it is far superior to any ability I had in Mandarin after two years of living in China or in Korean after 3.5 years of living in South Korea.

7.6 The first belief driving this project

The discussion to this point has been concerned with the development of my French listening comprehension which is related to the first belief driving this project. Although research projects are often driven by research questions, in the first year of writing this thesis, I became aware that it wasn't actually questions that were motivating me to do this project, rather it was beliefs that I held, and as such, that was how I framed the project. This approach fits within the autoethnographic lense because the subjective, personal perspective of the researcher in relation to the cultural phenomenon under investigation forms the central focus of research (Boechner, 2013; Chang, 2008). Upshaw (2017) stated that for arts-based researchers it is also uncommon to begin with research questions.

The first belief driving this project was:

> *<u>Regarding L2 listening comprehension:</u> I believed that through extensive audio-visual exposure to a foreign language combined with concentration on the audio-visual media, any person whose eyes, ears and ability to concentrate were functioning could develop the same degree of aural comprehension as an L1 speaker in that language.*

The fact that my French listening comprehension developed from comprehending almost nothing on the 05/01/2016 to being able to comprehend, in real time, enormous quantities

of spoken French at varying speeds, with various accents, with various speakers, on a wide range of topics on the 24/05/2018, certainly suggests to me that the first belief is becoming a reality for myself and will continue to develop provided that I continue with receiving French language audio-visual input. The quantity of French that I comprehend now, far outweighs the quantity of French that I don't understand, with the reverse being true for a very long time. Since this entire project represents a single person's experience, I cannot state with any certainty that this learning method would work for other people, only that I believe it would.

There have always been things that I haven't comprehended or have struggled to comprehend in French speech. Processing numbers in real-time is still difficult, but I can do this much better and faster than ever before. The main comprehension difficulties I have are processing vocabulary that I've never noticed, processing vocabulary that I haven't identified a meaning for, and processing ultra-rapid adult speech. However, my ability to process ultra-rapid speech gradually improved over time such that I was able to process vast amounts of adult ultra-rapid speech at the end of my time in France.

Perhaps in support of the value of extensive listening as a means to improved comprehension of ultra-rapid speech is a study conducted by Gordon-Salant and Friedman (2011) in relation to the phenomenon of 'older' adults self-observing that their ability to comprehend rapid speech in their L1 was deteriorating with age, particularly when background noise was present. To examine this phenomenon, the researchers examined three groups of 10 people all assessed as having 'normal' hearing: older sighted adults (aged 60 to 80), older blind adults (aged 60 to 80 who had been totally blind for a minimum of 20 years) and younger sighted adults (aged 18 to 30). Eight of the ten members of the blind group reported having done between 4 and 40 hours of listening practice per week during the past year, which involved intentionally training their listening comprehension by accelerating the speed of recorded audio. No members of the other two groups reported having done this kind of practice. The participants listening abilities were examined under eight conditions: speech spoken at normal speed and three progressively faster speeds, both with a quiet background and with background noise. The results of the experiment showed similar 'superior' performance for both the older blind and the younger sighted groups in comparison to the older sighted group. The researchers concluded that the performance of the blind group was due to the intentional practice with listening to

accelerated speech and that such training might be of benefit to older sighted learners self-assessing as having a deteriorating listening ability.

For me, the belief that I could discover the meaning of vocabulary and grammar for myself through a combination of sounds, moving pictures and concentration was confirmed – I learned thousands of words and understood thousands of sentences this way. What I seriously underestimated were the number of words and expressions there were to learn, the benefit of Caillou-like programs, the extraordinary differences between the language of children and adults, the number of homophones and cognates in French, how quickly I could develop my comprehension, and how difficult it would be to find French programs to watch on YouTube.

7.7 The second belief driving this project

The second belief driving this project was:

> *Regarding L2 speech production: I believed that if speech production in the second language was delayed until the aforementioned comprehension level had been reached, any person capable of speaking would rapidly develop the ability to speak the L2 as though they were an L1 speaker, provided that extensive speaking opportunities for practice were available.*

Because I did not reach the hypothesised listening comprehension level that I thought was achievable through extensive exposure to AV media alone, I was unable to examine the second belief driving this project. My current position is that it still may be possible because the comprehension level that I did achieve prior to speaking still allowed me to communicate despite limited speaking practice. However, despite not being able to examine my second belief in the way I had wanted, I was still able to examine how practical my speaking ability was after first developing my listening comprehension through extensive AV exposure.

In addition to the two beliefs driving this project, there was always another underlying belief that I held regarding L2 learning, which developed from my personal experiences with L2 learning, experiences with ESL teaching, discussions with my previous ESL students over many years, and engagement with language learning literature, and which

was similarly expressed by Postovsky (1974). I believed that because many L2 learners were receiving limited audio TL input from TL L1 speakers and were spending a considerable portion of their study with written words without TL sounds, the sounds they were producing while reading, writing and speaking were from their own L1 sound system. Furthermore, I believed that doing so repeatedly for years possibly resulted in mentally storing the TL in an audio format that did not match the sounds of the TL speakers they encountered, hence contributing to many students' struggles with communicating in the TL. I also believed that because many, if not most, L2 written materials were of a non-conversational format, students had limited opportunities to experience the myriad of directions that conversations could take, hence giving them a limited source of conversational language in memory to draw upon when creating their own conversations with TL speakers. I believed that a mental language source such as this may be forcing students to create spoken sentences that differed from the ones TL speakers themselves would choose to communicate the same ideas, i.e. students were creating an interlanguage. In cases where such interlanguage still resulted in productive communication, L2 learners might have been re-using the same interlanguage expressions whenever the need for expressing the same ideas arose and hence fossilising some of their speech through repeated use.

I certainly did develop a mental acoustic resource that was always more effective for listening than speaking. When speaking French, I was clearly drawing on this resource since the amount of vocabulary that I learned from dictionaries while in France was minimal and words 'learned' from dictionaries were often only useful if I had previously processed their corresponding sound chunks aurally. My ability to draw upon French expressions that I had processed aurally was often dependent on the frequency with which I had processed them. Expressions which had been processed with the highest frequency were generally easier to use in fluent speaking, but there were many cases of me struggling to bring frequently processed expressions to mind when I needed them. One example is the expression 'ensemble' meaning 'together'. I could aurally process this word from early on in this project, but even after months in France I struggled to bring it to mind when I needed it, which I think was connected to interference from the same word in English meaning 'an outfit'.

There were also some expressions which I could bring to mind and then say quite fluently, yet French people still couldn't understand me. It was only when they pointed out my

inaccurate pronunciation that I realised the difference between the sounds stored in my memory and the ones that I had processed frequently were different. One example of this is the sound that means ‘water’ in French. When I first learned this word from a Caillou episode, I thought the sound was ‘oo’, and that’s what I always said. It was pointed out to me that the actual sound is more like ‘oh’. It took me a few weeks to change my pronunciation, but it came out right most of the time after that. Interestingly, in English, I have no problem distinguishing between these two sounds, but in rapid French speech such sounds can sound identical and as I mentioned earlier, I sometimes influenced what sounds I heard based on what I thought they should be.

One of the characteristics of second language learning I was aiming to avoid for longer during this project was the creation of sentences that I had either never encountered or had not processed frequently enough to become part of an accessible repertoire for speaking. However, from the beginning of French speaking, I was frequently doing this and that is where most of my communicative struggles lay. I simply had no complete acoustic exemplars to draw upon for certain expressions and so I would just do my best to construct meaningful sentences - sometimes they worked, sometimes they didn’t. Fortunately though, I was often able to find another way to express the meaning I had intended.

Despite having problems with speaking French, the listening comprehension that I did achieve from AV media still resulted in a relatively rapid development of my speaking ability. This self-assessment is based on a variety of factors. Firstly, at the end of two years in China and 3.5 years in Korea, I didn’t even come close to the speaking ability I had in French after around 1500 hours of AV exposure and 3 months in France. Secondly, my French speaking ability as self-assessed on the 03/04/2018 was far better than either my very first French speaking in Australia (2/11/2017), or my first French speaking in France (11/12/2017). Thirdly, during my 5.5 months in France there was a noticeable increase in French speakers’ positive opinions of my speaking ability and its improvement, and a decrease in puzzled looks when I did speak. When I first arrived in France, French people often switched immediately to speaking English with me, even after I had said only a few words. Fourthly, I’ve met hundreds of ESL students who had ‘learned’ English for five or more years during formal education, who described themselves as still struggling to comprehend and speak in conversations with L1 speakers. Finally, my speaking ability has developed like this with only minimal speaking practice. In reality, I spent the majority of

my first four months in France without speaking to anyone at all because I was studying most of the time and I lived in two villages where I found few social opportunities.

I cannot say whether or not the way I have learned French will result in a permanent, fossilised interlanguage with an Australian accent as I theorised I could avoid if I reached the hypothesised level of comprehension. If I continue to practise French listening and speaking after this project, I will have an opportunity to examine that at a future date. However, the promising thing about having a listening comprehension ability that is far superior to my speaking ability is that I can participate in conversations, I can often quickly hear and understand corrections I've been given, and I can learn new language from rapid speech, which is often where the adult expressions I desire to learn are to be found. Interestingly, it was only after 5 months in France that I began to reflexively verbally imitate French expressions immediately after hearing them.

7.8 Reading and writing in French

Prior to arriving in France, I had done less than one hour of French reading in private (one week before going to France), no writing and then only the reading and writing sections of the first formal DELF B1 test. In France, the only French writing I did was one journal entry and a few text messages which I used Google Translate for. My main priorities were thesis writing, speaking in French and listening to French. In France, I estimate that I did the equivalent of less than 10 minutes of French reading per day and this was in the form of: four thick comic books, some newspaper articles, two junior encyclopedias, an hour of an audio book on YouTube, about 20 graded readers targeted to 7 to 10 year olds, two chapters of a sci-fi novel, TV advertising, menus, and signs. Granted, more reading and writing could have been done, but after working on the thesis all day, it was a task that I had little motivation to do and the better my listening became the easier reading became. Upon returning to Australia, I began reading Wikipedia articles in French in the hope that such practice would translate into familiarity with academic language, which I expected to be in the DELF B2 test, and would develop my visual memory of French spelling. As an estimate, I read approximately 10 full length articles with the surprising ability to comprehend most of what I read.

Reading French was an interesting phenomenon. There were a large number of words that I could understand upon first encounter because they used the same letters as

English and because I have French language sounds stored in memory. As Chung, Jarmulowicz and Bidelman (2017, p.1407) state, “[phonological awareness] is well established as a precursor to reading, [and] recent studies have revealed that linguistic prosody awareness (i.e., identifying sound patterns spanning across syllables) and auditory processing of acoustic features signaling prosodic patterns are important to reading acquisition.” By far the easiest books for me to read were comic books and the graded readers, which through a combination of pictures, a familiar alphabet and conversational French in memory, allowed me to read and understand quite well without use of a dictionary. The most difficult reading, like listening comprehension, was adult texts like news reports and novels, which contained many words that I hadn’t experienced in the conversations I had observed, and which were frequently non-conversational in nature. However, the biggest problem with reading was the lack of audio. Whenever I encountered written words that I couldn’t work out from my audio knowledge, I had to do what I wanted to avoid, which was to make up my own pronunciation or use Google Translate, which has a robotic voice. There were several occasions when listening to French that the speakers said some English words that sounded noticeably robotic. I’m guessing they may have copied the pronunciation from something like Google Translate.

Despite the robotic voice, sometimes when copying and pasting an unknown word into Google Translate I could comprehend the word as soon as I heard it. The general reason why I couldn’t understand such words when written is that the spelling was often very different from the pronunciation, particularly with word endings. This experience is exactly what I have been arguing is frequently going on in L2 learning with use of the written word. If it is not accompanied by audio, how is the L2 reader to know how to pronounce it? And if they don’t know, how are they pronouncing it? I went to bookshops and libraries in France, and looked online for resources that allowed me to read and listen simultaneously, and such resources were sparse. I’m not saying that there aren’t large numbers of wonderful dedicated language teachers out there doing their best for their students. I’m saying that we can do such much more for students by at least providing audio for all of the written materials that we provide them, in particular textbooks, which typically only have audio samples for the listening excerpts (I do not wish to name any textbook titles, so as to avoid singling out any particular textbook series). By including audio for every single word in a textbook, students, in their own time at the very least, can listen to the differences between an L1 speaker’s pronunciation and their own, and possibly improve their ability to recognise and say those words when necessary. I would further argue that students are in

need of far more conversational examples than the dialogue excerpts in textbooks and the conversations occurring mostly between non-L1 speaking students in the classroom. This is where I see video as a valuable resource. It would be beneficial for students if some kind of option existed for learning from video, rather than how in my own experience it occurs in schools - something to be shunned, left for students to do in their free time, or as an occasional break from the normal classroom routine.

7.9 Comparing my learning experience with Krashen's 'monitor model'

Although, Chomsky's theory was originally applied to L1 learning, different positions exist as to whether or not the LAD is still available for L2 acquisition (Mitchell & Myles, 2004), each of which requires a distinction between acquisition and learning. The first position is that the LAD is no longer available due to a critical period after which it is basically switched off. After this period, languages can only be learned, i.e. studied, as opposed to being acquired. The second position is similar in that the LAD is no longer operational, but that the L1 model can be used in order to learn subsequent languages. The third position is that the LAD is partially available whereby an L2 learner can use a combination of their LAD and learning strategies. The fourth position is that the LAD is completely available for L2 acquisition. Stephen Krashen's (1982) 'monitor model' is of importance here because he takes the fourth position and in the first of five hypotheses makes the distinction between acquisition and learning,

> adults have two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in a second language. The first way is language acquisition, a process similar, if not identical, to the way children develop ability in their first language. Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication… In non-technical language, acquisition is "picking-up" a language. The second way to develop competence in a second language is by language learning. We will use the term "learning" henceforth to refer to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. In non-technical terms, learning is "knowing about" a language, known to most people as "grammar", or "rules" (p.10).

It is very difficult to relate my own experience to the acquisition-learning distinction according to which I can't have *acquired* French since I was conscious of all of the French I know and use, but I must have *acquired* it because I 'picked it up'. I can't have *learned* it since I don't know and can't talk about the rules of French grammar, but I did *learn* it because I was conscious of the language knowledge I possess. The confusion essentially comes from the necessity to incorporate subconscious processes into the theory, in accordance with Chomsky's subconscious LAD, and hence needing a distinctive 'label' for this kind of processing. It may have been less confusing to just contrast terms like 'subconscious learning' and 'conscious learning'. If this was the real distinction Krashen was trying to make here, then I consciously learned French, I did not subconsciously acquire it. Melani (2016) cites such a distinction made by Schmidt (1990) between incidental learning and intentional learning with the former being a subconscious process and the latter being a conscious one.

An alternative perspective of the acquisition/learning distinction taken by Cole and Vanderplank (2016) is that 'acquisition' is synonymous with 'informal, out-of-class learning' and 'learning' is synonymous with learning in 'traditional, classroom-based environments', and within this definition I experienced 'acquisition'. However, personally, I think the word 'learning' is all that is needed in language learning theory, unless 'acquisition' is being used as a synonym. The word 'learning' can be modified by an adjective to indicate what kind of learning is being spoken about.

In addition to the acquisition-learning hypothesis, Krashen's monitor model is composed of four other interrelated hypotheses: the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis. The natural order hypothesis centres around the idea that language learners 'tend' to acquire grammatical patterns of specific language in similar orders. Individual variation is said to exist, but the 'trends' of English language learning as discussed by Krashen for English are that L1 learners have one sequence of syntactical development, young L2 learners another sequence, and older L2 learners another. The adult L2 sequence is said to be most similar to the young L2 sequence, which in turn is more similar to the L1 sequence. In Krashen's (1982, p.15) words, "This uniformity is thought to reflect the operation of the natural language acquisition process that is part of all of us."

In relating the hypothesis to my own experience, it is important to note that the studies upon which the ‘natural order hypothesis’ was based refer to ‘mature, or well-formed structures’ evidenced in spoken output. Thus, because I only spoke French for about 5.5 months and I did not record my spoken output, I cannot examine whether or not such a natural order of grammatical patterns occurred. However, from the mental event data that I did collect during the first four months of French AV exposure, it would be possible to examine whether I had an order of acquisition for ‘comprehending’ syntactical patterns and then compare this to any existing studies on French orders of acquisition. At this stage, I will leave that for future examination.

In discussing the third hypothesis, Krashen (1982) says,

> The Monitor hypothesis posits that acquisition and learning are used in very specific ways. Normally, acquisition "initiates" our utterances in a second language and is responsible for our fluency. Learning has only one function, and that is as a Monitor, or editor. Learning comes into play only to make changes in the form of our utterance, after is has been "produced" by the acquired system. This can happen before we speak or write, or after (self-correction)… The Monitor hypothesis implies that formal rules, or conscious learning, play only a limited role in second language performance…research…strongly suggests that second language performers can use conscious rules only when three conditions are met… (i) Time. In order to think about and use conscious rules effectively… (ii) Focus on form…or thinking about correctness… (iii) Know the rule…This is a very formidable requirement. Linguistics…claim to have described only a fragment of the best known languages (p.15-16).

There were definitely times when I spoke French fluently both with and without grammatical errors. If Krashen’s (1982) theory is correct then this could only have come from the LAD, meaning that the fluency without errors was coming from correctly configured parts of the LAD, while the fluency with errors was coming from a part of the LAD still in need of further configuration. Since I can’t observe the subconscious world, I can’t say definitively whether or not my cases of fluency were from the LAD or myself. If I take the position that LAD is operating and I am in control of what I want to say, then my fluency operated something like: I first thought of something I wanted to say, then that got ‘worked on’ in microseconds by the LAD, which then presented what I wanted to say back

to me in a way that I couldn't observe it, then, dependent on available time, I just said it or I edited it with grammatical rules that I didn't know and that even professional linguists have difficulty describing. However, the word 'initiates' may be implying that the LAD is actually producing my language for me. Personally, I was in control of my own speaking and comprehending and my fluency was a result of enormous listening practice.

There were cases where I did observe myself monitoring my French, both before and after speaking. When I did it before speaking, I generally knew that what I wanted to say wasn't correct because it was something that wasn't in my repertoire of stored language. In such cases, I just constructed the best sentence I could. Sometimes after speaking, I immediately recognised that something was wrong, and occasionally then made another attempt. When I first got to France I tried to learn some French grammar, but like English grammar, the explanations were confusing and so I stopped. The only real knowledge I had for monitoring my speech was what was stored in my memory from processing thousands of hours of speech, but this wasn't rule-based monitoring. Rather it was sound-based and familiarity-based.

Krashen's (1982) fourth hypothesis, the input hypothesis, was concerned with how to provide L2 learners with the opportunity to *acquire* language in classrooms, based on the assumptions that the LAD is still available and that the order of syntactical acquisition occurs in predictable stages. Krashen says,

> a necessary (but not sufficient) condition to move from stage i to stage i + 1 is that the acquirer understand input that contains i + 1, where "understand" means that the acquirer is focussed on the meaning and not the form of the message. We acquire, in other words, only when we understand language that contains structure that is "a little beyond" where we are now. How is this possible? … We also use context, our knowledge of the world, our extra-linguistic information to help us understand language directed at us. The input hypothesis says…we acquire by "going for meaning" first, and as a result, we acquire structure! ...The final part of the input hypothesis states that speaking fluency cannot be taught directly. Rather, it "emerges" over time, on its own. The best way, and perhaps the only way, to teach speaking, according to this view, is simply to provide comprehensible input. Early speech will come when the acquirer feels "ready" (p.21).

In Krashen's theory here, language acquisition occurs subconsciously via the LAD in accordance with the Chomskian view. However, while Chomsky (1957) was very emphatic that acquisition via the LAD operated without 'meaning' (semantics) being utilised in the acquisition process, Krashen argues that meaning, and hence a conscious learner, is essential in order for syntactical acquisition to occur. Two quite contrary viewpoints of the LAD. What Krashen may have meant is that as long as the L2 learner is comprehending the L2, the LAD is subconsciously processing the grammar and setting 'switches', the results of which will later be provided as fluent output for the learner. However, does that mean that any 'grammar' that an L2 learner such as myself might happen to notice whilst simultaneously comprehending, still can't be used for fluent production because it was consciously learned?

I embarked on this thesis being influenced by Krashen's input hypothesis, but with certain differences that I assumed were more similar to L1 learning. Firstly, while both Krashen and I saw language input as essential for language learning, I was concerned with exclusively receiving many daily hours of conversational L2 input spoken by French L1 speakers in order to only receive accurate models of the L2. Krashen argued that modified teacher talk and student interlanguage were both forms of beneficial comprehensible 'i+1' input for L2 learners because they were similar to child-directed speech in L1 learning and so Krashen recommended about an hour of daily comprehensible input like this in the classroom. Secondly, while both Krashen and I saw L2 input in context as playing a role in language learning, I was concerned with that context being presented in a storyline video format, while Krashen argued that teachers could use still images and objects, and students could rely on teacher talk and interlanguage to provide context. Thirdly, while both Krashen and I believed that L1 acquisition was replicable for L2 learners through extensive 'comprehensible' input, I was also focused on receiving extensive incomprehensible input. My belief was that I was always developing familiarity with the sound of French the more I listened to it, whether I understood it or not and that that familiarity would later allow me to copy non-lexical elements of French like intonation, tone, stress, and rhythm, i.e. prosody. Finally, both Krashen and I agreed on the value of developing comprehension prior to production utilising a silent period, but for Krashen it was about providing opportunity for the LAD to identify language rules to 'initiate' later fluency, whereas for me it was about consciously becoming familiar with the sound and meaning of spoken French so that when I later encountered it in real life I had a chance of

comprehending what people were saying and therefore had a chance of contributing something meaningful to whatever topic of conversation was being discussed.

Krashen's (1982) final hypothesis, the affective filer hypothesis, states that before comprehensible input reaches the LAD, it passes through an 'affective filter' which varies the amount of input that can be extracted by the LAD. The main 'affects' he mentioned were motivation, self-confidence and anxiety, with high levels in the first two and a low level in the last allowing for the best LAD processing and vice-versa for the worst. The LAD in L2 learners with the 'best' filters would develop acquired language better than in those learners with the 'worst' filters. Although I was highly motivated to do this project, there were many occasions on which I was extremely unmotivated to watch French TV, yet during such unmotivated times, provided that I concentrated on the AV media, I continued to learn new language with no noticeable difference from when I was motivated. The same holds true for me for the other mentioned affective variables. Provided that I was concentrating, what affected my rate of learning most was the quality of the AV media. Cartoons were by far the most superior because the conversations I heard frequently related to the immediate visual context and while still quick, were spoken at much slower rates than most adult speech. They hence provided me with more opportunities for meaning making than programs which didn't have such qualities. This finding was contrary to my initial belief at the start of this project where I thought that the quantity of input was the most important factor.

7.10 Comparing my learning experience with the 'competition model'

According to MacWhinney (2013), the first instantiation of the competition model was published in two parts by Bates and MacWhinney (1982), and MacWhinney (1987). The first model sought to explain L1 acquisition, while the second sought to explain both L1 and L2 acquisition (MacWhinney, 2008). In the CM, the language that infants first acquire is that which matches the concepts they have formed, that can be most easily picked up from the context, and that is frequently present in the speech they hear. However, because a child initially has no way of knowing whether a chunk of sound is a word or many words, the speech sounds that they map to the concepts within their mind are guesses that are either correct, approximate or incorrect. Correct guesses are reinforced, since in every context the use of the word matches the concept or function in the child's mind. However, the other two kinds of guesses will need to undergo modification over time. This

modification is known as competition and gives the model its name. Although the CM acknowledges that some conscious processing by L1 learners occurs for vocabulary and simple syntactical constructions, most language is considered to be far more complex and therefore the brain must be using some kind of subconscious competitive processes to resolve such conflicts. Although the speech we hear is a linear stream, in the CM, ambiguity is resolved in a non-linear fashion before reaching our perception. When a speech stream enters the brain, all possible meanings are activated and then through competitive processes one meaning is chosen based on: relationship to the verb, intonation, context, probability, or previous activation.

The Competition Model (CM) of L1 and L2 learning has many features with which to describe my own L2 learning experience of French. Firstly, in describing L1 acquisition the CM theorises that the language infants first acquire is that which can be most easily picked up from the context. Context certainly played a major role for me in learning new words. Almost all of the French that I learned occurred within a visual context accompanied by TL audio, although had I concentrated harder and listened to radio dramas without pictures, instead of just music, advertising and DJs, I may have learned more from radio. In addition, higher mental event rates occurred for me when the immediate visual context was connected to the topics of conversation, as was generally the case with cartoons. Also, as time progressed, the majority of language ‘triggers’ came from the linguistic context, i.e. known words next to or surrounding unknown words, rather than from cognates.

Secondly, the CM theorises that the language infants first acquire is that which is frequently present in the speech they hear. Although the frequency at which salient sound chunks occurred was certainly favourable for me in learning many words, it by no means guaranteed how quickly I was able to pick up all words. Many extremely salient and frequent sound chunks took enormous amounts of exposure to identify a meaning for. My explanation for this is that some words represented concepts that could only be understood after the foundational concepts upon which they depended were understood. This is very similar to Krashen’s (1982) idea of comprehensible ‘i+1’ input. There were also many non-cognate sound chunks that I was able to determine a meaning for rather quickly, even though they were not as frequently used as many other words.

Thirdly, the CM suggests that because infants don't know whether a chunk of sound is one word or many, they make guesses that are either A) correct (and are hence strengthened through repetition), or they are B) approximate or C) incorrect and undergo modification (competition) over time. This CM process is an extremely accurate description of how the meaning of sound chunks developed for me in French. Once I had assigned a meaning, the frequency of sound chunk occurrence had a major impact on how quickly my confidence in a meaning rose and fell, provided that I was able to recall that meaning. The other factors which contributed to my confidence were vocabulary growth, the ability to understand longer and longer word strings, and an increase in the frequency of language matching the visual context in which it was said.

Finally, the CM suggests that because language input is so complex, subconscious processes must be operating in order to help infants resolve competing meanings for sound chunks. Prior to beginning this experience, I was of the belief that much of my L2 learning would come from such subconscious processes. However, I am now forced to hold the opposite view. Every single word and phrase of French that I learned from AV media, I was conscious of learning and I was also consciously observing and controlling the competition for meanings in my mind. Essentially, the complexity of language was irrelevant. I literally had to learn one word at a time with the meanings getting stronger over time until I had learned enough words so that some of them could occur in pairs that I could comprehend and then continue to be patient until the same process occurred with longer and longer strings of words.

7.11 The role of grammar – a personal perspective

The concept of 'grammar' or 'syntax' is at the heart of many questions related to language learning: How do children acquire it? How can L2 learners 'acquire' it? How should grammar be taught? What role does it play in language development? For me, grammar plays no role in L1 learning, and is unnecessary and confusing in L2 learning. For people who were taught grammar during their formal education, it might be difficult to disassociate the concept of grammar from language learning, but for a person like me, whose only grammatical knowledge of English prior to becoming an ESL teacher was that a verb was 'a doing word' and a noun was 'a naming word', it is easy, because I clearly remember being able to speak English fluently without any knowledge of the syntactical terminology

or ‘rules’. There are certainly identifiable patterns within language, but the patterns are made of sequences of sounds, not with sequences of rules.

If someone sings a song, I can experience it by listening to it. If I do this, not only is it possible for the song to get stuck in my head, but I can also hear it in memory and even idiosyncratically hum or sing it, particularly after hearing many repetitions of the song. In other words, I can learn it with minimal effort in a very short time, just by listening. If someone were so inclined, they could take the song, analyse it, identify the patterns in the rhythm and the melody, record it all on paper with musical notation and then give it to me. If I could read musical notation and had been trained in singing it, I could sing or hum the song. If I couldn’t read musical notation, I would first have to learn all of the symbols and language necessary for interpreting written music, and then train myself to sing according to the notation, before I could even produce a recreation. This would take considerably much more effort than just listening to the song.

Spoken language is similar to music in that it is made of sound, it can get stuck in memory, it can be idiosyncratically copied from memory in the form of speaking, and it can be experienced it in its actual state rather quickly just by listening to it. Spoken language however is a far more complex set of sounds than music and hence takes more time to familiarise oneself with. Grammar is similar to musical notation in that it is a silent, analysed, symbolic form of spoken language, which must be learned first in order to understand the explanations for which it is used. However, if Huddleston and Pullum’s (2002) 1842 page book of English grammar is anything to go by, grammar is just a ‘little’ more complex than musical notation. Every time L1 learners are exposed to spoken L1 language they immediately have the opportunity to learn what it is they need – language sound. Conversely, not only is the writing in books used by classroom L2 learners devoid of sound, but students are faced with understanding both a large quantity of highly complex, abstract grammatical rules and terminology that L1 experts spend years understanding AND the actual language that the terminology describes. In my view, language education with books and grammar is actually making L2 learning a much more difficult and lengthy process for students by trying to explain it to them and by not providing enough language sound. It’s not that a second language can’t be learned from grammar and books, many people have done it. It’s just that the form the language will eventually take will be of the form it is modelled upon, which would mostly be rules and the learner’s L1 sound system, not the sounds of the TL.

The emphasis on grammar within the ‘Western’ world can be traced to the dominance of scholasticism within medieval philosophy (Spade, 2016; Bruce, 2011; Weisheipl, 2005), in which an emphasis was placed on the study of the seven liberal arts: logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy and *grammar* (Cook, 2014). Because grammar was considered a subject in its own right and Latin was of central importance to both the church, politics and high society the study of grammar in scholastic education was the study of Latin grammar (Leonhardt & Kronenberg, 2013). Although non-Latin European languages rose in importance (McClelland, 2017), grammar remained a subject in many Western European countries well into the 20th century and is still a subject in some curriculums (Leonhardt & Kronenberg, 2013). A bi-product of the emphasis on Latin and Latin grammar in the history of Western education was that the terminology of Latin grammar was often used in describing or prescribing the ‘grammars’ of other European languages (McLelland, 2017), English being one such example (Lefevre, 1966; Binnick, 1991).

In Foley (2013), I wrote a grammar of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns that aimed to present these same grammatical concepts to ESL students in a way that did not rely on using inconsistent Latin grammatical nomenclature. I did not do this because I value grammar – clearly I don’t. I did it because every ESL school that I worked at and every textbook I used insisted on using grammar. I could therefore either find a new career, knowingly confuse my students, or try to turn what is an extremely difficult and confusing topic into one that is as simple as possible for students to understand. Even after years of studying the grammar of my own language and my best attempt at simplifying it for students, grammar still remains complex and confusing to me.

7.12 Final thoughts

Despite all that I’ve discussed to this point, I still have not achieved fluent comprehension of French, although I feel that it is rapidly approaching based on continual improvement and the ability to now understand vast quantities of ultra-rapid adult speech. On the other hand, my French speaking, while good enough to participate in a wide range of conversations, is still lagging behind my comprehension ability. However, my speaking continues to improve and I believe it is natural for speaking to develop at a slower pace than comprehension, simply because that is what happens in L1 acquisition. In addition,

the amount of time I have spent in French conversations could have been dramatically increased under different circumstances.

During the entire time that I was living in France, I continued with French AV exposure and my ability to ‘pick up’ words and comprehend faster rates of speech continued. Since the same language learning processes continue to be beneficial, it is difficult to imagine why they would suddenly stop being so. It was always an unknown how much AV input was necessary to arrive at the hypothesised state expressed in the first belief, if it existed. However, were I able to repeat this experience with a wider variety of better sequenced, higher quality AV media and allow subtitles and dictionaries to be used, I imagine the hypothesised state may have been achievable in 1500 hours or less. Although I intentionally avoided subtitles and dictionaries, I did not do so in order to suggest that they are not useful for L2 learning. My purpose in avoiding such techniques was to bring attention to the value of listening to an L2 within a visual context, a subject having received limited attention in the literature, and I believed that by using the other learning techniques I would have been unable to emphasise this.

7.13 Suggestions

Suggestions for independent learners

- Begin AV exposure with children’s programs. Movies, sitcoms, TV series, and news reports typically use ultra-rapid speech and often talk about topics not connected to the immediate environment. Develop your ability to hear slower, simpler speech first.
- Begin by allowing yourself to just become familiar with the sounds of the language. Many sounds will eventually stand out. When you can notice them, that is the time to use a dictionary, provided you have subtitles that show the word you’re interested in.
- Concentration is essential. I learned nothing when my mind was elsewhere.
- Avoid grammar. It’s overly complicated and confusing and it takes years of study even for L1 speakers.
- Build your listening vocabulary. As your listening vocabulary grows, you will notice and comprehend more words that appear together. You will work out the nuances of ‘grammar’ later.

- If focusing on reading, whenever possible, always have it accompanied by audio from an L1 speaker of the language.

Suggestions for language classes

- Many students exit high school after years of language learning classes and often have minimal ability in speaking or comprehension in the L2. It can't hurt therefore to have an alternative program where students learn from cartoons. Lots of kids love cartoons and they just might learn better from them than from traditional teaching methods. At least try it with the kids who are already failing. But if you do do that, don't give them any worksheets and delay or avoid testing if possible because worksheets will quickly ruin the learning experience and tests frequently do not measure what they claim to.
- If schools allow you flexibility in testing, make your tests reflect what they are testing or don't use them at all.
- Try to provide audio as much as possible for the written resources that are used.
- If possible, before enrolling in a language school, talk to some students who have been there for a while. Ask how well they think their learning has improved. If they give a lot of negative answers, don't waste your money or time.

Suggestions for future research

- Although my individual human L2 experience may not be replicable, future research could still replicate the following features: extensive L2 AV exposure; non-use of instruction, subtitles or reading; L1 English learner of French; the same sequence of AV media that I utilised; and being an adult Australian male.
- Not replicating the aforementioned features may also provide avenues for comparison between: learners from any L1, learning any L2; learners of different ages; learning with and without subtitles, video, dictionaries, grammar and instruction; AV media presented conversationally versus monologue, as cartoons versus dramas; with learners who concentrate and those who don't; with programs of interest versus those not of interest; or, experimental versus autoethnographic approaches.
- Some studies could make comparisons between mental event rates, sequences of sound salience, or mental triggers.
- If linguists tried language learning from AV media, their extensive academic knowledge might provide alternative insights than non-linguists or 'experimental subjects'.

- Comparisons could be made between the order of acquisition that is evidenced from speaking, and the order of acquisition that is evidenced from observing one's own mental comprehension.
- The effects of learning from listening on reading and speaking ability could be further investigated.

7.14 Conclusion

In my view, this project has demonstrated that 'picking up' a second language through concentration on conversational exchanges embedded within an animated visual context is humanly possible, allows for eventual participation in real-life conversational contexts, and is extremely useful for the development of reading comprehension. It has also shown that both the quantity and quality of audio-visual media are important. All of the painfully meticulous recording of 1295 hours of French input made up of 212 hours of radio and 1073 hours of television, was done simply to be able to give a 'ballpark figure' of the quantity of input potentially necessary for a single adult human to develop a practical ability in listening comprehension through the chosen learning method. Although I was able to 'pick up' language through a range of audio-visual media, cartoons proved to be much more beneficial for my own journey, particularly Caillou.

As beneficial as the chosen learning method was for myself, this experience is unable to show whether or not it is a practical language learning technique for any other human. Even if it is, there are bound to be a myriad of differences between my own experience and that of others. Much of my learning came as a result of French having thousands of similar words to English and my reading ability most likely progressed rapidly in part due to English utilising the same alphabet as French. Although France most certainly has different cultural characteristics to Australia, at no stage did such differences provide me with any form of 'culture shock'. The noticeable cultural differences to me are perhaps best described as nuances.

I am disappointed that I was unable to achieve fluent French listening comprehension prior to my first French speaking, because I was unable to demonstrate whether or not utilising a 'silent period' had any practical effect other than removing pressure. Although I am still of the belief that speaking in French too soon would have been a contributing factor to my own fossilised interlanguage, this is merely speculation. Despite my disappointment, I am

pleased that the acoustic mental resource that did develop inside my head reached a point where I was able to understand large quantities of adult ultra-rapid speech and use that skill to participate in a wide range of conversational exchanges with both children and adults. If I learn another second language in the future, my main technique will be to watch extensive amounts of cartoons during a silent period, while making use of subtitles and dictionaries only after identifying salient sounds that I am itching to understand. I believe that with such added assistance, I can develop a similar practical ability in much less time than I did with French. Reading and writing in a second language will always be secondary goals for me because they are skills that I believe I can develop rather quickly after the development of a solid foundation in listening comprehension.

At the very least, I hope that this project has achieved my goal of bringing greater attention to the value of listening and television in the field of second language learning. Much of the knowledge that linguists and grammarians have discovered about language is truly fascinating, but that does not imply that that same knowledge is useful within a learning context. For me, real language is spoken and heard in conversational exchanges, and is connected to the visual context in the earliest stages of language learning. In order for a second language learner to be a participant in such exchanges those same skills must be practised extensively with high quality media.

This project represents a single human language learning experience in relation to the literature which I feel it is most connected. It builds on previous L2 research which sought to investigate L2 learning that was based on characteristics of L1 learning, namely, building listening comprehension prior to speaking without direct instruction. It differed from previous research in that I was studying my own learning as it occurred, I was an independent learner outside of a classroom, both my ‘silent period’ and quantity of input were vastly greater, and I focused primarily on observing conversational language presented within a video context. The project aimed to examine well established beliefs in regards to language learning: the value of grammar, the poverty of stimulus argument, the language learning device, the value of learning language in schools and from books, the need for subconscious processing in language learning theories, the acquisition-learning distinction, the devaluation of television as a language learning tool, the value of language tests, and the promotion of writing, reading and speaking over listening. The main aim of the project was to draw attention to the value of listening to conversations when learning a language and the assistance that an animated visual context can provide in this endeavour. The project also aimed to challenge the belief that the researcher should not

be the researched. It aimed to show that one's own mental world is an extraordinarily rich environment for data collection and is a world that can only be observed by oneself.

My personal belief is that I have simply utilised learning characteristics that other humans who are capable of seeing, hearing and concentrating possess. I do not believe in concepts such as 'intelligence' or 'language aptitude'. I believe in effort, practice and human potential. The autoethnographic lense allowed me to include the personal side of my language learning journey, showing that I was often unable to observe my own progress, that I had many doubts about whether I would succeed, that learning can occur even through depression, isolation and other pressures of life, that one can judge one's own ability better than tests can, and that listening comprehension, although difficult, can gradually improve with practice. Such personal experiences can be used as a guide not to quit, for anyone facing similar struggles when learning language from television.

In what is now an electronically connected, globalised world, where the possession of an L2 can open many doors to life opportunities, learning a second language from television may be worthy of further attention and at the very least could be utilised by people with no time or money to attend schools, by students who are not 'succeeding' in traditional L2 classes, and by people who have plenty of 'time to kill' such as prisoners and hospital patients. Even if my own L2 journey about learning from television is unconvincing, I hope it still draws attention to the value of listening and television while learning an L2.

List of Figures & Tables

List of Abbreviations used in this thesis

L1	First language
L2	Second language
TL	Target language
LAD	Language acquisition device
UG	Universal grammar
POS	Poverty of Stimulus
TV	Television
AUD	Audio
AV	Audio-visual
ESL	English as a Second Language
MLAT	Modern Language Aptitude Test
CM	Competition Model
HELG	Helene et les garcons
PBLV	Plus Belle La Vie

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Appendices

Appendix A Ethics approval letter

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Sub-Committee Human Research Ethics Approval

Project Title:	Second language learning through extensive audio-visual media exposure - an autoethnography
Chief Investigator:	Mr Peter Foley
Supervisors:	Dr Simone Smala, Professor Bob Lingard
Co-Investigator(s):	None
School(s):	School of Education, UQ
Approval Number:	2017001427
Granting Agency/Degree:	School of Education funding, APA Scholarship
Duration:	30th April, 2018

Comments/Conditions:

- HREA Application Form, 23/09/2017
- CH2 Research Design, 23/09/2017

Conversations and engagement with people must be respectful and have regard to imposition on time and cultural appropriateness.

Note: if this approval is for amendments to an already approved protocol for which a UQ Clinical Trials Protection/Insurance Form was originally submitted, then the researchers must directly notify the UQ Insurance Office of any changes to that Form and Participant Information Sheets & Consent Forms as a result of the amendments, before action.

Name of responsible Sub-Committee:
University of Queensland Humanities and Social Sciences, Low & Negligible Risk Ethics Sub-Committee
This project complies with the provisions contained in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and complies with the regulations governing experimentation on humans.

Name of Ethics Sub-Committee representative:
Associate Professor Elizabeth Mackinlay
Chairperson
University of Queensland Humanities and Social Sciences, Low & Negligible Risk Ethics Sub-Committee

Signature Liz Mackinlay Date **09/10/2017**

Appendix B Mental event journal exemplar

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
AV EXPOSURE DETAILS						OBSERVED MENTAL EVENTS DURING EXPOSURE													
Day	Date	Session Number	Exposure Length		Media Name	Event Count	Event Type	Event Description		Event Context	Event Mechanisms (stimulation)						NOTES	Code info	JEN
			min	sec				English	French										
1	1/05/2016	1	20	48	Hélène & les garçons Episode 1 La rencontre	1	v	boy	ga:son	When copying the title of the the show to youtube from wikipedia, I saw the show title translation which was boy. I've heard the word garcon used for waiters.	we	pl					2c41 i didn't know garson meant boy i only thought it meant waiter, so not technically prior learning		1
						2	v	Miss	madamoiselle	3 boys approached a woman they found attractive and said it. I'm guessing miss instead of madam because she is young.	pl	lr							
						3	v	thank you	merci	Just heard it	pl								
						4	v	incredible		Just heard it	sle								
						5	v	tired	fatigei	Just heard it	pl								
						6	v	Joanna		A girl walked in the room and another girl said it.	sle					pn	Just enetered pn code here on Day 41. Put in the right column with spaces to left to show it was a second round		
						7	v	terrible	teri:bl	The girl that entered started crying and said it	sle								
						8	v	telephone	telefeuni:k	Just heard it. Probably a derivative of telephone	sle								
						9	v	concierge		Just heard it.	sle								
						10	v	cuisine/food		Just heard it. It might be another word but cuisine came to mind.	sle								

Appendix C 100 hour test exemplar

Hélène & les garçons Episode 1 La rencontre, running time 20:48			
Test of comprehension, using First French Listening Experience as model. How many more words can I comprehend over time, without visual assistance and what variation exists in salient sounds? accuracy or correct understanding is not a factor. Interested in what understanding happens. Any new mental events that occur during test are recorded on Appendix B and here. No replays, just playing through once.			
A	B	C	D
Day 1, First Viewing of project, audio and visual, she was not a code, only sle			
	sle		Salient Sounds
	English	French	
1	boy	ga:son	
2	Miss	madamoiselle	
3	thank you	merci	
4	incredible		
5	tired	fatigei	
6	Joanna		
7	terrible	teri:bl	
8	telephone	telefeuni:k	
9	concierge		
10	cuisine/food		
11	three	trois	
12	imagine	imazhina	
13	musician		
14	guitar		
15	Christian (man's name)	kristi:on	
16	Fender		
17	hello	salut	
18			minion
19			sa va
20			kum sa
21			kess ke say
22			mei wee

Appendix D Personal journal exemplar

DAY NUMBER	ENTRY NUMBER	JOURNAL ENTRY
1	1	I am about to begin my experiment with learning French from AV media. I'm a bit nervous and a bit daunted by the amount of TV I'm going to watch, but I'm also excited to finally do this. I have been thinking about learning language this way for about 12 years and have been telling my ESL students about it, without having any supportive evidence. I think I'll just get started.
	2	Headphones are uncomfortable after a while, will try earphones. From the listening up to now, once I wanted to copy what I heard, there are also a few expressions that sound like questions but no meanings come to mind when I hear them. They are becoming familiar though. Some of the words have been repeated frequently eg. ploblema, exactemon, people's names. It's all positive reinforcement.
	3	It's 8 at night on my first night and I still have a couple of hours to go. I really don't feel like it. I started too late in the day. Anyway I'll continue.
	4	Makes me think about how to teach LOTE in school. If kids listen to an episode with a lot of cognates and are given the task of writing down words that sound like English, it may be as good as being told the words from a teacher and certainly less boring.
	5	Couldn't watch anymore tv, so decided to listen to an hour of French music to complete my 6 hours

Appendix E Day 3 examples of cell formulas used in Tables 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D

Day 3 examples of cell formulas used in Tables 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D

Column D:	C2 + C3 + C4 = 12 + 15 + 17 = 44 = D4
Column E:	D4 / A4 = 44 / 3 = 15 (rounded) = E4
Column H:	F4 + (G4 / 60) = 352 + (482 / 60) = 360 (rounded) = H4
Column I:	H2 + H3 + H4 = 320 + 400 + 360 = 1080 = I4
Column J:	H4 / 60 = 360 / 60 = 6.0 hours = J4
Column K:	J2 + J3 + J4 = 5.3 + 6.7 + 6.0 = 18.0 (rounded) = K4
Column L:	H4 - 360 = 360 – 360 = 0 = L4
Column M:	L2 + L3 + L4 = -40 + 40 = 0 = M4
Column N:	K4 / A4 = 18.0 / 3 = 6.0 = N4
Column P:	O2 + O3 + O4 = 109 + 83 + 73 = 265 = P4
Column R:	Q2 + Q3 + Q4 = 0 + 0 + 1 = 1 = R4
Column U:	S4 + (T4 / 60) = 33 + (48 / 60) = 34 (rounded) = U4
Column V:	U2 + U3 + U4 = 65 + 110 + 34 = 209 = V4
Column W:	U4 / 60 = 34 / 60 = 0.6 (rounded) = W4
Column X:	W2 + W3 + W4 = 1.1 + 1.8 + 0.6 = 3.5 (rounded) = X4
Column Y:	X4 / A4 = 3.5 / 3 = 1.2 (rounded) = Y4
*Column Z:	Q4 / C4 = 1 / 2 = 0.5 (rounded) = Z4
Column AA:	Q4 / U4 = 1 / 34 = 0.03 (rounded) = AA4
Column AB:	R4 / V4 = 1 / 209 = 0.00 (rounded) = AB4
Column AC:	O4 – Q4 = 73 – 1 = 72 = AC4
Column AD:	AC2 + AC3 + AC4 = 109 + 83 + 72 = 264 = AD4
Column AE:	F4 – S4 = 352 – 33 = 319 = AE4
Column AF:	G4 – T4 = 482 – 48 = 434 = AF4
Column AG:	AE4 + (AF4 / 60) = 319 + (434 / 60) = 326 (rounded) = AG4
Column AH:	AG2 + AG3 + AG4 = 255 + 290 + 326 = 871 = AH4
Column AI:	AG4 / 60 = 326 / 60 = 5.4 (rounded) = AI4
Column AJ:	AI2 + AI3 + AI4 = 4.2 + 4.8 + 5.4 = 14.5 (rounded) = AJ4
Column AK:	AJ4 / A4 = 14.5 / 3 = 4.8 (rounded) = AK4
*Column AL:	AC4 / C4 = 72 / 17 = 4.8 (rounded) = AL4
Column AM:	AC4 / AG4 = 72 / 326 = 0.22 (rounded) = AM4
Column AN:	AD4 / AH4 = 264 / 871 = 0.30 (rounded) = AN4
Column AO:	R4 / P4 * 100 = 1 / 265 * 100 = 0.4 (rounded) = AO4
Column AP:	AD4 / P4 * 100 = 264 / 265 * 100 = 99.6 (rounded) = AP4
Column AQ:	U4 / H4 * 100 = 34 / 360 * 100 = 9 (rounded) = AQ4
Column AR:	AG4 / H4 * 100 = 326 / 360 * 100 = 91 (rounded) = AR4

Column AS: V4 / I4 * 100 = 209 / 1080 * 100 = 19 (rounded) = AS4

Column AT: AH4 / I4 * 100 = 871 / 1080 * 100 = 81 (rounded) = AT4

*The original formulas used in the raw data calculations for Columns Z and AL contained an error. In both formulas, I originally used the total number of daily sessions in the calculations (on Day 3 this value was 17), where instead I should have used the number of radio/music sessions in Column Z (Day 3 = 2) and the number of TV/movie sessions in Column AL (Day 3=15). This has been rectified for all discussions pertaining to these values in the findings chapters and in this appendix.