UNIVERSITÉ DE SHERBROOKE

Faculté d'éducation

Accessible Immersion Metrics (AIM) for Second Language Acquisition: A Constructivist Innovation for the ESL Classroom

Matrice d'immersion accessible (MIA) pour l'acquisition de langue seconde; une innovation constructiviste pour un cour d'anglais langue seconde

By

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Essai présenté à la Faculté d'éducation
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A Constructivist Innovation for the ESL Classroom

Gregory De Luca

a été évalué par un jury composé des personnes suivantes:

Stephen Taylor, Ph.D. Research Supervisor
First name and Last name

John Mc Kay, Ph.D. External Evaluator
First name and Last name

Master`s Paper accepted on:

SUMMARY

This study was designed to validate a constructivist learning framework, herein referred to as Accessible Immersion Metrics (AIM), for second language acquisition (SLA) as well as to compare two delivery methods of the same framework. The AIM framework was originally developed in 2009 and is proposed as a "How to" guide for the application of constructivist learning principles to the second language classroom. Piloted in 2010 at Champlain College St-Lambert, the AIM model allows for language learning to occur, free of a fixed schedule, to be socially constructive through the use of task-based assessments and relevant to the learner's life experience by focusing on the students' needs rather than on course content.

Several questions arose after the initial pilot course, in relation to the efficacy of the AIM framework. The first question involved the simple validation of this learning framework as an effective way to learn a language. The second question involved comparing the use of the AIM framework in an alternative experiential teaching and learning course approach to a more traditional, teacher and content-centered course approach. Third, this study looked at the motivational effect of using the AIM framework in alternative approach versus a more traditional approach. The hypotheses were: 1) The AIM paradigm is a valid way to teach and learn a language, 2) Using the AIM model in conjunction with an alternative learning environment (ALE) will benefit the students more than with a traditional class/course format and 3) students will be more motivated using an alternative methodology.

The study was conducted on two groups of adult students enrolled in a full time, 5-month English Second Language intensive course sponsored by Emploi-Québec and hosted at Champlain College St-Lambert. The AIM model was validated by comparing two approaches to its employment; the "traditional" and the "alternative". Group 1 (n=9), began the first nine weeks of class with a traditional, content-centered approach and finished the last nine weeks of class with an alternative, task-based approach. Group 2 (n=11) began the first nine weeks of class with and alternative, task-based

approach and concluded the last nine weeks of class with a traditional content-centered approach. The instrumentation for both groups consisted of the task-based assessments included in the AIM framework, allowing for the measurement of speed and depth of learning. Motivation was measured using the Situational Motivation Scale (Guay et al, 2000), twice per nine-week session. This study compared the learning outcomes of these two groups as they moved through their courses. Each group experienced both teaching approaches and were evaluated by the same problem-based assessments (AIM), herein referred to as "challenges".

The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) as a control and measure of student development, administered at course start and again at course end, confirmed that the AIM framework is an effective teaching and learning framework in second language acquisition. It was also found that the "alternative" approach had little to no effect on the speed and depth of learning as compared to the "traditional" approach. Furthermore, extracurricular socio-demographic factors had far more powerful effects on student motivation and learning than did the teaching approach.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude a été principalement conçu pour valider un cadre d'apprentissage constructiviste, ci-après dénommé Accessible Immersion Metrics - AIM, pour l'acquisition d'une langue seconde - SLA. Le cadre de l'AIM est proposé comme un mode d'emploi pour l'application des principes constructivistes à l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde. Créé en 2009 par l'auteur, et piloté en 2010 au Collège Champlain St-Lambert, le modèle de l'AIM permet l'apprentissage des langues à se produire, sans horaire fixe et socialement constructive grâce à l'utilisation des évaluations alignées basées sur des tâches pertinentes à l'expérience de vie de l'étudiant en se concentrant sur les besoins des élèves plutôt que sur le contenu des cours.

Plusieurs questions ont été soulevées après le cours pilote initial, par rapport à l'efficacité du cadre de l'AIM. La première question portait sur la validation de ce cadre d'apprentissage comme un moyen efficace pour apprendre une langue. La deuxième question consistait à comparer l'effet de l'environnement de cour, soit expérientiel, ou traditionnel et laquelle serait plus efficace pour l'application du modèle AIM. Troisièmement, cette étude a mesuré l'effet sur la motivation étudiante avec une approche expérientielle par rapport à une approche plus traditionnelle. Les hypothèses proposées sont les suivantes: 1)Le paradigme de l'AIM est un moyen valide d'enseigner ou d'apprendre une langue, 2) en utilisant le modèle de l'AIM en conjonction avec un environnement d'apprentissage alternatif ALE les étudiants bénéficieront plus qu'avec un format traditionnel de cours et 3), les élèves seront plus motivés en utilisant la méthodologie AIM en milieu expérientiel.

L'étude a été menée sur deux groupes d'étudiants adultes inscrits à un cours intensif à temps plein d'anglais langue seconde durant 5 mois, subventionné par Emploi-Québec. Le modèle de l'AIM a été validé en comparant les deux approches de son emploi; soit la "traditionnelle" et le "alterné". Groupe 1 (n = 9), ont commencé les neuf premières semaines de classe avec un contenu axé sur l'approche traditionnelle et ont terminé les neuf dernières semaines de classe avec une approche basée sur une approche alternée ou expérientielle. Groupe 2 (n = 11) ont commencé les neuf premières semaines de classe avec une approche basée sur les tâches alternative et ont conclu avec les neuf dernières semaines de classe avec une approche centrée sur une méthodologie traditionnel. L'instrumentation pour les deux groupes était composée des évaluations basées sur des tâches d'évaluation incluses dans le cadre de l'AIM, permettant la mesure de la vitesse et de la profondeur de l'apprentissage. La motivation a été mesurée en utilisant le SIMS (Guay et al, 2000), deux fois par session. Cette étude a comparé les résultats de l'apprentissage de ces deux groupes. Chaque groupe a connu deux approches d'enseignement et ont été évalués par les mêmes évaluations basée sur AIM, ci-après dénommées les défis.

En utilisant le test d'anglais TOEIC comme contrôle et mesure du développement de l'élève, les résultats ont confirmé que le cadre de l'AIM est une stratégie d'enseignement efficace en acquisition des langues secondes. Il a également été constaté que l'approche alternée a eu peu d'effet sur la vitesse et la profondeur de l'apprentissage par rapport à l'approche traditionnelle. En outre, les facteurs

sociodémographiques parascolaires ont eu des effets beaucoup plus puissants sur la motivation des élèves et de l'apprentissage que l’approche

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, INITIALISMS, AND ACRONYMS

AIM	Accessible Immersion Metrics
CMS	Course Management System
ESL	English as a Second Language
SDT	Self-determination Theory
SIMS	Situational Intrinsic Motivation Scale
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language

INTRODUCTION

How do individuals learn to use a new language and what instructional strategies or study habits lead to pragmatic proficiency? Are the current paradigms of teaching and learning a second language, both in private and public institutions, congruent with contemporary learning theory and furthermore, are they effective? Do they develop authentic language abilities in students, or do students simply develop through applied practice?

The world of second language acquisition (SLA), and specifically in the case of this study, English as a Second Language (ESL), is a treasure trove of both, small and immense, private and public institutions as well as licensing agencies that vary greatly in teaching and learning philosophy, classroom application, pedagogical and institutional structure as well as the needs of their students. While these institutions are engaged in primarily the same enterprise, i.e. the teaching and learning of English, they do not seem to hold to the same beliefs and pedagogical models of "how" English should be learned.

There exists a range of methodologies which depend on the type of institution and the needs of its students. Thus, a Canadian university might administer a written, essay-style language test and offer further academic, second-language writing courses. Alternatively, a foreigner seeking basic communicative ability might approach a community centre and participate in informal discussions in order to develop simple verbal proficiency. At first glance this seems to make sense, but is it not possible that the academic student also needs to develop verbal proficiency, while the hobbyist might stand to benefit from some introduction to academic writing?

Because students themselves may not have the training required to objectively analyze the quality of their learning experience, some of these institutions may be providing a service that may not meet the students' needs adequately. Also, there seems to be a series of assumptions that permeates the world of ESL that may not be true. For example, small classes are assumed to be more effective than large classes. Also,

language proficiency as well as the related courses are often divided into levels ranging from true beginner to advanced. Yet few of these institutions possess or agree on the same rubrics and learning outcomes that define these levels. The prevalence of language institutions engaged in "teaching" illustrates the strong perceived need for language courses. Can the same language not be learned more effectively and deeply by simply engaging in the target language in its natural environment without the need for level segmentation, course outlines and/or formal grammar lectures?

In recent years, constructivist theory has become popular in the design of teaching and learning activities by pedagogues and educational researchers. Its effectiveness has been shown by many studies (Hmelo-Silver, Duncan, Chinn 2007), and suggests that it would suit the learning of a second language quite well. It is interesting to note however, that while many teachers may "know" and "understand" such a philosophy, it may not always be "applied" or used in an educational context. In order to promote a constructivist approach and provide training to teachers and institutions, practical guidelines such as a "model" or "how-to" for constructivism in ESL should precede its actual application.

Specifically, in the realm of second language acquisition (SLA), neither private nor public institutions seem to have caught up with contemporary learning theory and thus have neglected to try new constructivist learning models. While many employ a "student-centered approach", this concept is so intangible to students and many teachers that it may not even be employed, effectively causing fraudulent service. Drawing on John Dewey's (1938) early research and application on active intellectual learning environments in a laboratory setting, a model or active learning environment, with the scaffolding of topics and problem-based assessments is presented herein. Through constructivist theory this study presents a particular model of active learning, hereafter named "AIM" (Accessible Immersion Metrics), attempting to create a problem-based learning environment in ESL that can be used as a "how to" guide for the application of constructivism to English second language acquisition. By comparing learning results from the application of this learning model with results from

regular contemporary English courses, it was possible to validate the AIM model of language learning and show that it is more effective than the current status quo in ESL classrooms.

CHAPTER 1
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to validate a previously constructed language learning framework (AIM) for second language acquisition that provides a "how to" approach for teachers interested in employing constructivism, but unsure of how to go about it. This study validated the AIM framework by comparing it to the typical contemporary ESL classroom in which learning is content-centered. This "how to" approach uses problem-based learning "challenges" and/or learning outcomes which are required to show that language proficiency has been attained by the student. It also seeks to reduce pedagogical assumptions in ESL concerning best practices in teaching, learning, assessment and classroom management by providing a theoretically grounded constructivist framework as well as assessments and strategies that could encompass all types of ESL courses. This comparative intervention drew heavily on constructivist theory and studies in its validation of the AIM model.

The motivation behind this research stemmed from the author's desire to provide a truly effective framework for the learning of a second language and to propose its related methodology. This study evaluated these approaches in order to justify their effectiveness in relation to current teaching and learning trends in ESL and SLA. The strengths and weaknesses of the AIM framework were assessed in relation to existing research on constructivism and problem-based learning as well as a direct comparison of two groups. As previous studies have shown, the results of the application of the AIM model benefited students in terms of their learning. The development of real language proficiency occurred somewhat faster, students displayed increased involvement and active participation in both learning and assessment, but not all students enjoyed learning in a social and authentic language environment.

CHAPTER 2
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In *The Republic* (Cornford, 1945), Plato likens true knowledge to the objective good. Thus, if the development and improvement of teaching and learning leads to better, deeper and more meaningful knowledge, it can be said to be "good". In John Dewey's terms;

> "The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some, experiences are 'mis-educative'. "Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience." (Dewey, p 11, 1938)

Can it be said that certain paradigms of language learning that are currently in use in language learning institutions are "arresting" or "mis-educative"? What are these negative learning experiences and can they be avoided? Alternatively, what is a positive learning experience in SLA and how can it be implemented? Drawing on ideas presented in Vygotsky's "social constructivism" as well as his notion of the "zone of proximal development" and implementing these within a problem-based learning environment that allows students to learn at their own pace, might not an enriching learning experience be produced? By attempting to mirror the implicit demands of learning a second language with aligned assessments can we not mimic the "natural" environment and process of learning a target language? Following Bateman and Taylor's (2009) work in curriculum alignment, can there be a model and procedure to the teaching and learning of a second language that would directly mirror the "natural performance" requirements of native language speakers? By applying Bloom's et al. (1956), taxonomy to performance-based tests or "challenges" of what a successful learner of English is, an aligned assessment framework can be created that mirrors "real" learning of English. That is to say the test not only demonstrates that learning has occurred and language proficiency has been developed, but that in and of itself, the test leads to authentic learning and proficiency.

Furthermore, what are the reactions of students to a new learning methodology? Are they motivated by it or does it frighten them? Do the motivational aspects of this new paradigm promote education or "mis-education"?

There are many teaching strategies that can address these individual demands, yet the more recent notion of "constructivism" encompasses the aforementioned criteria in a neat little package. Specifically, these criteria are; 1) Social and Cognitive Constructivism, the view that learning is a social and cognitive process, are used during the course, 2) student-monitored, authentically motivated and self-regulated learning activities are implemented and 3) learning activities are always student-centered and provide ample opportunities for practice. While criterion 1 implicitly includes criteria 2 and 3, they are separated to denote 1) teacher procedures, 2) student procedures and, 3) environmental procedures.

Appleton and Asoko (1996, p. 167) write, "A teacher who holds a constructivist view of learning might be expected to show the following characteristics in the classroom:

1. A prior awareness of ideas that students bring to the learning situation, and / or attempts to elicit such ideas.
2. Clearly defined conceptual goals for learners and an understanding of how learners might progress towards these.
3. Use of teaching strategies which involve challenge to, or development of, the initial ideas of the learners and ways of making new ideas accessible to them.
4. Provision of opportunities for the learners to utilize new ideas in a range of contexts.
5. Provision of a classroom atmosphere which encourages children (students) to put forth and discuss ideas."

It is very important to note the lack of subject matter in the definition above when attempting to define a constructivist approach to teaching and learning. The idea that the subject content of the course is the focus of student inquiry is valid. However, it would be invalid to state that the subject matter of the course should be the primary focus for the teacher. Rather, pedagogical content knowledge, knowing how and when to teach the subject content takes center stage in any constructivist framework. Briefly, the term "Constructivism" implies precisely that which it states; students are left to their own devices to 'build' their own knowledge, rather than being told what it is. Teachers therefore are the suppliers of building blocks and the moderators who observe student needs and behaviours and design learning activities which will allow their students to meet course objectives and authentic development.

The term 'Social Constructivism' implies a social context in which learners are not isolated from their peers and are encouraged to build knowledge together. This 'togetherness' allows for more evaluation of proposed material and provides students with a broader outlook on course content. The term "Cognitive Constructivism" implies not only knowing what but knowing how. Indeed much of the research presented in this literature review supports not simply ways of knowing course content but what strategies are effective in learning course content and their juxtaposition to what students employ. Thus an emphasis is placed on learning strategies and how to modify them based on the demands of course content.

By reflecting on the definitions above, it becomes clear how the broad category of constructivism can encompass the ideas of; 1) socially and cognitively moderated learning strategies, (teacher procedure), 2) authentic and self-reflective learning allowing for improved motivation, (student procedure) and, 3) The emphasis on accessible and effective practice (environmental procedures), which are not always readily in the teacher`s control such as classroom layout, temperature and institutional regulations.

CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review synthesizes prior studies by presenting them in three different categories. These categories have been selected and defined as the three main facets in creating a constructivist alternative learning environment in SLA or ESL. By collecting information on these ideas, the AIM framework can be created to encompass; 1) the teacher procedure for the alternative learning environment (ALE), 2) the student procedure for the ALE and 3) the environmental procedure for the ALE. Not all of these studies are specific to ESL, yet all are related to teaching and learning. The following studies and reviews examine students at several levels of education (K-12, university, etc.) but are primarily focused on adult learners. Many of the studies present quantitative data, such as the results on assessments, but the majority are concerned with student perception and affect, relying heavily on qualitative data.

3.1Teacher Procedure

The fields of English as a Second Language (ESL), Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) are now being studied through the use of student-centered pedagogies as well as studies performed on the success of English Language Learners (ELL's) and their learning challenges, learning disabilities and the types of environment students find themselves in. It has become increasingly important to address the needs of individual students in the acquisition of language versus the emphasis on course content. Studies show, through an evaluation of student success and learning strategies, that student-centered practice as well as rich and deeply authentic manipulation of the target language through natural communicative practice (speaking, reading, writing, etc.) are necessary ingredients in producing successful learners of a second language.

Perhaps one of the most important findings that has been mirrored by several researchers and articles is that teacher involvement plays an insignificant role in determining the outcome of second language acquisition as well as the level of linguistic learning that occurs in any given course. As Tran (2009, p. 2) points out in his article/literature review, "...certain learners tended to be successful regardless of methods or techniques of teaching; therefore, the importance of individual variation in language learning has been noticed. It seems that in addition to language-teaching methodology, learning strategies can significantly enable learners to achieve a high level of success in learning another language". These results show that student success lies primarily with the student and not with the strategies that individual teachers decide to employ. Rather, the learning strategies that are selected must mirror the preferred student choice or enable individual students to learn within a given framework. As Fan mentions, "...the notion of independent successful learners is closely linked to the increasing importance now attached to the learner-centered approach to language teaching, which is grounded in the assumption that language learners who have greater control of their learning will become more successful than those who do not." (Fan, 2003). Thus it has become increasingly important for researchers in TESL and SLA to focus predominantly on what students "do", their chosen learning strategies, their methods of learning and the processes that are used in learning, in order for teachers to design and select instructional strategies that promote authentic learning. Teachers themselves need not "do" in the classroom, but rather must "do" before and after class.

Thus, teachers should become designers of learning experiences and ensure that these experiences lead to successful attainment of learning objectives. The design in this study relies on ideas presented by Dewey (1938), who coined the term "alternative learning environment", Bloom et al. (1956) for the taxonomy of educational terms as they relate to cognitive dimensions, and a host of others. Specifically, Bateman and Taylor's (2009) look at curriculum alignment provides a nice basis for creating a set of "aligned" learning outcomes. In their study, Bateman and Taylor (2009) focused on departments and their summative assessments. They interviewed teachers and defined their type of assessment by using Bloom's cognitive dimensions. It was found that

teachers within the same disciplines were asking their students to perform quite different tasks, yet hoping to produce the same learning outcome. In some cases, an assessment would only ask students to "remember" declarative knowledge, while others would not only ask that students remember, but also "apply" and "evaluate". By relating a learning assessment task, or student assignment to cognitive dimensions an "ideal" performance-based assessment can be created that is nicely aligned or "tuned" to the demands of learning a particular language ability. Simply put, if a student wants to speak with better syntax, should a paper-and-pencil test be administered, or alternatively, should some new performance-based assessment be created that synthesizes grammar, syntax and speaking? In so doing, not only does this latter assessment test for proficiency, it also provides extra practice to the student.

3.2 Student Procedure

The "teacher procedure" outlined in the previous section provides a detailed strategy to the best practices involved in the "teaching" portion of the teaching and learning equation. But how do students learn a second language best? What are the challenges involved and how can learning be maximized given limited resources and time? In order to answer these questions, several researchers have first turned their attention to the profile of successful students and have attempted to list criteria that are similar with all successful students of a second language. What kind of students are they and what strategies do they employ that allows them to be successful with little or no teacher involvement? Rubin and Thompson (1982, p. 46) were able to isolate and list fourteen criteria that all successful students shared.

1. Good language learners find their own way to learn and take charge of their own learning.
2. They organize information about the language and their own program of study.
3. They are creative and experiment with the language.
4. They create their own opportunities to practice the language.

5. They learn to live with uncertainty
6. They use mnemonics by organizing individual items into patterns and linking things together.
7. They make errors work for them and know how to deal with errors (Don't stop talking for fear of errors).
8. They use their linguistic knowledge and rely on what they know such as their first language or other languages they know.
9. They know how to use context to help them understand the message by guessing and taking risks.
10. They need to learn to make intelligent guesses.
11. They learn expressions and idioms as wholes.
12. They learn ways to keep conversations going.
13. They make use of production techniques such as paraphrasing, using synonyms, and asking for help.
14. They use different styles of speech depending on the formality of the context.

A quick examination of the above list does provide us with a constructivist outlook on SLA. By comparing Windschitl's (2002) definition of constructivism with the above definition of a successful second language student, many similarities are found. First and foremost, there are elements of social and cognitive constructivism in most of the criteria above. Points 1 through 10 all show elements of cognitive processes at work within the student and are completely independent of what occurs in the classroom or what kind of strategies the teacher employs. Points 4, 12 and 14 definitely create a penchant for a meaningful and authentic application of language in social contexts and do hint at self-regulation through the acceptance of errors as learning tools and the modification of speech patterns based on social context. As Tran points out in his literature review, "...good language learners, as those who are active learners, mentor their language production, practice communicating in the target language, make use of prior linguistic knowledge, use various memorization techniques, and ask questions for clarification." (Tran, 2009, p. 9) These findings support a student-

centered constructivist approach to language teaching, and illustrate the notion that teachers are not the necessary factor in whether or not a student develops in any target language. Furthermore, as Dörnyei and Skehan (2003) noted in their study, "...it was not merely a high degree of language aptitude and motivation that led to excellence in language learning of some learners but also the students' creative and active participation in the learning process through the use of individualized learning techniques." (Dornyei & Skehan, 2003, p. 8)

To further elaborate on Rubin and Thompson (1982), their criteria seem to not only include a constructivist outlook, but also imply student motivation to learn. Should student procedures also take into account student motivation? As suggested by Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 58), "Intrinsic motivation has emerged as an important phenomenon for educators—a natural wellspring of learning and achievement that can be systematically catalyzed or undermined by parent and teacher practices because intrinsic motivation results in high-quality learning and creativity, it is especially important to detail the factors and forces that engender versus undermine it." Ryan and Deci's article *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Definitions and New Directions* presents the results of several studies in student motivation and defines their popular "self-determination theory" (SDT). They provide particular tenets such as; "The significance of autonomy versus control for the maintenance of intrinsic motivation has been clearly observed in studies of classroom learning. For example, several studies have shown that autonomy-supportive (in contrast to controlling) teachers catalyze in their students greater intrinsic motivation, curiosity, and the desire for challenge. Students who are overly controlled not only lose initiative but also learn less well, especially when learning is complex or requires conceptual, creative processing" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 59) Thus it is clear that motivation in student learning procedures of ESL must be taken into account. Self-determination theory presents motivation as a grouping of four variables; intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, external regulation, and a-motivation, or the lack thereof.

Brooks and Young (2011) studied the relationship between student motivation and student empowerment, following SDT theory and utilizing Guay et al's (2000) situational motivation scale (SIMS). Results demonstrated that there was a positive relationship between increased intrinsic motivation and a sense of empowerment or self-efficacy and that there was also a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and a-motivation or a lack of self-efficacy. Though significance testing found that the correlation was rather weak, Guay's et al's (2000) instrument proved to be a powerful instrument in measuring student motivation. The SIMS is a 7 point Likert survey that provides a quick and effective means of measuring student motivation across the four categories as identified by Ryan and Deci (2009). The SIMS scale was developed through trial and error, reliance on previous studies conducted on measuring student motivation, and internal validity testing. A close examination of Guay's, et al, (2000) results show strong correlations to other similar models of motivation measurement, and are in line with self-determination theory.

Further support for the use of a constructive paradigm in SLA and specifically ESL, is the study conducted by Tims (2009) on problem-based learning and students' views vis-a-vis their learning. According to the study, PBL may help ESL adult students improve, learn, and/or practice English because it promotes hands-on learning as well as the possibility of integrating the four language skills. PBL was seen as effective by the students. Mirroring Dornyei and Skehan's conclusions; "Students' learning needs should determine the type, length, and focus of the project activity, as well as the degree of active teacher involvement." (Tims, 2009, p. 13)

Thus through this examination of findings, it is reasonable to state that the profile of a successful language learner mirrors criterion 2 set out in the conceptual framework. The student procedure of learning a second language should be highly active, much more than the procedure for the teacher. This seems to greatly diminish the importance of the traditional "input" approach employed by many teachers. In behavioural courses, the subject matter and procedures begin and end with the teacher, leaving very little time and energy for the needs of the students. In such cases, new

terminology, grammar, etc. are introduced to the students in lecture format and students thereafter tackle the newly presented information in individual written exercises and follow through by reading and writing for homework. Little emphasis is put on student questions and cognitive needs as well as the reality that any language evolves from and is used in a social context. In a sense, language can be seen as cognitive expression for a social application. Why then remove the two fundamental aspects of language from its study? It is only intuitive to suggest that language can be best acquired when the learner is actively engaged in attempting to share his/her opinions clearly in a social context. In fact, to support such a claim, Waring's (2009) article takes a look at a traditional approach to instruction, yet adds a small modification to the classroom dynamic in order to allow for student questioning and input. The IRF sequence, Initiation-Response-Feedback, is essentially a lecture that incorporates student responses, making it more active than passive listening. First, the teacher poses a query and asks for student to respond. Then, the teacher examines the responses and provides the "correct" feedback. By simply modifying this dry class structure to incorporate a period of "negotiation", Waring (2009) was able to show better learning results. "The analysis suggests that creating negotiation-rich opportunities is paramount not just during pair and group activities, but more critically, during teacher–whole class interactions." (Waring, p. 1, 2009.) Thus, the teacher begins the same way as usual and introduces a subject to the class and poses a question to which they must respond. Once the responses come back to the teacher, the teacher responds with the correct answer, yet does so by allowing students to ask questions about why their responses may be erroneous as well as to challenge the instructor's explanation of the correct response. In so doing, students develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter by making it relevant to their own predisposition. By simply allowing students to pose questions that are authentically relevant to them, a certain class-wide cognitive examination of the subject matter results. While this is not completely student-centered, it does allow for their participation in class, thus mirroring the tenets of constructivism.

As Gardner (1968) writes in his article on motivation, "The concept of the integrative motive implies that successful second-language acquisition depends upon a willingness (or desire) to be like valued members of the "other" language community. The acquisition of a new language involves more than just the acquisition of a new set of verbal habits. The language student must adopt various features of behaviour which characterize another linguistic community. The new words, grammatical rules, pronunciations, and sounds, have a meaning over and above that which the teacher is trying to present. They are representations of another cultural group and as such the student's orientation toward that group should be expected to influence the extent to which the student can incorporate these verbal habits." (Gardner, 1968, p. 143) This quote provides a very clear definition of the complexity inherent in motivation vis-a-vis learning a second language. As Gardner explains, a language is in fact a socially constructed syntax that allows for deeply meaningful communication within a cultural context. In other words, a language is not only a system of transforming thought into communication, but it is also highly dependent and designed for the specific culture that uses it. Therefore, willingness to emulate this culture is necessary in order to achieve high levels of ability with any second language. Gardner's studies conducted in Montreal yielded interesting results when it came to children who were studying a second language that they passively believed to be unworthy. While it is a commonplace notion in Quebec that English is necessary in business, it is not perhaps openly welcomed by some French speaking Quebec residents. Gardner identifies two forms of motivational attitudes towards learning a second language. *Active* motivation implying the stated reasons for study is what usually leads student to the second language. The necessity to speak English in business pushes many French speaking Quebecers to learn English. Yet, *passive* motivational factors could greatly hinder their enterprise. If a child is raised in a household that looks upon the target language and culture as unfavourable, there exists an inherent aversion to learning. While the student may openly say "I want to learn English", their actual emotional orientation to such an endeavour is less than keen. Thus, in order to ensure success, the idea of authentic learning must come into play. Students must clearly understand their motivation and

develop strategies to modify their passive beliefs. Being honest with themselves and clearly understanding their motivation is not only good constructivism, but it will allow them to properly define or modify their linguistic goals. As the research suggests, it would be near to impossible to acquire native-like fluency in any language while retaining a dislike of the target language's culture. By understanding one's inclination to a particular subject, the beliefs vis-a-vis this language can be modified, or the learning goal can be reduced to allow for language ability without the deep study of culture, yet not fully developing into native-like fluency.

Furthermore and relating to the first part of this literature review, the level at which a student is motivated not only affects how deeply they learn the target language but how many strategies they employ, how effectively they can change their strategies depending on what is called for as well as the increased use of higher-order thinking skills, as Rahimi, et al, (2008) suggest in their review of several studies and articles conducted on the effects of motivation. According to Rahimi, et al, (2008), Oxford and Nyikos (as cited in Rahimi, et al, 2008), who studied the effect of a number of factors affecting strategy use, including motivation, found the latter as the single most important factor influencing strategy use. McIntyre and Noels (as cited in Rahimi, et al, (2008) examined the relationship between language learners and motivational level among undergraduate foreign language learners. They reported that, compared with less motivated learners, "those who were substantially motivated, tended to adopt more learning strategies and used them more frequently." (Rahimi, et al, 2008, p. 35)

Based on the proposed definition of constructivism as well as the profile of students who successfully acquire language, the use of various strategies and knowing how to implement them definitely leads to deeper and more meaningful learning. Thus, if motivation plays an instrumental role in determining to what extent students will modify their strategies and push their cognitive evaluation of the target language then it is imperative that active motivation be fostered in any language course. All of the articles reviewed so far support the criteria set out by this current study. Namely; 1)

teacher procedure should be minimal and 2) student procedure should be deeply active, rich with self-reflection and above all, very motivating.

3.3 Environment

In a study and literature review conducted on distance learning in second language acquisition, Andrade and Bunker (2009, p. 1) mirrored the ideas presented in this literature review, that student-centered, authentic activities that provide opportunities to monitor and regulate one's own learning are essential to learning any new skills in a new language. The flip side of the coin however is the real need for output practice. Specific to distance learning is the lack of opportunity to practice speaking and using the new language, as the following quote suggests: "Second language acquisition theory indicates that not only do learners need comprehensible input but also opportunities for output. Output focuses on production of language, rule testing, and the development of discourse skills. Related to output, learners must have the opportunity to interact in the target language to negotiate meaning, make input more comprehensible, get feedback, and recognize the need to change their language to achieve successful communication."

Every article examined in this literature review places importance on the need of either practice or feedback, thus supporting the idea that language is socially developed and cannot be fully learned in isolation. Furthermore, without practice, students are hindered in terms of negotiating meaning, having opportunities for deep reflection/monitoring and developing new strategies to successfully learn the target language. In other words, practice is paramount in consolidating all other learning strategies. "...to produce meaningful interaction. In addition, an understanding of learning strategies and learner characteristics is critical to closing the gap – the distance between the learner and the teacher, or the learner and other learners. These areas of research encompass sometimes overlapping concepts such as cognition, meta-cognition, motivation, autonomy, and self-regulated learning. (Andrade & Bunker, 2009, p. 3) This supports not only the removal of the teacher from the center of learning,

but placing the environment, cultural and social context of SLA at its center alongside the student.

Furthermore, in Cook's (1998) literature review on several facets of SLA research, he mentions that an important element of any learning design for second language acquisition must include the, "pedagogical consequences of immersion education", (Cook, 1998, p. 217), that is to say, the effects of real, relevant and available practice outlets. Cook mentions that any successful curriculum that aims to develop second language fluency must include real practice as its output; practice that should in effect mirror the target language and culture through real or simulated immersion in that language and culture. As of yet, data on creating an alternative learning environment (ALE) that can simulate the "native" environment of the target language is difficult to come by, possibly because it seems difficult or implausible to provide access to this culture and environment in a classroom setting. By attempting this, however, any language course that attempts to "simulate" native English culture should be more effective than a course completely removed from it. Second language acquisition has been shown to be a learner-centered enterprise that prompts instructors to develop and design learning activities that allow for maximum student input and flexibility of approaches. While it must be a deeply cognitive enterprise, it is highly social and dependent on the comprehension and approaches of others. It of course follows that without much practice, authentic target skills cannot be developed to any high degree.

3.4 Research Questions

Can a 'How To' model be created for the application of social constructivist ideas to the ESL classroom? Can it then be validated in comparison to more traditional approaches and perhaps be shown more effective? Following Dewey's ideas on alternative learning environments and the numerous studies in problem-based learning, it was possible to create a paradigm of the teaching and learning of ESL / SLA that

synthesizes constructivism, social learning, problem-based learning and motivational needs analysis into a practical and defined set of learning outcomes, relevant assessments, learning activities and/or didactic materials. It can provide interested teachers with a set of procedures for the design of the SLA learning environment. This framework was tested for efficacy and emotive affect in language learning and compared to the same variables in a traditional SLA classroom.

This study validated an innovation, herein named AIM, and tested its general effectiveness in relation to the included task-based assessments. Furthermore, the AIM framework used within an alternative experiential learning environment (ALE) was compared to a traditional teacher or content-centered course using the AIM framework only in the form of assessments, in order to determine whether an alternative approach compounds or confounds the benefits of the AIM approach. This new framework provides an alternative learning environment for students of ESL. It is meant as a guide to teachers working in such a field and can be employed for any ESL audience. Further research or development in this regard is encouraged, as the AIM model may need further refinement and results may vary based on student demographics. The comparison of the alternative versus the traditional approach was tested through an empirical comparison of two groups of adult ESL students. Both groups experienced both approaches. The first group participated in the traditional model for the first nine weeks of the course and thereafter in the alternative for the final nine weeks. Group 2 experienced their first nine weeks in the alternative format, and finished with the traditional. In order to validate the alternative model and compare it to the traditional, three main questions were addressed.

1. Can students learn faster with the ALE + AIM approach?
2. Can students develop greater cognitive depth with the ALE + AIM approach?
3. Can students learn with more enjoyment and/or motivation with the ALE + AIM approach?

The null and alternative hypotheses were stated as;

Ho: The ALE + AIM approach causes no beneficial effect on speed and/or depth and/or motivation in SLA.

Ha: The ALE + AIM approach does cause a beneficial effect on speed and/or depth and/or motivation in SLA

CHAPTER 4
DESCRIPTION OF THE AIM METHODOLOGY

In the autumn of 2010, the Forum Language Club at Champlain College St-Lambert's continuing education department in Quebec, Canada, was founded with this objective in mind: to create and provide an alternative learning environment that would develop a defined application of constructivism, enable learning through this paradigm and evaluate its effectiveness in relation to established and traditional methods. The Forum Language Club employed the AIM system in its teaching and learning activities, as a pilot study in order to determine student opinion and efficacy of this problem-based assessment paradigm. This alternative learning environment (ALE) was designed, developed and delivered to a total of 49 adult students. An "aligned" assessment framework providing these "accessible immersion metrics" was used to define learning outcomes and related "tests", also known as "challenges". These were defined and designed to be concrete "performances" or "proficiency tests". Students were given AIM sheets (see methodology), which grouped a hundred and sixty (160) aligned proficiency tests in a visual histogram-style table. Students were given access to the "challenge book" which provided a page or two on each "challenge" breaking the performance down into a set of procedures as well as providing its related grading rubric. Students arrived at the club when they wanted and stayed as long as they wanted. The initial data obtained during this first pilot of the Forum Language Club concept is not the subject of this study, but did provide an encouraging basis to perform a deeper study of the effectiveness of this ALE in comparison to the current trend in both small and large language schools.

The innovation under study has been named AIM, an acronym meant to reflect the type of environment, albeit artificial, in which most language learning naturally occurs. This model attempts to simulate the natural language learning environment within the artificial confines of a course/classroom. The term "Accessible" is meant to illustrate how this model provides easy access to language

learning, creating a course free of a fixed schedule and allowing for student preference in time and type of study. “Immersion” refers to the numerous English speaking instructors/volunteers who are on-site, ready to help/interact with learners, thus simulating a real English environment. Finally, the term “metrics” illustrates how each individual learner has a detailed profile of their current and desired language ability as well as a whole set of metrics designed to keep tabs on everything from language pragmatics to motivational affect. The AIM innovation is presented below in more detail.

4.1 Accessible Environment

There are several facets to the term “accessible”. The first is simply a temporal consideration, of when “in-class” learning begins and when it ends. In typical ESL course structures, class begins at a set time and ends at a set time. This varies from school to school, but generally courses have fixed schedules. In this case, the course did not have a start and end time, but rather opening hours. The groups in this study were required to be in class for a minimum of five hours per day due to the patron agency’s demands. In the traditional portion of the course, class started at 9:00 AM and ended at 3:00 PM with a 1-hour lunch break. In the “AIM” portion of the course, the environment opened at 8:30 AM and closed at 4:00 PM. Students arrived at any time and left at any time, but were asked to complete a minimum of 5 hours of in-class time per day. This time requirement is due to the hosting agency’s (Emploi-Québec) demand that students be in class five hours per day. It is possible that flexibility in schedule during the AIM portion could be extended into the evening, given available resources. In such a case, the AIM environment could be open until 9:00 PM. A sign-in and sign-out sheet was used to assure that students in the study completed a minimum of 5 hours of in-class time. The physical environment of the “classroom” attempted to provide access to various types of learning activities in order to meet all aspects of language learning. Image 1 illustrates this below.

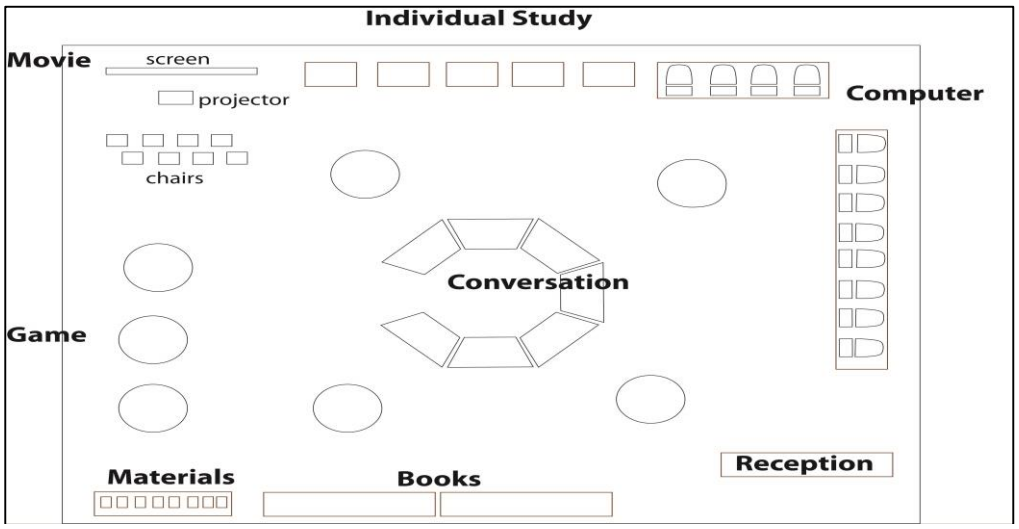


Figure 1 The Alternative Learning Environment

The goal is to allow students flexibility in choice of activity in order to meet their personal language learning goals. One student may arrive and choose to join the conversation in progress at the conversation table, while another may choose to sit at a computer terminal and work on a written assignment, etc. It is important that the student's profile sheet be consulted by the student and teacher prior to selecting an activity. While this is occurring, the teacher patrols the room, monitors, observes and offers assistance to students when necessary. Accessibility is met through flexible timing, choice of assignment and personalized learning outcomes.

4.2 Immersion

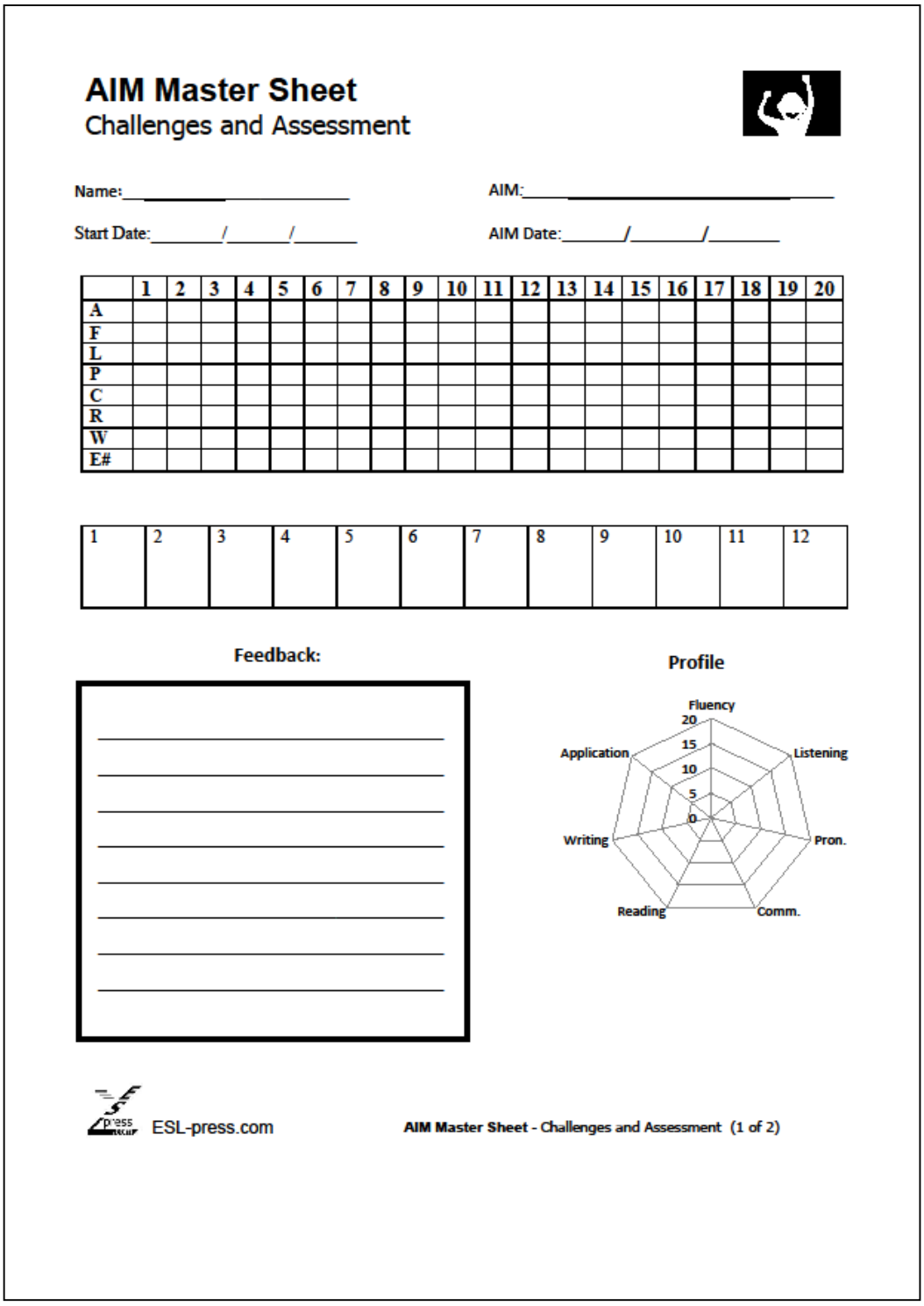
While this portion of the AIM framework was not directly tested during the study, for both financial and statistical reasons, the following may still hold true. Considering Dewey's (1938) ideas on learning through experience, it becomes clear that students must engage in the target language as much and as often as possible. While this is done in regular courses, students are often forced to practice with other language learners. This social learning can be beneficial, yet practicing with non-native speakers may not be ideal due to numerous factors such as incorrect pronunciation and general lack of declarative knowledge on the students' parts. It becomes quite clear that in order

to simulate an English culture and environment within the classroom, more than one native–English speaker should be present. Thus, it is possible to hire native English speakers, who are not necessarily English language teachers and enlist them to act as "trainers" within the classroom. While not as qualified as certified ESL instructors, they are nonetheless capable of engaging in English discussion without error, transmitting and explaining cultural expressions, vocabulary and idioms. These trainers receive a 5-hour training course prior to working in the learning environment. Their training course consists of a crash course in English grammar and syntax, as well as some basic procedures for effective "teaching" within the AIM ALE. In the case of this study, several factors forced the researcher to never have another trainer in class. These factors were a small population size of participants and the financial demands of running the convenience sample at Champlain College St-Lambert. However, several trainers were employed during the 2010 pilot program and were well received by students. A brief version of trainer training minutes/tasks is presented below

.

1. To engage in conversation with students
2. To promote and maintain an English environment
3. To assist, participate in and direct student learning based on AIM profile sheets
4. To assess and evaluate both the starting level and learning goals of students
5. To fill out student AIM profile sheets with all required information
6. To prepare the learning environment with all necessary didactic materials and peripherals
7. To link learning outcomes "challenges" to exercises in textbooks, online, etc.
8. To provide formative feedback to students
9. To observe and intervene in student motivational problems
10. To evaluate the successful completion of "challenges"
11. To clean the environment upon closing time and ensure all materials and AIM sheets are well-stored

4.3 Metrics: The AIM profile and The Challenge Book



AIM Master Sheet
Challenges and Assessment

Name:_____ AIM:_____

Start Date:_____/_____/_____ AIM Date:_____/_____/_____

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
A																				
F																				
L																				
P																				
C																				
R																				
W																				
E#																				

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Feedback:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Profile

ESL-press.com

AIM Master Sheet - Challenges and Assessment (1 of 2)

Figure 2 AIM Sheet

The AIM sheet, presented above, consists of two pages, printed double-sided. When a new student enters the learning environment, a trainer greets him or her and proceeds to run a short interview in order to fill out the AIM sheet with relevant information. Below is a description of every element on the Aim sheet.

Section 1: The "AIM" slot refers to a general learning outcome that would symbolize the conclusion of learning. This is quickly denoted as a type of challenge and its associated level, e.g. W18. If the student meets the requirements for the "Writing level 18" challenge, then they have accomplished their learning goals. In this particular case, the student has identified that their main learning goal is to attain advanced proficiency in English writing. The "Start date" is simply the first day of attendance and the AIM date is simply the projected date that the AIM, in this case W18, will be accomplished.

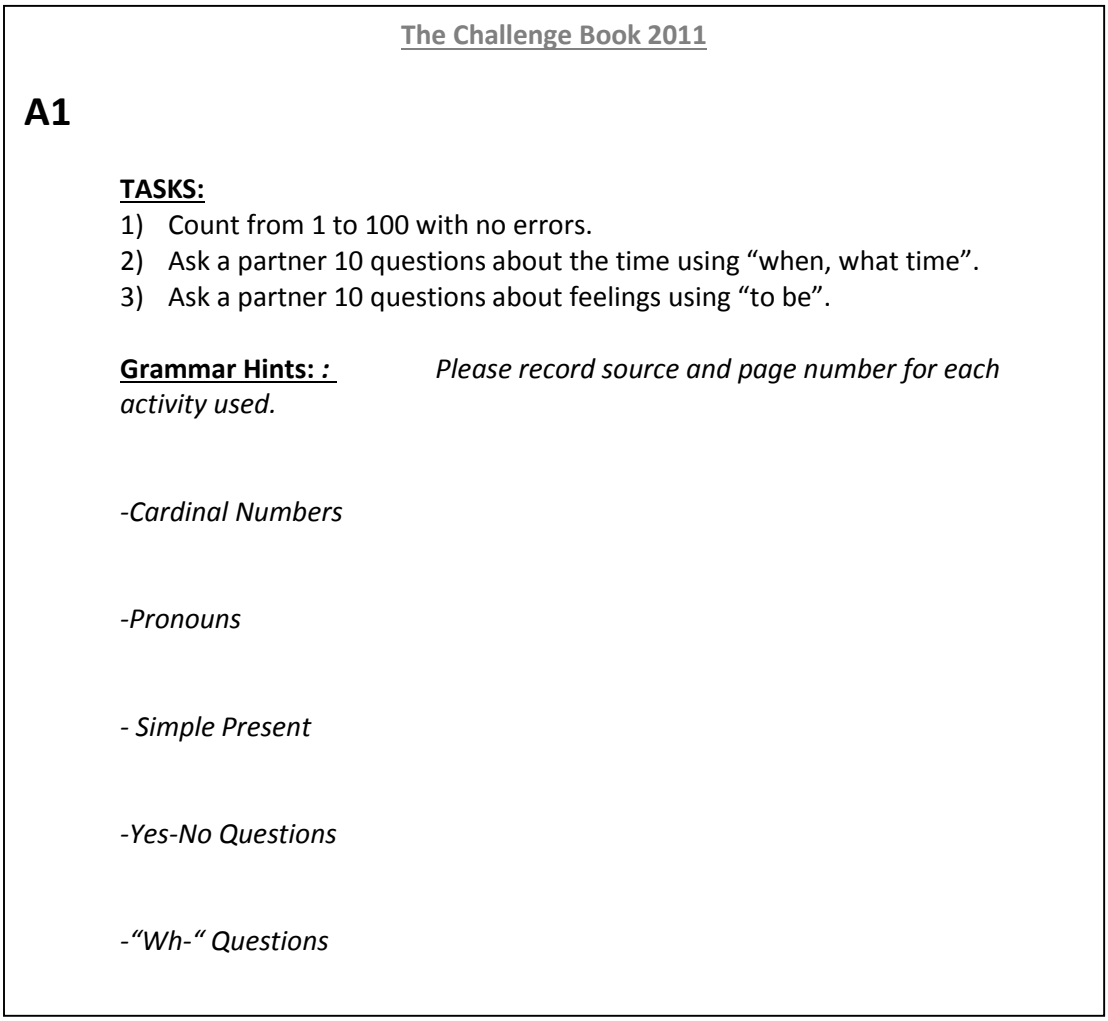
Section 2: The challenge grid is a visual collection of all the possible performance based assessments, herein named "challenges" that a student can attempt to accomplish. Based on the *Test of English for International Communication* (TOEIC) is the concept that 3000 hours of study are needed to become fluent in English. The grid presents eight category types, spread over 20 levels. The goal here is to target all facets of learning a language and scaffold the difficulty of challenges. The learning of English has been divided into 7 applicable skill categories and 1 exit test category. The categories are defined on page 2 of the Challenge sheet, but briefly are: 1) Oral application, 2) Fluency in application 3) Applied listening, 4) Pronunciation, 5) Communication, 6) Reading and 7) Writing. These seven areas of language ability have been divided into twenty levels of difficulty; level 1 being very beginner and level 20 being near-native. There is also an eighth category named "Exit test" which is a formative paper-and-pencil grammar test. Below the challenge grid are the stamp cases. These are used to record students' membership payments. When a student is interested in learning in this ALE, they pay a flat monthly membership fee. This is recorded by simply stamping the number of months the student has paid for, starting with the recorded starting date. For the sake of this study, student membership was paid by the host agency, Emploi-Québec.

Section 3: The feedback box and profile diagram serve as a "notes" section for both the student and trainer. When a student signs up for the AIM learning environment, their starting ability is assessed through a short interview. Trainers sit and chat with the new student for a few minutes, using questions that increase in difficulty and are pre-designed to align to the challenges presented in the challenge grid. Once complete, the trainer provides a somewhat subjective assessment of the 7 categories of English learning by drawing in the relative strengths into the profile diagram. This diagram visually displays the student's strengths and weaknesses. The trainer crosses out and initials all challenges in the challenge grid above that are too easy for the student, thus providing a starting level. Note that a student may begin at a level 8 reading and level 2 application simultaneously. This would mean that the student's reading skills are far more developed than their ability to apply grammar and theory in oral form. This enables trainers to suggest types of learning activities that directly target the student's weaknesses. The feedback box allows for quick notes and communication between students, trainers, teachers and administration. Notes such as, "student wishes only to improve academic writing", or, "student has difficulty reading due to vision problems," etc. would be found in this box. Trainers must be polite in what they write, yet it is important to ensure that regardless of which trainers and teachers are present on any given day of class, that all employees are aware of important facts about the student.

Section 4: Page 2 of the AIM sheet is completed once the trainer has finished the interview. The student records important registration information while completing a short, low-level grammar quiz. Performance on this quiz also enables teachers and trainers to determine starting level. It also gives trainers a few minutes to set up the new student with their first learning activity. Below the short quiz is a brief definition of the challenge categories.

4.4 The Challenge Book

The following images are excerpts taken out of "The Challenge Book". Figure 3 shows the tasks associated with challenge "A1" or "Application level 1". Figure 4 shows the associated grading rubric, which has been aligned to Bloom's et al. (1956) cognitive dimensions. Below the grading rubric is a series of motivational questions used to interview students and to help them develop meta-cognitive learning awareness.



The Challenge Book 2011

A1

TASKS:

1) Count from 1 to 100 with no errors.
2) Ask a partner 10 questions about the time using "when, what time".
3) Ask a partner 10 questions about feelings using "to be".

Grammar Hints: *:* *Please record source and page number for each activity used.*

-Cardinal Numbers

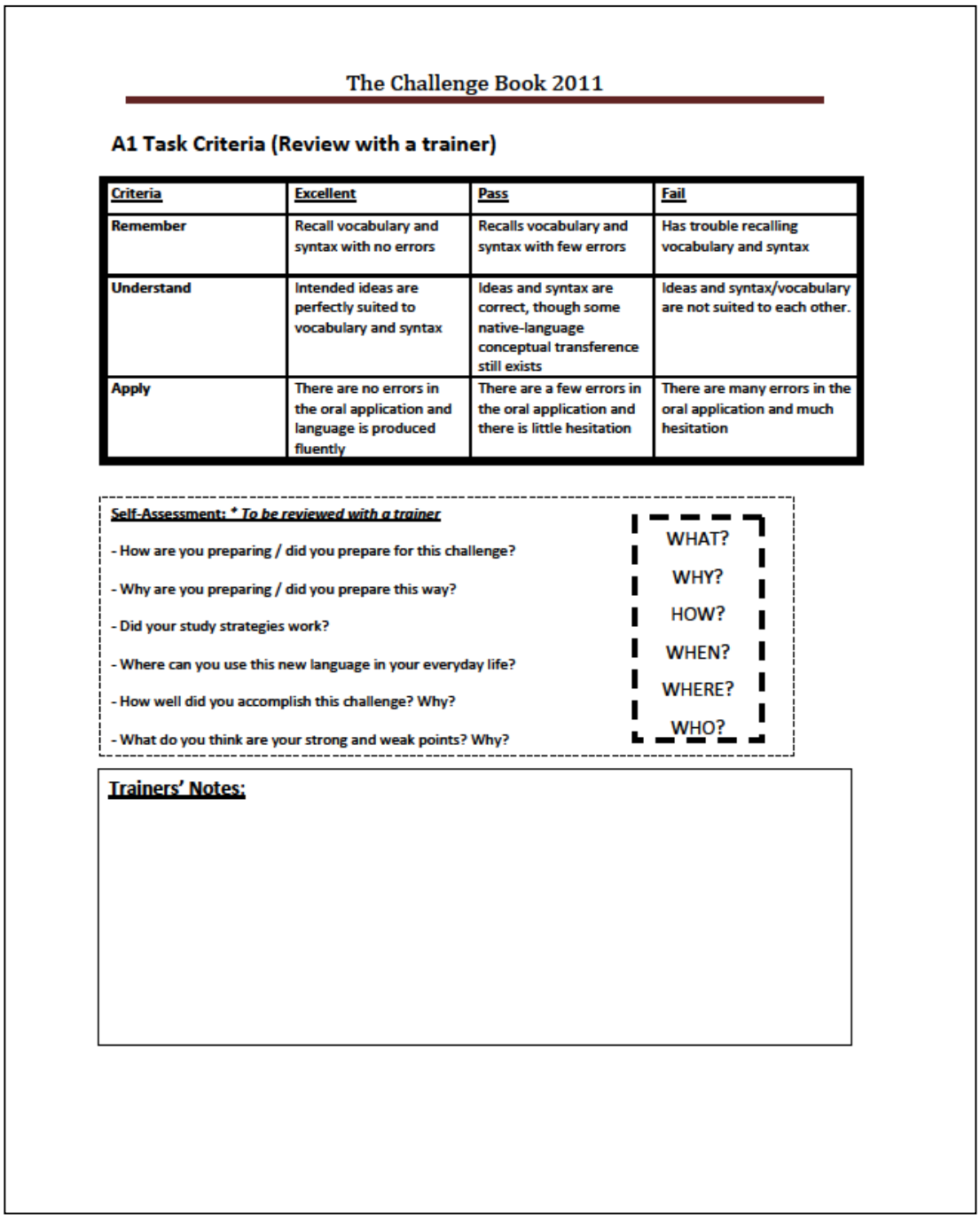
-Pronouns

- Simple Present

-Yes-No Questions

-"Wh-" Questions

Figure 3 The Challenge Book Task A1



The Challenge Book 2011

A1 Task Criteria (Review with a trainer)

Criteria	Excellent	Pass	Fail
Remember	Recall vocabulary and syntax with no errors	Recalls vocabulary and syntax with few errors	Has trouble recalling vocabulary and syntax
Understand	Intended ideas are perfectly suited to vocabulary and syntax	Ideas and syntax are correct, though some native-language conceptual transference still exists	Ideas and syntax/vocabulary are not suited to each other.
Apply	There are no errors in the oral application and language is produced fluently	There are a few errors in the oral application and there is little hesitation	There are many errors in the oral application and much hesitation

Self-Assessment: ***To be reviewed with a trainer***

- How are you preparing / did you prepare for this challenge?
- Why are you preparing / did you prepare this way?
- Did your study strategies work?
- Where can you use this new language in your everyday life?
- How well did you accomplish this challenge? Why?
- What do you think are your strong and weak points? Why?

WHAT?
WHY?
HOW?
WHEN?
WHERE?
WHO?

Trainers' Notes:

Figure 4 A1 – Rubric and Motivational Assessment

Following the challenge grid presented on the AIM sheet, the challenge book provides all the necessary details that students need to be successful in accomplishing challenges. The challenge book is available in physical and digital formats within the ALE and online through a CMS such as Moodle. When attempting to accomplish a challenge, students use the challenge book to get a clear idea of what is asked of them and how they are graded. The images above are excerpts from the challenge book. They show challenge A1 and has been chosen at random. The entire challenge book cannot be presented in this paper as it is approximately 320 pages.

Each challenge is listed by its type and level. The first image above shows the A1 challenge (Application level 1). Below the header is the particular challenge or problem that students must accomplish. In this case, there are three problems listed under "tasks". Below these, the students and trainers find the associated content knowledge required to complete the challenge. Here, trainers are encouraged to write in references to materials, websites, books, worksheets, etc. These can help students study for the challenge. A trainer might simply pen in "Oxford Practice Grammar, Eastwood 2000, p. 11," under the heading for "cardinal numbers". If the students is at first unsuccessful in completing the challenge, further study is suggested by the trainer and students can access any activity that has been listed. If no activities are listed, it is the trainer's job to locate and assign a learning activity to the student, after which they must record its location for future use.

The second page of challenge A1 presents a grading rubric written in simple language for the students and trainers to understand. Each challenge has been aligned with Bloom's levels of cognition in order to identify which cognitive processes are at work. In the case of A1, there are three cognitive dimensions; Remember, Understand and Apply. These dimensions are given only three grades; excellent, pass and fail. If a student meets the definition of the "excellent", no further study is required. If the student receives a "pass", they can move on to more difficult challenges, but review and/or reinforcement are recommended. If a student receives a "fail" grade in at least one cognitive dimension, the challenge is not successful and the trainer does not initial

the challenge grid. The student has not met the challenge and must try again at a later date, after having practiced more.

Below the grading rubric is a set of questions designed to promote meta-cognition on the student's part. Trainers engage in a short informal discussion with students upon passing or failing a challenge and quickly assess the student's learning strategies, motivation, feelings, etc. The questions presented on the sheet are only meant as a guide to this discussion and are not all necessary. Trainers provide feedback and suggestions on how to better study and meet learning goals. Below these questions lies a box for trainer and teacher comments. Trainers and teachers are asked to constantly evaluate the challenges, their relevance to learning and whether they are properly aligned to cognitive levels. Trainers may write simple notes here, such as: "this challenge is too easy because…", or "the cognitive levels are not properly aligned because…" This allows for teachers and administration to make edits to the current framework and improve it over time.

CHAPTER 5
TEST METHODOLOGY AND INSTRUMENTATION

The three research questions entail a look at three dependent variables; namely 1) speed of learning, 2) depth of learning and 3) motivation to learn. The definition of these variables is presented below, along with their instrumentation. The type of classroom approach to applying the AIM framework entails two independent variables; namely 1) the "traditional" approach to classroom instruction and 2) the alternative learning environment (ALE) approach.

5.1 Dependent Variable 1: Speed of learning

The speed of learning was measured by how many bonus problem-based assessment challenges students were able to complete in any given nine-week period. When using the AIM framework, the data for speed was collected by counting how many successful bonus challenges students were able to complete above and beyond the mandatory challenges required of the course. The rate at which they attempted these bonus challenges was at their discretion and students could attempt each challenge as often as they liked. The rationale here was that students who worked, studied and practiced more would develop more quickly over the course's time frame.

During the traditional portion, challenges were presented as summative assessments every three weeks. The mandatory assessments were the same as those used during the alternative portion but grouped together and given on the same day to all students. Whereas a student could attempt challenge A1 whenever she liked during the alternative portion, during the traditional she had to complete A1, A2, and A3 together and at the same time as other students. However, the bonus challenges that students could complete for extra points on their final grades were completed at their discretion and as often as they liked. The grammar tests however were identical in both alternative and traditional portions, except that students in the alternative portion were allowed a retry. Students in the traditional portion were not allowed to retry either

mandatory or bonus challenges as well as grammar tests, as their grade on each was considered final.

5.2 Dependent Variable 2: Depth of Learning

Using Bateman and Taylor's (2009) work on curriculum alignment, the variable for depth was measured by using Bloom's cognitive dimensions. As is described above, each challenge in the AIM framework has clear defined tasks that students must complete to be successful. These tasks have been aligned to cognitive levels and do not necessarily include all of Bloom`s cognitive dimensions. Each challenge is aligned to relevant cognitive dimensions and excludes the most irrelevant. The challenge below is of the category type A, which stands for the application of grammar to conversation. This challenge has thus been aligned to three of Bloom`s cognitive dimensions, namely: remember, understand and apply. The challenge requires students to remember conjugation and syntax, understand their meaning and use and apply this knowledge to the psychomotor skill of speaking. There is little to no analysis and evaluation of this knowledge and the synthesis required is minimal at best. Challenge A1 for example is defined as:

1. Count from 1 to 100 with no errors.
2. Ask a partner 10 questions about the time using when and what time.
3. Ask a partner 10 questions about feelings using the verb be.

Table 1
Grading Rubric with Cognitive Depth

Criteria	Excellent	Pass	Fail
Remember	Recall vocabulary and syntax with no errors	Recalls vocabulary and syntax with few errors	Has trouble recalling vocabulary and syntax
Understand	Intended ideas are perfectly suited to vocabulary and syntax	Ideas and syntax are correct, though some native-language conceptual transference still exists	Ideas and syntax/vocabulary are not suited to each other.
Apply	There are no errors in the oral application and language is produced fluently	There are a few errors in the oral application and there is little hesitation	There are many errors in the oral application and much hesitation

In table 1 above, Bloom's (1956) cognitive dimensions are listed on the left. Each dimension then has a definition for three types of grade; excellent, pass and fail. When a student attempted to complete a challenge, they were evaluated on three cognitive dimensions in this particular case. As Bloom (1956) suggests, "apply" is at a deeper cognitive level than "remember". Thus, if a student can "apply" the above challenge, they have reached its maximum depth. During the traditional and alternative portions of the course, "depth" was measured by assigning a grade point to the three degrees of competence, namely; Excellent = 1, Pass = 2, Fail = 3. Thereafter an average score for the criteria test was assigned and a final mark for the challenge was recorded.

5.3 Dependent Variable 3: Motivation

The last portion of data collection, "motivation", relied on the SIMS (The Situational Motivation Scale) survey developed by Guay et al, (2000). Because this 7-

point Likert scale questionnaire has already been tested for validity, it was simple to put into use. Minor modifications and explanations were made to the questions to be more relevant to language learning and/or easier for second-language students to understand. While it may not be extensive or absolute, it provided a quick and cost-effective way to easily gather motivational data concerning the students and their learning. Motivation was measured in both learning approaches (traditional versus AIM+ALE) with a SIMS survey administered every three weeks as well as by observation and interview notes collected after consulting with students about their performance on challenges. For the sake of simplifying and clarifying results obtained, only intrinsic motivation and a-motivation were analyzed. Identified regulation and external regulation were omitted as they were deemed of less interest. In the case of the SIMS, the concept of regulation entails authority, whether on the student's part or of an external authority who imposes the course on the student. Of interest in this study were the intrinsic and extrinsic effect on students rather than the source of authority and discipline. Intrinsic motivation refers to the student's innate desire to learn a new language without considering external motivators like work or money. A-motivation, a term less widely used, is simply the opposite, a lack of intrinsic motivation. The two types of questions serve to validate each other. The SIMS survey is shown in appendix A.

5.4 Independent Variables

The independent variable in this study was the type of class, i.e. ALE + AIM vs. AIM + traditional. While the AIM + ALE model is very concrete and provides a specific approach, the traditional + AIM class is a bit vague as many teachers may opt to teach in a slightly different way. There is no definition of a standardized "traditional" course, so one is necessary for the sake of this study. As the AIM + ALE framework seeks to provide 3 types of procedures for its application, 1) a teacher procedure, 2) a student procedure and 3) an environmental procedure, the "traditional" is also defined in such a way.

The “traditional” course approach would broadly be defined by these three criteria:

1. The teacher delivers course content in manageable “chunks”. The teacher follows course timing and the course syllabus. The focus is on content and delivering it to students. Assessments are usually pencil and paper and rarely ask students to apply language orally. Assessments verify whether or not the “chunks” have been “understood”.
2. The students passively record course content and manipulate it during exercises or homework. The focus is on acquiring course content and is divided by subject. Students prepare themselves for the assessment by practicing grammar exercises. There is some group work and discussion, but it is focused on the content.
3. The environment is a classroom, with set hours. Students must arrive at a particular time and leave at the designated time. Students usually sit with their attention directed towards the board and often record what the teacher delivers. Peripherals; such as a projector or television may be used, but often by the teacher and not the students.

The “AIM + ALE” course approach would broadly be defined by the same three criteria:

1. The teacher prepares and presents “problems” or in this case “challenges” to the students. Course content is learned through direct manipulation of content and solving of the presented problems. The focus is on acquiring the skills to “solve” the problem. The teacher is free to observe students during the ALE and to coach them through the problems as needed. In so doing, the teacher records issues with the course, the students, the content and uses this data to modify their next learning session, or intervenes when needed. Assessments are performance based and are “aligned” to the course learning outcomes. The teacher presents students with the grading rubric and procedure for each test, well before its actual completion.

2. The student actively engages in solving problems and in so doing covers content and develops ability. The focus is on developing real concrete language abilities by attempting and practicing them. Knowledge is constructed socially as students help each other work through the problems and refer to the teacher for advice. Students prepare for assessments by reviewing the relevant grading rubrics and "solving" the presented problems. Each assessment is an aligned language challenge.
3. The environment is a free workshop. Students can arrive any time during operating hours and leave anytime. Didactic materials, books, films, computers, games, etc., are provided along with a list of challenges, "the challenge book". The focus is on concrete performances, so the room provides all the necessary tools to the students. There is often more than one teacher available for student queries, often in the form of native-English volunteers. Students use the social environment to aid them in meeting the criteria of each "challenge". If students adequately complete all of the challenges, they can be said to be fluent in English.

5.5 Test Methodology

The sample for this study consisted of a convenience sample, drawn from two specific groups of adult learners involved in a specific government-funded course. The course in question is hosted at Champlain College St-Lambert through the continuing education department and is funded by Emploi-Quebec, a government organization which has as its mandate to help unemployed adults find work. The course is a full-time intensive which usually runs from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, five days a week for a total of 450 hours of in-class learning and approximately 50 – 100 hours of homework. The English training program in question is divided into two main sessions (beginner and intermediate) and usually takes a traditional approach. Two separate groups of 16 students were available in the 2013-2014 academic year and ran for 18 weeks each. Both groups employed both the AIM + ALE and AIM + traditional approaches, yet group 1 began with the traditional and group 2 began with AIM + ALE. Frameworks

changed at the nine-week mid-term. It may be possible to replicate this study with other groups and organizations, as they become available. The teacher responsible for teaching both groups and in both approaches is the author of this study. It must be noted that the teacher did not prompt students or encourage them to complete more challneges during any portion of the course. Extra trainers were not present during the AIM + ALE portions of the courses.

5.6 Participants

Though both groups began with a total of 16 participants, a few students did not sign their consent forms, thus reducing the sample size. Due to the nature of the course as a training program designed to help unemployed adults find work, some students left the course before its completion. This also reduced the eligible sample size. Eventually, group 1 was left with a total of nine eligible (n=9) participants and group 2 with a total of eleven, (n=11). Thus, the total sample size for this study came in at twenty, (n=20).

5.7 Procedure

In order to accurately measure the first two dependent variables across both groups (speed and depth), the same assessments, i.e. “the challenge book” was used. In such a way, speed and depth of learning could be more easily compared. So as to maintain a traditional approach, the “challenge book” was presented as a standardized test at the end of each three-week period during the traditional portion of the course, with no prior notice of the criteria or grading rubric. While remained problem-based for both groups, the traditional group did not have a choice in selecting which challenges to accomplish, nor were they necessarily aware of how they were graded. The grading rubrics however remained the same so as to measure test performance equally between groups.

In order to control for confounding variables, the teacher for all groups and sessions did not change. On the first day of class, each group was informed of the study and its purpose. Informed consent was acquired before the course and study could begin.

Table 2
Course Procedure

	Session 1 (beginner)	**Session 2 (Intermediate**
Group 1	-AIM + Traditional -Tests every three weeks levels 1 – 8 for speed and depth -SIMS every three weeks -Fixed schedule 9:00-15:00 -TOEIC 1 (course start)	-AIM + ALE -Open Testing levels 9 - 15 for speed and depth -SIMS every three weeks -Flexible schedule 8:30 – 16:00 5 hours min. -TOEIC 2 (course end)
Group 2	- AIM + ALE - Open Testing levels 1 – 8 for speed and depth - SIMS every three weeks - Flexible schedule 8:30 – 16:00, 5 hours min. -TOEIC 1	- AIM + Traditional - Test every three weeks levels 9 – 15 for speed and depth -SIMS every three weeks -Fixed schedule 9:00-15:00 - TOEIC 2

The course and sessions proceeded in the fashion detailed in table 2. At sessions' end, data collected on student profiles concerning the number of completed challenges, the relative depth attained on them and feedback from the SIMS survey and interviews were recorded. Upon the study's completion, the data was compiled and results analysed.

A previous pilot study on the AIM approach was informally conducted in 2010 with a total of 49 adult students. The main purpose then was to gather basic feedback

on the experience and effect on students of the AIM framework. A brief open-ended questionnaire was given to students after they had participated for at least a month, in order to collect some data on their perceptions of the AIM approach. The responses have not been coded nor analyzed in depth, but did provide some encouraging results concerning motivation and depth of learning.

5.8 Ethical Considerations

As the participants in this study were a convenience sample of only two groups which were both quite specific in terms of demographics, i.e. "unemployed adults", the data and results produced by this study may not be indicative of the larger population of ESL students. The results show support for the AIM framework, yet further study using random assignment of participants is suggested.

Also, because both groups started and finished with different approaches, there may have been a difference in how the approaches were perceived. For example, those beginning with the AIM framework might not have wanted to revert to a traditional approach in their second session, therefore immediately creating a negative motivational affect that would otherwise not exist. Alternatively, those beginning with the traditional format were more advanced when starting with the AIM and may have been more capable of dealing with the structural nuances of the framework due to previously acquired declarative and pragmatic knowledge.

A third point of note lies with the researcher also being the author of the AIM framework as well as the teacher of both groups. There seems to have been a mild conflict of interest between the goal of the study and the learning goal of the group. In order to validate the AIM framework, the teacher might have brought some form of bias and "looked for" merit when engaged in the ALE. In order to avoid this, the consent forms were given out and collected by a third party. Participating students were then assigned a number, unknown to the teacher/researcher. The teacher proceeded with the course, not knowing which students were participants and which

were not. Upon completion of the courses, results were sent to the third-party compiler who then organized the data by student number and not by name. Thereafter, the researcher received the data coded by number, in order to keep the students anonymous and avoid any student favouritism during the course.

Permission to conduct this study at Champlain College was received by the hosting agency and the Continuing Education department. The ethics committee was notified of the study upon acceptance of the initial research proposal and approval was given shortly after. The ethical consent form as well as the Board of Ethics approval letter can be found in appendix A.

CHAPTER 6
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Data for the current study was analyzed in several ways. The table below lists the type of variable being analyzed along with its type of compilation and analysis. The number of completed bonus challenges in any given session was recorded to provide a total amount for the group and session. Depth of learning was recorded as the associated grade on prescribed challenges and data for motivation was collected using the SIMS survey twice per session.

Table 3
Analytics

Dependent Variable	**Compilation**	**Analytics**
Speed of Learning	• Mean of completed bonus "challenges"	• Total of completion per session.
Depth of Learning	• Frequency of cognitive depth for "challenges" • Standard grammar test • TOEIC (validation of AIM and control) • Final course grade	• Mode of cognitive depth • Mean grades on standard grammar tests and final
Motivation	• SIMS results • Number of hours absent from class	• Frequency and mode of responses. • Mean hours absent

6.1 Speed of Learning

Above and beyond the required mandatory challenges and grammar tests, students were given the opportunity to complete bonus assessments taken directly from the challenge book. These extra challenges gave each student a 1% bonus on their final course grade. These bonus grades were submitted to the host educational institution

upon course completion, but they were not added to the final course grade herein measured. Their frequency was compiled and divided by the number of participants per group in order to show a mean completion rate per individual, per session and approach.

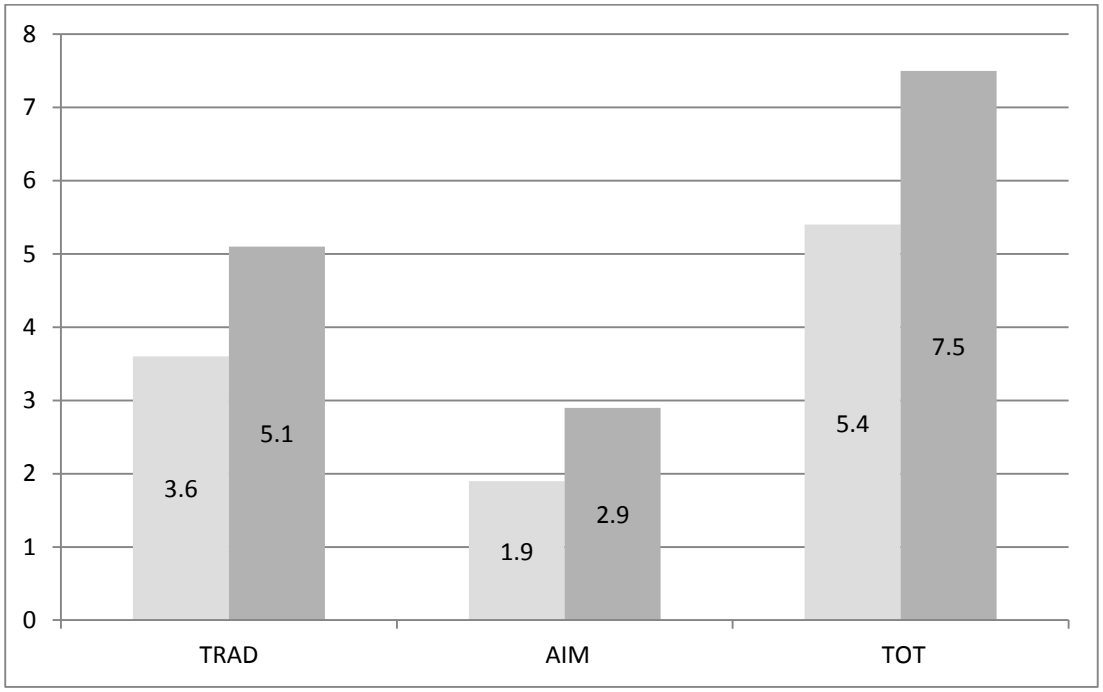


Figure 5 Mean number of bonus challenges completed per session

Readily apparent in figure 5, is the higher number of bonus assessments completed during the traditional portions of both groups. This would suggest that the traditional approach produces a faster speed of learning. Also apparent however is the performance of group 2, consistently performing better than group 1 and completing almost double the number of bonus challenges during the entirety of the course. It is possible that a bleed-over effect from the first session carried on into the second, possibly explaining the vastly superior total mean for group 2. In other words, students in group 2 began with the AIM + ALE approach, completing an average of 2.9 bonuses per student, thereafter increasing this in session 2 to 5.1. It is quite possible and was observed that students continued doing as they did in their first session. This is further discussed below.

6.2 Depth of Learning

The depth of learning for each group and portion is shown on the tables below. Three different readings were recorded for depth. They were a) mandatory application challenges, b) standardized grammar test scores and c) final course grade.

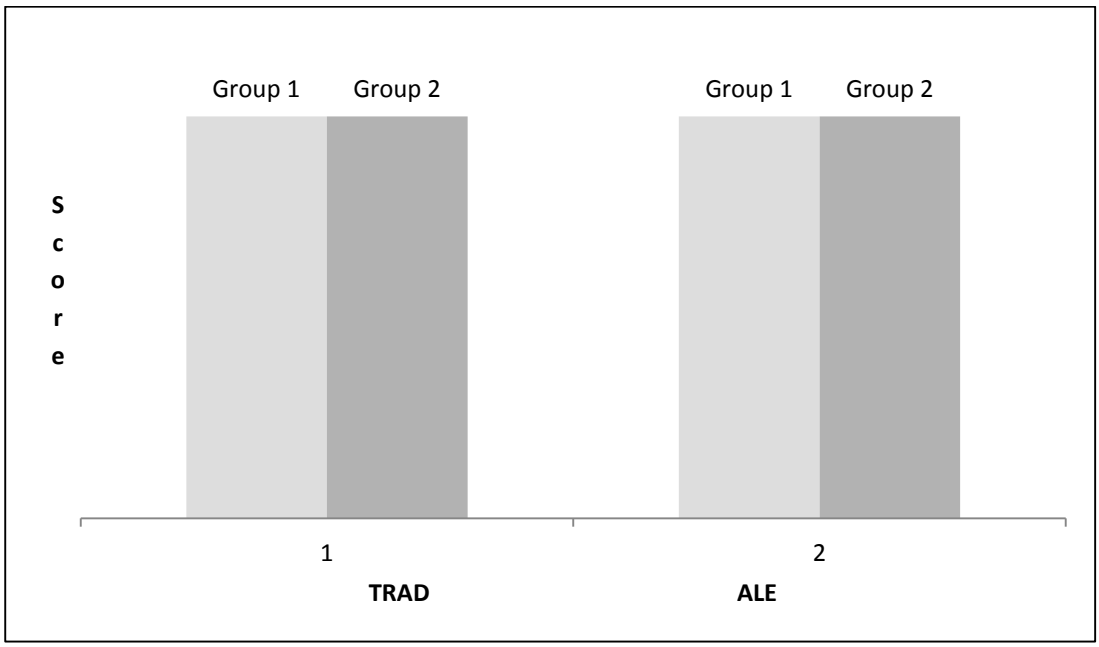


Figure 6 Mode score per session and group on mandatory application challenges.

As shown in figure 6 above, the mode per group, for achievement on depth of learning on application challenges resulted in a unanimous 1, or excellent. Individual student scores varied somewhat, but in general, no effect was seen. This result was the same, regardless of approach, session or challenge. There was therefore no effect on final challenge scores in relation to course approach. Nor did the ability to repeat challenges during the AIM + ALE framework produce an effect on challenge scores. At first glance, no effect was observed. However, the instrumentation in this case was deemed insufficient as only three different results were possible. While two students were both given excellent grades, their performances were not at the same cognitive depth. Yet, no other score could possibly be given. Thus, the three possible outcomes

were insufficient in measuring differences between student performances. Further study with a wider range of possible scores may yield different results.

Table 4
Average Scores on Standardized Grammar Tests

	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Total Average
Gr. 1 – Trad.	71.2	64.8	64.2	66.7
Gr. 1 - ALE	77.1	79.8	64.6	73.8
Gr. 2 – Trad.	84.4	89.6	75.1	83.0
Gr. 2 - ALE	87.8	84.4	79.8	84.0

The table above presents the results of the standard, paper-and–pencil, grammar tests, administered in both portions of the course.

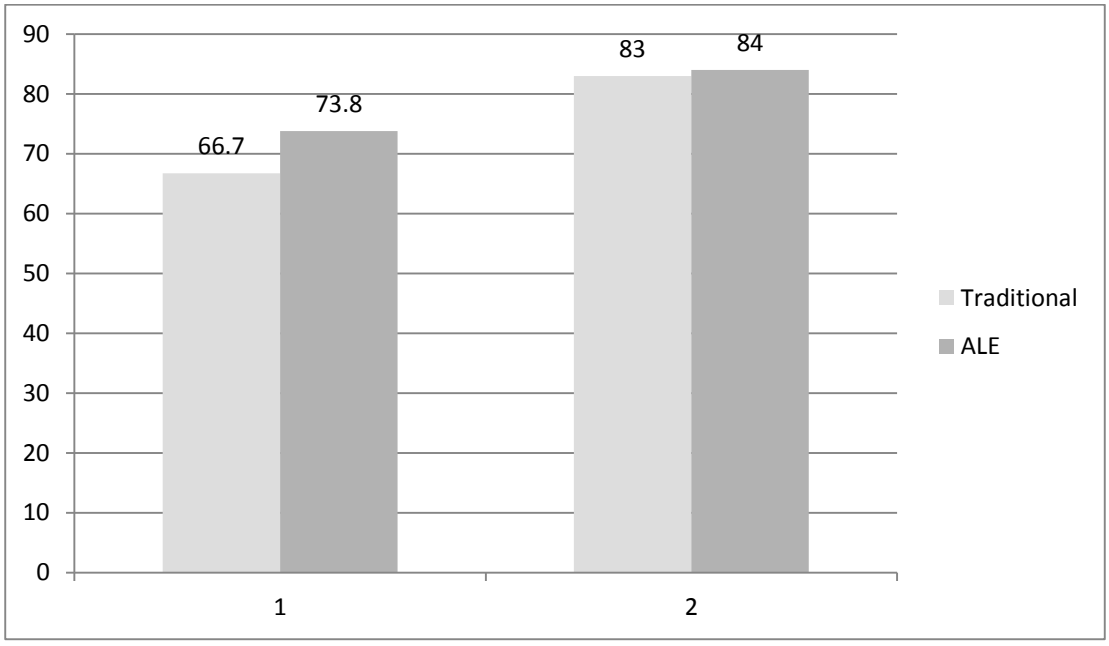


Figure 7 Total average on standardized grammar tests by group

The tables above clearly show that results vary primarily based on group. Regardless of approach, Group 2 produced results superior to group 1. Interestingly,

scores for both groups were higher in the ALE portion than in the traditional. Though it must be noted that grammar tests 4-6 contained subject matter that can be considered more difficult than the material included in grammar tests 1-3 the ALE portions still registered as superior to the traditional.

6.3 Test of English for International Communication

The TOEIC score was recorded as a control and validation for the AIM framework. The latter allowed the comparison of group starting and exit levels, also allowing the researcher to assess the groups' overall level in English as a means to control the interpretation of findings. TOEIC test scores can vary between 0 and 999, the former meaning absolutely no proficiency with the English language and the latter meaning native-like fluency.

Table 5
Group 1 Initial and Final TOEIC scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control Initial	9	325	695	473.3	109.6
Control Final	8	495	880	664.4	128.2

Table 6
Group 2 Initial and Final TOEIC scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control Initial	11	365	520	446.8	52.6
Control Final	11	680	775	735.0	31.6

The preceding tables present the results obtained from the sample TOEIC tests administered at the beginning and end of each group. It must be noted that group 2 was more successful in developing their English language abilities from the point of view of the TOEIC. Group 1 increased their TOEIC score by 191.1 points on average, while group 2 managed to post an increase of 288.2.

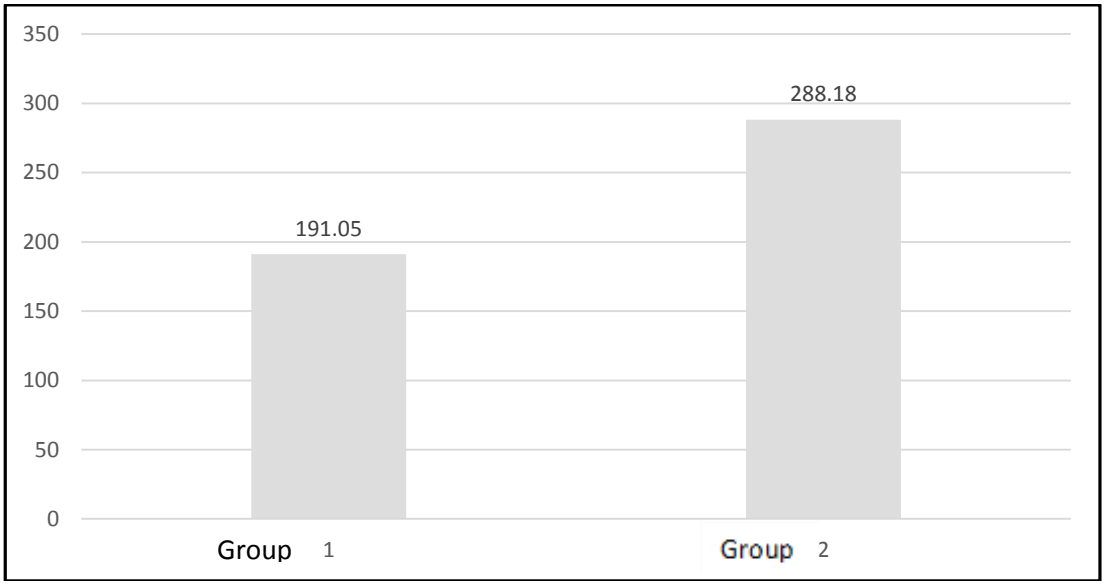


Figure 8 TOEIC Score Improvement per group

When looking at final course results for both groups, the same observation as was made by the TOEIC scores is seen. Group 2 achieved far more throughout their course. The tables below present the average final score (final course grades) for both groups.

Table 7
Group 1 Final Grades

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Final Score TRAD	9	41	58	99	80.8	13.2
Final Score ALE	9	35	64	99	84.2	10.5

Table 8
Group 2 Final Grades

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Final Score ALE	11	11	89	100	95.9	4.3
Final Score TRAD	11	18	81	99	90.7	6.3

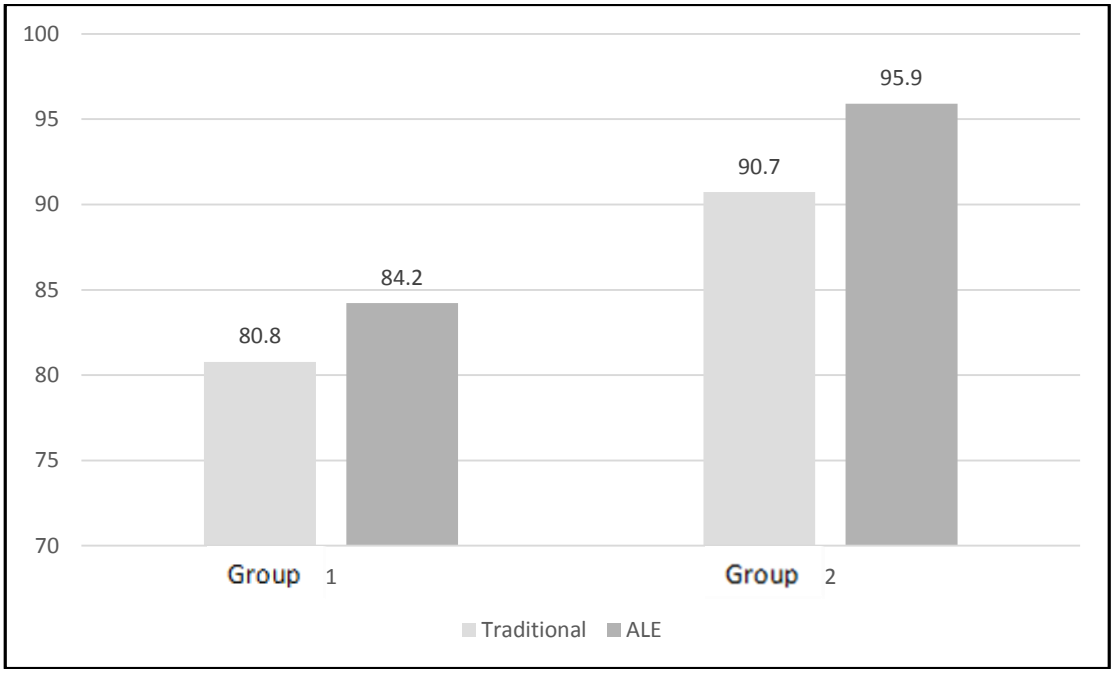


Figure 9 Final grades per group and approach

Figure 9 above shows the grades per group and approach. Both groups scored considerably higher during the AIM+ALE portions.

6.4 Motivation

Results obtained from the SIMS (Guay, et al, 2000) survey were interesting. The coded responses were grouped by type. Of particular interest in this study were the concepts of intrinsic motivation versus a-motivation, or lack thereof. The tables below present the mean result obtained from the 7-point Likert scale survey. The results show that intrinsic motivation for both groups was higher in the ALE portion of the course. However, a-motivation also increased for group 1 in the ALE portion. This curious result is most likely due to extraneous circumstances and not course approach. By the second 9-week session, many of the students actively seek out employment and begin to miss a considerable amount of class time. Their motivation and effort shifts towards other life demands.

Table 9
SIMS Results

	Gr. 1 Trad.	Gr. 1 ALE.	Gr. 2 Trad.	Gr. 2 ALE.
IMOT 1	6.5	6.4	5.8	6.4
IMOT 2	5.6	6.1	5.6	6.2
IMOT 3	5.6	5.7	5.7	6.1
IMOT 4	5.5	6.2	6.0	5.8
Total Avg	5.8	6.1	5.8	6.1
AMOT 1	1.8	2.3	2.8	2.5
AMOT 2	1.7	2.3	2.7	2.6
AMOT 3	1.6	2.0	2.2	2.3
AMOT 4	1.9	2.3	2.7	2.7
Total Avg	1.7	1.7	2.6	2.5

Table 9 above shows the results for the codified responses to select questions from the SIMS (Guay, et al, 2000) survey. Each survey contained four codified questions for intrinsic motivation, denoted above as IMOT and four codified questions for a-motivation denoted as AMOT. The total average response from all participants and surveys is shown as a function of course approach.

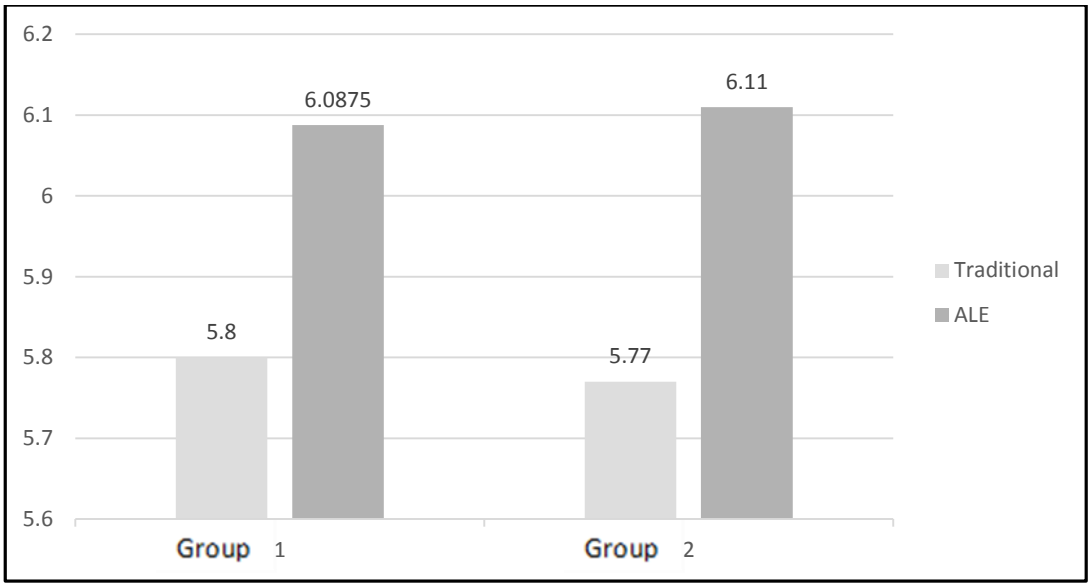


Figure 10 Intrinsic Motivation

The graph above is a graphical representation of the average response for intrinsic motivation.

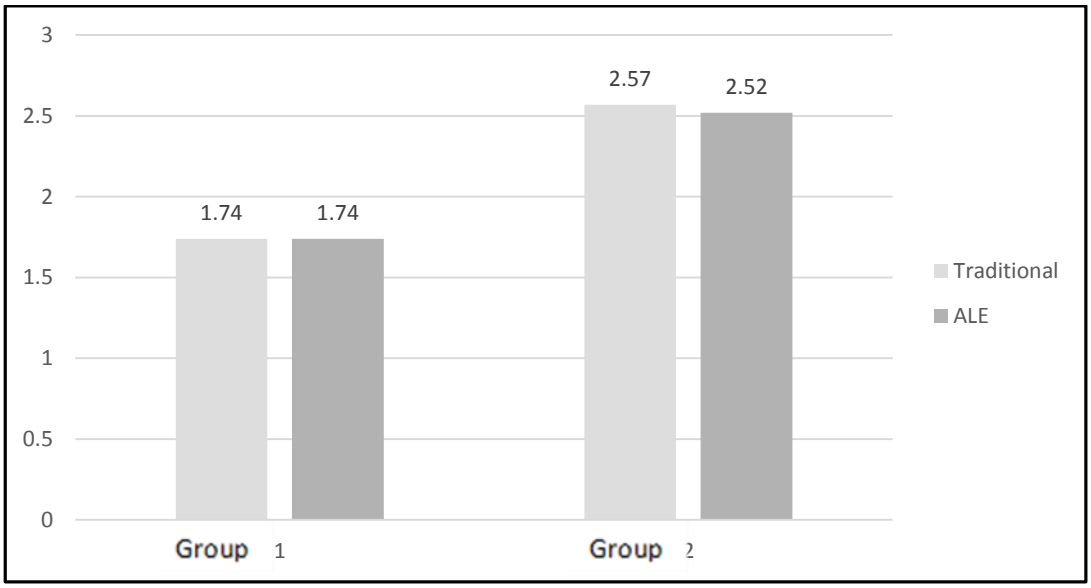


Figure 11 A-motivation

The graph above is a graphical representation of the average response for the results obtained for a-motivation.

6.5 Absences and Schedule

Data obtained for hours of class time missed mirror some of the results presented in the previous sections. According to the results, student absence increases with time and is not dependent on course approach. However, student absence was recorded to be the greatest in the ALE sections. It is possible that a flexible course schedule would increase the amount of class absence, but this cannot be directly shown from the results obtained.

Table 10
Class Hours Absent

	November	December	January	February
Group 1	51.8 Trad.	77.3 Trad	163.0 ALE	124.5 ALE
Group 2	87.3 ALE	121.3 ALE	161.5 Trad.	118.0 (Trad.

The table above and figure below present the total hours of class time missed per group and approach/section.

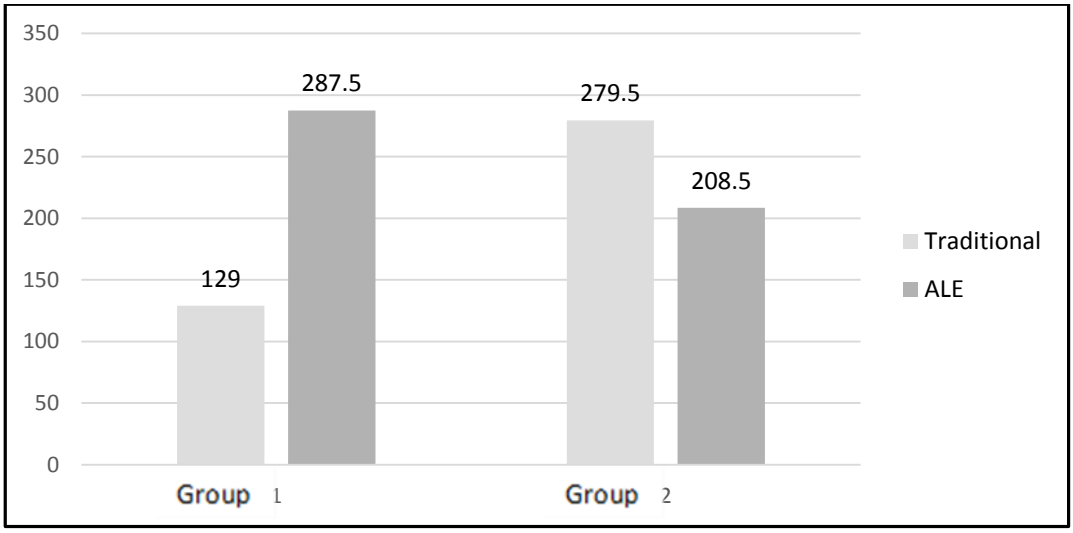


Figure 12 Hours absent per approach and group

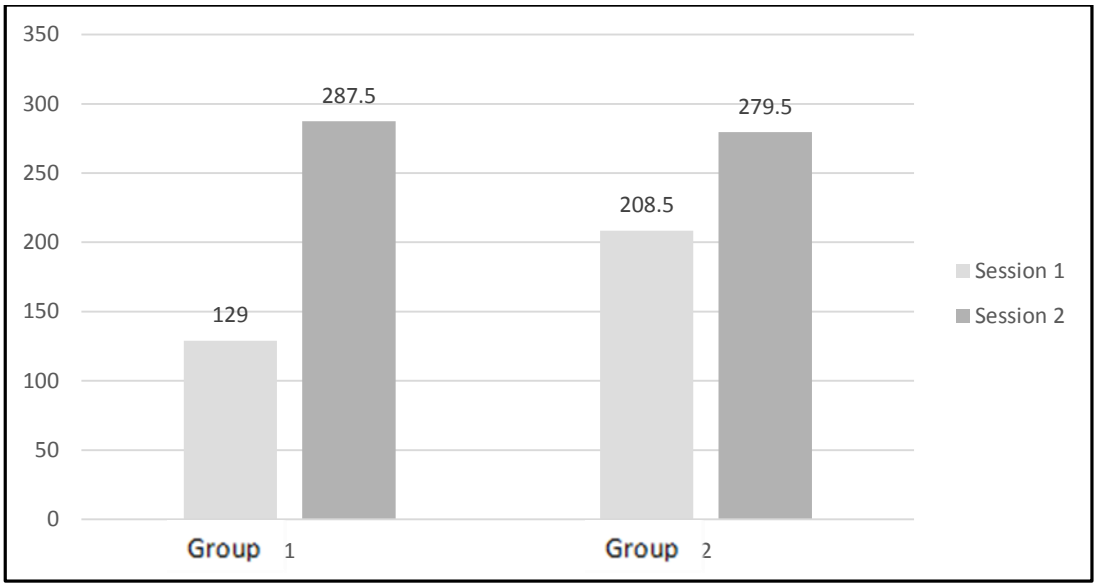


Figure 13 Hours missed over time and group

As figure 13 shows, class absence seems to occur more as a function of time rather than any other variable.

CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION

The results detailed above successfully measured the effect and affect of two different learning approaches within an intensive, five-month ESL course. The measurements taken deal mostly with grades and performance in learning a second language. Somewhat ignored during the study were the extraneous socio-demographic factors that are known to have a dramatic effect on the ability to learn and attend class. The data presented above do not include any interviews or observations made during the courses under study. However, many informal interviews and observations took place and are fresh in the researcher's mind. While they have been omitted from the results, they are nevertheless incorporated within this discussion so as to shed more light on the results and possible explanations for them. The researcher of this study is also the primary teacher of the course herein studied and at the time of data collection had already taught over thirty groups in the eight years prior. Thus, while not presented above, the researcher's personal experience with the course in question is vast and should be considered within this discussion.

Of great import is the general effect of the study itself on the students and conversely, the students' effect on the study. The simple act of reading and signing a consent form caused some consternation right from the first day of class for both groups. Some students expressed resistance or worry about being the subjects of a study for numerous reasons. The reasons are manifold and cannot all be listed herein, however the most salient are presented below.

First, the students involved in this ESL intensive are all unemployed, many with financial obligations and families to support. The course itself is offered by the Québec agency for employment, Emploi-Québec, and is intended to provide students with a functional level of English in order to re-enter the workforce. Students are asked to avoid seeking out work and attending job interviews in the first nine-week session of the course so as to develop their English before they start actively looking for employment. Thus, when asked why the students have registered for the course, the

most popular response is always in order to find a job and rarely about interest in the English language. For many students, the motivation to follow such an intensive is simply related to finding employment. Thus, if the teacher is also conducting experimental research, it is possible that this new experimental approach be viewed as ineffective and thus would not help the student develop their English and thereafter find work. This view was expressed by a few students who were worried about not learning anything during the experimental ALE portions and thus potentially wasting their time all while needing to find work.

Second, the data presented above shows stronger effects related to time rather than course approach. This is absolutely normal as many students do find work before the end of the course. Considering that this is their motivation to take the course in the first place, it is no surprise that absences and lower participation would be the result in the second nine-week portion as students begin attending interviews, finding work and dropping the course entirely when they realize they are not and never were motivated to learn English. This is why the original group sizes of n=16 were reduced as students began leaving in later portions.

Third, the students registered in these courses range in educational level from high-school dropouts to medical professionals with PhD's. The students also begin at varying levels of English, some having close to none and others beginning the course with near native fluency. These factors confound the data even more as it becomes very challenging to teach both the dropout and the PhD within the same course approach and framework.

The observations listed above are also incorporated into the discussion of each variable under study. Each variable is discussed below in its own section and synthesizes the study's results as well as the researcher's observations.

7.1 Speed of Learning

While figure 1 clearly shows the traditional portion of the course as being the fastest in terms of succeeding on problem-based tasks, it is possible that this result had

little to do with course approach and more to do with student and group type. Furthermore, there is the potential for the effect of the first session to carry over into the second.

Readily apparent is the large difference between groups. By looking at the total number of completed bonus challenges, group 2 almost doubled the amount of successful problem-based tasks. Why is this so? Was group 2 simply more talented and motivated? By looking at the measurements for motivation, it was found that both groups had almost equivalent levels of intrinsic motivation and a-motivation or lack thereof. Thus, motivation must be ruled out as a possible explanation in this case as they were almost equal with no significant difference. It is possible that student type and preference in learning had an effect on the number of bonuses completed, but this was not measured directly and would be very difficult to account for as student typology can become an onerous task of measuring many factors such as personal finances, ethnicity, age, etc.

A more probable explanation stems from the structure of the experiment itself. In order to more accurately measure the effect of using the AIM framework within both an ALE and a traditional course, group 1 began with a traditional approach in their first nine-week session and finished with an alternative approach in their second nine-week session. However, group 2 began with the alternative, then finishing with the traditional. While not explicitly recorded herein, it was observed by the researcher that students tended to carry over habits from the previous session. Because group 1 began traditionally, they were more likely to maintain a traditional learning mindset into the second session. In fact, group 1 expressed a lot of anxiety upon commencing the ALE and were worried about its implications as being something new and experimental. Group 2, alternatively, was asked to begin with an alternative approach, which quickly became the de facto procedure throughout the course and persisted as a learning approach deep into the second traditional session. Students in group 2 also expressed consternation, but in an opposite sense, worried about returning to a traditional structure wherein they would be forced to follow a stricter schedule and would be unable to learn at their own pace. While this is only a possible explanation for the data

and would have to be further studied, informal observation points to the lasting effect of beginning with the ALE as a normal way to go about learning.

7.2 Depth of Learning

The primary observation to draw from the measurement and results of this variable has to do with the challenges and their rubrics. As presented in section four, the AIM challenges rely on a scale of three possible results. The score of 1 is equal to an excellent, 2 is a pass and 3 a failure. This rating system was inadequate in identifying differences between students who had both scored excellent, yet in which one student was clearly stronger. Thus, the null hypothesis seems to hold true for the measurement of depth only in so far as the challenges themselves, but should be studied further using a rating system with a wider range of results, i.e. a 7-point rating system as opposed to a 3-point. By doing so, the first student would have received a score of 1 (being very excellent) and the second student would have received a score of 2 (being simply excellent). In such a way, a difference might have been drawn. Due to the large amount of course grades attached to these mandatory challenges, most students completed them with a high level of proficiency. The differences in their performances were not recorded however.

However, when looking at the standardized grammar tests which were on a scale of 0 to 100 percent, bigger differences can be seen. In this case, the alternative hypothesis holds true. Students in all groups scored higher on the pencil-and-paper grammar tests during the alternative portions and lower during the traditional. It is assumed that this is due to the flexible and personalized nature of the ALE, heavy in practice, light on teacher presentation, with a deep focus on the students' weaknesses. The greater amount of practice in and out of class, coupled with the bonus challenges and the possibility to study what is needed rather than what the teacher is presenting seem to have permitted students to improve when they otherwise would not have. The alternative portions allowed the more advanced students to practice language function outside their abilities and the purview of the course while low level students had the

time to review material as often as needed until it was mastered before moving on to another subject. In the traditional portions, this was not possible as all students studied the same subject at the same time and at the same pace.

7.3 Test of English for International Communication

This standardized test of English proficiency has been in use for decades and is one of the most popular assessments determining fluency in English for the workplace. Regardless of approach, session, student typology or learning methodology, both groups were able to improve their TOEIC scores during the course. Ignoring the alternative and traditional approaches for the moment, the AIM framework must be valid as it was used during the entire course and not simply during the ALE portion. Thus, by following the AIM framework for assessment and learning tasks, learning ESL pragmatics and becoming for fluent English can be achieved using AIM.

The large difference between groups on TOEIC scores can be accounted for by how both groups began. Similar to the speed of learning, group 2 which began with the ALE portion, seemed to carry this over into their traditional portion as well, continuing bonus assignments and learning more deeply than group 1. While student talent, ability and motivation also play a factor, the good habits developed in the first session may have allowed group 2 to develop more than group 1, the latter having become accustomed to a traditional approach in session 1. More research on this would have to be undertaken with many groups as opposed to just two. By doing so, this bleed-over effect could be better measured and reported on.

7.4 Motivation

It can be stated that the AIM approach produced more enjoyment in learning, or at least a greater desire to learn. Results obtained for intrinsic motivation show that the change in motivation seems to have been affected by course approach rather than a function of time. Thus, combining an ALE with the AIM framework can lead to

increased motivation and likely the depth of learning as well. Larger studies would have to be conducted with a satisfactory number of participants to further validate this seeming correlation.

Interestingly, a-motivation seems to increase more as a function of time rather than course approach. Probable reasons include the type of demographic under study. It is important to note that this study was conducted on a limited number of participants all sharing the common traits of being unemployed, between twenty and sixty years of age, with varying levels of financial obligations, income and family co-dependents. It is not uncommon for students to drop midway through the course in need of employment, often selecting less than desirable job opportunities due to financial stress. Similarly, more studies conducted on a wider range of participants may yield further results.

7.5 Absences and Schedule

The data clearly show that absence increases over time for most probably the same reasons as motivation detailed in section 7.4. Interestingly, results obtained in relation to course approach show an increase in absence during the AIM portion of each group. This may be explained by the extracurricular demands placed on the adult students, who may view the flexible schedule as an opportunity to accomplish other tasks outside of class before committing to learning. It was observed that on several occasions, some students opted to go to a food bank during the lunch hour, hoping to be away for no more than an hour, but finally spending over two hours outside of class. For others, the flexible schedule may have been viewed as less strict, permitting students to be more absent without reproach. In some particular cases, some students were encouraged by the schedule and opted to stay late in the afternoon, spending more time in class than the required five hours per day. While the increase in absence during the ALE+AIM portion seems to support a more strict schedule, this is perhaps not the case. As results for learning and motivation show, students were more successful and motivated during the ALE+AIM portion, supporting the notion that students need not

be present in class to continue their learning. It is quite possible that the same students who left for the food bank listened to English radio on the way. This is an example, of course, but it is interesting to note the increase in learning and pleasure was coupled with a decrease in attendance. Further studies on this should be conducted and lead neatly into distance synchronous and a-synchronous language courses.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained from experimentation paint an interesting picture of the nature of ALE's and how students experience them. The most important conclusion in this study is that the AIM framework is valid and effective in producing language learning and pragmatics, regardless of classroom approach, teaching style or student profile. This positions the AIM framework as a viable and effective option for language teachers. Modifying the challenges within the framework to match the linguistic and grammatical requirements of other languages could also be undertaken in order to apply AIM to the teaching and learning of other languages and perhaps disciplines as well. Results obtained from comparing the two different approaches of traditional + AIM versus ALE + AIM seem to show a positive effect on the speed and depth of learning in support of the alternative approach. While results for speed show greater frequency in the traditional portions of the course, the students in group 2 completed close to twice the total number of bonus challenges. Depth of learning, as measured by scores obtained on challenges, had no significant difference. However, both groups scored significantly higher on standardized grammar tests during their alternative portions and lower during the traditional. Motivation to learn decreased more as a function of time rather than as a result of course approach and was inextricably linked to the students' socio-economic reality. The latter seemed to hold true as well for student absence from class, which increased more as a factor of time rather than course approach. The goal of building a 'how to' approach to applying constructivism to the ESL classroom or to any SLA environment is a success. Direct teacher observations also seem to show that socio-demographic and extraneous factors play a major role in determining a student's motivation and ability to succeed in language learning as was predicted by the literature.

8.1 Speed of Learning

At first glance, measurements taken in the form of the amount of bonus challenges completed seem to show that students learned faster during the traditional portions of the course. Interesting to note however, is the possible presence of a kind of bleed-over effect from the first nine-week session to the second. Both groups began completing approximately the same number of bonus challenges but group 2 greatly outpaced group 1 in the second portion. From direct teacher observation, it seemed that because group 2 began with the alternative framework, students were more accustomed to carrying out similar learning strategies in the second session. The opposite seemed to be true for group 1. Students spent their first nine weeks in a traditional format with the notion of bonuses as a way to improve their grade, but once their alternative session commenced, focus was shifted to completing the mandatory tasks before any bonuses were attempted. No definite conclusion can be made for the effect of the alternative approach on the speed of learning. However, group 2, which began with the alternative approach, completed far more bonus challenges in total than did group 1. This would seem to suggest that more familiarity and experience with the novel AIM + ALE approach leads to more effective learning within this framework. Students in group 2 simply became accustomed to learning in the ALE from day one and carried out its conventions until the last day of class, well into the more structured traditional portion.

Further research conducted on a larger number of groups with an adequate random sample is suggested. The comparison of eight groups with a population of close to thirty students per group should be sufficient to more clearly define the positive effect of the alternative approach to the speed of learning in ESL and SLA.

8.2 Depth of Learning

Results obtained from the student application of challenges taken from the challenge book did not show a difference in relation to course approach. This is most likely due to the fact that there were only three results possible, i.e. 1 = excellent, 2 =

pass and 3 = fail. When students were evaluated by the teacher using this nominal scale, a score of 1 was assigned to students even though their performance on the challenge may have been slightly different. The vast majority of students were able to receive a score of excellent for being able to meet the challenge requirements, even though some performed better than others. Perhaps a wider range of possible scores would have produced a more significant result. Thus the null hypothesis was conserved in this case, showing that the AIM + ALE portion produced no beneficial effect.

However, on standardized paper-and-pencil grammar tests, students in the AIM + ALE sections had higher average scores than during the traditional portions. Unlike the challenges, the standardized tests provided a more precise scale measurement. Thus, the measurement of challenge efficacy in terms of the challenges was inadequate and performance on standardized tests was stronger in the alternative portions. The alternative hypothesis that the AIM + ALE framework produces a beneficial effect on learning holds true and a comparison of the different groups on these results indicates that the AIM+ALE framework provides a valid SLA learning experience.

8.3 Motivation and Absence

Results for motivation found that intrinsic motivation decreased with time, rather than with approach. It is important to note that all of the participants were unemployed adults, many with families, some with part-time jobs, and several under severe socio-economic stress. The convenience samples used in this study came from two specific groups undertaking a five-month ESL intensive with subsidies but no pay. Measuring motivation in relation to course approach was extremely difficult. Through informal interviews and discussion with students, it was clear that motivation in class was directly linked to their personal and professional lives. While these observations were not directly recorded by the researcher, official agency documents do exist showing the various student profiles, their age, profession, curriculum vitae, education and both mental and physical health. It is not uncommon for students with learning disabilities, psychological disorders, including aggression and suicidal tendencies to be

registered in these groups and students with a clean bill of health are often far more concerned about their next source of income than their learning of English. This was also shown by the amount of class hours missed, which tended to increase with time. Often in the second portion of the course, students scheduled job interviews, began other studies and even started new careers, effectively dropping out of the course before its end. It is thus recommended that future studies be undertaken with a larger number and wider variety of groups to more accurately measure motivation in students in relation to ALE's and the AIM framework. A sufficient sample size of varying types of ESL classes should be used as outlined above.

8.4 Limitations of the Study

Results obtained, along with the small convenience sample used within this study, validate the AIM framework. Yet, no strong conclusion can be made about the comparison of course approaches, i.e. AIM + ALE versus AIM + traditional, due to the small sample size, specific socio-economic profile of the groups and a narrow nominal scale used in evaluating the efficacy of AIM challenges. Furthermore, the study was conducted by only one researcher, being the teacher of the course under study and the author of the AIM framework. Familiarity with AIM may have led to an effective application of the framework which may or may not have been duplicated by another teacher less accustomed to AIM and ALE's.

Furthermore, results may have been skewed by the consent forms given to participants at the beginning of each course. While not recorded within this study, there was a strong resistance by several students to being participants in a study. The students who chose not to participate have been omitted from this study, yet their negative attitudes towards it persisted throughout the course, affecting other students' perceptions of the course and approach.

8.5 Further Research Recommendations

Future research in using the AIM model for an ALE should be first and foremost conducted on a much larger sample size, across varying groups and in a number of settings. Several teachers should also be involved in studying and applying it in their classes. The ordinal scale used in this study should be broken down into more possible values than the simple, excellent, pass, fail values employed in this study. It is suggested that within each value, a subset of three values could be used, effectively creating nine possible results for the mandatory performance-based challenges.

Modifying the AIM framework to suit other languages is also of interest for future research and may involve a look at student and institutional culture vis-à-vis the application of constructivist principles to the language classroom

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Appendix A

SIMS Survey

The Situational Motivation Scale - SIMS

Guay, et al. 2000

Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale below, please circle the number that best describes the reason why you are currently engaged in this activity. Answer each item according to the following scale: 1: corresponds not all; 2: corresponds a very little; 3: corresponds a little; 4: corresponds moderately; 5: corresponds enough; 6: corresponds a lot; 7: corresponds exactly.

Why are you currently engaged in this activity?

1. Because I think that this activity is interesting 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Because I am doing it for my own good 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Because I am supposed to do it 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. There may be good reasons to do this activity, but personally I don't see any 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Because I think that this activity is pleasant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Because I think that this activity is good for me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Because it is something that I have to do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I do this activity but I am not sure if it is worth it 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Because this activity is fun 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. By personal decision 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. Because I don't have any choice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. I don't know; I don't see what this activity brings me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. Because I feel good when doing this activity 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. Because I believe that this activity is important for me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. Because I feel that I have to do it 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. I do this activity, but I am not sure it is a good thing to pursue it 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Coding key: Intrinsic motivation: Items 1, 5, 9, 13; Identified regulation: Items 2, 6, 10, 14; External regulation: Items 3,7, 11, 15; A-motivation: Items 4, 8, 12, 16.

Appendix B

Board of Ethics Approval

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study of
Accessible Immersion Metrics for Second Language Acquisition

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This document is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. Ask the researcher or study staff to discuss this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any words or information you do not clearly understand.We are asking you to take part in a research study called:

Accessible Immersion Metrics for Second Language Acquisition

The person in charge of this research study is Greg De Luca. **For more information** you can contact Greg at **gdeluca@champlaincollege.qc.ca.** The secondary researcher is Stephen Taylor, PhD and may be contacted through the following e-mail: steveta@alumni.concordia.ca. Other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. The research will be conducted at Champlain College St-Lambert in room A-207, during both session 1 and session 2 of the Course: ESL-EQ English Immersion Intensive Groups 32 and 33

The Purpose of this study is to:

1. Complete the requirements of a Master's of Education
2. Measure learning and motivation in students in two (2) different pedagogical approaches to learning English as a Second Language.
3. Compare the efficacy of these two different pedagogical approaches.

What is the study?

The goal of this study is to gather data that would support an alternative learning environment in Second Language Acquisition. The goal is to compare a new learning model to an existing traditional approach and measure the effect on speed and depth of learning as well as effect on student motivation. You are asked to participate because you are full-time English students who happen to be in the researcher's class. The course's objectives will remain the same as listed in your course outlines, yet the approach to 'how' you will learn will change throughout the course. Your learning and development will still depend on your motivation and participation. This study will not affect your learning in any way.

You have chosen to take the ESL-EQ English Intensive. You are in this study simply because the researcher is ready to begin data collection. You need not do anything outside the normal demands of the ESL-EQ Intensive. Come to class and participate in all learning activities and tests.

Participation and Confidentiality

Each ESL-EQ group consists of 16 students. This study will be conducted in 2 groups for a maximum number of 32 participants. You may decide to participate or not, but please note that you must participate in your Emploi-Quebec course. If you decide to NOT participate in the study, you will still participate in all learning activities and tests. Only your results will not be collected. If you decide to participate, your test and survey results will remain confidential and anonymous. The primary researcher will NOT know if you are participating. Your test and survey results will be compiled by a secondary researcher who will be tasked with assigning you a study number. The primary researcher / your teacher will teach the course and administer the tests and surveys but the results will be sent to the secondary researcher who will compile and store all of the results. The data collected in this way will not be shared with any third parties and will be available if you would like to see it.

Consent to Take Part in Research and Authorization for the Collection and Use of Data

It is up to you to decide whether you want to take part in this study. If you want to take part, please read the statements below and sign the form if the statements are true.

- I understand the nature of the study and what I must do;
- I understand that the study is anonymous and confidential;
- I understand that I must participate in my course even if I do not participate in the study;
- I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

Consentement à participer à la recherche et de l'autorisation pour la collecte et l'utilisation des données. C'est à vous de décider si vous souhaitez participer à cette étude. Si vous voulez participer, s'il vous plaît lire les déclarations ci-dessous et signer le formulaire si les affirmations sont vraies.

- Je comprends la nature de l'étude et ce que je dois faire;
  • Je comprends que l'étude est anonyme et confidentiel;
  • Je comprends que je dois participer à mon cours, même si je ne participe pas à l'étude;
  • J'ai reçu une copie de ce formulaire pour prendre avec moi.

_____ _____

Signature of Person Taking Part in Study Date

_____

Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

CHAMPLAIN REGIONAL COLLEGE

Certificate of Ethics Approval

Principal Investigator

Name: Gregory De Luca
Campus: ☐ Lennoxville ☒ St. Lambert ☐ St. Lawrence
Sector: ☐ Regular Day ☒ Continuing Education

Research Information

Category: ☒ Master Teacher Program (MTP) ☐ CRC Research ☐ External research

Title: **Accessible Immersion Metrics (AIM) for Second Language Acquisition; A Constructivist Innovation for the ESL Classroom**

Abstract: This study is designed to validate a constructivist learning framework (AIM) for an alternate learning environment in two ESL courses. The AIM framework is proposed as a "How To" guide to the application of constructivist principles to the second language classroom. Created in 2009by the author and piloted in 2010, the AIM model allows for the learning of language to occur free of a fixed schedule, to be socially constructive and focused on the learner's needs rather than on course content. This study will be conducted with two groups of adult students enrolled in a full time intensive English course sponsored by Emploi-Québec. Employing two approaches, namely AIM and the "traditional method", this study will compare the learning outcomes of these two groups. Each group will experience both approaches and will be evaluated by the same problem-based assessments, herein referred to as "challenges". By comparing student successes on these aligned performance based assessments, results should confirm that the AIM framework is an effective teaching strategy in second language acquisition.

Review

Primary Reviewer[1]: Josée Bouchard, PhD
Planning and Evaluation Analyst

Recommendation of the Director of Studies' Office

The Director of Studies' Office conducted an expedited review[2] of the research proposal and accompanying documents forwarded by Greg De Luca entitled: "Accessible Immersion Metrics (AIM) for Second Language Acquisition; A Constructivist Innovation for the ESL Classroom".

- It was concluded that the project will likely involve minimal risks for the participants
- The research project is acceptable as submitted and recommended for a full ethics approval by the Director of Studies' Office of Champlain Regional College.

Danielle Lafaille
Danielle Lafaille, Director of Studies

28/mai/2014
Date

[1] Until a Research Ethics Board (REB) is officially appointed at Champlain Regional College, the Director of Studies' Office is responsible for ethics review of research proposals involving human participants.
[2] As per the definition included in the Champlain Regional College's Institutional Policy on Research (2013).

Appendix C

Challenge Book Excerpts

A3

TASKS:

1) Talk about 10 things that you like to do. Ex. “I like to swim”
2) Talk about 10 things that are equal. Use “As good as...”
3) Ask a partner 10 questions about “states” using only stative verbs.
4) Ask a partner 10 questions about habits using active verbs.

Grammar Hints:

-Equatives

-Stative Verbs/Active Verbs

-Demonstratives

-Reflexive pronouns

- *Simple Present*

-*Yes-No Questions*

-*“Wh-“ Questions*

-*Infinitives – positive & negative*

Trainers’s Tips:

A3 Task Criteria (Review with a trainer)

Criteria	Excellent	Pass	Fail
Remember	Recall vocabulary and syntax with no errors	Recalls vocabulary and syntax with few errors	Has trouble recalling vocabulary and syntax
Understand	Intended ideas are perfectly suited to vocabulary and syntax	Ideas and syntax are correct, though some native-language conceptual transference still exists	Ideas and syntax/vocabulary are not suited to each other.
Apply	There are no errors in the oral application and language is produced fluently	There are a few errors in the oral application and there is little hesitation	There are many errors in the oral application and much hesitation

Self-Assessment: **** To be reviewed with a trainer***

- How are you preparing / did you prepare for this challenge?
- Why are you preparing / did you prepare this way?
- Did your study strategies work?
- Where can you use this new language in your everyday life?
- How well did you accomplish this challenge? Why?
- What do you think are your strong and weak points? Why?

WHAT?
WHY?
HOW?
WHEN?
WHERE?
WHO?

Trainers' Notes:

W3

TASKS:

1) Write a short 100-word text about yourself.
2) Write ten sentences using equatives and demonstratives
3) Write ten sentences or about how you feel. Use stative verbs.
4) Highlight/underline the subject, verb, object and complement in your sentences.
5) Circle all prepositions, pronouns and possessive adjectives.

*These tasks can be accomplished over several drafts. Students should evaluate their own writing and attempt to correct rough drafts with little interference. Trainers should prompt students, but not correct their writing directly.

Grammar Hints:

-Equatives

-Stative Verbs/Active Verbs

-Demonstratives

-Reflexive pronouns

- *Simple Present*

-*Yes-No Questions*

-*"Wh-" Questions*

-*Infinitives – positive & negative*

Trainer's Tips:

W3 Task Criteria (Review with a trainer)

Criteria	Excellent	Pass	Fail
Apply	Has little trouble in applying and integrating syntax, spelling vocabulary and meaning	Has some trouble in fluently applying and integrating syntax, spelling, vocabulary and meaning	Has a lot of trouble in fluently applying and integrating syntax, spelling, vocabulary and meaning
Evaluate	Easily identifies errors in use and usage and can explain why they are errors	Can identify some errors in use and usage and can explain why some are errors	Cannot identify most errors in use and usage nor correct them
Create	Creates new correct writing after self-evaluation	Creates some new correct writing after evaluation, but some errors are repeated	Has difficulty producing new correct writing

Self-Assessment: **** To be reviewed with a trainer***

- How are you preparing / did you prepare for this challenge?
- Why are you preparing / did you prepare this way?
- Did your study strategies work?
- Where can you use this new language in your everyday life?
- How well did you accomplish this challenge? Why?
- What do you think are your strong and weak points? Why?
- Did you make errors? What were they?
- Can you correct your errors without your teacher's help?
- What can you do to stop reproducing the same error?

WHAT?
WHY?
HOW?
WHEN?
WHERE?
WHO?

Trainers' Notes:

R3

TASKS:

1) Your trainer will give you a text to read and questions to answer.
2) Develop five questions about information in the text and discuss the answers with a partner/trainer

Grammar Hints:

-Equatives

-Stative Verbs/Active Verbs

-Demonstratives

-Reflexive pronouns

- *Simple Present*

-*Yes-No Questions*

-*"Wh-" Questions*

-*Infinitives – positive & negative*

Trainer's Tips:

R3 Task Criteria (Review with a trainer)

Criteria	Excellent	Pass	Fail
Analyze	Easily retrieves information from text and answers questions correctly	Retrieves most information from the text but answers few questions incorrectly	Has trouble retrieving information from text and correctly answering questions
Understand	Intended ideas/topics are understood. Both salient and obscure context is inferred.	Intended ideas/topics are understood. Salient context is inferred	Intended ideas/topics not properly understood. Salient context not inferred
Apply	Produces original questions relating to the text with little or no grammatical errors	Produces some original questions relating to the text with some grammatical errors	Has difficulty producing new questions from information presented in the text.

Self-Assessment: **** To be reviewed with a trainer***

- How are you preparing / did you prepare for this challenge?
- Why are you preparing / did you prepare this way?
- Did your study strategies work?
- Where can you use this new language in your everyday life?
- How well did you accomplish this challenge? Why?
- What do you think are your strong and weak points? Why?
- Did you make errors? What were they?
- Can you correct your errors without your teacher's help?
- What can you do to stop reproducing the same error?

WHAT?
WHY?
HOW?
WHEN?
WHERE?
WHO?

Trainers' Notes:

C3

TASKS:

1) Have a two-minute (2) conversation with partners and a trainer. Try to ask questions about feelings and states, using stative and active verbs and equatives (as + adj. + as).
   Ex. Are you as tall as me?
2) Have a two-minute (min.) conversation with partners using demonstratives (These/Those), stative verbs and adjectives.

Grammar Hints:

-Equatives

-Stative Verbs/Active Verbs

-Demonstratives

-Reflexive pronouns

- *Simple Present*

-*Yes-No Questions*

-*"Wh-" Questions*

-*Infinitives – positive & negative*

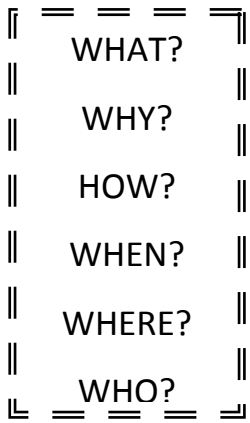
Trainer's Tips:

C3 Task Criteria (Review with a trainer)

Criteria	**Excellent**	**Pass**	**Fail**
Remember	Recalls vocabulary and syntax with no errors	Recalls vocabulary and syntax with few errors	Has trouble recalling vocabulary and syntax
Understand	Intended ideas are perfectly suited to vocabulary and syntax and easily transferred to and from student	Ideas and syntax are correct, though there is some conceptual and aural confusion	Ideas and syntax/vocabulary are not suited to each other and there is much conceptual an aural confusion
Apply	There are no errors in the oral application, language is produced and understood fluently	There are a few errors in the oral application and there is little hesitation or misunderstanding	There are many errors in the oral application and much hesitation and misunderstanding

Self-Assessment: **** To be reviewed with a trainer***

- How are you preparing / did you prepare for this challenge?
- Why are you preparing / did you prepare this way?
- Did your study strategies work?
- Where can you use this new language in your everyday life?
- How well did you accomplish this challenge? Why?
- What do you think are your strong and weak points? Why?



Trainers' Notes:

P3

TASKS:

1) Read a list of sentences with stative and active verbs. A trainer will write down exactly what s/he hears
2) Read a short dictation that contains infinitive verbs. A trainer will write down exactly what s/he hears.
3) Identify sounds that are difficult for you to pronounce. Develop a learning strategy with a trainer.

Grammar Hints:

-Equatives

-Stative Verbs/Active Verbs

-Demonstratives

-Reflexive pronouns

- *Simple Present*

-*Yes-No Questions*

-*"Wh-" Questions*

-*Infinitives – positive & negative*

Trainer's Tips:

P3 Task Criteria (Review with a trainer)

Criteria	Excellent	Pass	Fail
Apply	Produces few spelling and grammatical errors in trainer written dictation	Produces some spelling and grammatical errors in trainer written dictation	Produces many spelling and grammatical errors in trainer written dictation
Analyze	Particular pronunciation problems are identified by the student and attempts are made to pronounce more clearly	Particular pronunciation problems are identified, but no immediate improvement occurs	Particular pronunciation problems are not identified by the student.
Evaluate	Student develops and employs a long-term improvement strategy	Student needs some help in developing an improvement strategy	Student does not develop or employ an improvement strategy

Self-Assessment: **** To be reviewed with a trainer***

- How are you preparing / did you prepare for this challenge?
- Why are you preparing / did you prepare this way?
- Did your study strategies work?
- Where can you use this new language in your everyday life?
- How well did you accomplish this challenge? Why?
- What do you think are your strong and weak points? Why?
- Did you make errors? What were they?
- Can you correct your errors without your teacher's help?
- What can you do to stop reproducing the same error?

WHAT?
WHY?
HOW?
WHEN?
WHERE?
WHO?

Trainers' Notes:

L3

TASKS:

1) A trainer/partner will read a list of short sentences. Write down a pronoun for each noun that you hear.
2) A trainer will read a short dictation with stative, active and infinitive verbs. Write it down.
3) A trainer will quickly read some questions using demonstratives. Write your answers.
4) Watch a short video and answer comprehension questions.

Grammar Hints:

-Equatives

-Stative Verbs/Active Verbs

-Demonstratives

-Reflexive pronouns

- *Simple Present*

-*Yes-No Questions*

-*"Wh-" Questions*

-*Infinitives – positive & negative*

Trainer's Tips:

L3 Task Criteria (Review with a trainer)

Criteria	Excellent	Pass	Fail
Analyze	Produces few spelling and grammatical errors	Produces some spelling grammatical errors	Produces many spelling and grammatical errors.
Understand	Intended ideas/topics are understood. Both salient and obscure context is inferred.	Intended ideas/topics are understood. Salient context is inferred	Intended ideas/topics not properly understood. Salient context not inferred
Apply	Fluently transfers aural input into written form and understanding	Transfers aural input into written form and understanding with little hesitation	Has difficulty transferring aural input into written form and understanding

Self-Assessment: **** To be reviewed with a trainer***

- How are you preparing / did you prepare for this challenge?
- Why are you preparing / did you prepare this way?
- Did your study strategies work?
- Where can you use this new language in your everyday life?
- How well did you accomplish this challenge? Why?
- What do you think are your strong and weak points? Why?
- Did you make errors? What were they?
- Can you correct your errors without your teacher's help?
- What can you do to stop reproducing the same error?

WHAT?
WHY?
HOW?
WHEN?
WHERE?
WHO?

Trainers' Notes:

F3

TASKS:

1) A trainer will ask you questions using stative and active verbs. Answer quickly
2) Your trainer will say short sentences. Replace the nouns with pronouns (Obect, Subject, Possessive, Reflexive)
3) Complete a "pronoun" drill with a trainer.

Grammar Hints:

-Equatives

-Stative Verbs/Active Verbs

-Demonstratives

-Reflexive pronouns

- *Simple Present*

-*Yes-No Questions*

-*"Wh-" Questions*

-*Infinitives – positive & negative*

Trainer's Tips:

F3 Task Criteria (Review with a trainer)

Criteria	**Excellent**	**Pass**	**Fail**
Remember	Recalls vocabulary and syntax with no errors	Recalls vocabulary and syntax with few errors	Has trouble recalling vocabulary and syntax
Understand	Intended ideas are perfectly suited to vocabulary and syntax	Ideas and syntax are correct, though some native-language conceptual transference still exists	Ideas and syntax/vocabulary are not suited to each other.
Apply	There are no errors in the oral application and language is produced fluently	There are a few errors in the oral application and there is little hesitation	There are many errors in the oral application and much hesitation

Self-Assessment: **** To be reviewed with a trainer***

- How are you preparing / did you prepare for this challenge?
- Why are you preparing / did you prepare this way?
- Did your study strategies work?
- Where can you use this new language in your everyday life?
- How well did you accomplish this challenge? Why?
- What do you think are your strong and weak points? Why?

WHAT?
WHY?
HOW?
WHEN?
WHERE?
WHO?

Trainers' Notes: