General Directions:

This Reading and Writing test consists of two parts. The first part evaluates your reading ability, requiring you to write a summary of the reading. The second part evaluates your ability to express your ideas in writing. Read the instructions for each part carefully.

Part 1: Summary Writing (50%)

Directions: The following excerpt is taken from an article published in *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. Read the excerpt and <u>write an "Abstract" (摘要) of around 300 words</u>. The abstract is a comprehensive paragraph(s) which summarizes a research study. It should cover at least the research problems, research questions, data collection procedure, and results.

Language Learning Motivation in Early Adolescents:

Using Mixed Methods Research to Explore Contradiction

By Pamela M. Wesely (University of Iowa), *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*,

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This mixed methods study is an exploration of students' second language (L2) learning motivation as it relates to their attrition from an L2 immersion program. The first section of this article provides the theoretical background and context of the article: the problem of attrition from L2 immersion programs and how it has been (or has not been) linked to the construct of motivation. It also creates a case for the use of mixed methods in studying L2 learning motivation. The second section of the article describes the purpose and mixed methods design of the study in more detail. The third section is a presentation and a discussion of findings. The article concludes with a summary of the methodological implications of this study.

Theoretical Background and Context
The Problem: Attrition From L2 Immersion Programs

L2 immersion programs offer their students the opportunity to learn an L2 through academic content classes (e.g., social studies, math). Language is not the topic of study as it is in a more traditional "foreign language" class; it is integrated with the instruction of the academic content. This study focuses on one particular subset of L2 immersion programs, called one-way total immersion. In one-way immersion, instruction in an L2 (in this study, French or Spanish) is intended for speakers of the majority language (in this study, English, which I will also call the L1). At the elementary level, one-way total immersion features instructional use of the L2 for at least 50% of the day, promotes additive bilingualism and biliteracy, employs teachers who are fully proficient in the two languages of instruction, relies on support for the majority language in the community at large, and clearly separates the teacher use of the L1 and the L2 for sustained periods of time (Fortune & Tedick, 2008; Genesee, 2008).

A considerable majority of L2 immersion programs in the United States begin at the elementary level (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2006). However, the transition between elementary and middle/junior high school has often been identified as a time of high attrition, with students choosing to leave the immersion program for a monolingual English curriculum (Garcı́a, Lorenz, & Robison, 1995). This study is positioned at this transition, examining the L2 learning motivation of students who have made a variety of choices about their continuation in their immersion programs. Research has suggested that language use and positive attitudes about the second language and culture stop developing after students leave immersion programs (MacFarlane & Wesche, 1995). Thus, in leaving, these students do not enjoy the many benefits of continuation, including increased language proficiency and corresponding cognitive and personal benefits.

Additionally, one-way immersion programs that have high rates of attrition face the particular problem that there are extremely few new students who could enter the program in the upper grades who have the requisite L2 skills to participate, let alone succeed. Attrition from immersion programs thus means that the program slowly

dwindles out of existence as the students rise through the grades. This issue is of particular interest to a number of stakeholders in immersion education, including not only administrators, teachers, parents, and students in current immersion programs but also the same stakeholders in districts that are considering the establishment of immersion programs (Cadez, 2006; Mannavarayan, 2002). Therefore, understanding more about the attrition that occurs between elementary and middle/junior high schools in language immersion programs is critical to the creation of programs that provide the maximum benefits to students, schools, and the community.

The Lens: L2 Learning Motivation

L2 learning motivation has commonly been measured using an instrument called the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), a set of subscales measuring different aspects of L2 learning motivation and comprising Likert-type scale questions (Gardner, 1985a, 1985b). The subscales of the AMTB reflect the components of language learning motivation as defined by the socio-educational model of second language acquisition. The socio-educational model has been praised as one of the first models of motivation that took into account the idea of the cultural and social setting where learning takes place (MacIntyre, MacKinnon, & Cle´ment, 2009). It has generally been recognized as the most influential construction of motivation in L2 research, in large part because of the overwhelming empirical evidence produced by Gardner and his colleagues.

In this article, I focus on one aspect of the socio-educational model that was measured in the modified AMTB used in this study: attitudes toward learning the language. Gardner (2005) has positioned this as a minor indicator variable that contributes to ''Motivation'' in the socioeducational model. He explained the relationship between students' attitudes toward learning the language and their motivation by saying that ''the motivated individual will enjoy the task of learning the language. Such an individual will say that it is fun, a challenge, and enjoyable, even though at times enthusiasm may be less than at other times'' (p. 10). This definition characterizes attitudes toward learning the language as a more or less fixed factor that may only vary in the intensity of the enthusiasm associated with it. Note that this

definition also does not explicitly reference persistence in an area of study, although the general assumption by educators tends to be that learners will want to continue learning something that they enjoy.

I incorporate three different concepts of motivation in particular into my analysis: the attribution theory of motivation, where past successes and failures (and the perceived causes of those successes and failures) affect students' perceptions of their own capabilities (Covington, 1984); Norton's (2000) notion of investment, which identifies the multiple, changing desires of a learner; and Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System, which examines how L2 learning has repercussions in learner identity formation (Dörnyei, 2005).

The two research questions that guide this analysis are the following:

Research Question 1: What does an examination of the second language (L2) learning motivation of early adolescent immersion graduates reveal about important issues in immersion education?

Research Question 2: How do the data collected through student interviews compare with the data generated by the results of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery?

Methodology

The target population of this study was the 358 sixth and seventh graders (early adolescents aged 11-13 years) who had graduated from one of five one-way early total immersion programs in French or Spanish in the previous spring of 2007. Because I contacted all 2007 graduates, the target population included both students who chose to continue in the immersion continuation program in their district and students who chose to pursue other educational options such as a monolingual English curriculum or homeschooling.

A total of 131 students and their parents1 responded to surveys (36% response rate), and 33 of those students were interviewed for this study. Ultimately, 74.8% of the survey respondents had chosen to continue in the immersion program, which is comparable with the 73.5% continuation rate in all 2007 graduates of all five schools. Therefore, the sample of survey respondents in this study roughly mirrored the

percentage of continuing students in the population. For the 33 interviews, I selected from the students whose parents had indicated on their surveys that they could be interviewed. As such, I interviewed 20 continuing students and 13 noncontinuing students starting in late February 2008 and continuing through early June 2008

The student survey primarily comprised 40 Likert-type scale questions adapted from the AMTB. The interviews were semistructured and lasted from 15 to 35 minutes, depending on the student. In my interview protocol, I first asked students to reflect generally on their language learning experiences, and second, I asked about motivational factors in the socio-educational model. For the first part, inspired by the work by Daniels and Arapostathis (2005), I asked students about ''favorite'' and ''least favorite'' things about learning the target language,2 and also for some of their ''best'' and ''worst'' memories. I also prompted them to tell me about whether they have ever been proud or nervous about communicating in the target language and what their friends thought about their own experiences learning the language. These questions served to flesh out their experiences from a number of perspectives, because in some cases students had harder time thinking of responses to the very general initial questions. I followed these questions with general inquiries into their decision to continue (or not to continue) with immersion education. For the second portion of the interview, I deliberately fashioned questions about each of the subscales on the AMTB. This allowed me to increase the likelihood that my qualitative interview data would directly address motivational factors that would inevitably be a part of the statistical analysis of the quantitative data; however, it did not explicitly limit the students' responses to those factors only.

Results

Some surprising attitudes and revealing trends were identified through the quantitative data about this variable, notably that students who left the immersion programs were slightly more positive in their attitudes toward learning the language than those who continued. Furthermore, students from the programs with the highest attrition rates were more likely to indicate positive attitudes in their responses to the ''Attitudes toward Learning the Language'' subscales. The qualitative data supported

the general finding from the quantitative data that there were few differences in attitudes toward language learning between the continuing and non-continuing students in this study. In interviews, it was revealed that the immersion students were likely to identify and consider language learning in one of three ways: as a mysterious process, a grammar-focused experience, or (when successful) as a result of effort and work.

Misunderstandings about the definition of language learning.

Using the qualitative data to expand on and elaborate on the quantitative data, one can narrow down the possible explanations for such a result. It was clear from the interviews that students simply had profound misunderstandings about what language learning entailed. The students struggled with defining language learning in general, often focusing more on the mysterious, automatic process that they associated with learning the language through their content courses or, alternatively, on the decontextualized grammar lessons that fit the more traditional definition of language class. These definitions of language learning might have confounded their responses to the "Attitudes toward Learning the Language" subscales on the AMTB. As such, the unexpected finding from the quantitative results that non-continuing students were slightly more likely to be positive in their attitudes toward learning the language subscale might have simply been an error in the instrument.

Language learning as a process, not an event.

A further examination of the qualitative findings, particularly in looking at how the students spoke of successful language learning, suggests a possible alternative explanation as well. This alternative explanation is rooted in the idea that, even if immersion students struggle with an accurate definition of language learning in their context, the concept of language learning is still important in understanding L2 learning motivation, specifically when language learning is considered not just as a fixed event to be evaluated by the learner but as a path that is traveled to success or failure. Language learning, to many of these students, was difficult to reduce to something that, as the AMTB states, was "really great" or "a waste of time." Thus,

the immersion graduates' definition of "language learning" was sometimes much more complex than the statements associated with the "Attitudes toward Learning the Language" subscales on the modified AMTB. This presented a divergence at the definitional level between the quantitative and the qualitative data. This more fluid imagining of language learning allows a researcher working with immersion students to focus with them on the totality of their language learning experience, as opposed a discrete learning event. In this study, the students' thoughts on successful language learning revealed that they knew that it was connected with skill and/or effort, and as such, they fit the profile of successful, motivated language learners.

Allowing for contradiction in immersion students.

However, the role of the students' understanding of language learning in whether or not they decided to continue in an immersion program is not as clear. Here, one can turn to Norton's (2000) notion of investment, which acknowledges that the language learner often has "multiple desires" in their language learning. For instance, students could be intrigued and inspired by the process of learning language, but still want to leave the program; that they could still be frustrated by the banalities of grammar work or by the challenges of mastering content in another language, but still want to continue as immersion language learners. Classroom-based language learning is thus only a part of how the students envision themselves as L2 learners and communicators. Studies by Yashima (2009) and Lamb (2009) have offered the interpretation that students often disassociate the process of language learning from the fact that the person that they would like to become, their "ideal L2 self" (Do¨rnyei, 2005), actually speaks the L2. This occurs more frequently as students become more proficient in the L2. As Yashima stated, when the language moves from being just another subject that must be "tested and graded" to one that is used for communication, the students are more able to envision their ideal L2 selves (2009, p. 153). Of course, in the case of immersion students, there is a strong likelihood that they never saw L2 study as "just another subject"; as such, the disconnect between their attitudes toward learning a language and their other opinions and decisions about L2 learning (such as whether or not to continue with L2 study) is completely

comprehensible. Thus, other research in the field supports the integrated consideration of this study's qualitative and quantitative findings: student attitudes toward learning a language did not necessarily have a strong impact on their decision to persist in immersion education, even though some aspects of those attitudes were linked to their language learning motivation.

Conclusion: Theoretical and Methodological Implications

This study illustrates how an Explanatory Design mixed methods study can be used to investigate contradiction and paradox in the data. Social psychological constructs such as motivation benefit from the combined deductive and inductive approach featured in mixed methods research. I would argue that the socio-educational model correctly identified students' attitudes toward learning the language as being important in their L2 learning motivation, but my use of data from student interviews allowed me to see the complexity of that factor and its relationship with motivation and persistence in immersion programs. Research on immersion education has struggled with understanding the relationship between student motivation and persistence in immersion programs. This study has offered some insights into that area. Mixed methods research on motivation can give our field important and rich insight into how students experience and process their education. Future research can build on this study to develop this further.

Part 2: Response (50%)

Directions:　In this part of the exam, please write an essay in response to this article. Your response could address any issues brought up by the article from any perspective, but please make sure that you at least mention the main issues that are the foci of the article: students' learning motivation, attrition, immersion program, and mixed methods research.

Please write more than one paragraph. Your essay will be judged based on (a) the quality of the content and organization of your thoughts, and (b) language use. The best essay is the one that is well-supported, well-organized, free of grammatical and vocabulary errors but at the same time use academic-level language.