De-duotanging Core French: Case Study of a Digital Learning Space Portfolio in a Grade 8 Classroom

by

Susanna Jurkowski

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Abstract

This case study explored the use of a digital learning space portfolio by Grade 8 French as a Second Language (FSL) students. The focus of this study was on the meaning students assigned to the use of the digital learning space portfolios and how their perceptions of themselves as FSL learners changed while using the system. The study addresses the existing gap in the literature. The digital learning space portfolio was created based on the needs of adolescent learners as identified in the literature. The literature also suggests that embedding assessment and learning in one place, that is accessible to all, improves student engagement. The study took place at a rural school in Eastern Ontario and included fourteen students, six male and eight female. The results indicate that students had positive experiences using the digital learning space portfolio which supported student participation in the FSL classroom. In addition, the students reported positive perceptions of themselves as FSL learners while they were engaged in using the tool. The results also indicate that the teacher was integral in developing and modelling positive use of the digital learning space portfolio. Further research regarding the use of the digital learning space portfolio in other disciplines and at other grade levels should focus on teacher support to ensure successful use of these types of tools in education.
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Chapter 1 - Introduction and Purpose

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore Grade 8 students’ perceptions of the use of a digital learning space portfolio and themselves as second language learners. The literature indicates that a positive self-identity is key to motivation in the second language classroom (Dornyei, 2009). This study explored how students’ perceptions of themselves as learners were influenced by the use of the digital learning space portfolio in their Grade 8 Core French classroom. The study also considered how the digital learning space portfolio contributed to a positive learning environment essential to the needs of adolescent learners.

This thesis is organized in five chapters and begins with the introduction and purpose followed by the literature review, methodology, data analysis, results and summary.

The use of portfolios is not new. For example, artists have been using portfolios for centuries to store and showcase their work (Barrett, 2007). Barrett (2007) also points out that artists’ portfolios have traditionally contained their best work. On the other hand, educational portfolios have typically contained work chosen by the learner to demonstrate their growth and change over time (Barrett, 2007). For the purpose of this study, the digital learning space portfolio is defined as a digitalized collection of artifacts including demonstrations, resources, and accomplishments that represent an
individual, group, or institution. This collection can be text-based, graphic, or multimedia (Lorenzo & Ittleson, 2005).

Rationale

Biographical Sketch: Why Core French? As a Core French teacher, I watched students throw away their French duotangs containing their worksheets at the end of each term/academic year and wondered if there was another way. Having taught in the Primary and Junior Core French classrooms, I had also noticed a waning of interest as students got older and an increasing number of behaviours, especially from boys. “Why do we have to learn French?” was a frequent question from my Grade 6 students. Instead of telling them that it was important to learn French I wanted them to discover this for themselves, via meaningful activities that involved authentic tasks outlined in the revised Ontario French as a Second Language (FSL) curriculum (OME, 2013). I wondered how their FSL work could be made more meaningful. Would using their work to track growth be part of the solution and might it allow students an opportunity to take ownership for their learning? What were students’ perceptions of their work and of themselves as second language learners? Could tasks other than worksheets allow students to make connections to their real lives and help make the second language learning more meaningful? Could these same tasks offer students choice and a greater opportunity for collaboration with their peers?

Earlier studies have explored the use of a digital portfolio in the language classrooms. These studies however focused on the elementary English as a Second Language classroom in Quebec or the French Immersion context in the United States.
No previous studies have explored the use of a digital learning space portfolio and students’ perceptions of themselves as second language learners in the middle school FSL classroom in Canada.

**Why Technology?** Duotangs full of worksheets date back to my own days as an FSL learner, over 30 years ago. Since this time, the use of technology has become an integral part of students’ lives. It has been noted that,

As a result of using technology in the classroom, students are more motivated to learn (51%), apply their knowledge to practical problems (30%), and take ownership of their learning (23%). Teachers also report that by using technology, students are developing key 21st Century skills including creativity (39%), collaboration (30%) and skills in problem-solving and critical thinking (27%). Furthermore, the learning experience becomes more meaningful for the student as teachers have newfound time to differentiate instruction (31%) to a greater degree, and have more information to how their students are doing academically (29%).

(Project Tomorrow, 2010, p. 2)

From this research stems the idea that to use digital learning space portfolio to track growth (Barrett, 2007), provides a meaningful assessment opportunity and allows students to take ownership of their learning. To this end, the use of digital learning space portfolios could serve as a link between students’ personal and school lives and also be representative of students as 21st century learners.
A 21st century duotang: What should a digital learning space portfolio look like? A common digital learning space design consists of three components: (1) Collaboration space; (2) Content library; and (3) Student notebook (Microsoft Class Notebook, 2015). Students are able to share their work and ideas with peers in the Collaboration space, access class resources (e.g. exemplars, learning goals, anchor charts) in the Content library and have a private working space where the student can submit work to the teacher and receive feedback in a variety of ways (i.e. text, audio, video) in a timely manner through the Student notebook. (See Appendix A)

Students would also have the opportunity to submit tasks in the format of their choice (i.e. audio, video, text, etc.) to allow all learners an opportunity for success. The digital learning space would be accessible 24 hours per day, 7 days per week from school and remote locations allowing students more control over their learning.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore what the use of a digital learning space portfolio means to Grade 8 students. This study addressed the existing gap in the literature on students’ perceptions of the use of a digital learning space portfolio in the middle school second language classroom and themselves as second language learners.

The following questions guided this study: (1) What does a digital learning space mean to Grade 8 students?; and (2) What are students perceptions of themselves as second language learners in a Core French classroom that utilizes a digital learning space portfolio?
Theoretical Framework

The research conducted on identity and motivation in second language (L2) learning lays the groundwork for this study. Theories on the impact of motivation on L2 are not new and date back to Gardner and Lambert (1959). Since then, additional constructs have been used to measure student attitudes toward L2 learning. These measures are the basis of Gardner’s Motivation/Attitude Test Battery (1985) and include student attributes such as integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, language anxiety, and instrumental orientation (Gardner, 2001b). These attributes have helped researchers explore students’ perceptions of themselves as language learners (Tremblay and Gardner, 1995; Kissau, 2006; and Dornyei, 2009). Students’ perceptions of themselves as language learners align with their identity as language learners and address the following questions: Do students believe they are good at second language learning? Why do they believe it is important to learn French as a Second Language? What do they feel helps them as second language learners? For the purpose of this study, I investigated the constructs that are part of students’ perceptions of themselves as French as second language learners.

In his work, Dornyei (2009) identifies two further constructs of the L2 learner identity. According to Dornyei, motivation for the L2 learner is based on the learner’s self-image and their engagement in the process of learning of second language:

“For some language learners the initial motivation to learn a language does not come from internally or externally generated self-images but
rather from successful engagement with the actual learning process (e.g. because they discover that they are good at it)”. (Dornyei 2009, p. 29)

Kissau’s (2006) study specifically targeted student participation in FSL learning. As a result of his work, Kissau identified goal setting, self-efficacy, anxiety and causal attributions as factors that influence motivation in the L2 learning environment. With this framework in mind, students’ perceptions of themselves as FSL learners refers to their identity as second language learners. This includes their beliefs about how good they feel about themselves as second language learners and why they believe learning French as a Second Language is important.
Chapter 2 - Literature Review

In this chapter, the literature review is presented in a thematic approach. These themes include: the needs of the adolescent learner; the digital learning space portfolio as an assessment tool; and students’ perceptions of themselves as second language learners.

**Needs of the Adolescent Learner**

Marinak (2013) speaks to the needs of adolescent learners with regard to language learning. She identifies the following attributes of instructional strategies as key to adolescents’ developing positive views of themselves as language learners and their motivation in language learning: choice; challenge; collaboration; and authenticity (p. 40). These are explained in greater detail below. Adolescents’ motivation in language learning is central to their perceptions of themselves as second language learners as the more positive and successful they feel about themselves as learners, the more motivated they are to continue to engage in the learning.

**Choice.** Offering choice allows students to develop ownership over their learning, which leads to increased desire to participate in school (Daniels, 2010). Deci and Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory (1985) links to the importance of choice for middle school students: “Students in middle school and high school both want and need to know that they can exercise some semblance of control over their lives” (Deci and Ryan, 1985, p. 15).

When teachers allow their students to make choices about their learning, students develop ownership over their learning, which leads to increased desire to participate in
school (Daniels, 2010). To this end, Zimmerman and Cleary (2004) developed a Self-Regulation Empowerment Program (SREP) aimed at middle school students. The theory behind this program is that when students are empowered, they will have perceptions of self-efficacy and personal control indicative of self-regulation. The same is true of students who are able to self-regulate i.e. they will often feel a sense of empowerment. No matter what the starting point, Zimmerman and Cleary state that “the first step in training individuals to become self-regulated is to cultivate the belief that academic success is under student control” (Zimmerman and Cleary, 2004, p. 542).

**Challenge.** Providing appropriate challenge is also key to middle school students’ perceptions towards language learning. In order for challenge to be possible, there needs to be a match between the individual’s skill and the activity itself (Freeman et al, 2002). By allowing students to choose their topic and curricular outcomes that align with their learning goals, they are offered a chance to challenge themselves. In addition, the opportunity for timely feedback provided through the use of the digital learning space allows students to remain challenged and within their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978).

**Collaboration.** Collaboration is also mentioned by Marinak (2013) and is present in the revised Ontario FSL curriculum (OME, 2013). Within the newly added listening strand, there is a sub-strand entitled “Interacting with Others”. To this end, Freeman et al. (2002) used Dewey’s (1913) theoretical formulation of interest and effort to examine Grade 6 students’ views of activities that do and do not help them learn.
Aligned with the social interdependence theory, students identified working with friends as an activity that helped them learn.

Digital learning spaces foster interactive ways of discussing work and assessment criteria with students as a means to redistribute power and establish more collaborative relationships with students as found in Tunstall and Gipps’s (1996) study in Great Britain. These collaborative relationships can extend to developing a “community of practice” (Lave and Wenger, 1991 as cited by Shepard, 2000, p. 96) where students are able and willing to explain their reasoning and will offer and receive feedback about their developing competence (Shepard, 2000).

Dornyei’s study (2009) also identified some of the needs of adolescent learners specific to second language learning. These include having students create a vision for their learning. “For adolescents, this vision stems from peer groups, themselves and role models” (Dunkel, 2006 as cited in Dornyei, 2009, p. 33). Further to this, Dornyei (2009) speaks to adolescents’ needs for goal setting, individualized study plans and a check-up phase to support feedback.

**Digital learning space portfolio as an Assessment Tool**

Dynamic assessment theory (Shepard, 2000) also plays a role in the choice of digital learning spaces, their design and their connection to meaningful learning opportunities. Digital learning space portfolios have the potential to allow students to show their learning in many ways (i.e. text, pictures, video, etc.) which is therefore more likely to transfer to their long-term memory (Bransford, 1979). This allows learners to create meaning and increase the relevance of what is learned. “Good teaching
constantly asks about old understandings in new ways, calls for new applications, and
draws new connections” (Shepard, 1997, p. 27).

The digital learning space portfolio design allows for dynamic assessment, the
use of feedback, teaching for transfer and student assessment which serve social,
motivational purposes as well as cognitive and informational ones (Shepard,
2000). Dynamic assessment is defined as finding out what a student is able to do
independently as well as what can be done with adult guidance (Shepard, 2000) and
connects to Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) and Marinak’s
(2013) call for challenge mentioned previously.

Shepard’s (2000) need for feedback ties into Barrett’s belief that to be
successful, a culture of evidence needs to be established (Barrett, 2007). This evidence
is measured not only by the artifacts but also by the rationale the learner provides for
sharing this artifact. To this end, Barrett devised a formula: “Evidence = Artifacts +
Reflection (Rationale) + Validation (Feedback)” (Barrett, 2003, p. 6, slide 32). Further to
this, a study of digital learning spaces in the UK suggests that “the use of multimedia can
facilitate students’ talk about their learning which in turn provides evidence to support
formative assessment theory” (Wall, Higgins, Miller & Packard, 2006, p. 27).

Meyer et al (2010) also state that it is key to have the use of digital learning
space portfolio integrated into classroom practice versus adding it as an isolated
event. Barrett emphasizes the same that “e-portfolios (digital learning spaces) should
be used simultaneously to support an environment of reflection and collaboration”
The digital learning portfolio then becomes part of the classroom routine and culture.

A number of studies have been conducted around the use of digital learning space portfolios in Kindergarten – Grade 12 classrooms. Abrami et al’s work involved mixed methods studies that spanned a number of years, beginning in 2007. The studies focused on students’ attitudes towards literacy learning. Abrami’s most recent study (2013) provided evidence that the use of the e-portfolio can have a “meaningful impact on learning” (p. 1200) when implemented in a thoughtful and purposeful way. The ePearl software found at http://grover.concordia.ca/epearl/promo/en/index.php was the technology platform for the Abrami study’s use of a digital learning space portfolio in select elementary schools in Quebec, Manitoba and Alberta. As next steps, Abrami suggested “revisions to the software to encourage use within cooperative and collaborative learning environments to fit within student-centered contexts” (2013, p. 1201).

Barrett initiated a similar mixed methods study, albeit earlier (2005), using the TaskStream toolset which offers direct technical support to schools to design digital learning space. The goal of this study, the REFLECT (Reflecting Electronic portfolios: Learning, Engaging and Collaborating through Technology) Initiative, was to research the use of digital learning space portfolios in terms of learner engagement in a time of “assessment crisis” (Barrett, 2007, p. 442).

Both Abrami et al (2013) and Barrett (2007) chose process portfolios as the focus of their research. This type of digital learning space portfolio demonstrates growth over
time and documents the learning process (Abrami et al, 2013; Barrett, 2007). This type of digital learning space portfolio also incorporates self-regulatory strategies such as self-reflection and self-monitoring and creates ownership and motivation in the learning process (Zimmerman, 2008). Both studies emphasised the integration of technology in classroom learning versus using technology in isolation.

Barrett and Abrami also emphasize the student-centeredness of the digital learning space portfolio and a focus on creation of student work versus consumption of technology (Abrami et al, 2013). Abrami et al (2013) clearly define the phases of self-regulation present in the digital learning space portfolio design (forethought, performance and self-reflection). Barrett’s focus on assessment for learning serves as a means to the same end.

More recently, Cousins (2016) reported on the findings of a ten-year review and reform of the undergraduate curriculum in the History Department at Western Michigan University and the move towards the digital learning space portfolio as an assessment tool. While not specific to the second language classroom, the results provide insight into the current e-portfolio experience and the triumphs and challenges therein. The experience allowed educators to become faster and more efficient in their data collection as well as more responsive to the artifacts received. The study also notes the need for a collaborative environment to support assessment practices associated with digital learning space portfolio use. This ties into Meyer et al’s (2010) work that found that the digital learning space portfolio cannot be used in isolation but needs to be part of a broader pedagogical technology plan. Cousins also speaks to the “more holistic
appraisal of the body of student work” (2016, p. 6) that is collected over a duration. This aligns with Barrett’s study (2007) on process portfolios. Further to this, from a practical standpoint, removing “the cumbersome process of artifact collection” has allowed educators more time to “digest the results” (Cousins, 2016, p. 6) and provide meaningful feedback. With respect to digesting the results, Barrett (2007) also states that reflection and the opportunity to provide meaningful feedback are key features of the digital learning space portfolio.

In her recent work, Koh (2016) speaks to the possibilities that digital learning space portfolios can provide elementary students in terms of a personalized learning space and opportunity for social networking. Through these personal learning environments, students have "an expansible ‘space’ for safekeeping and organizing their resources, as well as a platform for sharing and discussion that is accessible from anywhere and at any time" (p. 250). This aligns with Barrett and Abrami’s assertion (2005) that these attributes of the e-portfolio will positively impact students' self-regulation skills and students will thereby enhance their self-efficacy.

Koh also explored students' motivation while using the e-portfolio and concluded that students with low motivation were most impacted through the implementation of the e-portfolio as indicated by their "self-evaluated learning and perceived usefulness of the tool” (p. 250 as cited in Chang, 2009). In their focus group interviews with Koh, students identified choice (of artifacts and process of creating the e-portfolio) as one of the reasons they enjoyed using the digital learning space portfolio.
enhancement of student motivation when students "perceive autonomy support when carrying out an assigned task" (p. 251).

This literature review points to many gains with respect to the positive impact of digital learning space use in the K-12 classroom (Abrami, 2013), especially Abrami et al’s work (2008, 2010 and 2013) as it provides a Canadian perspective. The literature also presents some of the limitations of these studies. One of the limitations of the above-mentioned studies on the use of digital learning space in Kindergarten to Grade 12 classrooms (Abrami et al, 2013; Barrett, 2003) is that the experiences of middle school students were not explored. Abrami’s work focused on grade 4-6 students and Barrett’s work focused mainly on high school students. While both researchers focused on students’ attitudes towards literacy learning, neither targeted student perceptions of themselves as second language learners. In addition, Abrami et al. (2013) indicated the need for more qualitative data (behavioural observations, log files) to describe students’ perceptions towards the use of digital learning space further.

**Students’ Perceptions of Themselves as Second Language Learners**

Some past studies have looked at students’ perceptions of themselves as second language learners. Wesely (2009) explored motivation in the US French Immersion learning environment. Using Gardner’s Attitude/Motivation Battery Test (2004), Wesely identified motivation factors for Grade 6 L2 students at an Immersion school. One of the findings was that the “micro-context” (Dornyei, 2004) plays a role in motivation in the L2 environment. This micro-context is defined as the personal relationships the students have in the L2 learning environment and the positive impact this can have on
students’ identity as L2 learners. Wesely (2009) concludes that a successful immersion program is dependent on creating positive relationships within the learning environment as well as the promotion of why students should engage in language learning.

Wesely’s 2009 study was completed in a French Immersion environment in the United States and she recommends future qualitative studies in the area.

The reviewed literature supports the research questions posed in this study. However, while the literature review reveals that research on the presented framework exists, it also exposes gaps in the literature and recommendations for future research to which the current study responds.
Chapter 3 – Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology for the study is outlined. It begins with a description of the case study, followed by the data collection methods, a description of the participants and the second language experience and the data analysis approach. The chapter concludes with a discussion on reflexivity, triangulation and validity.

Introduction

I have selected a case study methodology for this qualitative research. The use of a case study allowed me to describe and interpret what happened (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014) in the intermediate/middle school Core French classroom in terms of students’ perceptions towards second language learning and their use of the digital learning space portfolio as an assessment tool. Due to the commonalities that exist in French as a Second Language classrooms in a mid-sized city in Eastern Ontario (curriculum, programming, required minutes), I recruited one Grade 8 Core French classroom to be the focus of this case study. This recruitment took place by word of mouth. The class of twenty-six students was selected based on teacher willingness to participate and the teacher’s enthusiasm to try something new, confidence, comfort and skill with technology and availability of sufficient technology at the site.

The rationale behind the choice of a case study lies in the following: “We study a case when it itself is of very special interest. We look for the detail between interaction with its context. Case study is the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances.” (p. xi, Stake, 1995)
For the purpose of this study, I looked at students’ use of digital learning space portfolio as an assessment tool and their perceptions of themselves as second language learning within the context of one Intermediate Core French classroom.

Data Collection Methods

Recruitment – Site and Participants. This site was chosen as it was the only one of its kind using digital learning space portfolio as an assessment tool in an FSL classroom in the selected school Board. Further, the site was recruited based on access to technology at the site and teacher willingness to participate in the study.

The case study was bounded in terms of time, place and boundaries pre-determined through the selected classroom and creation of the digital learning space. The study was completed in the Fall-Winter of 2016-2017, at a point when students were established in their school routine and environment. The French as a Second Language context outlines 200 minutes of Core French in a 5-day cycle. The study took place over a three-week period and included four classroom visits of approximately 60 minutes per visit.

Multiple forms of data were used to provide for an in-depth exploration of the topic. This data included a teacher and student interviews, student work as artifacts and observations of students using the digital learning space portfolio in-class to “capture the complexity of the case” (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014). “… students are excellent at articulating what they care about and what they need, and we can learn a lot from listening to their stories” (Daniels, 2010, p. 25). Six participants were asked to self-select to participate in the interviews. The open-ended nature of the interviews
allowed me the flexibility to pursue various topics related to learning in the Core French classroom in greater or lesser depth depending on relevance to the individual participants (Patton, 2015). The latter aligns with the case study methodology of the research.

Artifacts consisting of student work in the digital learning space portfolio, both group and individual tasks and feedback from the teacher shared in the personal area of the digital learning space. The first interviews took place prior to the digital learning space being used and were used to gather demographic data as well as open-ended questions about the students’ perceptions of themselves as second language learners. The second interviews took place after students had used the digital learning space portfolio over the course of a three-week period. Interviews with individual students were conducted to further explore students’ responses and their perceptions on the use of digital learning space portfolio. Through these interviews, observations and student work as represented in the digital learning space, student perspectives were elicited to construct an in-depth, detailed, holistic case study and allow for triangulation of data (Patton, 2015). All observations and interviews took place in the students’ school.

**Description of participants and L2 experience**

The participants were part of a Grade 8 Core French class at a new school in a rural setting in Eastern Ontario. The class was comprised of thirteen girls and thirteen boys. The majority of the participants had been studying French for five years, since Grade 4. Two of the students I interviewed said that they had been studying French since Grade 3. One student said that they had attended French camps. Another student
said they knew or were learning other languages such as Portuguese and German. Two students mentioned the online Duolingo program for language learning when speaking about their previous experience learning a second language. Of the fourteen participants, four had an Individual Education Plan, one had a modified program (including French) and three had accommodated programs. Six students participated in the interviews. These participants were self-selected and represented an equal gender split (three girls and three boys) and a range of achievement and engagement.

Core French was scheduled for the first period of the day (9:15 am – 9:55 am) every day of the 5-day cycle for a total of 200 minutes per cycle. After putting their items in their lockers, the students entered the classroom where they were greeted by the teacher and co-op student. The teacher had a plan ready for the students each day with a description of their task on the daily agenda which was shared with the homeroom teacher and posted on the front whiteboard. There was usually a visual to accompany the lesson on the SmartBoard, often the corresponding page in the digital learning space portfolio.

The teacher was in her second-year teaching. She "acquired" this Grade 8 class after a school reorganization in the third week of September. The rest of her full-time teaching assignment comprised Grades 1, 2, 3, 4/5, 6 (1 block) and 7 Core French. Prior to this school year, the teacher had completed a long-term occasional teaching assignment in a Grade 1 French Immersion classroom. She was recommended for this study by the Superintendent responsible for French programming in the Board as someone willing and able to try new things and someone who demonstrated comfort
with technology. Her principal echoed these thoughts when approving the study take place in this classroom at her site.

The teacher introduced the digital learning space with her students through a script that she and I co-created (see Appendix B).

**Data Analysis Approach**

Data collected were analyzed in two stages using a thematic approach. Through an inductive analysis, I identified and defined key phrases and terms that were unique to the students involved in the study (Patton, 2015). Once coded, the key phrases and terms were grouped into themes to describe students’ experiences using the digital learning space portfolio. The key phrases that were grouped under self-beliefs were students’ confidence and comfort, understanding, reason for learning French as a Second Language, time for practice, consistency and views on pronunciation. For motivation and interests (in L2 learning), key phrases included family, travelling, future (e.g. job opportunities), a required subject and communication skills. Within use of technology (and sub-themes of collaboration and choice), the terms identified were access, coordination and continuity of learning, availability, convenience, collaboration, audio features, feedback and choice e.g. break from writing/worksheets, audio features, etc. Phrases related to feedback and assessment included helping to move forward/improve/succeed, monitor progress, frequency and check for understanding.

By looking for “recurring regularities” (Patton, 2015, p. 555), I created codes for the interview data, using the A priori codes from the literature as a starting point and then identifying new codes. I also noted the frequency of the codes. This classification
and coding process produced a framework for organizing and describing what had been collected during the interviews (Patton, 2015). This process was done manually and documented in a table (see Appendix H).

The data addressed the research gap by providing the qualitative data missing from previous studies and advance the knowledge on middle school students’ perceptions of use of a digital learning space in the second language classroom.

**Reflexivity, Triangulation & Validity**

“Reflexivity leads both to understanding one’s own perspective and to owning that perspective” (Patton, 2015, p. 71). My background teaching and learning in the French as a Second Language Program, specifically Core French, and my resulting interest in the study were key to my reflexivity and are disclosed in the study. I know where I’ve been in my own language learning journey, know what I’ve observed as a language teacher and know what I believe in terms of best practice and reaching all students. I do not know 100%, however, where this leaves me now, as knowing where one is in the moment is often the challenge (Lee, 2015).

I chose Microsoft’s Classroom Notebook program as the platform for the digital learning space. This was in part due to my experience with other platforms and my school board’s recent move to the Office 365 software. Both reasons are demonstrative of my subjectivity and previous experience with technology.

The data from the interviews, classroom observations and artifacts contained in the digital learning space portfolio allowed for triangulation, provided responses to the research questions and improved the rigour of this study.
Chapter 4 – Results

The results of the study are discussed in this chapter based on a thematic approach. First, the themes are described in a general sense and then connected specifically to the data.

Data were analyzed using a thematic approach based on six A priori codes. Through an inductive analysis, I identified codes that were unique to the students involved in the study (Patton, 2015). The codes were grouped into themes to explore the participants’ perceptions of learning and the use of the digital learning space as a tool in the Core French classroom.

Classroom Observations (November 24, 2016; December 9, 2016; December 19, 2016; January 13, 2017)

On my four visits to the classroom, a routine was observed. Each class started with a pre-determined set of minutes of oral communication (indicated orally and on the agenda for the day found on the front board). This activity was followed by a group task to complete/continue in the digital learning space using the OneNote Classroom Notebook platform. This activity aligns with the newly added listening strand of the revised Ontario FSL curriculum (OME, 2013) where there is a sub-strand entitled “Interacting with Others”.

The teacher greeted students at the door. The Core French class took place in the students’ homeroom classroom. Upon entering the classroom, one student was
overheard asking, “Are we using OneNote (digital learning space portfolio) again?” suggesting that the use of the digital learning space/technology was also part of the routine (December 19, 2016).

In my observations of the room on one of my visits (December 9, 2016), I noted that the French homework was included on the class homework board established by the homeroom teacher. The students got their technology (laptop, iPad, phone) very quickly. French was at the same time every day, first thing from 9:15am – 9:55am. This same easy uptake was noted on another visit (December 19, 2016) when I noticed a new student, who I learned was from a neighbouring school’s French Immersion program, engaged in the classroom routine. On another occasion, another new student joined the day of the visit. She was introduced to the group and quickly joined into the day’s activity.

The oral communication activity served as an opportunity to practice what was being learned in class and get “minds on” for the activity in the digital learning space portfolio that followed. The teacher said “Bonjour” to get the students’ attention. There was also a co-op student from a neighbouring high school in the class. While he did not speak French, he worked to reinforce the teacher’s message and encourage struggling students. The struggling students I observed were mostly boys who were off task, these same students were also students, as I learned from the teacher, with a modified or accommodated program.
During these visits, I observed the teacher’s calm and encouragement in dealing with the often-challenging needs of the class. She was especially responsive to the students on modified programs. One student announced to the class that they (the student) “suck at French” (December 19, 2016). The teacher’s response was “No, you don’t”. She focused on students’ strengths. For example, “You just answered two questions” in response to “I can’t speak French” (December 19, 2016). A high level of student engagement was observed when the teacher, leading a guessing game to uncover new vocabulary, responded with positive feedback e.g. “It’s close” to the students (December 9, 2016). During this activity, no student passed on their turn and the majority were observed listening to find out what clues had been uncovered.

I witnessed the teacher’s thoughtful planning and purposeful use of instructional strategies to ensure the oral communication learning goal was attainable for all students. She provided modeling, wait time, resources and positive encouragement to help students achieve the learning goals e.g. “You can do it” (December 19, 2016). During the oral communication activity, the teacher was also respectful of individual students’ readiness and did not force a student who responded, “not yet” (December 19, 2016) when asked to take his/her turn. She allowed for choice when a student asked, “can I say the second one (question)?” (December 19, 2016). She was responsive when a student who said he “couldn’t do French” (December 19, 2016) wanted to be asked a different question from the list the teacher was reviewing with the students. The teacher referenced “using your resources” i.e. anchor chart on board, posters on the wall, digital learning space Content library, etc. (December 19, 2016). She also
referred to the learning as a continuum “using everything we’ve been learning for the last month” (December 19, 2016).

In my visits, the teacher demonstrated comfort with the digital learning space and did not get flustered if there was a problem with the technology. She modeled patience in these situations and worked through the issues with the students.

During each visit, the teacher had the digital learning space portfolio open to the Content library on the SmartBoard as well as referring students to it on their own devices. The teacher let me know that this was a daily occurrence as evidenced by the dates recorded in her entries in the digital learning space. In one of the visits, the date on the teacher’s digital learning space entry was the Sunday prior to the lesson. The students let me know that the teacher often added new entries to the Content library on the weekend, something they also let me know that they were checking so they were aware of any new resources to help them complete their assigned tasks.

The teacher gave the students an opportunity to practice each class. The resources in the digital learning space portfolio were offered to support learning. The tasks in the Collaboration space were collaborative and based on student interest (e.g. travel theme). The digital learning space portfolio also allowed for timely, meaningful feedback from the teacher in the Student notebook (personal area of the digital learning space). The teacher also provided oral feedback, redirection and one-on-one support as needed during class time. All of these elements are outlined in the revised Ontario FSL curriculum to foster a successful second language learning environment:
Mastering the skills and concepts connected with learning in the FSL curriculum requires ongoing practice, personal reflection, an effort to respond to feedback, and commitment from students. It also requires a willingness to try new activities, take risks in using French, and work respectfully with peers. Students will have ongoing practice in using French in contextualized, meaningful, and age-appropriate situations. Through reflection on their use of French, students will deepen their appreciation and understanding of the French language as well as of themselves and others. (OME, 2013, p. 11)

As part of the digital learning task I observed on one of my visits, students were organized in groups of three, in their choice of group, and each had a role within the group. During this time, the teacher circulated helping students. She began with a group of boys who appeared to be having difficulty getting started/focused. Students were observed using different strategies to work in the digital learning space portfolio during this time for example, one group had the resources (Content library) and dialogue task (in the students’ personal area) open on two devices so they could move easily from one to the other. Another group saw everyone on task. This group included a former French Immersion student who served as a positive model for her own group and was also observed helping another group. Some boys started to be distracted at the end, talking about the supply teacher who would be in next and were interrupted by someone asking for permission forms. During this class, the teacher was
overheard saying “you’re not going to fail French” to a student (December 19, 2016).

After one of my visits, the teacher shared with me the feedback one student gave her: “You’re the first person who told me that I can (do French)” (December 9, 2016). In my time observing her classroom, her positivity and growth mindset were evident. This was confirmed in the interview with her when she spoke of her students with high needs: “I’m not giving up on Joe (pseudonym)” (January 22, 2017). Whether it was helping students access the digital learning space during class time or providing redirection or re-explanation as needed and feedback outside of class time via the digital learning space portfolio, the teacher remained positive and focused on ensuring the success of her students.

**Description of Themes**

The following questions guided this study: (1) What does a digital learning space portfolio mean to Grade 8 students?; and (2) What are students’ perceptions of themselves as second language learners in a Core French classroom that utilizes a digital learning space portfolio?

The themes identified were students’ self-beliefs; their motivation and interests in second language (L2) learning; use of technology with sub-themes of collaboration, convenience and continuity of learning and choice; feedback and assessment; and new themes of sense of trust and the role of the teacher.
Self-Beliefs

Self-beliefs are defined as students' self-perceptions of themselves as language learners. They refer to students' identity as second language learners in terms of how they feel about themselves as second language learners, what helps them learn French as a Second Language and why they believe studying FSL is important.

In the interviews, the student participants spoke of their beliefs about themselves as French as a Second Language learners in terms of confidence and comfort (code # 1a). One of the participants started by telling me that she was the "smart one" in terms of her French as a second language learning (Participant 3, November 24, 2016). Some of the students said they “felt confident”, one said he “wasn’t good at French but could get better through practice (code # 1d) and more focus” (Participant 5, Nov. 24, 2016). Another student said, “even if I don’t end up going somewhere where they all speak French, knowing that I can and that I have that possibility (code # 1c) feels cool” (Participant 2, Nov. 24, 2016). In our pre-study interview, one student said she “felt good (about herself as an L2 learner) because I’m learning different things (code # 1c). I’m very confident (code #1a) when I’m studying for things, even when we’re using the laptop” (Participant 6, Nov. 24, 2016). Another student said they felt “kind of comfortable (code # 1a)” (Participant 4, Nov. 24, 2016) as an L2 learner – “I’m good at understanding what someone is saying, I’m not always the best at saying what someone is saying ... replying to what someone has said to me” (code #1e, Participant 4, Nov. 24, 2016). Other limitations within the language that students identified were: “I don’t like getting up in front of the class and speaking” (Participant 4, November 24, 2016) and
“the verbs and the masculine and feminine part of that” (code #1e, Participant 2, November 24, 2016). In her post-study interview, Participant 2 also mentioned that she had been “really confused with the verbs and the grammar” (code #1e, January 13, 2017).

The teacher said that she found the digital learning space portfolio helpful for students developing positive perceptions of themselves as second language learners. “I think it’s helped in the sense that they can choose to hear themselves (code #3h) and see that they are capable of writing and not getting stuck at that “I can’t do it” stage ... so I think there is a transition to a positive outlook but did it come from the tech, I’m not 100% sure.”

**Motivation and Interests in L2 Learning**

Students’ motivation and interests in L2 learning are defined as their self-images and/or by their successful engagement with the learning process e.g. because they discover they are good at it (Dornyei, 2009). The self-images can be generated internally or externally. The goals the students set for themselves, their self-efficacy and their anxiety can also be used to describe students’ motivation (Kissau, 2006).

In the interviews, the participants spoke of their motivation to learn French as a Second Language. For example, some talked about travel and job opportunities: “the possibility of going somewhere where you can speak French”; “better job opportunities” (code #2c); “I know it’s going to help me with my future” (code #2c, Participant 3, Nov. 24, 2016). One talked about “grades and tests and pressure ... my parents want me to
do good in French” (code #2a, Participant 2, Nov. 24, 2016). Another said, “it’s cool to learn so you have more languages than just the one so you can enhance your communication skills.” (code #2e, Participant 4, Nov. 24, 2016). The participants also talked about how the digital learning space helped them do this: “I understand more now and feel like I can say a paragraph about anything in French.” (code #2e, Participant 6, January 13, 2017).

When asked about their interest(s) in learning French as a second language, I received a variety of responses. One student stated: “I really like the culture” (code #2f, Participant 3, Nov. 24, 2016). One student referenced the teacher, “probably one of my favourite French teachers that I’ve had” (Participant 1, Nov. 24, 2016). Another student responded, “I like all of it in general. It’s a different language with different words and different accents and it’s cool because it’s French people’s language.” The same student said, “I just like French, I know I’ve said this a lot” (Participant 6, Nov. 24, 2016).

**Use of Technology Needs of the Adolescent Learner.** The needs of the adolescent learner are many and include choice, challenge, collaboration and authenticity (Marinak, 2013). The use of the digital learning space offers an opportunity to meet all of these needs.

When discussing the use of the digital learning space portfolio in the L2 classroom, participants spoke of its convenience, availability of resources, organization, ease-of-use, audio features and access (remote, 24/7): “You didn’t lose papers at all” (code #3b); “I used it when I went to Florida for Winter Break” (code #3a, Participant 2,
January 13, 2017); “…it was easier to use than a bunch of papers. Once I figured it out and how to use everything” (code #3b, Participant 1, January 13, 2017); “a lot more convenient at times. Instead of having to take sheets home, you would just have to go onto that online thing and all of your work was right there” (codes #3b and 3d, Participant 1, January 13, 2017). Another student shared: “it (the digital learning space portfolio) keeps you organized, you can put your slots in different places so that you can find them, like you can put things in your tasks” (code #3b, Participant 5, January 13, 2017).

**Convenience and Continuity of Learning**

One student commented that the convenience would be beneficial to using the digital learning space in other subjects: “I think it would be really nice to use in Math or Science in class or still French because it’s more convenient and then instead of having all of these loose papers you can just lose, you have them all in one spot” (codes #3b and #3d, Participant 4, January 13, 2017). Two students described convenience (code #3d) and the ability to continue learning (code #3b) when absent from school: “so if you were away a day so instead of missing a whole class and missing how to pronounce these things, you could still access these things through the OneNote (digital learning space portfolio)” (Participant 4, January 13, 2017); “… if you miss a day of class or you don’t understand something and you’re at home then you can ask your peers in a group setting more than just texting them and the teacher can also see if you have a question” (Participant 2, January 13, 2017).
One student described convenience in terms of access to technology: “It was something about it that just seemed more convenient because everybody has technology so if you need to look something up, you don’t need to go and get your technology because you already have it” (code #3d, Participant 4, January 13, 2017). Another participant had similar thoughts on the use of the digital learning space portfolio:

I liked how you won’t lose it very easily, I always have my phone with me and I can go on the app and everything’s already saved. There are different folders you can go into and that helps a lot of the time so I know which topic we’re going on. (Participant 6, January 13, 2017)

The teacher also spoke of the ease of use and continuity of learning: “I like it because it (the digital learning space portfolio) cut down on the amount of time spent sorting papers, giving papers ... it cut down on losing papers, starting, can’t find them” (codes #3b and #3d, January 22, 2017).

As their preferred part of the digital learning space portfolio, another student indicated that, “the content library part where the teacher would post things.” When I clarified what “things” were, the student said, “assignments or little things like pronunciation” (code #3f, Participant 2, January 13, 2017). A few other students mentioned referring to the teacher’s recordings in the digital learning space helping them with their pronunciation. For example, “I was looking to see if Mme had posted any more notes or helping things (be)cause she puts up different notes on how to
pronounce different words and she puts audios in too so it’s a lot easier to follow” (codes #3b and #3f, Participant 2, January 13, 2017).

This was a key point meaning that the digital portfolio is an active learning space that is asynchronous to the ongoing meetings between the classroom teacher and the students. It was also used as a tool to coordinate these meetings and keep everyone on the same page:

“Mme would tell us what we were doing as the subject and what we were learning about and then she’d write down different things that would help us so we could look it up and try and collaborate paragraphs on it.” (codes #3b and #3e, Participant 6, January 13, 2017)

One student (on a modified program) said that the work was the same (in the digital learning space), “it was just taught, showed to us differently” (Participant 1, January 13, 2017). The teacher spoke further on the impact of the digital learning space on her students with modified or accommodated programs – “the device aspect helped those that are accommodated in the fact that they always had it and it was always there and they weren’t singled out by the fact that they have the tech.” The latter comment “they always had it” (code # 3a) aligns with the students’ comments about the accessibility of the digital learning space and reaching all students (January 22, 2017).
Collaboration and Choice

Collaboration is described as interacting with others (OME, 2013), working with their friends to help students learn (Social Interdependence Theory) and a means to redistribute power and establish more collaborative relationships with students as found in Tunstall and Gipps’s (1996) study in Great Britain.

The theme of collaboration reoccurred throughout the interviews when asked what part the students liked most about the digital learning space portfolio. In explaining why they liked the collaboration area of the digital learning space portfolio, one student said: “Because your classmates could also post things on there so you could get a better idea of what you’re talking about and you could look at your peers’ answers to get a deeper understanding” (code #3e, Participant 2, January 13, 2017). Another student said that they preferred the collaboration space which they referred to as the “group chat” (code #3e, Participant 5, January 13, 2017). The same student said, “if you don’t know, you can go on and ask somebody.”

This theme of collaboration was mentioned by another student when describing the digital learning space portfolio: “it’s not just one person with a laptop, it’s everybody who can throw their ideas on it” (code #3e, Participant 3, January 13, 2017); and “I liked the Collaboration Space”. It gave me a chance to work with my friends on something” (code #3e, Participant 3, January 13, 2017).
The teacher also spoke of the collaborative features of the digital learning space portfolio. “… and I like the idea of being able to collaborate the ... I like the idea of the collaboration space ... but I wish there was something ... it frequently got used in a silly, silly way ... so more like I think I’d have to spend, I’d have more time to teach them on the self-regulation about it” (January 22, 2017).

Another student spoke to choice and said that the digital learning space offered a “break from writing” (code #3h). The same student also said that they “prefer writing with Word. I do a lot of writing so it’s my go to” (Participant 3, January 13, 2017).

**Feedback and Assessment**

Feedback is described in the way students are able to receive it (e.g. text, audio, video), its purpose (e.g. to develop students' competence, explain their reasoning) and its timing and frequency. Feedback can also be described in terms of the opportunity it provides for students to remain challenged and within their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). The use of feedback and student assessment can serve social, motivational purposes as well as cognitive and informational ones (Shepard, 2000).

Feedback was another theme that emerged from the classroom visits and in the interviews. During one of my classroom visits, one student showed me the online discussion in the collaboration space. The student had thought that another student had erased their work but they discovered it was still there. The student told me there
was feedback for each student in the Student Notebook (personal area) from the teacher and that they had “gone back to fix it (their work)” (December 9, 2016) based on this feedback. In my interviews with the students, one student stated the following regarding teacher feedback: “I found on OneNote (the digital learning space portfolio) she (the teacher) (gave feedback) a lot more often” (code #4c, Participant 2, January 13, 2017). The same student described the feedback as the following: “I like when Mme gives us feedback, because it helps me understand what I need to improve on. (code #4a) In probing a bit further, the participant described how the teacher gave her feedback through the digital learning space portfolio:

“She puts notes on the side of the tasks that we do or she highlights things. If she highlights things, she always comes back and talks to us about what she highlighted and why.” S: Did she do that before the OneNote (digital learning space portfolio)? “Not a lot. I found on OneNote she did it a lot often, I mean frequently” (code #4c).

Students also spoke of what assessment meant to them in the interviews. Participant 1 (November 24, 2016) described assessment as “Getting marked on your work, seeing where you’re at and how you’re doing.” (code #4b) Participant 3 identified assessment similarly with “how well I am progressing in my French work” (code #4b, November 24, 2016).

Another student referred to assessment “like a test or so that the teacher can check your understanding about French so they know where you are in French and what
they need to teach you next.” (code #4d, Participant 4, January 13, 2017) This theme of knowing what to do next was how Participant 6 described assessment: “I think of (it as) something that helps me succeed more, like I know what’s right or wrong so I can bump up my answers and be stronger in it (French)” (code #4a, November 24, 2016). Later, when talking about assessment in terms of the digital learning space portfolio, the same participant said “it’s kind of like I’m not missing out on anything because I can look back to it the night before so I won’t get something wrong. S: When you say look back the night before, you mean on your phone, on OneNote (digital learning space portfolio)? Yeah, I have a laptop too but I mainly use my phone if I’m busy and need to look at it” (code #4d, January 13, 2017).

One student summed up the varied gains from the use of the digital learning space as the following:

I feel like I understand more than when we started because when we started I was really confused with the verbs and pronunciation and with OneNote (digital learning space portfolio) you can put audios in so you can hear it back to you. I got better on my tests … When other people were talking to me, I could kind of understand what they were saying more clearly. (Participant 2, January 13, 2017)

A theme that emerged in my interviews with the students was a sense of trust. “It (using the digital learning space) was a sense of trust from our teacher because (the teacher) was letting everyone use it (technology)” (Participant 3, January 13, 2017).
Another new theme that emerged was the role of the teacher as one student referred to the teacher as their favourite part about French class (Participant 1, Nov. 24, 2016).
Chapter 5 – Discussion and Conclusion

The themes identified in the data analysis were close to the grounded themes identified in the literature review. Motivation, engagement, learning and well-being will be most evidenced in learning environments where students (adolescents) are afforded opportunities to feel autonomous, competent and emotionally supported (Deci and Ryan, 2002, as cited in Eccles and Roeser, 2011). The use of the digital learning space portfolio promoted students' motivation to study French through the opportunities mentioned above. The emphasis of their responses was on their future use of the French language (e.g. for job opportunities and travel). Two students mentioned family as a source of motivation. One student mentioned “liking all of it” (Participant 6, November 24, 2016) when speaking about learning a second language.

Another student indicated the teacher was a source of motivation: “one of my favourite French teachers that I’ve had” (Participant 1, November 24, 2016). I observed the teacher support in the classroom during my visits – the teacher was calm, encouraging and positive. She knew her students, their interests and their learning needs, both from the time she spent with them in class and the interactions she had with them via the digital learning space portfolio. Through these points of contact, the teacher successfully met the students where they were at with by engaging them in activities that challenged them appropriately and allowed them to experience success as evidenced by their participation in the digital learning space, both at school and at home, and improved marks for some.
Adolescents both need and want to know how their learning at school connects to their lives (Daniels, 2010). This was supported by a number of student responses. For example, students spoke about knowing what they were learning about next and being able to refer to the Content library (resource section) of the digital learning space portfolio, both in class and from home and remote locations. While this points to the ease of use and continuity of learning, it also speaks to the teacher's planning of themes that were connected to the interests of her students. For example, the teacher planned a unit around travel which included vocabulary and verbs related to travel, writing a postcard, and describing a tourist destination where French is spoken. It also speaks to the students' view on assessment in that they view it as helping them to know where they are and helps the teacher to know what to teach next.

Meyer et al (2010) also state that it is important to have the use of the digital learning space portfolio integrated into classroom practice versus an isolated event. Barrett emphasizes the same that “(e-)portfolios should be used simultaneously to support an environment of reflection and collaboration” (2007, p. 444). The digital learning space portfolio then becomes part of the classroom routine and culture as I observed in the Grade 8 Core French classroom.

Deci and Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory (1985) links to the importance of choice for middle school students. According to this theory, adolescents need and want to exercise some control over their lives. In the interviews, one student talked about being able to access the digital learning space from home where they were “less
distracted” (Participant 6, January 13, 2017). The teacher offered students choice in terms of making groups for the activities in the digital learning space. Through the Content Library, the teacher also modeled and provided the students with choice of how to complete their work in the digital learning space portfolio (i.e. video, audio and written formats). Students had the option of accessing the digital learning space portfolio from home and from a variety of devices (phone, laptop, iPad, desktop) which allowed for ease of use and continuity of learning.

Offering choice allows students to develop ownership over their learning, which leads to increased desire to participate in school (Daniels, 2010). This was evidenced through the student engagement observed in the classroom visits and documented in their participation in the digital learning space as well as improved report card marks for some.

Marinak (2013) speaks to the needs of adolescent learners specific to language learning. One of the attributes of instructional strategies she identifies as key to adolescents’ motivation in language learning is collaboration. The digital learning space portfolio allowed and was utilized for collaboration as identified by the data collected from the students. Aligned with the social interdependence theory, the literature states that students identified working with friends as an activity that helped them learn. This was communicated by the students interviewed through their positive view of and references to the collaboration occurring through the digital learning space portfolio. For example, one student stated, “Because your classmates could also post things on
there so you could get a better idea of what you’re talking about and you could look at your peers’ answers to get a deeper understanding” (Participant 2, January 13, 2017).

For adolescents, “their vision of their learning stems from their peers, themselves and their role models” (Dunkel, 2006 as cited in Dornyei, 2009, p. 33).

Further to this, the need for goal setting, individualized study plans and a check-up phase to support feedback is discussed by Dornyei (2009). During one of my classroom visits, one student showed me the online discussion. The student had thought that another student had erased their work but they discovered it was still there. The student told me there was feedback for each student in the Student notebook (personal area) and that they had “gone back to fix it (their work)” based on this feedback. In my interviews with the students, one student stated the following regarding teacher feedback: “I found on OneNote (digital learning space portfolio) she (the teacher) (gave feedback) a lot more often” (Participant 2, January 13, 2017). The Collaboration space also allowed the students to give and receive peer feedback.

A new code that emerged in my interviews with the students was a sense of trust which relates to feeling autonomous and supported (Deci and Ryan, 2002 as cited in Eccles and Roeser, 2011). “It (using the digital learning space) was a sense of trust from our teacher because (the teacher) was letting everyone use it (technology)” (Participant 3, January 13, 2017).

Another new code and theme that emerged was the role of the teacher as one student referred to the teacher as their favourite part about French class. The role of
the teacher was also evident in my classroom observations. One of Wesely’s findings (2009) was that the “micro-context” (Dornyei, 2004) plays a role in motivation in the L2 environment. This micro-context is further defined as the personal relationships the students have in the L2 learning environment and the positive impact this can have on students’ identity as L2 learners. The positive relationship the teacher had with her students was evident and helped to create a positive, safe and inclusive learning environment for her students.

Meyer et al (2010) also states that it is key to have the use of digital learning space integrated into classroom practice versus an isolated event. For the three-week duration of the study, the students were using the digital learning space for their assigned tasks, resources and collaborative activities. The teacher spoke of the time period of the study and the availability of the technology within the school.

“I think an extended period of time which is why I’m continuing to use it … just getting used to listening to themselves and hearing themselves … and then it comes down to the number of tech, the amount of tech we have and that would be … If we consistently had enough (for) each student, that consistently worked, I think the space would be far more efficient, like it would just be … flow a little bit better than when you’re grabbing from different classes.” (January 22, 2017)
New themes: New Insights

The new themes that emerged were a sense of trust and the role of the teacher. The latter ties into the “micro-context” of the L2 classroom (Dornyei, 2004). The former, a sense of trust, is important for adolescent students’ well-being and may have contributed to their willingness to try the digital learning space portfolio and in a sense, reciprocate the trust they felt their teacher bestowed on them.

Other questions that emerged were around the impact of the use of the digital learning space on male versus female students. Kissau touches on the male versus female aspect in his 2006 study where he notes a waning of interest in second language learning from male middle school students. His study, however, does not go further into this topic except to suggest that more research is needed.

A number of the participants in this study were on a modified or accommodated program. They were often the students I observed receiving redirection or positive encouragement from the teacher. They were also the students who I often observed being off task in my visits. The impact of the use of the digital learning space portfolio on students with special learning needs is another area that could be researched.

Last but not least, one participant brought up the idea of using the digital learning space in other subjects like Math or Science. This, too, is connected to Meyer’s (2010) research that use of a digital learning space portfolio cannot be done in isolation. The student made these connections to other areas of his academic life, thereby making the learning more meaning for himself?
Limitations

The study started off with a bang, literally, as the teacher suffered a concussion on Day 2 of the study. This, however, is reflective of the teaching profession because we can have the perfect plan (lesson, day, week, or unit) and then things happen (snow days, tournaments, students’ interests leading the project in another direction, etc....). Despite the start-stop beginning, constant use of the system remained the end goal meaning that using the digital learning space portfolio via the Microsoft Classroom Notebook for learning was their focus.

While the sample size was small (fourteen of the twenty-six students in the class participated in the study), the students’ responses were centred around the same themes that grounded the study in the literature. Six students, three boys and three girls, self-selected and participated in pre- and post-study surveys. The self-selection itself is considered a limitation because of the bias it represents i.e. why did these students choose themselves over others?

The school, while new, was also a rural school and a distance from the city where I lived so access was not always easy and visits ended being one time per week during the study. Seeing and hearing more of the students’ daily interactions while they were using the digital learning space portfolio (with each other, with their teacher, working independently) may have allowed me further insight into their perceptions of the tool and themselves as L2 learners.
While tech savvy and tech equipped, access to technology (e.g. iPads, laptops) was challenging for the class featured in the study. Many students brought devices from home, however the teacher was still left borrowing from other classes to ensure each student had access to a device. The class also discovered a few glitches in the program i.e. the online version (used on iPads and iPhones) did not offer the same tools that the desktop version (used on laptops did). Students, for example, often had difficulties saving their work at times which was a source of frustration. The teacher also spoke of the limitations with the digital learning space. “... as the class as a whole, I just found that it took a little bit longer to get work done and umm to get on track, to get started on work” (January 22, 2017). The teacher also identified some issues with the platform used – “so the platform itself, I think it needs to be more consistent across (devices).”

The role of teacher may be considered another limitation. Would another teacher be able to implement this in the same way or were there unique characteristics about the teacher featured in this study outside of the selection criteria (i.e. comfort with technology, willing to try something new, etc.) that made this intervention work? Overall, I would suggest that a thoughtful and caring teacher will be able to learn from the results of this study and adapt the system into their own teaching.
Summary of Findings and Conclusion

This study helped to close some of the gaps that were identified in the literature, namely that no previous research had explored students’ perceptions of the use of digital learning space portfolios and student beliefs about themselves as second language learners in middle school Core French classrooms in Canada.

The results of the study were positive. The students embraced the digital learning space portfolio as part of their classroom routine. They used it for the period of the study (and beyond) to the best of their ability, some accessing more features (e.g. audio, video, and remote access) than others. Overall, the participants said they had a positive experience using the system. The only frustration they voiced with the digital learning space portfolio were technical difficulties. The students interviewed started from a good place, meaning that they began with a positive outlook about themselves as L2 learners in second language learning and awareness of their strengths and areas of growth.

Three of the six participants in the interviews indicated that the Collaboration Space was the part they liked best about the digital learning space portfolio. The participants also talked about the digital learning space offering the opportunity to work together, learn from each other and develop a deeper understanding of the material. The participants referenced the teacher’s contributions to the digital learning space portfolio as well – highlighting the resources she added to the Content Library in and outside of school hours (e.g. audio recordings) of correct pronunciation and the
feedback she provided via notes and highlights which helped them further their learning. All of the participants interviewed spoke of the convenience of the digital learning space in terms of access. One of the students talked about being able to work on the tasks at home through the digital learning space portfolio where she felt less distracted, indirectly referring to the choice that the space offered through its remote and 24/7 access.

The teacher continued to use the digital learning space portfolio after the three-week period of the study. She eventually stopped as there were internet connectivity issues at the school that made use of the digital learning space portfolio “more than a challenge on a regular basis than helpful but students always had the option of doing their work on it.” One student, the same student who suggested using the digital learning space portfolio for other subjects, continued to use the space for his French tasks for the remainder of the year.

Despite some technical difficulties, the teacher found the experience using the digital learning space portfolio to be a positive one as well. She said she planned to use the digital learning space again in the new school year for her middle school Core French classes (Grades 6, 7 and 8).

Some of the technical difficulties that the class experienced have since been resolved by Microsoft. For example, the platform now offers the same features across devices and through the online and desktop formats.
As noted the role of the teacher was a key finding of this study. Her calm, solutions-oriented approach coupled with her comfort with technology, established routine and knowledge of her students’ strengths and areas of need was evident. She helped the students through their tech issues as best she could and was diligent in posting documents (video, text, etc.) to the Content Library and modeling how the digital learning space could be used and accessed outside of school hours. She was consistent in providing feedback for students’ work through the students’ personal area both during and outside of school hours. The teacher also consistently monitored the students at work during class time, providing feedback, redirecting students who were off task and trouble-shooting tech questions as they came up. She demonstrated confidence especially as an early career teacher. She put trust in her students and their abilities and created collaborative tasks based on student interest.

This study demonstrates the positive impact of the use of a digital learning space portfolio on Grade 8 Core French students and demonstrates itself as a hybrid tool that embeds assessment and learning together in an online space. Through this space, students voiced the opportunity to work collaboratively on projects, communicate with and obtain feedback from their teacher in and outside of class time, have 24/7 and remote access to resources to support their learning and choose the format to share their work e.g. audio, video, text. These are all constructs that the research says promotes a positive and meaningful learning experience for middle school students. The students had a good relationship with their teacher which research also says is key to a positive learning experience.
The students also had the opportunity to access their learning wherever they were, whenever they wanted. Their learning was no longer tied to the confines of a duotang or to the FSL classroom. The ease of use and continuity of learning were talked about by the participants as was the feedback the teacher gave them through the digital learning space. Students knew where to find their work, the resources and their peers for questions. They also knew where they could find their teacher and knew that they would receive timely and meaningful feedback to help them move forward in their learning.

Would this same timely and meaningful feedback have been available outside of the digital learning space portfolio? Would students have been able to refer back to the feedback and their work and track their growth in another medium? Based on my experience teaching FSL, I’m not sure. Having seen so many worksheets and duotangs of Core French tasks end up in the garbage, the permanency of the digital learning space with its flexible “insides”, including the content (resource) library, made it almost impossible to throw away. The student who kept using the digital learning space portfolio regularly after the class was no longer accessing it speaks to the longevity of the space and perhaps its meaning for students too. It was this same student who talked about the benefits of using/extend such a space for learning to other subjects, like Math and Science.

**Future research**

With the above student voice in mind, future studies could focus on the impact of using the digital learning spaces in other/all subjects including Core French. A greater
focus on what the digital learning space portfolio means to students with special needs
is also an area that could be further explored as the digital learning space offers a
variety of ways to access the learning and ensure equity of opportunities and outcomes
in the classroom.

Another area of future research could be to explore the perceptions of male and
female students, both on their perceptions of the use of the digital learning space and
themselves as L2 learners. This data could add to and update Kissau’s (2006) study that
speaks to the waning of male engagement in the FSL classroom.

Other questions for future research could include - how does a digital learning
space portfolio support and/or enhance the 21st Century Competencies (OME, 2016) of
collaboration, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and communication? How
could a future study focusing on even one of these areas help us to further understand
what the digital learning space portfolio means to students? For example, the digital
learning space portfolio in the Microsoft platform is called the Classroom Notebook and
is called this to highlight its collaborative purposes. How is this purpose meaningful to
students? How does the choice of where and when to use the digital learning space
portfolio promote autonomy and ownership in the students that use it?

Cooke (2013) specifically identified the need to create challenge in the FSL
classroom. This was based on her findings that novice FSL teachers identified
themselves least effective in their ability to promote students’ critical and creative
thinking skills. How does this connect to motivation and what role could the digital
learning space portfolio play in creating challenge for students and teachers?
As per the teacher’s voice and feedback, the relationship between self-regulation and the digital learning space portfolio could also be an area of future study. The teacher noted: “I like the idea of the collaboration space … but I wish there was something … it frequently got used in a silly, silly way … so more like I think I’d have to spend, I’d have more time to teach them on the self-regulation about it.” This theme of self-regulation comes up in previous research (e.g. Abrami et al, 2013) and also by one of the participants who says that she likes to work in the digital learning space at home where she was “less distracted” (Participant 6, January 13, 2017).

Longer duration studies (i.e. longer than three weeks) could also look at students’ perceptions of themselves as language learners over longer periods of time. How do these perceptions change over time? How do we measure these changes? Do they reset every year? How much is their self-identity based on internal versus external images and how much is based on the process of learning (Dornyei, 2009)? What are the sub-themes of students’ self-beliefs and their motivation and interest in FSL learning?

Last but not least, the role of the teacher, with respect to the general success of the use of the digital learning space portfolio as a learning tool, should be examined in more detail. Traces of this insight were evident in this study, through my classroom observations, in the participants’ interviews and in the teacher’s continuous efforts to model the use of and contribute to the digital learning space including the positive characterization at the start and throughout the technical difficulties that the class faced. Wesely concludes that “creating a school environment that fosters these
relationships, as well as promoting instrumental and integrative reasons to learn language, are vital to the cultivation of a successful immersion program” (Wesely, 2009, p. 281).

The use of the digital learning space portfolios to support second language learning is one that should continue to be explored with the goal of helping improve students’ perceptions of themselves as learners and their motivation to learn French as a Second Language.
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program to enhance self-regulated and self-motivated cycles of student learning.


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Appendix A

Microsoft Classroom Notebook (2017)
Appendix B

To introduce the class notebook, the following points were shared with the students:

- It is a digital notebook where you will have access to a variety of tools.
- The key tools of the notebook are:
  1. Collaboration space is where everyone is able to post. Posting is to be appropriate and in French. Multiple people can edit at the same time and it saves automatically.
  1. Content library: where resources and work will be found. I am the only one that can post in this. You can copy documents from here and put them in to a section in your own notebook.
  2. Your own notebook: this is between you and I. No one else can see or access it. You can add not just written files but pictures, videos and audio files. Your work will be submitted in the notebook and I will provide you with feedback in the notebook.
- You can access the Notebook from home or school
- If you have any questions as you go, to let Mme know.
Appendix C

Student Questions:

Pre-study

1. How long have you been learning French?
2. Do you speak French at home?
3. What do you like about learning French?
4. What do you find challenging about learning French?
5. Do you use French or work on French activities outside of school?
6. How do you feel about yourself as a French as a second language learner?
7. Would you still want to learn French even if it was not required at school?
8. What does the word assessment mean to you in the context of the Core French classroom?

Post-study

1. What did you like about using technology in French class?
2. Did you access the digital learning space outside of class time? If yes, when and how?
3. What section of the digital learning space did you prefer (collaboration area, student notebook, resources section)?
4. How do you feel about yourself as a French as a second language learner after using this space?
5. How do you feel about your progress after using the digital learning space?
6. Would you like to use the digital learning space for future learning or projects? If so, why?
7. Is there anything you would change about the digital learning space?
8. Has your view of assessment in the Core French classroom changed since using the digital learning space? If yes, please explain.
Appendix D

Teacher Questions

Post-study

1. How do you feel about the use of the digital learning space in your classroom?
   Prompts: positively, negatively
2. How do you feel it impacted students’ perceptions of themselves as second language learners?
3. What changes, if any, did you notice in your students during this three-week period? Prompt: comments/observations of classroom behaviour
4. Is there anything your students said they would want to change about the digital learning space?
5. Is there anything you would change about the digital learning space?
Appendix E

LETTER OF INFORMATION and CONSENT FORM

De-duotanging Core French: what a digital learning space means to Grade 8 students?

This research is being conducted by Susanna Jurkowski under the supervision of Dr. Richard Reeve, in the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. This study has been granted clearance by the General Research Ethics Board according to Canadian research ethics principles (http://www.ethics.gc.ca/default.aspx) and Queen’s University policies (http://www.queensu.ca/urs/research-etcics).

What is this study about? The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between the use of a digital learning space as a learning and assessment tool in middle school and students’ perceptions of themselves as second language learners. This study will also address the existing gap in the literature on students’ perceptions of the use a digital learning space in the middle school second language classroom.

What is involved to participate in this study? This study will focus on the use of a digital learning space that will be part of all students’ normal curricular activity over a 3-week period of time. The principal investigator will visit the site to complete classroom observations of the participants using the digital learning space. The observations will be recorded in the form of notes. Your children are invited to do the following as part of the study:

a) Complete an on-line survey (20 minutes)
b) Be observed – 1-2 times per week for a maximum of 60 minutes per week
c) Allow access to their artifacts (contributions to the digital learning space) as part of the digital learning space and have these artifacts be used as part of public presentations
d) Participate in two interviews (20 minutes each, in a public space in the school) - 4-5 participants, self-nominated, randomly selected from self-nominating group, interviews will be conducted on an individual basis on the school premise during regular classroom time

There are no known physical, psychological, economic, or social risks associated. Participation in the survey portion of the study will require the missing of some class time. A time will be negotiated with the teacher to ensure that the survey can be completed with the least amount of disruption for the participants. The benefits to this study will be the expansion of current knowledge and understanding of a digital learning
space in the Intermediate Core French classroom and students’ understanding of themselves as second language learners.

**Is participation voluntary?** Yes. Your child should not feel obliged to answer any questions that you find objectionable or that make you feel uncomfortable. Your child may choose to withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your standing in school. If you wish to withdraw, you may contact myself, Susanna Jurkowski at 613-539-3060 or via e-mail (14sdj1@queensu.ca) or my supervisor, Richard Reeve (see below for contact information). If you withdraw, you may request removal of all or part of your data from the dataset. However, one month following the end of using the digital learning space all identifying information in the data will have been converted to pseudonyms and therefore removal of your child’s data will be impossible.

**What will happen to your responses?** Your child’s responses will be kept confidential. Only the researcher, Susanna Jurkowski, and her supervisor, Dr. Richard Reeve will have access to this information. Your child’s identity will be protected to the extent possible. Results from this study may be published in professional journals or presented at conferences for language teachers, but any such presentations will maintain individual confidentiality to the extent possible. In accordance with the Faculty of Education’s policy, data will be retained for a minimum of five years. If data are used for secondary analysis they will contain no identifying information.

**What if you have concerns?** Any questions about study participation may be directed to Susanna Jurkowski at 14sdj1@queensu.ca or 613-539-3060 or Dr. Richard Reeve at reever@queensu.ca or 613-533-6000 x77296. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research study.

**Your signature below indicates that you have read this Letter of Information and have had any questions answered to your satisfaction. Please keep a copy of this letter for your records.**

Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Signature: ________________________
CONSENT FORM

De-duotanging Core French: What does a digital learning space mean to Grade 8 students?

Name (please print clearly): ________________________________________

1. I have read the Letter of Information and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.

2. I understand that my child will be participating in the study called De-duotanging Core French: What does a digital learning space mean to Grade 8 students? I understand that this means that my child will be asked to:
   a) Complete an online survey (20 minutes)
   b) Participate in two interviews (4-5 participants, self-nominated, randomly selected from self-nominating group, 20 minutes each, in a public space in the school, on an individual basis)
   c) Be observed – 1-2 times per week for a maximum of 60 minutes per week
   d) Allow access to their artifacts (contributions to the digital learning space) as part of the digital learning space and have these artifacts be used as part of public presentations
   e) Have their Core French achievement data shared with the researcher.
   f) Have their data archived for a minimum of 5 years.

3. I understand that my child’s participation in this study is voluntary and he/she may withdraw at any time. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the data now and in the future. Only researchers affiliated with this study will have access to my data. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at scientific conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality. I understand that I am entitled to a copy of the findings, if I am interested.

4. I am aware that if I have any questions, concerns, or complaints, I may contact Susanna Jurkowski at 14sdj1@queensu.ca or 613-539-3060 or Dr. Richard Reeve at reever@queensu.ca or 613-533-6000 x77296. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.
5. I have read the above statements and freely consent to participate in this research:

Signature: ___________________________ Date: _____________________
Appendix F

LETTER OF INFORMATION and CONSENT FORM

De-duotanging Core French: What does a digital learning space mean to Grade 8 students?

This research is being conducted by Susanna Jurkowski (Master of Education, Candidate) under the supervision of Dr. Richard Reeve in the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. This study has been granted clearance by the General Research Ethics Board according to Canadian research ethics principles (http://www.ethics.gc.ca/default.aspx) and Queen’s University policies (http://www.queensu.ca/urs/research-ethics).

What is this study about? The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between the use of a digital learning space as a learning and assessment tool in middle school and students’ perceptions of themselves as second language learners. This study will also address the existing gap in the literature on students’ perceptions of the use of a digital learning space in the middle school second language classroom.

What is involved to participate in this study? There are different levels of participation in this study. You will be required to allow your students time and technology to access the digital learning space as part of their regular classroom programming. I will set up a meeting with you prior to the study commencing to prepare the digital learning space for your class’ current/next unit of study. We will also prepare a script of how to introduce this space to the class. This will require approximately an hour to two hours of your time. Once the digital learning space is ready, I will ask that you introduce the digital learning space to the class as planned and dedicate three weeks of class time to using this space for the students to record and track their learning. You will also be asked to provide feedback on students’ work in this space. During the study, I will request the opportunity to observe your classroom on one or two occasions per week for a maximum of sixty minutes per week. Ideally, I will be able to observe the students using the digital learning space to capture their Core French work. You will also be asked to share the student artifacts and any other documents and allow 4-5 self-nominated students to participate in two interviews (beginning and end of study). Lastly, you will be asked to participate in an exit interview of approximately 30 minutes. The total estimated time required for participation is 7 hours maximum. There are no known physical, psychological, economic, or social risks associated with this study. Although you may not directly benefit from taking part in this research study, information from
this study will contribute to our understanding of the role of a digital learning space in a second language classroom and may guide future program development.

**Is participation voluntary?** Yes. You should not feel obliged to answer any questions that you find objectionable or that make you feel uncomfortable. You may also withdraw at any time with no effect on your employment. If you wish to withdraw, contact Susanna Jurkowski at 14sdj1@queensu.ca. If you withdraw, you may request removal of all or part of your data from the study. Should you withdraw all data collection will cease in your classroom.

**What will happen to my responses?** Your responses will be kept confidential. Only Susanna Jurkowski and Dr. Richard Reeve will have access to this information. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. None of the data will contain your name or the identity of your place of work. To protect your identity a pseudonym will replace your name on all data files and in any dissemination of findings. Results from this study may be published in professional journals or presented at scientific conferences, but any such presentations will maintain individual confidentiality. In accordance with the Faculty of Education’s policy, data will be retained for a minimum of five years. If data are used for secondary analysis they will contain no identifying information. All electronic files will be password protected. Paper and audio data will be secured in a locked cabinet.

**What if I have concerns?** Any questions about study participation may be directed to Susanna Jurkowski at 14sdj1@queensu.ca or 613-539-3060 or Dr. Richard Reeve at reever@queensu.ca or 613-533-6000 x77296. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research study.

**Your signature below indicates that you have read this Letter of Information and have had any questions answered to your satisfaction. Please keep a copy of this letter for your records.**

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Signature: ________________________
De-duotanging Core French: What does a digital learning space mean to Grade 8 students?

Name (please print clearly): ______________________________

1. I have read the Letter of Information and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.

2. I understand that I will be participating in the study called De-duotanging Core French: What does a digital learning space mean to Grade 8 students? I understand that this means that I will be asked to prepare the digital learning space for my class' needs with the help of Susanna Jurkowski, have my students use the digital space to capture their learning for a 3 week period, provide students with feedback during this time and host 1-2 classroom visits per week for observations.

3. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the data now and in the future. Only researchers affiliated with this study will have access to my data. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at scientific conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality. I understand that I am entitled to a copy of the findings, if I am interested.

4. I am aware that if I have any questions, concerns, or complaints, I may contact Susanna Jurkowski at 14sdj1@queensu.ca or 613-539-3060 or Dr. Richard Reeve at reever@queensu.ca or 613-533-6000 x77296. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

5. I have read the above statements and freely consent to participate in this research:

Signature:_________________________________________ Date:______________
Appendix G

Dialogue : En voyage

Learning goal : I can read and understand a dialogue discussing travel.

A
Amy : Salut!
Cory : Bonjour! Comment ça va?
Amy : Ça va bien merci et toi?
Amy : Ah oui? Pourquoi as-tu voyagé à Kingston?
Cory : Je suis allé là pour plusieurs raisons. La première raison c’est parce que ma mère et mon père aiment manger au Panda Garden.
Amy : As-tu aimé la nourriture là?
Cory : Non je n’ai pas aimé la nourriture, je préfère manger la nourriture américaine.
Amy : Désolé. As-tu fait quelque chose d’autre?
Cory : Oui! J’ai vu Sam et Dan et nous sommes allés magasiner.
Amy : Oh c’est le fun! As-tu dépensé beaucoup d’argent?
Amy : Au moins tu as trouvé quelque chose!
Cory : C’est vrai! Il faut que je retourne à la maison maintenant.
Amy : D’accord! Salut!
Cory : Salut!

B
Amy : Salut!
Ben : Bonjour! Comment ça va?
Amy : Ça va bien merci et toi?
Ben : Ça va comme ci comme ça. J’ai voyagé à Napanee.
Amy : Ah oui? Pourquoi as-tu voyagé à Napanee?
Ben : c, parce que ma mère et mon père aiment manger au Flying J.
Amy : As-tu aimé la nourriture là?
Ben : Non je n’ai pas aimé la nourriture, je préfère manger à A&W.
Amy : Désolé. As-tu fait quelque chose d’autre?
Ben : Oui! J’ai vu Sam et Dan et nous sommes allés magasiner.
Amy : Oh c’est le fun! As-tu dépensé beaucoup d’argent?
Amy : Au moins tu as trouvé quelque chose!
Ben : C’est vrai! Il faut que je retourne à la maison maintenant.
Amy : D’accord! Salut!
Ben : Salut!
With a partner (XXXX):
1. Use your appropriate resources to help you identify and understand new words in the text.
2. Highlight or underline the passé composé verbs.
3. Using the Venn Diagram, trouve (find) les similarités et différences entre les voyages de Cory and Ben.
4. Rehearse and record 1 of the dialogues.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Self-beliefs</td>
<td>a) confidence and comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) learning new things, possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) practice and consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) pronunciation, grammar, accents, verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Motivation and Interests</td>
<td>a) family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) travelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) future e.g. job opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use of technology</td>
<td>a) access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-themes: Collaboration &amp; Choice</td>
<td>b) coordination &amp; continuity of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) availability</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) convenience</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) collaboration</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>f) audio features</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g) feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h) choice e.g. break from writing/worksheets, audio features</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Feedback &amp; Assessment</td>
<td>a) helps to move improve/succeed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) monitor progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) check for understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sense of trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Role of teacher</td>
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