Bibliographie Annotée

**Callaghan, M. (1998). An investigation into the causes of boys’ underachievement in French. *The Language Learning Journal*, *17*(1), 2-7. doi.org/10.1080/09571739885200021**

***Mots clefs*:**

Core French, male students, male/female French teacher, French syllabus.

***Objectif de l’article*:**

The author explores research and articles on the underachievement of and underrepresentation of boys in French programs in the UK in the 1990s. Through an analysis of the French curriculum she highlights syllabus topics that may be contributing factors to boys’ dissatisfaction with French class.

***Résumé*:**

In this article, Martine Callaghan explores factors related to the phenomenon of boys underachieving in French as a second language classes within the context of 1990s schools in the United Kingdom. She reviews research on gender stereotypes in society and how they affect boys’ choices in school. Because French culture and language is seen as a more feminine areas of interest, boys will avoid being seen enjoying or excelling in this subject. Boys are motivated to learn subjects that are of immediate use to them. Because second language is not an obvious advantage, boys may dismiss the idea of learning one. If boys do not see the value in a topic, they will rebel against learning it. Parental perceptions in our society support this way of thinking.Callaghan also looks at studies into linguistic ability in girls being higher than that of boys, but those studies have been contradicted in more recent research.

Teacher gender and attitudes towards boys and girls are also important. It is suggested that male and female teachers have different perceptions of how boys and girls are and how they behave. These attitudes and expectations provoke different behaviours and reactions in the students. Boys who are uncomfortable and unmotivated to learn with a female teacher will act out and cause problems in class, and this will affect their success in the program.

The units of study in the French curriculum of the GCSE include many topics that are of little appeal to boys. Students are invited to describe themselves and their family. They describe houses, furniture, fashion and social interactions. Girls delight in these descriptions, while boys see no point to doing them. Units on shopping may interest girls, but the boys would prefer to look at travel, sports, leisure topic, money and food.

Callaghan recommends a revision of curricular concepts, along of curricular concepts, along with changes in teaching methodology. She recommends teaching subjects of interest to boys such as science topics but using French as the language of instruction. This is, of course, what we see in immersion classrooms today.

***Méthodologie*:**

This is a literature and research review that seeks to investigate the phenomenon of gender differences in French language learning. The author looks at research in the domain of stereotypes towards French language learning, and also at research regarding the effect of male vs female teachers. She then does a systematic analysis of the curriculum in the UK in the 1990s and points out the topics that are clearly more interesting to girls than boys.

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***Pertinence pour les objectifs d’études que vous avez choisis****:*

Despite being written in 1998 and based on a British curriculum, this article offers several observations that are very relevant to my study. While Researches e no longer ascribe to theories that genders may be predisposed to linguistic ability, there are many current studies that support the findings mentioned by Callaghan regarding societal stereotypes and perceptions regarding masculine and feminine subjects in school, and also of the influence of teacher gender on the behaviour, attitude, and achievement of boys and girls.

Most relevant is the analysis of topics covered in the French language curriculum. These topics are also common units in Canadian Core French programs now, and Callaghan makes insightful comments that call into question the units and projects typical in French classes that may be one of the causes of the discontent shown by male students.