Does the use of a specific language-learning IT programme have the potential to improve both the quantity and quality of pupils' French oral production in a year 11 iGCSE class

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Abstract

This research project looks at the impact of using language software in the classroom to enhance pupils' oral skills. After defining the notions of quality and quantity as pertains to language learning, the study essentially involves a three-pronged approach, using my class of 17 pupils and a colleague's class of 18 pupils as a control group, in examining the extent to which using technology in the language laboratory affects learning.

Firstly, pupils' levels of confidence and fear as regards speaking French in classroom situations were identified and explored via questionnaires and semi-structured group interviews. Secondly, pupils engaged with the software in the language lab once per two-week cycle over the course of five months. During this time, they used headsets to focus on tasks related to oral skills for the entire 55-minute lesson, all the while adhering to a 'checklist' of key desirable linguistic features to succeed at the iGCSE oral exam. Finally, changes in confidence and fear levels as well as quantity and quality of language were measured via pupils' own uploads of their audio-recordings, the same questionnaires, further group interviews and official exam grades.

Findings indicate the potential for effective integration of ICT within MFL for speaking tasks. This is evidenced by a reduction in fear with a concomitant rise in pupil confidence levels as per teacher observations and pupil feedback in questionnaires and interviews. Quality and quantity of language produced also increased, considerably for some. However, it appears that pupils do not wish to engage solely with ICT and prefer to retain face-to-face communication for most language lessons, despite feeling unconfident in front of others at times, with ICT complementing traditional lessons rather than replacing them.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Working at a boarding school of 670 pupils in Oxford , of which approximately 60% are boys, and all of whom are obliged to study at least one modern foreign language to iGCSE level (the school not offering GCSE), provided me with a rather interesting context in which to investigate the potential for the use of technology in language learning. Given that the school has a well-equipped language laboratory and that the majority of pupils elect French as their language to study (85/164), I had ample access to a host of resources, be it the number of pupils, the number of language teachers (16), an Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Information Technology (IT) technician or a number of commercially available language software programmes; the whole providing me with a healthy sample size from which to conduct my research.

Interestingly, the school states on its website that: 'Modern Languages teaching takes place in the Modern Languages Centre which is fully equipped with a state-of-the-art digital Language Laboratory. Information Technology is widely used…' plus that 'We believe that the five skill areas of research, communication, thinking, collaboration and organisation, along with a reflective approach to learning, provide the essential foundations for successful and rewarding study.'

Indeed, one of the main goals of the school has been to integrate technology more into the school curriculum; yet, no clear instructions are set out as to how this is to be achieved, whether online, in school manuals or through continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities. Automatically deciding to enshrine computers into school learning led me to ask one major question: 'Is there actually any proof that using technology in the classroom enhances learning performance, and, if so, is this enhancement reflected in grades?'

As an MFL Department, we teachers underwent two training days last year in two information and communication technology (ICT) pieces of software, one of which particularly aroused my curiosity due to its bold claims, as laid out on its website, that 'Our language labs and language teaching solutions will improve your students' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills' as well as 'Individualize teaching; improve even the most difficult to teach elements, pronunciation and intonation...' Indeed, Hawkes (2014) claims on their website that the software in her school has acted as 'an essential boost to our student's speaking and listening skills, enabling them to develop these in a more varied and autonomous way. Learners of all ages, abilities and learning styles benefit from this excellent resource.'

Research however into ICT usage in MFL in the UK is not extensive. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA:2004) states that ICT use in schools throughout the UK is heavily varied, being affected by teacher competence and available resources. They claim that there are a range of benefits to using technology, but question whether ICT resources are effectively being deployed to develop key language skills. According to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (2003), 20% of MFL teachers still make no use of ICT to support their teaching; yet, no great disparities in effectiveness of teaching seem to arise in terms of those teachers who use ICT and those who do not. It must however be said that this research dates from almost 14 years ago, and that the prevalence of technology has no doubt increased in the world of education toady.

Interestingly, the above investigation was one of the few studies to examine the use of technology by teachers in the UK. The paucity of research makes it somewhat difficult to draw clear conclusions as to the effectiveness of ICT in MFL, as clearly highlighted by a study carried out by Beatty (2013:193) looking at the term 'computer assisted language learning' (CALL) for the years 2006 - 2008 using various databases. In his study, the Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) offered the most 'hits': 102. However, of

these, a mere four related to speaking – the lowest number of any of the language skills. The need for much greater research into the use of CALL to investigate its potential effects on oral skills in language learning is thus evident.

Having seen a plethora of software programs infiltrate language classrooms over the past few years (Linguascope, VocabularyExpress, Duolingo etc.), I wondered whether any evidence-based research had been conducted into the utility of a) purchasing these programs on a limited MFL budget; b) having staff undergo training as to how to integrate them into pupils' learning and c) having pupils forego other ways of learning in favour of using computers, tablets or phones to practise speaking in a foreign language.

Whilst these questions were of primordial importance, the true nature of my desire to research the effectiveness of technology in language learning lay in the frustration at not seeing my pupils progress as much as I would like in oral skills, whether in terms of how much they spoke or how well they spoke. Indeed, Chaudron (1988) claims that pupils do not feel that they are given sufficient opportunity to practise speaking in the classroom, a view echoed by Ofsted (2011) in their analysis of pupils' interaction in MFL classrooms where they noticed 'too few opportunities to communicate in a realistic manner' (23). This is supported by Long and Porter (1985) who found that pupils were given, somewhat alarmingly, an average of only one hour per academic year to communicate in the target language (TL). Tsui (1995) comments how in traditional teaching 'the predominant pattern of interaction is the teacher asking display questions rather than referential questions, students answering….and the teacher giving feedback on the answer. There is little opportunity for students to perform other speech functions that are frequently found in genuine communication…' (95-6).

The above lies somewhat in stark contrast with Ofsted's (2012) Grade Descriptors as to how pupils would ideally behave in the target language (TL): 'As appropriate to their stage of development, all groups of speakers are confident with good intonation and

pronunciation. They develop a sense of passion and commitment to the subject and can use language creatively and spontaneously to express what they want to say, including when talking to each other informally.' (6).

A thought-provoking question arose early on as to what it is that holds pupils back from engaging more with the TL – fear of making mistakes and being ridiculed?; lack of motivation?; no self-confidence? Such were the factors needing to be initially examined in order to allow for a more accurate measurement of judging the effectiveness of ICT in the MFL classroom.

1.2 Rationale

- In the latest school inspection (2014), the learning and teaching at the school were characterised as excellent whereas the provision for ICT only qualified as good. This discrepancy led me to ask whether teachers incorporating more technology into the curriculum may fill the gap between the two.
- I felt that incorporating ICT, in particular this software programme, into pupils' language learning may better respond to their needs by providing an environment in which the fear of others listening to them speaking would be eliminated, allowing for greater language output and, with greater output and experimentation, perhaps quality.
- Given that this current generation of teenagers interact far more with ICT already in their daily lives than any other before, which sees them consult traditional print forms much less, I hypothesised that, by appealing to their way of interacting with the world today – receiving and producing information -, they would obtain greater benefits than using solely a more traditional approach to learning and teaching without ICT.

1.3 Research Questions

These many initial observations led to the formulation of my key research questions:

1. Does the use of ICT in an MFL classroom increase the pupils' desire to communicate in TL?
2. Does the use of ICT in an MFL classroom reduce anxiety/fear in pupils and thereby improve confidence?
3. Does the use of ICT in an MFL classroom enhance the quantity of language spoken by pupils?
4. Does the use of ICT in an MFL classroom improve the quality of language spoken?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Willingness to Communicate

Before analysing the effects of computer software on language learning, a necessary step, based on my observations over the course of a year in which a number of pupils felt fear or seemed to lack the inclination to enter into conversation with peers, was to investigate their actual desire to communicate in French. To analyse such desire, Macintyre et al. (1998) devised a framework in which learners' 'willingness to communicate' in another language is measured by the use of a 5-point Likert scale. The definition of this Willingness to Communicate (WTC) model is seen as 'a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2' (547). It essentially seeks to scrutinise psycholinguistic factors affecting motivation to learn a foreign language. Twelve key behavioural factors are categorised into six separate layers (Figure 1) and classified as either 'situation-specific' or 'longer term influences', with a view to offering an explanation as to why some learners are willing to communicate in L2 and others not (Appendix 1 for a sample of questions). The foundation of the pyramid is indeed McCroskey and Baer's (1985) original interpretation of WTC – 'an individual's general personality orientation towards talking' (cited in Barraglough et al., 1988:188) – but has been extended to encompass a host of other information, rather than rely exclusively on a so-called stable personality trait.

Based on a number of studies carried out over the years, WTC has laid claim to a host of positive effects on L2 learning and acquisition. Students who possess a high level of WTC tend to interact in L2 more frequently, thus providing greater opportunities for output (Clément, Baker & MacIntyre: 2003). Oxford (1997) examined how they are more inclined to take risks in communicating whilst Kang (2005) analysed how they demonstrate the qualities of autonomy in language learning more frequently than those with low WTC.

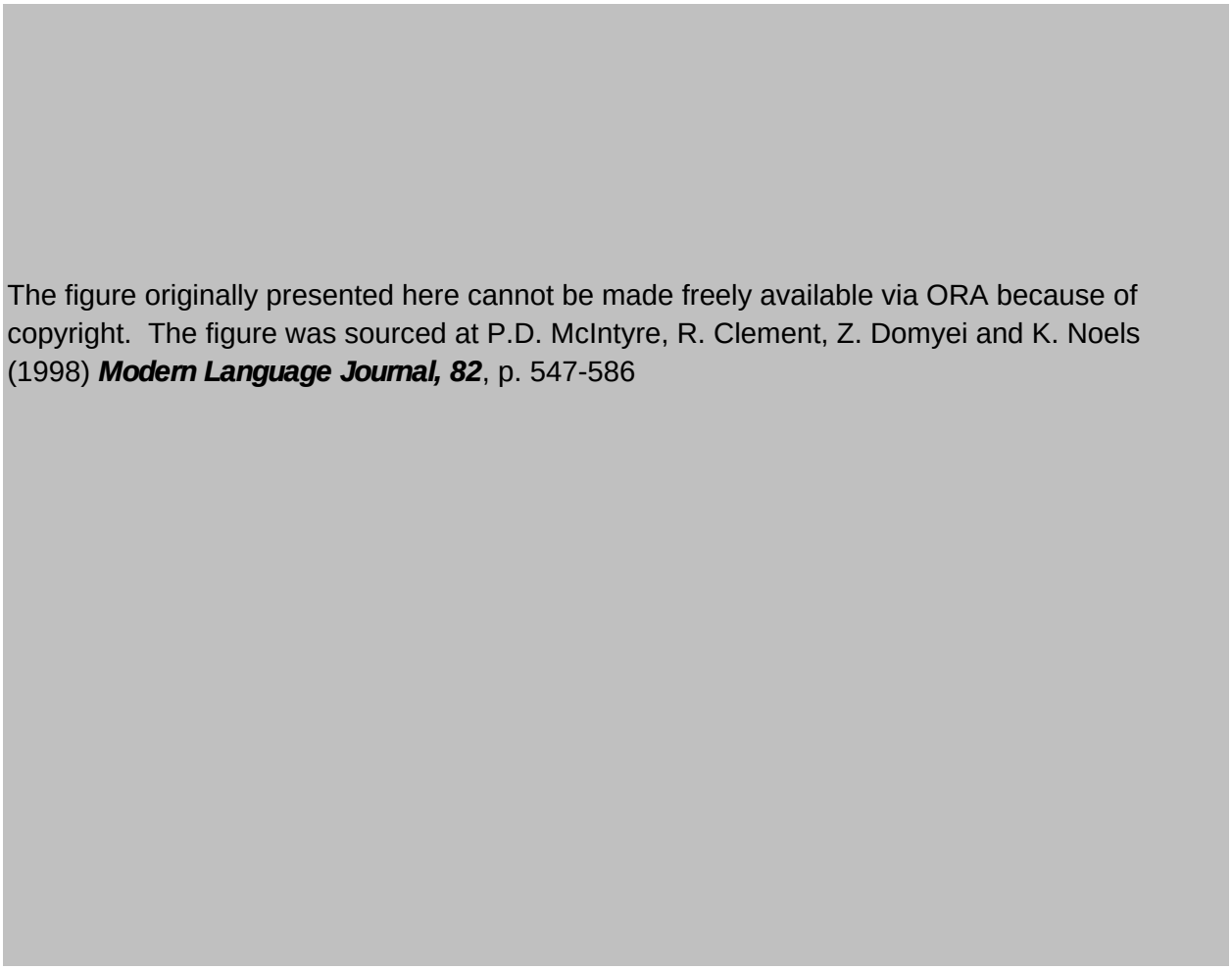

Figure 1.

In another study by Derwing et al. (2008), they showed how high-WTC students generally acquire much greater fluency. Given that a high WTC does seem to offer strong evidence for predicting successful language learners, more so than motivation alone according to researchers such as MacIntyre et al. (1998) and Dörnyei (2001), many researchers are calling for it to be somehow more purposefully integrated into curricula. Whilst both are of course interrelated, Dörnyei (2009) explains how high levels of motivation do not always necessarily lead to high levels of WTC as, oftentimes in language, learners' affective barriers may well inhibit them from transferring their motivation (wanting to produce) to WTC (commitment to L2 production).

Essential to fostering high levels of WTC among learners is the need for teachers to create a safe and supportive environment beneficial to both learning and risk-taking. This is the central tenet of WTC theory: providing for positive interaction in a safe environment conducive to language output will encourage greater self-confidence, reduce anxiety, and enhance willingness to communicate, allowing for greater practice and use of L2. Cao and Philp (2006) showed how such an environment essentially allows students to experience lower levels of anxiety and greater self-perceived communicative competence, thereby allowing for higher levels of WTC and subsequent enhanced interaction among students.

Technology is being extensively examined today as a means of providing such an ideal environment. Compton (2004) claims that students chatting among themselves (online messaging) allows for greater confidence, higher levels of WTC and more interaction in classrooms. His research showed that those with high WTC made the most contributions in both number of words used and number of turns taken. Whilst this does not pertain to oral production, the study does highlight how certain students may 'freeze' in oral tasks but be more willing to communicate through other forms of communication. Indeed, Freiermuth and Jarrell (2006) compared students at a Japanese university who completed a task in face-to-face interaction as opposed to a chat environment. Their findings, based on transcripts, observations and questionnaires, pointed to reduced anxiety and greater WTC of those in the chat atmosphere, which lead to greater L2 output. Such revelations have significant bearings on the teaching profession: what if our students are far more willing to communicate than we believe, or indeed observe, but that our task design and pedagogical methodologies are not eliciting the very best from them.

2.2 Pupils' cognitive and affective L2 beliefs

Although the WTC is a very useful tool in analysing students' propensity to communicate in L2 and in providing a list of inhibiting factors to interaction in classrooms, it does suffer

from two major drawbacks; namely, its somewhat arbitrary delineation between factors deemed as 'simply situational' and factors deemed 'longer-term in nature' as well as its lack of a thorough explanation as to why students are more reticent to communicate in L2, with the WTC Likert scale merely identifying some internal barriers to interaction.

The debilitating impact of anxiety on learning a language and how often it is experienced by students in classrooms is still widely underestimated according to Arnold (2007). Research has shown how a lack of confidence and motivation (Peng & Woodrow 2010), a fear of making mistakes (Liu & Jackson 2008) or indeed even general shyness (Chu 2008) all have severe disabling effects on L2 learning, participation and production.

Other researchers have thus attempted to investigate these inhibiting factors when learning a language, the most notable of which has perhaps been Horwitz et al. (1986). They ask teachers to remember how 'any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear or even panic' (128). To accurately measure such negative impacts on L2, they devised the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire (Appendix 2), primarily concerned with examining the severity of the effect of anxiety on L2 learning. Studying beginner language learners at the University of Texas, they themselves found that 49% of learners panic when required to speak in L2 with no preparation time whilst 38% reported feeling more tense and nervous in their language classes than in their other classes.

Indeed, MacIntyre et al. (1998) have commented how self-confidence can only be built if two 'key constructs' are present: 'perceived competence and ….a lack of anxiety (549). They describe how students' 'internal drives' – their self-judgements and their feeling of discomfort in L2 - may often damage their capacity to speak with confidence and point to the need for teachers to not only address inhibiting cognitive factors but to pay more attention to affective ones too.

Building on this, Woodrow (2006), in his research of 275 pre-university students learning English in Australia, examined 'causes of anxiety' using the Second Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (SLSAS – an adaptation of FLCAS) and discerned another domain that language teachers need be aware of; namely, two main causes of language anxiety - 'retrieval interference and skills deficit.' Woodrow thus differentiates between anxiety caused by, say, memorisation difficulties and those stemming from lack of key language skills. Whilst both types trigger anxiety, very different interventions would be required to address students' needs in each case.

Another insightful finding related to anxiety pertains to Gallagher-Brett (2007) in a study of 28 Year 9 beginner learners of German, which identified how negative students' self-image can become when they compare themselves to others in the class. Indeed, 53.4% agreed that they 'always felt that other students speak better German than I do', lending further credence to the belief that there is no universal panacea to address students' anxiety and that cases need to be examined on an individual basis where possible.

Lessons from the above clearly point to the prevalence of fear and the lack of self-confidence in students, throughout the globe, learning a foreign language as well as to their comparing themselves with others in the class in a negative light. The original FCLAS, and its subsequent derivatives, allow researchers to gain insight into how pupils not only think but also feel. It points to the need for teachers to not only teach a foreign language but to reassure, comfort, encourage and support, perhaps more than in any other school subject, especially if one takes account of the findings by Zimmermann et al. (1992). Their research into how pupils in the UK essentially feel in their language lessons as opposed to in other lessons revealed that they are more nervous in them, perceiving their ability in languages to be less than in other school subjects.

2.3 Arguments for ICT in MFL

Whilst there has appeared some scepticism as to the use of ICT in second language acquisition (SLA) by some - 'Critics of CALL have pointed to its fragmented approach to language learning and an over-emphasis on consolidation of language knowledge rather than language skills' (Macaro, 2013:50) – the criticism tends to revolve more around how best to incorporate ICT into MFL rather than a dichotomous yes or no as to whether ICT should have a place in MFL. Furstenberg (1997) stresses that technology cannot be viewed as a panacea for all SLA issues and reiterates how, whilst it 'needs' to be used in teaching and learning, it 'needs' to be used appropriately, i.e. creating an environment where 'the learner [is] to make choices and thus provides autonomy, a sense of empowerment, and the opportunity to become an active participant in language learning.' (22).

For the most part, researchers over the past 30 years have argued for much greater prominence of ICT in MFL. Collins (1991),writing on computer-based learning a quarter of a century ago, recognised great potential in the teaching profession for the use of CALL in MFL classrooms, citing a number of key benefits that ICT lends itself to. Essentially, it allows for:

1. 'A shift from whole-class to small group instruction
2. A shift from lecture and recitation to coaching
3. A shift from assessment based purely on test performance to assessment based on products, progress, and effort
4. A shift from a competitive to a co-operative work structure
5. A shift from all students learning the same things to different students learning different things' (28)

Hoogeveen (1995) supports this view, insisting that the use of quality multimedia provides for 'a high-degree of interaction leads to high level of stimulation of the senses, high level of involvement, attention, concentration and emotional arousal' (350).

An interesting large-scale study of 60 schools in England between 1999 - 2002, entitled 'ImpaCT2: The impact of information and communication technologies on pupil attainment' - demonstrated how MFL shows the greatest relative gains per subject when ICT is used at Key Stage 4, i.e. Years 10 and 11, compared to Key Stages 2 and 3: 'The greatest difference in mean performance between high ICT and low ICT pupils is found in modern foreign languages' (Harris et al., 2002:31). The report did however go on to mention that 'despite the fact that overall usage in this subject was quite low.'(31), indicating that MFL was lagging behind other subjects such as the sciences in terms of ICT usage.

Blow (2001), in his teachers' online project examining ICT usage for teachers involved in French, explains how teachers' using ICT in MFL classrooms carries a host of advantages, whether in relation to skills deployment, enhanced motivation, greater self-confidence or improved attainment levels. In his research, he made an interesting finding in discovering how these benefits seemed to apply more to boys than to girls.

This was later also supported by Passey et al.'s findings (2004), contained in the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) report 2004. They interviewed over 1200 people (headteachers, teachers, parents, pupils, etc.) to determine their attitudes towards ICT usage in schools. The potential for ICT to better provide for personalised feedback and more timely assessment was lauded by most participants.

More recently, much research (for example, Ting & Li, 2012 and Liu & Boyer, 2009 in Hempel (2006)), seems to have been carried out in Asia on the use of various aspects of ICT (computer games, Skype, chatting, etc.), all of which point, to varying degrees of course, to learners experiencing a stress-reduced atmosphere whilst feeling more confident, relaxed and motivated to use L2 (English in this case). Furthermore, the use of 'games', i.e. informal unassessed learning, helped in reducing anxiety levels whilst also encouraging opportunities for greater risk-taking in using the target language.

It should be noted at this stage that much of the criticism levelled at the use of ITC in MFL may have had a relation to, at times, the extreme behaviourist nature of many of the programmes and features of software available. These essentially saw lessons proceed along a fixed sequence with learners receiving incentives to achieve high grades, themselves measured using standardised tests. Oxford (1997), comments how such use of ICT in MFL was 'boring and repetitive' and 'does not seem to fit the highly complex activity of learning a second or foreign language' (448).

Fortunately, considerable advances have been made in the past decade and far greater elements of constructivism now feature in many programmes (Memrise, This is Language) that allow for more 'meaningful learning' to take place according to Anderson (1988). Indeed, he comments how effective software may better provide for learners' needs in that 'we internalize information, we break it down, digest it and locate it in our pre-existing highly complex web of interconnected knowledge and ideas, building fresh links and restructuring old ones' (197), referring to online mind maps as a key example of how learners can 'inter-connect' and draw on their schematic knowledge to enhance their learning further. Such a view is echoed by Gould (1996) when he remarks how teachers who effectively employ a constructivist mind-set 'encourage and empower students to follow their own interests to make connections, to reformulate ideas and to reach unique conclusions' (93).

Whether it lie in teachers' attempting to become more constructivist by using ICT as a catalyst to achieve this, the potential for more personalised instruction and tailored feedback or simply to meet the needs and learning styles of a new generation that interacts with technology to such an extent in daily life that it only makes sense to incorporate it into their learning, the case is rather a strong one for inclusion of ICT in MFL. Where issues tend to arise is in the form of how to effectively use it, i.e. task design.

2.4 Task design

Drawing on Psycholinguistic Theory, the Interaction Hypothesis defines tasks as 'meaning-based activities closely related to learners' actual communicative needs and with some real-world relationship, in which learners have to achieve a genuine outcome (solve a problem, reach a consensus, complete a puzzle, play a game, etc.) and in which effective completion of the tasks is accorded priority.' (Klapper, 2003:35).

Ellis (2000) states that a task acts as a 'device that guides learners to engage in certain types of information-processing that are believed to be important for effective language use and/or for language acquisition.' (197). He proposes tasks that incorporate the ability to negotiate meaning between learners and exchange personal information in addition to the frequently-used closed-outcome tasks or information-gap ones.

The major issue with the above theory however derives from the fact that it does not define the nature of the task environment nor the teacher's role. The sociocultural perspective, on the other hand, states that 'participants always co-construct the activity they engage in, in accordance with their own socio-history and locally determined goals.' (Ellis, 2000: 208). Interestingly, Vygotsky (1978) proved that 'problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers contributes to learning more than independent problem-solving.' (86). This essentially means that it is imperative to include in the definition of task the very notion of collaboration with other learners and the teacher.

The vast majority of research on CALL deals only incidentally with the concept of task design and it appears that teachers, for the most part, simply transport their classroom face-to-face tasks to the language lab. This, according to Doughty & Long (2003:62) can have adverse effects on turn-taking. Interestingly, they alsi argue that, when using computers, the ideal number of pupils working on a task is only two.

Merely transferring classroom tasks to the lab can also be problematic if learners are unaware of the affordances of the technology and how to interact with it effectively to practise or develop their language. Hampel and Hauck (2006) make an interesting point when they mention how certain learners may struggle with the more democratic and learner-centredness of CALL-based tasks, being perhaps used to an instructivist approach to learning. Hampel and Hauck (ibid) go on to explain how issues may arise, related to speaking a foreign language without actually seeing the other pupil, which impede on communication and turn-taking. The need not only to create tasks suited to a CALL environment, but also to ensure pupils are armed with the necessary skills and electronic literacy to fully exploit this powerful medium is evident.

In essence, CALL-designed tasks thus need to ensure the following affordances, as per Meskill (1999):

- 'provide ample opportunities for differing perspectives and opinions, for controversy, disagreement, resolution, and consensus building;
- motivate active participation and interaction by having no one single answer or process to employ in accomplishing them;
- offer some form of problem-solving (something for which computers are particularly well suited);
- designate roles for individual learners and teams to take on as they engage in these processes, helping situate learners within a community of participants;
- and include a motivated awareness of the forms and functions of language used'

(146)

This advice may initially seem somewhat off-putting for those teachers who are either not used to, or confident in, using ICT themselves. However, in reality, there is no real need to start from scratch, with tried and trusted classroom tasks often simply needing 'tweaked' in order to fit a CALL environment, as evidenced in this research project.

2.5 How exactly is quantity and quality defined in pupils' use of TL?

Macaro and Mutton (2002), looking at two teachers in two schools teaching language, conceived a model of key characteristics inherent to quantity and quality. Essentially, quantity relates to the amount of participant talk and pupils' turn-taking patterns. Quality comprehends a number of ideal attributes based on their research, such as pupils trying to work out what the speaker is saying and their being engaged in 'meaning negotiation' (asking questions; commenting on task) as well as initiating turns and offering spontaneous comments. Use of a wide range of verbs and a variety of nouns is also important.

Building on this, research projects carried out by the Graham and Macaro (2007), in which 151 Year 12 secondary school pupils' interaction in all skills were monitored in French lessons over the course of a year, have led to the establishment of eight key principles in language learning. Four of which relate to oral production and form the cornerstone of the Professional Development Consortium in Modern Foreign Languages (PDCMFL) website dispensing research-backed practice for language teachers. Related to speaking evidence, we have:

1. Target language input is essential for learning but it can be made more effective if learners are allowed/encouraged to 'negotiate' their understanding of it by asking questions of what the teacher is saying

2. Learners need to be encouraged to speak and to say things that they are not sure are correct

3. Although not all oral interaction can be 'communicative' (some will be practice and/or form focused), it has to nevertheless demonstrate measures of 'quality' (among other things, student initiated turns, student length of turn; adequate wait time; cognitive challenge; appropriate teacher feedback)

4. Students need to be given opportunities to develop oral fluency but also taught how to use communication strategies when faced with communication difficulties

These brief points, summing up key findings into SLA, are a simple, yet invaluable, tool in knowing how best to help pupils' improve their languages capacities.

Other concepts of quality and quantity exist amongst researchers. Drawing on Lemon's (2000) definition of fluency - 'the rapid, smooth, accurate, lurid and efficient translation…' (26) – Kormos and Dénes (2004) look at the notion of both from a 'fluency perspective'. Much of their research being concerned with adults, not just teenagers, they define quantity, somewhat similarly to the above, as the mean length of turns taken by learners when participating in conversation; learner-initiated turns (they start the idea) and absence of major pauses or hesitations at open boundaries.

They define quality, on the other hand, using a number of desirable speech features. The most important for this research project include: oral proficiency, speed (lexical retrieval and grammatical competence); absence of major hesitations or hesitations at only at 'closed boundaries'; use of native-like oral discourse features; effortlessness; rhythm (regular beat of stressed and unstressed syllables) and expressivity (what is conveyed in voice of interlocutor) as well as one's ability to self-correct.

Interestingly, they claim that the best predictor of fluency for those learning a language (their research was into French and English) is the Phonation-Time ratio, i.e. the ratio of actual speaking time to pauses in speech. They remind us that speed in itself is not a great predictor of fluency and that learners need to focus on their mean length of runs/turns to develop fluency.

Contrary to popular belief, their research evidences that the longer the pauses that you make whilst speaking, the more perceived fluency you have. The caveat is that the pauses

must be at closed boundaries, i.e. where you would normally expect to find a pause, and not, for example, a mid-sentence pause (breakdown) due to lack of grammar or vocabulary. From the research, it emerges that it is important to inculcate two key messages to learners of French. Firstly, that it is completely fine to 'pause' in order to reflect, and that speed does not always equate to quality. Secondly, that in French, the pauses are longer but less frequent than in English (one draws to mind the characteristic '*uhhhhhh*' followed by '*beehhhhhnnn*'), and that, somewhat surprisingly for pupils, pauses may occur mid-sentence unlike in English, where such pauses, not uttered at closed boundaries, are viewed as a breakdown in communication. This leads to a fundamental difference in the notion of quality between the two languages and may act as a very useful 'comforting' piece of knowledge for those pupils who worry about 'breaking down'.

Préfontaine and Kormos (2016) have also conducted extensive research into how we can seek to enhance fluency. Aside from increasing planning time, the notion of task repetition is fundamental to becoming fluent in a foreign language and a highly useful tool for teachers wishing to develop their pupils' speaking skills. Kormos' extensive research into SLA over the years has made a strong case for different task types being accorded different numbers of repetitions in order for pupils to benefit fully from their learning. Whilst greater repetitions are possible than those outlined below, Bygate (2001) has remarked that this can lead to boredom and Préfontaine and Kormos (2016) have stated that the incidental gains are so small that it would be more worthwhile for learners to engage in a new task. In any case, the ideal number of repetitions for a task is:

- Idea generation task = 2 (brainstorming a topic in pairs)
- Instruction task = 4 (such as 'How to cross the river')
- Narration task – 3 (e.g. create a story from related or unrelated pictures)
- Opinion task – 3 (e.g. two ambiguous photos that require description and comparison)

- Mid-clause pausing problems task (grammar and vocabulary) – 4 reps = best to 'repair'

Significantly, their research demonstrates that the repetitions proved beneficial to all learners, irrespective of proficiency levels or task concerned, providing evidence that higher-level learners' needs are not neglected by repeating the same task and that every learner's quantity and quality of language can experience improvement.

2.6 Interaction and collaboration

According to Lightbown and Spada (2013), the most prevalent turn-taking method in teaching is the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) sequence, whereby a teacher initiates a conversation, requests a pupil response and then provides feedback to the pupil. This accounts for two-thirds of classroom interaction according to their research, and generally displays only what pupils already know how to do reasonably well.

Central to improving one's speaking in a foreign language is the ability to interact and collaborate effectively with others. 'Collaboration is defined as a process in which two or more learners need to work together to achieve a common goal' (Beatty, 2010:109). According to Jacobs (1998), there are a number of benefits to collaboration:

1. 'Quantity of learner speech can increase
2. Variety of speech acts can increase
3. Greater individualization of instruction
4. Anxiety can be reduced
5. Motivation can increase
6. Social integration can increase
7. Students can learn how to work with others' (100)

Whilst technically unrelated, it is very interesting to notice that Hoogeveen's (1995) compilation of key attributes of multimedia learning in the language classroom contains an almost identical list of benefits (350; cf. section on Arguments for ICT in MFL above). A conclusion one could draw form here is that collaboration and ICT use in MFL can go effectively hand-in-hand, provided task design is effective.

On another note, drawing somewhat on Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights the importance of teacher input for successful L2 acquisition by learners, and on Swain's Comprehensible Output Theory (1985), where teachers provide ample opportunities to 'force' learners to speak, the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) goes a step further in demanding that learners be involved in the 'negotiation of meaning' in language classrooms, i.e. meaningful input can derive also from learners and not just teachers. This is echoed by Lightbown and Spada (2013): 'When communication is difficult, interlocutors must 'negotiate for meaning' and this negotiation is seen as the opportunity for language development' (114). Examples may include concept-checking questions, clarification requests, self-repetition or paraphrasing, all of which are items that students are not always necessarily trained in. It is important to note at this stage that whilst interaction can be extremely beneficial for learners' oral proficiency development, it may, in certain cases, hinder it if the interlocutors concerned do not work effectively together. Three interesting studies point to this.

Storch (2002) analysed dyadic dynamics in an Australian context with 33 adult learners of English, mostly Asian, aged 19 to 42. He identified four key patterns of interaction. Those pupils involved in a 'collaborative' relationship (two learners engaged equally in the task) and those involved in an 'expert-novice' relationship (one learner acts as a teacher to the other) led to better retention of L2 by all learners, essentially supporting Vgotsky's (1978) idea of co-construction of knowledge when pair work functions. No real concrete learning took place when relationships centered around the types 'dominant-dominant' (neither

learner wishes to really work) or 'dominant-passive' (one learner dictates; the other follows his/her instructions). The need for judicious selection by teachers of which pupils work with which pupils is evident.

Long & Porter (1985) examined adults performing tasks in pairs learning Spanish or English for which three levels were established; namely, native speaker advanced or intermediate. Findings demonstrated that learners talked more with other L2 learners than with native speakers, and that they produced more talk with advanced level than intermediate level speakers. Interestingly, no major difference in vocabulary and grammatical errors was observed across all three levels, i.e. it is not necessary to be exposed to native-level speakers all the time in order to progress in L2. Commenting on this study, Lightbown and Spada (2013) remarked how accurate constructive feedback is perhaps limited with learner-to-learner interaction, but that 'we have genuine communicative practice that includes negotiation for meaning' (166).

Yule & Macdonald (1990) also looked into pair work between adult language learners and made two very useful findings for teachers. Firstly, when the sender of information possesses a high level of language compared to the receiver, the quality of interaction is low, e.g. a pedestrian (sender) explaining directions to a lost driver (receiver). This particular study argues for the weaker learner to thus be placed in the position of sender with the stronger learner acting as receiver, which, according to Yule and Macdonald, improves both quantity and quality of interaction.

Given the nature of the iGCSE oral examination (two role plays followed by ten minutes of questions and answers on a variety of topics), the importance of the findings of these studies is apparent to all language teachers wishing to have their pupils improve their speaking abilities.

Finally, related to positive and effective interaction and collaboration, it could be surmised that having learners interact and collaborate with one another allows for increased 'wait time', which in itself acts as a catalyst to better quality and longer' responses from learners. Analysing 'wait time' from a teacher's perspective, Lightbown and Spada (2013) remark how research has shown that teachers give pupils an average of 1-2 seconds to respond to their questions, after which, if no answer is forthcoming, they either repeat the question or paraphrase it. When they simply wait, 'students produce more responses but their responses are also longer and more complex' (147). It is very possible that leaners, understanding the difficulty in formulating their thoughts and feelings in L2, may be more patient with one another, thereby providing a strong argument for reduced teacher talk and greater learner interaction and collaboration in MFL classrooms; a point that using headsets in an ICT setting naturally lends itself too.

2.7 Peer-assessment

Whilst the nature of this assignment is by no means to evaluate the quality of feedback provided by learners to one another inside the language laboratory using specific computer software, it is worth remembering that peer-assessment can be a useful learning tool, and, as such, merits mentioning in its role in L2 learning. Although researchers use different terminology in their works, with some using the term 'peer review', others 'peer feedback' and 'peer evaluation', for the purposes of this assignment, Loddington's (2008) term 'peer assessment' has been chosen, defined as 'one student's assessment of the performance or success of another student' (2). It is generally perceived to carry a host of positive effects on learning, from improved self-regulation and meta-cognition to understanding better the process of learning and ability to monitor one's own progress. Macaro (2013) tell us that, 'it is less threatening and less evaluative in nature; it

encourages a focus on communication rather than accuracy; it may be pitched more at the level of the learner' (90).

However, just at with interaction and collaboration, a teacher must be aware of the potential for ineffective, and potentially misleading, peer assessment among students. Indeed, Macaro (ibid) relates how it seems that learners do not place 'great fate' in other learners' observations. Given that they often do not wish to appear too harsh, Orsmond (2004), who conducted his research at higher level education, believes that their feedback may not always be accurate nor useful to language development. Tseng and Tsai's (2007) research into secondary-school peer-assessment found that their research participants – 184 pupils in 10th grade (approx. 16 years old) - over-mark. Other researchers such as Elliot and Higgins (2005) have actually shown how peers may indeed under-mark. Whether under or over-marking, Topping (2009) reminds us that peer assessment will be more accurate and effective when it is preceded by appropriate learner training. One of the key points worth perhaps mentioning is the finding by Hunter (2012), who investigated the exact timing of feedback and its effect on L2 learning. She concluded that, by and large, feedback is best taken on-board after the task as opposed to during it, and that in meaning or content focused language learning situations, explicit corrective feedback is more effective than implicit feedback.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Background

In order to gain as accurate an insight as possible into the effectiveness of the computer software on pupil's L2 oral performance and in order to best reduce the 'teacher variable effect, two classes of 5th form iGCSE pupils (15 - 16 year olds in Year 11) were chosen - my own class and another teacher's (Madame X) as a control group. In the school, MFL is the only subject in which classes are set according to ability. For 5th form, there are currently six sets. My class of 12 boys and 5 girls is Set 3, and Madame X's control group is Set 4, containing 10 boys and 8 girls. In reality, there is very much a top set and a bottom set, with all those in the middle sets being considered of similar ability and potential. Whilst there were some cases of mild learning difficulties in both classes, nothing was deemed as inhibitory to effective participation in the programme. The research took place between January and June 2016. 5th form receive French lessons 5 times per 12 day cycle (Weeks A and B with lessons also on Saturday mornings), of which one lesson is in the lab during which they do whatever activity the teacher has prepared for them, i.e. there is no harmonious approach to ICT instruction among teachers in any language department. Lessons last for 55 minutes and pupils sit in a U-shape facing the wall, and wearing headsets at all times in this research project. Furthermore, a relatively level playing ground was ensured given that none of the 35 pupils had previous exposure to the software.

3.2 Ethical considerations

In order to fully comply with the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) guidelines (2011) regarding working with minors, my Head of Department (HOD) gave a talk to both classes, explaining the nature of my research and that they need not

participate if they did not wish to. Questions raised by pupils before committing to being participants in the study related to storage of data (‘*Will our parents see everything?’; ‘Will everybody in the class know my score?*’) and confidentiality of audio-recordings (‘*Will people outside the school be able to listen to me trying to speak French?’*). Data collection and storage followed all BERA guidelines with documents such as questionnaires, pupils’ scores on tasks or my notes from interviewing, all stored in the HOD’s private office in a locked cabinet for which only I had the key. Pupils’ audio-recordings were stored on the software’s secure server, for which only my colleague, my HOD and I had the password. All questionnaires were anonymised using a system of numbers (1 to 17 and 1 to 18) to mark each in order to allow for a comparison of each pupil’s answers at the beginning and end of the project and all data used prior to the research period, relating entirely to pupils’ oral marks in exams, is freely available to access on the school’s drive for all teachers. Pupils also consented to their scores being divulged once explained that all data is anonymised.

Drawing on Macaro (2013), the key question to ask when conducting and analysing research is ‘If a different researcher (for example you!) were analysing the data, would you come up with the same results as the author?’ (26), i.e. ‘how did me being me affect the participants and my interpretation of the research?’. Whilst being keen to investigate the area of the potential for integration of ICT in MFL, I hold no partiality to its inclusion or not in the school curriculum, and thus have no vested interest whatsoever in seeing the research outcomes indicate a positive or negative effect towards pupils’ propensity to language learning. Furthermore, having to collaborate with other teachers, and particularly closely with one teacher, ensures that any conclusions drawn are subject to critical evaluation by other professionals and, given that I presented my findings at our MFL INSET in June 2016 to 16 colleagues, are thus the fruition of constructive discussion by a range of teachers, covering a wide span of nationalities, ages, qualifications, experience and IT-savvy.

My attempting to incorporate Cohen et al.'s (2011:425/6) advice on devising questionnaires and conducting interviews essentially guaranteed that no leading questions were asked. Furthermore, pupils were explained that whilst their personal examples and experiences were encouraged to be shared, they were not to mention names of other teachers or pupils in a derogatory manner at any stage. That being said, pupils were made feel entirely free, comfortable and safe as to how they responded, and no safeguarding issues arose during the research. Indeed, I did my best to follow Beatty's advice (2010) when working with such young learners - 'Engage them in the research as co-investigators and imbue them with a sense of the importance of the research' (217).

There was, in theory, a potential issue with the fact that both teachers are not only the researchers, but also the assessors of their oral exams. Oral exams at this level are generally conducted by the teacher who has taught the class. Given that this may have had too partial an effect on my research, my HOD kindly sat in on as many oral exams as possible for both classes (10/17 and 8/18), thus allowing for a more accurate picture of pupils' oral abilities. The department's policy is to have teachers work together afterwards, swapping their recordings and second-marking (without knowing the original mark) ca. a third of the pupils in each class. Where major discrepancies arise, discussion is held with the HOD in our weekly departmental meetings, and we are all asked to adjudicate. Of 85 pupils who sat the exam this year, we were required to adjudicate in one case; not a pupil in this research project.

3.3 Process

WTC and Fear

The first step carried out was to identify the factors negatively impinging upon pupils' speaking. Madame X and I discussed our beliefs as to what we felt was holding our pupils

back from speaking more and better, and conceived a number of factors from lack of motivation, fear or shyness to embarrassment, behaviour issues or indeed disinterest in language learning in general. Based on our professional judgements from observations, we thus used a combination of Horwitz's FLCAS and the Macintyre's WTC (Appendix 3), deciding to cut the number of questions significantly in order to make the questionnaire more manageable to fifteen-year-old pupils (eight pages reduced to three). The questionnaire contained 26 questions, divided into three sections of 8 measuring 'WTC', 10 measuring 'fear' and 8 measuring 'general disposition towards learning French'. In order to keep matters relatively easy-to-follow for pupils, each question required a simple tick on a 4 or 5-point Likert scale, thereby providing clear quantitative information as to pupils' attitudes, thoughts and feelings in learning a language. Whilst devising a questionnaire relevant to research participants does take time, and even though the scope of data gained may be quite limited, I believed it served as a useful tool in gaining an overall insight into how pupils feel about language learning. Cohen et al. (2011) also comment on the advantages of 'being able to administer [it] without the presence of the researcher and often being comparatively straightforward to analyse' (377). It also allowed us to choose, after analysis of the 35 questionnaires, as broad a spectrum of research participants as possible for the interviews based on their responses.

Attitude to language learning and to ITC

Having analysed the 35 questionnaires, we selected six pupils from each class to engage in separate semi-structured interviews in order to gauge their interest in using technology to learn a foreign language. The twelve pupils were chosen based on as broad a variety of opinions as possible expressed in the questionnaire in the hopes that this tactic would stimulate interesting cross-debates. Lewis (1992) claims that the optimum number of pupils for relatively informal group interviews is six or seven, drawing upon his research

that ‘ten-year olds’ understanding of ‘severe learning difficulties’ was enhanced in group interview situations, the children challenging and extending each other’s ideas and introducing new ideas into the discussion.’ (Cohen et al., 2011: 433).

Whilst observations of pupils’ behaviours in the classroom and questionnaires do of course yield valuable and pertinent information, Docherty and Sandelowski (1999) maintain that children are essentially ‘the best sources of information about themselves’ (177), which thus made me realise that a questionnaire for such pupils, whilst affording the advantages of discreteness, simplicity and easily-quantifiable information, would never elicit the type of qualitative information I was looking to gather, i.e. the ‘how they feel’ as opposed to the ‘what they think’.

According to Cohen et al. (2011). ‘The interview is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard’ (409) and I used their advice list (425) to fully prepare for the interview in the best manner possible. To this end, Madame X, my HOD and I designed five very open-ended questions to allow pupils’ to explore the topic of using ICT in learning French (Appendix 4), drawing on Cohen et al.’s (2011) ‘Interviews with children should try to employ open-ended questions, to avoid a single answer type of response.’ (433). Interviews, using both cumulative talk-building (uncritical) and exploratory talk (critical) as per Mercer’s categories (1999:98) lasted approximately 20 minutes for each class and were audio-recorded. At the end of the research period, approx. five months later, interviews with the same pupils using the same questions were held to monitor any differences in their personal perceptions of using ICT, and in particular this programme, to learn French.

Training

Following on from Hampel and Hauck (2006), where appropriate ITC instruction in imperative, the initial three lessons in the language lab were dedicated to training so that pupils could get to grasps with the software. Basic activities were set up (simple discussion of their weekend to different partners, giving their opinions on a short reading or listening, designing their ideal holiday) and English was the medium of instruction. Using Mercer's (1985) notion of exploratory task about tasks, pupils were afforded the opportunities to provide input as to how they found the programme in each of lessons. During this time, pupils also received basic learner training in how to effectively use the 'Awesome Checklist' (explained below) when peer-marking. After the first three lessons, and with a better idea of pupils' ability to interact with the software as well as of their preferences, a host of varied tasks was carried out in language lab over four months.

Quantity and quality

Based on colleagues' input, key literature above, pupils' input, and the syllabus and demands of the iGCSE board for the oral exam (Appendix 5), I designed a key list of desirable attributes to incorporate the concepts of both quantity and quality in speaking a language. This list was given the pupil-friendly language title of 'iGCSE Awesome Language Checklist' (Appendix 6) and was an integral part of monitoring the development of pupils' oral proficiency over the course of the research period. It should be noted that whilst the use of the word 'nice' may appear somewhat opaque initially, it was chosen purposely as a qualitative word to encapsulate a quantitative notion. Employing pupil-friendly language, I believe, allows for a more personal interpretation of the criteria and, thereby, provides for some effective differentiation among pupils.

Tasks for both classes were designed based on the needs of the syllabus, and pupil interaction was observed and recorded for all lessons. Audio-recordings of pupil interaction was saved on the company's system and analysed by respective teachers. Pairs were carefully selected as per key recommendations in the literature, and altered within lessons on average three to four times to allow for effective task repetition as per Kormos (2006) without the boredom effect setting in as per Bygate (2001). Support was provided during lessons as per normal teaching. During the rest of the lesson, teachers, on their headphones, observed and listened to a range of pupils conducting the tasks and ticked off boxes on 'iGCSE Awesome Language Checklist' for pupils in order to have quantitative data as to pupils' progression of both quantity and quality over the research period.

Pupils were also provided with a laminated version of the checklist, and asked to grade their last partner of the day, when confidence was deemed to be at its highest, by ticking which key features he/she employed. Whilst not the focus of this assignment, this had two added benefits. Firstly, it honed their listening skills for specific information – an important skill in the listening exam. Secondly, it made them much more aware of the official iGCSE mark schemes and what quality and quantity entail in these terms. Five minutes was left at the end of each lesson for brief feedback between the pairs who graded one another.

Mid-way through the research, and immediately in the aftermath of the mock oral exam, a lesson was conducted in English seeking pupils' perspective on the affordances and misaffordances of the programme. Feedback was taken on board by both teachers, and teaching, tasks and feedback was adapted to respond to learners' needs and to their weaknesses, identified in the mock exam.

Finally, it should be noted that the school has a strict system of monitoring pupil progress. Every month teachers are required to complete a form on whether a pupil is on track to meeting their 'Target grade' or not. Target grades are initially chosen based largely on

MIDYIS data, but may be adjusted by teachers afterwards, once justified. Sets 3 and 4 are generally considered to be, by and large, grade B sets, with some A's. Whilst an A* exists for a pupil's overall iGCSE grade (the combined mark for the four skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking), there is no award of an A* for individual skills, and thus an A is the highest one can obtain in the oral.

3.4 Collaboration

Wishing to draw on colleagues' craft knowledge, and to involve other language departments, I initially asked teachers what they believed the words 'quality' and 'quantity' referred to in relation to iGCSE language study. Concepts such as *'the ability to keep the conversation going'; 'being able to elaborate on things, describe them in some detail' or 'not making so many mistakes that your message becomes unintelligible'* were some interesting insights into teachers' personal views. They each gave consent for their opinions to be used and were informed by the HOD that the findings of the research would be presented to them at our school's INSET in June 2016.

Close collaboration with Madame X took place throughout the entire research period in a number of forms. Firstly, we both chose which questions to retain and which to delete from the original WTC and FLCAS questionnaires in order to meet the needs of our pupils more closely. We also devised the interview questions to be used, and passed them to our MFL HOD for approval. Whilst I initially conceived the checklist of desirable linguistic features, it was upon my colleagues' feedback that a number of changes were made to it before using it in the language lab. Due to the nature of what is taught when and how being slightly different for each language, I only took on board a certain number of colleagues' views. For example, tenses and conjugation in German were deemed much more straightforward by my German-teaching colleagues and did not merit so much space on my checklist for their pupils; yet, due to the word order of the language, a much

greater number of ‘quality features’ were deemed necessary, such as ‘conjunction use’ or ‘verb placement’. This suggestion did not apply to my pupils. However, a Spanish colleague deemed it appropriate to include a simplified version of the official iGCSE Mark Scheme, and his suggestion was taken on board. This saw pupils give one another a mark from 15 for ‘Quality of Communication’ (efforts made, pause frequency, length of answers, etc.); a mark from 15 for ‘Quality of language’ (tenses and linguistic structures primarily) and a mark from 10 for ‘Intonation and pronunciation’. Madame X and I also used this when listening to pupils and completing the checklist (Appendix 7). it proved useful in providing feedback to them on their progress, as required to do once per month.

Collaboration as regards the interviews was limited. Madame X was unable to attend the four interviews due to school commitments. She did however listen to each approx. 20-minute interview. Given that she knows her class quite well after three years of teaching them, her insight into pupils’ responses provided critical analysis on a level that I alone could perhaps not have achieved. Ideally, we both would have observed one another teaching in the language lab but, as all 5th from lessons take place at exactly the same time on the same days, this was never possible. We did however have our HOD occasionally visit to monitor how pupils were interacting with one another, though this was more on an ad-hoc basis than planned visits.

Perhaps the most beneficial part of collaboration in this research project was being able to draw upon my colleagues’, and in particular Madame X’s and my HOD’s, wealth of professional experience. Without my colleagues’ input as to the findings, there is the strong possibility that some points may have been misinterpreted, and that the cause-consequence relationship between ‘use of ICT and MFL gains’ may have been exaggerated. Fortunately, such was not the case, and by having teachers compare the performance of their pupils in previous years (who did not avail of structured ICT lessons) with the present cohort, we were able to judge the true value of using the programme.

Finally, at the end-of-year MFL INSET in June 2016, Madame X and I presented our findings to the department in a 40-minute talk to our 15 colleagues. We outlined what we had observed over the past 5 months, the points that pupils had raised regarding language learning and ITC, and whether or not we thought investment in the programme was the right choice for our department. Discussion was encouraged. Teachers spoke of their familiarity of other programmes. Comparisons were made and our HOD informed us all that a decision would be made by the school year-end.

3.5 The software

There are a host of programmes available in today's market for langaue learning. I chose to research this one for two main reasons: it does not require internet and it focuses primarily on speaking. It affords a host of key attributes from both teachers' and pupils' perspectives. (Appendix 8).

For example, teachers may, before task-setting, block or indeed enable access to other applications or dictionaries. They may blank all pupils' screens to have them listen attentively or take control of pupils' screens, either individually or collectivley, to illustrate how to access, complete or use certain features. The most important function for a teacher is the ability to monitor pupils' voices whilst they complete tasks in order to ensure that they are progressing, and also after they complete tasks so that the pupils themselves have a recording of their perfomance and can see their own level of progress. Collection of all recordings is extremely simple and time-saving in that one must simply press 'Collect all', and each audio file is automatically uploaded in seconds to a secure database. A rather useful feature is the traffic-light system, which allows pupils to give live feedback as to how their task is going and whehter they perhaps need help or not; red meaning 'I'm really stuck'; orange 'I'm struggling' and green 'All good'. This can serve as a highly-useful for both formative and summative assessment. Finally, from the teachers'

perspective, differentiation is effectively accomodated for by allowing teachers to group activities into separate bundles, which grant access to separate individuals, pairs or groups. This may be done based on target grade or how pupils have been coping on a paritcualr topic. Unlike in a classroom setting, where it is often possible for pupils to 'see' the differentiation in place among themselves, at no stage are they made aware of, or able to even guess, such using this programme.

For pupils, perhaps the most attractive feature is the uploading of teacher recordings of all the questions on all the topics (over 120 questions) for the iGCSE exam (Appendix 9). When pupils listen to the question, they individually record themselves and save their answer. If they are not content with the quality or quantity of their answer, they may try again and again until they wish to send their final version, i.e. they have ownership over which version they deem best meets the criteria after criticially self-evaluating their own oral proficiency. If learners are experiencing difficulty, and the teacher has not yet requested traffic-light information, they can simply 'call' the teacher, which sends him or her a request to interact with a particular learner either using the headsets, text or taking control of the learner's screeen to demonstrate something. If given free reign, learners may actually 'ring' another pupil (traditional housephone ringing tone provides for excellent authenticity) and simply have a 'free chat'. A rather interesting point about this software is that it provides for a free, albeit heavily reduced, verision of the programme for learners and teachers to use on their personal laptops. Whilst no interaction between learners can take place, useful homework related to anserwing the 120 questions can be set, ensuring pupils actually practise their oral skills outside of class. This feature was not availed of during the research period.

3.6 IT lesson content

Drawing on a plethora of resources, craft knowledge, colleagues' ideas and literature, I desigend a number of tasks for pupils to complete in lessons in order to have them attend to each component of the iGCSE oral exam requirements. All tasks were applied equally in both classes by both teachers.

Each ICT lesson involved practice for the two exam role-plays using past-exam papers (Appenix 10), covering a host of areas such as booking a hotel room, ordering in a restaurant, making a complaint, reclaiming a lost item, enquiring about a job advert, etc. These tasks are relatively straight-forward, require only one-sentence answers, test a maximum of three tenses (passé composé, présent et futur simple) and involve little deviation from a standard formulaic script. They do, however, consititue 30% of the iGCSE oral exam, and thus were an integral component in most ICT lessons, with Lambert et al's (2016) theory of task repetition seeing pupils practise at least three times each scenario. The role-plays last a maximum of five minutes in the exam.

Responding to a certain number of questions on whichever topic was currently being studied, by using the department's list of sample questions that were recorded onto the programme by teachers, was also a core part of each class, and the task for which I used my 'iGCSE Awesome Checklist perhaps the most. These involve questions where extended answers are expected using a range of tenses, a host of linguistic structures and appropriate intontation. Pupils prepare a short presentation of 2 minutes maximum on a subtopic of one of the five iGCSE main topics after which they answer questions on their topic for three minutes (Appendix 11: sample presentation and questions). The following five minutes involve pupils answering questions on two more of the five main topics, chosen at the examiner's discretion.

3.7 Tasks

In order for pupils not to suffer from 'boredom effect' and in order to encourage them to benefit from the 'negotiation for meaning' aspect of language learning, I designed a number of 'fun' learning tasks to be completed in pairs. These tasks were generally repeated three to four times with a variety of partners and were not officially graded, the objective being to speak freely with no exam pressure. Examples of my tasks include:

1. Story-telling: pupils read a brief story that I display for 3 - 4 minutes on the software to half the class, with another story to the other half, then tell their partner about it in their own words. Skills and language development include fluency, spontaneity and paraphrasing.
2. Related picture narration task (based on Kormos' task design to encourage fluency): pupils see 11 pictures on the screen and take turns to make a story. Skills and language development include analytical thinking, sequencing, language for agreeing/disagreeing.
3. Unrelated picture narration task: this requires pupils to be more creative and invent a story of 6 completely unrelated pictures. Skills and language development include creative thinking, negotiation, justifying opinions.
4. Picnic–shopping: pupils have a budget for a day out. They must peruse French grocery shopping websites (Carrefour, LeClerc, etc.) and decide what to buy and how much of each item. Skills and language development include research, evaluating and negotiation.
5. Map-reading: learners take turns using maps to ask for and give directions as well as plan a route. During this task, 'news reports' suddenly appear every 3 – 4 minutes on their screen warning pupils of roadworks, traffic accidents, congestion, etc, obliging them to alter their routes and thus directions. Skills and language

development include quesiton formulation, critical thinking, ‘small talk’ interaction.

6. Diariy entries: pupils have different agendas and must make arrangements to meet up or accomplish certain activities together. Skills and language development include explaining, inviting, apologising and making excuses.
7. Descriptions: pupils have different photos appear on their screens of celebrities. They describe their celebirty to their partner who draws it online and tries to guess who it is from their own drawing. Skills and language development include descriptive language, feminine v masculine agreements, negotiation of meaning and paraphrasing.
8. Audio-dubbing of trailers for the visually-impaired: pupils watch a movie trailer in silence and record their own voices on the programme, relating what happens in the 1.5 – 2 minute clip. Pupils then have to close their eyes and listen to one another’s dubbing, imagining what they hear. Afterwards, they watch the actual clip to compare what they imagined to the trailer itself.

Whilst some tasks may of course be carried out in a normal classroom, or perhaps with another program, the crux of the argument in using the ICT lab to learn is that it removes a large proportion of ‘wasted learning time’ where pupils may chat in English, complete the task quickly and sit in silence or have the benefit of charade-like gestures to gauge meaning, thereby reducing quality output. Using only headsets and not having access to non-verbal communication for almost an hour demands the development of a very high level of listening skills as well as acute negotiation of meaning competences. Added to this that pupils know that they may be being recorded by their teacher, we hypothesised that pupils’ level of engagement with these speaking tasks would be much higher than what we witness in the classroom regarding their speaking.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

4.1 Summary of findings

1. Greater pupil WTC, participation and confidence to speak in French was observed during ITC lessons by both teachers, corroborated by pupils' questionnaire feedback and final interviews.
2. A significant reduction in 'fear of speaking' in the language laboratory was observed for most pupils in both classes, though this did not always positively transfer into the classroom.
3. Quantity of language produced by pupils increased as measured by teacher monitoring of the average number of words in a sentence though did not outperform what is generally achieved in a classroom setting.
4. Quality of language significantly increased as measured by the iGCSE Awesome Langauge Checklist of desirable linguistic features for the exam and did outperform, for certain features, what is generally achieved in a classroom setting.

Ancillary findings not related to the nature of this investigation, but offering the possibility of further research to enhance pupil learning include:

1. Boys in both classes appeared to take to the programme more than girls, which is perhaps why they experienced greater percentage mark-ups in grades.
2. Pupils seem to benefit from the greater wait time afforded to them by peers, but do not take on board one another's feedback very seriously.

4.2 Overview

Over the course of the five months, it was evident that the amount of time pupils actually spent productively speaking on the programme was greatly enhanced compared to how much time they would normally spend speaking in a traditional classroom setting. Whilst originally my colleague and I did debate about pausing at one or two times throughout the lesson to offer 'focus on forms' mini-input teacher-led sessions, we ultimately voted against it, believing that it may break pupils rhythm and that we could easily address issues in the following lessons back in the classroom, the ultimate goal being to do everything for the development of oral proficiency. Both of us confidently agree that there is little chance in a traditional classroom setting that pupils would believe that they could speak for 50 minutes in French non-stop, let alone enjoy speaking the whole lesson in French; it would have inevitably descended into English chattering or periods of silence at times, both of which were almost completely absent using this programme.

Why were pupils just able to get on with it all but may perhaps struggle in the classroom: boredom?; lack of positive self-efficacy?; expectations that lessons must always involve teacher-talk? The answer is not easy to decipher. One thing is certain however: each pupil simply managed to get on with the tasks. Whether it be disdain for awkward silences on the 'phone' to peers, knowledge that the teacher may be monitoring 'you' at any given time, a lack of fear and embarrassment from knowing that nobody else can hear you speak or perhaps a genuine desire and interest in the tasks set believing that this was really 'their time' during which they had complete ownership over conversations and, at times, outcomes. My colleague believes that the reduction of fear played the most significant role in pupils' progress. I, on the other hand, would like to believe that it was a genuine desire to communicate and participate in meaningful tasks that, very impressively it must be said, saw 15-year old Set 3 and Set 4 pupils engage in high—quality conversations in French using a variety of tenses, subject pronouns and quite sophisticated linguistic

structures with much improved pronunciation and intonation for most (cf. Appendix 12 for progression in both sets' three oral exam scores over a one-year period).

Could the same result have been achieved without the use of this programme? We believe that whilst progress would have of course been made, it would not have been as significant as what we witnessed for both classes in under only five months. Indeed, given the extremely similar opinions expressed in interviews, the almost identical responses in questionnaire answers and our personal observations of pupils' participation in both classes, it was deemed unnecessary to subdivide the findings into two separate groups given their homogenous nature, and thus charts below reflect the differences that arose over the research period for all 35 pupils together, though a comprehensive individual breakdown for each question has been calculated (Appendix 13).

4.3 WTC

Evidence of greater WTC by both sets of pupils comes from their questionnaire answers (Figure 2 and 3 below), where one can clearly see how they themselves are more willing to participate in activities by the end of the research period as opposed to at the beginning.

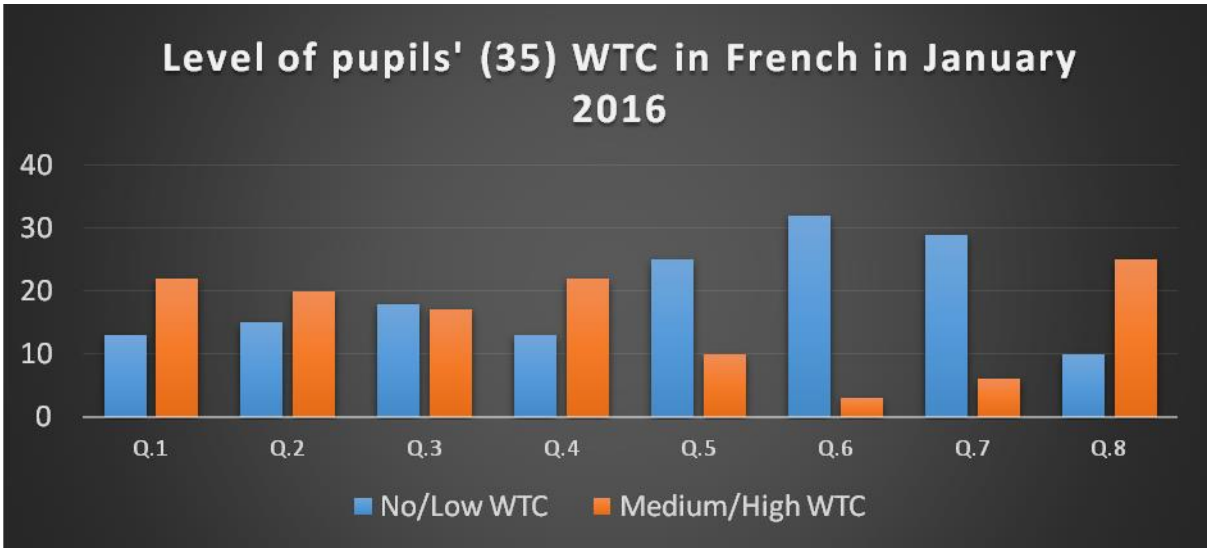

Figure 2.

Taking the bottom two categories ('almost never willing/sometimes willing) and applying the term 'No/Low WTC', and the top two (usually willing/always willing) and applying the term 'Medium/High WTC' , one sees immediately from their responses a marked progression in willingness to communicate with the teacher (Q.2), a stranger (Q.3), or indeed among themselves (Q.5). They also seem slightly more willing to engage in a game (Q.8) or to discuss their holidays with partners (Q.1). What is, however, rather interesting to note is the distinct lack of significant increase in willingness for questions 4 (ask for clarification) and 7 (explain the rules of a game) compared to the rest.

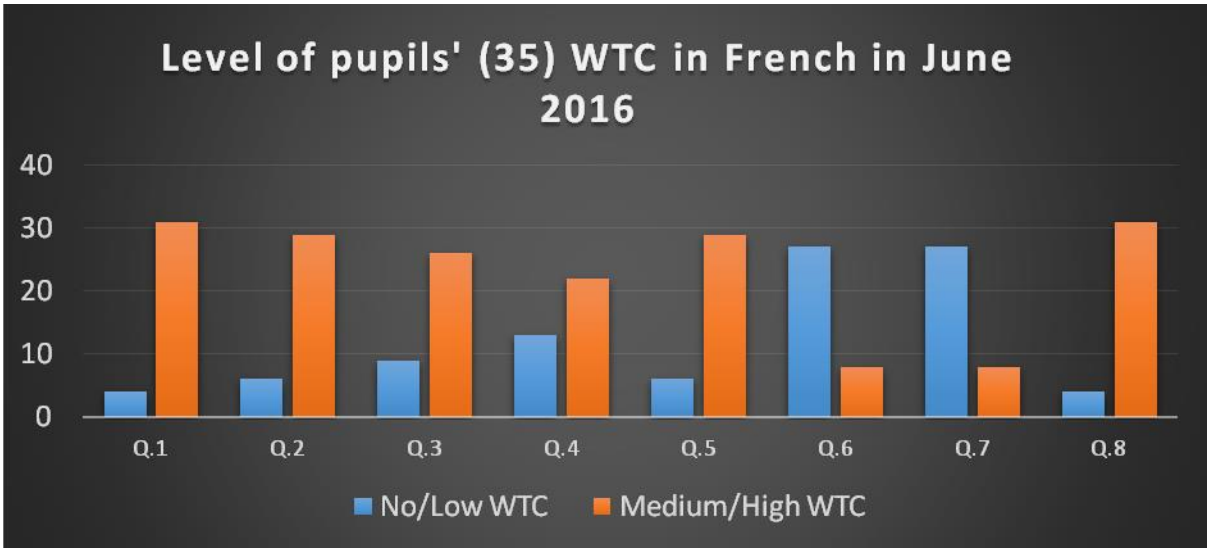

Figure 3.

This is most likely due to the fact that these situations would require a learner to become the focus of attention of the entire class, placing him/herself in a 'vulnerable' position. A fair conclusion to be drawn here is that it may not always be about language or ability if a learner is 'unwilling' to participate, but rather the disdain at '*putting yourself on the spot'*, to quote one interviewee.

What is also very interesting to notice is the relatively stable figures in pupils' general disposition towards French (Figures 4 and 5 below). A summary of key data obtained from the questionnaires is represented in the charts using the system 'strongly disagree' (SD), 'disagree' (D) and 'neither agree nor disagree' (NN) on one side with 'agree' (A) and

'strongly agree' (SA) on the other side, which compare pupils' feelings the beginning and end of the research period. Indeed, the only question experiencing a significant shift is Q.6 relating to 'learn about myself' through the study of French. When questioned about this in the interviews, most pupils were unable to explain the difference, but some did proclaim to have learned to be more confident and not afraid to make mistakes as much. A somewhat bemusing finding is how French, or any foreign language in their opinion, is useful to gain admittance to a top university (pupils generally mean Russel Group or above by that), but is less useful in a job, i.e. real life. Their logic was that '*it is good to be seen to be smart'*, and knowing a language well demonstrates that, but that in the workplace everyone speaks English these days. The most probable cause for a large increase in the number of pupils believing French was useful for university (23 to 31) was the number of talks held regarding future careers and 6th form choices at the school, coinciding with the research period, during which the value of knowing a language for university applications was made clear. This in itself may also have had a positive effect on WTC for some pupils.

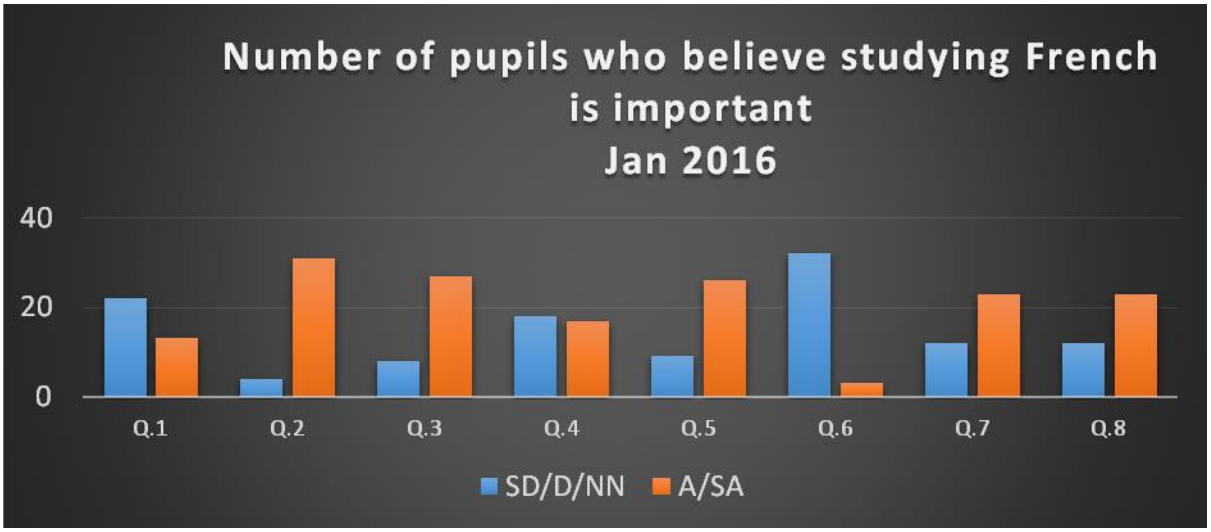

Figure 4.

Indeed, exploring both classes' questionnaire answers during the final interview led to some interesting insights by pupils and some very mature reflection on their behalf. Some telling comments raised about WTC, applicable to the majority it appeared, include the following:

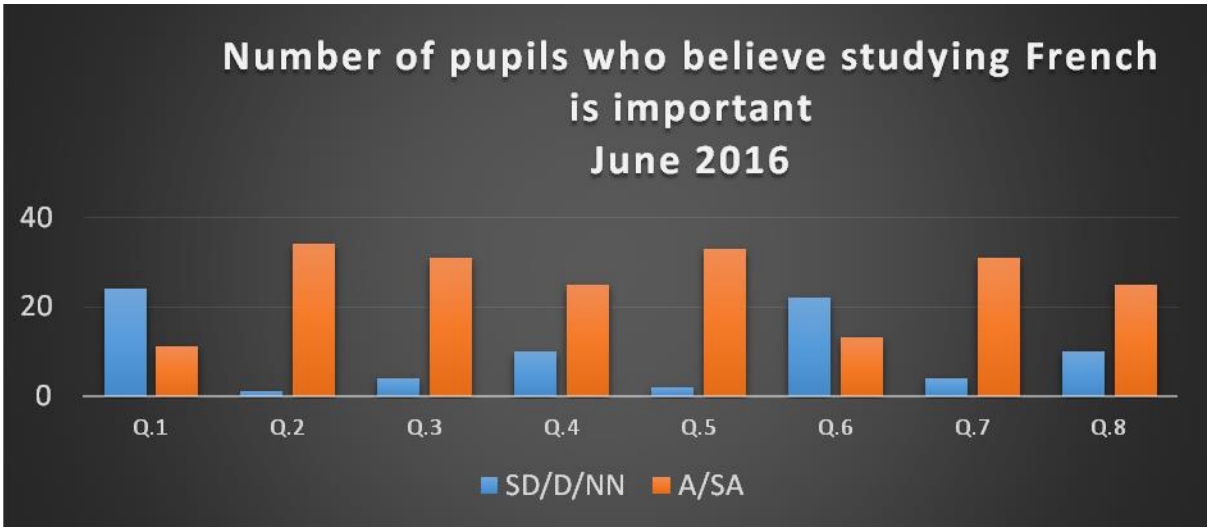

Figure 5.

- *'I didn't think it would really help that much cos I used Linguascope in my old school and that was, like, kinda, just for fun when the teacher would just let us do what we want. But you kinda feel stupid if you sit there saying nothing, so I kinda had to speak in French, but I didn't think I could but I can…kinda now' (Q.1)*

- *'I thought it helped my French to get better, but I don't wanna do it all the time, cos, like, it gets a bit boring cos you don't know what to say sometimes and you get stuck and nobody says anything then! (Q.2)*

- *'A mix. It's good to practise them [presentations] on the programme first a few times to get good at it, then do it for the class' (Q.3)*

- *'I definitely feel like I can speak better French now…yeah, cos, like, I never spoke a full lesson until we started using this…it's weird, like, it's hard and all but I definitely feel more confident' (Q.4)*

- *'The voice notes were good and all, cos you could listen to them again if you forgot what you need to work on…but, I still prefer the face-to-face way cos if you*

don't understand anything, the teacher can help you straight away….but with the programme, it's, like, the same as the written comments in books…you don't pay as much attention to the mistakes you made' (Q.5)

Overall, the vast majority of pupils in the interviews (10/12) believed that the programme had done more for their oral French than a traditional lesson would. Levels of participation were extremely high in both classes, and confidence levels, as per questionnaires and interview exploration, demonstrate a greater belief in their own abilities. It is, however, difficult to measure exactly how much of this increase in French speaking time lies in relation to a genuine desire and willingness to communicate using TL, and how much of it is due to environmental conditions being perhaps more conducive to oral tasks by eliminating the fear factor.

4.4 Fear and anxiety

Examining the questionnaire feedback reveals a very interesting tendency towards a rather large reduction in apprehension felt at speaking a foreign language by pupils. (Figures 6 and 7).

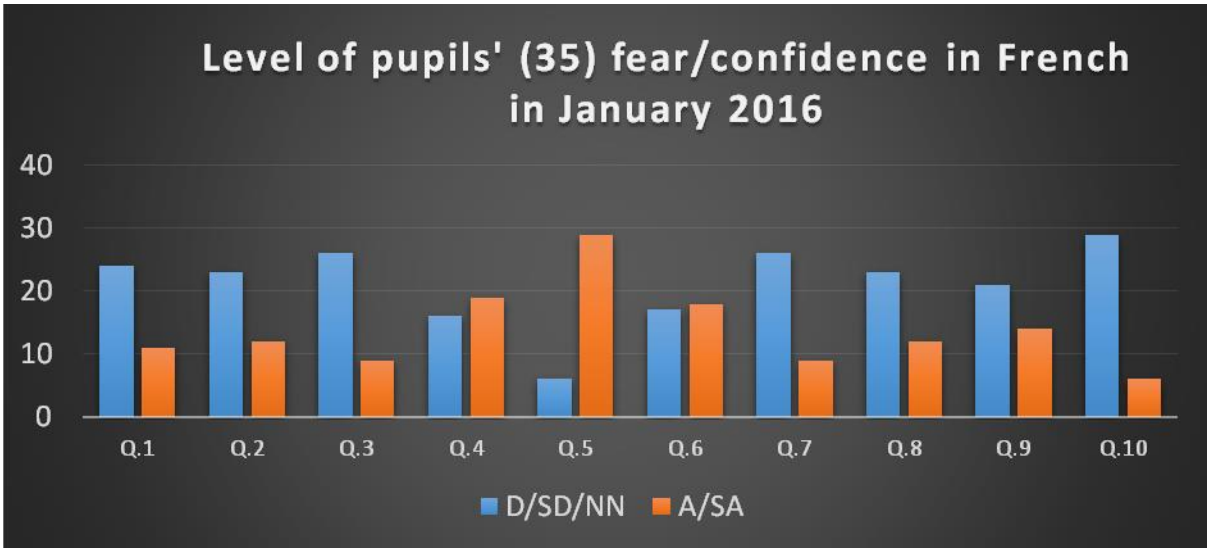

Figure 6.

There is of course some overlap between Horwitz's WTC and Macintyre's FLCAS, as demonstrated in Q.2 and Q.4, both for which pupils' responses attest to an increase in confidence and a slight decrease in the so-called 'negative self-image' when comparing themselves to others.

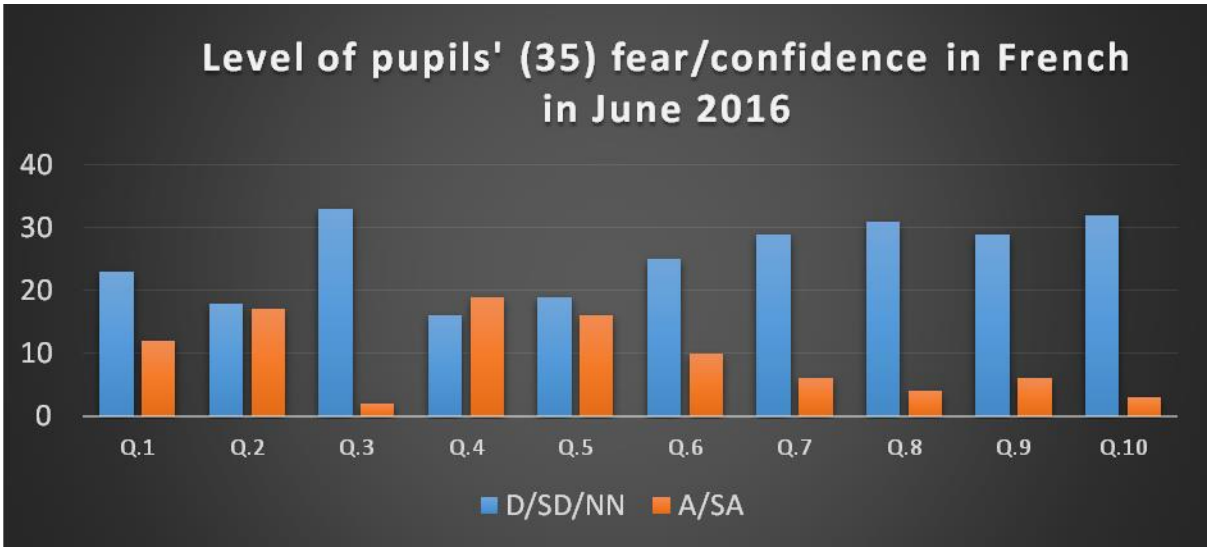

Figure 7.

However, it is in relation to most other questions that led my colleague to deduce that the decrease in fear played a bigger part in greater oral production than the increase in their WTC. Taking Q. 3, Q.5, Q.7 and Q.8 together, one notices that pupils claim to experience less fear, anxiousness or panic at not understanding, at volunteering answers or indeed at being asked to speak impromptu. The regression in these negative emotions, impacting detrimentally upon language learning, is considerable in some cases. Exploring this with both groups, and drawing on Q.4 of the interview to have them compare confidence and fear, led to some pertinent discoveries.

- *'There's no way I'd have put on a French accent if everyone was listening to me in normal class..it'd just be weird'*

- *'I think that cos nobody was listening to our mistakes, we weren't as afraid to speak cos, you don't really get that shy if it's only your mate laughing at you'*

- *'I wouldn't say I was afraid, just that when all your mates are watching you, listening to you, when they normally talk to you in English, and your voice is well different, you feel a bit, kinda stupid, no, not stupid, just shy or embarrassed like'*

- *'I know I spoke more on this than in class…well with most of them [pupils] I mean….with some, it was just awkward cos you weren't talking and he wasn't talking and it would have been easier to just do it together, like the matching story pictures one, in the class I mean……but then we'd've probably spoken in English…… yeah we would've'*

- *'I know my pronunciation isn't good, or my accent I mean, but I kinda tried more cos no one was listening, and I think I got better, at least for the 'r' and even a bit the nasal sounds…..that Madame X always tries to make us do in class, but nobody really does them'*

These opinions clearly indicate a rather strong appreciation of the primary affordance of the program, i.e. the ability to interact with other pupils without being heard by all. Pupils seem aware of the inhibiting impact of fear in speaking, yet, when asked whether they would prefer to have all speaking lessons in the lab, the answer was a resounding 'no' by all 12 participants. The justification seemed that, whilst the program helped their fluency and their confidence, it was not very 'realistic' and that they would not *'spend our lives on headsets'*. Even though they all admitted to being more 'fearful' in the class, the most striking factor in being fearful was not the language itself but the lack of preparation afforded to them at times by teachers, and that a great deal more preparation is required in languages than in other subjects.

On a related point, there is also some evidence that language classes at the beginning of the research period may have been causing more anxiety than what was felt by pupils in other subjects (Q.9). The ratio was not far off 1:1 at the beginning for those believing that they were more apprehensive in their language classes, conforming, to an extent, to Zimmermann's (1992) research or Horwitz' et al.'s (1986) findings outlined in the literature review. However, by the end of the research period, one notices a considerable decline in this ratio to almost 5 to every 1 pupil believing that they experience no more fear in languages that in other subjects. When interrogated about this, the general consensus seemed to be again much more relate to the notion of preparedness than the language itself, and that language teachers need to give more 'wait time' so pupils can respond well. This is something that they all felt they had whilst interacting with other pupils ('*no pressure to have to quickly think on the spot'*) and appreciated very much, believing strongly that better learning occurred through greater thinking time.

4.4 Quantity

As mentioned in point one, pupils speaking time was essentially the full 50 minutes with 5 minutes at the end for providing feedback to partners in English. Whilst this of course demonstrates an increase in quantity, it would be somewhat useless if all sentences produced were short one liners with little evidence of either complex constructions or descriptive explanations and justifications. In this light, I looked at quantity more on a sentential level than simply as a whole, i.e. were pupils improving the quantity or length of their individual sentences?

Recording the average level of the number of words used in an answer by the 35 pupils prior to using the programme and then again at the end (Figure 8), just before their exam in May revealed a substantive growth from 4 to 27 pupils being capable of producing what the MFL department considers to be an extended sentence, i.e. 30 words plus.

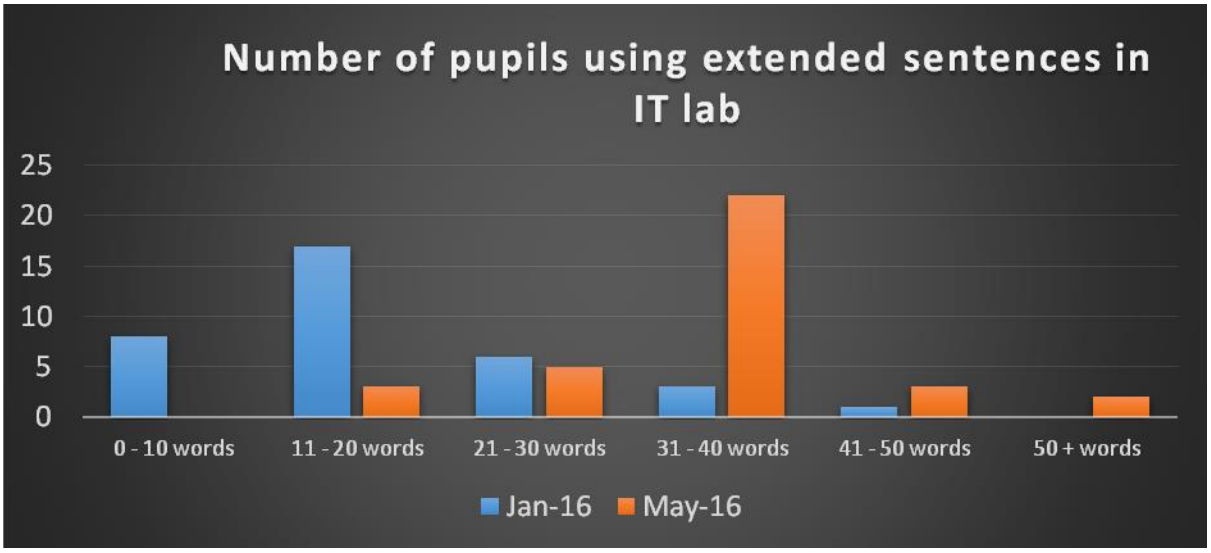

Figure 8.

Some pupils even managed to produce regular coherent sentences of 50 to 60 words, as in the example below:

- *Comment seraient tes vacances de rêve? (Descibe your dream vacation)*
- *Mes vacances de rêve? Behhh, je dirais que c'est les vacances passées au bord de la mer avec toute ma famille au mois d'août quand il fait le plus chaud partout et quand il y a beaucoup de personnes étrangères pout fêter avec et faire nouveaux amis internationals…..oui, oui, c'est ça!* (52 words).
- *'My ideal vacation? Ehhhhh, I'd say that it is holidays spent at the seaside with my family in the month of August when the weather is hottest everywhere and when there are a lot of foreign people to celebrate with et make new international friends…yeah, that's it'* [my translation 07/11/2016].

Whilst not of course faultless, nor possessing any real complex linguistic structures or advanced tenses, this pupil has shown that he has strongly developed one important concept – fluency by giving extended answers. Using our agreed upon class principle of attempting to answer at least three to four 'Wh' questions for every question posed by the examiner (or peers in this case) in order to ensure sufficient detail in their responses,

learners ensured that, even when they struggled to insert high-quality linguistic structures, they were all fully-prepared and felt confident in being able to engage in a 'conversation' with an examiner for 15 minutes, without he or she having to constantly pose questions, i.e. they had greater ownership and realised that they could 'steer' the conversation in the direction they wanted with their answers. Coupled to this, we can add their comprehension of the Phonation-time ration, learned through effective compensation strategies such as their use of the quintessential French 'uhhhhhhh' or 'beehhhhhhhnnn' when they felt like they were 'breaking down, and their refusal to allow 'awkward silences' to spoil their conversations. Both of these saw them improve their perceived fluency of speech as well as quantity.

Although not a part of my methodology, it was interesting to note in my class (but not Madame X's class) that pupils actually began timing one another's responses, demanding that their interlocutor speak for at least 20-30 seconds. Given that people speak at different rates, and based on Kormos' (2004) theory of how speed is a poor predictor of fluency, I did not lend much weight to this methodology, but was nonetheless pleasantly surprised at how pupils were reflecting upon the quantity of their answers given and devising a simple system to monitor and evaluate themselves against this criterion. Aside from this observation, both classes equally increased the length of their sentences to meet the criterion 'extended sentence'.

Would this have been the case without the use of the software? This is where collaboration played a significant factor in interpreting the findings. My colleague, who has been teaching at the school for 15 years (whereas I have only been there for two years), believes that there was no significant difference in what she observed in terms of improvement in quantity over the 5 months compared to previous years without the programme. She claims that she would expect pupils to improve by this much, and this was backed up our HOD, at the school eight years. It thus seems, based not on the findings

alone but on teachers' craft knowledge and ability to interpret the increase in quantity of language in light of previous years, that the programme cannot be said to have outperformed a traditional classroom setting and that such improvement in pupils' sentences can be, and has been, achieved without ITC intervention.

4.5 Quality

Whilst perhaps appearing somewhat simplistic in nature initially, the conception of the 'iGCSE Awesome Language Checklist' proved to be an invaluable tool in allowing me to successfully quantify a qualitative notion in language learning, i.e. what constitutes good-quality speaking. Whilst there are of course some indicators in the iGCSE Syllabus Handbook, surprisingly little heed is paid to some very key concepts, as defined such as negotiation of meaning or spontaneous comments Macaro & Mutton (2002) or indeed Kormos and Dénes' (2004) notion of the absence of major hesitations or her pauses only at appropriate boundaries. Indeed, no mention is even made to compensation strategies in the Handbook or pupils' trying to work out the meaning when unsure of a question. Based on the procedure as outlined in the methodology, results of the improvement in the quality of language spoken by pupils in both classes show an increase in the use of almost all structures by all pupils. Looking at the four major categories of quality on the Checklist, observations recorded by both teachers demonstrate that all pupils were regularly meeting their Language Checklist goals.

Verbs

Pupils were consistently using the key tenses at least three times for each individual topic by the time the exam came, i.e. le présent, le passé composé, le future simple, le future proche, l'imparfait et le conditionnel. Scores at the beginning indicated a heavy reliance

on the présent, future proche and dubious use of the passé composé, with the other key tenses being largely ignored. Analysis of each tense, achieved via a combination of teacher monitoring, peer notetaking and self-feedback, demonstrates how every singly pupil in both classes were able to regularly employ all six key tenses by the time of the exam, which is considered to be the most important factor when preparing, and indeed executing, the oral exam. Greater use of a wider variety of subject pronouns (rather than relying solely on 'je') is also to be noted in Figure 9 below.

Interestingly, it is generally considered by the HOD that pupils in Set 1, and perhaps a strong Set 2, tackle the 'plus-que-parfait' and the 'conditionnel passé', but that this is not appropriate for the rest of the sets, who habitually need to spend more time focussing on consolidating the basics and making sure that they 'nail', to use the HOD's term, all basic tenses and can confidently switch between them.

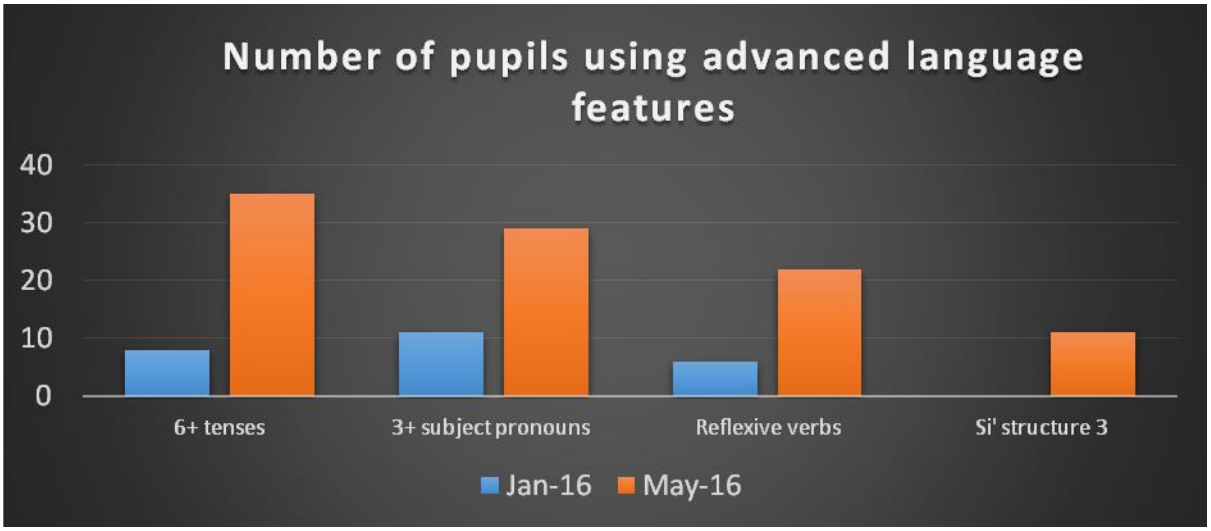

Figure 9.

The logic behind this is sound for two reasons. Firstly, it is not technically necessary to employ either of these two tenses to achieve an A*, although they do come across as impressive and can 'stand out' in exams. Secondly, from a historical vantage, pupils who are in Sets 3 and 4 do not generally achieve A* and are thus not expected to study the more sophisticated aspects of tense usage. Also, very few pupils in these sets pursue

language study at A-level, and thus the argument of at least exposing them to the tenses for future benefit is largely redundant.

We however decided to set the bar very high for our sets, and thus did teach both tenses (mostly only in the 'if clause form' or '3rd conditional for expression of regret'), curious to discover how the pupils would cope with the higher expectations of quality of language, with greater speaking and experimentation practice being afforded to them than they may normally experience in the classroom. Of the 35 pupils, only 3 managed to confidently use them three times or more for each topic. However, using them only once can also 'stand out' in an oral exam, and if successfully communicating them just one time for a regret is the standard, then 11 pupils achieved this rather impressive milestone, i.e. 11 pupils that would normally not be expected to be capable of such a feat.

Vocabulary

As evidenced from Figure 10 below, the quality of vocabulary was enhanced significantly. Subject-specific lexical items do not figure as a mark of quality on the checklist for the simple reason that the focus was on useful vocabulary, easily 'reproducible' across all topics and in all situations, whether oral or written. In this regard, a considerable rise in the use of connectors was observed in both classes. Furthermore, banal adjectives such as 'bon', 'mauvais' and 'intéressant' ceded way to greater sophistication in the expression of their opinons, e.g. 'plaisant/charmant/agréable'; écoeurant/dégueulasse/inefficace and 'intriguant/captivant /fascinant' ('pleasing/charming/pleasant'; 'vile/disgusting/ineffective' and 'intriguing/captivating/fascinating') as well as the aforementioned extension of their answers using a 'Wh' approach to sentence-building.

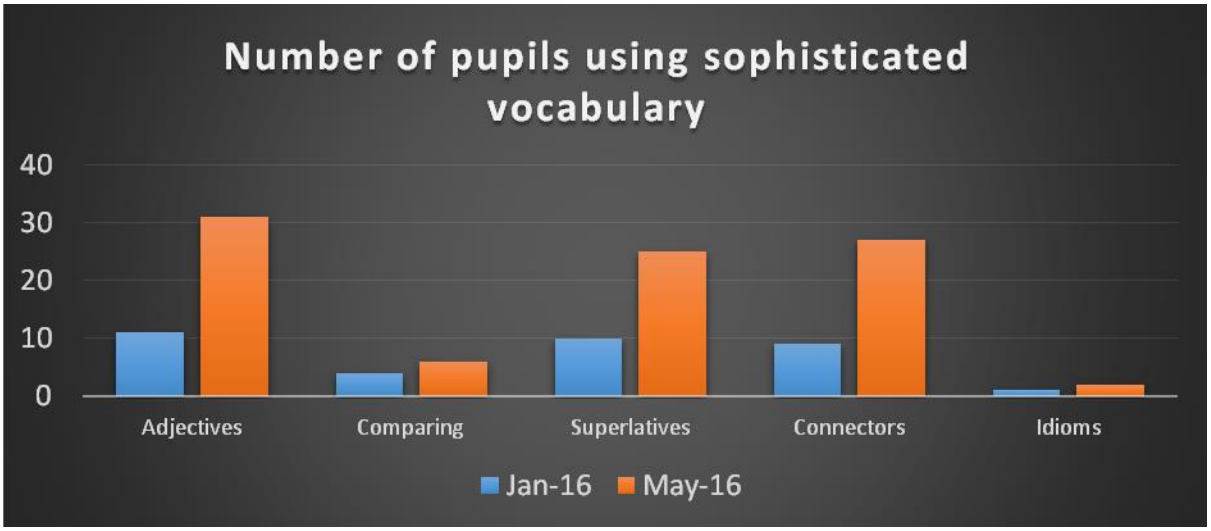

Figure 10.

Two areas that did not notably witness much change under the category 'Vocabulary' include 'comparing language' and 'exclamations/idioms'. My colleague and I hypothesised that the art of comparing things, being difficult by both its nature and, in a foreign language, by its often complex structure, perhaps put pupils off attempting to incorporate this more into their answers. Interestingly, they used 'superlative language' extensively, which is an easier structure to master. As regards the finding that idioms did not feature almost at all over the course of the research period despite at least one idiom being taught in both classes per week, I can only assume that pupils' limited schematic knowledge does not allow them to naturally integrate idioms into natural conversation yet, perhaps in either L1 or L2.

Linguistic structures

Whether it pertain to writing or speaking, this is the key area in which pupils fail to gain marks in the iGCSE exams. Whilst a solid foundation in tense usage, coupled with a wide variety of vocabulary and opinion expressions, will guarantee pupils at least a B in the oral exam, learners who do not naturally incorporate sophisticated structures into their answers will not reach the top band of A-A*. Of course, key to speaking French well is

mastery over feminine-masculine agreements. In this regard, from teacher and pupil observations, learners significantly improved their competence in regularly switching between forms. With the selection of 'nice' being justified in the Methodology section, it was left at pupils' discretion whether they peer-mark this box or not. As evidenced in Figure 11 below, the number of teacher ticks for agreeements rose considerably over the research period, from 16 of 35 in the month of January to 31 of 35 by the end of May.

More advanced structures also saw large improvements, especially the use of 'negatives' other than 'ne…pas' (4 to 22), 'si structure 1 or 2' (14 to 35) and 'après avoir/être …' (1 to 18). What is interesting to note about this from a language teacher's perspective is that most of the key structures that witnessed the greatest improvements are all capable of being somewhat 'learnt by heart' and repeated in the exam without the need for extensive critical thinking skills (other than feminine-masculine agreements). The structures that witnessed a much lower rate of increase could be argued to be those where more 'spontaneous' thinking skills are required (object pronouns and agreements with completely different syntax to English or perhaps the use of 'qui/que').

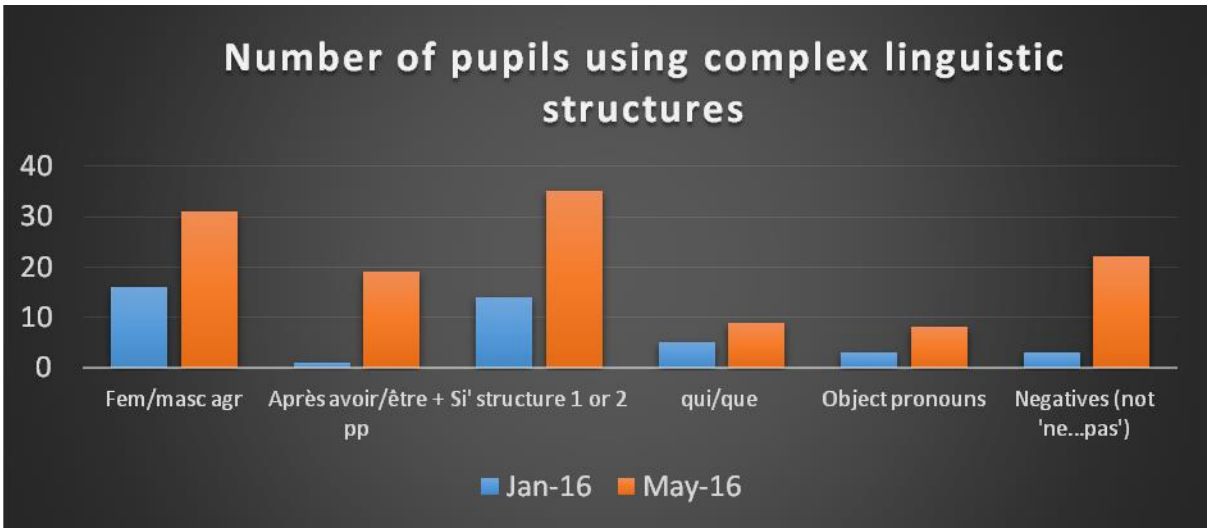

Figure 11.

Whilst not a finding directly related to the theme of this dissertation, it is nonetheless worth mentioning how language teachers may need to spend more time on the latter structures, though this is very much an incidental and isolated finding.

So, how much of this success in improving pupils' quality of language can be attributed to the use of the software? Whilst it is of course impossible to isolate all other factors entering into the equation of pupils improving their oral competence in Yr 11 (cf. Limitations), the simple answer is that the programme did indeed enhance the quality of language spoken by a significant factor. This finding can be confidently stated based on evidence not only from teachers' monitoring of their pupils, but also from the pupils themselves. Comments that arose during interviews included:

- *'There's no way I'd have practised so much the 'si structures'…well, not in speaking at least [without the programme]'*

- *'You don't feel stupid if you're, like, practising the things [structures] that you learnt in the last lesson cos even if you mess it all up, like, I used to always get the the 'si structures' mixed up…nobody's listening to you, so you don't get, like, you don't feel under pressure and so you can practise more…plus your mate's not making you hurry like a teacher sometimes does'*

- *'I still don't really get all the object thingys [pronouns], but I probably tried to use them more [on the programme] than I would've done in the class…cos, like, I don't know… I probably got them all wrong, but I think I was trying more than I probably would have'*

Whilst the assertion by Docherty and Sandowlski (1999) that pupils 'are the best sources of information about themselves' (177) may be open to debate, their claims that they not

only feel but know that they would not have improved by as much in a traditional classroom setting cannot be ignored. One would perhaps expect to hear such comments by the weaker learners in the groups, but my finding is that there was a resounding 'thumbs up' for greater integration of ICT in MFL by all. This was a point which was endorsed by pupils who, looking both ways, lamented the fact that there had been little or no language-lab lessons in the previous two years instruction, but also enquired as to whether such lessons would regularly feature in the future, if they were to choose a language.

Exploring this theme with three boys in my class and with one boy and one girl in my colleague's class led me to conclude that, whilst of course not the primordial factor in deciding whether to pursue languages or not at A-level or IB, pupils were however taking into consideration the integration of ICT in MFL as many of them had themselves developed a greater sense of belief that they could perhaps succeed in an area they thought was not for them (a common bane for teachers and severe misconception on the part of pupils that being in Sets 3 or 4 equates to 'not being naturally good at languages').

Lending credence to the pupils' beliefs are those of my highly-experienced French colleague. In her own words, commenting on her own class, she proclaimed that *'I have never seen such fluency or such mingling of tenses at this level. Add to that their efforts at intonation which you don't normally hear in the classroom…it's so nice to hear*'. Whilst she did, just as with quantity, believe that many of the other benefits witnessed could have been achieved without the programme, she raised some insightful points touching on a number of subjects.

Although, unlike her, I personally feel that the 'mingling of tenses' may be achieved with use of IT, I do concur with her finding that we would never have witnessed such efforts at 'sounding French-like' in a normal classroom setting, where fear and potential embarrassment would have won over risk-taking and courage. Some may argue, as was the case with two Spanish teachers of Spanish origin during the MFL INSET, that practice

among peers does not necessarily lead to development and improvement if pronunciation or intonation is erroneous, and may even worsen the situation if peers are 'misleading' one another. We found however that it did lead to improvement, and whilst these improvements were not always carried into the classroom, where learners chose to 'revert' to their 'normal English-sounding' ways, we can both confidently state that, when faced one-to-one in the oral final exam, the difference in pronunciation and intonation of many, though not all, pupils was substantial compared to their performance just prior to the beginning of the research period in the mock oral exam. Wearing headsets and interacting with other pupils in a safe environment is thus a highly effective way to improve one's pronunciation and intonation.

I further strongly agree with my colleague that the level of fluency achieved by pupils would not have been the same without using the software. Drawing on Kormos and Dénes (2004), I ensured that pupils first grasped the basics of where and when to pause when speaking French, and presented, in a mildly-entertaining manner, a lesson on how to integrate the classic 'uhhhhhhhh' or 'beennhhhh' into their speech. This not only granted them the needed time to reflect on their answers but also made them sound more fluent. With pronunciation and intonation meriting 10% of the overall mark for the oral exam, the importance of such is evident. Simply put, there are so many distractions taking place in a classroom at any given moment, which, over the course of a year, must be severely detrimental to learning. Wearing headsets, looking at a relatively mundane screen, and knowing that you may be being audio-recorded all contributed to the positive effect on performance, fluency, quality and ultimately grades achieved by pupils.

One must however note that there is the possibility of interpreting the data in an alternative manner and drawing perhaps a different set of conclusions to the ones outlined above. Taking the statistics obtained from analysis of each classes' performance over two periods (Appendix 12) – one without the use of ICT and one with the use of it – some may

question the extent to which the software benefitted pupils overall, given that the differential between both periods for both classes is only 5.3% and 1.4%. Furthermore, as noted in the chart, some pupils actually did worse with the use of ICT in the sense that their improvement was less than it had been when they did not avail of the software. To interpret the global data in such a manner would, however, be a mistake. As outlined above, when the scores are broken down and analysed under the relevant research questions, a very different picture emerges as to the one presented in simply looking at a pupil's overall three test scores. Being able to draw on all pupils' input, teachers' experiences, researchers' observations and actual detailed monitoring of pupils' performance on tasks has allowed for the data to be interpreted in the best possible manner. These findings thus represent the most accurate picture of the effect of using ICT in pupils' learning of French for this particular investigation.

Finally, On a side note, effective task design is primordial in ensuring that effective learning takes place. Whilst practising for exam questions using past papers for role-plays and the department's question sheets on the five key topics did of course help pupils to improve their exam technique as well as their speaking, it is my core belief, and my colleague's, that it was the non-exam tasks that benefitted pupils the most. The demand that they negotiate meaning, agree, disagree, justify their opinions, argue, compromise, paraphrase, summarise, evaluate as well as creatively, critically and analytically 'think' about what they were trying to achieve extended far beyond the 'question and answer format' of the exam in which little genuine conversation takes place. Whilst it is of course teachers' responsibility to ensure that learners are well-prepared for the exam, language teachers do try to teach a language and not just a school subject. Preparing learners for 'real-life' tasks is an admirable and worthwhile goal, and one which, with the use of headsets, and the knowledge that the teacher is monitoring not only your speech but your efforts, leading itself to the removal of unnecessary English-language chatter, pupils successfully rose to.

Chapter 5: Limitations

Whilst this research project has best attempted to reduce the number of variables entering into the equation when learning a foreign language in a classroom setting, by the relatively wide scope of the study – the use of an IT programme to enhance oral skills – it has suffered from a number of limitations. Aside from the obvious statement as to the validity of conclusions drawn from such a small-scale project being applicable on a much wider scale, further questions relate to the following points.

1. From a literature vantage point, the development of the FLCAS was to identify language anxiety but it does not show how to manage it. Not having time to study behavioural psychology techniques, I focused more on cognitive aspects of increasing confidence and reducing fear (use of headphones, not feeling vulnerable in front of the entire class, practice and task repetition to gain confidence) as opposed to addressing affective issues.

2. As with any methodology, there exists of course a myriad of pros and cons to the use of my chosen research methods. Some drawbacks for each methodology may include the following:

    - Semi-structured informal pupil interviews: lack of clear direction of interview at times or pupils leading one another was observed at times. Also, there may have been some pupils saying only what they think the teacher wanted to hear.

    - Exam grades and their percentage changes: it can of course be argued that pupils inevitably improve a lot when it comes to exams, and that both classes' oral scores would have been higher at the end of 5th form, whether they used IT to a large degree or not. Indeed, Ofsted has studied how pupils in 5th form

make the fastest rate of progress in language acquisition over the course of their secondary school years.

- Pupil feedback in questionnaires using Likert scales: this presents a highly restricted view of how pupils feel and what they think. Ideally, and with time and resources, all class members would have been interviewed in small groups to better ascertain their opinions.

- Teacher collaboration: although working with other professionals offers a host of benefits, having to compromise and concede on points related to task design, number of repetitions, time allotted to do tasks, process of monitoring pupils, etc. can be problematic at times, and 'realistic' demands on teachers has to take precedence over thoroughness of research in some cases.

3. Generic factors such as age, personality, beliefs, aptitude, etc. will always inevitably play a role in any research project. Little can be done to mitigate these.

4. Removing non-verbal communication from all oral tasks presents a host of advantages. However, some pupils, justifiably, argued that, whilst it is a useful means to practice French for 'on the phone', the exam is face-to-face with an examiner, and thus removing that element of communication does not prepare them for 'French body language' in their opinions, nor for 'real life'.

5. The questionnaire suffers from a lack of some key questions. Seeking responses, for example, to their use of technology in their daily lives or to their time spent studying French outside lessons in general would have allowed me to better interpret questionnaire findings.

Finally, the idea I conceived initially was to have the control group not undergo IT lessons at all (something that is actually at each individual teacher's discretion already at our school). However, having read Beatty (2013) - 'It would be unethical to try to measure the long-term impact of access to computers where the denial of access might lower the grades of one of the groups' (221) – I deemed that, whilst permissible at the school in theory, and whilst perhaps offering a much greater insight into how IT may affect performance and results, this would be entirely inappropriate, if indeed not unprofessional, and thus dismissed the idea outright.

Chapter 6: Implications for practice

According to Richards (1997), teaching typically involves: 'selecting learning activities, preparing students for new learning, presenting learning activities, asking questions, conducting drills, checking students' understanding, providing opportunities for practice of new items, monitoring students' learning, giving feedback on student learning and reviewing and re-teaching when necessary' (196). Ultimately, incorporating ICT into my teaching in a highly-structured manner did not really change much of the above. However, a number of significant findings from this research project have already begun to impact on my language teaching across the board, and, I believe, on other teachers' teaching.

Firstly, whilst the concept of teaching to appeal to certain 'learning styles' in the classroom has been somewhat debunked over the past few years, my most important finding is that, irrespective of whether a learner prefers listening over reading or interacting with others to individually writing, there is a place for all learners to positively engage with IT in order to enhance their language learning. Although teenagers interact extensively with technology in all areas of their lives nowadays, I was dubious as to whether a relatively simple IT programme, without fast-moving objects, beautiful graphics or video links, could stimulate and retain the attention and interest of teenage pupils in a school subject. I now believe that it can.

This has had a huge impact on not only my colleague's and my teaching for next year, but on all teachers. The HOD has decided to invest in the software licence for two years. Furthermore, Having co-presented with my colleague the nature of our research and our key findings in a 40-minute session at our MFL INSET day in June 2016 to 16 colleagues teaching French, German, Spanish and Italian, the HOD has now made a number of important key changes. Firstly, all years (except Yr 9 due to lack of resources and time available) are now obliged to have one IT lesson per week. This was supposed to happen

from September 2016 onwards, but has been put back to from January 2017 onwards. Heretofore, even though pupils had IT lessons in the lab, some did not even turn on their computers; teachers conducting a normal lesson without the need for computers. This new initiative, it must be said, has not been met with great enthusiasm by some of the older teachers in the department (hence the postponement to January). For this reason, in conjunction with my colleague and my HOD, we have agreed to do our internal INSET in Term 1 on the integrating the software into lessons (sometime in November). Essentially, we will teach all teachers how to effectively use the programme's features. Whilst all teachers received a brief 90-minute introduction to the software a year and a half ago, this would not suffice to use the programme well, and has been forgotten by most in any case. I have made my own tasks available to all on the shared drive, and our HOD has asked that each teacher upload just one task each fortnightly cycle. I am proud to say that I feel my research project has had the positive effect of promoting greater collaboration between not only colleagues in the French department but across all departments.

Although, as mentioned above, there was no intention to segregate boys and girls in terms of their learning, nor stronger or weaker learners either, it did emerge from both observations and oral exam results that weaker boys seemed to benefit most from using the software. Their level of participation in both classes was, by and large, much higher than in traditional classroom settings. There was also the added benefit – for those among them who struggle to behave themselves at times – that they could not disrupt others' learning and, thus, valuable learning time was not lost. I believe that this unintended finding is worthy of considerable investigation for a number of reasons:

- Are weaker boys underperforming in languages because traditional classroom settings do not meet their learning needs?
- Does eliminating distractive influences by having them wear a headset and face the wall benefit them or did they simply actually enjoy a novel way of learning

a language with tasks that really made them think and give their own opinions on topics?

- Should more homework, especially oral, be set using computers rather than copybooks?

The majority of the weaker boys who improved considerably do not have learning issues.

Looking forward, my most likely future step will be into the role of HOD of French. In such a case, I feel that I will go one step further than my present HOD and actually integrate IT lessons into schemes of work, with clear learning goals and outcomes harmonised among the department, or indeed even across all departments. Using such a programme allows for incredibly effective assessment of pupils' oral skills with an easy method of collection being an important factor too (as opposed to digital recorders, uploading, converting, storing in some file, etc.). Whilst I have only examined one piece of software in detail, my reading revolved around the general integration of IT into MFL, and also pointed me towards other programmes, which I have since explored. Whilst I would recommend this programme as a very effective tool to aid pupils' learning in oral tasks, it does not suffice to meet all learning needs. Cognizant from my reading of what ideal features that programmes need to contain in order to help learners develops all their skills, I would invest money in other programmes to compliment this one. Examples include Vocabepxress for key vocabulary related specifically to iGCSE French as opposed to other more generic, albeit excellent programmes such as Linguascope or Duolinguo. Also, Thisislanguage for authentic listening tasks and exposure to pronunciation and intonation tips would be a valuable tool. I have read of other programmes that offer reading texts in the form of tickertapes, believing that this is a more natural way to read. Given more time, this is something I would like to investigate, i.e. does moving text (as in on news channels floating across the screem) speed up reading and what is its effect on comprehension rates.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This research project has examined whether or not the integration of an ICT programme into MFL learning could help young learners improve the quality and quantity of their oral language in French. It was hypothesised that, by all pupils wearing headsets, fear of speaking would be reduced and a subsequent increase in confidence levels would be observed. The investigation ultimately attempted to discover whether reduced fear and greater confidence would lead to greater willingness to communicate and, if so, whether there would be a positive impact on their oral performance and, consequently, final iGCSE French exam scores at the end of the research period. The study, directly concerning pupils' own interests, thus ensured that research participants engaged fully with the investigation whilst extensive collaboration throughout the MFL department lends greater validity to this project's findings.

As regards the first research question relating to 'Willingness to communicate in TL', it is evident from this study that the use of the software, and the affordances it presents, was a key factor in increasing pupils' willingness to communicate. On almost every question on the WTC component of the questionnaire, a greater desire to communicate is to be observed over the course of the research period, irrespective of the audience type (teacher, stranger, friends, etc.). This perhaps suggests that learners may be more willing speak in French than teachers think they are, but that the medium of communication for oral tasks may need to be changed from traditional classroom settings where 20 -30 people are all trying to talk and listen to one another to one where less 'noise' is present. The fact that there were no major changes in pupils' general attitude towards French serves as further evidence that it was the affordances of the IT programme that brought about the increase in pupils' desire to communicate as opposed to a keener interest in French as a subject or language.

The subject of ‘fear – confidence levels – willingness to communicate’ inevitably all go hand-in-hand. One possible interpretation of our research is that greater willingness seems to stem from reduced fear. Related to the second research question on fear and anxiety is that pupils’ experience less fear or potential embarrassment at ‘getting things wrong’ or ‘sounding weird’ when wearing headsets, and that this ‘frees’ them to experiment with the language more, safe in the knowledge that even if they ‘mess up’, nobody (a part from the teacher and one peer) is listening. Simply put, experiencing these negative emotions less allows pupils to communicate more. Communicating more means practising more. Practising more generally leads one to have greater self-confidence. Thus, a reasonable conclusion based on our findings is that if a pupil feels ‘safer’, in the sense that others are not listening to only him or her, fear is reduced which leads to a virtuous cycle of ‘practice – confidence – willingness to communicate’.

Communicating more, i.e. greater quantity overall of speech, is all very well and good, but this communication must be targeted towards specific outcomes - the iGCSE exam criteria in this case – in order to be truly beneficial to pupils. Looking at research question 3 on whether quantity was affected by use of the program, there can be no arguing that pupils considerably increased the length of their individual answers over the research period to meet the criterion ‘extended sentence’. However, and based on teachers’ professional experience, it appears that use of the programme did not help pupils outperform themselves compared to how they may have done in traditional classroom settings. In this light, it can be stated that the ICT software did not fare better nor worse when used for developing pupils’ quantity of speech as per the iGCSE criteria.

Examining the fourth and final research question on the relationship between quality of language and use of the software perhaps reveals the most interesting findings. Indeed, it is our belief that pupils’ greater output of high-quality linguistic structures, their increase in fluency and their improved intonation and pronunciation would not have been achieved

to the same degree without use of this programme. Whilst some elements may indeed be open to debate (e.g. why some linguistic structures witnessed little change such as comparing structures; whether such natural mingling of tenses would have been achieved without the program), based on direct observations, pupil interviews and exam score progression, it can be viewed that the use of this ICT programme has the potential to effectively help pupils 'outperform their traditional classroom selves'.

Arising however from the last point, and difficult to quantify, is the importance and role played by the greater wait time pupils seemed to afford to one another compared to how much time they would probably receive in a more traditional IRF teaching system. This is perhaps an avenue of research that may be worth investigating, especially in relation to dyadic interaction between learners of a foreign language using ICT to communicate.

Pressey (in Beatty, 2010) as early as 1926 advocated the use of 'technology' to enhance learner autonomy and to avoid one of the greatest difficulties in classroom instruction; namely, 'the pace of instruction in a group of learners whose comprehension and learning rates are at different levels.' (96). There can be no doubt that great advances have occurred in multimedia technology in the past thirty years in all domains of our lives. In terms of SLA, Harris and Kington (2002) laud the much more practicable access to TL language and culture nowadays whilst Blyth (2008) claims that international language 'e-pals' provide for tremendous positive effects on grammar, vocabulary and tenses. Milton (2002) makes a strong point when he argues that is the authenticity of interaction with native speakers via ICT that holds the greatest potential benefit for MFL pupils.

However, despite these great advances in the sophistication of software in recent times, we are still, in my opinion, many years away from a world in which IT programmes can be tailor-made to pupils' individual linguistic, intellectual and emotional needs; to offer them immediate constructive qualitative, not just quantitative, feedback after formative and

summative assessment; and perhaps to extrapolate the very best from them as a learner overall. Indeed, in order to have language learning software capable of realising greater feats, Beatty (2013) calls on teachers to become more involved: 'If CALL software packages are to be properly evaluated and matched with learning needs, they need to be classified by teachers' (166). Bailin (1995) also points out that teachers need to be implicated in the creation of new software to ensure it is of a pedagogical quality. Williams (1998) drawing on Stringer (1997) goes a step further, claiming that not only teachers, but also software designers need to step 'outside the box' when it comes to improving language learning programmes: 'We need more radical reviews of what learning might be through multimedia, combined with innovation in design (Stringer, 1997), to realize more fully the true potential for educational interaction in multimedia' (170).

I strongly believe that a very useful first step towards improved language learning software must be greater collaboration between teachers, researchers and software designers. Moody (1995) highlighted the need for this over 20 years ago when he described how a particular language learning software program had had a plethora of input from engineers, programmers, executives, marketing and salespeople, before coming to fruition, but almost none from teachers. Drawing upon this example, Beatty (2013) raises a very interesting points when he states, from the perspective of software providers, that 'what is technically possible and what is commercially viable are more important than what is pedagogically appropriate' (172). Irrespective of how 'viable' it may all be funding-wise, there can be no arguing that there is always room for improvement, and, as outlined in the Introduction about the paucity of research into speaking skills in a CALL environment, much greater efforts are required on all parties' behalves to more effectively integrate the needs of our MFL learners with the technology that will allow them to realise their potential.

This research project has been made available to the whole school, and both the History and English departments have shown keen interest in trying out the software with their pupils, believing that it may have the potential to help pupils to focus and remain on task more effectively.

Ultimately, the conclusion I have thus come to, akin to the vast majority of my MFL colleagues', echoes that of Beatty (2013) '… the question is no longer whether or not computers should be used in the classroom. Questions now include how computers should be used and for what purpose' (202). This research project has taught me and indeed my colleagues that it is indeed not a matter of whether or not we think that we should integrate IT into our own MFL learning and teaching, but how best we now enshrine its place.

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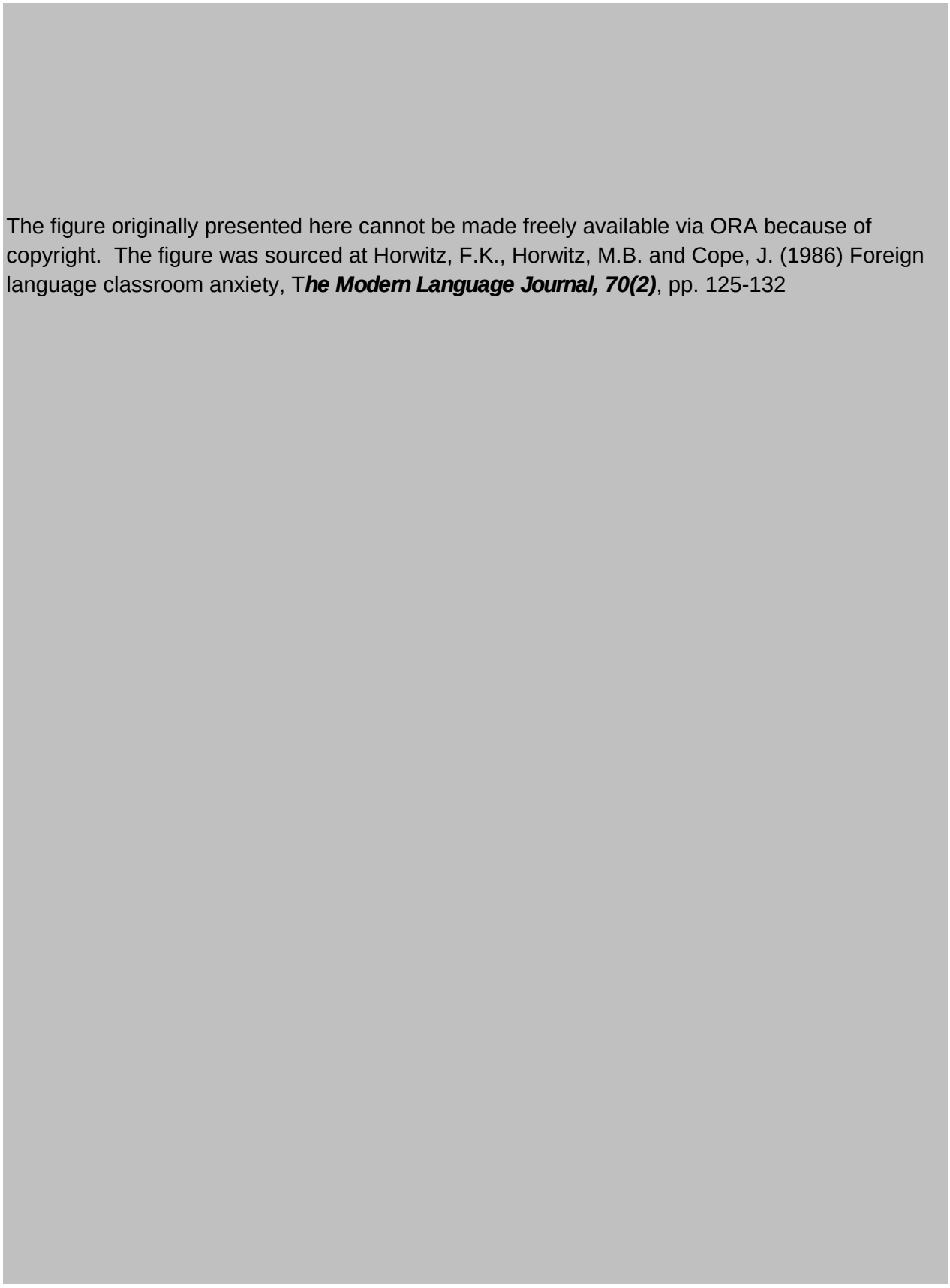
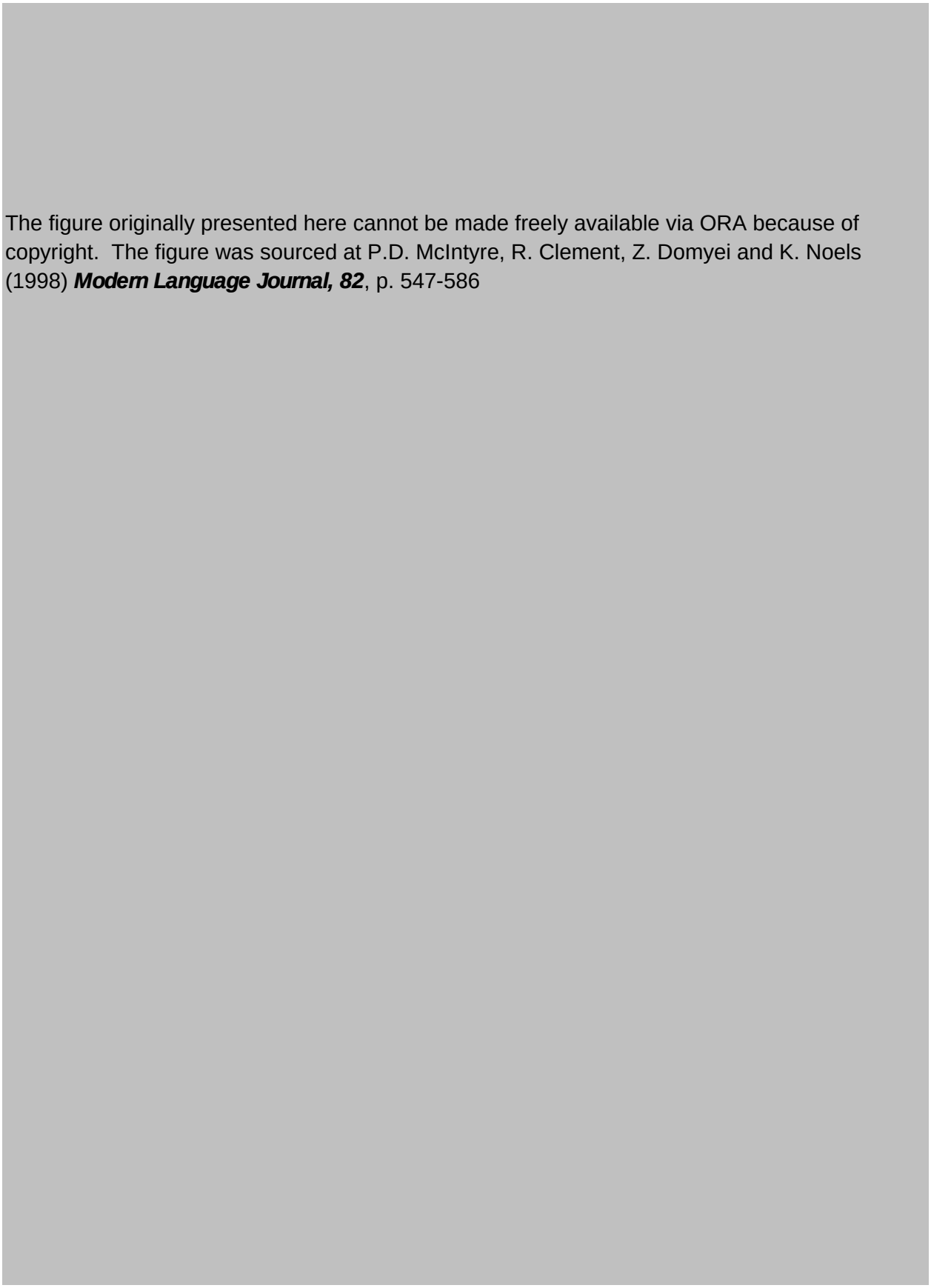
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: WTC – Horwitz et al. 1986.



Appendix 2: FLCAS – MacIntyre et al. 1998



The figure originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. The figure was sourced at P.D. McIntyre, R. Clement, Z. Domyei and K. Noels (1998) ***Modern Language Journal, 82***, p. 547-586

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Appendix 3: FLCAS & WTC (adapted for 5th Form French iGCSE class)

Please indicate below how you feel about speaking French in the classroom.

1. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

2. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

3. It frightens me when I don't understand the teacher in the foreign language.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

4. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

5. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

6. In language class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I am sure I know.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

7. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

8. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

9. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

10. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE *INSIDE THE CLASSROOM*

How willing are you to communicate? **Speaking in class, in French ……**

1. How willing would you be to speak in French in a group about your summer holiday?

Almost never willing Sometimes willing Usually willing Almost always willing

2. How willing would you be to speak to your teacher in French about your homework?

Almost never willing Sometimes willing Usually willing Almost always willing

3. A stranger enters the room, how willing would you be to converse in French if s/he talked to you?

Almost never willing Sometimes willing Usually willing Almost always willing

4. You are confused about a task in class, how willing are you to ask for clarification in French?

Almost never willing Sometimes willing Usually willing Almost always willing

5. How willing would you be to talk to a friend in French while waiting in line to see the teacher?

Almost never willing Sometimes willing Usually willing Almost always willing

6. How willing would you be to speak French as an actor in a play?

Almost never willing Sometimes willing Usually willing Almost always willing

7. How willing would you be to describe the rules of your favourite game in French?

Almost never willing Sometimes willing Usually willing Almost always willing

8. How willing would you be to play a game using French?

Almost never willing Sometimes willing Usually willing Almost always willing

I am interested in your reasons for studying French. Please indicate the extent to which you consider each of the following to be important reasons for YOU PERSONALLY to study French.

1. It will be useful in getting a good job

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

2. I would like to travel in France

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

3. It will help me understand French people and their way of life

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

4. I would like to be friends with some French people

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

5. It will make me a more knowledgeable person

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

6. It will help me learn about myself

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

7. It will help me get into a good university

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

8. It will help me broaden my outlook

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

Appendix 4: Interview Questions

Interview on the use of ICT - 5th Form French iGCSE class

1. Do you feel that using computer programs helps you in learning French in general?
   Please give personal examples of how you have used the language software this year to study French and describe how effective you think it was for you personally.

2. Do you prefer speaking French to your classmates using the language software or would you rather speak face-to-face in class?
   How would you feel about using only the software in the future to practise oral skills? Please justify your opinions with personal examples.

3. Do you prefer uploading your spoken PowerPoint presentations using the language software or do you prefer doing them in front of the class for everyone?
   Is there a big difference between the two in terms of your French speaking in your opinion? Please justify with personal examples.

4. Can you describe any changes that you notice in your confidence levels between speaking with your classmates in class and using the language software?

5. What is your favourite method of teacher feedback in French lessons for your iGCSE speaking activities: immediate feedback face-to face in the class; written feedback in your books or voice notes on the language software?

Appendix 5: iGCSE syllabus overview and oral exam requirements

Area A	**Everyday Activities** - **Home life and school** - **Food, health and fitness**	• Home life • School routine • Eating and drinking • Health and fitness
Area B	**Personal and Social life** - **Self,family and personal relationships** - **Holidays and special occasions**	• Self, family, pets, personal relationships • House and home • Leisure, entertainment, invitations • Eating out • Festivals and special occasions • Holidays, getting around • Accommodation
Area C	**The world around us** - **Home town and local area** - **Natural and made environment** - **People, places and customs**	• Home town and geographical surroundings • Shopping • Public services • Natural environment • Weather • Finding the way • Meeting people • Places and customs • Travel and transport
Area D	**The world of work** - **Continuing education** - **Careers and employment** - **Language and communication in the work place**	• Further education • Future career plans • Employment • Communication • Language at work
Area E	**The international world** - **Tourism at home and abroad** - **Life in other countries and communities** - **World events and issues**	• Holiday travel and transport • Geographical surrounding • Weather • Places and customs • Food and drink • Meeting people

Structure of the Speaking Examination

Test 1: Role Plays (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)

Cambridge supplies a number of alternative *Role Play Cards* which the teacher/Examiner allocates at random to candidates during each session of examining. Each candidate is given **one** card containing two role play situations, each of which consists of five tasks. Each candidate is examined in both role play situations on the card they have been given. The first role play (Role Play A) is more straightforward than the second (Role Play B). Candidates should be allowed approximately 15 minutes to prepare their two role play situations. They may not take any written notes into the preparation room nor may they make any notes during their preparation time. Candidates should have a copy of the Role Play Card they have prepared to refer to in the examination room but must not be allowed to take it away with them after the examination.

Each role play situation specifies the roles of the teacher/Examiner and candidate. Teacher/Examiners must conduct the role plays in accordance with the instructions provided in the *Teachers' Notes Booklet*. They must prepare the situations carefully so that the candidate's tasks follow on naturally from the teacher/Examiner's response. As marks can only be awarded for the stipulated tasks, the teacher/Examiner must not create extra tasks, and if a candidate misses out a task, should try to guide him/her back to it, in as natural a way as possible. It does not matter that this may lead to tasks occurring in a different order, as long as they are all attempted.

For the Mark Scheme, see Appendix A, Table A of the Marking Instructions.

Test 2: Topic Presentation/Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)

This part of the examination starts with a one to two minute presentation by the candidate on a topic of their choice which they will have prepared in advance. The teacher/Examiner will follow up the presentation with specific spontaneous questions on the topic, bringing the total time for the Topic Presentation and Topic Conversation to approximately five minutes.

Candidates are encouraged to choose a topic in which they have a personal interest. Suitable subjects might be, for example: 'School life', 'Hobbies and pastimes' (general or specific), 'My country', 'Life in another country', 'My ambitions', 'Holidays'. Topics dealing with politics or social and economic issues are ambitious for this level of achievement and may disadvantage candidates if they do not possess the linguistic skills and maturity of ideas which such topics necessitate. Candidates should be encouraged to prepare different topics within a Centre and should not be allowed to present 'Myself' or 'My life' as topics, as these can often pre-empt the General Conversation section. Candidates may use illustrative material, e.g. photographs, if this seems appropriate to their topic, but are not allowed to use written notes of any kind.

The teacher/Examiner will allow the candidate to speak for one to two minutes uninterrupted on their chosen topic before starting the Topic Conversation. Where a candidate has been talking for two minutes and shows no sign of finishing their presentation, the teacher/Examiner must interrupt and start the Topic Conversation.

In the Topic Conversation, candidates should be able to respond to the teacher/Examiner's questions in a spontaneous and natural manner. It is the extent to which candidates can manipulate their prepared material according to the needs of the teacher/Examiner that determines their marks and they must not be allowed to deliver a prepared monologue or a series of obviously prepared replies.

The teacher/Examiner **must** try to lead the candidate into using other tenses. For a mark of 7 or above to be awarded on Scale (b), Linguistic Content, candidates must show that they can convey past and future meaning and teacher/Examiners need to ask questions which allow them to do this. In order to extend the candidate as far as possible, the teacher/Examiner should probe, explore, ask for explanations, enlargements, descriptions (*how? when? why? tell me a bit more about...* etc.).

For the Mark Scheme, see Appendix A, Table B of the Marking Instructions.

Test 3: General Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)
The Topic Conversation will lead into a spontaneous discussion of a more general nature. The teacher/ Examiner will announce the transition to the General Conversation and should ease the candidate into the General Conversation by starting out from any point of interest noted earlier or by asking a couple of general 'starter' questions relating to the candidate's everyday life, e.g. school, home, town, journey to and from school, free time (evenings, weekends), holidays, hobbies. All candidates can reasonably be expected to have the command of vocabulary and idiom necessary for this.

The teacher/Examiner should aim to cover two or three of the Defined Content Examination Topics in this section of the examination (listed in the Curriculum Content section). With weaker candidates, it may be necessary to cover a greater number of topics superficially, but with more able candidates, it is preferable to ask a series of linked questions on two or three topics, in order to explore these in greater depth. Precise factual information or knowledge is not required and candidates must not be penalised for lack of such knowledge. Questions must be adjusted to the candidate's ability and the teacher/Examiner should be ready to pass on quickly to another subject if candidates are obviously out of their depth.

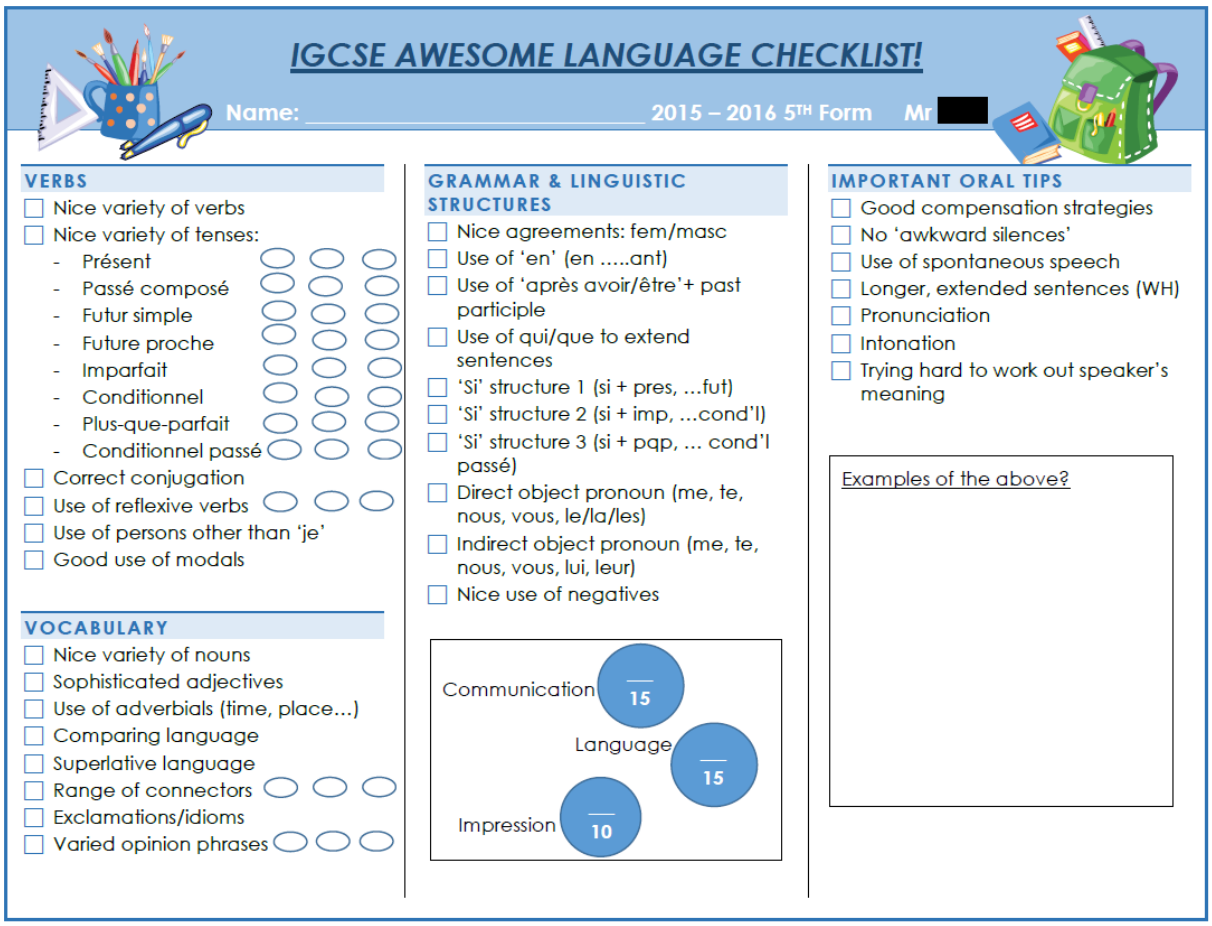
Candidates are expected to give natural replies to questions; their answers need not therefore be in the form of complete sentences. The teacher/Examiner should avoid asking questions which can be answered with 'yes' or 'no' and should instead use a variety of interrogatives, e.g. *when? how? why? how many? how long? with whom? with what?* etc. Questions should be adjusted to the candidate's ability. However, as in the Topic Conversation, the teacher/Examiner must try to extend the candidate as far as possible by giving them the opportunity to provide opinions and justifications.

As in the Topic Conversation, the teacher/Examiner must try to lead the candidate into using other tenses (themes could be visits to other countries, plans for the future, etc.) and he or she can then be extended as far as possible. For a mark of 7 or above to be awarded on Scale (b), Linguistic Content, candidates must show that they can convey past and future meaning and teacher/Examiners need to ask questions which allow them to do this.

For the Mark Scheme, see Appendix A, Table B of the Marking Instructions.

Impression (10 marks)
At the end of the Speaking examination, based on the candidate's overall performance, the teacher/ Examiner awards a mark for pronunciation, accent and fluency.

Appendix 6: iGCSE Awesome Language Checklist



IGCSE AWESOME LANGUAGE CHECKLIST!

Name: _____ 2015 – 2016 5TH Form Mr [redacted]

VERBS

- ☐ Nice variety of verbs
- ☐ Nice variety of tenses:
  - Présent ◯ ◯ ◯
  - Passé composé ◯ ◯ ◯
  - Futur simple ◯ ◯ ◯
  - Future proche ◯ ◯ ◯
  - Imparfait ◯ ◯ ◯
  - Conditionnel ◯ ◯ ◯
  - Plus-que-parfait ◯ ◯ ◯
  - Conditionnel passé ◯ ◯ ◯
- ☐ Correct conjugation
- ☐ Use of reflexive verbs ◯ ◯ ◯
- ☐ Use of persons other than 'je'
- ☐ Good use of modals

VOCABULARY

- ☐ Nice variety of nouns
- ☐ Sophisticated adjectives
- ☐ Use of adverbials (time, place...)
- ☐ Comparing language
- ☐ Superlative language
- ☐ Range of connectors ◯ ◯ ◯
- ☐ Exclamations/idioms
- ☐ Varied opinion phrases ◯ ◯ ◯

GRAMMAR & LINGUISTIC STRUCTURES

- ☐ Nice agreements: fem/masc
- ☐ Use of 'en' (en .....ant)
- ☐ Use of 'après avoir/être'+ past participle
- ☐ Use of qui/que to extend sentences
- ☐ 'Si' structure 1 (si + pres, ...fut)
- ☐ 'Si' structure 2 (si + imp, ...cond'l)
- ☐ 'Si' structure 3 (si + pqp, ... cond'l passé)
- ☐ Direct object pronoun (me, te, nous, vous, le/la/les)
- ☐ Indirect object pronoun (me, te, nous, vous, lui, leur)
- ☐ Nice use of negatives

Communication ___/15

Language ___/15

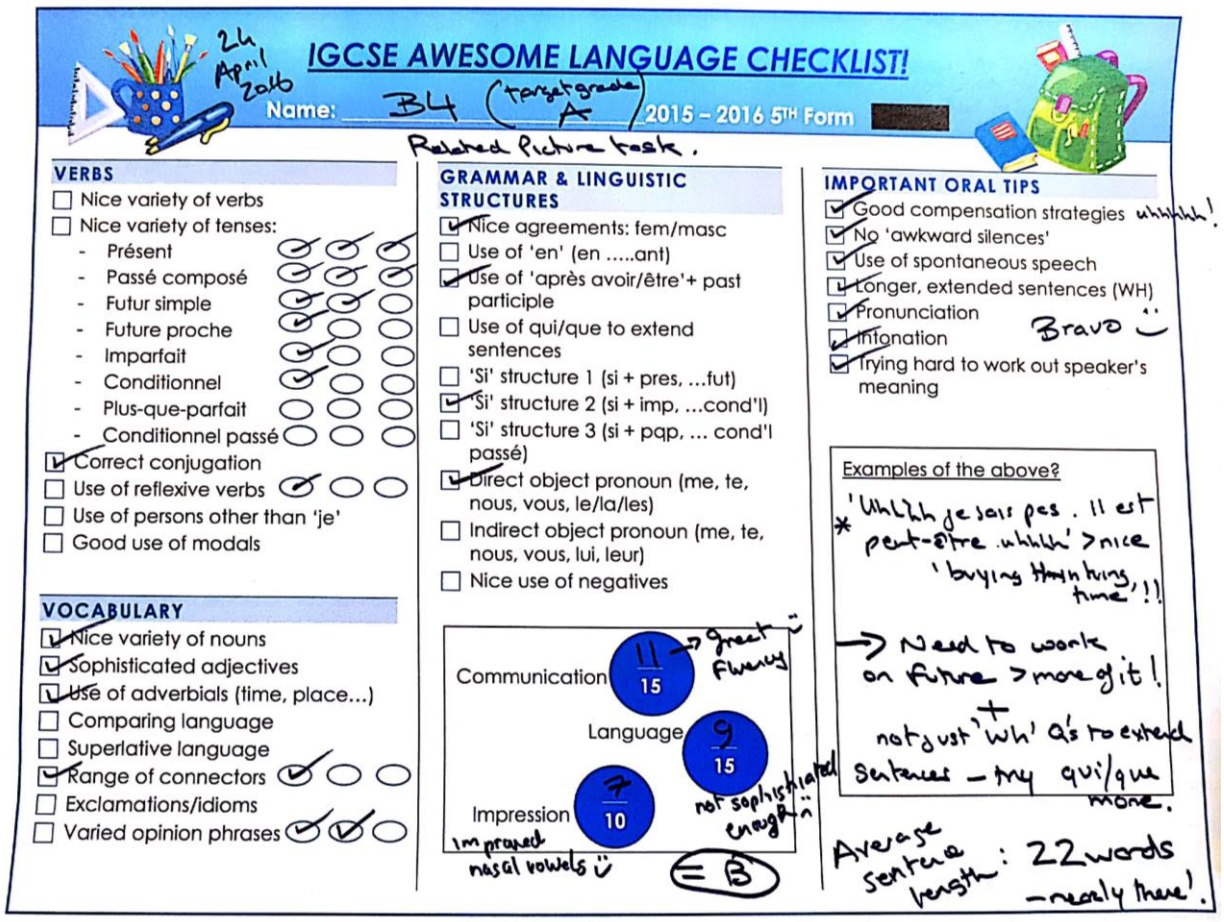
Impression ___/10

IMPORTANT ORAL TIPS

- ☐ Good compensation strategies
- ☐ No 'awkward silences'
- ☐ Use of spontaneous speech
- ☐ Longer, extended sentences (WH)
- ☐ Pronunciation
- ☐ Intonation
- ☐ Trying hard to work out speaker's meaning

Examples of the above?

Appendix 7: iGCSE Awesome Language Checklist – sample of teacher monitoring



IGCSE AWESOME LANGUAGE CHECKLIST!

24 April 2016

Name: B4 (target grade A) 2015 – 2016 5TH Form [redacted]

Related Picture task.

VERBS

- ☐ Nice variety of verbs
- ☐ Nice variety of tenses:
  - Présent ✓ ✓ ✓
  - Passé composé ✓ ✓ ✓
  - Futur simple ✓ ✓ ○
  - Future proche ✓ ○ ○
  - Imparfait ✓ ○ ○
  - Conditionnel ✓ ○ ○
  - Plus-que-parfait ○ ○ ○
  - Conditionnel passé ○ ○ ○
- ☑ Correct conjugation
- ☐ Use of reflexive verbs ✓ ○ ○
- ☐ Use of persons other than 'je'
- ☐ Good use of modals

VOCABULARY

- ☑ Nice variety of nouns
- ☑ Sophisticated adjectives
- ☑ Use of adverbials (time, place...)
- ☐ Comparing language
- ☐ Superlative language
- ☑ Range of connectors ✓ ○ ○
- ☐ Exclamations/idioms
- ☐ Varied opinion phrases ✓ ✓ ○

GRAMMAR & LINGUISTIC STRUCTURES

- ☑ Nice agreements: fem/masc
- ☐ Use of 'en' (en .....ant)
- ☑ Use of 'après avoir/être'+ past participle
- ☐ Use of qui/que to extend sentences
- ☐ 'Si' structure 1 (si + pres, ...fut)
- ☑ 'Si' structure 2 (si + imp, ...cond'l)
- ☐ 'Si' structure 3 (si + pqp, ... cond'l passé)
- ☑ Direct object pronoun (me, te, nous, vous, le/la/les)
- ☐ Indirect object pronoun (me, te, nous, vous, lui, leur)
- ☐ Nice use of negatives

Communication 11/15 → great fluency

Language 9/15 not sophisticated enough

Impression 7/10 improper nasal vowels

= B

IMPORTANT ORAL TIPS

- ☑ Good compensation strategies uhhhhh!
- ☑ No 'awkward silences'
- ☑ Use of spontaneous speech
- ☑ Longer, extended sentences (WH)
- ☑ Pronunciation
- ☑ Intonation Bravo ☺
- ☑ Trying hard to work out speaker's meaning

Examples of the above?

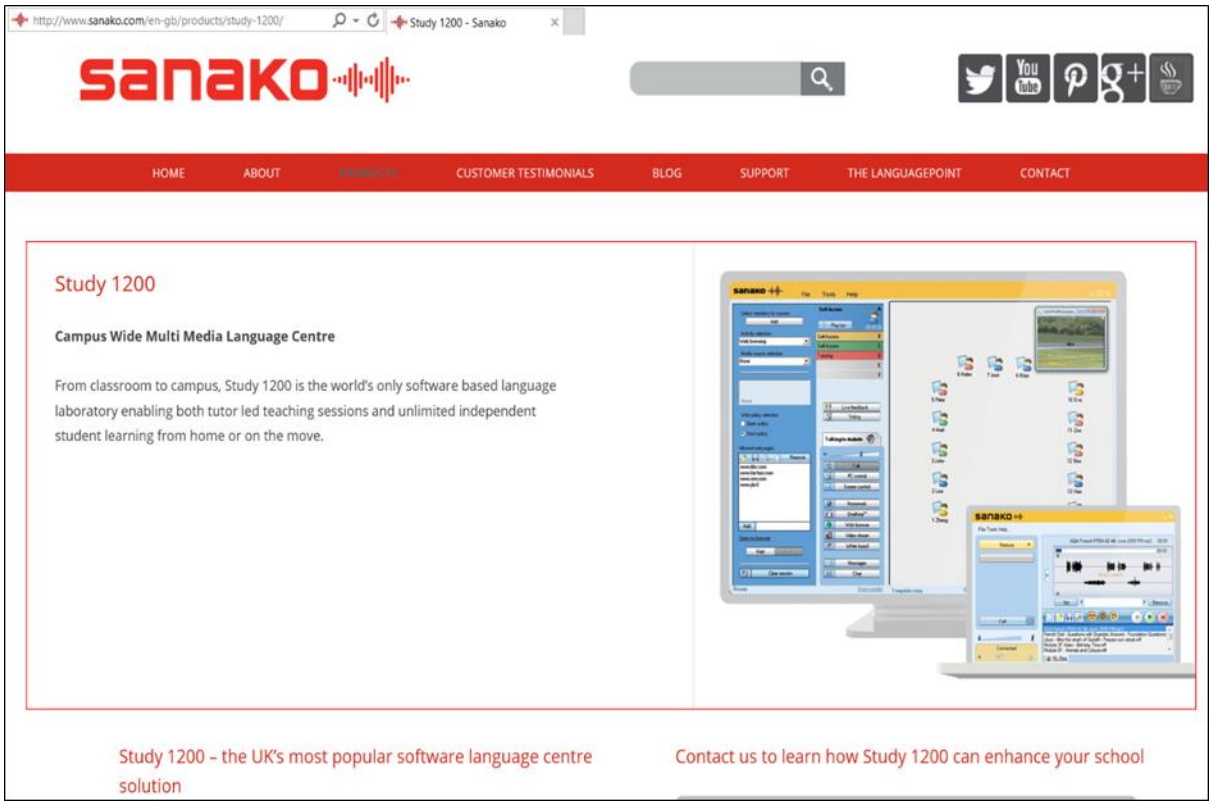
* 'Uhhhh je sais pas. Il est peut-être uhhhh' > nice 'buying thinking time'!!

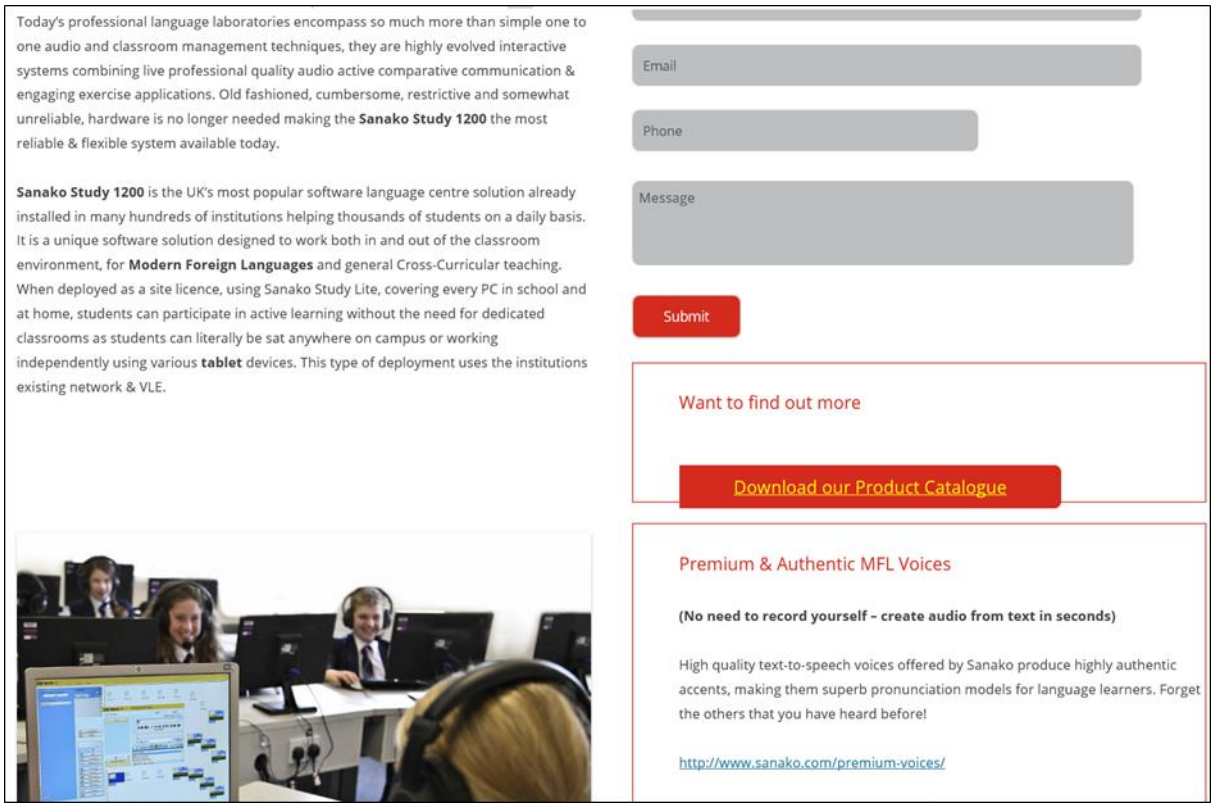
→ Need to work on future > more of it!

not just 'wh' q's to extend sentences – try qui/que more.

Average sentence length: 22 words – nearly there!

Appendix 8: The software







- **Examination Mode**

Tutor controlled public examination routines by automatically locking down the computer and restricted student access to selected files. This system also has automatic file collection (MP3) at the end of the exercise so it can also be used for assessment routines.

- **Tutor Controlled Playlists**

Multiple tutors can set up student playlists from anywhere, thus allowing lesson plans to automatically appear as soon as a student logs in to the system. Precious time is saved ensuring that different ability students receive the correct exercises immediately.

- **Multiple Mixed Ability Groups**

All classes have students with different abilities, this colour coded method of differentiation and separation allows tutors to clearly identify and support students who need it the most whilst more capable students can continue without distraction.

- **Automatic Voice Insert Technology**

Simple gap filling exercises can easily be created by asking a series of questions, there is no need to leave pre-recorded "gaps" as Study 1200 will automatically sense when a student is about to speak and record their voice. The student can speak for as long as they like as the next question will not begin until the student finishes recording. Once again these responses can be automatically collected making this facility ideal for oral assessment routines.

- **Random Pairing Routines**

Students can randomly be set up in pairs to simulate role play scenarios, odd students are automatically connected to a pair to ensure that no one is left out. The tutor can monitor and support any pair at any time and collect back recordings.

- **Text to Speech Technology**

Lessons can be kept current at an instant by simply copying & pasting text from a news web page, existing document or just typing your own. Study 1200 will take this text and play it back in authentic audio to the students. Alternatively, one button click coverts this text into an audio file with subtitles and sends it to students to work on individually at their own pace. This is currently available in French, Spanish, German, English and several other languages.

- **Consecutive & Simultaneous Interpreting**

Basic interpreter training routines are included as standard. These allow students to listen to a live or pre-recorded source on one channel and record their translation "live" and **simultaneously** on another channel with the advanced software merging the two. Alternatively, a pre-recorded file can be used allowing students to translate in segments for **consecutive** interpreting. All recordings can be collected back for evaluation.

- **Model Student Imitation Activity**

The tutor can randomly select a student to be broadcast to the rest of the group or class as an example of good practice. This can be an audio only based broadcast or the tutor can choose to broadcast the selected students screen and internet audio if required.

Source: http://www.sanako.com/en-gb/products/study-1200

Appendix 9: Sample iGCSE oral exam questions at our school

Area A

Home life, School life, Eating and drinking, Health and fitness

a. Parle-moi de ta routine journalière pendant une semaine typique
b. Qu'est-ce que tu n'aimes pas de ta routine journalière ? Pourquoi ?
c. Qu'est-ce que tu as fait hier soir après l'école ?
d. Qu'est-ce que tu changerais de ta routine ?
e. Tu aides à la maison ?
f. Quelle est la tâche ménagère que tu détestes le plus ? Pourquoi ?
g. Qu'est-ce que tu as fait pour aider à la maison hier / la semaine dernière ? C'était comment ?
h. Qui fait la plupart des taches ménagères chez toi ?
i. Parle-moi d'une journée typique au collège
j. Quel est ton cours préféré ? Pourquoi ?
k. Quels cours tu ne supportes pas du tout ? Pourquoi ?
l. Qu'est-ce que tu as eu comme cours aujourd'hui ?
m. Que fais-tu pendant la récré et la pause-déjeuner ?

Area D

Further education - Future career plans –Employment – Communication - Language at work

a. Apres le brevet (GCSE) tu vas poursuivre tes études dans cette école ou ailleurs ? Pourquoi ?
b. Que voudrais-tu étudier ? Pourquoi ?
c. Qu'est-ce que tu vas étudier à l'université ? Pourquoi ?
d. Tu vas étudier dans une université locale ou étrangère ? Où ?
e. Tu penses que l'école t'a bien préparé pour l'université ? Comment ?
f. Qu'est-ce que tu voudrais choisir comme métier ? Pourquoi ?
g. Tu penses que l'école t'a bien préparé pour le monde du travail ? Comment ?
h. Quelles sont les qualités idéales dans le boulot que tu voudrais choisir ?
i. Que cherches-tu dans un boulot ?
j. Comment serait ton boulot idéal ?
k. Tu préfère un travail autonome ou salarié ? Pourquoi ?
l. Tu as jamais eu un petit boulot ? Tu aimais faire ça ?
m. Tu penses que les nouvelles technologies ont changé le monde du travail ? Comment ont-

Appendix 10: Role-play sample

Candidat(e): vous-même
Professeur: réceptionniste dans un hôtel

Vous passez la nuit à l'hôtel. Il y a des problèmes et vous voulez changer de chambre. Vous téléphonez à la réception.

P **Dites: «Allô, réception. Je peux vous aider?»**

C1 **(i)** Saluez le/la réceptionniste; **et**

(ii) Expliquez ce que vous voulez faire.

P **Dites «Je suis désolé(e), Monsieur/Mademoiselle. Qu'est-ce qui ne va pas?»**

C2 Expliquez les **2** problèmes que vous avez dans votre chambre.

P **Dites: «Je regrette, Monsieur/Mademoiselle. Vous ne pouvez pas changer de chambre. Ce soir, l'hôtel est complet».**

C3 (Le/la réceptionniste vous dit que vous ne pouvez pas changer de chambre.)

(i) Vous n'êtes pas content(e): que dites-vous? **et**

(ii) Donnez votre opinion sur l'hôtel.

P **Dites: «Je suis désolé(e), Monsieur/Mademoiselle. Alors, ce soir l'hôtel va vous payer le dîner au restaurant. À quelle heure voulez-vous dîner?»**

C4 Répondez à la question.

P **Dites: «Très bien. Je vais vous réserver une table».**

C5 Posez **1** question sur la possibilité de changer de chambre demain.

P **Répondez de façon appropriée et terminez la conversation.**

Appendix 11: Pupil oral presentation (1.5 - 2 minutes) & sample exam questions

French Oral – Mes Vacances

L'année dernière, je suis allé en Jamaïque pour la première fois, c'était très divertissant. Le temps faisait très beau et chaud et la mer était bouillante! Les gens étaient très gentils parce qu'ils sont tellement détendus. J'ai surtout aimé nourriture car elle était gratuite et délicieuse. Le poulet Jerk, Jerk Chicken, était vraiment piquant. Si j'avais plus de temps, j'aimerais bien y aller de nouveau. Si j'étais allé en Haïti, je l'aurais trouvé moins divertissant. Je pense que la Jamaïque a les meilleures vacances que j'ai jamais eus.

Je vais en Irlande depuis de nombreuses années pour les grandes vacances, et maintenant je m'y ennuie très fort. Apres l'avoir visitée tant de foi, il n'y a plus rien à y faire. Si je devais y aller encore une fois, je voudrais apporter un bal de foot avec moi pour que je peux avoir quelque chose à faire.

L'année prochaine, j'irai au Ghana avec mes copains pour visiter les lieurs touristiques. Pendant mon séjour au Ghana, nous allons manger beaucoup de nourriture savoureuse. Ce sera une bonne expérience et nous ouvrira les papilles. Si j'adore le Ghana, je vais y aller à nouveau. J'espère avoir beaucoup de souvenirs. Je voudrais aller à la plage au Ghana mais je trouve des plages trop chaud et ennuyeux. Je suis impatient d'y aller! Je crains qu'on voit des requins à la plage.

Area e

Holiday travel and transport-Geographical surrounding- Weather -Places and customs -Food and drink- Meeting people

a. Parle-moi des destinations de vacances préférées? Pourquoi tu aimes ces endroits ?

b. Tu préfères voyager seul ou en compagnie ? Pourquoi ?

c. Tu es déjà allé en Europe ? Où ? Qu'est-ce que tu as fait ? C'était comment ?

d. Comment as-tu voyagé ? C'était comment ?

e. Quel est ton moyen de transport préféré, quand tu vas en vacances ? Pourquoi ? Quels sont les avantages et les inconvénients de ce moyen de transport ?

f. Tu aimes le climat dans ta région ? Pourquoi / pas ?

g. Quel genre de climat préfères-tu quand tu pars en vacances ? Pourquoi ?

h. Que fais-tu quand il fait chaud/fait froid / pleut / neige ?

i. Tu préfères les vacances ludiques (play, having fun), les vacances culturelles ou les vacances d'exploration et aventure ?

j. A ton avis, est-ce que voyager souvent à l'étranger changer notre façon de penser et être ? Pourquoi ? Tu peux me donner un exemple de comment un voyage que tu as fait a élargi (broadened) tes horizons culturels ?

k. Quel plat typique as-tu découvert en voyageant ? C'était bon? Pourquoi ?

l. Que penses-tu des différences culturelles entre _____(country X) et _____ (country Y) ?

m. Dans quelle mésure les avancées dans la communication et dans le transport ont changé notre société au niveau national et global ?

Appendix 12: Final iGCSE overall exam scores & oral progression: my class

ORAL EXAM May 2016	Target Grade	Actual IGCSE exam grade - Aug 2016		Percentage Score - April 2015	Mock 1 Grade - Apr 2015	Percentage Score Nov 2015	Mock 2 Grade - Nov 2015	Percentage Score - May 2016	Official Grade - May 2016		Percentage change over 1st mock oral to 2nd mock oral, i.e. pre-research phase Apr 2015 - Nov 2015	Percentage change over research period in oral score, i.e. Jan - May 2016	Differential between pre-research % change & during-research % change	Percentage change over one year in oral score			
B1	A	A		47	E	68	C	81	A		21	13	-8	34			
G1	A	A		64	C	70	B	85	A		6	15	9	21			
B2	B	A		43	E	64	C	68	C		21	4	-17	25			
G2	B	C		34	U	42	E	62	C		8	20	12	28			
B3	B	B		33	U	38	U	61	C		5	23	18	28	80+	A	
B4	A*	A		54	D	67	C	95	A		13	28	15	41	70 - 80	B	
G3	A*	A		59	D	64	C	83	A		5	19	14	24	60 - 70	C	
B5	B	A		44	E	44	E	85	A		0	41	41	41	50 -60	D	
B6	B	B		37	U	50	D	62	C		13	12	-1	25	40 - 50	E	
G4	A	A		54	D	56	D	80	A		2	24	22	26	39 -	U	
B7	B	B		40	E	60	C	55	C		20	-5	-25	15			
B8	B	C		n/a	n/a	54	D	64	C		n/a	10	n/a	n/a			
B9	A*	A*		59	C	65	C	91	A		6	26	20	32			
B10	A*	A*		69	C	80	A	100	A		11	20	9	31			
B11	B	B		26	U	57	D	71	B		31	14	-17	45			
G5	A*	A*		60	C	72	B	87	A		12	15	3	27			
B12	A	A*		39	U	62	C	82	A	Average % change	23	20	-3	43			
pupil's oral exam moderated											12.3%	17.6%	5.3%	30.4%			
n/a = not at our school then																	

Madame X's class

ORAL EXAM May 2016	Target Grade	Actual IGCSE exam grade - Aug 2016		Percentage Score - April 2015	Mock 1 Grade - Apr 2015	Percentage Score Nov 2015	Mock 2 Grade - Nov 2015	Percentage Score - May 2016	Official Grade - May 2016		Percentage change over 1st mock oral to 2nd mock oral, i.e. pre-research phase Apr 2015 - Nov 2015	Percentage change over research period in oral score, i.e. Jan - May 2016	Differential between pre-research % change & during-research % change	Percentage change over one year in oral score			
B1	B	B		50	D	62	C	75	B		12	13	1	25			
B2	B	C		35	U	57	D	67	C		22	10	-12	32			
B3	B	B		63	C	71	B	80	A		8	9	1	17			
G1	B	A		58	D	62	C	70	B		4	8	4	12			
B4	A	A		36	U	68	C	84	A		32	16	-16	48	80+	A	
G2	A	A		45	E	63	C	74	B		18	11	-7	29	70-80	B	
G3	B	B		44	E	48	E	66	C		4	18	14	22	60-70	C	
B5	A	A		66	C	75	B	90	A		9	15	6	24	50-60	D	
B6	B	A		57	D	67	C	81	A		10	14	4	24	40-50	E	
G4	C	B		50	D	50	D	61	C		0	11	11	11	39-	U	
G5	B	A		45	E	53	D	70	B		8	17	9	25			
G6	A	A*		68	C	77	B	92	A		9	15	6	24			
G7	A*	A*		59	D	74	B	83	A		15	9	-6	24			
B7	B	B		47	E	59	D	76	B		12	17	5	29			
B8	A*	A*		67	C	76	B	90	A		9	14	5	23			
G8	B	C		33	U	47	E	58	D		14	11	-3	25			
B9	A	B		55	D	62	C	72	B		7	10	3	17			
B10	B	A		52	D	65	C	78	B		13	13	0	26			
			Average % change								11.4%	12.8%	1.4%	24.3%			

ORAL EXAM RESULTS : 3 TIME PERIODS

pupil's oral exam moderated

Appendix 13: Pupil questionnaire responses – class breakdown

WTC

Speaking in class, in French:	Pre & post research periods	my class (17) / control group class (18)			
		Almost never willing	Sometimes willing	Usually willng	Always willing
1. How willing would you be to speak in French in a group about your summer holiday?	Jan-16	1 ; 2	4 ; 6	6 ; 8	6 ; 2
	Jun-16	n/a	1 ; 3	13 ; 11	3 ; 4
2. How willing would you be to speak to your teacher in French about your homework	Jan-16	2 ; 2	5 ; 6	8 ; 9	2 ; 1
	Jun-16	n/a	2 ; 4	12 ; 12	3 ; 2
3. A stranger enters the room, how willing would you be to converse in French if s/he talked to you?	Jan-16	3 ; 5	5 ; 5	7 ; 7	2 ; 1
	Jun-16	0 ; 1	5 ; 3	10 ; 12	2 ; 2
4. You are confused about a task in class, how willing are you to ask for clarification in French?	Jan-16	3 ; 3	2 ; 5	5 ; 8	7 ; 2
	Jun-16	1 ; 2	5 ; 5	6 ; 7	5 ; 4
5. How willing would you be to talk to a friend in French while waiting in line to see the teacher?	Jan-16	4 ; 7	6 ; 8	4 ; 2	3 ; 1
	Jun-16	0 ; 1	1 ; 4	6 ; 5	10 ; 8
6. How willing would you be to speak French as an actor in a play?	Jan-16	9 ; 12	7 ; 4	0 ; 2	1 ; 0
	Jun-16	3 ; 5	11 ; 8	3 ; 5	n/a
7. How willing would you be to describe the rules of your favourite game in French?	Jan-16	7 ; 8	7 ; 7	3 ; 2	0 ; 1
	Jun-16	8 ; 4	5 ; 10	4 ; 4	n/a
8. How willing would you be to play a game using French?	Jan-16	1 ; 0	3 ; 6	9 ; 10	4 ; 2
	Jun-16	n/a	1 ; 3	5 ; 5	11 ; 10

Fear

Please indicate below how you feel about speaking French in the classroom.	Pre & post research periods	my class (17) / control group class (18)				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class	Jan-16	n/a	7 ; 4	2 ; 3	8 ; 11	n/a
	Jun-16	n/a	8 ; 4	3 ; 2	6 ; 12	n/a
2. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	Jan-16	n/a	7 ; 5	4 ; 4	7 ; 9	n/a
	Jun-16	n/a	10 ; 7	2 ; 3	5 ; 8	n/a
3. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	Jan-16	1 ; 0	5 ; 3	2 ; 4	9 ; 10	0 ; 1
	Jun-16	n/a	1 ; 1	3 ; 5	13 ; 12	n/a
4. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	Jan-16	0 ; 1	7 ; 11	5 ; 3	4 ; 3	1 ; 0
	Jun-16	3 ; 1	6 ; 9	1 ; 2	7 ; 6	n/a
5. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	Jan-16	2 ; 4	11 ; 12	n/a	4 ; 2	n/a
	Jun-16	1 ; 2	7 ; 6	1 ; 2	8 ; 8	n/a
6. In language class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I am sure I know.	Jan-16	2 ; 0	6 ; 10	3 ; 3	6 ; 5	n/a
	Jun-16	0 ; 1	2 ; 7	4 ; 3	9 ; 6	2 ; 1
7. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	Jan-16	n/a	3 ; 6	3 ; 4	9 ; 8	2 ; 0
	Jun-16	n/a	2 ; 4	2 ; 2	12 ; 11	1 ; 1
8. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	Jan-16	2 ; 0	3 ; 7	3 ; 2	6 ; 9	3 ; 0
	Jun-16	0 ; 1	2 ; 1	1 ; 2	10 ; 11	4 ; 3
9. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	Jan-16	n/a	6 ; 8	3 ; 3	7 ; 7	1 ; 0
	Jun-16	0 ; 1	2 ; 3	2 ; 3	12 ; 10	1 ; 0
10. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	Jan-16	0 ; 1	1 ; 4	3 ; 2	9 ; 9	4 ; 1
	Jun-16	n/a	2 ; 1	1 ; 1	13 ; 13	1 ; 3

Attitude towards French

Studying French is important because:	Pre & post research periods	my class (17) / control group class (18)				
		Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Neither nor**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
1. It will be useful in getting a good job	Jan-16	2 ; 1	5 ; 5	4 ; 2	6 ; 9	0 ; 1
	Jun-16	1 ; 1	5 ; 4	2 ; 5	9 ; 8	n/a
2. I would like to travel in France	Jan-16	4 ; 5	11 ; 11	1 ; 2	1 ; 0	n/a
	Jun-16	8 ; 8	8 ; 10	1 ; 0	n/a	n/a
3. It will help me understand French people and their way of life	Jan-16	4 ; 4	11 ; 8	1 ; 4	1 ; 2	n/a
	Jun-16	9 ; 7	7 ; 8	1 ; 2	0 ; 1	n/a
4. I would like to be friends with some French people	Jan-16	0 ; 1	9 ; 7	5 ; 7	3 ; 3	n/a
	Jun-16	4 ; 2	11 ; 8	2 ; 6	0 ; 2	n/a
5. It will make me a more knowledgeable person	Jan-16	4 ; 3	11 ; 8	2 ; 6	0 ; 1	n/a
	Jun-16	9 ; 7	6 ; 11	2 ; 0	n/a	n/a
6. It will help me learn about myself	Jan-16	1 ; 0	0 ; 2	6 ; 5	5 ; 8	5 ; 3
	Jun-16	3 ; 1	6 ; 3	4 ; 4	2 ; 6	2 ; 4
7. It will help me get into a good university	Jan-16	3 ; 2	8 ; 10	3 ; 3	2 ; 2	1 ; 1
	Jun-16	12 ; 10	3 ; 6	2 ; 1	0 ; 1	n/a
8. It will help me broaden my outlook	Jan-16	4 ; 3	8 ; 8	4 ; 4	1 ; 3	n/a
	Jun-16	7 ; 6	7 ; 5	3 ; 7	1 ; 0	n/a