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Department of Education, University of Oxford

Motivational development in the input-poor context of the MFL classroom

Rosanna Lloyd

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Abstract

This dissertation explores student motivation for learning languages and how it develops in a secondary school in England. The MFL classroom faces obstacles such an inconsistent education policy, limited curriculum time, and negative attitudes, contributing to the well-documented decrease in MFL uptake at GCSE and A-Level. Using a mixed-methods cross-sectional design, this study collected questionnaire results from 70 students across all year groups and conducted semi-structured interviews with nine students in Year 7 and Year 12. Five motivational constructs were examined: integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, intrinsic motivation, attitudes towards the learning environment, and attribution. The results showed that overall motivation was surprisingly high, and all constructs were interrelated. Intrinsic motivation emerged as the most important for overall motivation and influenced all other constructs, but could also be influenced by the others, in particular the learning environment. There was evidence that motivation followed a U-shaped curve over time: decreasing over KS3 and then increasing again at GCSE and A-Level. Attribution appeared to behave slightly differently: while attributional tendencies were generally positive, some participants held contradictory views and attribution scores remained stable over time. There was tentative evidence that attribution plays a larger role in self-reported proficiency. To fully understand student motivation, it was necessary to consider the underlying factors of each construct which contributed to overall motivation uniquely for each participant. Instrumental orientation could be divided in two, since internalised and external instrumental drivers behaved differently. Motivation could mostly be conceptualised within the framework of the L2MSS which has not been previously used in this context. Pedagogical and research implications are offered.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HEPI	Higher Education Policy Institute
KS3	Key Stage 3 (secondary school year 7-9)
KS4	Key Stage 4 (GCSE year 10-11)
L2	Second language
L2MSS	L2 Motivational Self System
LOTES	Languages other than English
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis
RQ	Research Question
SLA	Second Language Acquisition

1. Introduction

There exists a common perception that the UK is in a "language crisis" (Lanvers et al., 2021). The concerning state of UK modern foreign language (MFL) education is evidenced by a long-standing decline in language uptake at GCSE, A-Level, and university (Broady, 2020; Collen, 2020; Vidal Rodeiro, 2017), and numerous expert reports and papers advocating for policies to reverse this trend (e.g., The British Academy, 2019, 2020; The Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI), 2020; The Nuffield Foundation, 2000).

Accounts of negative UK attitudes towards foreign languages are not new (e.g., Burstall, 1975a; Stables & Wikeley, 1999) and recent Language Trends surveys (Tinsley & Dolezal, 2018; Collen, 2020) suggest these attitudes may be exacerbated by events such as Brexit. In a HEPI report, Bowler (2020, p14) notes:

> The post-Brexit climate has meant the issues of multilingualism and multiculturalism are now politically contentious. To speak another language is to be associated with an internationalist mindset, and the defence of language learning is charged with wider social issues beyond the scope of education policy.

The rise of English as a Lingua Franca[1] (ELF) has been found to affect attitudes towards learning languages other than English (LOTES) even in non-anglophone countries. In an extensive longitudinal study, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) tracked attitudes of over 8500 13-14-year-olds studying English, German, French, Italian, and Russian in Hungary between 1993-1999, a time of rapid language globalisation. Questionnaire data demonstrated a significant decline in attitudes for all languages except English, suggesting the dominance of ELF may have negatively impacted motivation for LOTES.

It may be then that the UK – like other anglophone countries (East, 2009; Suttmeier, 2011) – is not inherently bad at learning languages, but rather held back by an unfavourable learning environment in which the target language does not have the same prestige as English. The rise of ELF has led to a mentality of 'English is enough', which Coleman (2009) showed is prevalent in the UK media and Krüsemann (2018) linked to school student attitudes towards learning languages.

The situation is further complicated by a lack of importance placed on language learning by government through inconsistent and incoherent language education policies (Broady, 2020). A summary of recent changes in language education policy[2] is presented in Figure 1.

[1] ELF will be used here as an umbrella term referring to English as the language of global communication and the preferred language for non-anglophones to learn (Gaagliardi & Maley, 2010).

[2] The four UK nations have autonomy over their language education policy. Since this study takes place in England and differences in policies and the presence of bilingualism may be a confounding factor on student motivation, this paper will discuss the English context.

Figure 1: Language education policy timeline – England

Policy changes have largely been detrimental. Making GCSE languages optional provoked a dramatic drop in entries of 32% in eight years (Broady, 2020). Consequently, A-Level and university student numbers decreased (Vidal Rodeiro, 2017), leading to department closures (Broady, 2020) and concerns over the pipeline of language teachers (Tinsley, 2019). Initiatives such as the English Baccalaureate (E-Bacc) – an optional qualification requiring a GCSE language (Department of Education, 2010) – only had short term success (Long & Danechi, 2019). Current GCSE uptake is around 47%, far off the 90% government target by 2025, with little evidence of it increasing (Collen, 2020). Some suggest making GCSEs compulsory again (Collen, 2020; Hagger-Vaughan, 2020) but similarly many have criticised this: forcing GCSE languages on unmotivated students is unlikely to produce cohorts of successful language learners, change attitudes, and encourage further language study (Bartram, 2006; Macaro, 2008; Parrish & Lanvers 2019).

The low priority given to languages in policy is reflected in low priority in the curriculum: MFL is rarely assigned more than one hour a week at Key Stage 3 (KS3) (Dobson, 2018). This limited contact time has been heavily criticised (e.g., Macaro, 2008). The difficulty of learning a language in such input-poor conditions is highlighted by the struggle of attaining high grades compared to other subjects at KS3, GCSE, and A-Level (All-London, 2019; Mitchell, 2003; Ofqual, 2018), which discourages students from taking them and schools from promoting them (Duff, 2017).

The “language crisis” is caught in a vicious cycle. Negative attitudes are reflected in education policies which communicate that languages are low-priority. This encourages ethnocentric beliefs that ‘English is enough’ in society, government, and media, which subsequently decreases student motivation for languages. Combined with limited emphasis in the school curriculum, students struggle to keep up with the course and are demotivated to continue to GCSE, A-Level, and beyond, finishing school both with limited knowledge of and negative attitudes towards languages, starting the cycle again.

To break this cycle, we need to improve language attitudes in general and encourage students to pursue them in school and beyond. Understanding student motivation is key to achieving this. Students start learning a language as a compulsory subject like any other, so motivation likely develops secondarily and fluctuates as they progress through school (Kramsch, 2005). This dissertation examines this motivational development through secondary school, aiming to add to the understanding of student language motivation to be better placed to combat the language crisis. To this end, a mixed-methods cross-sectional study was conducted with the following research questions (RQs):

1. What is the motivational composition of students learning French in secondary schools in England?
2. How does the motivational composition differ between more and less proficient and motivated students?
3. How does the motivational composition of students differ between year groups?

This dissertation is organised as follows: Chapter 2 will review the existing relevant literature. Chapter 3 will outline the study’s methodology. Chapter 4 will present the results. Chapter 5 will discuss the findings and provide theoretical, research, and pedagogical implications. Chapter 6 will conclude the study.

2. Literature review

This chapter will examine the existing literature addressing the questions of this study. First, relevant principal motivational theories will be outlined. Then, previous research in the English classroom context will be reviewed. Gaps in the literature will be highlighted and finally, the current study and its aims will be introduced.

2.1. Theoretical framework

2.1.1. Socio-educational model

Arguably the first influential second language acquisition (SLA) motivation theory was Gardner's socio-educational model (Gardner, 1985, 2001; Gardner & Lambert, 1972), based on the idea that attitudes towards a language and the target community cannot be separated. The model uses both 'orientation' – the underlying goal of learning a language; and 'motivation' – the "combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal" (Gardner, 1985, p.10). Orientation can be *integrative* – referring to openness to the target community, willingness to adopt features from it, and/or desire to integrate into it; or *instrumental* – referring to perceived pragmatic gains of language proficiency (Al-Hoorie, 2017). The third element is the learning environment. This model expects initial attitudes to influence perceptions of the learning experience, initiating either a positive or negative motivational cycle, although Gardner (1985) concedes an exceptional learning environment may trigger the eventual development of positive attitudes.

Research has largely focused on the dichotomy of integrative and instrumental orientation but they are not mutually exclusive (Gardner, 1985); learners demonstrate both to varying degrees and at times separating them is difficult. For example, talking to natives when travelling could be both an instrumental and integrative goal, so the researcher should justify how these items are categorised based on the evidence (Coleman et al., 2007). Research also suggests they are not equal motivators; for example, a large-scale UK study of university language students (Coleman, 1996) found that instrumental orientation was not only less powerful but also associated with below-average attainment, while integrative orientations were associated with above-average attainment.

Language learning is a socio-psychological phenomenon, meaning the context in which learning takes place cannot be ignored, hence the importance of the learning environment (Gardner, 1985). This model originated from bilingual Canada, but in the foreign language classroom geographically and/or culturally distant from the target community, integrative orientation has been found to be less important, particularly for lower proficiency students for whom meaningful communication in the second language (L2) is difficult to achieve (Dörnyei, 1990; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). In the UK context, early research by Burstall (1975a, 1975b) found both orientations were low for beginner learners: instrumental because ELF makes foreign languages seem unnecessary, and integrative due to insufficient exposure to the target community. However, when this study was conducted exposure to other countries through travel and media may have been less accessible than it is today.

This is no longer the predominant model in SLA motivation and may not be the most relevant to the UK school context. Nonetheless, this model and the concepts within it have strongly influenced subsequent motivational theories and research.

2.1.2. The L2 Motivational Self System

Gardner's concept of integrativeness may not transfer directly to learning contexts with less opportunity to integrate with the target community. In the same study described in Chapter 1, Dörnyei

and Csizér (2002) found evidence of a powerful integrative-like factor which more broadly captured how students viewed their future self in relation to the L2, labelled the *ideal L2-self*. Interestingly, from the same data set, Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) observed that this factor developed from both integrative and certain internalised instrumental orientations.

This ideal L2-self*,* alongside the *ought-to self* (consisting of external instrumental motives) and the learning environment, made up Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). This model draws from self theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) and is a progression of Gardner's socio-educational model. In the L2MSS, motivation stems from wanting to reduce discrepancies between one's present self and their ideal (based on wishes) or ought-to (based on obligation) selves, mediated by the learning environment.

The ideal self has primarily been researched in contexts where the target language is English, representing a tool for international communication rather than access to anglophone communities. This clearly differs from learning LOTES in the UK context. Nonetheless, Busse (2013) found the L2MSS better explained the motivation of UK university language students than Gardner's model. In Busse's study, 59 students completed a questionnaire and 12 took part in semi-structed follow-up interviews at the beginning and end of their first year of German. There were strong correlations between self-efficacy beliefs and both ideal L2-self and instrumental orientation (parallel to the ought-to-self), but not integrative orientation. Despite being motivated language learners voluntarily studying German at university, participants had limited contact with the target community and little desire to have more, placing more importance on an ideal L2-self in terms of desired proficiency.

2.1.3. Self-determination theory

Influential in motivational psychology and brought to SLA by Noels et al. (2000), self-determination theory (Brown, 1990; Deci & Ryan, 1985) distinguishes *intrinsic* motivation – enjoyment of and personal interest in the subject without expectation of external recognition or reward; and *extrinsic* motivation – receiving external rewards such as grades, job or university entry requirements, or avoiding punishment. Integrative and instrumental orientations have often been paralleled with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation despite important distinctions (Littlewood, 1984). Both integrative and instrumental orientations are extrinsic in that the learner is trying to achieve a goal (Gardner, 1985). Using questionnaire data from American university students learning Spanish, Noels (2003) proposed a tripartite model consisting of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation (encompassing instrumental orientations), and integrative orientation. The learning environment was interrelated but appeared to be more influential for primarily intrinsically-motivated students (Noels et al., 2001).

Research suggests intrinsic, more than extrinsic, motivation is important for educational outcomes. Deci et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis of 128 school studies from 1971-1996 found extrinsic motivators such as rewards can undermine intrinsic motivation, particularly in younger children. Taylor et al.'s (2014) meta-analysis of 18 questionnaire-based studies from 1991-2009 indicated general academic motivation and achievement in high school and university was positively moderately-strongly correlated with intrinsic motivation, weakly but negatively correlated with extrinsic motivation, and strongly negatively correlated with amotivation (lack of any motivation). To corroborate these findings, they conducted three one-year longitudinal studies with a cross-section of 319 French-Canadian high-school students aged 12-17, 288 Swedish final-year high-school students on natural sciences programmes, and 638 students in an English-speaking Canadian college science programme. Each study compared motivation questionnaire results to grades at the beginning and end of the year

controlling for prior achievement, and found intrinsic motivation consistently had the strongest positive correlation to attainment while amotivation was negatively correlated. Only in the Swedish study, where students had imminent high-stake exams, was extrinsic motivation positively (though less strongly than intrinsic) correlated with achievement.

These findings have been replicated in the UK context: intrinsic motivation is frequently a significant factor when deciding GCSE and A-Level options, and extrinsic motivation is less important for uptake and attainment. These studies will be described in detail in Section 2.2.

2.1.4. Attribution Theory

Attribution theory (Weiner, 1992, 2010), following Heider (1958), concerns how learners explain past successes or failures and how this influences motivation and future achievement. Students with *adaptive* tendencies attribute success and failure primarily to effort and believe improvement is possible, whereas *maladaptive* tendencies involve attributing failure to lack of ability and success to external factors such as luck.

The role of attribution in general education is demonstrated by Chaplain (2000) who collected questionnaire data from over 1000 Year 10 pupils representing a range of ability and socio-economic status across 21 UK schools on attributional tendencies, academic motivation, stress, and interpersonal skills. Most students demonstrated adaptive attributional patterns overall towards themselves, their schoolwork, and their futures, although there were significantly more males among those who attributed success to luck and other people. Attributional tendencies influenced motivation; students with maladaptive tendencies were more likely to give up easily and believe natural ability is necessary for success. Students generally agreed there was a relationship between effort and academic success, but attainment was not directly measured. Similarly, Rogers (2005) collected data over Key Stage 4 (KS4) from 20 group interviews and 1074 questionnaires and found a significant positive relationship between adaptive attributional tendencies and final GCSE achievement.

2.1.5. Summary

This section explored the relevant theoretical models guiding this study. The predominant SLA motivation models were developed for various contexts and subsequent research has overwhelmingly focused on settings with English as the target language (Duff, 2017). Some research demonstrates that they apply to an extent in the English MFL classroom, which has some unique features as described in Chapter 1. Now I will turn to a detailed review of motivation research in this specific context.

2.2. Motivation research in English MFL classroom context

To conduct a detailed review of the existing literature, I used the Education Collection database (including ERIC). I also searched Google Scholar for additional studies and conducted backward and forward citation searches on relevant papers. The final search string was as follows:

(UK_OR_England_OR_Britain) AND
(MFL_OR_foreign?languages_OR_French_OR_Spanish_OR_German_OR_Italian_OR_Russian) AND
(Secondary?school_OR_Year?7_OR_Year?8_OR_Year?9_OR_Year?10_OR_Year?11_OR_Year?12_OR_Year?13_OR_KS3_OR_key?stage?3_OR_KS4_OR_key?stage?4_OR_KS5_OR_key?stage?5_OR_GCSE_OR_A?LEVEL) AND

(motivation_OR_attitudes_OR_attribution_OR_integrative_OR_intrinsic_OR_instrumental_OR_extrinsic_OR_learning?environment)

Studies generally fall into three categories: measuring general motivation, investigating GCSE and A-Level uptake decisions, and interventions attempting to improve motivation. For the current study, the first two categories are of interest. While not a direct RQ, uptake decisions provide insight into student motivation as well as which motivators are more powerful than others.

2.2.1. Studies looking at general motivation

Clark and Trafford (1995) did group interviews with an impressive sample of 75 above- and below-average Year 11 students taking compulsory language GCSEs in four UK comprehensive schools. Participants criticised the curriculum, expressing a desire to learn more culture and have more contact with native speakers, suggesting integrative orientation was low but recognised as a factor which could increase motivation. The perceived usefulness of languages was correlated with its relevance to the individual's career aspirations, with higher-proficiency students seeing more value in languages. Overall enjoyment was linked to perceived success, although actual attainment was not measured and was judged according to ability-grouped classes.

Chambers' (2000) longitudinal study used questionnaires and interviews comparing English students learning German and German students learning English in Year 7 and again in Year 9. Only at the beginning of Year 7 were students enthusiastic and positive about languages and there was a clear decline in motivation over KS3. For both groups, the learning environment was a significant factor in this decline, notably the teacher and learning materials. For German students learning English integrative orientation decreased but extrinsic motivation remained high as they considered English in the top three most useful subjects. English students did not consider German important and were put off by its difficulty, highlighting the difference in learning context where the target language has more prestige.

Williams et al. (2002) conducted a mixed-methods cross-sectional study with 228 Year 7, 8, and 9 students in three schools in South-West England studying German and French. Questionnaire results and 24 follow-up interviews found languages were generally perceived as unimportant and unenjoyable. Gender differences emerged and the motivation gap increased across KS3 alongside an overall decrease in motivation, although there were uneven samples across year groups. Overall, girls had higher intrinsic motivation, integrative orientation, and more positive attributional patterns. Boys preferred German and girls preferred French, often citing perceptions that certain languages are better suited to particular genders.

In a cross-sectional study bridging KS3 and KS4, Davies (2004) compared full cohorts of Year 7 (n=148) and Year 10 (n=122) studying French as a compulsory subject in an English comprehensive school to investigate changes over time specifically in relation to gender. Questionnaires captured student perceptions of their ability and the difficulty, usefulness, and popularity of French compared to other subjects. Girls were more likely to underestimate their achievement. The well-documented gender motivation gap was already evident in Year 7 and widened by Year 10: boys' motivation started lower and decreased more. Enjoyment and perceived usefulness scored high in Year 7 but dropped significantly by Year 10, even more so for boys, while perceived difficulty increased for both genders. Some students (mostly boys) were disapplied from language GCSEs and thus were not surveyed but were added to those who expressed strong dislike for French. While presumably students who

struggled to the extent of not being entered for a compulsory GCSE would dislike the subject, it may inflate the proportions without fully understanding their attitudes. Furthermore, these students were not added to the negative scores for difficulty or usefulness, and this inconsistency makes direct comparison problematic.

Coleman et al. (2007) conducted a cross-sectional UK study with an impressive sample of over 10,000 Year 7, 8, and 9 students across specialist language colleges, Asset Language pilot centres[3], and comprehensive schools. Questionnaire results looking at effort, academic achievement, integrative orientation, and instrumental orientation showed motivation decreased over KS3 for all constructs except perceived achievement which increased marginally only for girls. While not addressed explicitly, from observing descriptive statistics it appeared that instrumental and integrative orientation were roughly similar in Year 7, but by Year 9 instrumental orientation had decreased less. They also collected data from 147 Year 10 students, which showed a sharp increase in overall motivation from Year 9, where languages were compulsory, to Year 10, where those who remained did so voluntarily. However, integrative and instrumental orientation were not reported individually to see how they developed differently in KS4.

Bartram (2010) compared attitudes towards learning English, French, and German from 408 15-16-year-olds in England, Germany, and the Netherlands. Note that in England languages were optional, whereas in Germany and the Netherlands English was compulsory but French and German were not. Multiple qualitative instruments were used with sub-sets of the sample including word-association tasks, free-written responses, and group interviews. They found evidence in each country of "English is enough" mentalities reducing motivation for LOTES. Despite studying languages voluntarily, English students had noticeably more negative attitudes overall than the European students. Again, students criticised the learning environment (particularly lesson tasks and topics) and saw languages as irrelevant and difficult. Interestingly however, lower-ability students did not necessarily have more negative attitudes, suggesting perceived difficulty may be independent from actual ability – echoing other studies showing even high-achieving students lack confidence in their proficiency (e.g., Davies, 2004).

Martin (2020) conducted questionnaires and follow-up semi-structured interviews with 495 Year 8 students and their parents in four English schools, and found parental influence was significant for five out of six motivational constructs. Overall, motivation was low, and again the primary reasons were difficulty and lack of relevance. Extrinsic motivation was quite high because languages were compulsory, and few intended to continue at GCSE. Students generally took agency in their learning and agreed effort was important, but positive attributional patterns did not appear to compensate for negative attitudes in other areas.

2.2.2. Studies looking at GCSE and A-Level uptake

Aplin (1991) collected open-ended questionnaire responses from 200 16-19-year-olds across nine UK schools who had dropped languages either before GCSE (44%) or A-Level (47%) about their reasons why. Most frequently cited was preference for other subjects. Lack of enjoyment, low grades, perceived uselessness for career, and disliking the teacher and learning activities were also often mentioned, suggesting intrinsic motivation, personal relevance (instrumental orientation), and

[3] Asset Languages is the national assessment scheme for the Department of Education and Skills' Languages Ladder, offering regular individualised measures of progress in the four skills.

attitudes towards the learning environment were low and important. Some thought more contact with the target population would have changed their decision. Optimistically, 21.5% regretted dropping languages because they saw them as useful for job applications and facilitating communication opportunities. It seems at the time of deciding lack of intrinsic motivation overrode any weak instrumental and integrative orientation students had, although how this differed at GCSE and A-Level was not explored. This study was conducted when the UK was preparing to join the European Single Market rather than leave it, so the social and political context in which students were choosing their options was quite different to what it is today.

Stables and Wikeley (1999) compared results from parallel studies in 1984 and 1996 in which Year 9 pupils in 10 English schools rated all subjects for enjoyment and perceived importance in a questionnaire, and a stratified sub-sample of 144 pupils were interviewed in Year 9 and a year later. Attitudes had barely changed: languages were consistently the subject students most wanted to drop for reasons including perceived lack of ability, subject content, and attitudes towards the teacher. Languages were only seen as useful for those intending to live abroad, exacerbating the gap between students of different socio-economic status who may be unequally likely to consider travelling and living abroad as an option. Compared to other subjects which rated highly because they were either useful or enjoyable, languages scored badly on both sides. The authors suggest promoting both intrinsic and instrumental motivation is key to improving the situation.

Fisher (2001) investigated factors influencing A-Level uptake through giving questionnaires to 117 Year 11 language students and conducting nine individual and three group interviews with Year 12s who were and were not taking languages in five above-average UK comprehensive schools. The main factors contributing to uptake were enjoyment, perceived ability, and difficulty compared to other subjects. Many pupils acknowledged that languages would be useful but were still reluctant to take them, suggesting extrinsic motivation is less powerful than intrinsic. Questionnaire and interview results came from different year groups but were compared without regarding how motivation may have developed in between these time points.

Graham (2002) measured attitudes towards A-Level uptake using a questionnaire with 83 Year 11 French students in three above-average comprehensive schools in South England. Despite being high achievers, only 18% considered continuing French at A-Level. Again, the most cited reasons for continuing were enjoyment and perceived usefulness. Seeing French as difficult, uninteresting, not useful for future career, and unenjoyable were the most significant reasons for not continuing. Graham also looked at attributions with these students plus 26 Year 12s and 14 Year 13s and found success was often attributed to effort and ability over luck, but even high-achieving students underestimated their abilities and attributed their perceived lack of success to lack of natural ability, demonstrating maladaptive tendencies. Graham suggested improving attributional patterns through strategy instruction would tackle the perception of difficulty – following up this claim with a successful strategy intervention program with Year 12 French students (Graham & Macaro, 2008) – and making lessons more enjoyable and promoting instrumental advantages of languages would increase uptake. Only attribution was measured cross-sectionally although differences between year groups were not discussed in terms of development over time.

Krüsemann (2018) surveyed 506 Year 9 and Year 11 German students in four UK secondary schools about GCSE and A-Level choices using quantitative Likert-scale ratings and asked students to create qualitative metaphors for their language learning experience. Self-efficacy, perceived usefulness, and

learning situation including the teacher were all interrelated and linked to enjoyment which subsequently predicted uptake, indicating the importance of intrinsic motivators. A relationship was also found between agreement with negative public perceptions of German from UK media and school discourse and wanting to drop the language. Acknowledging the relationship between different motivational factors was a strength of this study and, although not the main aim, the cross-sectional design showed higher motivation in all areas in Year 11. This is unsurprising since only the Year 9 data included those who were not studying the language voluntarily.

Parrish and Lanvers (2019) conducted an extensive study on GCSE uptake and attitudes in English schools with compulsory and optional GCSE language policies. 666 Year 10 students – 488 of whom were studying languages – from 13 English schools completed a questionnaire about their motivation and reasons for continuing or dropping languages. Open-ended responses showed perceived personal relevance was more important than purely extrinsic motivators. Unsurprisingly, intrinsic motivation was highest among students who were studying the language voluntarily. Interestingly, however, high-achieving students in schools where it was not compulsory but who were pressured to take languages had even lower intrinsic motivation than students in schools where it was compulsory. The authors criticise the emphasis schools place on attainment as it encourages students to adopt extrinsic motivational factors and ironically may stop them from achieving their full potential (Coleman, 1996; Taylor et al., 2014). They claim choice, more than attainment, is correlated with positive motivational compositions, but attainment was not measured so these correlations are speculative based on previous research. Giving students choice may increase motivation for those who continue, but uptake is unlikely to increase as unmotivated students will just discontinue. Focus should be on not adding external pressure to those who continue.

One intervention study warrants discussion here as it links attribution to uptake. In a quasi-experimental study Molway and Mutton (2020) used questionnaires to measure language attitudes and attributional beliefs and behaviours of 119 Year 9 German students in an English comprehensive school. One group received an intervention which raised awareness of attribution theories plus reading strategy instruction; another only received strategy instruction; and a control group received neither. Intervention group students demonstrated an increase in positive attributional tendencies, while the control group showed increasingly maladaptive behaviours – perhaps due to a loss of confidence and resilience related to the well-documented decline in language motivation over time. Twice as many students in the double intervention group opted to take GCSE German than intended to before the intervention. These findings suggest positive attribution patterns can be influenced, are important for uptake, and can potentially minimise motivational decline over KS3.

2.2.3. Retrospective studies

The aforementioned studies investigated the factors that are (de)motivating students at a certain point during the school learning process. Given language learning is a long-term, temporal, and dynamic process, measuring motivation at a single point or over a short period cannot capture the full picture (Dörnyei, 2009; Ryan & Dörnyei, 2013). Two studies will be discussed which take a different approach: eliciting retrospective narratives from successful language learners about the factors contributing to their success. While some detail may be lost, understanding the principal motivational factors for successful learners can indicate which areas to encourage from the beginning of secondary school.

Thompson and Vasquez (2015) collected retrospective narratives from three language teachers who learnt their languages in UK schools and were highly motivated and successful. Three key motivating factors were identified: a well-developed image of the ideal L2-self at some point during the learning process, the interaction between the environment and motivation, and a desire to go against what was expected of them (labelled the *anti-ought-to-self*). The L2-self has not emerged from secondary school studies, and these participants suggested it was not necessarily established at the beginning but developed over time along with increases in ability and motivation. The generalisability of these findings from just three participants may be questioned, yet the in-depth qualitative data has proven valuable; the anti-ought-to-self which emerged from two participants has since been evidenced in case studies (Thompson, 2017) and quantitative research with larger samples (Thompson & Liu, 2018).

Ushioda's (2001) study also warrants discussion despite being in Dublin, since UK-based retrospective studies are scarce and comments made were not specific to their school learning environment. Retrospective narratives were collected from 14 first- and second-year undergraduate French students – highly motivated by definition – who had studied French throughout school although it is unclear whether optionally or not. The most significant emerging motivational factors were intrinsic motivation, personal goals, and a desired level of L2 competence. Less-successful learners, measured using post-primary and university exam results, were not less motivated overall but depended more on extrinsic motivators. Consequently, assuming a simple cause and effect relationship between motivation and achievement can trap the less-motivated or unsuccessful learner in a vicious cycle. Positive attributional patterns also emerged as important, mediating the relationship between learning experience and motivation, and helping students break out of this negative cycle. Participants often rated the course and/or teacher negatively but remained motivated by viewing the course as a means through which to achieve their goal, rather than a motivating factor in itself.

2.2.4 Summary

This section reviewed existing MFL classroom motivation studies. Overall, motivation levels have consistently appeared low. Studies demonstrate that motivation declines over KS3, and there is tentative evidence that this improves at KS4 if languages become optional but continues to decrease if they do not. Intrinsic motivation frequently emerges as important for overall motivation, and more powerful than extrinsic motivation, which is higher among students with no autonomy over their decision to study languages. Perceived relevance for career seems to play a big role, but grades are a weaker motivator. There is some evidence of positive integrative disposition towards the target community, but it may not get the chance to develop strongly enough to influence overall motivation. The learning environment contributes significantly to enjoyment and therefore motivation, with teachers and the curriculum the most criticised aspects. Attributional patterns appear inconsistent, but positive attributional mindsets may improve motivation and even help students overcome the obstacles leading to motivation decline. Retrospective studies also show intrinsic motivation is most important, but the ideal L2-self also emerges as significant, despite being absent from school-based studies. Importance is placed on attribution, but the learning environment appears less influential, particularly when other motivators are strong enough to compensate.

2.3. Gaps in the literature

Most studies reviewed above measure motivation at one point or over a short time frame, ignoring the long-term, dynamic nature of the language learning process. The research is also limited by the measurement instruments. Questionnaires with large samples offer breadth but are restricted by only

measuring pre-determined constructs in isolation and are unable to comprehensively capture motivation which is complex and not directly measurable (Gorard, 2001). General calls for more qualitative research as a better way of investigating motivation (Dörnyei, 2009; Ryan & Dörnyei, 2013) have been somewhat answered in the English MFL classroom context; half the above studies use qualitative methods, but interview data is mostly used secondarily and discussed only to exemplify quantitative findings.

Some key patterns repeatedly emerge from the literature: the importance of intrinsic motivation, its superiority over extrinsic motivation, lack of integrative and instrumental orientations, the significance of the learning environment, and the potential ability of positive attributional patterns to improve motivation. However, it remains unclear how these motivators affect students at different points in their learning process, how they develop over time, and how they relate to each other.

The current study will address these unanswered questions using a mixed-methods approach to provide both depth and breadth, as suggested by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011). Ideally, longitudinal data would be collected to understand how motivation develops at the individual level, however, for practical reasons a cross-sectional approach will be used to track changes in apparent time. Previous cross-sectional studies have given preliminary insight into this but are limited by only comparing two or three year groups. The current study collected questionnaire results from all year groups from Year 7 through to Year 13. Ideally qualitative data also would have been collected from multiple year groups, but due to time and logistical constraints this was not possible, so interviews were conducted with Year 7 and Year 12 to represent both ends of the school language journey.

3. Methodology

This chapter will outline the methodology of the current study including the research design, participants, measurement instruments, and the data collection and analysis procedures.

1.1. Research Questions

This study investigated the motivational composition and development of secondary school students of French. Only one language was considered to make the data more manageable and comparable, but the findings have implications for other languages. Following the literature review, five motivational constructs were identified for examination:

1. Integrative orientation

This construct encompasses attitudes towards the target community and culture. Comments relating to travel, living abroad, or interacting with natives, which could also be interpreted as instrumental, were classed as integrative as they require at least some positive attitudes towards the target community, the extent of which will be considered in the analysis. The literature suggests integrative orientation is generally low in school students, but can develop into a powerful motivator for more successful learners.

2. Instrumental orientation

Instrumental orientation captures perceived pragmatic gains of learning French, such as grades or job opportunities, as well as external motivators like parental or teacher pressure. Both integrative and instrumental orientations are extrinsic motivators as they involve working towards a goal, but these goals are very different so they will be measured separately. The literature suggests instrumental is easier to develop than integrative orientation but is less powerful and may even hold learners back from achieving their full potential.

3. Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation includes interest in and enjoyment of the subject without expectation of achieving external goals or rewards. The literature has shown it is very powerful and can both interact with and counteract negative experiences in other areas.

4. Learning environment

The learning environment concerns factors related to the MFL classroom, such as the teacher, learning tasks, and curriculum. It is included as a key interrelating factor in both Gardner's socio-educational model and Dörnyei's L2MSS, and frequently emerges in the literature as a significant motivator alone and in relation to others.

5. Attribution

In the academic context, research has shown positive attributional patterns can influence attitudes towards the learning situation, effort inside and outside the classroom, and can promote a positive cycle of success and motivation. In contrast, maladaptive attributional patterns may enforce a negative cycle of demotivation and lack of success.

The current study will address three RQs in relation to the above constructs. The RQs and their respective hypotheses are as follows:

RQ1. In terms of the five constructs under review, what is the motivational composition of English secondary school students learning French?

This RQ *had no hypotheses as the aim was to explore patterns emerging from the data.*

RQ2. In terms of the five constructs under review, how does the motivational composition differ between more and less proficient and motivated students?

a. *More proficient and motivated students will display higher scores on all five constructs than less proficient and motivated students.*
b. *Among more proficient and motivated students, integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation will score higher than instrumental orientation.*
c. *Among less proficient and motivated students, instrumental orientation will score higher than integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation.*

RQ3. In terms of the five constructs under review, how does the motivational composition differ between year groups?

d. *Motivation levels will decline across KS3 then increase at GCSE and A-Level for all five constructs.*
e. *Year 7s will display lower levels of all five constructs than Year 12 students.*

1.2. Research Design

Following calls for more mixed-methods research (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), semi-structured interviews were conducted with five Year 7 and four Year 12 students, and a motivation questionnaire collected quantitative data from 70 students from Year 7 through Year 13[4] to investigate the RQs outlined above.

The mixed-methods approach aimed to provide further depth from exploring individual views in the interviews, and breadth from the larger quantitative sample, than a single approach would achieve (Ivankova & Creswell, 2009). Quantitative data shows *how* individuals think and act whilst qualitative data tell us *why* they do so (Bower, 2017). This study used a triangulation design in which both data sets were collected concurrently and combined at the interpretation stage (Creswell, 2003) since the aim was not to *explain* quantitative results through further investigation, but rather to examine both quantitative and qualitative evidence to gain a more in-depth understanding of the results.

Whilst longitudinal research is preferable when examining dynamic processes like motivation (Menard, 2002), due to time and resource constraints a cross-sectional design was used to observe change in apparent time. Aside from practical advantages, cross-sectional research can still be valuable to observe patterns and relationships in the data (Dörnyei, 2007). In this study, comparing

[4] Since the questionnaire was anonymous, it is unclear which interview participants completed it and their responses were not identifiable.

data from different year groups provided preliminary insight into motivational trajectories over secondary school to indicate where future longitudinal research may be warranted.

Researcher Positionality

To the participants I was an 'outsider' (Gair, 2012; Le Gallais, 2008) as I did not teach them and they did not know me before the study. This distance can be an advantage and encourage more honest responses. Nonetheless, the online modality of this study meant opportunities for rapport-building were limited. Given the opportunity to meet the students in advance, I could have emphasised that I had gone to the same school and learnt French in the same setting as them. This would have made me an 'insider' in some respects which may have made me more relatable and encouraged more open responses.

1.3. Participants

1.3.1. Recruitment Method

The target population was students learning a language as a compulsory subject from the start of secondary school in England. A single school was selected due to time constraints and to control as much as possible for the participants' language learning experiences.

The school is a 11-18 comprehensive academy in an urban area of South-West England. It is consistently rated as "outstanding" by Ofsted[5] and has a below-average number of students eligible for free school meals. Per fortnight, all Year 7 students have five hours of French. Year 8 students have three hours of French plus three hours of either Spanish or Russian. Year 9 students have three hours of French plus four hours of the additional language. Language GCSEs are not compulsory but highly recommended, and uptake and results are above the national average. Students have five hours a fortnight at GCSE and nine hours at A-Level. All three languages are offered to A-Level, and the school also offers extra-curricular Italian GCSE, and Chinese and Latin clubs at KS3 and KS4.

Interview participants were recruited through convenience sampling: teachers approached students of a range of motivations and proficiencies who were willing to take part and met the recruitment criteria (monolingual English speakers who do not speak other languages at home[6]). Efforts were made to select the sample with as little bias as possible, and whilst participation was voluntary, students were approached directly in the hope of reducing possible skewness resulting from a completely self-selected sample (Dörnyei, 2007). The questionnaire was sent to all students studying French.

1.3.2. Interviews

Nine students took part in the interviews (five Year 7s, four Year 12s; five males, four females). Three Year 7s had family from other countries but reported limited knowledge of these languages and were deemed to still meet the inclusion criteria. All participants had studied French in primary school except one Year 7 who studied Spanish. Three Year 12s studied a second language at A-Level, and two had taken extra-curricular Italian GCSE. All Year 12s attended the same school from Year 7 through to Year 12 and therefore had identical exposure to French, except one who joined in Year 12 and had studied French, Spanish, and German in KS3. Ideally all participants would have had the same language and learning environment exposure during secondary school, but given the limited interest in participation

[5] the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

[6] This study defined monolingual English speakers as someone who was born and has lived their whole life in an anglophone country, whose parents/guardians' first language is English, and who speak no other languages outside of school.

I decided this interview would still provide a valuable contribution to the RQs as long as the differences were considered.

1.3.3. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was sent to all students studying French except Year 11 since the school requested they not take part as they were doing their GCSE exams. 114 students took part in the questionnaire; 28 did not finish, 11 did not meet the inclusion criteria, and five did not answer all the questions. In the end, data from 70 participants, summarised in Table 1, were included for analysis.

Year	Female	Male	PNTS*	TOTAL
7	10	13	2	**25**
8	13	9		**22**
9	8	4		**12**
10	3	4		**7**
12	2	1		**3**
13		1		**1**
TOTAL	**36**	**32**	**2**	**70**

**prefer not to say*

Table 1: Questionnaire participants by gender and year group

1.4. Instruments

1.4.1. Interview

Semi-structured interviews were deemed most appropriate for this study as they allow for both clarification and elaboration whilst the continuity of questions and topics facilitate comparison between interviews (Richards, 2009; Robson & McCartan, 2016). An interview schedule was prepared in advance (Appendix 1) following Becker et al. (2002) which included open-ended questions addressing the constructs and some additional prompts to guide the conversation if needed, but the order was not fixed. The interview began by allowing the participant to ask any questions, seeking verbal consent, and ensuring they fitted the inclusion criteria. Subsequently, I asked the open-ended question: "can you talk me through your opinions of your experience of learning French?" to encourage free responses and elaboration, following Richards (2009).

1.4.2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was created on Qualtrics and completed electronically. It was made up of four sections. First, parental and participant consent was sought. The second section asked about the participant's demographic and linguistic background. The third section measured general motivation and self-reported proficiency. Lastly, a 6-point Likert scale gauged how strongly the participant agreed to 25 statements referring to the five motivational constructs. There was no middle point ("neither agree nor disagree") to encourage participants to consider the question and not abstain from having an opinion, following Dörnyei (2010).

The questions were taken from previously validated questionnaires looking at the same motivational constructs. Some questions were adapted to be more relevant to this study, and some were re-worded following the pilot study (section 3.5.2.). The language was appropriate for school-age students and did not include any jargon or un-defined terms they would not understand. The statements were

randomly ordered for each participant to avoid any bias in question order and two items in each category were negatively worded since respondents are generally more inclined to agree with a statement than disagree (Gorard, 2001). The full questionnaire and the studies the questions were taken from are included in Appendix 2.

To check the questionnaire's reliability, Cronbach's Alpha (α) was applied to each subscale, since it measured multiple underlying constructs (Cronbach, 1951). Three constructs reached the suggested threshold of α>.7outlined by Field (2018). Attribution was below this threshold (α=.61). The results indicated removing item 5e would increase reliability (α=.679), but since that still would not reach the 0.7 threshold and others have argued α>0.5 is sufficient for psychological constructs (Kline, 1999), it was decided to keep it. Only instrumental orientation had a problematic result (α=-.001). The results indicated reliability would increase to α=.363 if item 2e was removed, and α=.532 if item 2c was also removed. As this succeeds the acceptable level described by Kline, it was decided to remove these two items for analysis. The final values for Cronbach's Alpha are presented in Table 2.

Construct	**α**
Integrative	.730
Instrumental	.532
Intrinsic	.840
Learning Environment	.810
Attribution	.610

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha results for questionnaire constructs

3.5. Procedure

3.5.1. Ethics

This study was approved by the Central University Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 3). All information sheets and consent forms were distributed and returned by email. For participants under 16, consent forms were collected from parents/guardians and assent forms were obtained from participants. Participants aged 16-18 were classed as 'competent youths' and therefore consented for themselves. Example information sheets, consent and assent forms are included in Appendix 4. Verbal consent was also confirmed in the interviews and participants could ask any questions. A Data Protection Impact Assessment was approved by the University to record the interview on Microsoft Teams (Appendix 3). The questionnaire was emailed by the school to parents, and parental and participant consent was required before starting. In the questionnaire and interview, participants were reminded they could stop participating at any time.

Strict data protection measures were taken to ensure anonymity of participant information. All consent/assent forms were stored securely on the University's password-protected and encrypted OneDrive and any copies on my PC were destroyed using fileshredder.org. All emails were deleted once correspondence had ceased. No personal identifying information was collected. A code was used when storing the interview recordings and transcripts, which were destroyed following completion of the analysis. Any paper notes made during the interview were shredded. The questionnaire data was anonymous as Qualtrics does not collect any personal information.

3.5.2. Pilot study

Both the interview and questionnaire were piloted before being conducted with the school participants, following Gorard's (2001) comments on the importance of piloting the full research design. Pilot participants were recruited through my own networks.

The interview was piloted to test and get feedback on the procedure, identify any ambiguous questions, and for me as a new researcher to practice interviewing before the main study. Two female participants took part: a Year 12 comprehensive school student studying Spanish and a Year 8 grammar school student studying French and Spanish. These students were not identical but demographically close enough to the target population for the pilot to be effective. The procedure for collecting consent, conducting the interview, and data analysis was identical to the main study. The participants provided feedback on the procedure and no major issues arose. The wording of some prompts was adjusted where participants misinterpreted the question, but otherwise no significant changes were made so piloting again was not necessary.

Ten students (three Year 8s, one Year 12, six Year 13s; three males, six females, one did not disclose gender) piloted the questionnaire. Participant feedback indicated the questionnaire was an acceptable length, easy to understand, clearly presented, and easy to follow. The sample was too small to conduct reliability analysis. The questions were reviewed and some were reworded to avoid potential ambiguity and ensure they were measuring the correct construct. Due to a lack of interest, it was not possible to pilot the questionnaire a second time.

3.5.3. Interviews

Due to COVID-19, all data collection took place online. The interviews were conducted in late May 2021 using Microsoft Teams, a university-approved platform with enabled recording and transcription features. Participants were encouraged to enable their cameras as this helps with rapport-building and non-verbal cues may help understand verbal responses (May, 2011), however four students were unable to access the camera. All interviews took place outside of school time, and interviewees were asked to be alone to avoid any distractions or hesitation in giving honest responses.

3.5.4. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was sent out in early June 2021. Since it was electronic participants responded in their own time and it was impossible to control the environment in which they completed it. A link was sent to the parent's email, along with the information sheets, and they were asked to consent on their child's behalf before handing over to the student to complete the questionnaire.

3.6. Data Analysis

3.6.1. Interview

Transcription

I fully transcribed the interviews as all the data may be important in constructing meaning for analysis. The automatic transcriptions were reviewed and corrected alongside the recording to ensure accuracy. I added notes to the transcripts on verbal and non-verbal cues which influenced meaning, following Robson & McCartan (2016). The transcripts were uploaded to NVivo to be coded and analysed.

Coding

Following Richards (2009), the data analysis process took three stages. First, I read the transcripts multiple times, noting any key topics discussed. Then I coded the transcripts using qualitative content analysis. Finally, due to the interactional nature of the interview process, I rewatched the recordings with the aim of analysing the participant's utterance in consideration of the context, prior talk, and relationship between interviewer and interviewee (Rapley, 2006).

I used qualitative (rather than quantitative) content analysis (QCA) as this emphasises *latent meaning* – which cannot be directly observed, only understood through context. QCA involves developing a data-driven coding frame, as opposed to having a pre-defined set of codes which quantitative methods would rely on (Mayring, 2014).

To develop valid and reliable inferences and interpretations, I followed the systematic process outlined in Fual Selvi (2020) and described in Schreier (2014), as shown in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Main phases and steps in QCA, taken from Fual Selvi (2020, p.444)

The RQs were pre-decided before data collection to avoid arbitrariness in the research process. I decided to use all the interviews to create the coding frame as each interviewee discussed slightly different topics.

Creating the coding frame consisted of three stages: generating categories, defining categories, and revision. The main categories were concept-driven and included the five motivational constructs that emerged from the literature review, to which further data-driven subcategories were added as they arose in the material (Schreier, 2014). Each category was defined by giving it a name, description, and an illustrative example. This was then used in subsequent coding of the remaining material. Once all categories had been generated and defined, they were reviewed to ensure no overlapping categories warranted joining together, or any unusually comprehensive subcategories should be made into main categories. This process was repeated until the point of saturation where no new themes emerged.

The coding frame was then used to analyse one interview which was also coded by another student on the program to check consistency, as suggested by Harding (2018). Initially the coding consistency came back at 64% which is under the recommended threshold, likely due to the quantity of codes (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020). Following this, some sub-themes were combined, and following a discussion the inter-rater consistency surpassed the acceptable threshold, reaching 96%. Once finalised, the coding frame was used to analyse the complete data set. The final coding frame (Appendix 5) consisted of 55 items and represented a starting point for further data exploration in line with the RQs. Only quantitatively analysing the frequency of codes mentioned in the interviews would limit the value of the qualitative data, which comes from considering the data at the level of the individual (Ushioda,

2009). Therefore, each participant was examined holistically to try and understand the complex dynamic phenomenon of motivation.

3.6.2. Questionnaire

The raw questionnaire data was entered into SPSS to obtain descriptive and inferential statistics. As each item was rated on a 6-point scale, the potential range of mean scores is from 1 to 6, where 1 represents a strongly negative reaction and 6 represents a strongly positive reaction. The two negatively-worded items in each category were reverse coded. Details of specific analyses will be discussed in Chapter 4.

4. Results

This chapter will present key findings from the questionnaire and interview data. First, potential confounding factors will be explored, then each RQ will be addressed in turn. In addition, reasons for and against uptake will be briefly discussed. Descriptive statistics from questionnaire data will be examined to identify trends according to the hypotheses outlined in Chapter 3 and any additional patterns emerging from visual inspection. These patterns will be tested using statistical analyses where the sample size allows. Qualitative evidence will be presented to highlight similarities or differences from the quantitative data.

As explained in Chapter 3, the questionnaire measured motivational constructs using Likert-scale responses to statements from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). A mean score was calculated for each construct, where 1 represents a low disposition and 6 represents a high disposition towards that construct. Interviews were analysed using qualitative content analysis. Space constraints made it impossible to include all the interview evidence, so indicative quotes will be used to illustrate the most noteworthy findings[7].

4.1. Confounding factors

4.1.1. Gender

Gender was not a direct RQ in this study. Nonetheless, differences often emerge in motivation research, as shown in Chapter 2, so it was considered as a potential confounding factor. Figure 3 shows that females generally scored higher, particularly on integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation, although overall responses did not vary much by gender.

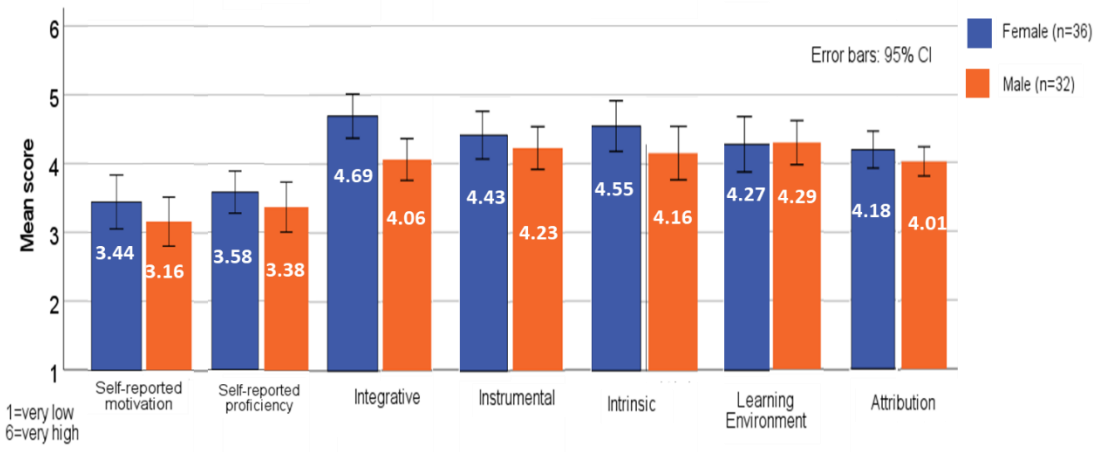


Figure 3: Mean motivation scores by gender

The differences were tested with seven independent samples T-tests. Two respondents who did not disclose their gender were excluded. The data met the assumptions for the T-test once six outliers were removed. A Bonferroni correction was applied to reduce the risk of making a Type I error (erroneously rejecting the null-hypothesis and concluding a statistical difference exists where it does not), making the significance threshold $p<.007$. Only integrative orientation differed significantly, with females scoring higher (4.69±.948) than males (4.06±.842), ($t_{66}=2.891$, $p=.005$, *Cohen's d*=.702). No significant differences were found for the other constructs (all p's>.1). Consequently, integrative

[7] False starts and filler words were removed from transcripts when reporting them as quotes.

orientation will be analysed separately by gender only for RQ1, as the samples become too small when examining RQ2 and RQ3.

Interviews were conducted with five males and four females. No comments were made about gender or were attributed to gender differences, so the interview data will not be analysed separately.

4.1.2. Language exposure

While the inclusion criteria controlled for bilingualism, previous language exposure at school or home may affect language motivation and attitudes. All students beyond Year 7 had studied an additional language in school, and only four questionnaire participants and one interview participant had not studied French at primary school, so school exposure was not examined as a confounding factor. Eighteen questionnaire participants indicated their parents spoke a second language fluently. The data was not normally distributed, so a Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted to compare motivational construct scores of participants with and without multilingual parents, but no differences reached significance (all *p*'s>.2). Therefore, language exposure was not recognised as a confounding factor in the subsequent analysis.

4.2. RQ1

RQ1. In terms of the five constructs under review, what is the motivational composition of English secondary school students learning French?

To answer this RQ, quantitative and qualitative results will first be looked at holistically to see how the constructs relate to each other. Each construct will then be examined in turn. RQ1 had no hypotheses as the aim was to explore patterns emerging from the data.

4.2.1. Overall results

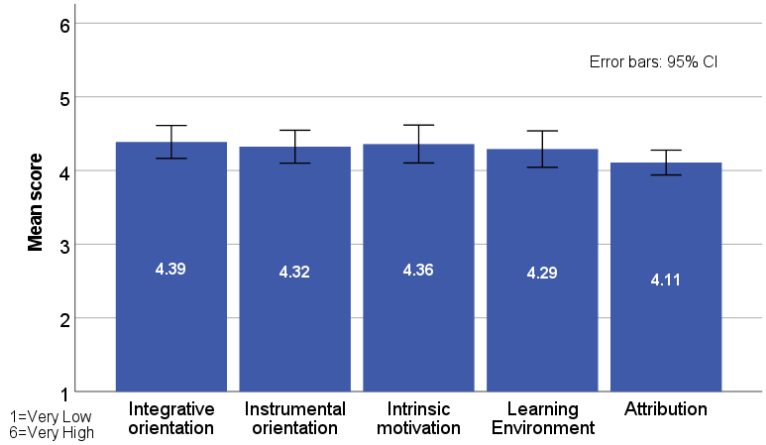


Figure 4: Mean motivational construct scores

Figure 4 shows the average scores for each construct for all 70 participants. Each construct scored quite highly with seemingly little variation between them. The differences were checked using paired-samples T-tests. The data met the test assumptions once five outliers were removed. The results, summarised in Table 3, show none of the differences reached significance using a Bonferroni correction (threshold *p*<.005). Attribution would be significantly lower than integrative orientation, intrinsic motivation, and learning environment scores at the normal *p*<.05 level, so these differences could be described as marginal.

	Instrumental	Intrinsic	Learning environment	Attribution
Integrative	t_{69}=.801, p=.426	t_{69}=.280, p=.780	t_{66}=-.368, p=.714	t_{67}=2.381, p=.020
Instrumental		t_{69}=-.364, p=.717	t_{66}=-.658, p=.513	t_{67}=1.948, p=.056
Intrinsic			t_{66}=.106, p=.916	t_{67}=2.484, p=.016
Learning environment				t_{65}=2.515, p=.014

Table 3: Paired-samples T-tests comparing mean construct scores

Relationships between constructs were examined using 2-tailed Bivariate Pearson Correlations, the results of which are shown in Table 4. The data met the test assumptions once five outliers were removed. Results showed all five constructs were mediumly (.3<|r|<.5) or strongly (|r|>0.5) positively correlated to each other, and all correlations were significant using a Bonferroni correction (threshold: p<.005).

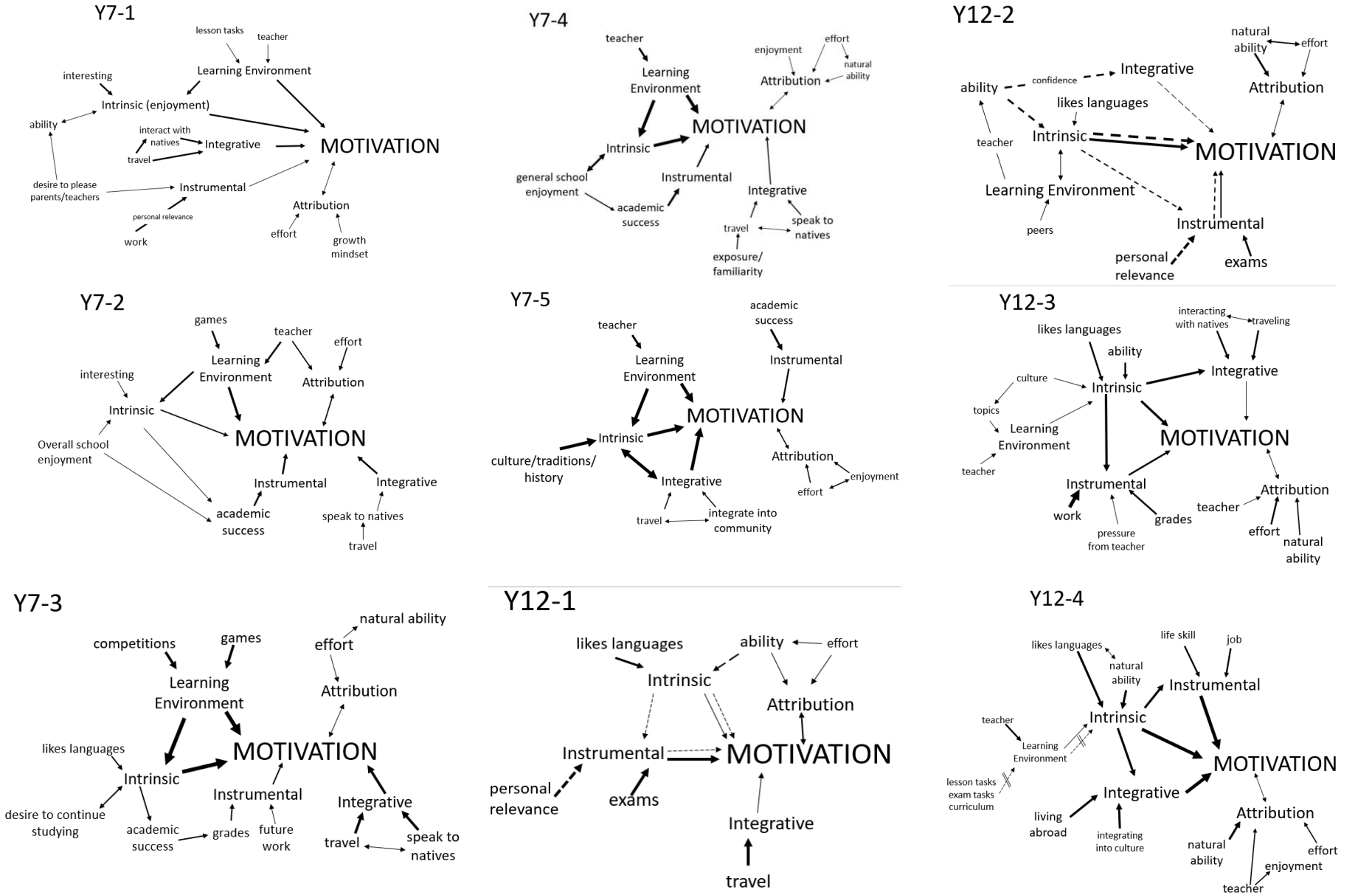
	Pearson's *r*			
	Instrumental	**Intrinsic**	**Learning environment**	**Attribution**
Integrative	.747*	.700*	.556*	.476*
Instrumental		.674*	.634*	.446*
Intrinsic			.759*	.593*
Learning environment				.477*

**significant at p<.005 level*

Table 4: Pearson Correlations between the five motivational constructs

The interview data was initially coded following the process outlined in Chapter 3 (section 3.6.1.). The number of participants mentioning each coding frame item is presented in Appendix 6. Frequency statistics provide preliminary insight into the qualitative data but fail to show the strength of each sub-motivator as it contributes to the motivational construct, nor the strength of the construct as it contributes to the individual's overall motivation. Therefore, they will not be discussed in detail here. Subsequently, I analysed each interview individually. Another common limitation of qualitative analysis is considering individual utterances in isolation rather than in context of the whole interview. As each participant's discourse developed, the importance of each construct and how they related to each other became apparent. To capture this, I created a motivational profile for each participant, presented in Figure 5.

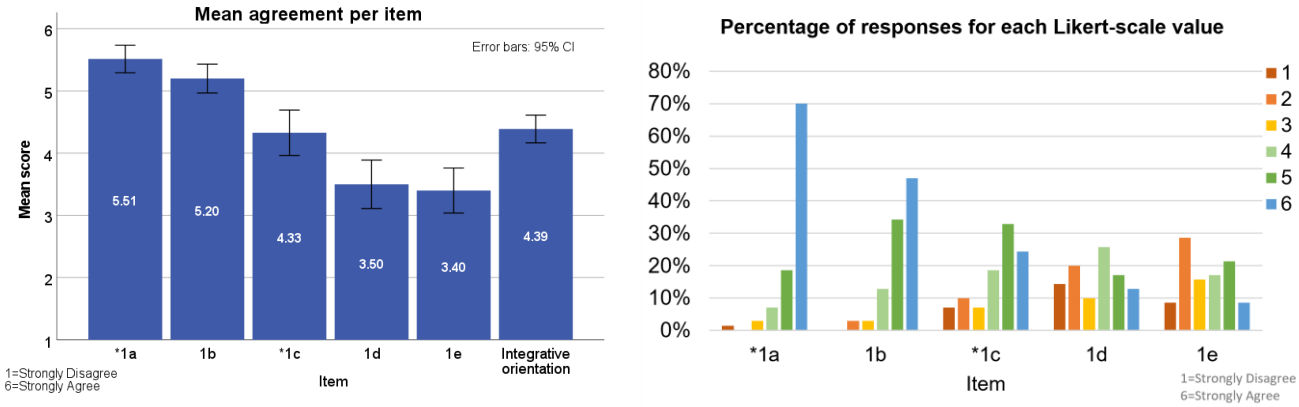
These profiles demonstrate that each construct cannot be viewed in isolation, and the underlying factors contributing to each one and the relationships between them require consideration. A key finding is that intrinsic motivation appeared to influence and be influenced by the other constructs the most, while attribution appeared to interact less. These relationships will be further illustrated in the subsequent analysis of the RQs.



Key:
Thickness of arrow represents strength
Dotted arrow represents lack
Blocked arrow represents negative influence

Figure 5: Interview participant motivation profiles

4.2.2. Integrative orientation



*1a=*I want to learn French because I like people who speak this language*
1b=I would like to travel to France someday
*1c=*I am interested in the lifestyle and culture of France*
1d=When I think of the future, I imagine myself as someone who is able to speak French
1e=I want to learn French because I want to make friends with people who speak it as their native language
**item negative worded in questionnaire*

Figure 6: Integrative orientation item scores

Figure 6 shows the response breakdown for integrative orientation items. Noteworthy here are the very high average scores and few negative responses to 1a and 1b, suggesting participants were warm towards French people and saw themselves visiting France in the future. However, lower scores and more evenly distributed responses to 1e suggests many did not see themselves making friends with native speakers, so integrative orientation might be quite superficial. Responses to 1d suggest fewer participants saw their future self as a French speaker.

The interviews showed similar results: participants overall demonstrated positive attitudes towards the target community but differed in the extent to which they wanted to integrate into the culture and community. For example, participant Y12-4 described really wanting to live abroad, immerse themselves, and become part of the community:

> *"a bonus of having a language is that it gives you that opportunity to go and feel at home in another country because you can just interact with everything and not feel like a tourist all the time" … "I'd really love to go live there and to immerse myself in the language" (Y12-4)*

However, others saw themselves visiting France for more superficial reasons (*"it's nice and warm"* – Y7-2); or because it was familiar, but did not necessarily see themselves living there:

> *"lots of my family know French and I've been to France quite a lot of times, so I know what it's like, so I'll probably go there again when I'm older" (Y7-4)*

> *"I mean possibly, but I'm not quite sure about [living there]. I haven't really thought about it in detail. I mean I might, but it's quite a big step to move country" (Y12-3)*

Although the ideal self seemed less prominent from the questionnaire data, when asked about their ultimate goal interview participants often expressed wanting to reach a certain level of proficiency as a French speaker, as well as integrative and instrumental goals:

"I just want to be able to speak French when I want and be able to say everything that I want to. Instead of going to say a sentence and realising I can't actually say part of it or something. I think being fluent is a bit of a stretch, but I do want to be able to speak it a bit better" (Y12-1)

Since integrative orientation showed significant gender differences (section 4.1.1.), Figure 7 shows mean scores for each item split by gender. The difference seems to be driven mostly by items 1c, 1d, and 1e, suggesting females may be more interested in integrating into the culture and community than males.

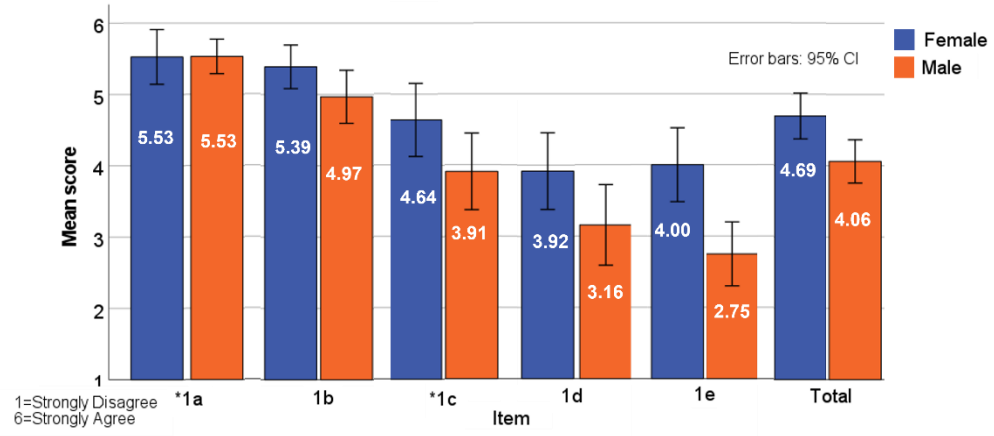
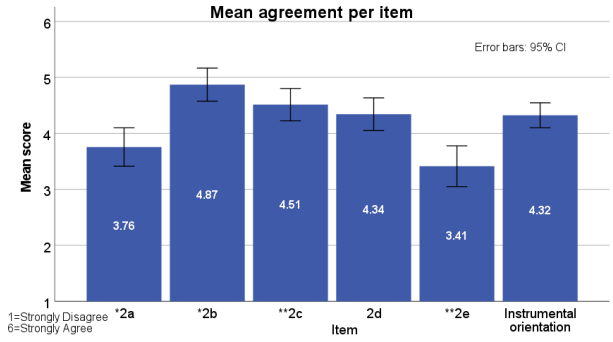
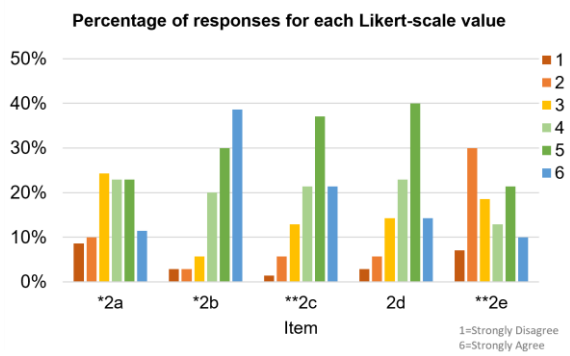


Figure 7: Mean integrative orientation item scores by gender

4.2.3. Instrumental orientation





*2a=*I think that French will be useful for getting a good job in the future.*
*2b=*Learning languages is not a waste of time.*
*2c=**My main motivation to work hard in my language class is because I want to get a good grade.*
2d=English people should learn French.
*2e=**I study French because I feel it is expected of me.*
**item negatively worded in questionnaire*
***item removed from statistical analysis following Cronbach's Alpha (see section 3.4.)*

Figure 8: Instrumental orientation item scores

Figure 8 shows the response breakdown for instrumental orientation items. Noteworthy here are the high responses to 2b and 2d, suggesting these students could see value in learning French. Interview participants also overwhelmingly vouched for the importance of languages, only participant Y12-1 thought they were unnecessary but still recognised value in them:

"I don't think that the English necessarily need to [learn languages] just because everyone speaks English. But I think it would probably be a good thing so that we can talk to other countries rather than them having to learn our language" (Y12-1)

Languages also had perceived value in encouraging cultural sensitivity and open-mindedness. All interview participants except two Year 7s mentioned this when asked whether languages were useful:

"I'd say that [languages] are useful in being a much more welcoming and internationally accepting nation" (Y12-4)

Responses to 2a show nearly half of questionnaire participants did not consider French useful for their career. An emerging link from the interviews between this and personal relevance will be discussed in RQ2 below. More generally, participants described languages as useful for job and university applications, although these comments were less frequent and required more prompting than other factors, suggesting they may not be strong active motivators:

"I do think it's useful in every way. […] when you go to different countries, when you go to university, go for a job and everything like that. […] it widens your options for jobs and stuff" (Y7-3)

"I thought it was just quite a different skill to have compared to most people, so I thought it would be quite good for uni applications and things" (Y12-1)

The two items that were identified by the reliability analysis and subsequently removed from statistical analyses (section 3.4.2.) capture more externally-driven instrumental orientations. Responses to 2c show grades were generally a strong motivator. All interview participants also placed importance on grades, but mostly linked to general academic motivation, so a desire to succeed in French could represent a desire to succeed in school overall. A Pearson correlation checked this relationship in the quantitative data and found a significant but weak positive correlation between item 2c and responses to "I enjoy school overall" (r=.260, p=.03):

"I quite like to do well on my tests, I really work hard and revise for them. I think it's just very important to get good grades." (Y7-3)

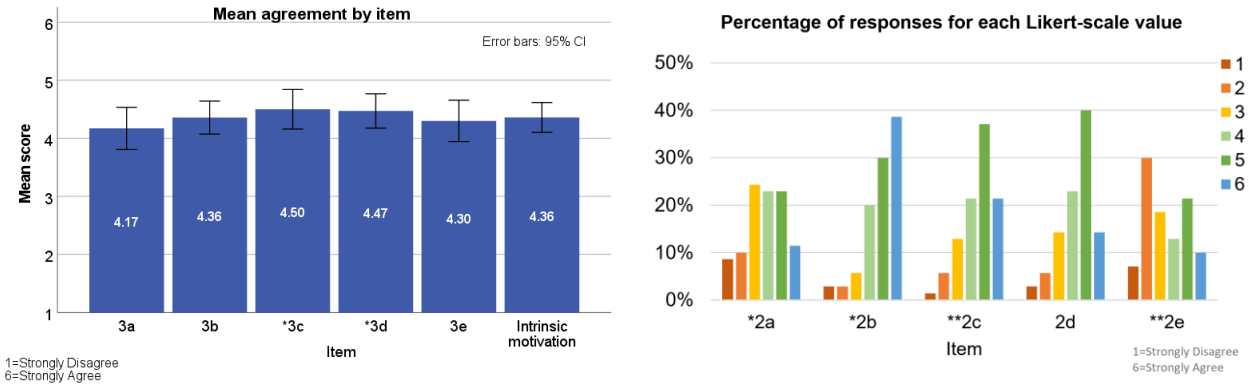
As will be discussed below, intrinsic motivation was found to be very important. However, it appeared that intrinsic motivation alone may not be enough. The instrumental orientations provided some pressure which motivated students to work, particularly outside of the structure of lessons:

"I think I would spend way less time revising if it was just pass fail. But I would try in my lessons 'cause I do like learning it. It's just the going over it bit, and like testing yourself bit, I don't really think I'd have a lot of motivation for that" (Y12-2)

Questionnaire participants did not seem to feel external pressure to study languages (item 2e), and this rarely emerged in the interviews. Interestingly, participant Y7-1 demonstrated how initial extrinsic motivation became intrinsic over time:

"I'd say that at the start I was aiming to impress my parents and my teachers, but now I'm not just doing it for them, I'm doing it for myself" (Y7-1)

4.2.4. Intrinsic motivation



3a=I enjoy learning French
3b=Learning French can be a rewarding experience in itself
*3c=*As a language, I like French*
*3d=*I put more effort into my French homework than my other subjects*
3e=I like learning foreign languages in general
**item negatively worded in questionnaire*

Figure 9: Intrinsic motivation item scores

Figure 9 shows the response breakdown for intrinsic motivation items. Scores are consistently high, suggesting these students generally found French enjoyable.

Similarly, interview participants generally demonstrated high intrinsic motivation. Three main underlying factors of intrinsic motivation emerged: finding languages linguistically interesting; enjoying learning about culture (potential underlying integrative orientation); and ability and sense of achievement:

"I've always liked learning new words in a different language and just the sensation of knowing a different way of speaking" (Y7-2)

"I also enjoy learning about different cultures and different views about the world. I think it's really interesting to see how French people think about different issues" (Y12-3)

"it's harder to have the motivation for subjects that I don't find as easy, but I feel like because I enjoy French and I can understand it, I have the motivation to do it" (Y7-1)

There were some contradicting opinions over whether achievement leads to enjoyment (e.g., participant Y12-3), or enjoyment leads to achievement (e.g., participant Y12-4):

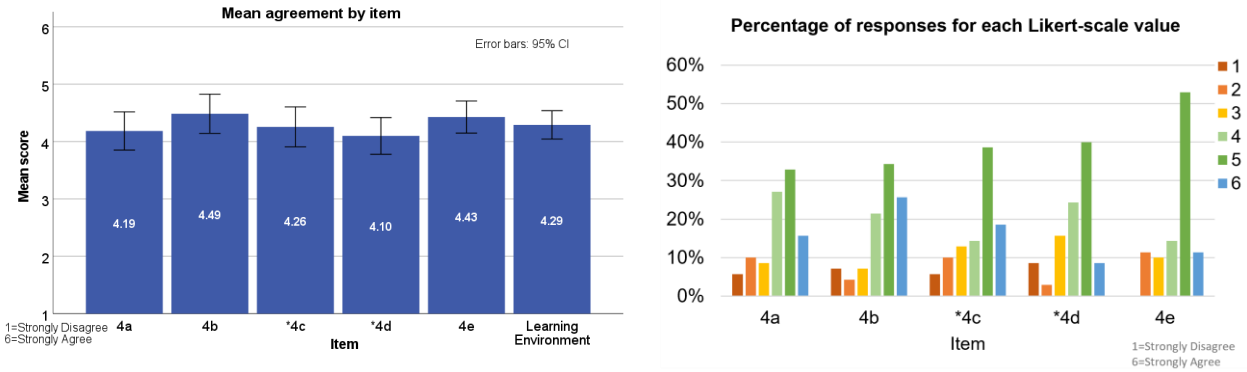
"it's quite kind of difficult to motivate yourself from nothing to achieve something, rather than achieve something and then motivate yourself to achieve another thing. I think, yeah, achievement makes motivation" (Y12-3)

"I think a love for something should proceed being good at it […] if you truly love something and will spend your time doing it and you know will go out of your way to get the most of you can out of it, then you can only do good at it" (Y12-4)

Overall though, the relationship between achievement and ability is likely circular, as participant Y7-4 articulated:

"well I liked French from the start, so I wanted to learn more, so I became better at it, and then I wanted to learn more so I got better at it and then I liked it more" (Y7-4)

4.2.5. Learning environment



4a=I enjoy French lessons
4b=my teacher makes French lessons fun
4c= I learn a lot in my French lessons*
*4d=*I like our learning materials (e.g., textbooks/topics)*
4e=French lessons are the right level of difficulty
**item negatively worded in questionnaire*

Figure 10: Learning environment item scores

Figure 10 shows the response breakdown for learning environment items. Overall responses were generally positive, suggesting these students enjoyed learning French in school. Interview participants had mixed opinions according to their motivation levels and year group which will be discussed in RQ2 and RQ3 below.

One constant among all interview participants was an acknowledgment of the important role teachers play in overall enjoyment and therefore motivation:

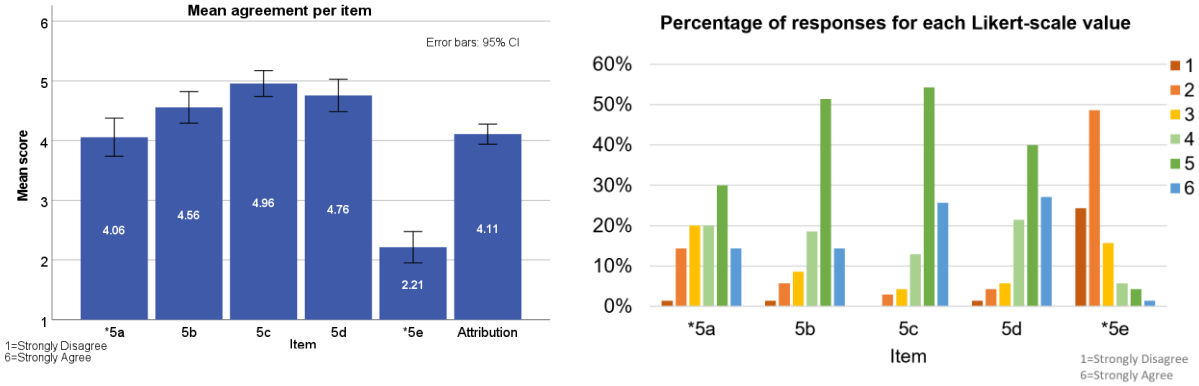
"I think the teacher has a really big impact on the subject too and whether they love their subject. Certainly, one of the teachers that I have now […] he's really good and he really loves his subject. You can tell that from just the way that it comes across in his lessons. And I think that's really good for keeping it going" (Y12-4)

"my friends have disliked some of their teachers and […] they just hated the lesson. So I think they kind of associate the teacher with the language so they just have a dislike for the language because they dislike their teacher" (Y12-2)

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was not a RQ and was not explicitly asked about. Only one interview participant mentioned that the subsequent changes to the learning environment impacted their motivation:

"it was difficult in lockdown because I had no structure and it's very easy to kind of forget everything so it's quite hard to kind of motivate myself to learn vocabulary and do the quite boring bits of language learning" (Y12-3)

4.2.6. Attribution



*5a=*If I try hard, I can do as well as I'd like in French.*
5b= If I do badly in French, I usually know how to do better next time.
5c= How well I do in my language tests is not a matter of luck.
5d= How well I do in French depends on how much effort I put in.
*5e=*It is not the case that some people are naturally better at languages than other people.*
**item negatively worded in questionnaire*

Figure 11: Attribution item scores

Figure 11 shows the response breakdown for attribution items. Noteworthy here are responses to 5b, 5c, and 5d, indicating that most students recognised the importance of effort and working to improve – demonstrating positive attributional patterns. All interview participants except one named effort as the biggest contributor to achievement, overriding any natural differences in ability that might exist:

> *"natural ability will get you so far, but it probably won't get you the best grades you can get" (Y12-1)*

Nonetheless, overwhelmingly negative responses to 5e suggest these students also believed in a 'natural language ability'. Contradicting opinions also emerged in the interviews as comments suggested that to an extent natural ability was significant:

> *"the harder it gets, the more it's your motivation, how much you put in and your teachers. But I think before that it's your natural ability" (Y12-2)*

4.3. RQ2

RQ2. In terms of the five constructs under review, how does the motivational composition differ between more and less proficient and motivated students?

Hypotheses:

a. More proficient and motivated students will display higher scores on all five constructs than less proficient and motivated students.
b. Among more proficient and motivated students, integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation will score higher than instrumental orientation.
c. Among less proficient and motivated students, instrumental orientation will score higher than integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation.

To answer this RQ, first, more and less proficient and motivated students will be identified. The evidence for each hypothesis will then be considered in turn. Most interview participants were highly motivated, and qualitative data will be drawn on predominantly in Hypothesis C. The initial aim was

to look at differences between more and less proficient and motivated students within each year group, but due to small sample sizes all participants will be considered together.

4.3.1. Measuring proficiency and motivation

To identify more and less proficient and motivated students, questionnaire participants rated their overall proficiency and motivation from Very High (5) to Very Low (1). The distributions of responses are presented in Figure 12. Descriptive statistics showed approximate normal distributions, but very few participants rated themselves "Very Low" for proficiency (n=1) or motivation (n=4), which appeared as outliers and were therefore removed from statistical analysis.

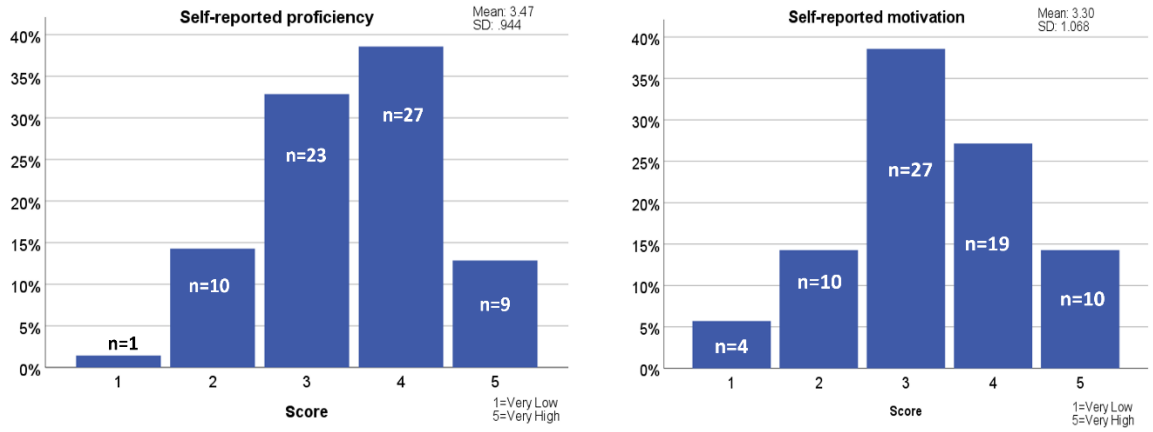


Figure 12: Distribution of responses for self-reported proficiency and self-reported motivation

Figures 12 shows similar patterns for self-reported proficiency and motivation, except more students rated themselves as "High" for proficiency than motivation. 2-tailed Bivariate Pearson Correlation found a significant strong positive correlation between these two variables (r=.584, p<.01).

Interview participants were asked to describe their motivation and proficiency levels. Participants generally considered themselves highly motivated and proficient French learners. Two Year 12s reported noticeably lower motivation than their peers and were also more hesitant to describe their proficiency as high, so their results will be discussed in hypothesis C.

4.3.2. Hypothesis A

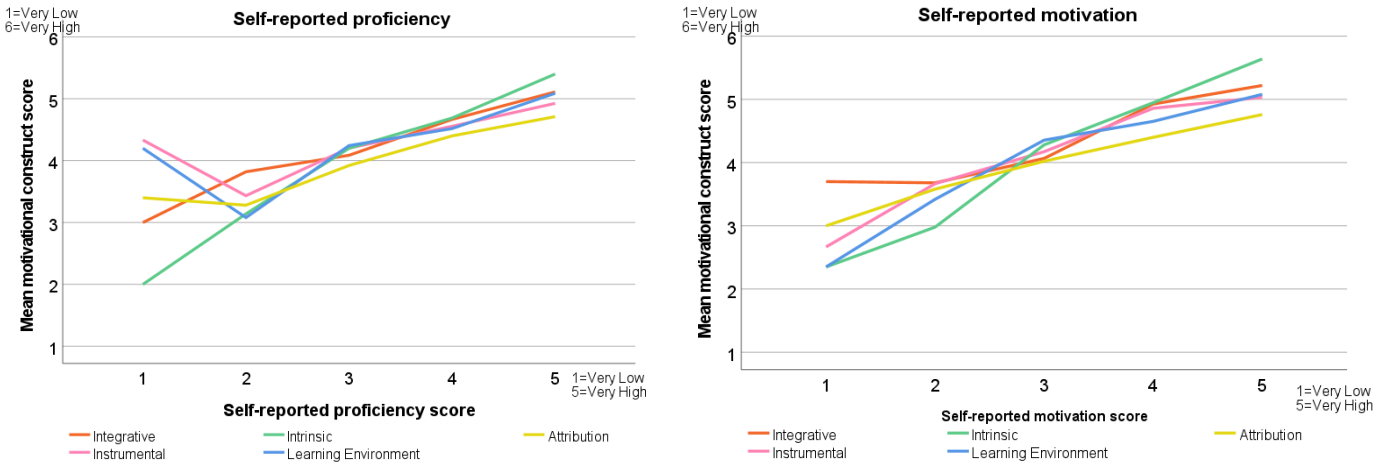


Figure 13: Mean construct scores by self-reported proficiency and self-reported motivation

Hypothesis A expects higher scores for all five constructs as self-reported proficiency and motivation increase. Upon visual inspection the data in Figure 13 supports this hypothesis, showing largely linear relationships between all constructs and both self-reported proficiency and self-reported motivation. The pattern only changes among the "Very Low" groups which contain very few participants.

To test this, 2-tailed Bivariate Pearson Correlations were conducted using a Bonferroni correction (significance threshold p<.01) for self-reported proficiency and self-reported motivation, summarised in Table 5. The data met the assumptions for the test once outliers were removed. Self-reported motivation had significant strong positive correlations with all constructs. Intrinsic motivation had the strongest correlation, suggesting this construct may be more powerful. Self-reported proficiency had significant medium or strong correlations with all constructs. Intrinsic motivation again had a noticeably stronger correlation, but so did attribution, suggesting it may play a bigger role in proficiency.

	Pearson's *r*				
	Integrative	**Instrumental**	**Intrinsic**	**Learning environment**	**Attribution**
Self-reported proficiency	.476*	.426*	.633*	.514*	.622*
Self-reported motivation	.574*	.540*	.793*	.539*	.545*

**significant at p<.01 level*

Table 5: Pearson Correlation between self-reported proficiency and self-reported motivation with the five motivational constructs

These correlations support Hypothesis A as they show each construct is predictive of overall proficiency and motivation. Nevertheless, it is insightful to see if any constructs emerge as significant predictors when all are entered as predictors in the same model, so a multiple regression was conducted. The assumptions for regression were tested and held once outliers were removed. Both models were significant. The model for self-reported motivation explained 67.4% of the variance (F(5,56)=23.134, p<0.001). The model for self-reported proficiency explained 42.3% of the variance (F(5,59)=8.660, p<0.001). The results, summarised in Table 6, show that intrinsic motivation was the only significant predictor of self-reported motivation, echoing the importance of this construct found in the interview data, as shown in Figure 5. However, attribution was the only significant predictor of self-reported proficiency.

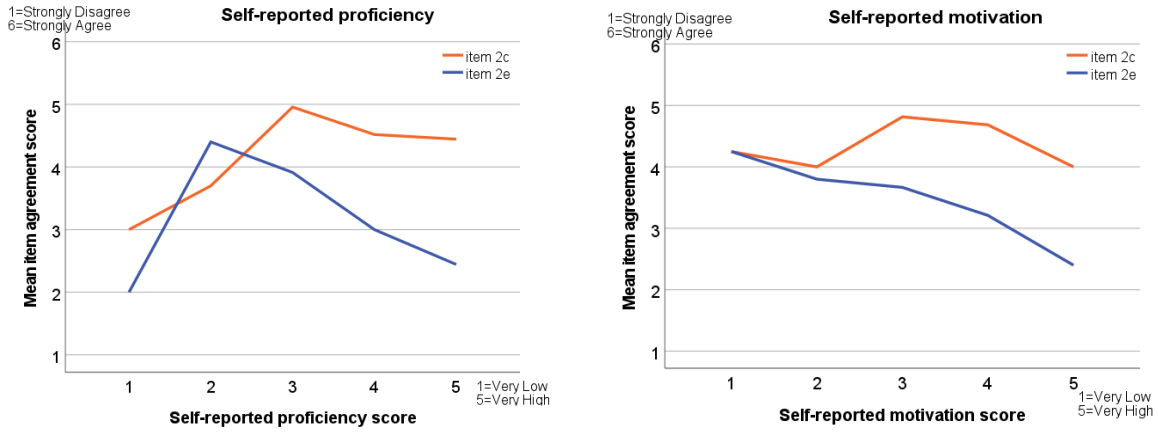
	Self-reported proficiency				**Self-reported motivation**			
	Coefficient (B)	**Coefficient Std. Error**	***t***	**sig (*p*)**	**Coefficient (B)**	**Coefficient Std. Error**	***t***	**sig (*p*)**
Integrative	.130	.146	.892	.376	-.041	.132	-.309	.759
Instrumental	-.028	.152	-.186	.853	.071	.127	.554	.582
Intrinsic	.210	.161	1.307	.196	.736	.126	5.826	**.**000*
Learning environment	.051	.135	.380	.705	-.134	.125	-1.074	.287
Attribution	.491	.155	3.161	.002*	.248	.142	1.752	.085

**significant at p<.01 level*

Table 6: Regression coefficients for self-reported proficiency and self-reported motivation

Descriptive statistics for the two items removed from the instrumental construct following the reliability analysis (section 3.4.2.) were examined separately. Figure 14 shows these items did not follow the same pattern as above: grades do not appear to correlate with either self-reported

proficiency or motivation, and external expectations seem to decrease as proficiency and motivation increase.

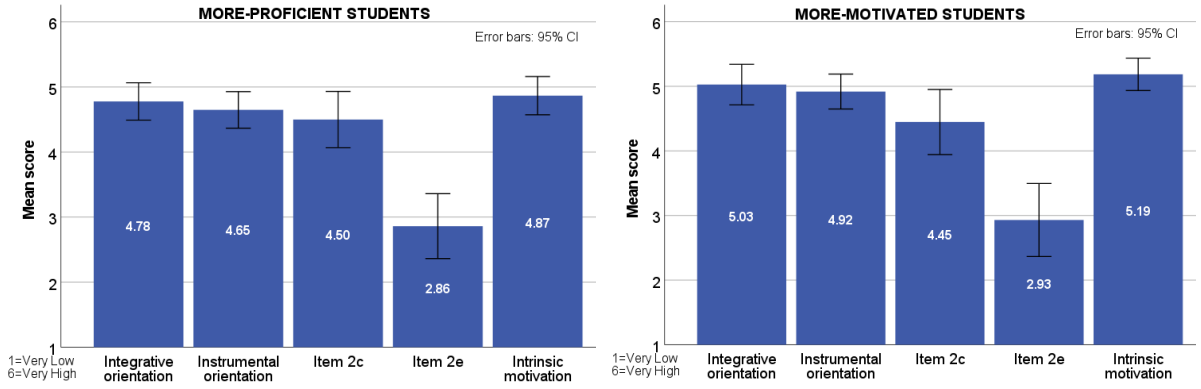


2c=My main motivation to work hard in my language class is because I want to get a good grade
2e=I study French because I feel it is expected of me

Figure 14: Item 2c and 2e scores by self-reported proficiency and self-reported motivation

4.3.3. Hypothesis B

Hypothesis B expects intrinsic motivation and integrative orientation to be higher than instrumental orientation among more proficient and motivated students. Students who rated themselves "High" or "Very High" were combined to represent more-proficient (n=36) and more-motivated (n=29) students. Figure 15 shows that in both cases, intrinsic motivation and integrative orientation appeared only marginally higher than instrumental orientation. However, item 2e, which represents a more externally-orientated instrumental orientation, was noticeably lower. Responses to 2c suggest viewing grades as a motivator may be more important for proficiency than motivation.



2c=My main motivation to work hard in my language class is because I want to get a good grade
2e=I study French because I feel it is expected of me

Figure 15: Mean construct scores for more-proficient and more-motivated students

The differences for integrative, instrumental, and intrinsic motivation were tested using paired-samples T-tests. The individually-examined items are not directly comparable to the constructs and were not included in statistical analysis. The results, summarised in Table 7, showed neither intrinsic motivation nor integrative orientation were significantly higher than instrumental orientation for either more-proficient or more-motivated students using a Bonferroni correction (significance threshold $p<.025$). Intrinsic motivation would be significantly higher than instrumental orientation

among more-proficient students at the $p<.05$ threshold, so this difference could be described as marginal.

	More-proficient students		More-motivated students	
	Integrative	**Intrinsic**	**Integrative**	**Intrinsic**
Instrumental	$t_{35}=1.319$, $p=.196$	$t_{35}=-2.049$, $p=.048$	$t_{28}=.882$, $p=.385$	$t_{28}=-1.910$, $p=.066$

Table 7: Paired-samples T-tests comparing mean construct scores among more-proficient and more-motivated students

In the interview data, intrinsic motivation came across strongly among highly-motivated students but not in isolation of the other constructs. For example, for participant Y12-4 high intrinsic motivation led to stronger integrative and instrumental orientations. The factors underlying their instrumental orientation were more to do with personal relevance than exams: because they loved languages, they actively wanted a career that incorporates them, therefore they saw French as useful:

"the role that [languages] play would be in opening up so many opportunities for me to live and work in other countries, as well as being able to communicate, you know reach out to other countries from the UK" (Y12-4)

"definitely not just to get an A-Level. […] I'm definitely learning French to learn the language. It's not just an A-Level option for me it's like a life skill." (Y12-4)

4.3.4. Hypothesis C

Hypothesis C expects instrumental orientation to be higher than intrinsic motivation and integrative orientation among less proficient and motivated students. Students who rated themselves "Low" or "Very Low" were combined to represent less-proficient (n=11) and less-motivated (n=14) students. Figure 16 shows that in both cases, intrinsic motivation was the lowest, but surprisingly integrative orientation was higher than instrumental. However, the more externally-orientated instrumental items 2c and 2e appeared to be the highest.

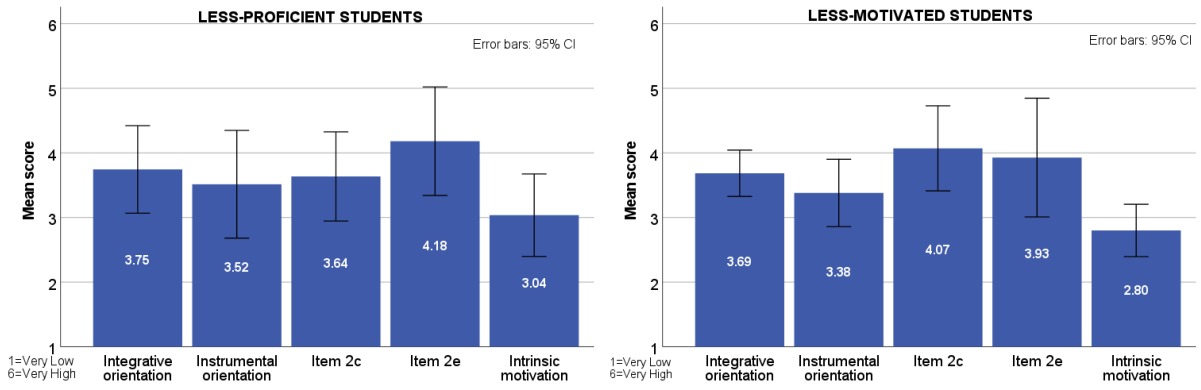


Figure 16: Mean construct scores for less-proficient and less-motivated students

Again, paired-sample T-tests were conducted to test this for the constructs but not the individual items. The results, summarised in Table 8, showed instrumental orientation was significantly higher only than intrinsic motivation among less-motivated students using a Bonferroni correction (significance threshold $p<.025$).

	Less-proficient students		Less-motivated students	
	Integrative	**Intrinsic**	**Integrative**	**Intrinsic**
Instrumental	t_{10}=.924, p=.377	t_{10}=1.524, p=.158	t_{13}=1.298, p=.217	t_{13}=2.552, p=.024* *Cohen's d*=.682

**Significant at p<.025 level*

Table 8: Paired-samples T-tests comparing mean construct scores among less-proficient and less-motivated students

In the interviews, two main reasons emerged to explain why the two less-motivated – and proficient – Year 12s described themselves as such. Using participant Y12-1 as an example, they did not see French as personally relevant and would not continue beyond school. Consequently, their main motivation was the A-Level grades needed for university, in line with the descriptive findings noted in the questionnaire data above:

> *"now that I've kind of decided what I want to do and I know that French is probably not that, I'm probably a bit less motivated. But I am still motivated just because I want to get good grades in it" (Y12-1)*

Also, their enjoyment was linked to perceived difficulty and relative success. At A-Level, the difficulty increased and their relative achievement decreased, having a domino effect on their enjoyment and motivation:

> *"I did enjoy it at GCSE, […] I didn't find it too difficult, and it was always a fun lesson to go it. But […] it's a lot harder now, so it's probably less enjoyable just because of how difficult it is" (Y12-1)*

The relationship between these factors emerged during the discourse: personal relevance was strongly linked to intrinsic motivation, itself related to ability and achievement. They did not want to continue studying something they found difficult because it was unenjoyable. Likewise, for participant Y12-2 difficulty led to decreased intrinsic motivation and a lack of personal relevance. Consequently, their motivation depended more on external instrumental orientation such as grades, which they recognised as a less effective motivator:

> *"I think 'cause it's exam focused I'm kinda less motivated 'cause it's like I have to do it. […] I just enjoy learning languages, so I'm quite motivated to do it anyway, but in a space where I'm not being forced to do it and I'm not being forced to learn certain things in a certain way." (Y12-2)*

For this participant there was also a negative effect on their integrative orientation. Their perceived lack of ability impacted their confidence to interact with native speakers and desire to live abroad:

> *"[my parents] always try and get me to order in the restaurant and stuff but I don't really like doing that" (Y12-2)*

> *"I find Spanish easier that I'm more confident in my ability to be able to [live in] Spain" (Y12-2)*

4.4. RQ3

RQ1. In terms of the five constructs under review, how does the motivational composition differ between year groups?

Hypotheses:

d. Motivation levels will decline across KS3 then increase at GCSE and A-Level for all five constructs.
e. Year 7s will display lower levels of all five constructs than Year 12 students.

To answer this RQ, the data will be broken down cross-sectionally by year group. Because interviews were only conducted with Year 7 and 12, questionnaire data will primarily be used to test hypothesis D and qualitative data will primarily be used to test hypothesis E due to the low sample of A-Level students that completed the questionnaire.

As shown in Table 1 (section 3.3.3.), the number of questionnaire participants decreases in each year group. Responses from the one Year 13 student were aggregated with Year 12 to represent the four A-Level students.

4.4.1. Hypothesis D

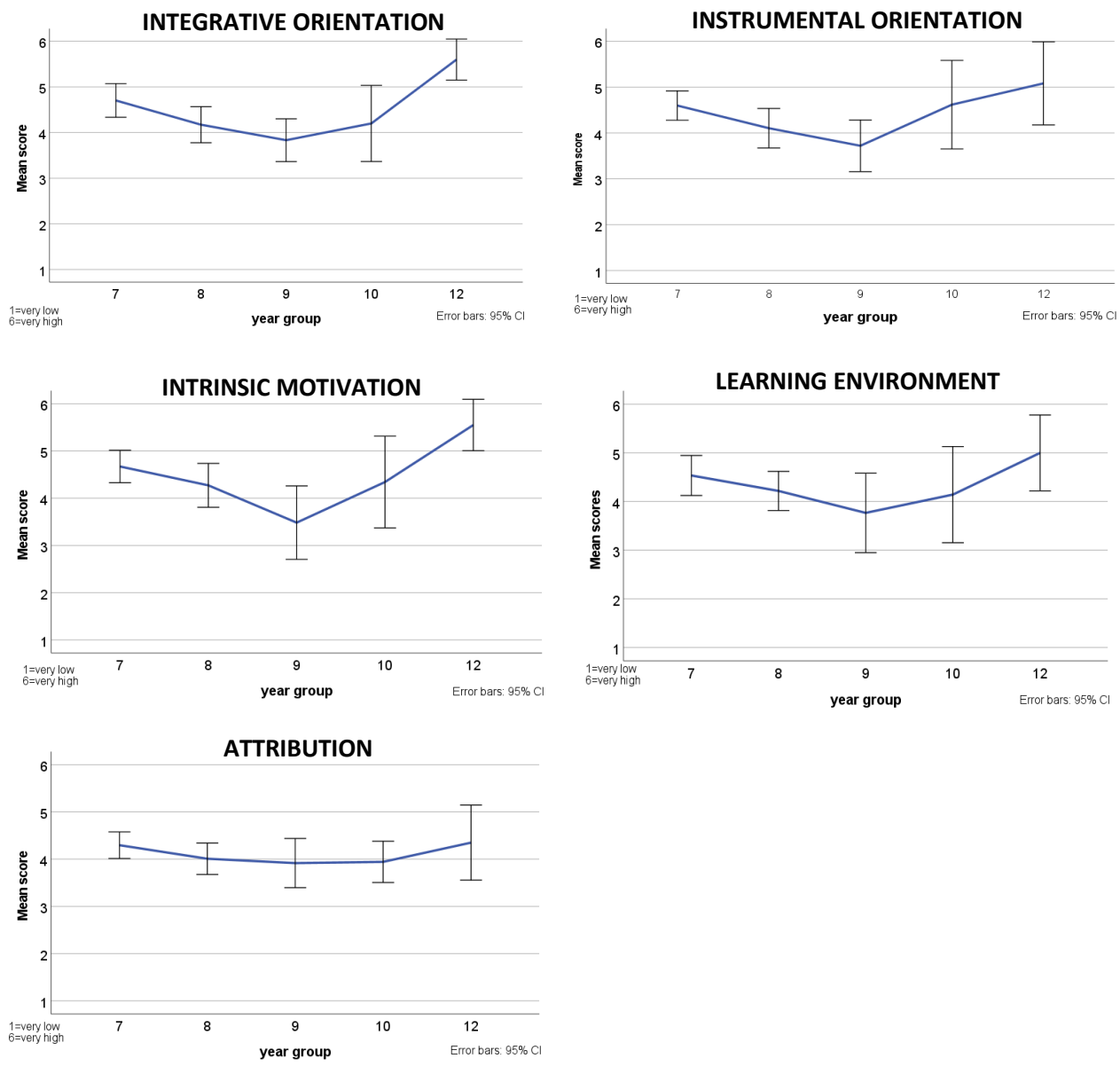


Figure 17: Mean construct scores by year group

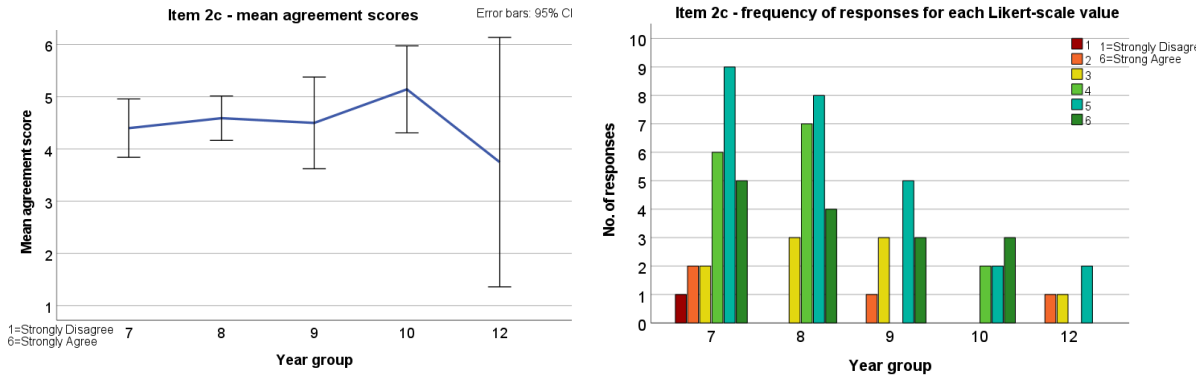
Hypothesis D expects motivation levels to decrease across KS3 and then increase again, and Figure 17 suggests this hypothesis is partly supported as the same U-shaped curve appeared clearly for each construct except attribution. The statistical significance was tested using curvilinear regressions and in each case the assumptions were met once the five outliers were removed. The results, summarised in Table 9, support the pattern observed above: in each test there was no significant linear relationship, but the quadratic model was a significant predictor for each construct except attribution.

	Linear model			Quadratic model		
	r	r^2	*p*	variance explained	*F*	*p*
Integrative	.025	.001	.836	21.7%	*F*(2,67)=9.299	<.005*
Instrumental	.025	.001	.838	12.4%	*F*(2,67)=4.724	.012*
Intrinsic	.005	.000	.969	15.3%	*F*(2,67)=7.251	.001*
Learning environment	.063	.004	.612	10.2%	*F*(2,64)=3.650	.032*
Attribution	.053	.003	.664	4.5%	*F*(2,66)=1.555	.219

**significant at p<.05 level*

Table 9: Curvilinear regression outcomes by motivational constructs

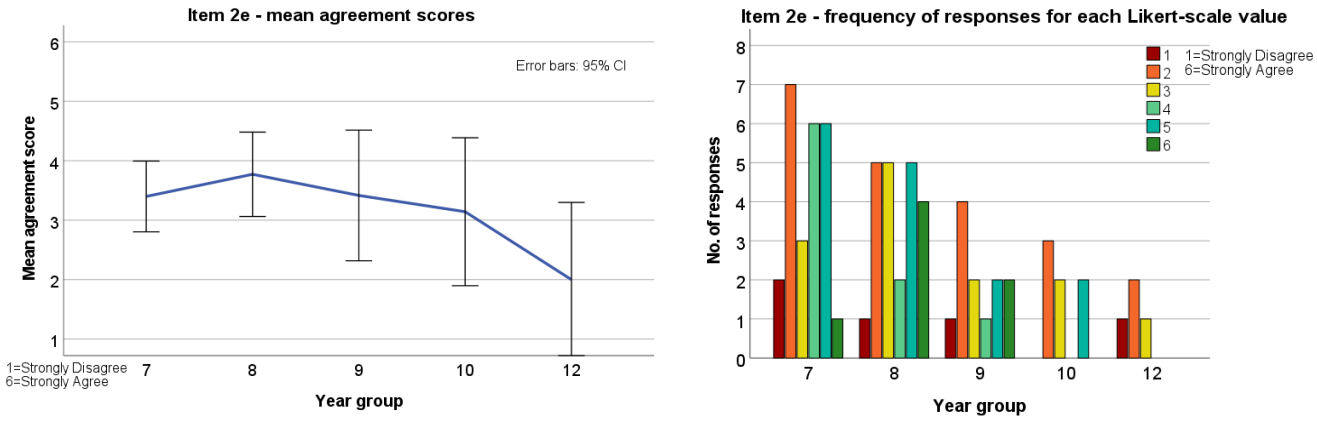
Note that the instrumental orientation plot within Figure 17 does not include the items removed following the reliability analysis (section 3.4.2.). These items will be discussed independently as they showed interesting patterns.



2c = My main motivation to work hard in my language class is because I want to get a good grade

Figure 18: Responses to item 2c by year group

Figure 18 indicates that motivation linked to grades does not follow the same U-shaped curve as the overall instrumental orientation construct. Instead, grades appear to remain quite a strong motivator across year groups. This small sample of Year 10s appeared more unanimously motivated by grades than other year groups. Two A-Level students did and two did not consider exams their main motivator, suggesting different types of motivation have taken over.



2e = I study French because I feel it is expected of me

Figure 19: Responses to item 2e by year group

Figure 19 shows that motivation from external pressure also does not follow the U-shaped curve, instead it decreases over time. The interview data did not really explore this topic, but retrospective comments from Year 12s suggested a growing sense of autonomy as expectation to study languages decreased throughout school, increasing motivation:

> *"It's much better […] from Year 7 to now being in a group of people who want to be there rather than have to be there because of curriculum or like mandatory subjects. [...] So there are people there who just don't want to be there but now everyone like chose that subject, so yeah I think the motivation increased I think definitely" (Y12-3)*

4.4.2. Hypothesis E

Hypothesis E expects Year 7s to be less motivated in all areas than Year 12s. Looking at Figure 17, visual inspection suggests this hypothesis is supported for all constructs except attribution. However, this was not tested statistically due to the small Year 12 sample. Differences emerging from the interview data will be discussed below.

Integrative orientation

Figure 17 shows already quite high scores in Year 7 (Mean=4.7), suggesting quite strong integrative orientations were established early on. It was also apparent from Year 7 interviews that integrative orientation existed and developed from previous exposure to French in primary school and travelling with family or school:

> *"I've been going to France since I was like 6-months old, and I always loved hearing the people speak [French] and always imagined speaking it and going to France and have a conversation with someone in French" (Y7-1)*

Retrospective comments from Year 12s suggested integrative orientation was not always established from the beginning. For example, participant Y12-2 thought it unlikely they would have developed positive integrative orientations towards French had they not studied it in school:

> *"I don't think [I would have encountered French] as much because I prefer learning about cultures that are quite different from ours and France isn't that different, so I don't really think I would have been that interested in it" (Y12-2)*

A noteworthy difference between year groups was the clarity of *how* they would interact with the target community, with Year 12s having more concrete goals than Year 7s:

"I'd really like to know a lot of French to be able to go into France and speak their language with them" (Y7-2)

"[my goal is] to be fluent speaking to French people on holiday. […] to be able to think in French. And like fluent at work and be able to talk to French clients. And also not only speak to people in French in France but also other French speaking countries. So like Quebec […] so be able to understand them fluently and talk to them" (Y12-3)

When talking about their goals, Year 7s were more likely to relate their future L2-self to the school context. For example, participant Y7-2 had two ideal selves: one based in school and one in the target community:

"I'd say I'm motivated by it because […] I'm not the best *at it, and I'd quite like to be the best at it" (Y7-2)*

"I'd really like to know a lot of French to be able to go into France and speak their language with them" (Y7-2)

Instrumental orientation

As with integrative orientation, interview participants differed in the clarity with which instrumental orientations fitted in to their future L2-self and drove their motivation. Year 7s unanimously agreed that French was useful although they did not all have specific ideas as to *how*, whereas the Year 12s were split depending on whether they saw them as relevant to their specific career path.

"I think it's quite important for when I go to university […] I'm not sure [why] but I think also like when you go out in the real world, then I think it is good to know another language" (Y7-3)

"I want to work in an NGO or the government so like foreign relations. So that's probably very likely that [languages] will be used" (Y12-3)

For Year 12s, even when they weren't the main motivator, grades inevitably represented more external instrumental orientations given the importance placed on A-Level results by the school and universities. In contrast, for the highly-motivated Year 7s who were taking French as a compulsory subject and would have no high-stake exams for another four years, grades were a reflection of ability. For them, grades reflected a desire to improve proficiency and an enjoyment of learning in general over purely extrinsic reasons:

"I usually work hard because I want to be good at it. But it's not all about the grades." (Y7-1)

"for me it's important because to go to a particular university they'd want you to get a particular grade" (Y12-3)

Intrinsic motivation

All interview participants displayed high intrinsic interest in and enjoyment of languages. One noticeable difference was the relationship between intrinsic motivation and the learning environment, which will be described below. The same contributors to intrinsic motivation mentioned in RQ1 were present in both year groups: finding languages linguistically interesting; enjoying learning about culture; and ability and sense of achievement.

Learning environment

Year 12 interview participants provided retrospective narratives showing how attitudes towards the learning environment improved over time:

> *"I didn't really have a lot of motivation when I was younger because […] the topics were quite boring […]. And now it's a bit more interesting […] so I'm more motivated because I find the topics way more interesting now" (Y12-2)*

These retrospective opinions were not reflected in the Year 7 data, perhaps because they were in an initial "fun" phase of learning French. Indeed, Year 7s rated the learning environment highly for this reason, particularly enjoying the use of games and competitions. In contrast, Year 12s prioritised linguistic progress over fun lessons:

> *"I really enjoy it because we do a lot of things that help you understand the language, cause we won't just do set work, we'll also do like games and stuff that help you understand it more and I think that's really enjoyable and it turns learning languages into more fun" (Y7-1)*

> *"if the teacher is really laid back, they don't really do a lot in the lessons, I don't really learn as much. But if they give us quite a lot to do, then I'm more motivated and I understand it more, even though I do enjoy the other lessons more. But I get more from the lessons where we do more. I like when the teachers are kind of more strict about the lesson plan" (Y12-2)*

Only one less-motivated Year 12 participant felt competitions would increase their motivation:

> *"if there was a reward in the subject, like if only the people who did the best in exams could go on a trip, I think that would be way more motivating to try harder" (Y12-2)*

While for Year 7s positive attitudes towards the learning environment led to enjoyment and intrinsic motivation, Year 12 comments showed how existing intrinsic motivation could compensate for negative attitudes towards the learning environment:

> *"I think if you enjoy languages then you're going to enjoy the lessons and stuff, but I can understand why people wouldn't enjoy it, I can see it being kind of boring I guess for them" (Y12-2)*

Attribution

The questionnaire data showed little difference between Year 7 and Year 12 (Figure 17). Year 7 interview participants were particularly enthusiastic about the importance of effort and demonstrated growth mindsets. Year 12s still showed generally positive attributional tendencies but were perhaps more willing to acknowledge the role of natural ability in success:

> "*Loads of people have natural talent in many things, but if you work hard then you don't need the natural talent. Then you'll gain your talent" (Y7-3)*

> *"I suppose if it was a GCSE or an A-Level I would kind of factor in my disability and kind of maybe a little bit like my natural ability" (Y12-3)*

4.5. Uptake

As this study did not specifically look at year groups who were making decisions about continuing languages, uptake was not a direct RQ. Nonetheless, when considering classroom motivation, understanding student opinions on uptake can provide interesting insight into what motivators they consider important. Free-written responses in the questionnaire allowed participants to answer in

their own words why they would or would not want to continue studying languages. Twenty-eight respondents provided reasons against and 43 provided reason for continuing. Interview participants were also asked what factors they thought most influenced uptake. All responses were analysed and classified into codes within the five constructs where possible. The responses are summarised in Figure 20, and the full list of reasons is included in Appendix 7.

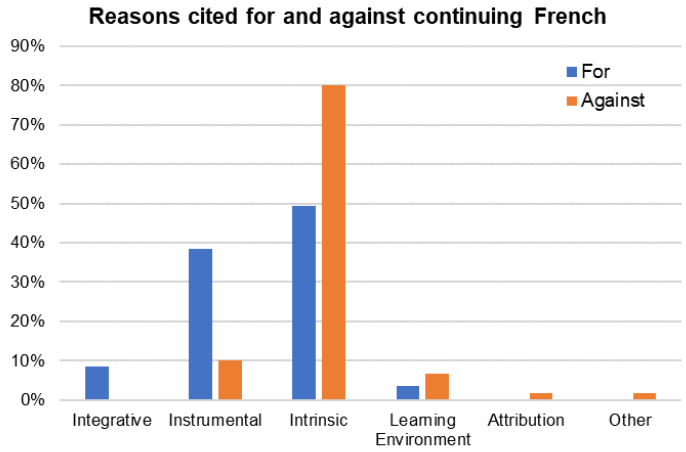


Figure 20: Summary of reasons cited for and against continuing French

Figure 20 shows most reasons for continuing were intrinsic in nature, closely followed by instrumental – mostly related to perceived relevance for career. Far fewer reasons were integrative or related to the learning environment. When it came to reasons against continuing, 80% of reasons concerned lack of intrinsic motivation, and none mentioned integrative factors.

5. Discussion

This chapter will provide a discussion of the findings presented in Chapter 4 and place them within the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Each RQ will be addressed in turn. Conclusions will be linked to theoretical and pedagogical implications, and the limitations of the study will be considered along with suggestions for future research.

5.1. RQ1

RQ1. In terms of the five constructs under review, what is the motivational composition of English secondary school students learning French?

5.1.1. Overall

The results showed motivation was generally higher than might be expected given the overwhelmingly negative description of student attitudes towards language learning in the literature, as shown in Chapter 2. It is possible that the voluntary nature of participation meant those who took part in the questionnaire and interview, despite attempts to approach a range of students, had higher motivation than those who did not participate (Dörnyei, 2007). Therefore, the sample is likely not fully representative of motivation levels of the target population.

No significant differences were found between construct scores when looking at the whole sample, but some differences did emerge when later examined by proficiency level, motivation level, and year group. Previous studies found certain motivators were higher than others, but the order is not always consistent (e.g., Davies, 2004; Martin, 2020; Parrish & Lanvers, 2019). It is possible these effects only hold for particular groups of students and may have been averaged out when looking at the whole school together, therefore explaining different findings across studies.

Quantitative data found positive linear correlations between all five constructs. This may be initially surprising given previous findings that, for example, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are negatively correlated (e.g., Parrish & Lanvers, 2019; Taylor et al., 2014). However, qualitative data indicated the relationships were more complex than the quantitative data suggested and could only be understood by considering the underlying factors within each construct.

5.1.2. Integrative orientation

Integrative orientation was higher than previous research findings would expect, especially in lower school. However, it came more from wanting to travel than wanting to live and integrate in the target community, potentially due to the demographics of this sample for whom France is a common and accessible tourist destination. Questionnaire participants did not generally see their future selves as French speakers, but interview participants demonstrated visions of an ideal L2-self, often linked to proficiency.

Females had higher integrative orientation than males, echoing previous findings (e.g., Williams et al., 2002) that girls are more favourable towards French language and culture. It would be interesting to see if the same differences would be found in other languages. Surprisingly, no gender differences were found for any other construct despite often being reported in previous research (e.g., Davies, 2004; Williams et al., 2002). It is possible the relatively small sample and potential sample bias meant a difference could not be detected.

5.1.3. Instrumental orientation

Overall, instrumental orientation appeared high, but the underlying factors painted a more complex picture. A two-way relationship between intrinsic motivation and instrumental orientation emerged from the qualitative data, but the directions and factors involved varied greatly at the individual level. For example, Year 12 interview data demonstrated how high intrinsic motivation can develop more internalised instrumental orientation such as personal relevance for career, but low intrinsic motivation can result in more external instrumental orientations such as exams.

Bearing in mind the potential sample bias, the results encouragingly suggested these students could see value in learning languages and there was little evidence of an 'English is enough' mentality negatively impacting motivation. Interview comments suggested students could appreciate socio-cultural advantages of languages, which may be more widely relatable than generic travel and career advantages. To my knowledge, this has not been explored in English MFL classroom studies, and would be an interesting area for further research.

Despite agreeing in principle that languages are worthwhile, few students had concrete ideas of *how* they would be useful unless they saw them as directly personally relevant (explored in RQ2). There appears to be a general narrative given to students that languages are useful without explaining *why* (Aplin, 1991; Fisher, 2001).

The importance placed on grades suggests it is difficult to separate the language from the school context where students face academic pressures. While purely extrinsic motivation has been shown to be less powerful both in this study and others (e.g., Chambers, 2000; Ushioda, 2001), it seems, in this environment, that some extrinsic motivation may be necessary to help students keep up with the course. The idea that intrinsic motivation alone may be insufficient to sustain student language motivation has not been explored to my knowledge and future research could investigate this further.

5.1.4. Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation was also higher than expected following previous findings, possibly attributable to the participation bias. Some students are naturally interested in languages, as could be the case for any school subject that appeals to some more than others. From both the quantitative and qualitative data intrinsic motivation emerged as the construct that most influenced and was most influenced by other constructs. The relationship between constructs has largely been ignored, but recent findings by Krüsemann (2018) echo those here.

5.1.5. Learning environment

Again bearing in mind the potential participation bias, overall attitudes towards the learning environment were positive. In the classroom context, the teacher seems to be extremely influential for developing initial impressions, echoing previous findings (e.g., Aplin, 1991). Other elements varied among students and will be discussed in RQ2 and RQ3.

The absence of remarks about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the learning experience was somewhat unexpected given the extent of interruptions and online learning over the last 18 months. However, its absence does not mean it had no influence on motivation, only that there was no evidence of it here. This highlights a limitation of attempting to measure a temporal phenomenon like motivation at one point in time as relationships with previous experiences may be missed.

5.1.6. Attribution

Overall, attributional patterns were quite positive, but students contradicted themselves by generally placing importance on effort and also believing in a natural ability for languages. Contradictions in the interviews highlight a limitation of reporting qualitative data in the form of isolated quotes without considering whether they truly reflect the participant's opinion in the context of the entire discourse. Previous studies have found inconsistent evidence on attributional patterns, and it is positive the discourse provided by the school and teachers may play a role (e.g., Molway & Mutton, 2020) although that was not explored here.

5.2. RQ2

RQ2. In terms of the five constructs under review, how does the motivational composition differ between more and less proficient and motivated students?

5.2.1. Hypothesis A

More proficient and motivated students will display higher scores on all five constructs than less proficient and motivated students.

The findings supported hypothesis A. Questionnaire data showed scores for all five constructs increased along with self-reported proficiency and motivation.

Intrinsic motivation was the only significant factor predicting self-reported motivation, suggesting it was the main driver. It is possible the other constructs were only predictive because they were correlated with intrinsic motivation. The importance of intrinsic motivation is reflected in the qualitative findings and numerous previous studies showing it is significant for general motivation and uptake in language classrooms (Fisher, 2001; Graham, 2002; Krüsemann, 2018; Parrish & Lanvers, 2019; Stables & Wikeley, 1999).

For proficiency, attribution emerged as the most important construct. This is intuitively sensible: students with adaptive attributional tendencies are more likely to be motivated to try and improve = than give up in the face of failure. The importance of positive attributional patterns for academic success more generally has also been shown in the literature (Chaplain, 2000; Rogers, 2005). Note that in this study proficiency was not tested, and self-reports may not truly reflect actual ability. It is possible that students with positive attributional tendencies may perceive their proficiency levels more favourably, potentially conflating the two variables. Future research using an objective measure of attainment would provide more insight into this relationship.

The different patterns observed for grades and external expectation are not surprising: grades were a strong motivator for all students since exams are unavoidable in the school context, and even highly-motivated students were driven by achieving good grades. However, the difference was that more-motivated students also had other more-powerful factors motivating them, and beyond the purely instrumental outcomes, grades were seen as a reflection of proficiency and would help them reach their goals and ideal L2-self. In contrast, less-motivated students saw grades primarily as an obligation.

The feeling of external expectation to study French decreases with motivation. Again, this is intuitively sensible: even before French becomes optional, more-motivated students would likely actively want to learn it, whereas less-motivated students would probably stop studying French if not for the school context and the obligation to complete the course. Previous research has shown that this lack of a choice hinders motivation (e.g., Parrish & Lanvers, 2019).

5.2.2. Hypothesis B

Among more proficient and motivated students, integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation will score higher than instrumental orientation.

Overall, the findings suggested the relationships between intrinsic motivation, integrative orientation and instrumental orientation were more complex than hypothesis B predicted. In the quantitative data, instrumental orientation appeared lower than integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation, which was the highest, but the differences did not reach significance. This sample was more highly motivated than previous studies in this context, but it is also possible that the sample was too small to find an effect. Furthermore, the absence in the quantitative data of more external instrumental orientations may have affected the findings. Comparison is also difficult between studies looking at multiple year groups versus just one.

Interview data demonstrated that intrinsic motivation was high among more-motivated students and both integrative and instrumental orientations developed as a result. The difference emerged in the *type* of instrumental orientation, highlighting the significance of the missing items in the quantitative analysis. For these students, instrumental orientation came less from exams and more from personal relevance for career, the importance of which has been noted in previous studies (e.g., Aplin, 1991; Graham, 2002). These participants had no imminent high-stake exams so it would be interesting to see if grades played a different role for other year groups, as has been found in non-UK studies (Taylor et al., 2014).

5.2.3. Hypothesis C

Among less proficient and motivated students, instrumental orientation will score higher than integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation.

The pattern here also appeared more complex than originally predicted. Quantitative data suggested intrinsic was low but surprisingly integrative orientation was the highest. This difference reached significance for motivation but not for proficiency. Again, the instrumental construct did not capture external pressure or grades which, when looked at individually, did score higher – tentatively suggesting external instrumental orientations may indeed be higher for these learners, as predicted. The findings from the two less motivated students could be interpreted in terms of the L2MSS. For these students, French was not a significant part of their ideal future self since they did not see it as personally relevant. Consequently, their motivation depended on an ought-to-self, predominantly through grades. Intrinsic motivation was reduced by a perceived decrease in ability as the difficulty of the course increased, echoing findings by Clark and Trafford (1995) about the relationship between enjoyment and achievement. Previous studies whose findings would support hypothesis C (e.g., Coleman et al., 2007; Martin, 2020) did not explore underlying factors or relationships between constructs, which this study found more insightful than examining them in isolation.

Previous research indicated that extrinsic motivation can be detrimental to intrinsic motivation and achievement (Deci et al. 2001; Taylor et al., 2014). However, these results found only certain types of extrinsic motivation have this effect: less-motivated students depended more on grades, whereas students who saw French as personally relevant were positively motivated by their instrumental orientations. This highlights a limitation of measuring these constructs in isolation without considering the underlying factors; grades and career goals are both instrumental but are predominantly driven by extrinsic and intrinsic factors respectively. They are also not equally powerful, echoing previous

findings that intrinsic motivators are stronger for overall motivation (e.g., Fisher, 2001; Parrish & Lanvers, 2019; Ushioda, 2001).

5.3. RQ3

RQ3. In terms of the five constructs under review, how does the motivational composition differ between year groups?

5.3.1. Hypothesis D

Motivation levels will decline across KS3 then increase at GCSE and A-Level for all five constructs.

Questionnaire data suggested hypothesis D was partly true: for all constructs except attribution, motivation followed a U-shaped curve – decreasing across KS3 and then increasing to its highest point at A-Level. The initial decline is well-documented in the literature, and the fact that it appeared in this data despite the generally high motivation of this sample is testament to the strength of this trend. There are some differences in patterns, however. For example, Coleman et al. (2007) found that integrative orientation decreased more than instrumental by Year 9, but in this study they decreased equally, again suggesting these participants demonstrated unusually high integrative orientation. The subsequent increase is also not surprising since Year 10 and A-Level responses reflect only the opinions of those studying French voluntarily.

The data collected does not directly provide an explanation for this dip: questionnaire data showed that it exists but not *why*. Retrospective comments from Year 12 interviews suggested the learning environment could be significant. Year 7 motivation may be high because the expected proficiency level is easily achievable and lessons encourage enjoyment through games and competitions. While this is expressed as intrinsic motivation by Year 7s, its underlying factors are actually extrinsic: competitions encourage extriniscally-motivated behaviour which can undermine intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 2001). It may be that over KS3, as lesson tasks become harder and less game-based, students who depend on these less-sustainable extrinsic motivators have insufficient intrinsic motivation to overcome the challenges of learning a language in the school classroom. The findings have suggested that intrinsic motivation is the strongest and most influential motivator, and all constructs correlate significantly with each other. Therefore, as intrinsic motivation decreases, the other constructs also decrease.

The data also cannot explain the lack of U-shaped pattern in attribution. It is perhaps not unexpected that attributional beliefs remain stable, but given that attribution correlated with all other constructs plus the evidence here and in previous research of its importance for overall motivation, it is surprising that it resists the general trend. However, an interesting difference emerged from the interviews. Very enthusiastic attributional mindsets displayed by Year 7s could reflect the initial optimism characteristic of high intrinsic motivation before the post-Year-7 motivational decline. Year 12 comments suggest this is somewhat dampened over time, perhaps as difficulty increases the value of ability over effort also increases. To my knowledge, there is no existing research on attributional changes in this context, so further research would be needed to investigate in more depth if and how attributional tendencies change and why.

The lack of U-shaped pattern for the two individually-examined items (2c and 2e) relating to grades and external expectation, is not necessarily surprising given the context in which French is learnt.

Grades are a constant motivator for all years because exams are inevitable and high-stake, and external expectation decreases along with optionality in the school curriculum.

5.3.2. Hypothesis E

Year 7s will display lower levels of all five constructs than Year 12 students.

Again, hypothesis E appeared to be partly true. Visual inspection of the quantitative data showed already high scores in Year 7 and only slightly higher scores in Year 12 for all constructs except attribution, which remained constant. Motivation was expected to increase since Year 7s study French as a compulsory subject whereas Year 12s choose it among their four top subjects. However, the potential sample bias means the Year 7 sample may not represent those who would drop languages after KS3. Previous research has not compared the beginning at end of secondary school and these findings are tentative so future research is needed to check their validity and further understand the patterns.

From the interview data two noticeable differences emerged. First, Year 12s understood their motivation according to each construct with more clarity whereas Year 7s were more vague, in particular regarding their future L2-self. It could be that as motivation develops over time it becomes better defined; Year 12s had likely reflected on their motivations, particularly when they chose French at GCSE and A-Level. Older participants might also simply be better at articulating their motivation in the interview setting.

Second, differences emerged when looking at how the constructs were interrelated and their underlying drivers. For example, Year 7s were strongly influenced by the learning environment but some Year 12s spoke about enjoying French *in spite* of it, suggesting strong enough intrinsic motivation can compensate for the learning environment, echoing findings from Ushioda's (2001) participants who viewed the course as a means to achieve their goal rather than a source of motivation.

As has been mentioned, Year 7 data suggested integrative orientations were already surprisingly strong, but retrospective comments from Year 12s echoed Thompson and Vazquez (2015) that integrative orientation can develop, or at least be strengthened, by studying the language in school. As ability and intrinsic motivation increase it can introduce possibilities of travelling to or living in that country.

5.4. Uptake

The reasons cited for and against continuing languages suggested enjoyment and perceived usefulness were particularly in the forefront of students' minds, in line with the more general findings about motivation discussed above. The findings showed perceived usefulness seems to come from intrinsic motivation, meaning these results echo previous research findings that intrinsic motivators are a better predictor of uptake than purely extrinsic motivators.

5.5. Theoretical implications

Previous UK language classroom research has generally conceptualised motivation through Gardner's socio-educational model if at all, reporting low integrative orientation and high instrumental orientation without differentiating between underlying types of motivators. However, in this study, even in lower years students had established integrative orientation, though it was somewhat superficial. Even highly-motivated Year 12s prioritised travel but did not necessarily see themselves living and integrating in the target community.

Dörnyei's L2MSS better captured motivation in this context: instrumental orientations could be split into those internalised by the student and those driven by obligation. The former internal instrumental orientations, combined with integrative orientation, created an ideal L2-self. This ideal L2-self and the ought-to-self then contributed in varying degrees to overall motivation. Intrinsic motivation clearly played a significant role: as well as influencing motivation directly, the strength of the ideal- and ought-to-self were driven by high and low intrinsic motivation respectively. From the qualitative data, the relationship between intrinsic motivation and different types of instrumental orientation emerged clearly, but integrative orientation appeared less susceptible to changes in intrinsic motivation. It seems students can have positive attitudes towards the language and target community without necessarily wanting to integrate into it. In this case, the ideal L2-self was more proficiency- or career-focused than integrative.

While Gardner's model expects initial attitudes to influence perceptions of the learning environment, this study predominantly found the reverse. Particularly in lower years, motivation was influenced by the learning environment, although very high intrinsic motivation could compensate for negative experiences in the classroom, and its importance may decrease over time. The learning context is especially significant in the school classroom where motivation develops after rather than before exposure to the language.

Attribution did not appear to link with the other constructs to the same extent, and attributional patterns seem capable of behaving separately to motivation. Overall, these generally highly-motivated students had positive attributional tendencies, but attribution alone was not able to explain motivation. To fully understand the relationship between attribution, motivation, and achievement, further research is needed to capture a wider range of attributional patterns and motivation levels.

5.6. Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study is not without limitations and the above findings are tentative, requiring further research to corroborate and explore them in more depth.

First, the sample has numerous limitations. Voluntary participation meant students taking part may have been more motivated, resulting in a potential sample bias. The requirement for parental consent may have reduced questionnaire response rates and meant approaching interview participants was not always successful. An opt-out method may have been preferable, although this brings some ethical challenges. The school, selected through personal contacts, was above-average and had a narrow demographic, so findings are unlikely representative of all secondary school students. Previous studies often use similar schools, so our understanding of student motivation is largely limited to this demographic. Furthermore, the questionnaire sample was insufficient to confidently carry out inferential statistics once split into groups, so patterns in the data can only be tentative. The qualitative sample could also be criticised as small and not generalisable, but it is not unusual for qualitative studies and the depth of insight they provide compensates for the lack of breadth (Dörnyei, 2007). Some interviews provided more useful data than others, especially with younger participants, but comparing multiple interviews helps build understanding of the issue (Becker et al., 2002). Replicating this study in more diverse schools with a larger random sample capturing different motivation and proficiency levels would strengthen the findings that emerged here and provide a different perspective into the RQs.

Second, the cross-sectional design meant emerging patterns of motivational development were only indicative and not evidence of change in real time. Future research following individuals longitudinally to track motivational changes and the drivers behind them would provide more robust insight into this.

Third, proficiency was not tested. The observed link with attribution can only be tentative since self-reported proficiency may be confounded by factors such as confidence and motivation. Previous findings about the accuracy of self-reported proficiency in this context are contradictory (e.g., Graham, 2002; Ushioda, 2001). Future research that finds an objective measure of attainment controlling for year group would be able to test this relationship and look at the predictive power of motivational variables on attainment over time.

Finally, the research instruments were not without limitations. Even good quality questionnaires are limited as they only capture responses within pre-determined areas and measure each element in isolation. This limitation was addressed by the mixed-methods design. In hindsight, it would have been valuable to link interview participants to their questionnaire responses to compare results from the different methods. The questionnaire created for this study was not standardised although it was developed from previously validated questionnaires. When piloted, the sample was too small to conduct reliability analysis. The final questionnaire met reliability requirements except on two items, meaning instrumental scores were calculated from three rather than five items and statistical analysis did not encompass the same themes as the qualitative data. Upon reflection, the removed items fitted with the external instrumental orientations characterised by the ought-to-self in Dörnyei's L2MSS. Previous studies in this context have not conceptualised motivation in terms of the L2MSS, and future research differentiating between internal and external instrumental orientation may provide more insight into the patterns that emerged from the qualitative data.

In terms of the qualitative data, the role of the interview-researcher in shaping the conversation cannot be ignored (Rallis & Rossman, 2009). This was my first experience conducting interviews, and while I took care to avoid asking leading questions, at times my discourse may have led responses in a certain direction, particularly with less-forthcoming Year 7s. A difficulty of interpreting interview data is determining the participants' true opinions; isolated quotes cannot accurately reflect a conversation since transcription turns the ephemeral spoken word into a stable object which could be mistakenly interpreted as 'truth' without taking into account the whole discourse (Walford, 2001). Consider the following Year 7 interview extract: they initially appeared nervous, and throughout the interview their responses developed in depth and breadth but also contradicted themselves. Perhaps they relaxed and became more confident over time, or perhaps their later utterances were influenced by previously discussed ideas. This example demonstrates how their integrative orientation changed significantly in clarity:

	Interviewer	**Participant**
09:31	Have you ever imagined living in France?	
		Umm.. no, not really.
	Do you think you could live abroad one day?	
		Yeah... probably
	In a French speaking country?	
		…yeah.
	Why would you want to do that?	
		So that I can learn more about different countries and not just English people.

10:40	So how would you see French having a role in your life when you're older?	
		I could see it in my life as I could learn it and then maybe.. go there quite a few times to go there and see different things.
14:19	How do you think French will be useful to you specifically?	
		I think that I will be able to be able to go to France and I could maybe live there for a bit and be able to live there and then... talk to all the people and see what they think about their.. their traditions.
28:03	What would you say is your ultimate goal with French?	
		Umm.. to take it through GCSE and to A-Level. Maybe go to France and live there for a few years.
	And how will you know that you're as good at French as you want to be?	
		Maybe when I.. learnt all.. gone through A-Level, then I lived there maybe for a few years and I speak.. and I start living there and I like become one of them and then I know.. that.. I know most of the words that they know. And I can understand what they're saying.

The modality of online interviews should also be considered since rapport-building is hindered, the environment cannot be controlled, participants may be distracted, and non-verbal cues are missed when participants do not have cameras (Janghorban et al., 2014; Mirick & Wladkowski, 2019). However, overall these participants appeared comfortable with the online format. In fact, research suggests adolescents may prefer online interaction since it is a modality in which they are used to communicating (Mason & Ide, 2014; Shapka et al., 2016).

5.7. Pedagogical implications

Bearing in mind the above limitations, some tentative implications for pedagogy will be suggested following indicative findings from this study.

The motivational decline over KS3 is worrying and avoiding it should be a priority for language teachers. In the school context, the learning environment is significant and should encourage motivation to develop as much as possible. Even among highly-motivated Year 7s, enjoyment can often depend on games and competitions. While this can promote short-term motivation, teachers should be wary of developing this kind of extrinsic motivation to the extent that students become reliant on this less-sustainable motivation when these activities inevitably subside.

Motivation is complex and unique to the individual, and develops according to personal experiences and objectives. Consequently, no single method will effectively motivate all students. Implementing conversations about motivation into the language classroom may benefit both teacher and pupil by understanding how students are motivated and what could help improve this. Promoting generic instrumental benefits of languages is unlikely to be effective if students do not see them as personally relevant. Broader conversations about what languages mean for becoming global citizens and the intercultural aspects of languages may reach a wider range of students. Intrinsic motivation is likely the most important but developing this may be difficult. Understanding what is influencing and

influenced by high or low intrinsic motivation in a particular group of learners may help address fluctuations in motivation.

6. Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to add to the field of SLA motivation by adding to our understanding of language motivation for LOTES in schools. Understanding student motivation is essential for tackling the "language crisis" given the many obstacles of learning a language in the MFL classroom, such as inconsistent policy, limited input time, and negative societal attitudes. Studies looking at student motivation in this context have generally only captured motivation levels at one time point, which cannot provide the necessary insight to understand the negative trend in language uptake and how to reverse it.

This study addressed the gaps in the literature by investigating student motivational composition in terms of integrative and instrumental orientations, intrinsic motivation, attitudes towards the learning environment, and attributional patterns using a mixed-methods cross-sectional design to understand how these motivations relate to each other and develop over time. The results provided some tentative evidence for these questions. These students had quite high motivation for all five constructs, yet the well-documented decline in motivation over KS3 still emerged. Findings also suggested some motivators were more powerful than others; particularly intrinsic motivation was interrelated with all constructs and predicted overall motivation. The strength of instrumental orientation as a motivator depended on whether the underlying factors developed from high or low intrinsic motivation. There was a tentative link between attribution and proficiency, although possible confounds from self-reported data were discussed and further research is needed with more objective attainment measures. The learning environment cannot be ignored in this context and was particularly influential for motivation in the early stages. However, gamification and competition can encourage extrinsically-motivated behaviour which can be less sustainable and undermine intrinsic motivation. These results demonstrate that language motivation is a highly complex phenomenon whose development is unique to the individual and their learning experience. This study is unique in conceptualising school student motivation in terms of the L2MSS. Overall, this study broadly examined student motivation and highlighted the relationships between constructs and how they develop. Future research should build upon these findings to corroborate their importance and develop more nuanced conceptualizations of motivation in this context.

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview schedule

Interview Schedule
(Bullet-point questions are potential prompts to guide the discussion and elicit further details)

Introduction.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. Remember, there are no right and wrong answers – I really want to know what you think. Everything you say will be confidential – I will be the only one to listen to what you say. I am recording it because it takes too long to write everything down but no one else will see it. If at the end of the interview you want to change anything that you have said, we can do that.

Are you happy that you have had a chance to read the information sheet that was e-mailed to you? Do you understand the purpose of this research, how your data will be used, and that you can withdraw at any time by letting me know?

Are you happy to be recorded?

Do you want to ask me any questions before we start?

Are you happy to take part?

Background questions.

Is English your first language?

Do you speak any other languages at home?

- If yes, which language(s)?

Can I check that you are in year 7/12?

Did you study French at primary school?

- If yes, how many years did you learn it for and how many hours a week?

Did you study any other languages at primary school?

- If yes, which one(s)? How long did you learn it for? How many hours a week?

(Y12) Do you study/have you studied any other languages at secondary school?

- If yes, which one(s)? How long for?

How often do you come into contact with people who speak different languages outside school lessons?

General motivation.

**Can you talk me through your opinion of your experience of learning French in school?

Do you think you are good at French?

- Why / Why not?
- Would your teacher or your classmates say you are good at French? Why / Why not?

Would you call yourself someone who speaks French?

- Do you consider yourself bilingual or multilingual? Why / Why not?
- What makes someone bilingual or multilingual?

How would you describe your present state of motivation for learning French?

- Compared to your other subjects?
- Compared to others in your class?

Have you experienced any motivational changes over the past year / over secondary school?

- What do you think caused these changes?

*Do you think you'll continue learning a language at GCSE / Year 13 / University?

- Why / why not?

*Would you like to continue learning French outside of school?

- Why / why not?

1. **Integrative orientation**

Have you ever been to France?

- Would you like to go (back) to France?
- How has visiting France changed your motivation?

What do you think of French culture/French people?

- Do you think French people are very different to you?
- Do you ever read books, watch TV/films, or listen to music in French?

Have you ever imagined living abroad?

- Where?
- Why?
- How does that motivate you to learn French in school?

In the future how do you see French playing a role in your life?

- Do you see yourself being fluent in French one day?
- Do you see yourself as someone who speaks many languages?

What is your ultimate goal with French?

2. **Instrumental orientation**

Do you think it is useful to learn French? Why (not)?

- For whom is it useful to learn French?
- How might French be useful to you / to people in general?

- Are some languages more useful than others?

Do you think it is important for English people to learn other languages? Why (not)?

Do you think languages are the same or different to other school subjects? In what way?

How important is it to you to do well in your exams?

- How does that affect your motivation to learn French?

3. Intrinsic motivation

Do you enjoy learning French? Why (not)?

- Has your enjoyment of French changed at all over time?
- What do you like/dislike about learning French?

(Y7) Would you study a language if it wasn't compulsory?

- What language would you choose in Year 7 if you had the choice?

Do you think you'll take French at GCSE/in Year 13 or beyond school? Why not)?

Do you think that achievement proceeds motivation or the other way around?

4. Learning environment

Do you enjoy the way you learn French at school?

- Why (not)?
- How would you like it to be different?
- Has your experience changed your motivation levels?
- Has your enjoyment of French lessons changed over time?

What affects your motivation during a French lesson?

- What about the teacher?
- What about the tasks/activities that you do? Which do you like / dislike?

What do you think of the topics you have studied in school?

- Do you think they are interesting? Which are the most/least interesting?
- Do you think they are useful? Which are the most/least useful?
- Do they help you understand French people and French culture better? In what way?

If you were in charge would you change anything about how French is taught in school?

5. Attribution

Why do you think you have been successful / unsuccessful in learning French?

- Do you think that your grades reflect your teacher's teaching, your effort, or your ability? Why?
- If you do badly on a test, what do you think the reason is?

Do you think that some people are naturally better at learning languages than others?

- Why do you think that is?
- What do you think makes some people better at learning languages than others?

Do you think you work as hard as you could in French?

- Why (not)?
- What would make you want to work harder?
- *Do you ever do work beyond what is required in the lesson/hw?

Closing

Why do you think some students choose not to continue with languages?

Do you enjoy school overall?

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Are you happy for me to use direct quotes of what you have said? These will be anonymous.

Would you like to change anything that you said?

Thank participant for taking part.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Section 1: consent

****PARENTAL CONSENT* for participants under 16***

This questionnaire is part of a research study for a master's dissertation project looking at how motivation towards studying languages develops over secondary school. To find out more about the study, please read the information sheet that was e-mailed to you. You can also e-mail us

Your child has been asked to take part because they are studying French at secondary school, have English as their first language and do not speak any other languages at home. They can stop taking part at any time by closing the browser.

The study has received ethical clearance from the University of Oxford. This questionnaire is completely anonymous.

If you are happy for your child to take part, please click the box below.

- I have read and understood the details of the study and am happy for my child to take part.
- The participant is over 16

Thank you. Please now hand over to your child so they can complete the questionnaire.

****PARTICIPANT CONSENT****

The purpose of this study is to look at what factors motivate young people to learn languages in school and how these change over time. The number of students in England taking Languages at GCSE and A Level is decreasing. In order to address this decline, it is helpful to understand what influences young people's motivations to learn languages. Motivation can change over time, so by comparing responses from different year groups we can get an idea of how motivation develops throughout secondary school.

You have been invited to take part because you are studying French in secondary school and English is your first language. It is completely up to you if you want to take part. If you do not want to take part you can close your browser at any time. Once you complete the questionnaire you won't be able to remove your answers because I will not be able to identify which answers were yours.

Your answers to this questionnaire will be completely anonymous, no one including your parents, your teachers or myself will know what you said.

The questionnaire shouldn't take more than 10 minutes to complete. The results from this study will be written up as part of my university dissertation project.

Please answer the questions as honestly as possible. Remember there are no right or wrong answers and no one will know what you put. I just want to know what you really think!

- I have read and understood the above information

Has someone explained this project to you?	▪ Yes	▪ No
Do you understand what this project is about?	▪ Yes	▪ No
Have you asked all the questions you want?	▪ Yes	▪ No
Have you had your questions answered in a way you understand?	▪ Yes	▪ No
Do you understand it's OK to stop taking part at any time by closing the browser?	▪ Yes	▪ No

Are you happy to take part? ▪ Yes ▪ No

Section 2: background questions

Is English your first language? (the language you grew up speaking) ▪ Yes ▪ No
Do you speak any other languages at home? (your parent/guardian speaks to you in a language other than English at home) ▪ Yes ▪ No
Do your parents speak any other languages fluently? ▪ Yes ▪ No

What is your gender?

▪ Male ▪ Female ▪ Third gender/non-binary ▪ Prefer not to say

What year are you in?

▪ 7 ▪ 8 ▪ 9 ▪ 10 ▪ 11 ▪ 12 ▪ 13

Have you been at SCHOOL since Year 7? ▪ Yes ▪ No
What year did you join SCHOOL? _____
Did you study French at primary school? ▪ Yes ▪ No
How many years did you study French? _____
Did you study any other languages at primary school? ▪ Yes ▪ No
Have you studied any other languages at secondary school? ▪ Yes ▪ No

How often do you come into contact with languages other than English outside of school? (e.g., on holiday, family friends, online etc.)

▪ Multiple times a week
▪ Once a week
▪ Few times a month
▪ Once a month
▪ Few times a year
▪ Once a year
▪ Less than once a year
▪ Never

What is the main type of contact? _____

Section 3: general motivation

How would you describe your overall motivation for learning French in school?

▪ Very high ▪ Quite high ▪ Medium ▪ Quite low ▪ Very low

How would you describe your ability at French?

▪ Very high ▪ Quite high ▪ Medium ▪ Quite low ▪ Very low

I would like to continue studying French at GCSE/A-Level/Year 13/University

▪ Definitely yes ▪ Maybe yes ▪ Probably no ▪ Definitely no

What is the main reason you would (not) like to continue studying French? _____

My French teacher would describe me as someone who is good at French.

▪ Strongly agree ▪ Agree ▪ Slightly agree ▪ Slightly disagree ▪ Disagree ▪ Strongly disagree

I try as hard as I can to learn French.

- Strongly agree - Agree - Slightly agree - Slightly disagree - Disagree - Strongly disagree

I consider myself a French speaker.

- Strongly agree - Agree - Slightly agree - Slightly disagree - Disagree - Strongly disagree

I consider myself to be bilingual / multilingual (a bilingual person is someone who speaks two languages, a multilingual person is someone who speaks more than two languages)

- Strongly agree - Agree - Slightly agree - Slightly disagree - Disagree - Strongly disagree

I enjoy school overall

- Strongly agree - Agree - Slightly agree - Slightly disagree - Disagree - Strongly disagree

Languages are different to other school subjects

- Strongly agree - Agree - Slightly agree - Slightly disagree - Disagree - Strongly disagree

<u>Section 4: motivational constructs</u>

all using 6-point Likert scale:

- Strongly agree - Agree - Slightly agree - Slightly disagree - Disagree - Strongly disagree

Question	Study taken from
*I don't want to learn French because I don't like people who speak this language.	Coleman et al., 2007
I would like to travel to France someday.	Courtney, 2014; Krüsemann, 2018
*I am not interested in the lifestyle and culture of France.	Martin, 2020
When I think of the future, I imagine myself as someone who is able to speak French.	Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016
I want to learn French because I want to make friends with people who speak it as their native language.	Coleman et al., 2007
*I don't think that French will be useful for getting a good job in the future.	Martin, 2020; Courtney, 2014; Krüsemann, 2018; Coleman et al., 2007
*Learning languages is a waste of time.	Taylor & Marsden, 2014
My main motivation to work hard in my language class is because I want to get a good grade.	Coleman et al., 2007
English people should learn French.	Taylor & Marsden, 2014
I study French because I feel it is expected of me.	Martin, 2020
I enjoy learning French.	Courtney, 2014

Learning French can be a rewarding experience in itself.	Taylor & Marsden, 2014
*As a language, I don't like French.	Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016
*I put less effort into my French homework than my other subjects	Coleman et al., 2007
I like learning foreign languages in general.	Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016
I enjoy French lessons.	Krüsemann, 2018; Williams et al., 2002
My teacher makes French lessons fun.	Courtney, 2014; Krüsemann, 2018
*I don't learn a lot in my French lessons.	Taylor & Marsden, 2014
*I don't like our learning materials (e.g., textbooks/topics).	Coleman et al., 2007
French lessons are the right level of difficulty.	Personal addition
*However hard I try, I'll never do as well as I'd like in French.	Williams et al., 2002
If I do badly in French, I usually know how to do better next time.	Williams et al., 2002
How well I do in my language tests is not a matter of luck.	Martin, 2020
How well I do in French depends on how much effort I put in.	Williams et al., 2002
*Some people are naturally better at languages than other people.	Taylor & Marsden, 2014

Thank you so much for completing this survey!

Your responses have been recorded. You can now close the browser.

Appendix 3: Ethical approval

CUREC approval email

From: _____
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 2:19 PM
To: _____
Cc: Student CUREC; _____
Subject: Re: CUREC 1A Application - _____

Dear Rosanna,

Title: "Motivational development in the input-poor context of the MFL classroom."

The above application (reference number ED-CIA-21-160) has been considered on behalf of the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to DREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly, approval has been granted.

If your research involves participants whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question (this includes those under 18 and vulnerable adults), then it is advisable to read the following NSPCC professional reporting requirements for cases of suspected abuse
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/reporting_child_abuse_wda74908.html

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application you should submit details to research.office@education.ox.ac.uk for consideration.

N.B. Any data collection involving in-person interactions with participants must have an up-to-date COVID-19 fieldwork risk assessment in place. Please refer to the guidance at https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/ethics/coronavirus as the University's position on conducting in-person research may change.

Good luck with your research study.

Yours sincerely,

_____
Member of DREC

DPIA approval email

From: _____
Sent: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 5:39 PM
To: _____
Cc: _____
Subject: DPIA Screening for recording on teams - _____

Dear Rosanna,

Thank you for sending your DPIA screening and DPA forms.

I have now reviewed, and approved both. Please see attached for copies for your records.

I also note that your CUREC application is in progress.

All the best with your research,

_____

Rees Centre, Dept of Education
University of Oxford
15 Norham Gardens
Oxford, OX2 6PY

Appendix 4: Example information sheet, consent form and assent form

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Motivational development in the input-poor context of the MFL classroom.

We are inviting you to join in a research study. My name is Rosanna Lloyd, and I am a master's student at the University of Oxford in the Department of Education. Before you decide if you would like to join in, it's important to understand what the study is about, why we're doing it and what it would involve for you. Please read and think about this leaflet carefully. Please feel free to talk to your family, friends, or the researchers about it if you want.

If anything isn't clear or you have more questions you can ask your parent/guardian to give us a call and we can discuss it with you and your parent/guardian.

Why are we doing this research?

The purpose of this study is to look at what factors motivate young people to learn languages in school and how these change over time.

There is an ongoing decline in the numbers of students in England taking Languages at GCSE and A Level. In order to address this decline, it is helpful to understand what factors are influencing young people's motivations to learn languages. Motivation can change over time, so by comparing responses from year 7s and year 12s, we can get an idea of how motivation develops throughout secondary school.

Why have I been invited to take part?

We are inviting you to take part because:

- you are studying French at secondary school
- you are a native speaker of English and don't speak any other languages at home

We are inviting 10 students to take part in interviews. All students of French are invited to complete the questionnaire.

Do I have to take part?

No - It is up to you. We will ask you to sign a form to say that you agree to take part (an assent form). We will give you a copy of this information sheet and your signed form to keep. You are free to stop taking part at any time during the research without giving a reason, by telling the researcher. If you decide to stop, we will not use the information we have already collected from you.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will participate in an interview conducted online with me, the researcher. The interview will last between 30-45 minutes. This interview will be recorded so that I can analyse the data but all comments you make will be completely anonymous in the paper. The interview can be done on a computer, phone or tablet from your school or home at a time that suits you.

During the interview, I will ask you some questions about your experience of learning French in school and your opinions on different aspects of motivation around learning French. It is important to be completely honest, and any comments you make will be anonymous and your parents and teachers will not know what you have said.

You will also complete an online questionnaire which should not take more than 10 minutes. The questionnaire is completely anonymous.

What happens to the results of the study?

The information you provide during the study is the **research data.** Any research data from which you can be identified (name, e-mail address audio recording) is known as **personal data**.

Personal data will be encrypted and stored securely and will be destroyed in August 2021 once the research project is finished. Other anonymous research data will be stored for 3 years after publication or public release of the work of the research.

The research will be written up as part of a student's work. We may also publish our findings in scientific journals, but this may be two to three years from the end of the study. We will ask all participants for their permission to use direct quotes.

If you wish to be informed of the results of the study, do not hesitate to contact us.

What are the advantages of taking part?

Whilst there are no direct and immediate benefits for you in taking part, it is hoped that this study would advance our understanding of student motivation towards language learning and help shape new educational practices.

What are the disadvantages of taking part?

There are no foreseeable discomforts, disadvantages and risks associated to this research. However, if you feel or believe there are any unexpected discomforts, disadvantages and risks which arise during the research, you should immediately contact us via email (____).

Will anyone else know I'm doing this?

We will keep your information private. This means we will only tell those who have a need or right to know, such as the research team, your teacher, and your parent/guardian. We will only share information that has your name removed.

What if I don't want to take part in the research anymore?

Just tell your parent/guardian and the people carrying out the research that you don't want to take part. You don't have to give a reason and no one will be annoyed with you. It is YOUR choice. You can stop taking part in this research at any point and you will be asked what you want to happen to the data you have already provided.

Who is organising the research?

The research project is organised by Rosanna Lloyd, a master's student at Oxford University. The research is being supervised by Elizabeth Wonnacott, associate professor at the University of Oxford.

Who has reviewed the study?

Before any research involving people can start, it has to be checked by a Research Ethics Committee to make sure that it is OK for the research to go ahead. This study has been approved by the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee [reference no. ED-CIA-21-160].

What if there is a problem or something goes wrong?

Please tell us if you are worried about any part of this study, by contacting the researcher (___). You may also talk to your teacher/parent/guardian who will let the researcher know. If you are still unhappy or wish to make a complaint, either you or your teacher/parent/guardian can contact the chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford:

Chair, **Social Sciences & Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee**;
Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk;

Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD

Data Protection

The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to your personal data and, as such, will determine how your personal data is used in the study.

The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. Research is a task that we perform in the public interest.

Further information about your rights with respect to your personal data is available from https://compliance.web.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights.

Contact details

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

Thank you for reading this – please ask any questions if you need to.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Motivational development in the input-poor context of the MFL classroom.

- Your child's school has agreed to take part in a study run by Oxford University looking at how motivation towards studying French develops over secondary school.
- If your child takes part, they would take part in a 30-45-minute interview with a researcher online via video call and complete a short online anonymous questionnaire.
- **If you are happy for your child to take part, please fill in the form below and return it to your child's class teacher as soon as possible.**
- To find out more about the study, please read the attached information sheet. You can also e-mail us at _______

- -

Name of child:

I have read and understood the details of the above study, and have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study with others. I have received satisfactory answers to my questions. I understand that the project has received ethics clearance through the University of Oxford's ethical approval process for research involving human participants, and I understand who will have access to the data, how it will be stored and what will happen to the data at the end of the study. I understand that participation is voluntary and that my child and I are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my child's education being affected in any way. I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint.

I agree for my child to be audio recorded	Yes ☐	No ☐
I agree for my child to be video recorded	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand how audio recordings / videos / photos will be used in research outputs	Yes ☐	No ☐

I give permission for my child to take part in the above study.

Name of parent/guardian:

Signature: **Date:**

Name of researcher:

Signature: **Date:**

If you would like to receive a copy of the completed research project, please provide your e-mail address:

Your child also needs to sign the attached assent form.

Please return a scanned copy of the signed forms to _____ you will then be sent an e-mail link to the questionnaire for your child to complete.

ASSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS UNDER 16

Motivational development in the input-poor context of the MFL classroom.

Participant (or if unable, parent/researcher/teacher on their behalf) to circle all they agree with:

- Has somebody else explained this project to you? Yes / No
- Do you understand what this project is about? Yes / No
- Have you asked all the questions you want? Yes / No
- Have you had your questions answered in a way you understand? Yes / No
- Do you understand it's OK to stop taking part at any time? Yes / No
- Are you happy to take part? Yes / No
- Are you happy for your voice to be recorded? Yes / No
- Are you happy to be on video? Yes / No

If any answers are "no" or you don't want to take part, that's OK! No one will be cross with you.

If you do want to take part, please write your name below:

Your name: Date:

The researcher who explained this project to you needs to sign too:

Print Name:

Sign: Date:

Thank you!

Please return a scanned copy of the signed forms to _____.

Appendix 5: Coding frame

(1) Ideal L2-self / integrative orientation		
Name	**Description**	**Example**
Desire to live abroad	Expresses desire or expectation to live in France	"I think that I will be able to go to France and I could maybe live there for a bit"
No desire to live abroad	Expresses that they do not want to or have not considered living abroad	"I don't think [I would live abroad]. I don't think I'm that confident with languages. But I think I'll be able to go on holiday there and speak with people"
Desire to travel	Expresses desire to expectation to travel to France in the future	"I think I'll be able to go on holiday there and speak with people"
Interacting with natives in person	Expresses desire to speak to and/or interact with native speakers or that contact with native speakers has/does affect their motivation.	"maybe I'll travel to France and talk to people over there" "when we visited France everything has been so nice and the people are really nice as well, and it's such a lovely environment and everything's really beautiful […] and I think it would be really cool to live somewhere like that"
Being part of community	Expresses desire to integrate into and become part of French community	"you can speak to all of the French people and you can maybe become one of their community"
Interacting with target culture	Expresses desire to or tendency to interact with the target culture in own time, for example with music, film, books.	"I like French films and sometimes I want French YouTubers"
Interacting with natives from afar	Expresses desire to or tendency to interact with native speakers without necessarily being in physical contact with them. For example through Internet forums, online, or over the phone.	"sometimes [come into contact with French people] on the internet, like in comment sections and stuff like that or like discussions online"
Goal proficiency	Expresses the desire to be fluent or reach a certain level of proficiency in the future.	"I just want to be able to speak French when I want, and to be able to say everything that I want to, instead of going to say a sentence and realising I can't actually say part of it or something"

Current L2 Self	Describes how they see their current proficiency / state of L2-self, perhaps in relation to their ideal L2-self	"I think I would say yes I can speak French, but I'd like to also say that I'm learning French as well, 'cause I'm not fluent but I know the main basics"

(2) Instrumental / extrinsic		
Name	**Description**	**Example**
Useful for job or work	Expresses the opinion that languages are or would be useful when applying for a job	"I definitely see French or a language having almost a right hand roll with whatever career I go into"
Personal relevance	Expresses the expectation of perusing a career involving/around languages	"maybe seeing if it's going to be useful in their life as well […] because if you don't think that you're gunna ever need it then you're not really going to want to study it"
Useful for future study	Expresses the opinion that languages will be useful when applying to university	"I thought it was just quite a different skill to have compared to most people so I thought it would be quite god for uni applications and things"
Useful for cultural sensitivity	Expresses the opinion that languages are useful to make people more open or positive about other cultures and people	"I feel that learning other languages almost helps to breakdown this wall that we're building by just forcing everyone else to learn English"
Useful as a communication skill	Expresses the opinion that languages are useful to make you a better communicator and/or improves English skills [not the same as communicating with natives in that language].	"it's helped me with English, obviously, like Latin roots of words they've been very helpful"
Exams / grades	Expresses that they are studying a language/they try hard in their language work in order to achieve a grade in an exam or test	"[tests] make me want to study more"
EBacc	Expresses that the option of obtaining the English Baccalaureate was a contributing factor in choosing languages or working hard in them.	"I think at GCSE there were these things called E-Baccs […] it sort of showed that you had a sort of breadth of subjects, but there wasn't really any outside incentive"

Lack of choice	Expresses that the lack of choice in studying French as a school subject affects their motivation.	"I don't really want to make languages as the subjects be a burden because I'm spending so much time learning them. I want it almost to come naturally […] than for it to be a subject that you spend hours and hours revising for"
Teachers	Expresses that they are studying languages or working hard in them to please their teachers or due to an expectation from their teachers.	"I do hope to do well not just for my teachers and my school […] so it's not all for my school, but it's me and my teachers and stuff"
Parents	Expresses that they are studying languages or working hard in them to please their parents or due to an expectation from their parents.	"my parents say it would be goof to do a language"
Healthy	Expresses that learning languages is good for you and that affects motivation to learn them.	"it's quite good for like.. there have been a lot of studies showing that it's good for your brain and things. [..] I mean it's not really a main factor, but yes"
Unnecessary	Expresses that learning languages is not useful or necessary because others speak English or because they will not travel to the country where it is spoken.	"well they don't have to because everyone speaks English"
Widespread	Expresses that the fact that the language is more widespread makes it more useful.	"but I think French is spoken in a more wider population"
Transferable to other subjects	Expresses that learning French has helped them in their other school subjects.	"I'll try new things more. If I'm doing a difficult history question, I'm more likely to try it and see what I do know, because in French if you don't know anything in a passage, you see what you know and then you kind of work on that. So it's like transferable to other subjects, where OK, I don't know much about this, but what do I know? and kind of go from there"

(3) Intrinsic		
Name	**Description**	**Example**
Difficulty – negative	Expresses that they find French hard and that is demotivator or a reason why they dislike it.	"so it's probably less enjoyable now just because of how difficult it is"
Difficult or challenge – positive	Expresses that French is hard or a challenge and that this is motivating or a reason why they enjoy it.	"yeah because it challenges me. I quite like a challenge"
Easy – negative	Expresses that French is (too) easy and this is a reason why they dislike it.	"in lower school it was so much simpler, it was almost as though it was dumbed down much more than other subjects"
Easy – positive	Expresses that they find French easy and this is a reason why they enjoy it.	"in year 7 to year 9 it was quite fun because it was just like the colours and numbers and everything, so I quite liked it then"
Interesting	Expresses that they find French interesting and this is a reason why they enjoy it.	"French is more interesting than other subjects and it makes me feel happy when I learn it and it males me feel interested in what I'm learning about"
Fun	Expresses that they find French fun and this is a reason why they enjoy it.	"it's really good fun"
Enjoy general learning	Expresses that they enjoy learning in general, not just languages.	"I don't know, learning all day everyday, it's just… I mean it's not bad but it's not the most enjoyable thing" (negative)
Doesn't enjoy general learning	Expresses that learning in general is not an activity that they enjoy	"I don't mind school. […] it's just, learning all day every day. I mean it's just bad, but it's not the most enjoyable thing"
Enjoy languages in general	Expresses that they enjoy learning languages in general or French in particular.	"I just like learning languages anyway"
Achievement / ability	Expresses that they feel they are good at French and therefore enjoy it.	"I'd say that if I was better at it I'd be more motivated"
Want to study informally	Expresses tendency to or wish to study French in own time	"I guess in my own time I'd like to continue learning French"
Want to continue formal study	Expresses desire to continue learning French in academic setting.	"I want to study French and Russian at university"

Exposure / familiarity	Expresses that they enjoy or want to continue learning French because they have had lots of exposure to it, or the amount of exposure affects their motivation.	"French is what I've been learning most. I'd like to keep learning it"
Different	Expresses that they enjoy French because it's different from other subjects/activities.	"I choose which [languages] because they are more interesting than others, some countries don't have that much more different to English and the French has quite a bit different"

(4) Learning environment		
Name	**Description**	**Example**
Teacher	Expresses that the teacher affects their motivation either positively or negatively.	"it's good 'cause the teachers really make it exciting"
Exam tasks	Expresses that the content of the exams affects their motivation either positively or negatively.	"I don't really think the questions and the actual physical exam is very useful because I know I'll never need to be able to find synonyms in a written passage of text"
Lesson tasks	Expresses that the classroom or homework tasks they do affect their motivation either positively or negatively.	"also do listening activities, so the teacher will play a clip and then write down 1 to 10 on the board and then you've gotta, when they say the word you gotta translate it into English which I find really good because instead of reading it off the paper it's listening to a French person say it so that's going to be like real life situations which I find really good"
Gamification	Expresses that elements of gamification in the class affect their motivation either positively or negatively.	"how they turn it into different sort of educational games"
Competition	Expresses that elements of competition in the class affect their motivation either positively or negatively.	"if you get it right you get this thing called a E-Priase point and then you get a certificate if you get a certain amount. So that sort of pushes us all to put our hands up and answer the questions which is quite good"
Topics /curriculum	Expresses that the topics they study affects their motivation either positively or negatively.	"I think they're good 'cause they are like most normal ones that we need to learn, not like random different topics that we don't really need when you go to France"

Resources	Expresses that the resources e.g. textbooks that they use in lessons affect their motivation either positively or negatively.	“we’ve always used textbooks […] if it’s all like doctored and written purely for a textbook then it’s almost like slightly artificial”
Peers	Expresses that their peers in their class affects their motivation either positively or negatively.	“it’s much better being a group of […] people who want to be there rather than have to be there […] so it’s easier ‘cause you’re with like-minded people”
Contact time	Expresses that the amount of contact time with the language affects their motivation either positively or negatively.	“back in year 7 we’d only get 4 French lessons a fortnight […] I felt that it was definitely not enough. I feel that it was sort of shifted to the side”
Lockdown	Expresses that changes to the learning environment during lockdown affected/affects their motivation either positively or negatively.	“I mean sometimes it’s difficult… it was difficult in lockdown because obviously I had no structure and it’s very east to kind of forget everything, so it’s quite hard to kind of motivate myself to learn vocabulary and do the quite boring bits of language learning”
Fun	Expresses that French lessons are fun and enjoyable.	“I think my French lessons motivate me. They’re good fun”

(5) Attribution			
Name		**Description**	**Example**
Adaptive attributions	Effort	Expresses the belief that effort plays a significant role in achievement.	"I think I've been quite successful 'cause I've tried my hardest that I can do"
	External factors	Expresses the belief that external factors uncontrollable play a significant role in achievement.	"maybe because someone was chatting near me and that might put me off a bit"
	Task difficulty	Expresses the belief that the difficulty of the task plays a significant role in achievement.	"maybe it's just a difficult topic"
	Growth mindset	Demonstrates a growth mindset: that it is possible to improve from a bad grade and that it motivates them to work harder to improve.	"[tests] make me want to study more and if I get some particular areas wrong I will study that and try and make it better"
	Enjoyment	Expresses that (lack of) enjoyment of the subject is the reason why they are (not) good at it.	"I think a love for something should proceed being good at it".
Maladaptive attributions	Teacher	Expresses the belief that the teacher's teaching plays a significant role in achievement.	"I think a lot of it reflects the teacher's ability to teach because everyone has some ability […] a lot of it will be down to what has happened in the year and what the teacher has put through them and taught them"
	Natural ability	Expresses the belief that natural ability at languages plays a significant role in achievement.	"I think that although they say in school a lot that it's not all about ability and that effort is everything, effort plays a really important part but something just being able to do it can help, or give you something that just putting in endless lots of effort can't"
	Fixed mindset	Demonstrates a fixed mindset: that a bad grade means they are incapable and it is not possible to improve on it, which is demotivating.	"if I do badly I'm like like uhh I don't wanna do this anymore. This is awful. I'm so bad at this"
	Exposure	Expresses the belief that the amount of exposure is the reason why someone is better or worse at the language.	"I think some people knew more French than others starting the year, so they had a bit of a head start"

Appendix 6: Participants mentioning coding frame items

(1)Integrative	total	Y7	Y12
Being part of community	2	1	1
Interacting with natives from afar	3	0	3
Interacting with target culture	8	4	4
Desire to live abroad	4	2	2
No desire to live abroad	7	4	3
Interacting with natives in person	9	5	4
Desire to travel	9	5	4
Ideal L2-Self			
Current L2-self	9	5	4
Goal proficiency	9	5	4
(2)Instrumental			
Useful as a communication skill	4	2	2
Useful for cultural sensitivity	7	3	4
Useful for future study	4	1	3
Useful for job/work	4	2	2
Widespread	5	3	2
Unnecessary	6	3	3
Transferable to other subjects	2	0	2
Healthy	1	0	1
EBacc	1	0	1
Exams/grades	9	5	4
Lack of choice	4	1	3
Parents	5	3	2
Personal relevance	6	3	3
Teachers	1	1	0
(5)Attribution – adaptive			
Task difficulty	2	1	1
Effort	9	5	4
Enjoyment	6	4	2
External factors	3	1	2
Growth mindset	6	3	3

(3)Intrinsic	total	Y7	Y12
Achievement/ability	8	5	3
Different	6	3	3
Difficulty – positive	2	1	1
Difficulty – negative	8	4	4
Easy – positive	5	2	3
Easy – negative	3	0	3
Enjoy general learning	8	5	3
Doesn't enjoy general learning	2	0	2
Enjoy languages in general	8	4	4
Exposure/familiarity	7	5	2
Fun	6	2	4
Interesting	9	5	4
Want to continue formal study	9	5	4
Want to study informally	4	3	1
(4)Learning Environment			
Competition	3	2	1
Contact time	8	4	4
Curriculum/topics	9	5	4
Exam tasks	6	3	3
Fun	6	4	2
Gamification	5	5	0
Lesson tasks	9	5	4
Lockdown	1	0	1
Peers	4	1	3
Resources	2	0	2
Teacher	8	4	4
(5)Attribution – maladaptive			
Exposure	2	1	1
Fixed mindset	2	0	2
Natural ability	9	5	4
Teacher	6	2	4

Note the number of participants who mentioned wanting to/not wanting to live abroad, and enjoying/not enjoying learning in general is more than nine, since some participants expressed contradicting views and are included in both codes.

Appendix 7: Reasons cited for and against continuing French

Construct	For	n	Against	n
Integrative		**13 (6)**		
	desire to be fluent	2 (1)		
	desire to improve level	1		
	talk to family	2		
	speak to people	1 (1)		
	travel	7 (3)		
Instrumental		**15 (7)**		**2 (4)**
	useful (unspecified)	7	not useful	2 (3)
	useful "looks good"	2		
	useful for career	5 (3)		
	iseful for future study	(1)		
	useful for communication	1 (1)	not necessary	(1)
	widespread	(1)		
	E-Bacc	(1)		
Intrinsic		**26 (15)**		**30 (18)**
	enjoyable	4 (3)	unenjoyable	1 (4)
	interesting	3 (1)	uninteresting	2 (2)
	fun	5 (2)	boring	9 (2)
	achievement/ability	3 (1)		
	easy	(2)	difficult	7 (7)
	prefers over other subjects	1 (1)	prefer other subjects	1 (3)
	likes French as a language	3 (2)	prefer other language(s)	8
	familiarity	(1)	done for too long	2
	likes languages in general	(1)		
	desire to speak another language	7 (1)		
Learning Environment		**3**		**3 (2)**
	teacher	2	teacher	1 (1)
	topics/curriculum	1	topics/curriculum	(1)
			don't learn a lot	1
			lesson tasks	1
Attribution				**(1)**
			Lack of effort	(1)
Other				**1**
			confusing learning 2 languages	1

Note: numbers in parentheses reflect interview participants that mention that item
numbers not in parentheses reflect questionnaire responses that mention that item