From ‘hoh-laa’ to ‘o-la’: An investigation into using songs to help second language Spanish students learn grapheme-phoneme correspondences to improve pronunciation when reading aloud.

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MSc Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching, 2024

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Abstract

The ability to read aloud in a second language (L2) is an important skill requiring secure knowledge of the sound-symbol relationships, also known as grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPC). However, previous research amongst students in England studying a modern foreign language (MFL) has consistently highlighted a weak ability to decode written language into its spoken sounds, which can lead to disengagement and demotivation for language learning. This is particularly concerning given the recently elevated position of L2 GPCs in official policy documents, as well as the imminent introduction of a reading aloud component in the new MFL GCSE speaking examinations. Current UK teaching methodology largely approaches L2 decoding implicitly which does not appear to be supportive of L2 phonological development.

The present study therefore aimed to explore the effect of an explicit approach to teaching Spanish decoding on pronunciaton accuracy when reading aloud among Year 8 learners of Spanish at an English independent school. Songs were used as the vehicle of instruction as many studies have highlighted their pedagogical potential for linguistic outcomes, although such claims are often based on poor quality research with methodological flaws. This study compared the effects of song-based GPC instruction on Spanish pronunciation accuracy with a usual practice comparator. Data were also analysed to assess whether the introduction of the GPC training came at a cost to development in other areas of Spanish learning, and whether it affected motivation to learn Spanish.

Pre- and post-test scores revealed that both the song group (SG) and usual practice group (UPG) demonstrated a statisitically significant improvement in their L2 pronunciation accuracy. However, the extent of the improvement in the SG was statistically significantly greater than that of the UPG. Additionally, the introduction of the GPC training was not found to be detrimental to general Spanish proficiency and both groups made comparable progress. Questionnaire findings also highlighted increased levels of L2 motivation amongst the intervention group, along with a positive evaluation of the GPC training. Overall, the study suggests that using songs to deliver explicit L2 decoding instruction may effectively support the development of L2 sound-symbol mappings for MFL learners in England.

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Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

EOM2	End of Module 2
EOM3	End of Module 3
EOM4	End of Module 4
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GPC	Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence
KS3	Key Stage 3
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MFL	Modern Foreign Language
RQ1	Research Question 1
RQ2	Research Question 2
RQ3	Research Question 3
SG	Song Group
UPG	Usual Practice Group

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1. Introduction

1.1 Aim

This study is situated in the context of English secondary school students learning Spanish as a modern foreign language (MFL), a term which Ellis (2004) defines as a taught subject learnt in addition to the first language (L1). An important aspect of second language (L2) acquisition is the ability to decode, which involves the conversion of "written symbols of an alphabetical writing system into the sounds they represent" (Woore, 2010, p.3). The aim of the study therefore is to investigate whether explicit teaching of L2 Spanish sound-symbol mappings can support improved L2 decoding outcomes. Specifically, the intervention used songs as an innovative approach to deliver this instruction at the start of Spanish lessons, which was contrasted with a comparison group continuing with usual practice. Outcomes were assessed before and after the intervention by measuring the accuracy of students' pronunciations of the L2 graphemes embedded in a series of unfamiliar words to read aloud, along with a questionnaire to gauge levels of interest in the training and overall motivation for L2 Spanish. Pupils' general progress in Spanish was also assessed to determine whether time spent on the intervention was to the detriment of making progress in other linguistic skills. This quasi-experimental design explored the effectiveness of the intervention on L2 decoding outcomes and assessed whether any changes in decoding ability were statistically significant.

1.2 Rationale

Current classroom practices predominantly focus on the communicative aims of language learning (Bauckham, 2019; Dörnyei, 2013) and favour an inductive approach to developing decoding abilities. Indeed, there is a widespread assumption that students will acquire knowledge of L2 sound-symbol mappings implicitly (Woore, 2010). However, research conducted in MFL classrooms has highlighted beginner learners' poor L2 decoding abilities (Erler, 2004; Woore, 2011) and lack of progress in this skill (Erler, 2008; Woore, 2009), even amongst students with four years of language learning experience (Woore, 2016).

Such findings are highly disconcerting and contrast sharply with updated policy guidance proposing that phonological decoding should occupy an elevated position in MFL teaching (Ofsted, 2021). Of further concern is the negative impact that poor L2 decoding ability may have on L2 motivation (Erler & Macaro, 2011), exacerbating an already troubling picture of declining enthusiasm for language learning that has persisted for nearly twenty years (Coleman et al., 2007; Davies, 2004) and continues to do so (Woore et al., 2024). Lanvers

and Graham (2022) note that language learning in the UK is currently in a state of crisis largely due to a policy change in 2004 allowing MFL to be optional at GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education). This steep decline in motivation to study a foreign language beyond the compulsory phase is corroborated by data trends from the British Council showing an overall decrease in MFL GCSE entries ever since the subject became optional (Collen, 2023).

The consequences of weak L2 decoding abilities and lack of motivation for language learning amongst MFL students could present a significant barrier to uptake at GCSE. This is particularly worrying in light of upcoming reforms to the MFL GCSE with heightened attention placed on L2 pronunciation (DfE, 2022) and the introduction of a read aloud component specifically designed to test understanding of L2 sound-symbol mappings (DfE, 2023). It therefore seems pertinent to question current implicit L2 decoding practices and address calls for an empirical investigation into the effectiveness of an explicit approach (Woore, 2022b), especially given the lack of guidance surrounding what this instruction should look like (Ofsted, 2021).

The use of songs is a novel approach to explore L2 decoding, building on previous research highlighting their positive influence on various L2 linguistic outcomes. However, in a comprehensive systematic review, Hamilton et al., (2024) caution that many of these studies reached conclusions based on poorly designed methods and without substantiating evidence. Thus, this necessitates further empirical research into the effectiveness of songs as a pedagogical tool to deliver explicit L2 decoding instruction to be able to offer reliable suggestions for the MFL teaching profession.

1.3 Outline of study

In the following chapter, previous research on L2 decoding will be presented, including the current situation in English MFL classrooms and the relationship this holds with L2 motivation. The role of explicit L2 decoding instruction will also be explored, as well as the use of songs in foreign language learning and their effect on linguistic outcomes on L2 motivation. The third chapter explains the methods used in the present study, detailing the various elements involved in conducting the research. Chapter 4 analyses the results through descriptive and inferential statistics, which are then situated in the context of previous literature through a discussion in Chapter 5. The study concludes with an overall summary and any limitations, along with offering directions for future research.

2. Literature Review

The aim of this chapter is to explore the importance of L2 decoding for L2 reading, along with its position in official policy guidance and the ability of MFL students in England to decode in a L2. Empirical research is critically reviewed to discuss the role of an explicit approach to L2 decoding, followed by the influence of songs as a pedagogical resource to support linguistic outcomes, including L2 decoding, and L2 motivation.

2.1 The importance of L2 decoding

2.1.1 Definitions

To contextualise the study, this chapter will first define several important terms in light of previous literature: graphemes, phonemes, grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), decoding, phonics, and orthographic depth.

2.1.1.1 Graphemes and phonemes

Both English and Spanish are classified as alphabetic writing systems, a type of phonographic script whereby the written symbols represent the sounds of the language (Hayes-Harb and Barrios, 2021). These sounds are referred to as *phonemes*, defined by Ehri (2022, p.53) as the "smallest unit in pronunciations of words". The Roman alphabet used for English comprises twenty-six individual letters, all of which also feature in the Spanish alphabet, alongside one additional letter, <ñ>. These are also referred to as *graphemes*, used to describe "one or more letters that symbolize single phonemes" (Ehri, 2022, p.53). However, the number of phonemes in both languages is greater than the number of graphemes. Hualde (2005) notes how Spanish features only five vowels and fewer than twenty consonant phonemes, whereas English has more than twice as many vowels and a consonantal inventory of around twenty-four.

2.1.1.2 GPCs, decoding, and phonics

Given the imbalance between the number of graphemes and phonemes in English and Spanish, there is no one-to-one correspondence between each of the written forms and the sounds. The connection between different combinations of letters and how they map onto different sounds in a language has been termed *grapheme-phoneme correspondences.* Knowledge of GPCs is fundamental in supporting the *decoding* of words, a process that "converts visual print into its corresponding spoken form" (Nassaji, 2014, p.9). The term *phonics* is also used in the literature, often interchangeably with *decoding* to describe "how spellings are related to speech sounds" (Rose, 2006, p.94).

2.1.1.3 Orthographic depth

While Spanish presents with regular GPC mappings (Tejedor et al., 2008), there are many inconsistencies in English between the graphemes and phonemes (Van Berkel, 2006). The degree of correspondence between the mapping of orthographic and phonological representations in a given language is referred to as *orthographic depth* (Pavlík & Bojo, 2023). It can be said, therefore, that Spanish has a shallow orthography as there are many more direct correspondences between the graphemes and phonemes, whereas the inconsistency of GPCs in English lends itself to a deep orthography as an individual grapheme may correspond to multiple phonemes (Tuero-Hevia et al., 2022). The absence of a systematic relationship between the written forms and sounds of English is exemplified by Pavlík and Boko (2023, p. 25) using the grapheme <a> which can be pronounced as /æ/ in *cat*, /e/ in *many*, /ə/ in *above*, and /ɪ/ in *heritage*. Tuero-Hevia et al. (2022) note that L1 learners of languages such as English with a deeper orthography are therefore likely to face more challenges with decoding, a difficulty which Hamada and Koda (2008) posit extends to L2 decoding if the L1 orthographic background is not congruent with that of the L2. On the contrary, a closer orthographic distance between the L1 and L2 can yield greater L2 decoding efficiency performance (Hamada & Koda, 2008).

2.1.2 Evidence from L1 reading

Previous research on L2 reading has identified that monolingual L1 reading skills can shape L2 reading development (Koda, 2012), as well as the similarities between the comprehension processes involved in L1 and L2 reading (Grabe & Yamashita, 2022). This section, therefore, begins with a brief account of L1 reading models to exemplify their influences on research into L2 reading.

One of the earlier theories of reading was characterised by a bottom-up processing model proposed by Gough (1972), an approach which emphasised the relationship between written symbols and representations of the sounds of the language stored in the reader's mental lexicon. Bottom-up models follow a sequential process in which letters are converted into phonemes to create words which are then assigned meaning (Anderson, 1999). However, the unidirectional approach to this model raises questions as to whether all readers pass through the same successive levels in precisely the same order, or if some levels may be surpassed, and if so, what impact that may have on the following level.

An opposing view of reading comes from a top-down perspective. Unlike the bottom-up view which does not account for the reader's prior understanding, Goodman (1973) argued that readers derive meaning based on the linguistic and world knowledge they bring to a text. A top-down approach therefore regards reading as a conceptually driven process that proceeds from whole to part (Hayashi, 1999). Comprehension starts from the top and a reader only uses as much visual information as they require from the text to confirm predictions (Goodman, 1973). However, evidence from eye movement research discredits this assumption as around 85% of content words in any given text are fixated by the reader (Rayner et al., 2007), suggesting that individuals do in fact focus on the word level to derive semantic meaning during the reading process. Additionally, Grabe and Yamashita (2022) note that a hallmark of skilled reading is the speed and efficiency with which an individual recognises the word forms, typically between 250-300 words per minute, implying there is little time for higher-level contextual predictions involved in word recognition.

However, recent research has instead adopted more of an interactive approach to reading comprehension combining both bottom-up and top-down perspectives. Nassaji (2014) proposes that reading entails three interrelated types of processes: 1) lower-level processes such as decoding which involve mapping sounds onto meanings of words; 2) semantic and syntactic processes where word units are combined into larger units of meaning; and 3) higher-level processes, in which the reader's prior knowledge is integrated with text-based information. A key element of the integrated approach to reading comprehension is an interactive compensatory mechanism (Rumelhart, 1977; Stanovich, 1980), enabling either higher or lower processes to compensate for deficiencies in the other. Thus, less skilled readers with underdeveloped word recognition abilities may rely on context to infer meaning (Stanovich, 1980). Although there still remains some discrepancy in the literature regarding the importance accorded to bottom-up and top-down processes in reading comprehension, it is generally accepted that both are drawn on simultaneously to establish meaning (Khalifa & Weir, 2009).

The role of decoding in L1 reading proficiency is highlighted in Gough and Tunmer's (1986) Simple View of Reading. This interactive model posits that, alongside the linguistic interpretation of sentences, decoding is essential to successful reading comprehension. As Hoover and Gough (1990) note, decoding enables beginner readers to sound out unfamiliar written forms of words that they already know orally but have never seen before in print. Although the Simple View of Reading model does not necessarily elaborate on the specificities involved in the processes of decoding, more recent research remains in agreement that decoding plays a pivotal role in L1 reading success (Cain, 2006; Perfetti, 2007).

2.1.3 Evidence from L2 reading

Research from L1 reading offers insight into the development of L2 reading ability, as the same processes proposed by Nassaji (2014) are also involved in L2 reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). However, an important debate specific to reading in a L2 arose in the 1980s concerning the role of L1 reading skills in comparison to L2 linguistic proficiency, and the importance accorded to each in determining L2 reading ability. This led to the idea of a linguistic threshold requiring L2 readers to attain a certain level of L2 proficiency before L1 literacy skills can support L2 reading (Alderson, 1984; Clarke, 1980). From this perspective, even learners with competent L1 reading skills make minimal L2 reading progress if their L2 linguistic proficiency is low. Current research concurs that L2 proficiency has a stronger influence on L2 reading, as reliance on L2 language knowledge may better facilitate comprehension, whereas L1 reading skills typically gain importance only when a reader reaches an advanced level of L2 proficiency (Grabe & Jiang, 2018).

A further area specific to L2 reading is the limited amount of L2 oral language knowledge an individual is likely to have when commencing the process of learning to read in a L2 (Grabe, 2010). Unlike in L1 reading where learners may sound out the written form of a word to match it with a previously heard oral equivalent, reliance on this approach as a L2 reader may not be possible, not least because of limited word knowledge in the L2. Moreover, reduced exposure to the sounds of the L2 language can result in difficulties for the L2 reader in establishing links between the graphemes in front of them and the corresponding phonemes (Verhoeven, 2000). Consequently, the lack of connection between L2 sounds and their written forms can result in L2 readers struggling to decode the phonology of a word and access its meaning (Chang et al., 2020).

A reader's concurrent knowledge of two languages adds a further layer of challenge to L2 reading. Jiang (2011) notes that the L1 may support or potentially interfere with decoding during L2 reading, depending on the orthographic distance between the two languages. Koda (2012) explains that when the L1 and L2 both consist of alphabetic writing systems, knowledge of L1 mapping skills can support L2 decoding, whereas two distinct languages require substantial modification from the L1 to map the L2 sounds and symbols together. However, a study by Woore (2013) explored the transfer effects from L1 English during a L2 French decoding task with 76 young learners and found that despite typological similarities between the two languages, many L2 French words were consistently read aloud based on L1 English GPCs. Woore (2013) concludes that close similarities between the L1 and L2 therefore do not necessarily facilitate accurate decoding when reading in a L2 and may instead lead to difficulties.

Furthermore, accurate decoding in L2 reading plays an important role as the phonological loop, a subsidiary system of working memory, rehearses the links between written forms of a word and the corresponding sounds (Grabe, 2009). This temporary representation between the graphemes and phonemes is held in the phonological loop until meaning is encoded in long-term memory, which an individual can then access during L2 reading (Gathercole & Baddeley, 1993). L2 decoding skills support connections between short-term and long-term representations of the GPCs to unlock meaning during the process of reading. However, even if learners demonstrate accurate L2 decoding, Stanovich (1980) notes that, in the initial stages, it is likely to be slow and challenging. This may result in less availability of resources for "higher-level comprehension processes" such as inferencing and integrating information from the text with prior knowledge, consequently impeding L2 comprehension (Stanovich, 1980, p.52). Grabe and Stoller (2002) therefore emphasise the importance of building a strong L2 vocabulary base to enable L1 strategies and background understanding to support comprehension of the L2 text, rather than learners solely focusing all their efforts on decoding.

2.2 L2 decoding in UK MFL classrooms

2.2.1 MFL policy in England

The MFL National Curriculum for students aged 11-14 in England aims for students to "continually improve" (DfE, 2013, p.1) in the accuracy of their pronunciation over the course of Key Stage 3 (KS3). A further statement adds that students will also develop accuracy in transcribing spoken words and sentences (DfE, 2013), a possible hint towards the role of L2 decoding though this is not expressed explicitly. Instead, there is a heavy focus on developing pupils' grammatical competence and building their vocabulary as these represent the "foundation" of language learning (DfE, 2013, p.2). However, a recent publication by Ofsted into a Curriculum Research Review for MFL places phonics equally alongside grammar and vocabulary as one of the "foundations of language learning" (Ofsted, 2021, p.11). Woore, Molway, and Macaro (2022, p.147) welcome this change in MFL teaching policy, highlighting that phonics is finally receiving "the attention it deserves" after many years of absence from official documentation and classroom practice. The increased importance of phonics is also noted in the subject content for the new GCSE effective from September 2024, particularly given the introduction of a L2 read aloud task in the speaking examination. The document clearly specifies that students must know the "principles by which spelling represents sounds" (DfE, 2023, p.4) to support their accuracy when reading aloud, which is accompanied by an annexe listing the GPCs for the different target languages. Overall, current MFL policy in

England now reflects an elevated position of phonics in the languages curriculum with the idea that pupils should build on their knowledge of GPCs from the previous Key Stage.

2.2.2 L2 decoding ability of MFL students in England

Despite a positive change in MFL policy that now officially recognises phonics as an instrumental component in the language learning process, research highlights a concerning inability amongst many students in England to link written L2 words with their corresponding sounds. A longitudinal study by Erler (2004) investigated the decoding ability of 359 Year 7 learners of French using a written rhyme test. Students were required to decode written representations of the French vowel sounds by circling any of the unfamiliar words from a predetermined list that they thought rhymed with the source word. The mean overall results revealed that only 20% of choices were correct. An exception to this was that nine individuals achieved a mark of over 50%; two were bilingual and scored over 93% and the remaining seven had studied French at primary school or lived with someone in their family who spoke the language. A simple Likert scale of emotive faces was also used to tap into students' feelings about reading aloud in French. Despite 75% of pupils in agreement about the usefulness of knowing the sound-symbol correspondences in French, only 7.6% reported feeling happy about reading aloud in lessons. In light of these findings, Erler (2004) proposes that the students' weak decoding of L2 written French words is comparable to L1 phonological dyslexia, reflecting an inability to decode print into sounds.

A limitation of this study is the shallow reporting of the results. It would have been interesting to gain deeper insight into which of the French vowels caused students the greatest difficulty. Further research could then have built on those findings to determine whether a pattern emerges with learners of a similar age and L2 French proficiency. In addition, Erler (2004) admits that an oral test for decoding the words was not feasible with a cohort of 359 pupils. However, the current format of the written pen and paper test in a multiple-choice capacity could have led to students simply guessing the answers. In this respect, the results may not necessarily reflect an accurate measurement of learners' L2 French decoding (in)ability, therefore raising questions around the validity of the test. Nevertheless, the study overall offers evidence to suggest that L2 decoding amongst beginner learners is weak, even after one year of formal L2 French instruction.

A further study conducted by Erler (2007) also used a rhyme judgement task to explore L2 French decoding but on a much larger scale with over 1700 KS3 students across Year 7, 8, and 9. The test was again predominantly assessing learners' ability to decode vowels and consisted of twenty-five pairs of words against which students were required to tick if they thought the two words rhymed. Overall results in a subsequent article (Erler, 2008) revealed correct mean scores with their standard deviations of 12.35 (2.5) for Year 7, 12.28 (2.5) for Year 8, and 12.64 (2.5) for Year 9 with a statistically significant difference between them ($p < .01$). However, it is clear that the marginal difference in overall scores between the year groups reflects a lack of progress in L2 decoding ability. These findings are supported by Woore (2009) who found that upon testing 85 Year 7 students on their knowledge of L2 French GPCs and again one year later, decoding skills were equally just as poor despite an additional year of instruction.

Furthermore, the students in Erler's (2008) study were also asked if they referred to the sounds of French when reading and 74% reported sounding out the words in their head. In light of the findings reflecting weak decoding skills, this would suggest that students do not have accurate representations of the French GPCs and instead there is a mismatch between the letter strings they see and the sounds they try to verbalise, resulting in defective decoding. A key strength to this study is the large sample size of students from across twenty-five schools and nine geographical areas of England, enabling the findings to be representative of KS3 L2 French learners. However, the list of words included some that were familiar to many pupils. This may have negatively influenced the results as pupils may have been more likely to score correctly on these familiar words, based on the possibility that they had learned them by rote, rather than having learned the individual GPCs that would allow them to decode the words. Consequently, the inclusion of known words does not directly address students' decoding ability in French. Despite these limitations, the overall findings are indicative of poor L2 decoding skills and refute the misleading notion in official policy guidance that students will show "steady development in understanding of phonics" (Ofsted, 2021, p. 11) as they progress with their language learning.

The research presented thus far depicts a worrying image of L2 phonological awareness amongst English MFL students. Of particular concern is that learners do not demonstrate evidence of progression over the course of their learning. Students' knowledge of L2 GPCs is inadequate from the very beginning and consequently they are unable to build on this skill as their language learning unfolds. It must be acknowledged, however, that the aforementioned studies were published over a decade ago, therefore the extent to which they accurately reflect the current decoding ability of MFL students should be approached

tentatively. However, as Woore (2022a) notes, there has been a dearth of research into phonics instruction, particularly in England where the L2 in question is a taught, foreign language, therefore further studies are imperative to understanding whether the same findings hold true today.

In light of the empirical evidence highlighting students' poor decoding ability, a logical next step is to consider why. In a study examining L2 beginner French learners' strategies when pronouncing unfamiliar words, and the difficulty with which they had during this process, Woore (2010) proposes there is an assumption within MFL teaching that learners will acquire L2 decoding skills implicitly, simply through exposure to the target language. Indeed, in a previous study, Woore (2007, p.175) notes that this view appears to have extended to students too with the belief that knowledge of L2 GPCs "will probably come in time". Nevertheless, Woore (2010) highlights that with such limited contact time of around two hours or fewer per week, it is unsurprising that an implicit approach to L2 decoding does not appear to be supportive.

An alternative explanation for poor L2 decoding skills amongst English MFL students could be the way in which foreign languages are taught. Dörnyei (2013) notes the prevalence of communicative language teaching, a method that focuses on implicit learning through meaningful L2 communication. Research into teaching practices by Enever (2011) in a four-year, transnational study with over 1400 children across seven countries revealed the use of many activities designed to simulate authentic, real-world communicative exchanges, including within MFL classrooms in England. This could suggest that teaching practices focusing primarily on the communicative purposes of language learning adopt more of an implicit approach to learners' acquisition of L2 GPC knowledge, potentially contributing to students' weak L2 decoding skills. Indeed, in a review of MFL pedagogy in English schools, Bauckham (2019, p.4) highlights that the current approach to phonics is typically "left to chance", which may imply that learners are expected to acquire L2 GPC knowledge implicitly.

Additionally, Woore (2014) highlights that the presence of cognates or words with identical spellings between the L1 and L2 may also contribute to poor L2 decoding skills. Although the written form of such L2 words is likely to be easily interpreted by the learner and therefore support access to meaning, any incorrect pronunciations in articulating the word verbally may not be addressed, as comprehension of the material can still be achieved. Thus, Woore (2014, p.91) notes that orthographically similar L1 and L2 words may be "particularly disruptive" for the development of L2 decoding skills, typically resulting in learners applying

L1 GPCs to the L2 words instead. If left uncorrected, the learner's phonological loop is then likely to continue to internalise these inaccurate L2 pronunciations.

2.2.3 Motivation amongst English students towards MFL

A concerning consequence arising from students' poor L2 decoding ability is the impact on motivation for language learning. Erler and Macaro (2011) conducted a study with over 1700 L2 learners of French across Years 7-9 to investigate their decoding ability and the relationship this may hold with their motivation for French. Findings from a questionnaire assessing decoding ability based on text to sound revealed minimal progress across KS3. The data from pupils' reflections surrounding their attitudes towards French established a link between weak decoding ability and disaffection to continue studying the language as a non-compulsory subject at GCSE. Conversely, the minority of students with stronger decoding proficiency demonstrated more positive feelings towards French and a desire to continue learning the language.

Given that the study adopted the same rhyme based written assessment of L2 decoding as used in Erler (2007) rather than an oral test, a degree of caution should be noted as the test did not necessarily directly address students' knowledge of GPCs. However, this approach was necessary for methodological reasons to obtain a large-scale stratified sample size to underpin the representativeness of the findings, potentially reflecting a population of learners with limited L2 decoding ability and subsequent lack of motivation for language learning. Given the heightened importance placed upon phonological awareness in the new subject content guidelines for GCSE Modern Languages (DfE, 2023), these results are highly concerning, as it is possible that negative attitudes towards decoding at KS3 could dissuade students from continuing with the L2 at GCSE level. The inverse of this argument is that accurate knowledge of L2 GPCs may inspire confidence amongst learners and enhance motivation for language learning (Woore, 2022a).

Erler and Macaro's (2011) study further contributes to an already troubling picture of motivation amongst English pupils towards MFL, as identified by previous research. Williams et al. (2002) found a decrease in motivation as students progressed through KS3, reporting that foreign languages are perceived as unimportant and boring, especially amongst boys. Although a mixed-methods approach using questionnaires and interviews elicited both quantitative and qualitative data, there was an uneven distribution of students across the year groups. Nevertheless, Coleman et al. (2007) identified the same pattern of decreasing motivation on a much larger scale with over 10,000 students evenly spread across Years 7-9, reflecting a more reliable sample. Interestingly, additional data from 147 Year 10 students who

had chosen to take French as an optional GCSE interrupted this trend, revealing a notable increase in motivation. This contrasts with Davies' (2004) study comparing a cohort of Year 7 and Year 10 pupils, in which L2 motivation was found to start declining from as early as the first term of Year 7 and continued on the same downward trajectory. However, the Year 10 students were studying L2 French as a compulsory subject, which may explain the sharp difference in motivation when compared to the positive response from the same cohort in the study by Coleman et al. (2007).

Recent research into L2 motivation amongst MFL students echoes the findings from these studies conducted over a decade ago, highlighting a continuing trend of poor motivation amongst learners in English schools (Courtney, 2017; Lanvers, 2017; Parrish, 2019). An interesting study by Martin (2023) explored the influence of parental beliefs on their child's motivation for language learning by administering questionnaires to 495 Year 8 MFL students. Findings revealed a significant correlation between low motivation amongst the students and a similar, apathetic response from their parents about learning a foreign language. Dyadic interviews between parents and their children mostly emphasised the "perceived difficulty" of language learning (Martin, 2023, p.330), although with only six sets of interviews, this small number of responses is not necessarily representative of the population.

A very recent study by Woore et al. (2024) adopted a comparative approach by exploring Year 7 students' motivation towards L2 Mandarin and European languages. Using the same questionnaire as Coleman et al. (2007), the 810 responses revealed that both Mandarin and European languages received the same average motivation score of 2.6 out of a possible 5, although students who studied only one foreign language demonstrated slightly higher motivation towards Mandarin, with a score of 2.8. Focus groups corroborated these findings with notably more positive comments about Mandarin, particularly the novelty of learning this language and the unique writing system. Nevertheless, Woore et al. (2024) conclude that overall levels of motivation for MFL in English schools are comparable to those identified nearly twenty years ago with no evidence of significant change. The need for further longitudinal research is, however, acknowledged to better understand how L2 motivation unfolds over time.

One of the most current and prominent approaches to L2 motivation is Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System. This tripartite model recognises the importance of: a) the Ideal L2 Self, referring to the type of learner we wish to become, b) the Ought-to L2 Self, which seeks to avoid negative outcomes by developing favourable attributes to meet expectations, and c) the L2 Learning Experience, encompassing the learning environment and the influence

of peers and teachers (Dörnyei, 2009). The latter component is particularly important in an educational context as it encapsulates different facets of the language learning process and may be “the most powerful predictor of motivated behaviour” (Dörnyei, 2019, p.22). Indeed, previous research conducted with young children (Zentner & Renaud, 2007) and students in the final stage of primary school (Chambers, 2019) indicates that an individual’s capacity to consider their future self or ways to reduce negative outcomes related to language learning does not typically develop until adolescence. Even then, Deckner’s (2019) study into L2 motivation amongst 335 Year 7 students at the start and end of the academic year revealed that learners were still trying to navigate their sense of self, therefore proposing that the L2 Learning Experience offers a more accurate representation of student motivation in this context. Based on these findings, the present study focuses on the L2 Learning Experience when exploring the motivational dimension of using a song intervention amongst 12-13-year-old students.

2.3 Explicit L2 decoding instruction

2.3.1 Why an explicit approach may be necessary

As previous research has highlighted, the current implicit approach to L2 decoding in English MFL classrooms does not appear to be particularly effective, which, in turn, is creating a sense of perceived difficulty surrounding foreign language learning, potentially leading to low levels of motivation. Reliance on implicit acquisition of L2 GPCs does not seem sufficient in light of the various L2-specific challenges that instructed foreign language learners face: a small vocabulary size (Williams, 2004); limited oral representations of L2 vocabulary (Macaro, Graham, & Woore, 2016); automatic triggering of L1 mapping procedures (Wang, Koda, & Perfetti, 2003); strong orthographic resemblance between some L1 and L2 words (Woore, 2014), and minimal L2 input (Woore, 2010).

Erler (2008, p.6) posits that students should receive explicit phonics instruction “consistently and coherently” to support effective L2 decoding, a view also shared by Hawkes et al. (2019) who argue that explicit teaching is necessary to overcome limited and slow progress in L2 decoding. Macaro et al. (2016) advocate for explicit instruction to strengthen learners’ understanding of the link between spoken and written forms and to support accuracy when sounding out L2 words. Additionally, they propose that explicit teaching of L2 decoding is crucial to help students “override automatic L1-based symbol-sound mappings” (Macaro et al., 2016, p.65), particularly when the L1 and L2 words are orthographically similar. Ellis (2008)

concurs with this proposal, noting that learners would benefit from explicit form-focused instruction to avoid entrenched L1 mappings interfering with L2 acquisition.

A further argument raised by Macaro et al. (2016) in support of an explicit approach to teach L2 decoding is the cognitive maturity of L2 learners and their capacity for mapping new linguistic forms onto an already developed conceptual framework. Explicit instruction could therefore capitalise on learners' ability to strategize and draw connections between the two languages, potentially compensating for the minimal L2 input they receive (Macaro et al., 2016). Dörnyei (2005) holds a similar opinion, although emphasises that the ineffectiveness of implicit processes should not simply be replaced by explicit instruction but rather the aim should be to establish a cooperative dialogue between implicit and explicit learning mechanisms. In this respect, the role of explicit instruction is not to discount learners' implicit processing abilities but to complement and enhance their capacity for L2 learning in an instructed environment. The most current perspective about the role of an explicit approach is by Woore (2022b), whose thorough examination of research into L2 decoding amongst instructed learners cautions that no strong conclusions should be drawn yet due to a lack of evidence. Woore (2022b) therefore calls for further research to determine the effectiveness of explicit instruction on L2 decoding and any potential effects this may have on wider L2 learning, which the present study aims to address.

2.3.2 Empirical studies adopting an explicit approach

Woore (2004) designed a series of short poems containing forty-five L2 German GPCs used to deliver explicit phonics instruction to twenty-eight Year 7 students. The GPC training typically featured as a brief starter activity over the course of eighteen lessons and was intended to provide students with source words containing key GPCs they could memorise and refer back to. The group receiving explicit instruction demonstrated a small but statistically significant improvement ($p < .05$) in their pronunciation accuracy when reading aloud a list of unknown L2 German words at post-test, compared to their peers in a control group who instead continued with usual teaching. Additionally, students' scores on listening and reading assessments across the two groups were extremely similar, indicating that the explicit instruction was not to the detriment of general progress in L2 German. An evaluation questionnaire from the experimental group highlighted how much students enjoyed the training, although items relating to learning the poems received slightly higher scores than those concerning their use as a strategy to support decoding. A limitation to this study is that ten weeks was considered insufficient for students to thoroughly learn the sound-symbol

correspondences within the poems and apply this knowledge to support decoding of new words. Woore (2004) concludes with a call for the development of additional approaches to GPC training to build on findings from using L2 poems.

Building on this work, Woore (2011) compared two explicit instruction programmes designed to support L2 decoding amongst 186 L2 French learners. Programme A used poems in the same way as Woore (2004), serving as a source of analogy for students to refer back to, whereas Programme B focused exclusively on explicit modelling of the sound-symbol correspondences by the teacher. Intact classes were assigned to one of the two intervention groups, covering fifty-five French GPCs over the course of thirty lessons, or to a control group which received no explicit decoding instruction. A pre- post-test design revealed that the two intervention groups made significantly more progress in decoding compared to the control group, as assessed by the number of acceptable pronunciations for the graphemes. However, the magnitude of this progress was relatively small and although many students moved away from relying on L1-based pronunciations, there were numerous different approximations of the target L2 French phonemes. Woore (2011) concludes that explicit L2 decoding instruction is beneficial, however, progress may follow a more complex trajectory than simply moving from correct to incorrect L2 pronunciations.

A large-scale study by Woore et al. (2018) strengthens the evidence for explicit instruction by conducting a 16-week large-scale randomised controlled trial with over 900 Year 7 learners of French, clustered in 36 intact classes in secondary schools across England. Although the study was situated within the framework of L2 reading, a core focus was on examining the effectiveness of explicit phonics instruction to support students' phonological decoding proficiency in L2 French. The classes were allocated to one of three groups who all read the same eight texts containing many examples of the target GPCs: one group received L2 French phonics instruction; another received instruction in reading strategies; and the third group worked on the texts without any form of explicit instruction. Students' outcomes on reading comprehension, decoding ability, vocabulary knowledge, and self-efficacy were measured at three time points: before, immediately after, and six months after the intervention. Due to participant attrition, overall findings were calculated from the first two time points and revealed that students in all three groups made statistically significant reading progress. However, the phonics group demonstrated the most progress in L2 decoding and vocabulary knowledge. The authors conclude with a call for explicit phonics instruction to support L2 decoding, which teachers should also combine with strategy instruction when tackling L2 reading comprehension.

Of particular interest in this study was the use of linguistically challenging texts featuring numerous unfamiliar words, directly contrasting with Ofsted's (2021) claim that such an approach is demotivating and reduces learning opportunities from the material. On the contrary, Woore et al. (2018, p.7) comment on the popularity of the texts amongst students and their ability to enhance "linguistic and motivational development". Furthermore, such texts were of additional importance in ensuring that learners applied their knowledge of L2 French GPCs to pronounce the unknown words, rather than relying on pre-stored phonological representations and treating the words as whole units. Overall, the aforementioned studies featuring university students as well as younger learners in a MFL context point to the effectiveness of explicit L2 decoding instruction to support students' knowledge of L2 GPCs, although further research is necessary to build on these findings.

2.4 Use of songs in foreign language learning

2.4.1 Teachers' beliefs about using songs

There is a prevailing view amongst language teachers that songs serve as an effective pedagogical tool to support linguistic development and foster enthusiasm for language learning, therefore often featuring as an essential part of daily classroom routine (Forster, 2006). Indeed, a large-scale survey by Garton et al. (2011) investigating global teaching practices amongst young learners of L2 English was completed by over 4600 teachers from 144 countries across all continents. Findings revealed that nearly 70% of teachers used songs either every lesson or very often in their practice.

A recent study by Hamilton and Murphy (2023) adopted a mixed methods approach to explore beliefs amongst early year practitioners and primary school teachers in the UK about the effectiveness of songs with young learners. Their findings from 103 questionnaires and 7 semi-structured interviews revealed that respondents across all age groups hold strong beliefs about the positive impact of using songs. For the youngest children as well as primary aged students in language lessons, songs are used to indicate classroom routines, whereas in all other lessons for primary students, songs feature less frequently and instead serve a strategic purpose to re-engage students. However, in their review of several studies that place great importance on the role of songs for L2 learning, Hamilton and Murphy (2023) highlight an alarming lack of robust evidence to support such claims. Consequently, the authors conclude that teachers' intuition-based, positive beliefs about the pedagogical benefits of songs are corroborated by the misleading circulation of unreliable studies that have not been critically interrogated. Hamilton and Murphy's (2023) study elucidates these beliefs of teachers working

with young children, but it would also be interesting to determine if the same findings extend to a secondary school context.

Although there is a dominant trend of teachers in favour of using songs to support L2 learning, further research suggests that this is not always reflected in practice. Tse (2015) administered a questionnaire to 60 Malaysian L2 English primary school teachers and found that despite their overall positive attitude towards the use of songs, over half of respondents cited a lack of resources and difficulty locating appropriate songs as barriers. Such findings are echoed by Tegge (2018) in a questionnaire administered to 398 teachers working in adult L2 classrooms across 41 countries, along with concerns around adult learners' reactions to using songs and the time-investment required to implement song-based activities into lessons. Whilst the findings from these studies contribute to our understanding of song use in classrooms around the world, both questionnaires obtained this data through pre-made statements which may have influenced the responses. Open-ended questions for this section would have enabled teachers to write their own genuine reflections about song use in their classroom.

2.4.2 Effect of songs on linguistic outcomes

A systematic review by Hamilton et al. (2024) investigated the linguistic effects of using songs for teaching foreign languages. The located 60 eligible reports of research, published between 1971 and 2021, from 23 countries, in preschool, primary, and secondary school contexts, evaluated the effects of singing songs with language learners on a variety of linguistic outcomes. The Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (Hong et al., 2018) was used to draw evaluations about the trustworthiness of the research and quality of the findings. Studies were organised according to their outcome measure of either speaking, listening, reading, writing, grammar, or vocabulary acquisition, and colour-coded to reflect their trustworthiness; green = strong, yellow = moderate, pink = limited. Overall findings revealed minimal reliable evidence to support the many claims within the literature advocating the facilitative use of songs for L2 learning, largely due to methodological flaws such as lack of transparency, poor baseline measures, and biased comparison groups. The authors conclude with a call for more reliable and rigorous intervention research to further our understanding of how songs may support linguistic outcomes.

Amongst the research exploring the effects of songs on L2 speaking outcomes, Hamilton et al. (2024) note that only one study received a positive trustworthiness rating within this category. Indeed, Chen (2011) utilised a cluster random sampling technique and divided 128 primary aged children into an experimental and control group to assess their pronunciation

of L2 English phonemes. Standardised tests revealed a statistically significant improvement in L2 pronunciation amongst the experimental group who received 12 weeks of music intervention, compared to the control group who instead used the textbook.

A recent study within the systematic review receiving a moderate rating of trustworthiness incorporated a read aloud task, an assessment tool which also featured in the design of the present study. Hakozaki and Nakagawa (2020) conducted a pre-post-test investigation over the course of a semester into the use of chants to improve L2 English pronunciation amongst 91 L1 Japanese children. Recordings of students' pronunciation were evaluated by 3 native English speakers and revealed a positive, statistically significant effect of using chants ($p < .01$), particularly on segmental features. However, students were assessed on reading aloud sentences that they had already seen throughout the training, suggesting a high degree of bias in the results. This does not reflect their genuine pronunciation ability therefore the trustworthiness of the findings is perhaps more limited than moderate under the quality criteria proposed by Hamilton et al. (2024).

A further study of interest is by Toscano-Fuentes and de Vega (2018) who investigated the effectiveness of songs to improve phonological awareness in L2 English reading amongst 9–10-year-olds in Spain. The quasi-experimental study focused heavily on developing decoding and segmenting skills through a 12-week intervention based on music videos with L2 English subtitles. Activities consisted of watching music videos and repeating the song lyrics, supported by explicit teacher-led phonics instruction, along with dictation exercises to practise knowledge of English sound-symbol correspondences, all of which is similar to the present study. Regular reading comprehension tasks were also part of the intervention to check for understanding. Outcomes were assessed through measuring the difference in pre- and post-test scores in an English and Spanish timed silent reading test requiring students to identify word boundaries. Findings revealed positive improvements at post-test; on the English task, 68% of students improved and 44% decoded double the number of words compared to at pre-test, whereas for the Spanish task, nearly half of students were able to decode more than 30 words per minute, the highest amount, compared to only 8% at pre-test. Although L2 decoding proficiency was assessed in a written rather than spoken capacity, these findings have relevance for the present study as they suggest a possible link between the use of songs and improved L2 decoding ability that deserves further investigation.

Indeed, Ludke (2018) calls for more research exploring the causal relationship between songs and their role in supporting L2 decoding, given the paucity of studies that have explored this connection. However, the findings should be considered tentatively given the absence of baseline measures and a control group to serve as a point of comparison; these are limitations which the present study seeks to avoid.

2.4.3 Motivation and use of songs

Research has identified songs as a powerful motivational force in supporting L2 learning (Chen & Chen, 2009; Millington, 2011; Sevik, 2014). Czisér and Dörnyei (2005, p.21) refer to songs as products of "cultural interest" which can play a pivotal role in shaping L2 motivation by building a sense of connection with the L2 community, especially in instructed learning contexts where L2 input is limited. A study by Aguirre et al. (2016) explored the influence of songs on motivation for learning L2 English amongst 56 children aged 8-9 years in Peru. Observation notes and questionnaires were used to compare L2 motivation in an experimental group where songs featured as an integral part of lessons with a control group who did not receive any music intervention. The researchers found that using songs yielded greater interest, attention, and motivation, however, the findings were only analysed descriptively. Nevertheless, Smadi's (2020) study with the same aged children and design reached the same conclusion. An independent samples t-test conducted on data from observations and interviews revealed a statistically significant effect ($p < .05$) of songs on students' L2 motivation, although a small sample of 24 children limits the generalisability of the findings.

In a secondary school context, Israel (2013) reports on the positive influence of songs to foster L2 motivation in South Africa amongst a group of students studying poetry in L2 English, although there was no comparison group. An interesting study by Pérez-Niño (2010) featuring L2 English students in Colombia aged 10-15 years adopted a strong mixed-methods approach using observations, diary entries, video recordings, and interviews to capture the effect of songs on L2 motivation. The group of students who received the song intervention in their English lessons compared to those who did not were more engaged and confident with language activities and demonstrated heightened motivation to succeed in L2 English. These findings from research in a secondary school are particularly pertinent to the present study, not only due to the comparable age of the students, but also because they highlight the influence of songs on learner motivation despite L2 English being a compulsory subject.

Adara and Taufik (2020) also identified an overall positive correlation between the use of songs and increased levels of L2 English motivation amongst beginner secondary school students in their experimental group when compared to the control group. However, the researchers caution that several responses from the questionnaire data expressed apprehension and a lack of enjoyment about using songs due to difficulty in understanding the lyrics, which consequently impeded students' understanding. Džanić and Pejić (2016) note similar findings with younger learners and report that despite the majority of students expressing great enthusiasm about using songs in L2 English lessons, 21% considered the choice of song material to be boring. Thus, tailoring the song difficulty and genre to students' language ability and interest could maximise the impact of using songs to enhance L2 motivation.

2.5 Summary

Research suggests that L2 decoding plays a salient role in L2 reading. However, influence from the L1 may lead to learners incorrectly applying these sound-symbol mappings onto their L2. Current approaches to L2 decoding in MFL classrooms in England largely assume that learners will implicitly acquire knowledge of L2 GPCs, with teaching focusing instead on the communicative aims of language learning. Despite renewed policy guidance emphasising the importance of phonics in the L2 classroom, especially in relation to the upcoming inclusion of a L2 read aloud task in the new GCSE speaking examinations, numerous studies have identified poor L2 decoding ability and lack of phonological awareness amongst MFL students. Evidence has shown that pupils' ability to decode in the L2 does not appear to progress, which may stifle their motivation to proceed with language learning after the compulsory phase. This could present a potential barrier to GCSE uptake.

Given the additional challenges for L2 instructed learners such as minimal L2 input and limited oral representations of L2 words, explicit L2 phonics instruction could override L1 processing mechanisms and support effective decoding of L2 GPCs. The use of songs as a vehicle to deliver this instruction presents a novel opportunity to build on previous research that has highlighted the potential influence of songs on linguistic outcomes and L2 motivation.

The present study therefore aims to contribute to research surrounding explicit teaching of L2 GPCs by exploring whether this approach has better outcomes on L2 pronunciation when reading aloud in comparison to usual practice. Additionally, the study will also explore any influence of the intervention on L2 motivation as well as considering any detrimental impact to students' general progress in Spanish.

3. Methods

This chapter will explain and justify the research design for the study, including an overview of the school and participants. The procedure for data collection is then outlined to illustrate the use of the instruments used within the study, followed by an explanation of the outcome measures and data analysis. The aim of this research is to assess the effectiveness of using songs as a way of teaching L2 Spanish GPCs to improve pronunciation when reading aloud compared to usual practice. The specific research questions were:

1. What are the relative effects of using songs compared to usual practice on L2 pronunciation during a read aloud task?

2. Does the group that received the intervention still demonstrate progress in general learning of Spanish, equal to the usual practice group?

3. What are students' impressions of the song intervention and how does their overall interest in Spanish compare with students in the usual practice group?

3.1 Research design

This study featured two Spanish classes of Year 8 (aged 12–13-years) students and adopted a quasi-experimental, non-randomised comparison design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). As the study was situated in an educational setting, random assignment of students at the level of the individual was not possible due to timetabling constraints, therefore it was necessary to allocate intact classes to the comparison conditions. Rogers and Révész (2020, p.134) note that quasi-experimental studies may feature a "comparison" group rather than a "true control group". This is particularly important in the context of a school as the group of students who did not receive the intervention training still needed to be taught Spanish as a curriculum requirement, rather than not engaging in any learning at all. The intervention offers a novel way of teaching which will be compared with standard classroom instruction. Two intact classes were recruited. One was allocated to the singing intervention, henceforth 'song group' (SG), and the 'usual practice group' (UPG) which received typical Spanish lessons. To determine which Spanish class would feature as the SG or UPG, a random flip of a coin informed this decision.

3.2 Participants and setting

The participants were students (n=35) at a co-educational independent school in Hampshire, UK. They were in Year 8 (aged 12-13 years), English was their first language, and they received three hours every fortnight of instructed Spanish lessons. The students had been learning Spanish for one academic year prior to this study. Both the Spanish SG (n=17) and the Spanish UPG (n=18) were mixed-ability and mixed-gender classes; the SG had nine male and eight female students, whereas the UPG had seven male and eleven female students. Both groups were taught by the researcher, who was their usual teacher. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the context and the participants across the two groups.

Table 3.1: Overview information of the school and the participants.

School overview		
Average number of pupils on roll	600, capacity is 630	
School type	Private day and boarding school	
Location of school	Hampshire, UK	
Age of pupils	3 months to 18 years	
Gender of pupils	Male and female	
Participant overview		
	Song group (SG)	**Usual practice group (UPG)**
Total	n=17	n=18
Gender	male = 9 female = 8	male = 7 female = 11
Age	12-13 years	12-13 years
L1	English	English
L2 Spanish instruction	1 year	1 year

3.3 Procedure for data collection

The overall process for the data collection in this study can be seen in Figure 3.1 and each component will now be explained individually.

3.3.1 Background questionnaire

To establish consistency across the two Spanish groups, students completed a background questionnaire (Appendix A). In Part A, students were asked about their connections with Spanish speaking people or countries based on Woore's (2004) research exploring the use of poems as an approach to developing GPCs amongst L2 German students. This was important to identify any learners who may regularly practise Spanish outside of school and could potentially influence the results. The second part of the questionnaire was inspired by Diakou (2013), who conducted research with primary aged learners to investigate the use of songs to enhance L2 English language learning and skills. Diakou (2013) notes the importance of establishing an individual's musical ability prior to commencing a song-based intervention as this may be an important variable. Part B of the present study's questionnaire asks students to respond with either 'yes' or 'no' to three questions: If they are having singing lessons, if they play a musical instrument, and if they are involved in singing activities outside of school. Students were asked to provide details if they chose 'yes'.

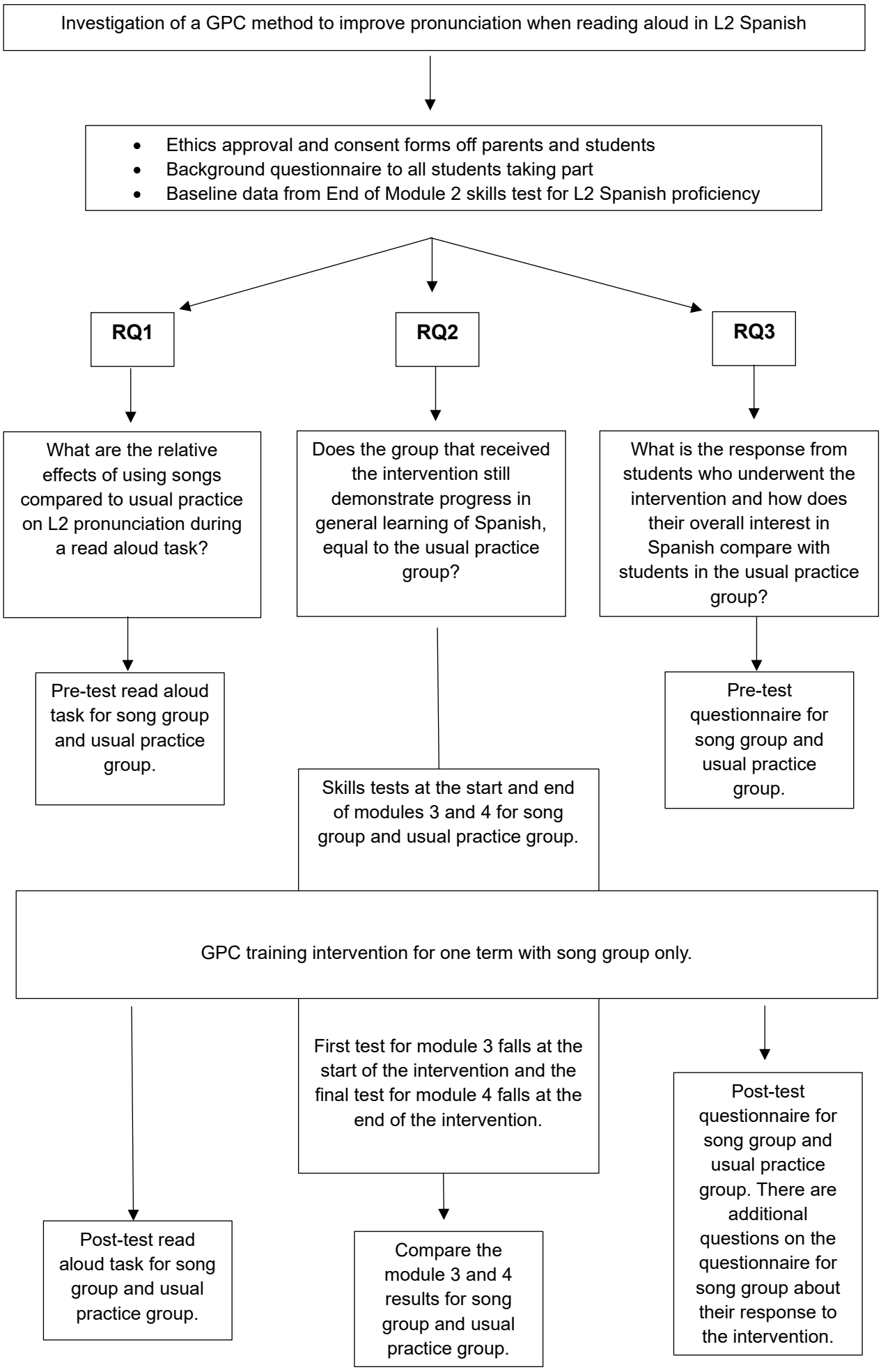

Figure 3.1: Schematic overview of data collection.

3.3.2 Baseline L2 proficiency

To provide contextual information for students' baseline Spanish proficiency, the scores from the listening, reading, writing, and speaking tests as part of their End of Module Two (EOM2) assessment were used (Appendix B.1 & B.2). This was the most recent assessment data the students had completed prior to commencing the present study and provided an insight into their current attainment in Spanish. In line with the School's assessment procedures, students received a colour band based on their proficiency level, which was designed to approximate the GCSE grading system. This is represented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Grading system from one to nine with the percentage boundaries and assigned colour band.

Red	Pink	Yellow	Orange	Green	Blue	Purple
Grades 1-2	Grades 3-4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
10 – 20%	35 – 40%	45%	55%	65%	75%	85%

3.3.3 Pre-and post-test reading aloud tasks

The overall study is based around a pre-test and post-test procedure, which Cook and Wong (2008) note is the most frequent approach to contrast two non-equivalent groups in a quasi-experimental design. At the start and end of the study, students in both the SG and UPG were audio recorded reading aloud a list of twenty-two Spanish words into a microphone (Appendix C). The purpose behind using pre- and post-tests was to determine any changes in the accuracy of students' pronunciation over the course of the study.

The decision to use a read aloud task was informed by upcoming changes to the GCSE Spanish speaking examination effective from September 2024, whereby phonological decoding in Spanish will be assessed through the introduction of this new task type (DfE, 2023). The new GCSE requires students to read aloud five sentences in the target language, each containing an average of six words which will be a combination of familiar and unfamiliar vocabulary. In contrast, the present study features only individual, isolated, and unfamiliar Spanish words that students read aloud one after another. Woore (2022a) argues that when assessing learners' knowledge of GPCs, the use of unfamiliar words or pseudowords is essential, otherwise learners may accurately pronounce familiar written words without having mastered the relationship between the graphemes and the phonemes. The current study, therefore, adopts this approach to investigate students' knowledge of sound-symbol mappings in the absence of any contextual inferencing from sentences or previously taught vocabulary.

The words in the pre- and post-tests were taken from the Pons Spanish-English online dictionary (Pons, 2024). The words used in the pre- and post-tests were different to avoid a practice effect whereby performance could improve simply from repeating the task (Dörnyei, 2007). Nevertheless, word length and number of syllables were controlled to ensure the words were not greatly dissimilar from each other. Each word was chosen to ensure it contained one of the GPCs from the students' Year 8 Spanish textbook, *Viva 2,* (McLachlan, 2014). Out of all the graphemes listed, only three (<cua>, <gue>, <cui>) were unable to be adapted within the song lyrics. Despite this limitation, the study still featured extremely similar graphemes with one letter difference (<cue>, <que>, <qui>).

3.3.4 Pre-and post-test questionnaires

Both the SG and UPG completed a pre- and post-test questionnaire to gauge their overall interest in Spanish (Appendix D). Due to time constraints, this approach to data collection was regarded as more practical and was able to elicit information from all students rather than conducting individual interviews. In line with suggestions proposed by Dörnyei and Dewaele (2022), the length of the questionnaire was designed to take no longer than fifteen minutes and the layout kept sufficient space between questions to avoid overcrowding of information. Additionally, the opening greeting reminded students about the purpose of the study and the format was presented to students as a short A5 booklet (Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2022). Closed questions were mainly used to be able to quantify the responses through a uniform measurement, which Mackey and Gass (2016) propose can increase the reliability of the findings.

The first question asked students how likely they are to take Spanish as a GCSE subject. Given that the participants were in Year 8 and were required to make their option choices at the end of the academic year, the purpose behind this question was to explore any possible change between the start and end of the present study in terms of students' desire to continue with their Spanish studies. To gain a deeper insight into student motivation towards Spanish, fifteen brief statements address the L2 Learning Experience based on Dörnyei's (2009) theoretical framework of the L2 Motivational Self System. Given that previous research has highlighted the significance of the L2 Learning Experience for young adolescent students in an instructed learning environment (Chambers, 2019; Deckner, 2019; Zentner & Renaud, 2007), the statements in the present study only address this component of the framework to better represent young learners' motivational dispositions.

The statements were adapted from Li (2023), who produced a validated questionnaire measuring this component of motivation. Across the twenty-eight statements, which were originally designed for adult learners, Li (2023) includes categories such as positive emotion, negative emotion, engagement, relationship, accomplishment, and meaning. For the purposes of the present study, the 'meaning' category was removed as this addresses a learner's motivation to engage in language learning to improve their employment prospects. Additionally, the total number of statements was reduced to fifteen with three in each of the remaining five categories. The final question in the present study is more open ended and asks students to write down two words describing their feelings towards reading aloud in Spanish.

For the SG only, the post-test questionnaire featured an additional section to enable students to evaluate the intervention (Appendix E). The ten statements were adapted from Woore's (2004) evaluation questionnaire administered to students following an intervention that used poems to explore GPCs. However, instead of a Likert scale with written responses, the current study features a scale of emotive faces adapted from Macaro and Erler (2008), who explored reading strategy instruction with students of a similar age, to offer an age-appropriate alternative that reduces the amount of wording.

3.3.5 The intervention: GPC method and materials

The intervention was conducted across one term and a total of sixteen lessons based on the School's fortnightly timetable structure of three Spanish lessons every two weeks. To ensure that students continued to follow the curriculum content as standard, the training for the SG consisted of a fifteen-minute starter activity, rather than featuring as an entire lesson. In contrast, the UPG engaged in usual starter activities in line with standard practice that were linked to the upcoming lesson content, typically through written tasks such as sentence translations, or vocabulary challenges.

At the core of the intervention were the lyrics of three adapted Spanish Disney songs containing the twenty-two GPCs (Appendix F). The three songs were: Yo soy tu amigo fiel [You've got a friend in me] (Sr. Leo Pardo, 2023); Bajo del mar [Under the sea] (Disney Latinoamérica, 2020); and Es la noche del amor [Can you feel the love tonight] (28Lere28, 2012). The full list of graphemes and phonemes used in the intervention, along with example words featured in the songs can be found in Appendix G. Students kept an A5 copy of the lyrics glued onto the inside cover of their exercise books to allow for easy access during lessons. In line with Woore's (2011) intervention that compared the use of poems with an alternative, explicit phonics teaching approach to support GPC amongst L2 German students,

the present study followed the same methodological steps taken for using the poem materials and adapted these for song lyrics instead, as seen in Figure 3.2. Students had access to the song videos through an electronic version of the lyrics sheet which was uploaded onto their Google Classroom. Every week, homework would include learning a couple of lines from one of the songs to support memorisation of the lyrics.

To test the materials for data collection before commencing the intervention, a small-scale pilot study was carried out with a separate, third Year 8 Spanish class, representative of the students in the SG and UPG and also taught by the researcher. The pilot study checked that the audio recorder was working correctly, along with confirming that the wording in the questionnaires was accessible. The students were also shown the list of words containing the target graphemes. They were asked to read through the Spanish words and tick any that they had previously encountered. Findings revealed that for the grapheme <ñ>, two students had seen the verb *teñir* before, and three students also ticked that they were familiar with *traer* for the grapheme <r>. Consequently, the word list was updated and after a second attempt, no students reported an awareness of the new entries.

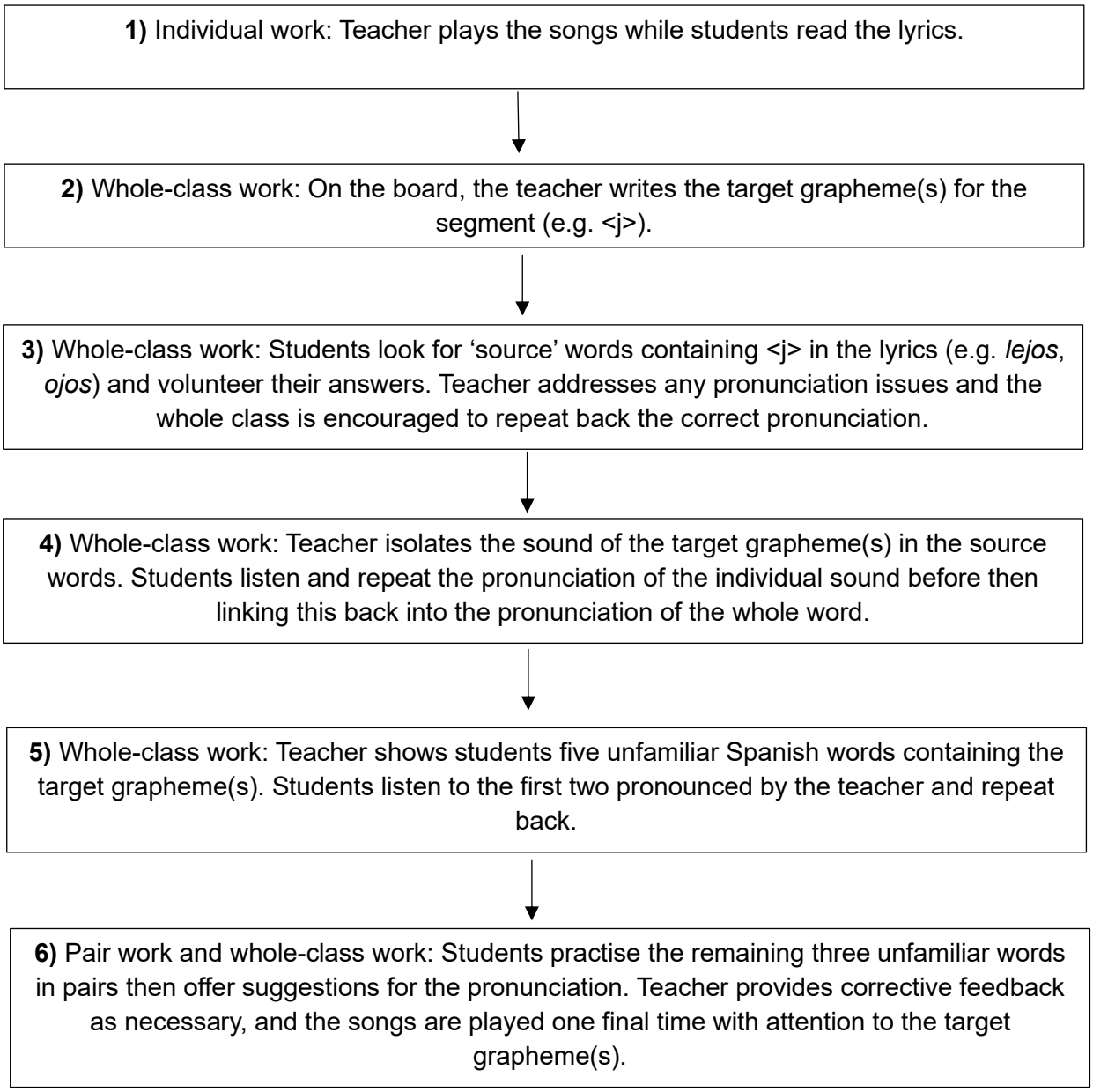

Figure 3.2: Schematic overview of GPC intervention.

3.3.6 Skills tests

Both the SG and UPG followed the standard Year 8 curriculum in terms of content delivery. Throughout the course of the study, two different topic cycles were taught; module three explored the topic of food, followed by module four, which covered free time activities. In order to assess whether the reduction in time spent learning the curriculum content had a material effect on the general Spanish progression of the SG, both groups completed the module three and four assessments at the beginning and end of teaching for those modules. Furthermore, as this study used non-randomised groups, testing students on their pre-existing knowledge of the topic before teaching commenced was important to determine whether there

were any initial differences between the two classes. The module assessments (Appendix H.1 & H.2) were taken directly from the Year 8 Spanish textbook, *Viva 2,* (McLachlan, 2014), they contained differentiated exercises designed to assess all abilities, and covered all four linguistic skills: reading, listening, speaking, writing.

3.4 Outcome measures

3.4.1 Research question 1

To determine the relative effects of the intervention on L2 pronunciation, the scoring system used by Woore (2004) was adapted for a L2 Spanish context. Additionally, the mark scheme features a scale from 0-5 and is also strongly influenced by the official GCSE version; for example, wording surrounding what constitutes major and minor errors is taken directly from the AQA examination board (AQA, 2023). Through several discussions with fellow language teaching colleagues at the School, it was agreed that the final mark scheme (Appendix I) was simple and quick to use, as well as adequately reflecting an adaptation of the GCSE version for Year 8 students. The scoring ranged from 0 for words that were not decoded and did not resemble the target graphemes, all the way up to 5 for excellent pronunciation that was always or nearly always accurate. An alternative option was to use the scoring system by Language Driven Pedagogy (2024), an open database of resources specifically designed for language teachers, however, their binary correct / incorrect approach of assigning either a score 0 or 1 seemed far too simplistic and did not allow for degrees of variation in the students' pronunciation.

To remain blind to the data, the audio files, which were already labelled using only the students' unique four-digit code number, were all mixed into one large folder containing recordings from both the SG and UPG in an attempt to avoid identifying participants during the analysis. The results were then inputted onto spreadsheets accordingly (Appendix J.1, J.2, J.3, J.4). The spreadsheets of results also offered the opportunity to explore the difficulty or ease with which participants pronounced the words in the read-aloud tasks by comparing the mean scores at pre- and post-test for both groups.

3.4.2 Research question 2

The End of Module 3 and 4 assessments for both the SG and UPG were marked in line with the answer scheme in the Year 8 Spanish textbook, *Viva 2,* (McLachlan, 2014) and the scores were entered into a spreadsheet in percentages. These unit assessments served as a measure of testing the content that was taught over the period of the intervention for both groups, rather than as a generic test of Spanish proficiency to keep the present study in line

with typical teaching practice as far as possible. The purpose behind using the students' assessment data was to determine whether there had been a detrimental effect in content learning to the SG by spending time on the intervention. Furthermore, using established tests enables replicability by other teachers and also supports the reliability of the task difficulty level for Year 8 students.

3.4.3 Research question 3

The pre- and post-questionnaires administered to the SG and UPG regarding their overall interest in Spanish featured closed questions, which enabled the responses to be quantified, together with one open ended question to gauge students' feelings about reading aloud. The additional post-test questions for the SG were designed to capture their evaluation of the intervention; mean scores were calculated for the closed questions featuring a five-point scale of emotive faces, from which the happiest face corresponded to a score of five.

3.5 Data analysis

3.5.1 Research question 1

A mean score was calculated for the pre-test and post-test scores across both groups, along with the change in mean to enable further examination of the data. A paired samples t-test for the SG was conducted using statistical software, SPSS 29, in order to analyse whether the performance amongst students in that group changed to a statistically significant degree. The same t-test was repeated for the UPG. An independent samples t-test was then carried out in SPSS by comparing the mean change between the SG and UPG to determine whether the extent of the change differed based on the group that the students were in. Additionally, the pre- and post-test words were analysed using descriptive statistics for the ease or difficulty with which students pronounced them and were categorised according to their mean score; words with a higher mean score were realised with greater accuracy.

3.5.2 Research question 2

Students' percentage scores for the listening, reading, writing, and speaking components in the module three pre-test were totalled to produce one percentage. The same process was repeated for the module four pre-test results. The two overall percentages from the module three and four pre-tests were then combined to create one result from a possible score out of 200. The purpose behind this approach was to remove the possibility of leading to unwarranted causal claims in explaining possible variations of students' performance across the two modules which were not controlled for. The same analysis was performed again on

the module three and four post-tests and the change score in the difference between students' pre-test and post-test was then calculated. An independent samples t-test was performed to analyse the overall mean change for statistical significance between the pre-test and post-test combined scores for module three and four using SPSS.

3.5.3 Research question 3

Descriptive statistics were employed to analyse the data from the pre- and post-test questionnaires. For the first question, 'Do you think you will take Spanish as a GCSE option?', the number of responses for 'yes', 'no', and 'unsure' were totalled at pre-test and at post-test for each group to enable a comparison. The second question addressing students' general motivation for Spanish followed a similar procedure, whereby the mean scores for the fifteen statements at pre-test and post-test were calculated for both groups, along with the change in mean score. For the third question, 'Write two words describing how you feel about reading aloud in Spanish', each student's choice of wording was coded as either positive, neutral, or negative and the number of responses within each of these three categories was compared at pre- and post-test for the SG and UPG. The results were displayed in a table, as well as in a bar graph to reflect any overall change. For the final question administered to the SG only regarding students' evaluation of the intervention, mean scores for each of the ten statements were calculated to produce an overall mean score. Additionally, mean scores were calculated for the statements relating to the learning of songs compared to those that directly addressed the method used in the intervention to allow for a comparison of the overall evaluation.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The present study was approved by the Central Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford (Appendix K). Prior to the collection of any data, consent from the Headteacher at the School was obtained to proceed with this study (Appendix L). Due to the use of audio recordings with students aged between 12 and 13 years old, it was necessary to follow an opt-in approach, meaning that this study is based on voluntary participation. Parents and guardians of the students in the Year 8 Spanish classes received an information sheet describing the study and its overall aims, along with a consent form to sign. Students also received an information sheet in simple language and an assent form to sign.

The researcher also explained the study in person to students. This ensured that participants were aware of the purpose of taking part, how the findings from the study would be used, as well as allowing time for any questions or concerns to be addressed. Students were also made aware of their right to withdraw from the study. All electronic data was stored on a password-protected computer and on the University's protected OneDrive, whereas hard

copies of data were kept in a locked cupboard. The audio recordings were labelled using a unique four-digit code number for each participant, which was only accessible by the researcher, and were erased at the end of the study.

4. Results

This chapter will present the results of a quasi-experimental non-randomised comparison to determine whether L2 Spanish pronunciation during reading aloud tasks improves as a result of using songs to teach GPCs, compared with usual practice. The findings from all the data collected are organised according to each of the three research questions.

4.1 RQ1: What are the relative effects of using songs compared to usual practice on L2 pronunciation during a read aloud task?

4.1.1 Descriptive statistics

The average mean scores for the SG and UPG are presented through descriptive statistics, taken at pre-test and post-test. The change in mean score for each group represents the difference between these two testing points. This was important to include given the use of intact classes rather than individuals randomly allocated to the two groups, as it was not certain at pre-test that the difference between students was chance difference. Both groups achieved comparable mean scores in the pre-test, with 46.1 for the SG and 46.4 for the UPG. However, it is clear that the SG had a much larger change in mean of 12.9 compared to a smaller increase of 3.3 for the UPG.

Table 4.1: Average mean scores for the SG and UPG at pre-test and post-test, along with the change in mean.

Group	n	Pre-test average mean (SD)	Post-test average mean (SD)	Change in mean (SD)
SG	17	46.1 (11.1)	58.9 (17.9)	12.9 (8.6)
UPG	18	46.4 (11)	49.7 (8.4)	3.3 (4.6)

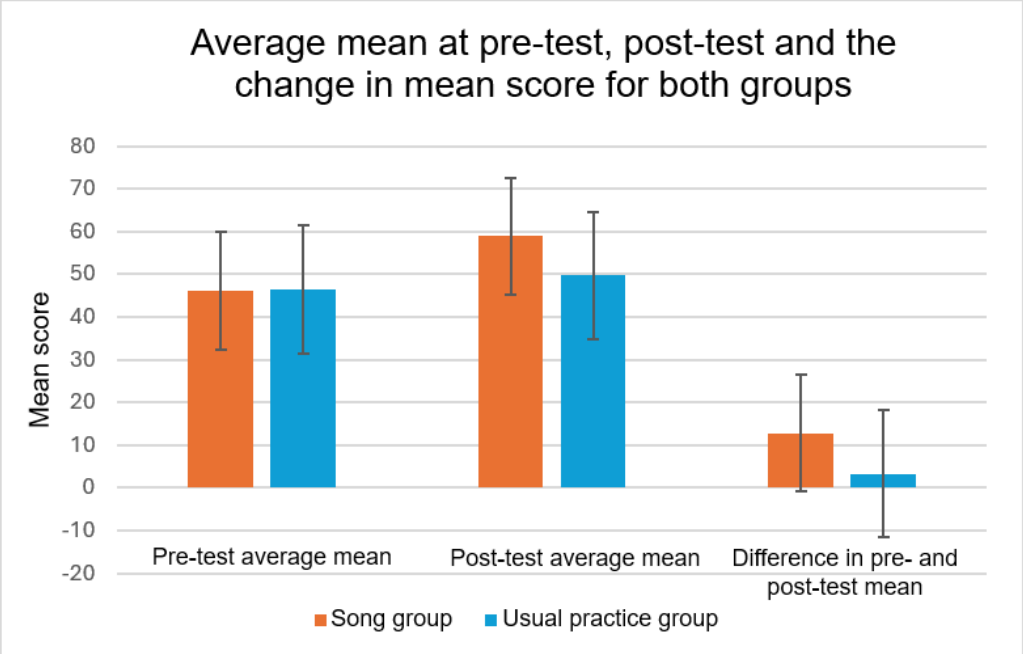

Figure 4.1: Bar graph showing average mean scores for the SG and UPG at pre-test and post-test, along with the change in mean.

4.1.2 Inferential statistics for dependent samples t-tests

To determine whether either group improved over the course of the study, dependent samples t-tests were conducted to explore the change in scores within each group from pre-test to post-test and to identify if these changes were to a statistically significant degree.

The pre-test scores for the SG were normally distributed with a skewness of -0.015 (*SE* = 0.550) and kurtosis of -1.117 (*SE* = 1.063). Post-test scores were also normally distributed with a skewness of -0.501 (*SE* = 0.550) and kurtosis of -0.513 (*SE* = 1.063). Students in the SG received higher ratings for their pronunciation of the words in the post-test (*M* = 58.94, *SD* = 17.970), compared to their lower performance in the pre-test (*M* = 46.06, *SD* = 11.065). When compared to the pre-test scores, the post-test scores in the SG elicited a mean increase of 12.9 (*SE* = 2.1), which was statistically significant, $t(16) = 6.160$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.49$. Table 4.2 shows the statistical results from the dependent samples t-test for the SG.

Table 4.2: Inferential statistics from the dependent samples t-test for the SG.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Significance (One-sided p)
SG difference between pre-test and post-test	12.882	8.623	2.091	6.160	16	<.001

A dependent samples t-test was also conducted with data from the UPG. Pre-test scores were normally distributed with a skewness of -0.083 (*SE* = 0.536) and kurtosis of -1.309 (*SE* = 1.038). Post-test scores were also normally distributed with a skewness of -0.036 (*SE* = 0.536) and kurtosis of -1.035 (*SE* = 1.038). There were slightly higher scores in students' pronunciation of the post-test words (*M* = 49.72, *SD* = 8.407) than in the pre-test (*M* = 46.39, *SD* = 11.014). This difference elicited a small mean increase of 3.3 (*SE* = 1.1), which was statistically significant, $t(17) = 3.040$, $p < .004$, $d = 0.71$. Table 4.3 shows the statistical results from the dependent samples t-test for the UPG.

Table 4.3: Inferential statistics from the dependent samples t-test for the UPG.

UPG difference between pre-test and post-test	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**t**	**df**	**Significance (One-sided p)**
	3.333	4.653	1.097	3.040	17	0.004

4.1.3 Summary of dependent samples t-tests

These results suggest that both intervention groups were associated with a non-chance increase in mean scores overall. This means that both groups improved their performance on tests of L2 Spanish GPCs over time to a statistically significant degree.

4.1.4 Inferential statistics for independent samples t-test

Given that a statistically significant change was established for the SG and UPG based on the dependent samples t-tests, an independent samples t-test was then performed to explore if the extent of such change differed depending on the group that students were in. There were 17 students in the SG and 18 students in the UPG. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .027$), therefore it was necessary to use the Welch t-test to establish if there were differences in pre- and post-test scores between the SG and UPG. There were no outliers in the data, as assessed by visual inspection of a boxplot. The change scores between pre- and post-test for both groups were normally distributed; the SG had a skewness of – 0.550 (*SE* = 0.550) and kurtosis of -0.817 (*SE* = 1.063), whereas the UPG had a skewness of 0.180 (*SE* = 0.536) and kurtosis of -0.431 (*SE* = 1.038). There was a greater increase in the pre- and post-test scores amongst students in the SG (*M* = 12.8, *SD* = 8.62) when compared to the UPG (*M* = 3.33, *SD* = 4.65), a statistically significant difference, *M* = 9.55 (*SE* =2.36), $t(24.280) = 4.044$, $p = <.001$. Table 4.4 shows the results of the independent samples t-test comparing the change score between the SG and UPG.

Table 4.4: Inferential statistics from the independent samples t-test comparing the change score between the SG and UPG.

Change score between SG and UPG	**Mean Difference**	**Std. Error Difference**	**t**	**df**	**Significance (Two-sided p)**
	9.549	2.362	4.044	24.280	<.001

4.1.5 Summary of independent samples t-tests

These results suggest that the song intervention was associated with a statistically significant greater change in scores on the test of L2 Spanish GPCs compared to usual practice. This means that the song intervention was more effective than usual practice for learning the L2 sound-symbol mappings and that this was not due to chance.

4.1.6 Individual performance

Despite a statistically significant increase in the overall mean performance of the SG, there is notable variation among students within the group. There were 7 students whose raw score improved the most between 18 and 24 points and five students who increased their score between 12 and 15 points. Two students who improved by 6 points and three did not improve at all; 1 student had a change score of 0 and two had a negative score of -2. These individual raw scores for the students in the SG are reflected in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Raw scores at pre-test and post-test for the SG, along with the change score.

Pupil	**Pre-test**	**Post-test**	**Difference**
9577	61	80	19
6289	54	67	13
1640	60	79	19
7263	31	31	0
5502	43	55	12
2621	31	29	-2
8538	43	49	6
2539	63	83	20
7827	39	62	23
5411	45	63	18
1446	44	50	6
3086	41	53	12
5270	51	64	13
6417	28	26	-2
5154	54	69	15
2191	58	82	24
3506	37	60	23

4.1.7 Difficulty and ease of word pronunciations

The table of results (Appendix J.1, J.2, J.3, J.4) showing the raw and mean scores at pre-test and post-test for the SG and UPG also offers the opportunity to explore which words were particularly easy or difficult for the students. The scoring system was on a five-point scale, with five representing the highest accuracy in an individual's pronunciation of the word. Higher overall mean scores reflected more target-like pronunciation of the Spanish words. Table 4.6 shows the mean scores for each word at pre-test and at post-test for the SG and UPG, organised in hierarchical order based on how accurately the word was articulated. Words on the same line within an individual box received the same mean score overall; for example, *cabal* and *soñar* in the SG post-test both had a mean score of 3.05.

The overall findings from Table 4.6 reveal that, at pre-test, both groups only had two words that received the highest mean scores across the data (*librar* and *chapa*), as well as two words in the lowest mean range (*quinta* and *queja*). The majority of words for both groups at pre-test averaged a mean score between 1.5 and 2.49. At post-test, this pattern remains stable for the UPG besides the addition of three more words across the two upper mean ranges. However, for the SG, the pattern is reversed; 18 of the 22 words received a mean score between 2.0 and 3.0, with 13 of these in the top two highest mean ranges. There were no words in the lowest mean category for the SG at post-test. Figures 4.2 and 4.3 also reflect these results.

Table 4.6: Words at pre-test and post-test for the SG and UPG, organised by average mean scores.

	SG pre-test	UPG pre-test	SG post-test	UPG post-test
Words with mean score greater than 3.0	librar chapa	chapa librar	lluqui ligar, chata cifra cabal, soñar pincho	chata ligar lluqui
Words with mean score between 2.5 and 3.0	caña, mago	caña	cofre, neto mego verter nudo traba	cabal, pincho neto
Words with mean score between 2.0 and 2.49	dañar, virar, pica cofa lloro feto, cera nulo, barra	mago, pica virar, lloro cofa, feto, dañar nulo, trago muro cera	zuro gira cuenco garra moho, jurar	cofre, verter soñar traba mego gira zuro
Words with mean score between 1.5 and 1.99	muro cuenca trago búho cinta, jalar, pozo	barra cinta, cuenca búho jalar, pozo	trozo quinto quena	garra trozo nudo, cifra jurar cuenco
Words with mean score between 1.0 and 1.49	quinta queja	quinta queja	N/A	moho quena quinto

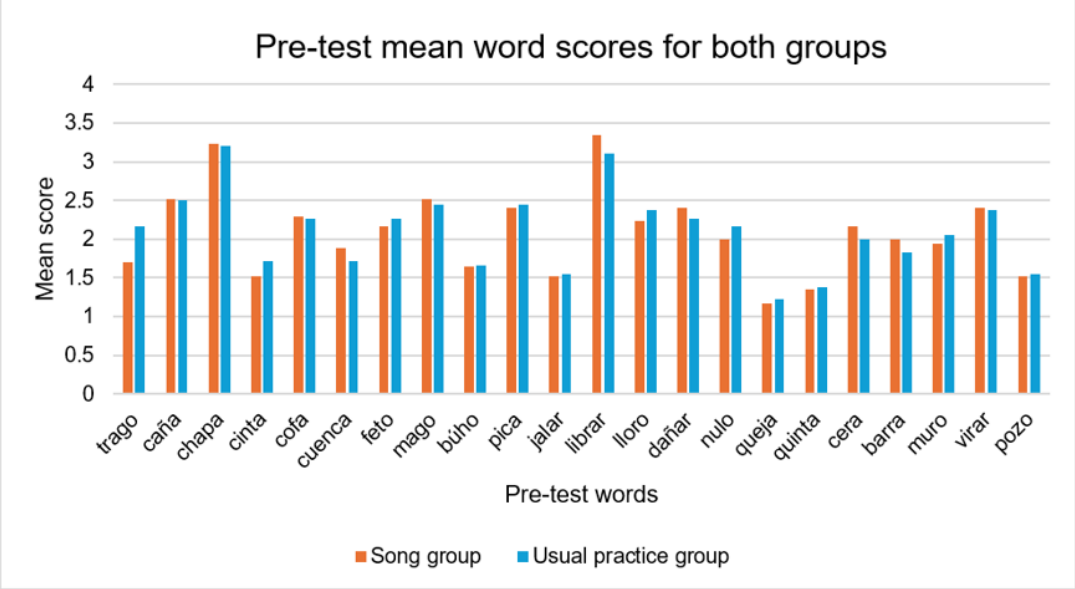

Figure 4.2: Bar graph showing average mean scores for the pre-test words for both groups.

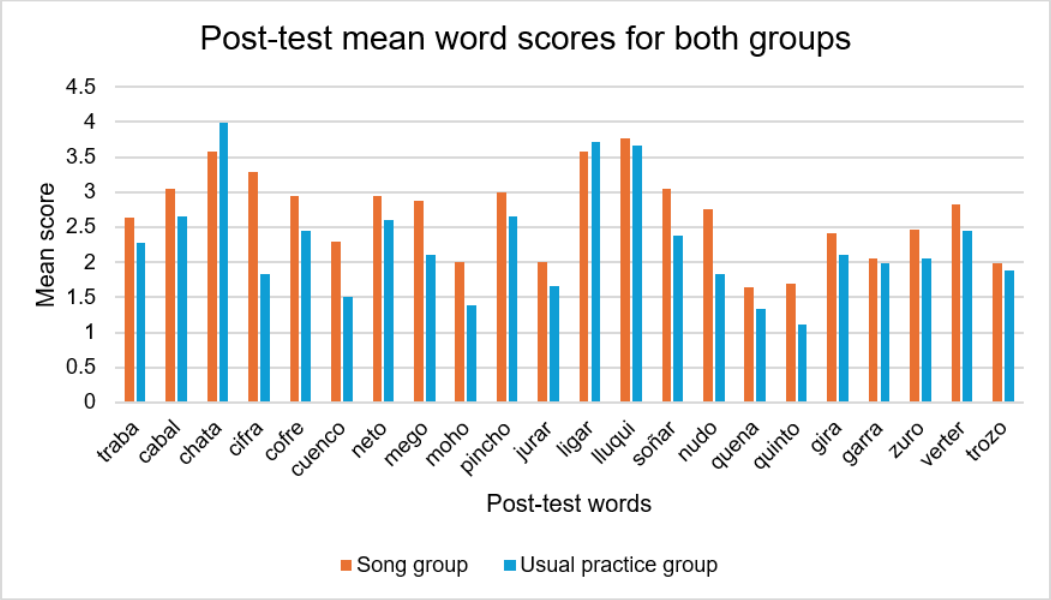

Figure 4.3: Bar graph showing average mean scores for the post-test words for both groups.

Overall, the SG improved to a statistically significant degree in the accuracy of their L2 pronunciation when reading aloud, indicating that the use of songs to explicitly teach Spanish GPCs is effective.

4.2 RQ2: Does the group that received the intervention still demonstrate progress in general learning of Spanish, equal to the usual practice group?

4.2.1 Descriptive statistics

To determine whether the intervention with the SG had a detrimental impact on students' general learning of Spanish, the combined scores for modules three and four were compared between the two groups. The mean change for the SG (*M* = 4.65) and for the UPG (*M* = 5.11) revealed an extremely small difference of 0.46 between the two groups in relation to their performance across the unit assessments. Table 4.7 shows the pre-test and post-test mean scores, along with the change in mean for the SG and UPG.

Table 4.7: Mean scores in the combined module three and four content tests for both groups at pre-test and post-test, as well as the change in mean.

Group	n	Combined module 3 & 4 pre-test average mean (SD)	Combined module 3 & 4 post-test average mean (SD)	Change in mean (SD)
SG	17	139.94 (21.8)	144.59 (21.0)	4.65 (11.6)
UPG	18	139.5 (22.4)	144.83 (22.5)	5.11 (11.5)

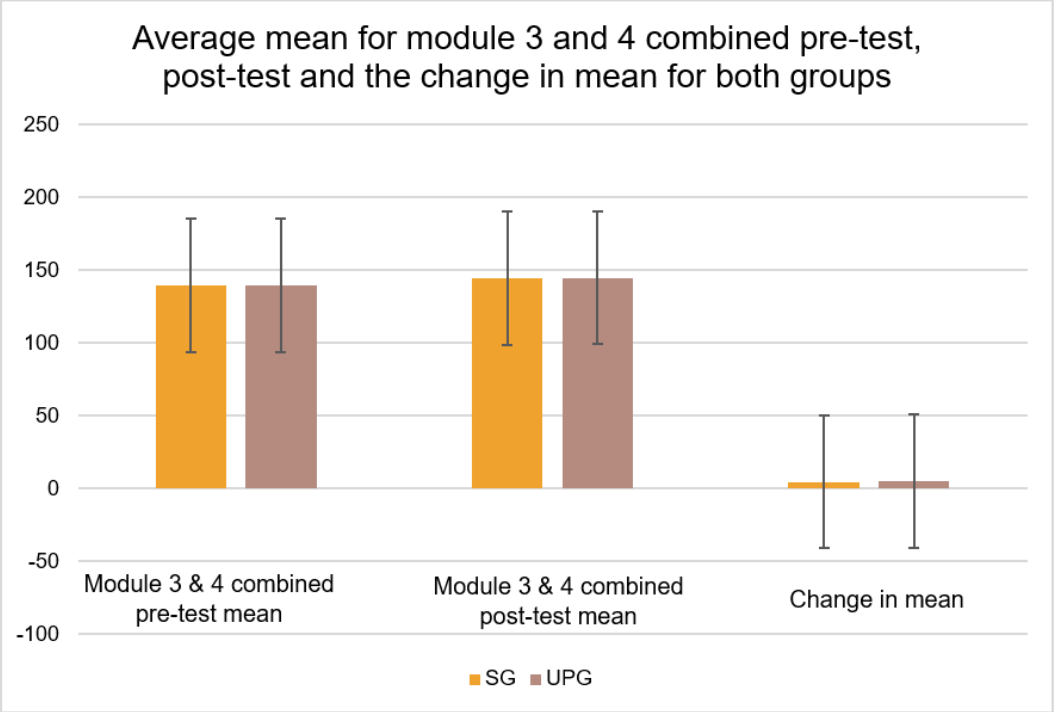

Figure 4.4: Bar graph showing the mean scores in the combined module three and four content tests for both groups at pre-test and post-test, as well as the change in mean.

4.2.2 Inferential statistics for independent samples t-test

There were 17 students in the SG and 18 students in the UPG. An independent samples t-test was run to determine any differences in general Spanish attainment over the module three and four end of unit tests. The change scores for the SG and UPG were normally distributed, which were checked for normality using the skewness and kurtosis z score values. The SG change scores had a skewness of -1.069 (*SE* = 0.550) and kurtosis of 0.864 (*SE* = 1.063), whereas the skewness for the change scores in the UPG was -0.293 (*SE* = 0.536) and

kurtosis of -0.802 (*SE* = 1.038). There was homogeneity of variances for the change scores for students in the SG and UPG, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances (*p* = .640). Overall, the UPG achieved slightly higher scores (*M* = 5.11, *SD* = 11.58) than students in the SG (*M* = 4.65, *SD* = 5.11), which did not demonstrate a statistically significant difference, *M* = -0.46 (*SE* = 3.92), *t*(32.9) = -0.118, *p* = .907, *d* = 0.040. Table 4.8 shows the statistical results from the independent samples t-test comparing the change score in general Spanish attainment between the SG and UPG.

Table 4.8: Inferential statistics from the independent samples t-test comparing the change score in general Spanish attainment between the SG and UPG.

	Mean Difference	**Std. Error Difference**	**t**	**df**	**Significance (Two-sided p)**
Change score in general Spanish attainment between SG and UPG	-.464	3.922	-.118	32.875	.907

Overall, there was no statistically significant difference in the mean change between the pre-test and post-test assessments of general Spanish attainment between the SG and UPG. This shows that the intervention with the SG did not have a detrimental impact on their learning of the typical module content in Spanish lessons.

4.3 RQ3: What are students' impressions of the song intervention and how does their overall interest in Spanish compare with students in the usual practice group?

A pre- and post-questionnaire to assess students' overall interest in Spanish was administered to the SG and UPG at the beginning and end of the present study. The SG also received an additional set of evaluative statements in the post-questionnaire to obtain their responses to the intervention. The results from each section of the questionnaire will now be presented.

4.3.1 Question one: 'Do you think you will take Spanish as a GCSE option?'

For the SG, Figure 4.5 shows that, at pre-test, six students chose 'yes', three said 'no', and the remaining majority of eight were 'unsure'. In contrast, the post-test results revealed that fourteen of the seventeen students said "yes" to taking Spanish at GCSE, with the

remaining three students divided between two who chose ‘no’ and one who was ‘unsure’. For the UPG, the pre-test findings from Figure 4.6 show that eight students said ‘yes’ to taking Spanish at GCSE, six said ‘no’, and the remaining four were ‘unsure’. The post-test for the UPG revealed that eight students also said ‘yes’ to taking GCSE Spanish, indicating no change from pre-test. On the other hand, the number of students who said ‘no’ increased to six, whereas there was a reduction of ‘unsure’ responses down to four students.

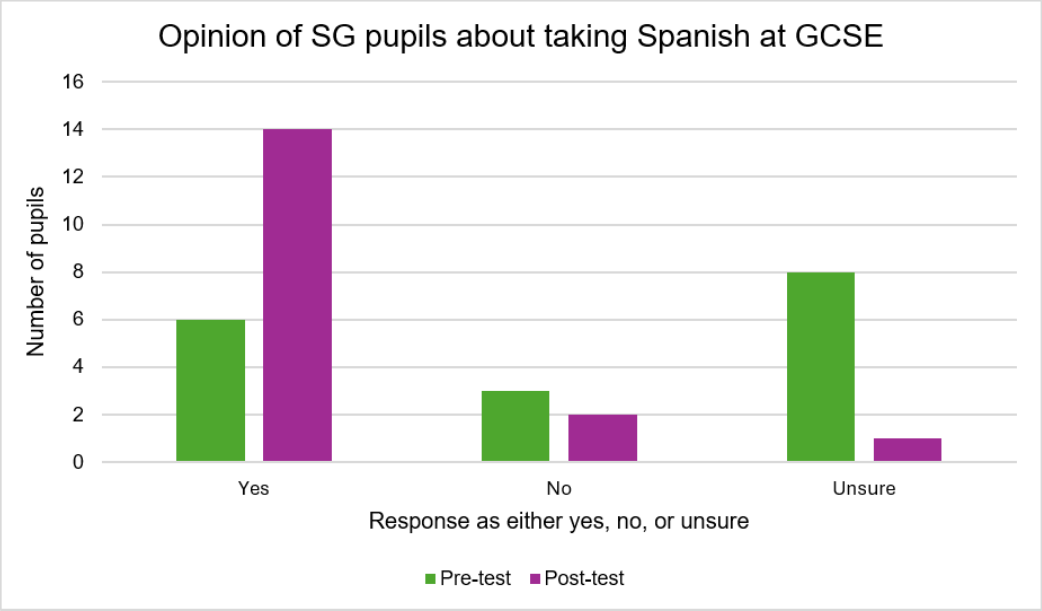

Figure 4.5: Bar graph showing responses from the SG at pre-test and post-test to the question ‘Do you think you will take Spanish as a GCSE option?’

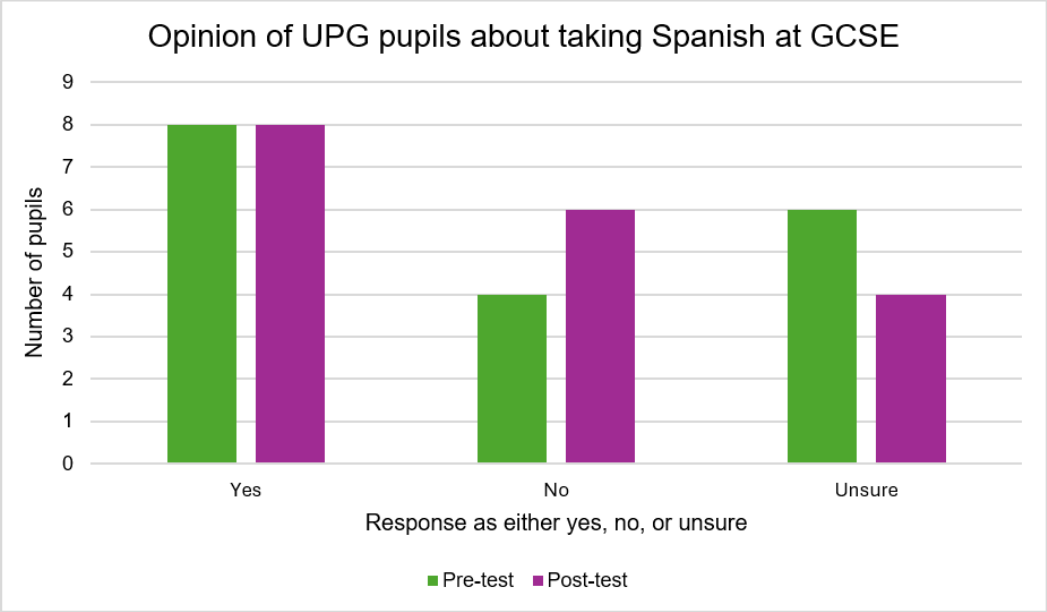

Figure 4.6: Bar graph showing responses from the UPG at pre-test and post-test to the question ‘Do you think you will take Spanish as a GCSE option?’

4.3.2 Question two: Statements assessing students' L2 motivation

The second question explored students' general motivation for Spanish by asking them to rate on a scale of 1-6 how strongly they agreed or disagreed with 15 statements relating to the L2 Learning Experience. In the pre-test questionnaire, the mean motivation scores were comparable across the two groups; 52.47 for the SG and 51.89 for the UPG meaning that both groups expressed a very similar level of motivation at the start of the study. However, in the post-test questionnaire, the mean motivation of the SG increased to 64.06, a change in mean of 11.58. In contrast, the UPG mean scores increased to 55.11, a much smaller increase of 3.11. Table 4.9 shows the mean motivation at pre-test and post-test for the SG and UPG, along with the change in mean. A full breakdown of each individual student's scores can be found in Appendix N.1 and N.2.

Table 4.9: Mean motivation scores at pre- and post-test, along with the change in mean for both groups.

	N	Mean motivation pre-test (SD)	Mean motivation post-test (SD)	Change in mean (SD)
SG	17	52.47 (7.65)	64.06 (9.75)	11.58 (10.72)
UPG	18	51.89 (6.57)	55.11 (8.88)	3.11 (4.36)

4.3.3 Question three: 'Write two words describing how you feel about reading aloud in Spanish'

Students' responses can be seen in Table 4.10 for the SG and Table 4.11 for the UPG. At pre-test, the SG stated eight positive adjectives and nineteen negative adjectives, a pattern which was reversed at post-test with twenty-one positive and only seven negative items. The words 'easy', 'confident', and 'fun' featured most frequently in the positive items following the intervention, whereas five of the seven negative items were 'hard' and 'nervous'. For the UPG, pre-test responses revealed ten positive adjectives and fifteen that were negative. At post-test, the number of positive entries reduced to six and the negatives increased to sixteen; notably the words 'embarrassed' and 'anxious' were the most frequently used negative items at both pre-test and post-test. Bar graphs also reflect these findings from the change at pre- and post-test in students' attitudes towards reading aloud in Spanish, as seen in Figure 4.7 for the SG and Figure 4.8 for the UPG.

Table 4.10: SG students' positive, negative, and neutral responses to the question 'Write two words describing how you feel about reading aloud in Spanish' at pre- and post-test.

SG pre-test responses	SG post-test responses
Positive (8) Confident Good (3x) Helpful Interesting It's possible Positive	**Positive (21)** A fun challenge Better understanding Clever Confident (3x) Easy (4x) Enjoyable (2x) Excited (2x) Fun (3x) Great (2x) I can do it Powerful
Neutral (7) Fine (3x) I don't know (2x) Not bothered OK	**Neutral (6)** Alright (2x) Normal (3x) OK
Negative (19) Bored (2x) Difficult (4x) Hard (3x) Impossible Nervous (2x) Tiring Too much effort Tricky Uncomfortable Worried (3x)	**Negative (7)** Challenging Hard (2x) Nervous (3x) Worried

Table 4.11: UPG students' positive, negative, and neutral responses to the question 'Write two words describing how you feel about reading aloud in Spanish' at pre- and post-test.

UPG pre-test responses	UPG post-test responses
Positive (10) Confident Cool Excited Good (3x) Happy Interesting Proud Relaxed	**Positive (6)** Easy (2x) Focused Good Great It's possible
Neutral (9) Average Fine (2x) I don't know Not bothered OK (4x)	**Neutral (12)** Fine (2x) Meh Normal (3x) Not good, not bad Not bothered OK (4x)
Negative (15) Anxious (4x) Embarrassed (3x) Hard (2x) I don't like it Just, no Painful Sad Stressed Tired	**Negative (16)** Anxious (3x) Embarrassed (4x) I don't enjoy it Nervous (2x) Not confident (2x) Sad Stressed (2x) Worried

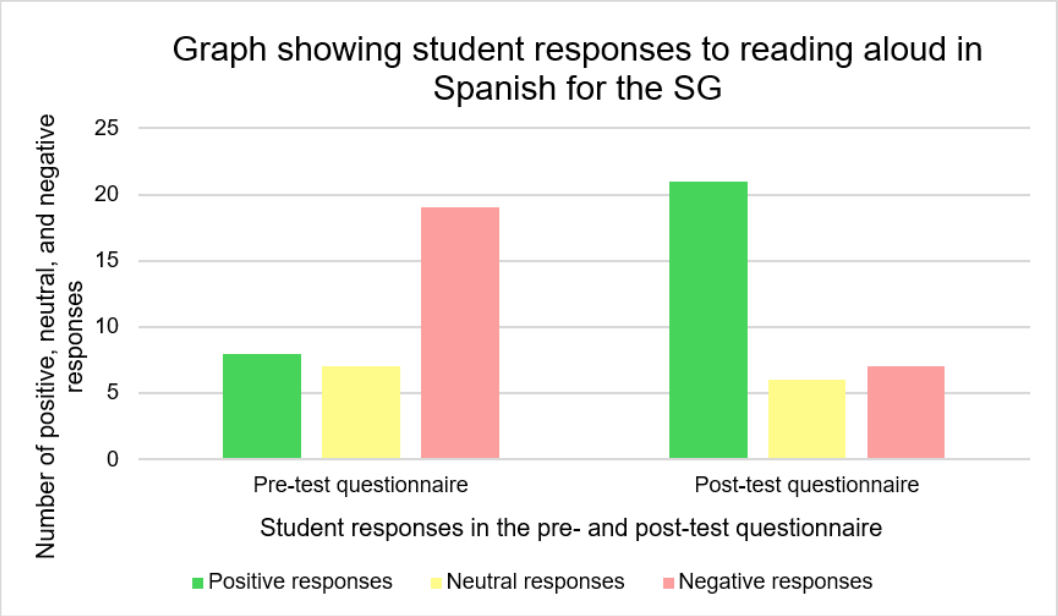

Figure 4.7: Bar graph showing positive, neutral, and negative responses from the SG at pre-test and post-test to the question 'Write two words describing how you feel about reading aloud in Spanish'.

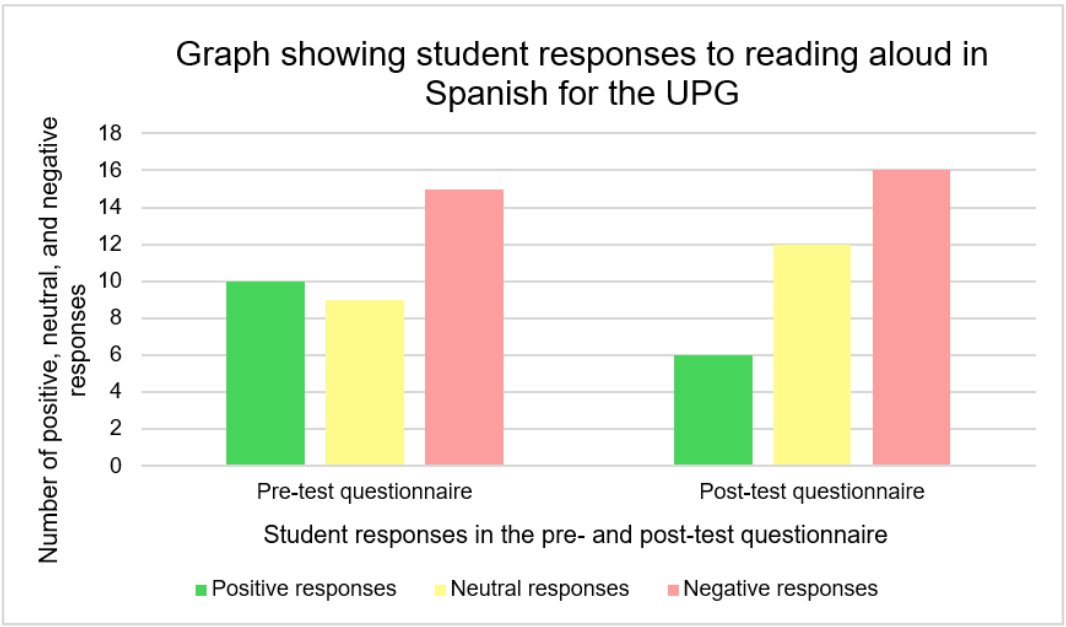

Figure 4.8: Bar graph showing positive, neutral, and negative responses from the UPG at pre-test and post-test to the question 'Write two words describing how you feel about reading aloud in Spanish'.

4.3.4 Question four: Evaluative statements of the intervention

The final question collected data from the SG as an evaluation of the intervention. Students read the 10 statements and circled the emotive face for each one that best reflected how they felt. A full breakdown of individual scores can be found in Appendix M. Table 4.12 presents the ten statements (A-J) and their average mean score. Given that the minimum score for each item was 1 and the maximum 5, the overall total mean score of 3.9 indicates a positive evaluation of the song intervention. Students' enjoyment of learning the songs (Item A) received the highest mean score of 4.6 whereas the ease of the method in the intervention (Item E) had the lowest mean score of 3.2. Similar to Woore (2004), the statements were further organised to differentiate between the learning of the songs (Category 1) and the use of the method (Category 2). Students expressed higher scores for the items pertaining to the learning of the songs (A, B, C, G), which averaged a mean score of 4.4. In contrast, items relating more to using the method in the intervention (D, E, F, H, I, J) received a lower average mean score of 3.6.

Table 4.12: Overall mean score for the ten statements, as well as the mean score for Category 1 and Category 2 statements.

Item	Statement	Mean score
A	Your enjoyment of learning the songs	4.6
B	How easy the songs were to learn	4.2
C	How well you know the lyrics in the three songs	4.4
D	If the method of using songs helped you to pronounce Spanish words you haven't seen before	3.6
E	How easy you found the method of using songs	3.2
F	How much you enjoyed the method	3.7
G	How easy it was to remember how the lyrics in the songs sounded	4.2
H	How easy it was to find letters in the lyrics which matched those in the unfamiliar words	3.6
I	How easy it was to transfer the sounds in the lyrics to the new words	3.4
J	How much you would like to continue using the song method in lessons	4.1
Total mean score for all statements = 3.9		

Category 1 statements		Category 2 statements	
Item	**Mean score**	**Item**	**Mean score**
A	4.6	D	3.6
B	4.2	E	3.2
C	4.4	F	3.7
G	4.2	H	3.6
		I	3.4
		J	4.1
Total mean for category 1 statements = 4.4		**Total mean for category 2 statements** = 3.6	

The overall findings for RQ3 revealed a positive influence of the intervention on the general interest in Spanish by students in the SG. In comparison to the UPG, following the intervention, more students in the SG expressed a desire to take Spanish as a GCSE option. Additionally, their motivation for Spanish as a subject was higher, and they responded with more positive adjectives in relation to reading aloud in Spanish. Additionally, an overall mean score of 3.9 out of a maximum possible score of 5 reflects a positive evaluation of the intervention by the SG.

5. Discussion

5.1 Research aims

The present study investigated whether the use of songs as part of explicit L2 decoding instruction would improve outcomes in L2 pronunciation amongst learners of Spanish during a read aloud task. A pre- post-test design using unfamiliar L2 words enabled comparison of change in mean scores between the SG and UPG in L2 pronunciation. Additionally, end of unit assessment scores were calculated for both groups to determine any detrimental impact of the training on pupils' general progress in Spanish. Questionnaires were also administered to identify any changes in motivation over the course of the intervention, along with evaluative statements for the SG to capture their response to the training. The research questions were:

1. What are the relative effects of using songs compared to usual practice on L2 pronunciation during a read aloud task?

2. Does the group that received the intervention still demonstrate progress in general learning of Spanish, equal to the usual practice group?

3. What are students' impressions of the song intervention and how does their overall interest in Spanish compare with students in the usual practice group?

5.2 Effect of explicit L2 decoding instruction

Both the SG and UPG demonstrated statistically significant mean increases between pre- and post-test in the accuracy of their L2 pronunciation while reading aloud unfamiliar L2 words. Given that both groups continued to receive Spanish lessons throughout the course of the study, this finding from the dependent samples t-tests is unsurprising. However, the extent to which students in the SG improved was far greater, and statistically significantly so, compared to the comparably small mean increases in the UPG. RQ1 can therefore be answered affirmatively. This result echoes previous studies featuring similar beginner MFL learners at KS3 (Erler, 2008; Woore, 2004; Woore, 2011), suggesting that in the absence of explicit instruction, students make limited progress in L2 decoding. The evidence is therefore supportive of calls by Woore et al. (2018) for a direct approach to teaching phonics, which may be "more reliable" (Teaching Schools Councils, 2016, p.12) for accurate L2 decoding outcomes than current implicit instructional practices.

Furthermore, results from the end of unit module tests designed to assess general Spanish attainment revealed a very small and similar change in mean score for both groups and was not statistically significant. Thus, the gains in L2 decoding by the SG were not at the expense of making progress in acquiring other aspects of the Spanish language, therefore RQ2 can also be answered affirmatively. This result concurs with previous intervention studies exploring the impact of an explicit phonics intervention with beginner learners of German (Woore, 2004) and French (Woore, 2011) in English MFL classrooms.

5.3 Analysis of L2 GPCs

An analysis of the ease and difficulty with which learners decoded the unfamiliar L2 words shows that the phonemes /t͡ʃ/, /l/, and /ka/ consistently scored the highest accuracy marks at pre- and post-test for both groups. Given that these phonemes also have the same graphemes in English and Spanish (<ch>, <l>, <ca>), the L1 may have a facilitative effect on L2 processing where the two systems overlap, enabling implicit acquisition of these GPCs. An exception to this is the grapheme <ll>, which also scored highly despite its corresponding Spanish phoneme /ʎ/ differing from the English pronunciation, /l/. A possible explanation could be that this is one of the very first sounds students learn in a written and oral capacity in the set phrase, *me llamo, (*/me ʎamo/, 'my name is') to introduce themselves, which is likely to be highly recycled across different topics and therefore perhaps already secure in their knowledge of Spanish GPCs.

Contrary to the supportive role of the L1, the L2 graphemes <z>, <qui>, and <que> were far more resistant to explicit training in the SG and received the lowest decoding accuracy scores, closely followed by <r>, <rr>, <h>, and <j>. In an investigation of decoding amongst Chinese learners of English, Li (2019) posits that learners' L1 processing mechanisms may become automatically activated upon seeing a L2 grapheme that also exists in the L1, even if their phonological representations differ between the languages, resulting in the application of L1-based pronunciations. This may explain why these Spanish graphemes, which also appear in English, were often articulated with anglicized pronunciations. This finding therefore refutes Koda's (2012) claim that two similar, alphabetic languages are more likely to yield greater decoding outcomes due to the smaller orthographic distance between them and the positive influence of L1 mapping skills onto the L2. Instead, the present study lends support to Woore's (2013) research investigating decoding with English learners of French that close similarities between the L1 and L2 may actually lead to more difficulties. Consequently, it would seem that additional time and practice for these GPCs during the training is necessary.

Alongside the potentially negative effect of the L1 on L2 decoding outcomes for <h>, <j>, and <z>, further analysis reveals that these graphemes in the source words from the lyrics were all in a different position to how they appeared in the final post-test words. For example, in the song lyrics, <h> only appeared in initial position (*hogar*, *hay*), <j> was only intervocalic (*lejos, ojos, bajo, almejas*), and <z> was only in final position (*paz, feliz*), whereas the words at post-test did not have these graphemes in the same place. It is possible therefore that despite memorising these sounds within the source words, some students may have associated the sound-symbol mappings with the position of the grapheme in a word, leading to incorrect outcomes in the post-test. Indeed, Mahzoun and Han (2019) highlight the importance of phonemes' positions in words following a read aloud task with L1 Turkish – L2 English learners who produced many pronunciations of graphemes that should have been articulated in the same way across initial, medial, and final positions. Thus, future training should be mindful of including a variety of words to avoid learners potentially associating the pronunciations of individual graphemes with the position in which they appear.

Nevertheless, the role of the L1 may not be entirely responsible for explaining inaccurate L2 decoding outcomes. Despite the overall statistically significant positive increase amongst the SG in decoding L2 Spanish words, with many students improving at post-test by at least 12 marks, it is important to acknowledge individual variation that interrupts this pattern. Indeed, two students only improved by six marks, one student's score remained the same at pre- and post-test, and two students' scores decreased by two marks. Interestingly, these pupils were all of a slightly lower ability in Spanish, having achieved either a Grade 5 or 6 in their baseline assessment of Spanish proficiency. The mean at baseline was 62%, a strong Grade 6 only 3% away from the next grade boundary, although nearly half of the students in the class achieved a Grade 7 or higher.

Woore (2011) reports a similar finding in his study of beginner French learners, noting that several students' marks were worse at post- than at pre-test. In light of having received ongoing explicit L2 decoding instruction, Woore (2011) notes it is unlikely that L1-based mappings can explain this deterioration in progress. Instead, it is plausible that learners were consciously aware of needing to pronounce the L2 words differently to how they would in English, however, a lack of secure knowledge of the L2 sound-symbol mappings led to approximate realisations of the L2 target form that resembled neither language (Woore, 2011). A later study by Woore (2016, p.13) also found evidence of such "idiosyncratic pronunciations" in learners' attempts to decode unfamiliar L2 French words and suggests this may reflect their developing knowledge of L2 GPCs which has not yet become automatised. For lower ability students in particular, explicit training therefore may require more time for L2 sound-symbol

mappings to become automatic, suggesting that in a mixed-ability class of learners, the intervention was more successful for students of an advanced ability.

5.4 Motivation for language learning

Students' written responses concerning how they feel about reading aloud in Spanish indicate a positive correlation between the intervention and their perceived ability to decode in a L2. The low number of positive and high number of negative adjectives at pre-test was reversed at post-test, whereas responses amongst the UPG remained similar, with slightly fewer positive and more neutral adjectives at post-test. Following the intervention, many students in the SG described reading aloud in Spanish as 'easy' and 'fun', along with other responses such as 'powerful', 'clever', and 'I can do it', suggesting an overall improved belief in their own ability. These findings are highly encouraging and lend support to recent policy guidelines emphasising the renewed importance of L2 phonological awareness (Ofsted, 2021). Given the limited progress that students across KS3 make in L2 decoding (Erler, 2008) under a largely implicit approach to phonics teaching in English MFL classrooms (Woore 2007; Woore 2010; Bauckham, 2019), explicit instruction could be a welcome alternative to build students' confidence in this skill and strengthen their knowledge of L2 sound-symbol mappings in preparation for the new MFL GCSE.

The impact of improved L2 decoding appears to carry important implications for students' wider motivation to learn Spanish. Questionnaire responses from the SG indicate a positive increase in motivation which is notably much larger in comparison to the UPG. This is an important finding as it suggests that the intervention not only improved students' actual ability and their perceived ability in L2 decoding, but that the benefits also extend further to a heightened sense of motivation for Spanish as a subject. However, two students who achieved amongst the highest change in motivation scores also reported musical ability on the background questionnaire, including one who has singing lessons every week. The notion of a song intervention potentially appealed to these students' interests anyway, regardless of explicit L2 phonics instruction.

It should be acknowledged that in the context of this study, measurements of motivation using Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Learning Experience can only offer an insight into learners' current disposition and therefore do not capture the temporal nature of motivation as a dynamic construct that may fluctuate over time. Nevertheless, these findings echo research by Erler and Macaro (2011) that increased L2 decoding abilities can inspire confidence amongst students and enhance L2 motivation, which may help to interrupt the motivational decline in language learning at KS3 (Williams et al., 2002; Coleman et al., 2007).

Indeed, an overwhelming majority of students in the SG at post-test also reported a desire to take Spanish at GCSE in the following academic year compared to far more mixed responses from the UPG. Although this could be subject to change as learners progress through the remainder of Year 8 and is unlikely to be purely as a result of the intervention, this tentative finding is nevertheless promising. Explicit L2 decoding instruction at KS3 could therefore encourage students to embrace the new focus on phonics in the upcoming changes to MFL GCSE, potentially increasing uptake.

5.5 Evaluation of GPC training

The evaluation questionnaire from students in the SG revealed an overall positive mean score, although the Category 1 statements relating to learning the songs were noticeably higher than the Category 2 items concerning the steps within the method. This is in line with Woore (2004) who reached a similar finding with beginner learners of L2 German, noting that statements about the use of poems received the highest mean scores. Woore (2004) suggests that learning the poems and interacting with the content as a whole class was arguably more engaging for students than the quieter pair-work or individual activities involved in applying GPC knowledge to decode unfamiliar L2 words. This explanation could be applicable to the present study, although it is important to recognise that students still responded positively to Statement J asking if they would like to continue using the song method in future lessons. Follow up interviews or focus groups with students could have perhaps illuminated these findings further to gauge which aspects of the training were particularly difficult or uninteresting. However, this was beyond the scope of the present study.

Although these responses from the evaluation questionnaire are encouraging, it is important to consider whether the intervention was successful due to the integrated song element, or whether explicit instruction alone would have resulted in the same positive outcome for L2 decoding. In light of the Category 1 statements receiving the highest mean scores, it is possible that the use of songs as the vehicle to deliver the explicit GPC instruction injected a sense of enjoyment and motivation into the training, contributing heavily to the overall success of the intervention. In the absence of using songs and instead delivering a more teacher-led approach to explicit GPC instruction, it is worth considering whether learners would have enjoyed the training to the same extent and if they would have made the same amount of progress in L2 decoding.

Previous research exploring L2 Spanish (Sturm, 2013) and L2 English (Li & Woore, 2021) explicit phonics instruction without any song component suggests that learners do indeed make good progress in developing L2 sound-symbol mappings. However, it must be acknowledged that the learners in these studies were university students who are more mature and arguably already self-motivated to succeed in the L2. It is possible therefore that younger students studying a foreign language as part of their compulsory school education may require an engaging, creative element such as songs in the present study, or poems as in Woore's (2004; 2011) research, to serve as a motivational tool and support success in L2 decoding. However, this would need to be addressed in further research by contrasting these approaches with a purely teacher-led focus on explicit instruction. Thus, in response to RQ3, evidence suggests that students responded positively to the intervention and demonstrated heightened motivation for Spanish in comparison to the UPG, although whether this was directly as a result of explicit phonics instruction, or the addition of the song element, is uncertain.

5.6 Suggestions for future research

Although findings from the present study are promising, it is possible that the novelty of working with songs played an important role in the success of the intervention. A key focus for future research therefore should compare different creative approaches to explicit L2 decoding, such as poems and songs, with purely teacher-led instruction. This is especially important given that official policy documents highlight the need for explicit L2 decoding yet fail to expand on what such instruction should look like in practice for MFL teachers (Ofsted, 2021).

The design of future studies should also include words at pre- and post-test with graphemes in a variety of positions to control for the possibility of learners associating the pronunciations of L2 graphemes with their location in a given word. Follow-up interviews or focus groups could complement the quantitative findings to better understand how well learners applied the intervention method to decode unfamiliar L2 words, in addition to gaining insight into their feelings surrounding the different aspects to the training.

Finally, although the present study found no statistically significant difference in general Spanish attainment between the SG and UPG, it is not inconceivable to anticipate growth in one of the four skills (reading, listening, speaking, writing) at the expense of another. Future research could therefore include an analysis of students' scores at pre- and post-test for each of these domains to further explore the impact of the training on different linguistic skills.

5.7 Implications for classroom practice

Overall evidence from this study points to the benefits of incorporating explicit phonics instruction into classroom practice to support L2 decoding outcomes amongst MFL students. However, an important consideration for teachers is to determine which L2 GPCs should be taught. Whilst it could be argued that teaching GPCs with the same graphemes in the L1 and L2 appears unnecessary, findings from the present study suggest otherwise. Such similarities between the two languages may actually be just as challenging for learners as L2 specific graphemes due to the influence of L1-based mappings, therefore explicit instruction could be beneficial. An initial step for teachers should be to carry out an audit of students' L2 decoding knowledge through a simple read aloud test of unfamiliar L2 words to determine which GPCs may require more attention. Following this, the steps in Figure 2 could be consulted to establish whether the difficulties relate to teacher-led explanations perhaps being too brief, a lack of practice, or perhaps even insufficient individual feedback. Certain steps may need to be repeated based on the learners' needs, particularly those who are of a lower ability. However, teachers should be guided by their own pragmatic judgement regarding how much time to dedicate to each L2 GPC through an informed decision based on the learners in their classroom and the language pairings in question.

Furthermore, teachers should be aware that automatization of L2 sound-symbol mappings may take time. Despite the statistically significant increase in the accuracy of L2 realisations amongst the SG, very few learners achieved the highest score of 5 marks on the unknown words at post-test. Instead, learners are more likely to progress through various iterations of the L2 GPCs over time before they achieve the target form due to the potentially interfering role of the L1, along with lack of secure L2 phonological awareness. Explicit L2 decoding instruction embedded as part of teaching practice should therefore be consistent to enable plenty of opportunities for L2 decoding practice, as well as supporting learners in solidifying their understanding of L2 sound-symbol mappings.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Summary of findings

The present study aimed to explore the effectiveness of using songs to deliver explicit decoding instruction of L2 Spanish GPCs to improve pronunciation amongst MFL students in England when reading aloud. The rationale for this study was due to heightened importance placed on explicit phonics teaching in updated MFL policy documents (Ofsted, 2021). However, this stands in contrast to a more implicit approach to phonics instruction widely adopted in MFL classrooms, with current practice instead focusing on the communicative aspects of language learning (Bauckham, 2019; Dörnyei, 2013). Furthermore, research has identified poor L2 phonological awareness and lack of progress in L2 decoding across KS3 amongst MFL students in England (Erler, 2004; Erler, 2008; Woore, 2009), which may be impacting on motivation for language learning (Erler & Macaro, 2011). This contributes to an already troubling picture of declining L2 motivation identified nearly twenty years ago (Coleman et al., 2007) that continues to persist (Courtney, 2017; Lanvers, 2017; Parrish, 2019), with current motivational levels amongst MFL students showing little sign of improvement (Woore et al., 2024). In light of imminent changes to the new MFL GCSE featuring a read aloud component specifically designed to test students' L2 decoding ability, secure knowledge of L2 sound-symbol mappings is therefore imperative.

To determine whether explicit phonics instruction supports correct realisations of L2 GPCs, an intervention group received training through the use of songs whereas a comparison group continued with usual practice. Outcomes were measured through accuracy in L2 pronunciations of unfamiliar words assessed at pre- and post-test. Findings revealed a statistically significant improvement in pronunciation accuracy for both groups. However, the extent of improvement in the SG was statistically significantly greater than that of the UPG. Results from the module tests completed by both groups found no detrimental effect of the training on progress in other linguistic skills. Additionally, students' responses to the overall intervention, particularly the use of songs, were highly encouraging and revealed a positive influence on their wider motivation for learning Spanish. The three research questions were therefore answered affirmatively. Thus, this study has provided promising results on the effectiveness of using songs to deliver explicit phonics instruction on students' short-term decoding ability and motivation for language learning.

6.2 Limitations and future research recommendations

A limitation of the study is its reliance on an adapted version of the MFL GCSE speaking examination mark scheme, which can only offer holistic judgements of L2 decoding outcomes. Transcriptions of students' L2 pronunciations using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA, 2023) could have complemented this assessment by offering a higher degree of accuracy, along with providing richer insight into the development of students' GPCs and whether their L2 realisations reflect more L1-mappings or approximations of the target L2 forms.

Additionally, the study can only offer evidence based on L2 Spanish learners, therefore the findings may not necessarily hold true for other foreign languages taught in MFL classrooms due to phonological differences. Also, the length of the intervention was just one term which is unlikely to allow for automatization of the L2 sound-symbol mappings; the findings therefore may be more representative of students' ability to remember the L2 GPCs in their short-term memory. An extended period of training would have provided greater understanding of non-linear progress and potentially more reliable insight into variation in L2 decoding outcomes. The fluctuating nature of L2 motivation as a non-static construct would also be better captured over a greater length of time. In addition, a delayed post-test would have been ideal to determine whether the effects of the intervention sustained in subsequent months, however, this was not feasible due to time constraints.

The use of songs as a novel approach to support L2 decoding merits further empirical investigation, particularly given the limited quality of current research in this field (Hamilton et al., 2024). This study demonstrated that songs are effective for teaching phonics explicitly, but cannot offer evidence of how well they work compared to alternative approaches, which some teachers may feel more comfortable with (such as traditional phonics teaching or the use of other media such as poems). Future studies should compare a song-based approach to phonics instruction with alternatives, to allow teachers to make evidence informed decisions about their practice.

The design of future research would benefit from qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups to enrich findings, along with ensuring that L2 graphemes in the test words appear in a variety of positions. A detailed analysis of learners' scores across reading, listening, speaking, and writing should also be considered to explore the impact of the training across these skills. Overall, this small-scale study has provided very promising results and an exciting opportunity for future research to build on with a larger sample size and over a greater length of time.

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8. Appendices

Appendix A: Background Questionnaire

Name:

Form:

Background Questionnaire

Part A: These questions are about your connections with Spanish speaking people or countries.

1. Do you have any friends who speak Spanish as a native language? YES / NO

2. Do you have any relatives who speak Spanish as a native language? YES / NO

3. Have you ever been to any Spanish-speaking countries? YES / NO

→ If you answered YES to this question, please explain below which countries and how often

……

4. Do you speak Spanish outside of school? YES / NO

→ If you answered YES to this question, please explain who with, how often, and for how long

……

Part B: These statements are about your musical ability. For each statement, circle the answer that is appropriate for you.

1. I am having singing lessons YES / NO

→ If you answered YES to this question, please explain how often and for how long

……

2. I play a musical instrument YES / NO

→ If you answered YES to this question, please say how often you practice

……

3. I am involved in singing activities outside of school YES / NO

→ If you answered YES to this question, please say how often you practice

……

Appendix B.1: SG EOM2 baseline data

Pupil	End mod 2 listening %	End mod 2 reading %	End mod 2 writing %	EOM2 Speaking %	Total %	Grade	Colour Band
9577	100	56	71	71	75	8	Blue
6289	79	72	83	46	70	7	Green
1640	73	72	71	54	68	7	Green
7263	63	36	29	50	45	5	Yellow
5502	50	44	71	83	62	6	Orange
2621	67	32	71	24	49	5	Yellow
8538	64	52	58	83	64	6	Orange
2539	71	64	100	67	76	8	Blue
7827	65	58	72	64	65	7	Green
5411	67	56	71	38	58	6	Orange
1446	48	77	57	51	59	6	Orange
3086	89	28	29	43	47	5	Yellow
5270	66	64	79	63	68	7	Green
6417	55	37	50	38	45	5	Yellow
5154	60	94	58	86	75	8	Blue
2191	77	72	79	70	75	8	Blue
3506	52	44	73	54	56	6	Orange
Mean	67.4	56.3	66	57.9	62.1	6	Orange

Appendix B.2: UPG EOM2 baseline data

Pupil	End mod 2 listening %	End mod 2 reading %	End mod 2 writing %	End mod 2 speaking %	Total %	Grade	Colour Band
2320	67	48	86	51	63	6	Orange
1960	89	72	86	84	83	8	Blue
2082	61	52	93	79	71	7	Green
2971	38	52	71	78	60	6	Orange
3926	72	48	64	46	58	6	Orange
3472	36	72	57	46	53	5	Yellow
4031	94	64	71	83	78	8	Blue
2421	56	83	86	67	73	7	Green
2636	89	28	51	38	52	5	Yellow
4914	40	75	67	29	53	5	Yellow
2088	83	71	44	50	62	6	Orange
4584	78	64	95	50	72	7	Green
3827	72	56	86	63	69	7	Green
1001	25	32	64	94	54	5	Yellow
3445	94	64	93	67	80	8	Blue
1289	83	72	86	83	81	8	Blue
4329	43	76	83	58	65	7	Green
5318	72	32	86	54	61	6	Orange
Mean	66.2	58.9	76	62.2	66	7	Green

Appendix C: List of Spanish words

Pre-test words

1	trago
2	caña
3	chapa
4	cinta
5	cofa
6	cuenca
7	feto
8	mago
9	búho
10	pica
11	jalar
12	librar
13	lloro
14	dañar
15	nulo
16	queja
17	quinta
18	cera
19	barra
20	muro
21	virar
22	pozo

Post-test words

1	traba
2	cabal
3	chata
4	cifra
5	cofre
6	cuenco
7	neto
8	mego
9	moho
10	pincho
11	jurar
12	ligar
13	lluqui
14	soñar
15	nudo
16	quena
17	quinto
18	gira
19	garra
20	zuro
21	verter
22	trozo

Appendix D: Pre- and post-test questionnaire (SG & UPG)

Name:
Form:

Questionnaire

As you know, I am interested in looking at how learners of Spanish read words aloud. To understand this better, I would like to find out about your overall interest in Spanish and how you currently feel about the subject. There are no right or wrong answers, I just want your honest opinions! What you say here will not affect your marks, your school reports, or my opinion of you in any way. Your responses will be confidential, only I will be able to see them.

1. Do you think you will take Spanish as a GCSE option?

Circle the answer that matches how you feel

YES NO UNSURE

2. Write the number in the boxes below that matches how you feel against each statement

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

a) Learning Spanish is enjoyable and fun for me

b) I feel a sense of achievement when learning Spanish

c) I feel proud because I am making progress in Spanish

d) I don't feel anxious when learning Spanish

e) I don't feel stressed by Spanish assessments

f) There are always clear goals to achieve in Spanish

g) I get actively involved in Spanish lessons

h) I try hard to learn in Spanish lessons

i) I do my best to stay focused in the classroom

j) Positive interactions with the teacher motivate me

k) I receive help from my teacher to learn Spanish

l) My teacher is supportive of my progress in Spanish

m) I believe that I have the ability to do well in Spanish

n) I try to achieve the goals my teacher has set me

o) I am able to do most Spanish tasks

a	**b**	**c**	**d**	**e**	**f**	**g**	**h**	**i**	**j**	**k**	**l**	**m**	**n**	**o**

3. Write two words describing how you feel about reading aloud in Spanish.

i) ……..

ii) ……

Thank you!

Appendix E: SG post-test evaluation of intervention

4. Read the following statements and circle the face that matches how you feel

a) Your **enjoyment** of learning the songs

5 4 3 2 1

b) How **easy** the songs were to learn

5 4 3 2 1

c) How **well** you know the lyrics in the three songs

5 4 3 2 1

d) If the method of using songs **helped** you to pronounce Spanish words you haven't seen before

5 4 3 2 1

e) How **easy** you found the method of using songs

5 4 3 2 1

f) How much you **enjoyed** using the method

5 4 3 2 1

g) How **easy** it was to remember how the lyrics in the songs sounded

5 4 3 2 1

h) How **easy** it was to find letters in the lyrics which matched those in the unfamiliar words

5 4 3 2 1

i) How **easy** it was to transfer the sounds in the lyrics to the new words

5 4 3 2 1

j) How much would you **like to continue** using the song method in lessons?

5 4 3 2 1

Thank you!

Appendix F: Song lyrics in Spanish and English

Yo soy tu amigo fiel

(You've got a friend in me)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79CZat0LLcg

(0:00 – 0:38)

Yo soy tu amigo fiel
Yo soy tu amigo fiel
Y si un día, tú te encuentras
Lejos, muy lejos de tu lindo hogar
Cierra los ojos y recuerda que
Yo soy tu amigo fiel
Sí, yo soy tu amigo fiel

You've got a friend in me
You've got a friend in me
And if one day you find yourself
Far, far away from your lovely home
Close your eyes and remember that
You've got a friend in me
Yeah, you've got a friend in me

Bajo del mar

(Under the sea)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygV_nhYBMxU

(2:22 – 2:41)

Bajo del mar (bajo del mar)
Bajo del mar (bajo del mar)
Hay bailarinas
Son las sardinas, ven a bailar
¿Pára que quieres explorar, si nuestra banda va a tocar?
Hay castañuelas, son las almejas
Bajo del mar

Under the sea (under the sea)
Under the sea (under the sea)
There are ballerinas
They're the sardines, come and dance
Why do you want to explore if our band are playing?
There are castanets, they're the shellfish
Under the sea

Es la noche del amor

(Can you feel the love tonight?)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQl0E9lUIBM

(1:59 – 2:35)

Es la noche del amor
Con todo en su lugar
Más allá, de toda oscuridad
Hay amor y paz
Feliz final
Escrito está
Es un gran error

Can you feel the love tonight?
With everything in its place
Over there in all the darkness
There is love and peace
It's a happy ending
It's over
It's a big mistake

Appendix G: List of GPCs and examples from the songs

	Grapheme	Phoneme	Words containing this GPC across the songs
1	a	/a/	**a**migo, día, encuentr**a**s, hog**a**r, cierr**a**, recuerd**a**, b**a**jo, m**a**r, h**a**y, b**a**il**a**rin**a**s, l**a**s, s**a**rdin**a**s, b**a**il**a**r, p**á**r**a**, explor**a**r, nuestr**a**, b**a**nd**a**, v**a**, toc**a**r, c**a**st**a**ñuel**a**s, **a**lmej**a**s, **a**mor, lug**a**r, m**á**s, **a**ll**á**, tod**a**, oscurid**a**d, p**a**z, fin**a**l, est**á**, gr**a**n
2	ca	/ka/	to**ca**r, **ca**stañuelas
3	ch	/t͡ʃ/	no**ch**e
4	ci	/θi/	**ci**erra
5	co	/ko/	**co**n
6	cue	/kwe/	en**cue**ntras, re**cue**rda
7	e	/e/	fi**e**l, t**e**, **e**ncu**e**ntras, l**e**jos, cierra, r**e**cuerda, qu**e**, v**e**n, qui**e**r**e**s, **e**xplorar, nu**e**stra, castañu**e**las, alm**e**jas, **e**s, noch**e**, f**e**liz, **e**scrito, **e**stá, **e**s, **e**rror
8	go	/go/	ami**go**
9	h	Silent, no phoneme	**h**ogar, **h**ay
10	i	/i/	am**i**go, f**i**el, s**i**, día, l**i**ndo, c**i**erra, bailar**i**nas, sardinas, bailar, oscur**i**dad, fel**i**z, f**i**nal, escr**i**to
11	j	/x/	le**j**os, o**j**os, ba**j**o, almej**a**s
12	l	/l/	fie**l**, **l**indo, **l**os, de**l**, bailarinas, **l**as, bailar, explorar, almejas, **l**a, lugar, fe**l**iz, fina**l**
13	ll	/ʎ/	a**ll**á
14	ñ	/ɲ/	castaña**ñ**uelas
15	o	/o/	y**o**, s**o**y, amig**o**, lej**o**s, lind**o**, h**o**gar, **o**j**o**s, baj**o**, s**o**n, explor**o**r, t**o**car, n**o**che, am**o**r, c**o**n, t**o**d**o**, t**o**da, **o**scuridad, escrit**o**, err**o**r
16	que	/ke/	**que**
17	qui	/ki/	**qui**eres
18	r	/r/	encuentras, sardinas, quieres, explorar, nuestra, escrito
19	rr	/r̄/	cierra, error
20	u	/u/	t**u**, m**u**y, n**u**estra, castañ**u**elas, osc**u**ridad, **u**n
21	v	/b/	**v**en, **v**a
22	z	/θ/	pa**z**, feli**z**

Appendix H.1 & H.2: EOM3 and EOM4 assessments

The figures originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Appendix I: Mark scheme

Points	Label	Descriptors	Examples
0	Non-decoded	* Pronunciation bears no relation to the graphemes * A different word is pronounced * Pronunciation does not meet the standard required for one point	*queja* /kiʎa/
1	Poor	* Pronunciation has regular minor and some major errors * Additional or omitted graphemes may be heard * Very few of the graphemes are articulated in line with the Spanish targets	*cifra* /t͡ʃifrə/
2	Approximate	* Pronunciation has minor errors and a few major errors * There may be some approximation of features towards the target Spanish form	*jurar* /xura/
3	Good	* Pronunciation has a few minor errors and very occasional major errors *The word sounds like the Spanish target word	*caña* /kaɲə/
4	Very good	* Pronunciation has a few minor errors and no major errors * The articulation of the graphemes reflects the target Spanish form	*barra* /bara/
5	Excellent	* Pronunciation is always or nearly always accurate	*lloro* /ʎoro/

Appendix J.1, J.2, J.3, J.4: Pre- and post-test results for SG & UPG

Pre-test results for SG

Pupil	1) trago	2) caña	3) chapa	4) cinta	5) cofa	6) cuenca	7) feto	8) mago	9) búho	10) pica	11) jalar	12) librar	13) lloro	14) dañar	15) nulo	16) queja	17) quinta	18) cera	19) barra	20) muro	21) virar	22) pozo	Total	Mean
9577	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	**61**	**2.772**
6289	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	**54**	**2.454**
1640	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	**60**	**2.727**
7263	1	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	**31**	**1.409**
5502	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	**43**	**1.954**
2621	1	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	2	1	**31**	**1.409**
8538	1	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	**43**	**1.954**
2539	3	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	4	2	**63**	**2.863**
7827	1	3	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	4	2	2	2	1	0	2	1	2	2	1	**39**	**1.772**
5411	1	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	**45**	**2.045**
1446	1	2	3	2	2	1	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	**44**	**2**
3086	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	**41**	**1.863**
5270	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	1	4	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	2	**51**	**2.318**
6417	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	0	3	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	2	1	**28**	**1.272**
5154	2	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	4	3	3	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	1	**54**	**2.454**
2191	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	**58**	**2.636**
3506	1	3	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	2	2	0	1	2	2	1	1	1	**37**	**1.681**
Mean	1.7	2.52	3.23	1.52	2.29	1.88	2.17	2.52	1.64	2.41	1.52	3.35	2.23	2.41	2	1.17	1.35	2.17	2	1.94	2.41	1.52	**46**	**2.08**

Post-test results for SG

Pupil	1) traba	2) cabal	3) chata	4) cifra	5) cofre	6) cuenco	7) neto	8) mego	9) moho	10) pincho	11) jurar	12) ligar	13) lluqui	14) soñar	15) nudo	16) quena	17) quinto	18) gira	19) garra	20) zuro	21) verter	22) trozo	Total	Mean
9577	4	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	5	4	4	2	2	3	3	4	5	2	**80**	**3.63**
6289	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	5	5	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	4	2	**67**	**3.04**
1640	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	2	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	3	**79**	**3.59**
7263	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**31**	**1.4**
5502	2	3	4	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	4	4	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	**55**	**2.5**
2621	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	**29**	**1.31**
8538	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	**49**	**2.22**
2539	4	4	5	5	4	3	4	4	2	4	3	4	4	5	5	3	2	4	3	4	4	3	**83**	**3.77**
7827	2	4	4	4	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	5	5	4	3	2	1	2	2	2	4	2	**62**	**2.81**
5411	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	5	4	3	3	2	1	3	2	2	2	3	**63**	**2.86**
1446	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	**50**	**2.27**
3086	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	4	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	**53**	**2.4**
5270	3	4	4	4	3	2	3	3	2	4	2	4	4	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	**64**	**2.9**
6417	1	1	2	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	**26**	**1.18**
5154	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	4	2	4	2	5	5	4	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	2	**69**	**3.13**
2191	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	2	**82**	**3.72**
3506	3	3	4	4	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	5	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	**60**	**2.72**
Mean	2.64	3.05	3.58	3.29	2.94	2.29	2.94	2.88	2	3	2	3.58	3.76	3.05	2.76	1.64	1.7	2.41	2.05	2.47	2.82	1.99	**58.8**	**2.67**

Pre-test results for UPG

Pupil	1) trago	2) caña	3) chapa	4) cinta	5) cofa	6) cuenca	7) feto	8) mago	9) búho	10) pica	11) jalar	12) librar	13) lloro	14) dañar	15) nulo	16) queja	17) quinta	18) cera	19) barra	20) muro	21) virar	22) pozo	Total	Mean
2320	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	3	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	**42**	**1.9**
1960	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	4	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	**60**	**2.7**
2082	2	4	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	**54**	**2.5**
2971	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	**43**	**2**
3926	1	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	3	2	2	2	1	0	2	1	2	2	1	**36**	**1.6**
3472	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	0	0	2	1	2	1	2	**34**	**1.5**
4031	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	**59**	**2.7**
2421	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	1	4	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	2	**50**	**2.3**
2636	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	0	3	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	2	1	**28**	**1.3**
4914	2	1	3	1	1	0	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	**33**	**1.5**
2088	1	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	**45**	**2**
4584	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	4	3	2	3	1	1	2	3	2	3	1	**54**	**2.5**
3827	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	**44**	**2**
1001	2	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	**32**	**1.5**
3445	3	4	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	**58**	**2.6**
1289	3	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	4	2	**63**	**2.9**
4329	4	4	4	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	**58**	**2.6**
5318	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	**42**	**1.9**
Mean	2.16	2.5	3.2	1.72	2.27	1.72	2.27	2.44	1.66	2.44	1.55	3.11	2.38	2.27	2.16	1.22	1.38	2	1.83	2.05	2.38	1.55	**46**	**2.1**

Post-test results for UPG

Pupil	1) traba	2) cabal	3) chata	4) cifra	5) cofre	6) cuenco	7) neto	8) mego	9) moho	10) pincho	11) jurar	12) ligar	13) lluqui	14) soñar	15) nudo	16) quena	17) quinto	18) gira	19) garra	20) zuro	21) verter	22) trozo	Total	Mean
2320	3	4	4	1	3	1	4	2	1	3	1	5	4	2	2	2	1	3	1	2	3	3	**55**	**2.5**
1960	2	3	5	2	3	2	3	3	2	4	2	3	5	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	**61**	**2.77**
2082	2	2	4	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	5	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	**52**	**2.36**
2971	1	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	4	5	3	2	1	1	3	2	2	3	2	**51**	**2.31**
3926	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	1	1	2	1	3	3	2	2	1	0	2	1	2	2	1	**39**	**1.77**
3472	3	2	4	2	3	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	3	2	2	0	0	2	1	3	1	2	**41**	**1.86**
4031	2	2	4	1	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	5	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	**55**	**2.5**
2421	3	3	5	2	2	1	3	3	1	3	1	4	3	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	**50**	**2.27**
2636	1	2	4	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	3	3	2	1	0	0	1	2	1	3	2	**37**	**1.68**
4914	2	1	3	2	1	0	2	2	1	2	1	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	**38**	**1.72**
2088	1	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	4	4	2	2	1	0	2	2	1	3	2	**47**	**2.13**
4584	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	4	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	1	**50**	**2.27**
3827	3	3	4	3	3	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	4	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	**48**	**2.18**
1001	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	3	2	4	2	2	1	0	1	1	2	2	2	1	**39**	**1.77**
3445	3	5	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	**58**	**2.63**
1289	4	4	4	2	3	2	3	2	2	4	2	5	5	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	**63**	**2.86**
4329	4	3	5	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	**62**	**2.81**
5318	2	2	5	2	2	1	3	2	1	3	1	3	3	3	1	1	1	2	2	3	4	2	**49**	**2.22**
Mean	2.27	2.66	3.99	1.83	2.44	1.5	2.61	2.11	1.38	2.66	1.66	3.72	3.66	2.38	1.83	1.33	1.11	2.1	1.99	2.05	2.44	1.88	**50**	**2.25**

Appendix K: Permission from DREC and CUREC1a form

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
INTERDIVISIONAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Department of Education
15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY
student.curec@education.ox.ac.uk; staff.curec@education.ox.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

[redacted]
Department of Education, Social Sciences Division
University of Oxford

19 December 2023

Dear [redacted]

Research ethics approval

Research title: From 'hoh-laa' to 'o-la': An investigation into using songs to help second language Spanish students learn grapheme-phoneme correspondences to improve pronunciation when reading aloud.

Research ethics reference: EDUC-C1A_23_248

Date of amendment: 25/11/2023

Amendment number: 1

The above amendment has been considered on behalf of the Department of Education Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the University's procedures for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to confirm that, on the basis of the information provided to the DREC, ethics approval has now been granted for this amendment.

Please note the following:

Personal data: It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that all personal data collected during the project is managed in accordance with the University's guidance and legal requirements.

In-person activities: Any data collection involving in-person interactions with participants must have an up-to-date fieldwork risk assessment in place; further guidance is available from the Safety Office's website.

Amendments: Please notify the committee if you intend to make any further amendments to the information in your ethics application as submitted at date of this approval, as all changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. The amendment form is available on the SSH IDREC webpage.

We welcome feedback on your experience of the ethical review process and suggestions for improvement. Please email any comments to staff.curec@education.ox.ac.uk / student.curec@education.ox.ac.uk or ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

DREC member

cc: [redacted]

SECTION A: Filter for CUREC 2 application		
This section determines whether the application for ethics review should be made using this form (CUREC 1A) or the CUREC 2 form (for research with more complex ethical issues).		
Please indicate with an 'X'.	**Yes**	**No**
1. Does the research involve the deception of participants?	☐	☒
2. Are the research participants vulnerable in the context of the research, or classed as people whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question? For example, • Participants aged 16 or under (also answer question A5); • Participants aged 16 – 18 who can neither be considered competent youths nor recruited under Approved Procedure 25 • adults at risk; Note the University's Safeguarding Guidance and Code of Practice and its implications for researchers involving young people or adults at risk.	☒	☐
3. By taking part in the research, will participants be at risk of criminal prosecution or significant harm?	☐	☒
4. Does your research raise issues relevant to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (the Prevent Duty), which seeks to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism? Best Practice Guidance 07 on the Prevent Duty provides further guidance.	☐	☒
If you answered **'No'** to all the questions above, go to Section B. If you answered **'Yes'** to any question above, continue to question 5 below.		
5. Is your project covered by a CUREC Approved Procedure?	☒	☐
If yes, list the CUREC Approved Procedure(s) you will follow	AP25	
If you have answered '**No**' to all questions 1-4, go on to **Section B**. If you answered '**Yes**' to ANY of questions 1-4, and answered '**No**' to question 5, **stop** completing this form and do not submit it for ethical review. You will instead need to submit a CUREC 2 application form. If you answered '**Yes**' to **any** of questions 1-4, and your project is covered by an Approved Procedure, **go on to Section B**. If more than one Approved Procedure applies, contact the SSH IDREC or your DREC for advice on whether a CUREC 2 form should be submitted instead.		

SECTION B: Researchers			
1. Name of Principal Investigator or student's supervisor	[redacted]		
2. Department or Institute	Department of Education		
3. University of Oxford email address	[redacted]		
Copy and paste the following six rows as necessary to complete for each additional researcher who will be involved in this study, including student(s) and those external to the University.			
4. Name of researcher or student	[redacted]		
5. Department or Institute	Department of Education		
6. University of Oxford email address	[redacted]		
7. Role in research	Student		
8. Degree programme, if student research	MSc ALLT		
The whole research team			
9. Have the researchers undertaken research ethics and integrity training?		**Yes** ☒	**No** ☐
10. Please provide details of any research ethics and integrity training undertaken, including the dates of the training. Alternatively state relevant research experience.	I [redacted] have completed the University's research ethics and integrity training. I have shared the evidence for this with my supervisor. Course completion date: 23/04/2023 I also completed a module on Research Methods in Hilary term 2023 as a non-summative module for my degree. [redacted] is an experienced researcher with a number of successful ethics applications and teaches about ethics on the MSc ALLT and ALSLA and was a member of the DREC 2019-2022.		
11. State any conflicts of interest and explain how these will be addressed.	None.		

SECTION C: The research project	
1. Title of the research project	
From 'hoh-laa' to 'o-la': An investigation into using songs to help second language Spanish student learn grapheme-phoneme correspondences to improve pronunciation when reading aloud.	
2. Anticipated start date of the aspect of the research project involving human participants and/ or personal data (**dd/mm/yy**).	ASAP please.
3. Anticipated research end date (**dd/mm/yy**).	11/08/24
4. Provide a brief lay summary of the aims and objectives of the research. This should cover the questions it will answer and any potential benefits. (max 300 words)	

This study seeks to determine whether the use of songs can be used as a vehicle to teach phonics to improve students' representation of the grapheme – phoneme correspondence in Spanish as a second language.

The study is contextualised within an independent co-educational school in North Hampshire and will feature students aged 11-13 who are beginner learners of Spanish. The current GCSE curriculum for Modern Languages will be changing as of 2024 with the introduction of a reading aloud component in the speaking examination, therefore providing this study with context validity. This study aims to explore whether a focus on pronunciation training in the Modern Languages classroom, specifically the grapheme-phoneme relationship, can support their Spanish pronunciation in this aspect of the speaking component.

With regards to potential benefits, this study has pedagogical implications as it hopes to offer suggestions for more inclusion or awareness of pronunciation training, should this study be a success. In addition, the study aims to advise on whether there are any particular phonetic features in L2 Spanish that should be brought to students' attention in lessons.

Research Questions

1. Can the use of songs help L2 Spanish learners improve their grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) when reading aloud, compared to a comparison group which has not received the training?
2. Does the experimental group still progress as well as the comparison group in other aspects of L2 learning?
3. How do students respond to using songs as an approach to developing their GPC?

5. Please indicate the methods to be used (indicate with an '**X**'):	
Analysis of existing records	☐
Snowball sampling (recruiting through contacts of existing participants)	☐
Use of casual or local workers e.g. interpreters (refer to guidance in BPG 01: Researcher safety)	☐
Participant observation	☐
Covert observation	☐

Observation of specific organisational practices	☐
Participant completes questionnaire in hard copy	☒
Participant completes online questionnaire or other online task (refer to guidance in BPG 06: Internet-mediated research)	☒
Using social media to recruit or interact with participants (refer to guidance in BPG 06: Internet-mediated research)	☐
Participant performs paper and pencil task	☐
Participant performs verbal or aural task (e.g. for linguistic study)	☐
Focus group	☐
Interview (refer to guidance in BPG 10: Conducting research interviews)	☐
Audio recording of participant (you will generally need specific consent from participants for this)	☒
Video recording of participant (you will generally need specific consent from participants for this)	☐
Photography of participant (you will generally need specific consent from participants for this)	☐
Others (please specify below)	☐

6. Provide a brief summary of the research design and methods. What will research participants be asked to do? (max 300 words) Please also submit a copy of the questions participants will be asked, if applicable, or some information about the sorts of topics that will be covered.
The study features two groups of Year 8 Spanish classes: a control group and an intervention group. Pupils will complete a questionnaire at the beginning of the study to obtain self-reporting data regarding their overall perceived confidence and level of Spanish pronunciation, as well as assessing their willingness to communicate. They will also complete an end of topic test (on Holidays) to provide a baseline measure of their proficiency and also to inform lesson planning. The intervention group will be audio recorded by reading aloud several short sentences in Spanish. This group will then receive pronunciation training in the form of 10-minute lesson starters. The pronunciation training is based around learning the lyrics to three short extracts of Spanish Disney songs, which contain targeted phonemes in line with the Year 8 scheme of work. As the researcher I will also make some field notes in relation to pupil engagement with the intervention training.
The recordings will be played to Spanish teachers working in secondary schools in England, through a live MS Teams call. They will follow the new proposed GCSE mark scheme for the reading aloud component to provide an overall score to the pronunciation of the recording. The teachers will be recruited via email communication, they will be aged over 18 years, and will be teachers of Spanish. I will also transcribe the recordings myself using the International Phonetic Alphabet to determine which specific phonemes may be causing students any difficulty.

After the intervention, pupils will be audio-recorded again and teachers will repeat the process, following the same criteria. A control Year 8 class will follow standard teaching practice as normal, however, they will still participate in the data collection to be able to determine whether the training in the intervention group has made a difference to their pronunciation. They will be audio recorded, just like the intervention group.

The envisaged timeline for data collection is from November 2023 until Easter 2024.
At the end of the data collection, all pupils will complete the same questionnaire as at the beginning of the study. Additionally, they will also repeat the end of topic test (on Holidays) to determine whether there has been a detriment on their overall learning in Spanish.

This study will be piloted firstly with a third Year 8 Spanish class, independent to this project. This is to test the audio recording equipment and to ensure the wording on the questionnaires is accessible to all pupils.

7. List the location(s) where the research will be conducted, including any other countries.	[redacted]
8. Clarify which parts of the research will be conducted in-person and which will take place remotely, e.g. online.	In-person • Student pre- and post-questionnaires. • Audio recordings of students. Online • Spanish teachers to listen to the audio recordings via a live MS Teams call.

9. If your research involves fieldwork or travel and your department requires a travel risk assessment, will you have completed and returned a risk assessment form beforehand? Please indicate with an '**X**'. (This must be approved by your department before you travel. If you are travelling overseas, you are advised to take out University travel insurance.) Refer to guidance available from your Department, the Safety Office, the Social Sciences Division, and the Humanities Division, and on travel for University business.	Yes	☐
	No	☐
	Not required in this instance	☒

10. In the case of international or collaborative research, explain how you will address any ethical issues specific to the local context. Please provide details of the local review, approval or permission obtained or required. Refer to the BPG 16: Social science research conducted outside the UK and the Code of Conduct for Ethical Fieldwork. If there will be no local review, explain why not.
Please mention any stakeholder or community engagement that has been/ will be undertaken in relation to the research.
Please also address any physical or psychological risks for Oxford researchers and local fieldworkers in Section G.

This study does not involve international or collaborative research.

11. Name of departmental/ peer reviewer (if applicable)	Not applicable.
12. External organisation funding the research and grant reference (if applicable)	Not applicable.
13. Please refer to the CUREC Best Practice Guidance and list any that have been used to develop your research.	BPG 09: Data collection, protection and management.

SECTION D: Recruitment of research participants		
1. Number of participants	Number of students: approx. 35 – 40	
2. How was the number of participants decided?	The students are in pre-determined classes set by the school.	
3. Age range of participants	The students: aged between 11-13 years.	
4. Inclusion criteria	The students need to be in the Spanish classes that I teach and aged between 11-13 years.	
5. Exclusion criteria	Any students who I do not teach for Spanish and who are not aged between 11-13 years will not be included in the study.	
6. Indicate with an '**X**' all intended recruitment methods **Please submit copies of the recruitment material that will be used, e.g. advertisement text, introductory email text.**	Poster advert	☐
	Flyer	☐
	Email circulation	☒
	Social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)	☐
	Website	☐
	In-person approach	☒
	Snowball sampling	☐
	Recruitment sites (e.g. Mechanical Turk)	☐
	Existing contacts or volunteer database	☐
	Other (please specify):	☐
7. How will potential participants be identified and approached?	Students have been identified through my teaching timetable.	
8. Will informed consent be obtained from the research participants or their parents/ guardians? If not, please explain why not.	Yes. Parents received the adult information sheet explaining the study in general terms regarding an exploration of Spanish pronunciation and that their child will be audio-recorded. They received a consent form for their child to opt-in to the study, as per AP25.	

9. For each activity or group of participants, explain how informed consent will be obtained from the participants themselves and/ or their parents/ guardians, if applicable. How will their consent be recorded? **Please submit copies of all participant-facing materials for review.** E.g.: • Recruitment material (e.g. emails, posters) • Information for participants to read (or hear) before they agree to take part (e.g. written information or, if applicable, an outline oral information script). • A document to record informed consent. Further guidance and templates.	Year 8 students Students received an information sheet explaining the study in simple language. They also received an assent form, as per AP25. Parents have signed an opt-in consent form. Spanish teachers They will be contacted by email and will receive an information sheet and the mark scheme to inform their scoring decisions.
10. Provide details of any payments and incentives and the rationale for providing these. Further guidance in Best Practice Guidance: 05 Payments and incentives in research.	None. This is a small-scale MSc dissertation.
11. Describe how participants • may withdraw from the study • may withdraw any personal information they have provided from the study State any limits to withdrawal, for example once the data has been anonymised or at some other specified stage prior to publication. Make sure participants are aware of any withdrawal limits.	Participants and their parents / guardians may withdraw from the study at any time, without giving a reason and without any effect on their education, by advising the school or researcher of this decision. The deadline by which participants can withdraw any information they have contributed to the research is Thursday 28th March 2024. Any data that has already been collected will be permanently deleted.

SECTION E: Research data

All information provided by participants is considered research data for the purpose of this form. Any research data from which participants can be identified is known as personal data; any personal data which is sensitive is considered special category data. Management of personal data, either directly or via a third party, must comply with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, as set out in the University's Guidance on Data Protection and Research.

In answering the questions below, please also consider the points raised in the Data Protection Checklist and Data Protection Screening Assessment and whether, for higher-risk data processing, a separate Data Protection Impact Assessment may also be required for the research. Advice on research data management and security is available from Research Data Oxford and your local IT department. Advice on data protection is available from the Information Compliance team.

For guidance on conducting internet-mediated research, refer to CUREC's Best Practice Guidance 06: Internet-mediated research.

1. What data will be collected? (Indicate with an '**X**')

Screening documents	☐	Task results (e.g. questionnaires, diaries)	☒
Consent records (e.g., written consent forms, audio-recorded consent, assent forms)	☒	IP addresses (refer to Best Practice Guidance 09: Data collection, protection and management for guidance)	☐
Contact details for the purpose of this research only	☐	Field notes	☒
Contact details for future use (guidance)	☐	Photographs	☐
Opt-out forms	☐	Information about the health of the participant (including mental health)	☐
Audio recordings	☒	Previously collected (secondary) data	☐
Video recordings	☐	Data already in the public domain. Specify the source of the data:	☐
Transcript of audio/ video recordings	☐	Other, please specify:	☐

2. During the course of the research, where will **each type of** research data be stored?	• All electronic data such as digital consent forms will be stored on a password-protected computer and on the University's MFA protected OneDrive. • All hard copies of questionnaires and hard-copies of consent forms from the students will be kept in a locked cupboard. This data will not be transferred anywhere other than the questionnaire findings being used as part of the write up for my dissertation. • The scores that the Spanish teachers assign to the recordings will be stored on a password-protected computer and on the University's MFA protected OneDrive. • All audio recordings will be stored on a password-protected computer, on the University's MFA protected OneDrive, and analysed using a code number rather than the student's name. The Spanish teachers will be provided with no information about the pupils they listen to. There will be no personal or identifiable information in the audio recordings. No participants will be identified in the dissertation. At the end of the research, recordings will be erased.
3. Who will have access to the research data during the project?	Myself [redacted] and possibly my supervisor [redacted] shall have access to the research data. The audio recordings and questionnaire responses will not identify the individual. Additionally, a unique code number will be used rather than the participant's name to help maximise their anonymity.

4. Please complete this section if your research involves the use of secondary (i.e. previously collected) data.	**Please indicated with an 'X'.**	**Yes**	**No**
	Are data access agreements in place for access to and use of this secondary data? (If so, please attach these.)	☐	☐
	Did the individuals agree that their data could be used for this purpose?	☐	☐
	Could anyone (including members of the research team) link the data back to an individual or individuals? If this is a possibility, please explain how the associated ethical issues will be addressed:	☐	☐

5. How do you intend to share the research data at the end of the project?		
	Depositing in a specialist data centre or archive	☐
	Submitting to a journal to support a publication	☐
	Depositing in an institutional repository	☐
	Dissemination via a project or institutional website	☐
	No plans to share the data	☒
	Other (please specify):	☐

6. How do you intend to report and disseminate the results of the research? (Indicate with an 'X')	Thesis publication	☒
	Publication in a peer reviewed journal	☐
	Publicly available report	☐
	Conference presentation	☐
	Publication on a website	☐
	Pre-registration	☐
	Report to a research funder	☐
	Providing participants with a lay summary of the results	☐
	Submission for academic assessment	☒
	Other (please specify):	☐

7. Explain what will happen to the data at the end of the research project.
This question must be answered for each type of data, including completed consent forms.

I confirm that I will store all of the research data (listed below) safely for at least three years after final publication of my dissertation.

- Hard copies of questionnaires from students
- Online scores from the Spanish teachers
- Audio recordings from the students
- Consent forms

The data will be stored securely on a password-protected computer and automatic back up to the cloud will be switched off. The hard copies of the students' questionnaires will be stored in the researcher's classroom in the school in a locked cupboard.

There are no arrangements for making the data available for reuse. I do not intend to, nor do I have reason to retain contact details of the participants to re-approach for any planned future studies.

SECTION F: Protection of research participants and their personal data		
1. How identifiable will the participants be from the **research outputs**? (Indicate with an 'X')	Directly identifiable from the information included	☐
	Pseudonymised/ indirectly identifiable	☒
	Not identifiable – data is anonymous	☐
	Other, please specify:	☐
2. To what extent will the **data** be de-identified? How identifiable will any individuals be from the research data? Describe any measures you will take towards	I will keep a linkage list (i.e. a list that tells me the names of Student 1, Student 2 etc. so that I can match the right post test with the right pre-tests) in a separate password protected folder. Data shared with raters will only use the Student 1 etc. formulation. Once I have all data I will fully anonymise the data and destroy the linkage list.	

assuring confidentiality, potential risks to confidentiality.	
3. How will you ensure that third parties (e.g., interpreters and transcribers) are aware of and adhere to the measures described in this form?	Not applicable.

SECTION G: Risks and benefits of the research
1. Will the research involve topics that could be considered sensitive? If so: a. Please provide more detail or supporting information (such as the interview questions) to show the range of questions; b. Explain what steps will be taken to reduce risk of distress; c. Consider seeking advice from within your Department or from the ethics committee including whether the application might benefit from additional ethics review (e.g., via a CUREC 2 application).
No sensitive topics will be involved in this research project.
2. Describe any additional burden or risks to the participants or others, including the potential for any indirect negative consequences. Explain the steps you will take to address these.
No foreseeable burden or risks to the participants.
3. Describe any physical or psychological risks to the researcher(s) (including local fieldworkers or research assistants) and the steps you will take to address these.
No foreseeable physical or psychological risks to the researcher.
4. Describe any benefits of the research, both to participants and to others. Outline the processes put in place to enable equitable research (see BPG 16 Social science research conducted outside the UK for further guidance).
The participants should benefit from dedicated time spent on their Spanish pronunciation, which may support their progress in Spanish going forwards. In a wider context, this research also hopes to contribute to the wider body of literature regarding the benefit of pronunciation training in secondary schools for second language learners of Spanish.
5. Comment on the societal impact.

Fellow teachers of Spanish and Modern Languages in secondary schools may benefit from this research, which could then inform teaching and curriculum planning going forwards.
6. Give details of any other ethical issues or relevant information.
No other foreseeable ethical issues or relevant information.

SECTION H: Professional guidelines		
Please indicate with an '**X**' at least one set of professional guidelines you will follow.		
Research specialism/ methodology	**Association and guidance**	
Anthropology	Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK	☐
Computer Science	ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct	☐
Criminology	British Society of Criminology Statement of Ethics	☐
Education	British Educational Research Association Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research	☒
Geography	American Association of Geographers Statement on Professional Ethics	☐
History	Oral History Society of the UK Ethical Guidelines	☐
Internet-mediated research	Association of Internet Researchers Ethical Guidelines British Psychological Society: Ethics Guidelines for internet-mediated research Association for Computing Machinery Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct	☐
Management	Academy of Management Code of Ethics	☐
Political Science	American Political Science Association (APSA) Guide to Professional Ethics in Political Science	☐
Politics	Political Studies Association. Guidelines for Good Professional Conduct	☐
Psychology	British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct	☐
Social research	Social Research Association: Ethical Guidelines	☐
Socio-legal studies	Socio-Legal Studies Association: Statement of Principles of Ethical Research Practice	☐
Sociology	The British Sociological Association: Statement of Ethical Practice	☐
Visual research	ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper: Visual Ethics: Ethical Issues in Visual Research	☐
Other professional guidelines		☐

SECTION I: Endorsements and signatures

Please ensure this form is endorsed by the Principal Investigator (or student's supervisor), the Head of Department (or nominee) and, if student research, by the student themselves.
The SSH IDREC Secretariat accepts either option below. If you have a DREC, check which signature option it prefers.

- **Option 1: direct email endorsements**
  Each of the signatories should submit an email from a University of Oxford email address, indicating their acceptance of the responsibilities listed below.
- **Option 2: signatures**
  Please scan the signed form and email it to us as a PDF. Pasted images of signatures cannot be accepted.

Endorsement by the Principal Investigator/ student supervisor and student, if applicable

I/ we the researchers understand my/ our responsibilities as Principal Investigator (and student, if applicable) as outlined in the guidance on the CUREC website. I/ we declare that the answers above accurately describe the research as presently designed, and that the ethics committee will be informed of any changes to the project which affect the answers to this form.
I/ we will inform the relevant IDREC if the Principal Investigator changes.

Name of Principal Investigator	[redacted]
Principal Investigator's signature	[redacted]
Date	27/11/2023
Name of student (if applicable)	[redacted]
Student's signature	[redacted]
Date	25/11/2023

Appendix L: Approval from Headteacher

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 7:47:29 pm
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Re: MSc Dissertation

Good evening [redacted]

Apologies for the delay. I see no problem with the research taking place with [redacted] students, as long as parents are informed and consent is gained.

Regards

[redacted]

Appendix M: Results from evaluation questionnaire for SG

Pupil	a) Enjoyment of songs	b) Ease of learning songs	c) Familiarity with lyrics	d) Supportive in pronouncing new words	e) Ease of method	f) Enjoyment of method	g) Ease of remembering lyrics	h) Ease of matching graphemes	i) Ease of transferring sounds	j) Desire to continue with method	Mean
9577	5	4	5	4	3	4	4	5	3	5	4.2
6289	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2.6
1640	5	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.1
7263	3	3	4	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	2.8
5502	5	4	5	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	3.8
2621	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4.4
8538	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2.9
2539	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	5	4
7827	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4.4
5411	5	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4.5
1446	5	4	5	4	3	4	5	3	3	4	4
3086	5	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	3.8
5270	4	3	5	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	3.8
6417	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	4.5
5154	5	4	5	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3.8
2191	5	5	5	3	3	4	5	4	4	5	4.3
3506	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4.6
Mean	**4.6**	**4.2**	**4.4**	**3.6**	**3.2**	**3.7**	**4.2**	**3.6**	**3.4**	**4.1**	
Total	**78**	**72**	**75**	**61**	**55**	**63**	**71**	**62**	**58**	**70**	

Appendix N.1 & N.2: SG and UPG motivation scores at pre- and post-test

SG pre-test motivation scores

Statement	9577	6289	1640	7263	5502	2621	8538	2539	7827	5411	1446	3086	5270	6417	5154	2191	3506
Learning Spanish is enjoyable and fun for me	4	3	4	3	4	2	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	2	4	4	3
I feel a sense of achievement when learning Spanish	4	3	4	4	3	2	3	5	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	4	3
I feel proud because I am making progress in Spanish	4	3	3	3	4	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3
I don't feel anxious when learning Spanish	5	5	6	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	3	4	5	4
I don't feel stressed by Spanish assessments	5	5	6	4	3	4	3	5	3	3	3	3	5	3	4	5	3
There are always clear goals to achieve in Spanish	5	4	5	5	4	3	2	5	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	5	3
I get actively involved in Spanish lessons	4	3	3	3	3	2	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	5	3
I try hard to learn in Spanish lessons	5	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	5	3
I do my best to stay focused in the classroom	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	5	4	2	3	4	4	2	3	4	3
Positive interactions with the teacher motivate me	3	3	4	3	3	2	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	3
I receive help from my teacher to learn Spanish	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	3
My teacher is supportive of my progress in Spanish	4	3	5	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	2	4	4	4
I believe that I have the ability to do well in Spanish	5	4	5	3	3	1	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	5	3
I try to achieve the goals my teacher has set me	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	3
I am able to do most Spanish tasks	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	5	4
RAW SCORE / 90	**63**	**54**	**64**	**52**	**53**	**39**	**51**	**59**	**49**	**50**	**48**	**50**	**53**	**38**	**55**	**66**	**48**
TOTAL MEAN (SD)	**52.47 (7.65)**																

SG post-test motivation scores

Statement	9577	6289	1640	7263	5502	2621	8538	2539	7827	5411	1446	3086	5270	6417	5154	2191	3506
Learning Spanish is enjoyable and fun for me	5	3	5	3	4	5	4	6	6	5	4	4	5	4	5	6	6
I feel a sense of achievement when learning Spanish	5	3	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	5	6
I feel proud because I am making progress in Spanish	6	3	6	3	4	4	3	4	5	6	4	4	4	4	4	6	6
I don't feel anxious when learning Spanish	6	5	6	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	4	3	5	4	4	5
I don't feel stressed by Spanish assessments	4	5	6	5	3	4	4	3	4	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	4
There are always clear goals to achieve in Spanish	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	3	4	4	3	4	4	5	3	4	5
I get actively involved in Spanish lessons	5	2	5	3	4	4	3	5	5	5	3	3	4	5	4	5	6
I try hard to learn in Spanish lessons	6	3	5	3	3	5	3	4	6	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	5
I do my best to stay focused in the classroom	4	3	6	3	4	5	3	5	6	5	3	4	3	5	4	4	5
Positive interactions with the teacher motivate me	4	3	5	3	3	4	3	3	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5
I receive help from my teacher to learn Spanish	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4
My teacher is supportive of my progress in Spanish	6	3	5	3	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4
I believe that I have the ability to do well in Spanish	5	3	6	3	4	4	3	4	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	6	5
I try to achieve the goals my teacher has set me	4	3	6	3	4	4	3	4	5	5	4	3	3	4	4	6	5
I am able to do most Spanish tasks	6	4	6	4	3	3	3	4	4	6	4	4	4	3	5	5	5
RAW SCORE / 90	**76**	**52**	**82**	**52**	**56**	**65**	**53**	**60**	**74**	**73**	**55**	**58**	**57**	**66**	**62**	**72**	**76**
TOTAL MEAN (SD)	**64.06 (9.75)**																

UPG pre-test motivation scores

Statement	2320	1960	2082	2971	3926	3472	4031	2421	2636	4914	2088	4584	3827	1001	3445	1289	4329	5318
Learning Spanish is enjoyable and fun for me	3	5	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	5	3	4	5	4	3
I feel a sense of achievement when learning Spanish	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	3
I feel proud because I am making progress in Spanish	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	5	3	3	3	4	4	3
I don't feel anxious when learning Spanish	4	4	4	4	2	3	5	3	2	2	4	3	3	2	3	3	4	1
I don't feel stressed by Spanish assessments	4	5	4	3	2	3	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	2
There are always clear goals to achieve in Spanish	5	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	4	2
I get actively involved in Spanish lessons	3	5	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	3
I try hard to learn in Spanish lessons	3	5	4	4	3	3	5	5	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	3
I do my best to stay focused in the classroom	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3
Positive interactions with the teacher motivate me	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	2	4	3	4	3
I receive help from my teacher to learn Spanish	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	3
My teacher is supportive of my progress in Spanish	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3
I believe that I have the ability to do well in Spanish	3	5	3	3	3	3	5	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	3
I try to achieve the goals my teacher has set me	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	4	5	3	3	4	4	4	3
I am able to do most Spanish tasks	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	2	4	4	3	3
RAW SCORE / 90	**51**	**64**	**57**	**53**	**43**	**50**	**61**	**54**	**48**	**46**	**52**	**59**	**51**	**40**	**53**	**56**	**55**	**41**
TOTAL MEAN (SD)	**51.89 (6.57)**																	

UPG post-test motivation scores

Statement	2320	1960	2082	2971	3926	3472	4031	2421	2636	4914	2088	4584	3827	1001	3445	1289	4329	5318
Learning Spanish is enjoyable and fun for me	3	5	3	4	3	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	5	5	3
I feel a sense of achievement when learning Spanish	3	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	5	5	2
I feel proud because I am making progress in Spanish	3	4	4	4	3	3	5	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	4	4	5	3
I don't feel anxious when learning Spanish	3	5	3	4	1	3	4	3	2	2	4	3	4	2	3	4	4	2
I don't feel stressed by Spanish assessments	4	5	3	3	1	3	4	4	2	2	3	3	4	1	4	4	3	2
There are always clear goals to achieve in Spanish	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	2
I get actively involved in Spanish lessons	3	5	3	3	3	4	4	5	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	4	4	3
I try hard to learn in Spanish lessons	3	5	4	4	3	4	5	6	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3
I do my best to stay focused in the classroom	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	5	5	3	3
Positive interactions with the teacher motivate me	3	4	3	5	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	4	4	3
I receive help from my teacher to learn Spanish	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	2	5	3	5	4
My teacher is supportive of my progress in Spanish	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	5	4	3	4	4	5	4
I believe that I have the ability to do well in Spanish	3	4	4	3	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	2	4	5	4	3
I try to achieve the goals my teacher has set me	4	5	3	4	4	4	4	5	3	3	3	5	3	2	4	5	4	3
I am able to do most Spanish tasks	3	4	4	4	3	3	5	5	3	4	3	4	3	2	5	5	5	3
RAW SCORE / 90	**49**	**67**	**54**	**58**	**44**	**52**	**64**	**63**	**51**	**48**	**50**	**62**	**57**	**37**	**63**	**66**	**64**	**43**
TOTAL MEAN (SD)	**55.11 (8.88)**																	