The effects of a multi-lingual approach: an exploratory study with Year 9

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Abstract:

In the context of an increasingly multilingual and diverse society, there has been a move within European language education and research to adopt a more multilingual and holistic approach to modern languages, where languages are not taught in isolation, but where students are encouraged to compare and contrast their languages and make use of their 'whole language repertoire' from both school and home. Much of the work on this so far has either been theoretical, or projects in quite different contexts to the UK secondary MFL classroom, with a lack of evaluation of the effects of such projects on attitudes towards learning languages and students' knowledge about language and ability to see connections between languages. My project therefore developed a multilingual approach for a UK context, that would work within the everyday MFL classroom. The activity of translation was chosen as the most appropriate way to get students to compare multiple languages. My school has already adopted this kind of approach for Year 7, so I wanted to see if something could be developed for Year 9, who are in many ways at a pivotal point in their language-learning career, as they go on to select which language(s) they will study for GCSE. With this in mind, the project aimed to see if adopting a multilingual approach in translation would have a positive impact on student attitudes and motivation, as well as their cross-linguistic awareness (XLA) and language-learning skills. The results from the quantitative data revealed that although the project did not have a measurable impact on students' XLA or their already positive attitudes towards MFL, it did appear to have an impact on their ability to spot patterns in a new language. Results from the qualitative interview and observation data also showed the beginnings of an impact on students' XLA, and the project will be subsequently expanded across the whole of Years 8 and 9 to further explore the potential impacts of this multilingual approach.

Introduction

‘But, Miss, why do we *have to* learn a language?’

‘Miss, why are you talking about French?! It’s our German lesson!’

‘Oh, this rule, that’s exactly like my language at home!’

The first of these comments is all too familiar to the UK MFL teacher, often from a demotivated Year 9. The second is also perhaps familiar for those teaching somewhere students learn more than one language and where you point out a similarity or difference between languages. Fortunately, every so often one also hears the final comment – perhaps less publicly and loudly, said in passing by a keen Year 7 as you go around the class. This project aims to address the three issues raised by these comments. It hopes to make Year 9 students more aware of the answers to the first two questions, by encouraging more of the third kind of comments and doing more of what some students find so shocking: talking about more than one language in their individual language lessons.

Why did I choose this project?

As part of my Part 2 assignment investigating transition in MFL, I looked at Year 7s' attitudes towards the languages they had learnt at primary school, home, and their first year of secondary school. In my interviews with students, I was struck by students struggling to see any links between the languages they had learnt and were learning at school, and languages they spoke or were learning at home. They saw them as separate subjects with few links between them; this was also highlighted by staff in a departmental discussion on the issue. It was seen not only as an issue in Year 7 but further up the school.

The only time I have tried to get students to see these links was in a series of lessons developed for an NQT CPD project on EAL learners within MFL. These lessons introduce Year 9 to the simple past in German, by asking them to list the ways of talking about the past in English, French, and any other languages they know. This initial activity always produces a useful discussion comparing use of tenses in different languages and yet some of my EAL learners are often reluctant to share information about their home language. These lessons come towards the end of Year 9 and are the first time I formally ask students to make links across languages. This project therefore aims to begin this kind of thinking earlier, to help students see the benefits of being multilingual.

Why my school?

This project is important to both my department and my school for several reasons. My school is an all-girls grammar school in Southeast England, where the percentage of EAL students was

exactly in line with the English national average in 2018-19: 16.9%.[1] Nearly every year, a cultural heritage survey reveals a huge range of languages spoken at home and often a much higher percentage of potential EAL students than our official statistics. Within school this linguistic diversity is celebrated with an annual display and a Year 8 PSHE project. Students are also given the opportunity (where possible) to sit a GCSE in their home language. However, within MFL lessons, these languages and backgrounds are rarely discussed, despite increasing evidence from language acquisition research which looks at the importance of this for multilingual learners (Jessner, 2006). Three languages are taught: French, German and Spanish. Everyone (barring occasional SEN exceptions) must do at least one language for GCSE, having studied three languages in Year 7 and two languages in Years 8 and 9. Those Year 9s who struggle with languages often ask why they must do a language. This project therefore aims to improve attitudes towards languages by getting students to engage in a different kind of activity involving more than one language and utilising any home languages in the process, in the hope that students will start to see languages as a skillset; part of the rationale behind why the subject is compulsory at GCSE. Moreover, as a department, we want students to see how taking two languages beyond Key Stage 3 can enable them to become better linguists.

We have developed various projects to help students see the links between languages, but currently there is nothing of that nature running in Year 9, when students make their choices about GCSEs. In Year 7, we developed a new scheme of work, partly because of my Part 2 investigation, that gives students a taste of all three languages taught at the school, one per term, and begins with general lessons on language-learning skills, and strategies and grammar concepts across languages. We ask them to pool their knowledge of diverse languages from home and primary school, encouraging them to see the links between them. This new development is very

[1] Reference not given to protect the anonymity of the school

much in line with suggestions made in the early days of the language awareness movement (Donmall, 1991; Hawkins, 1999). However, as Anderson (1991) argues, there is a need for this kind of approach at all stages of language learning, not just in the initial years.

Why now in a UK and European education context?

The phenomenon of multilingual language learners at my school is certainly not an isolated one and was picked up on in the early days of the Language Awareness movement, which observed that the UK was increasingly multilingual but that little was done within schools to promote students' diverse home languages, other than entering them for exams (Anderson, 1991). This call for more to be done is still highly pertinent and in line with the latest recommendations from the European Council (2019) on the teaching and learning of languages. Very much in line with the 'multilingual turn' in language acquisition research (Conteh & Meier, 2014) they advocate acknowledgement of 'learners' entire linguistic repertoire' and encouraging pupils to 'compare languages' and discuss different languages together (The Council of the European Union, 2019, p. 20).

Additionally, MFL in the UK is at a crisis point in terms of student numbers, despite continuous calls for a need for linguists, even more so in a post-Brexit world (Bowler, 2020; European Commission, 2018; Long & Bolton, 2020; Tinsley & Doležal, 2019). Interestingly, low student numbers was also part of the reason behind the initial Language Awareness movement (Hawkins, 1987), so in some ways the need to recruit more linguists and for students to see languages as a useful skill for later life is nothing new.

Finally, given the new Ofsted emphasis on the curriculum (Ofsted, 2019), there is much discussion within schools surrounding curriculum design and how different subjects fit together, something which has long been discussed in educational research (Barnes, 2015; Savage, 2011). In my own school this became a focus of the recently established teaching and learning research group who were introduced to this project as part of a wider conversation about increasing links between other subjects such as Science, Maths and Geography. Now would therefore seem an ideal time for a project which enables students to see those connections for themselves, particularly with regard to languages.

Research questions

It is in this context that this project sought to initially find out from the literature:

1. What is a multilingual approach and where did it come from?
2. What are the possible benefits of adopting a multilingual approach and why is it increasingly popular in Europe?
3. What previous projects have taken place and what effects have they had?
4. What further research is needed?

Literature Review

What is a multilingual approach and where did it come from?

The Language Awareness movement and the problem of definitions

The multilingual approach to languages education now being so strongly advocated by the European Council has its roots in the Language Awareness (LA) movement, which developed in the 1980s to improve MFL and English teaching in an age of greater ethnic diversity and poor language learning at secondary school, issues still relevant today. The Association for Language Awareness define LA as '**explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use**' (ALA, 2012). Early proponents (Fairclough, 1992; Hawkins, 1987) advocated a focus on LA in the final years of primary and early years of secondary school, developing projects similar to those operated by my own school in Year 7, asking students to think about language in general and celebrate the different home languages spoken by students. The initial flurry of books, articles and conferences then resulted in the Association for Language Awareness with its own journal and wide-ranging definition as quoted above.

Although this is a useful definition of LA, a review of the literature reveals numerous terms being used, often referring to slightly different and often much narrower areas of focus. Language awareness (Finkbeiner & White, 2008; Hawkins, 1987, 1999), critical language awareness (Fairclough, 1992; Lancaster & Taylor, 1991), knowledge about language (Cots, 2008), multilingual awareness (Jessner, 2008), critical multilingual awareness (García, 2008), meta-linguistic awareness (Jessner, 2006) and cross-linguistic awareness (Jessner, Allgäuer-Hackl, & Hofer, 2016) are all used by authors keen to situate themselves within the LA tradition. This then

makes it a very confusing field and it can become difficult to see how LA can be helpful in adopting a multilingual approach.

To navigate this terminological complexity, it will be necessary to go through the terms used in the literature relevant to my project. Firstly, it is necessary to look at the terms language awareness and knowledge about language (KAL). These terms often get used interchangeably and with good reason, for early proponents of LA hoped that it would get children thinking about language in general and thereby improve their knowledge of English and of foreign languages, as well as helping to combat linguistic prejudice (Hawkins, 1987; Carl James, 1999). This then explains why the ALA (2012) definition of LA encompasses the very general term, knowledge about language.

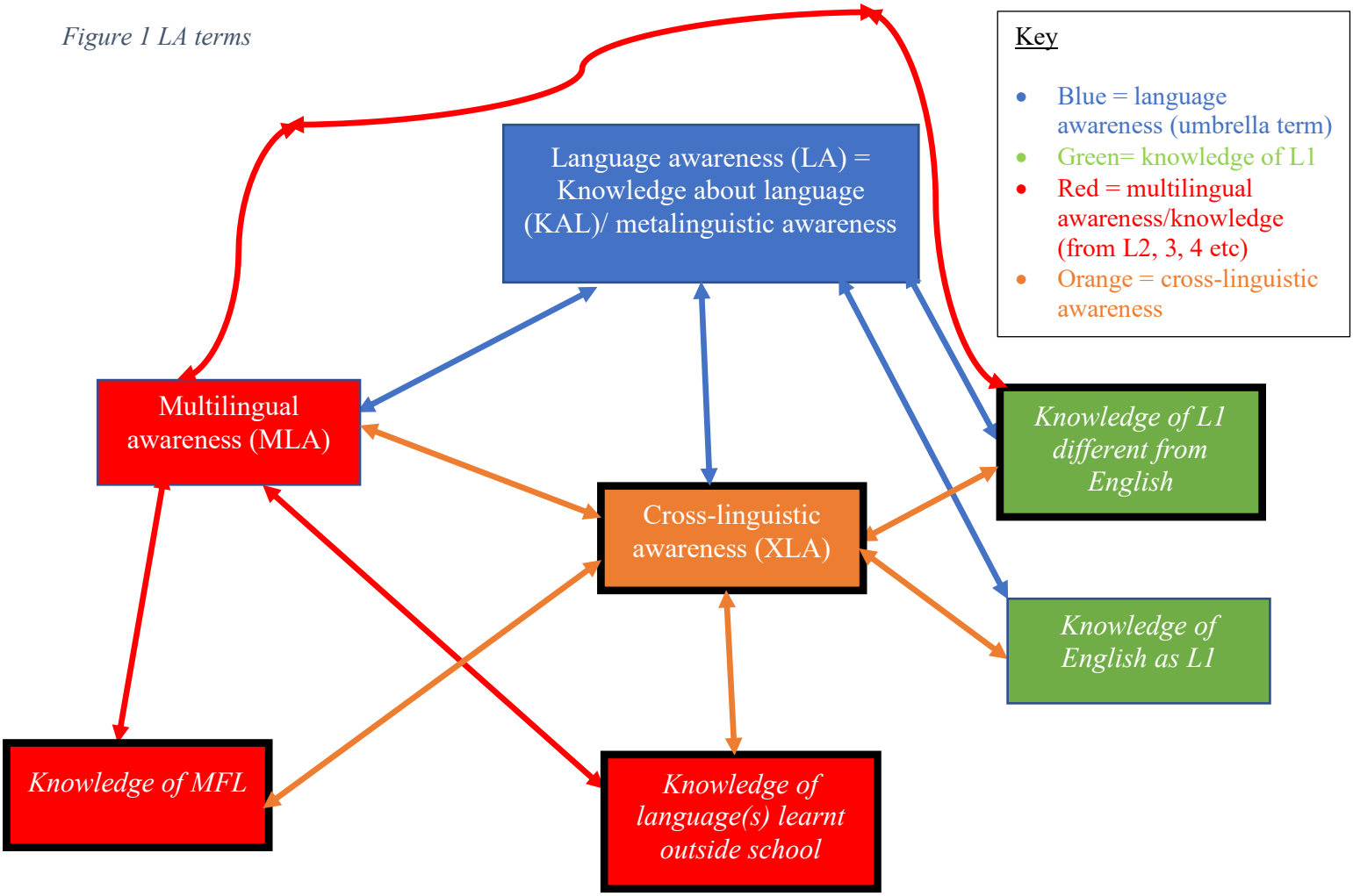
Going back to the origins of the LA movement also helps us see how this might fit into the school curriculum. Advocates such as Hawkins (1987) very much wanted it to be part of both the English and MFL curricula, but also wanted teachers to acknowledge and utilise students' home languages, as knowledge of all these feeds into people's KAL. Cots (2008) defines LA as 'explicit knowledge' about language, drawing on Ellis' (2004) work which defines explicit knowledge as knowledge about the language which is conscious, declarative (i.e. students can state facts about the language) and can be verbalised, even if leaners' use of precise metalanguage (terms for talking about the language) may vary considerably. Cots (2008) points out that knowledge about language often focuses on morphology and syntax, although the definition can be widened to include a more critical awareness of how language is used in society, often termed critical language awareness. This latter area will not be a focus for my study. Thinking about language in a very general sense has also been described by some, such as Jessner (2006), as metalinguistic

awareness. Jessner defines this as the ‘ability to focus attention on language as an object in itself or to think abstractly about language and, consequently, to play with or manipulate language’ (Jessner, 2006, p. 42).

However, Jessner, Allgäuer-Hackl and Hofer (2016) see this metalinguistic awareness as being part of what they later describe as multilingual awareness (MLA). For them, this is composed of being able to think about language in a very general sense and of cross-linguistic awareness (XLA), being able to see the connections between languages. The studies she and her colleagues focus on in their 2016 article were very much about getting students to compare the languages being taught in school in Austria and South Tyrol, but within a diverse UK context, it would also seem appropriate to encourage this alongside comparisons with children’s home languages, as Hawkins (1987) originally advocated.

With these myriad terms it may be easiest to see how they fit together for the purposes of this project in diagram form, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 LA terms



Here one can see that MLA comes under and feeds into the broader umbrella of more general LA, alongside knowledge of one's first language. One of the most crucial parts of this multilingual awareness is then XLA, advocated by proponents of a multilingual approach in the classroom. This can involve students not only comparing the languages being taught in school, but also comparing them with languages they might be learning and speaking outside of school, and it is these aspects that my project focuses on. They are therefore highlighted in bold in the figure above.

LA and the multilingual turn

This move for LA to also encompass MLA and XLA is part of a general trend within language learning research, sometimes referred to as the 'multilingual turn'(Conteh & Meier, 2014). Like

the European Council's recommendations (2019), this recognises that in an increasingly multilingual society it makes sense to acknowledge and include children's home languages as part of their foreign language learning. Not only that but it also recognises that the next step is not just the teaching of one foreign language, but the teaching of multiple languages. This is indeed advocated by the European Parliament in its policy that 'every European citizen should master two other languages in addition to their mother tongue' (Hériard, 2019).

Meier (2014) argues that to achieve this there needs to be a move away from traditional MFL education, where languages are taught in isolation and a move towards a more comparative approach. This is based on the argument that a curriculum must reflect the 'situational needs' of its learners, which for her means acknowledging and utilising students' diverse language backgrounds. Furthermore, she also argues that this approach helps language learning by developing inter-comprehension skills. In an environment such as my school where all students learn or speak more than one language learners should be encouraged to use one language to help them learn another. Meier argues that this often happens at university, but rarely in school, apart from two projects in Switzerland and Luxembourg. She cites the success of the Swiss project as an argument for trying to adopt a more comparative approach in other schools and is very complementary of the Luxembourg materials (Tonnar, Marguerite, & Perregaux, 2010), whilst acknowledging they have yet to be properly evaluated. A comparative approach is also advocated by Cenoz and Gorter (2008; 2013) who advocate cross-linguistic activities in the context of bilingual education systems, and also more traditional foreign language teaching. They argue that rather than keeping separate languages in separate classrooms, with separate teachers, teaching should adopt a more multilingual, holistic approach, enabling students to develop skills needed across their languages and to encourage methods used by multilinguals in everyday life, such as code-switching and 'translanguaging' (Cenoz & Gorter, 2013). Those students who do speak a

different language at home are very used to such practices on a regular basis, as teachers themselves may well have witnessed of their EAL students at parents' evenings, where students frequently translate for their parents and/or explain terms their teacher is using. It would therefore seem prudent to acknowledge and utilise these skills in the classroom.

Such an approach is advocated by Jessner (2006) in a university context. She advocates the importance of finding out about students' multilingual backgrounds when teaching them and not teaching languages in isolation. Instead she proposes teaching 'across the languages' (Jessner, 2006, p. 125). Her strong advocacy for acknowledging students' language learning backgrounds when teaching a foreign language in the classroom has also been put forward by LA proponents such as Lancaster & Taylor (1991), who argue that all children have at some point been successful language learners and that this should be exploited more in the classroom, as they did in their project in 1987/88. This involved not only entering students for home language exams as my school currently does, but also a project where students explored the variety of languages and dialects in school. This was done through assemblies, teaching dialect, and performing dialect role plays, a language survey of students and teachers, and both pupils and members of the public teaching community languages. They found that this improved attitudes to other languages and accents, but do not cite any data for this and it is unclear how the project fitted into the rest of the curriculum. Nonetheless it remains a clear early example of an LA project which focused on multilingualism.

The multilingual approach also ties into the theory of 'multicompetence' advocated by Cook (1995). This is picked up on by Scott (2016), who argues that students need to be made aware of how knowing multiple languages gives them a new way of thinking, rather than individually

compartmentalised ways of thinking for each language. Cook (1995) argued strongly for changing the goal for foreign language learning success from achieving the elusive 'native speaker' state and instead becoming a 'multicompetent' and multilingual second language user, who will differ from the monolingual native speaker in a very positive sense. While they may never achieve a monolingual's level of fluency, instead they develop multiple grammars and ways of thinking which interact with each other (Cook, 1995; Cook, 1992). He and later theorists such as Scott (2016) argue that learners should be made aware of these benefits and realities of multilingualism, by acknowledging the entirety of students' language repertoire in the classroom, encompassing languages from home and across the curriculum. Scott (2016) also argues that students should be introduced to this concept to aid motivation, and that part of this must include the teacher adopting a 'multilingual' stance where students' background languages are acknowledged.

What are the possible benefits of adopting a multilingual approach and why is it increasingly popular in Europe?

All these advocates of a multilingual approach are not of course theorising for the sake of it, nor is it recommended by the European Commission on a mere political whim. Instead, its advocates strongly believe that such an approach can bring about improvements in students' language-learning skills, their attitudes towards language learning and towards speakers of other languages, their motivation for language learning, and their MLA.

An improvement in language-learning skills: preparing for future language learning

One of the early advocates of LA, Hawkins, saw it as being one part of a 'trivium', where English, LA, and MFL lessons all worked together. Under this model, MFL lessons were not

designed to achieve total fluency in the specific language, but rather were to serve as a foreign language 'apprenticeship, whose main object is to show how to learn, while giving confidence that the job can be done and is rewarding' (Hawkins, 1987, p. 37). In his model, MFL lessons are part of LA in that they make students more aware of their own first language, as it is here that their attention is properly drawn to features of language that they do think about in their L1. This may well strike a chord with many MFL teachers, particularly in relation to explicit grammar teaching, when they often break down the formation of a tense into its distinct parts, for example. My own Year 9 German lesson on the simple past, which first asks students to list how many ways there are of expressing the past in English, is often a telling example: many students initially try to tell me that there is only one past tense in English, until I make them think of specific examples and they rapidly realise the complexities of the English language.

Hawkins made his argument for the language apprenticeship model throughout his life and career, arguing quite rightly that a school cannot really say that they know with certainty that students will need and use the specific foreign language taught to them in adolescence (Hawkins, 2005). Of course, many of us hope that our students will go onto to use the language taught to them, if only to order something on holiday or enjoy a foreign film. However, if Hawkins' argument is examined in a more recent context, it becomes more compelling. The British Council report on the top ten languages the UK needs in a post-Brexit world, which studied a range of economic, diplomatic and cultural factors, lists some which are commonly taught in schools, such as Spanish, French and German, and some that are not, such as Mandarin, Arabic, Japanese, Dutch, Portuguese and Russian (Tinsley & Board, 2017). Whilst they do advocate expanding UK MFL teaching to include Mandarin and Arabic, which make up the top five languages alongside Spanish, French, and German, they also acknowledge that the relative importance of lesser taught languages, such as Dutch, or even Malay and Thai which are creeping up their rankings, may change according to the economic climate. It would be impossible for schools to constantly switch the languages they teach according to fluctuating economic and diplomatic priorities, or indeed to

predict the languages that the UK may need in seven years' time after their current cohort of Year 7 language learners have left school. Therefore, alongside their argument for improved language teaching in schools of the top five languages, they also advocate higher education and adult education institutions, as well as businesses, facilitating adult learning of less widely taught languages, according to need. For these organisations to have success with adult learners, it would seem sensible for schools to produce future language learners, as well as reasonably competent users of the specific language they are taught in school. Indeed, this is one of the stated aims in the National Curriculum for Modern Languages that 'language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages' (Department for Education and Skills, 2013). Bearing in mind as well that many students drop a language at 14, or in the case of my school at 16, the level of competence they reach in the specific language is fairly limited. Certainly, by the end of the GCSE course, they should be able to hold a basic or transactional conversation in the language, but they will probably not be able to conduct trade or diplomatic negotiations in that language in ten years' time. Of course, those who go onto A Level and beyond may well acquire this level of competence, but these students will remain a minority.

Therefore, more realistically, language learning at school should lay the foundations for future language learning and Hawkins (1999) advocates that part of this must involve comparing languages and talking about language in general and how to learn, as well as the specific language being taught. Indeed, he even advocates assessing this, alongside assessing competence in the specific language, although in 1999 the details this were unclear. In his 2005 article, a model was laid out in considerable detail from Key Stage 1 onwards, where Key Stage 3 was highlighted as the stage for 'a specific apprenticeship language' where 'learning how to learn a language would be given practical application' (Hawkins, 2005, p. 15). This model relies on much of the LA work happening at Key Stage 2, although even with that model, it seems quite a jump to assume that

this will lay sufficient foundations for students to be at GCSE standard by the end of Year 9, to then go on to choose a specific language they study from age 14-19 in an 'intensive immersive' environment, run by native speakers in regional language centres. However wonderful this sounds, this would involve considerable overhaul of the entire school education system, a change which is not possible for individual teachers to execute.

Nonetheless, Hawkins' vision of Key Stage 3 as studying a specific language to act as a language apprenticeship does seem useful and more immediately applicable, particularly if reference is made to his earlier ideas, where this apprenticeship involves comparing languages and raising LA, to develop the skills of future language learners. A problem, however, lies in the fact that so far, language awareness programmes have not been shown to have much effect on students' learning of a specific L2. Parquennes (2008) argues that this is because language awareness programmes are often separated from language learning itself, which means they do not necessarily encourage comparison between languages or go much towards improving language learning, and of course Hawkins' model relies precisely on LA being part of the language learning process. A recent literature review of numerous projects across Europe found scant and conflicting evidence about the effect of LA on students' language-learning skills, although the authors tentatively suggest that there is some evidence for projects which encourage students to compare and contrast their L1 and the L2 being learnt as having a positive effect on their L2 learning skills (Sierens, Frijns, Van Gorp, Sereu, & Van Avermaat, 2018). The authors do however make clear that a lot more research needs to be done here, particularly in a secondary school context. Although at first it might seem to conflict with Hawkins' passionate argument that LA lessons *do* have a positive effect on MFL, it must be remembered that his overall argument is that it should be part of a teaching model that improves language-learning skills in general, not necessarily of the specific language being taught. If MFL lessons are an apprenticeship for language learning in later life,

enhanced by a LA approach, then this makes MFL 'educational, not instrumental' (Hawkins, 2005, p. 8). This perhaps goes some to way to answering the wail of a disaffected Year 9 student 'But, Miss, why do we *have to* learn a language?', or indeed 'why are we learning German? It's not like I'm ever going to use it?'

An improvement in attitudes and motivation

Counteracting the wail of the disaffected Year 9 student would therefore seem useful, but more generally in Year 9 a better attitude towards language learning and other languages would seem desirable, particularly when they are about to choose their GCSE options. An improved attitude to languages is indeed a prime motivator for many advocates of a multilingual approach. A curiosity about languages and language learning, as well as openness towards speakers of other languages was observed as a positive outcome by both teachers and parents of the 'janua linguarum' project, conducted across 16 countries in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary schools (Candelier, 2004, 2008). The exact nature of the lessons varied, but all involved inviting children to look at words in multiple languages on topics such as names, numbers, food and animal sounds. The languages involved were not just the language of the school and foreign languages taught, but also included new, unknown languages for the teachers and the pupils. The project evolved out of the smaller Evlang project conducted over three years and across five countries, which developed courses lasting between a year and 18 months for children at the end of primary school. Surveys of teachers and parents at the end of the project showed an improved interest in diversity and other languages, although it was less conclusive about the impact on receptiveness to unfamiliar languages and listening skills.

In contrast with Hawkins' model, Candelier's evaluation of the 'janua linguarum' was less certain about whether such projects have an impact on language learning competence and skills. Teachers

in France and Portugal who were very used to encouraging children to compare languages even prior to their involvement in the project, did think the project had an impact here, but teachers in most of the other countries surveyed were more sceptical (Candelier, 2004). It is important to note, however, that no attempt was made to test the pupils' language-learning skills and these results rely purely on teacher questionnaires and responses to statements about their pupils on a Likert scale. In his article surveying numerous similar projects four years later, Candelier is even clearer: current research does not show the impact of multilingual teaching on MFL as a subject and more research is needed here (Candelier, 2008).

A similar argument was made two years earlier in Hélot and Young's (2006) article reporting on the Didenheim project in France, where teachers and parents worked together to deliver a series of lessons on the pupils' different home languages and cultures. Whilst the project had a clear and positive impact on children's attitudes towards other cultures and languages, it was unclear what, if any, the impact was on their attitude and motivation for learning the specific foreign language they would go onto learn (German). However, as the authors themselves state, this was not the primary aim of the project. Instead, the project grew out of a concern about the increasing number of racist incidents at school and so they wanted a project that would encourage pupils with 'learning to live together' (Hélot & Young, 2006, p. 77). The fact that there were also fairly negative attitudes towards the learning of German in primary school was the context for the project, but it was not the primary motivation behind it. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that this aspect was not a focus of the research or the project itself. Nonetheless, Hélot and Young argue that more research is needed on the impact of multilingual teaching projects on attitudes to MFL and motivation for language learning. For all of Hawkins' conviction that LA and multilingual teaching *would* improve attitudes and motivation, it seems solid research here is lacking.

Where the research is more compelling is on the improved attitudes towards linguistic diversity and other cultures, as indeed the Didenheim project found (Hélot & Young, 2006). Of course, this project was extremely small in scale, taking place in just one village primary school, although over a three-year timescale from 2000-2003. However, its findings are backed up by many other projects, all of which took place in the continental European iteration of the LA: *éveil aux languges*. The organisation *Education et Diversité Linguistique et Culturelle (EDiLiC)*, which promotes this approach, indeed states that a primary aim of it is that:

> Les élèves développent des attitudes positives vis-à-vis de la diversité linguistique et culturelle du monde dans lequel ils sont appelés à vivre ainsi que le désir d'apprendre des langues variées (EDiLiC, 2009).[2]

Candelier's (2004) analysis of the 'janua linguarum' project emphasises that a positive attitude towards linguistic diversity and a curiosity about other languages was the key result of this 'awakening to languages' approach. This was also the conclusion of Donmal (1991), several decades earlier, in his justification for LA courses in UK schools in the 1980s. More recently, Finland and Luxembourg have formally adopted this approach in their new curricula to raise the profile of the increasingly diverse range of students' home languages (Hélot, Frijns, Van Gorp, & Sierens, 2018; Tonnar et al., 2010). Following on from this, in a review of numerous multilingual approaches in Europe it was again found that most projects had a positive effect on attitudes towards other languages and cultures (Sierens et al., 2018). Evidence for improvement in motivation to study other languages was harder to find, however, and the authors state that to date there have been few studies of this link between a multilingual approach and motivation.

[2] The pupils develop positive attitudes towards the linguistic and cultural diversity in the world in which they are called to live as well as a desire to learn a variety of languages

An improvement in MLA?

Almost equally hard to find are studies which show that a multilingual approach can improve students' multilingual awareness (MLA) i.e., their ability to think about languages in a very general sense. Part of the reason for this is that it is extremely hard to measure and instead studies that have touched on this have tried to measure cross-linguistic awareness, i.e., students' ability to compare and contrast their languages, or to measure metalinguistic awareness i.e., students' ability to think abstractly about language. Here, a recent literature review found that some projects did result in an apparent improvement in metalinguistic and metacognitive skills, particularly amongst older students and when the projects specifically focused on these skills (Sierens et al., 2018). In other words, projects which encouraged students to think about language as an object in itself and to think about language-learning skills saw an improvement in these areas. What this looks like in the classroom varies, but the authors emphasise success with projects that require students to learn 'to think like linguists' (Sierens et al., 2018, p. 67). How to measure this is more debatable and a second article by many of the same authors criticises attempts to test this through metalinguistic and grammaticality judgement tests, which they argue focus too much on form and not on actual proficiency in communication or linguistic skills (Frijns, Sierens, Van Avermaat, Sereu, & Van Gorp, 2018).

An alternative approach to form-focused testing might be to be use student self-reporting through questionnaires and interviews, as Ò Laoire (2007) did in his project with Year 9 students in Ireland. Here LA is part of the language learning curriculum, and he was keen to encourage students to contrast English and Irish, in what might seem like getting them to think like linguists as advocated by Sierens et al (2018). Although Ò Laoire (2007) stresses that LA work should not just mean grammar teaching, much of his project focused on grammar noticing activities about the

differences between English and Irish in the future tense. His students self-reported that LA had been unhelpful, although he maintains that it may have helped without the students realising. However, due to his research design, the evidence for this is not conclusive, as he himself acknowledges and he does not provide evidence for whether his project improved their MLA. This suggests again that measuring the impact of LA on students' MLA and ability to think like linguists is hard to do and clearly a balance is needed between relying on student self-reporting and relying on more objective, grammar-based testing.

More successful was Simard's (2004) project with English learners in Quebec, where the 10- and 11-year-olds involved were asked to keep a diary for the 2-month long project, recording what they had learned in their English lessons, and the differences and similarities they spotted between French and English. The control group did not keep such a diary. According to Simard this method was designed to promote the students' metalinguistic reflection, but one might also term it as promoting their cross-linguistic awareness (XLA). Before and after the project, all the students also sat listening and reading comprehension tests, an L2 writing task and a written reflection task, asking them to record differences and similarities they had noticed between French and English. Although completion rates for the diaries was low and there was no measurable difference before and after the project in students' XLA on the written reflection tasks, Simard concludes that the diaries were useful to gain insights into student perceptions and thinking. She highlights it as a possible model of measuring XLA. What is clear is that just the diaries in themselves do not improve XLA and so a project which seeks to have an impact on this must be more explicit in teaching it.

What previous projects have taken place and what effects they have had?

It is clear from this literature review that a wealth of projects encouraging a multilingual approach have already taken place throughout Europe, with the vast majority improving attitudes towards linguistic diversity. Most of these projects (e.g. *janua languarum, éveil aux languages, Didenheim project)* have taken place in primary schools as a way of preparing for more formal language learning in secondary school and promoting tolerance for linguistic diversity and raising the profile of students' home languages (Sierens et al., 2018). Most projects have been relatively small in scale, with the exception of Luxembourg, whose 'ouverture aux langues' approach is for every school in the country and at all levels of education, both primary and secondary (Tonnar et al., 2010). Although many of the activities suggested seem most appropriate for primary-school aged children, the introduction to the policy booklet emphasises the need for the approach in secondary school:

> pour décloisonner les enseignements des différentes disciplines et créer des passerelles entre les langues et les branches non linguistiques, en vue d'un véritable transfert des connaissances, compétences et stratégies d'apprentissage…développer chez les élèves une compétence plurilingue…à leur donner une plus grande assurance à communiquer avec leurs connaissances linguistiques, même partielles, et à les habituer à mobiliser ces dernières dans leurs apprentissages langagiers comme dans les autres disciplines scolaires.' (Tonnar et al., 2010, p. 14).[3]

The curriculum clearly aims to improve students' XLA, as well as more general cross-curricular links to result in multilingual students who are equipped for later language learning, and indeed later learning more generally. Unfortunately, there has been no analysis of the effects of this whole-country approach, but its ambitions are clear in a country where being trilingual in French,

[3] In order to break down the barriers between the teaching of different disciplines and to create links between languages and non-linguistic subjects in preparation for a real transfer of knowledge, skills and learning strategies…to develop plurilingual skills in the pupils…to give them greater self-confidence in communicating their linguistic knowledge however partial and to get them used to utilising this knowledge in their language learning as well as in other school subjects

German and Luxembourgish is the expected minimum, and where a very high proportion of the school-aged population speak another language as well at home (Le gouvernement du grand-duché de Luxembourg, 2020).

In a similar context is the Passepartout project run in six German-speaking cantons in Switzerland, which developed a programme from primary through to the end of secondary school, deliberately designed such that 'Sprachen werden bei jeder Gelegenheit miteinander verbunden und verglichen'[4] in their teaching of French and then English (Passepartout, 2009). Meier (2014) is critical of the fact that their comparative approach does not actually bring in students' home languages other than German, despite advocating this approach when the project began. In contrast the Luxembourg curriculum does this more explicitly in their activities inviting children to compare the country's three languages with Portuguese, Serbo-Croat and English, amongst others (Tonnar et al., 2010). However, overall, writing before the end of the Passepartout project, Meier (2014) cites the positive student reaction to it, despite some initial worries from teachers and parents. As the project only came to the end of its first run in July 2018, it is still in the process of being evaluated, but an initial report cites the difficulties many teachers had with comparing the two languages, and concludes that despite some comparison happening in individual lessons, 'Englisch und Französisch wurden demnach mehrheitlich isoliert und nicht fächerübergreifend unterrichtet' (Furter, 2018, p. 17)[5]. Nevertheless, the project is being refined and continued, and they are awaiting results on linguistic competence of the students who learnt their two foreign languages with this approach.

[4] Languages are linked and compared with each other at every opportunity
[5] English and French were thus mostly isolated and not taught in an interdisciplinary fashion

More conclusive is Jessner's (2016) analysis of two projects in South Tyrol and Austria, which explicitly encouraged and taught XLA and MLA, by frequently comparing and contrasting the languages taught at the schools. The South Tyrol project was again based in a primary school and in a context where children are required to use at least two languages in daily life: Italian and German. The class that received what Jessner terms 'metalinguistic training' or *riflessione lingua* classes, where they were actively encouraged to compare languages, did better on tests of their L1 (Italian), L2 and 3 (German and English) and of their metalinguistic knowledge and skills. The Austrian project took place in secondary school and was in the form of 'multilingual seminars' where again students were actively encouraged to compare and contrast the foreign languages they were learning in school, and indeed to use all of them together in various activities, such as tourism-based role plays. Less comprehensive analysis is provided of this project. Instead, a series of accounts by the teachers involved is provided, where they reflect on the pupils' engagement and the number of languages used in the activities. Given Jessner's overall argument about the benefits of such a multilingual approach, the observations by teachers are all highly positive, but it certainly seems like an exciting and possible approach with older students.

Of course, in the UK, it would be easy to dismiss such projects by arguing that the context of all these authors is very different from the UK secondary school classroom, as they are operating in officially multilingual states, or in states with bilingual education systems and where the motivation to learn English as a world language is very clear. However, their arguments are compelling, given multilingual students and the learning of several languages exist just as much in the UK (including my own school) as elsewhere. Indeed, there are several new UK-based projects addressing this very multilingualism in the classroom: Creative Multilingualism (2020) and MEITS (2020). These are both large-scale research projects which encompass numerous areas, looking at languages in school, culture and society more broadly. They are both attempts to

reenergise language education on a large scale with an impressive amount of public engagement and it will be exciting to read the results of all their projects. Some are specifically school-based, such as Creative Multilingualism's research strand on linguistic creativity in language learning, or multilingual poetry, which has many parallels with the Stephen Spender Trust's (2019) poetry translation project, or MEIT's strand looking at multilingual identity in foreign language learning. Poetry projects, such as those run by Creative Multilingualism or the Stephen Spender Trust, encourage EAL students to use their home languages in the classroom and share them with other students, either through producing poetry in their home language in the case of Creative Multilingualism, or by translating poems and pictures books from Polish to English. The Creative Multilingualism project is ongoing and has yet to produce a final report.

However, the Stephen Spender Trust (2019) reports very positively on its case studies from its pilot project, with pupils and teachers commenting on their ability to make comparisons between languages, apply translation strategies and recognise and validate EAL student's bilingualism. No specific data are given for these claims and the report instead relies on what are presumably observations and interviews with pupils and teachers conducted by the researcher evaluating the project. It is hoped the reports from both Creative Multilingualism and MEITS will include much more robust data and evidence about their findings.

Alongside these projects getting students to actively use their multiple languages there have also been several UK projects associated with the Routes into Languages programme, where researchers have delivered interventions in the form of lessons explicitly about the benefits of multilingualism (Lanvers, 2020; Lanvers, Hultgren, & Gayton, 2019). These did appear to have some impact on student motivation and curiosity about language learning, in a similar fashion to

Candelier's (2004, 2008) findings. However, the authors acknowledge their impact might be small in the long-term, given the limited number of sessions involved and the fact they had to be fitted in around the existing languages curriculum and took away from language teaching time, rather than being part of the curriculum and specific language teaching time itself. Similarly, Fisher, Evans, Forbes, Gayton, & Liu's (2020) project on developing multilingual identities with early secondary school students encourages students to discuss ideas about multilingualism and linguistic identities rather than use these multiple languages in the classroom. Again their project (which is ongoing and still being tested in a longitudinal study) seems to be in addition to language lessons rather than integrated into the curriculum and although they believe it is 'achievable within 6-10 hours of classroom time over the course of an academic year' (Fisher et al., 2020, p. 460) this is still a considerable addition to teaching time that does not get students to directly use their languages.

What further research is needed?

Whilst awaiting more formal results of the Creative Multilingualism and MEITS large-scale projects and in the wake of numerous projects running across Europe to encourage multilingualism, now would therefore seem an ideal time to conduct a smaller-scale UK based study in the ordinary secondary classroom, conducted by class teachers and which can be fully part of language teaching. Many of the European projects (Candelier, 2008; EDiLiC, 2009; Hélot & Young, 2006) have studied the effects on attitudes and tolerance towards speakers of other languages, which is clearly one important strand that has its roots in the origins of the LA movement. However, this project seeks to go beyond this and investigate whether adopting a multilingual approach can improve student attitudes towards learning other languages, and their language-learning skills in the form of XLA and MLA. To do this clearly requires an attempt to compare and contrast languages in the classroom and not teach them in isolation, an approach

advocated by Meier (2004) and Jessner (2006; 2016). Those projects that have truly attempted to compare and contrast languages in the classroom such as the 'janua linguarum' project cited by Candelier (2008) or the Passepartout project in Switzerland (Furter, 2018) and *Ouverture aux Langues* project in Luxembourg (Tonnar et al., 2010) have either yet to be fully evaluated, or have only been shown to have had an effect on student attitudes to other languages and language learning. My project therefore aims to find out if adopting a multilingual approach in the MFL classroom, focussing specifically on multilingual translation, has an effect on students' capacity to see links between different languages (XLA), can improve their attitude towards studying languages, and can enhance their language-learning skills. To do this, it will therefore be necessary to first find out:

1. What are current Year 9 attitudes towards languages in my school?
2. To what extent do Year 9 students currently see links between different languages?

Second, an intervention will be developed to address the following questions:

3. Would a multilingual approach in lessons enable Year 9 students to
    a. improve their cross-linguistic awareness (XLA)?
    b. improve their attitude towards studying languages?
    c. enhance their language-learning skills?

Methodology

Research Design

To answer these questions a pre/post-test quasi-experimental design was used, with half the year group (9K n=91) taking part in an intervention as part of their normal MFL lessons and the other half of the year group (9L n=89) acting as a comparison group who did not receive the intervention. In both halves of the year there were two Spanish classes and one German class, making six classes altogether. All six Spanish/German teachers worked on the project to conduct the tests and surveys, and three teachers (myself and the two 9K Spanish teachers) carried out the eight-week intervention. Nearly all students also studied French alongside Spanish/German, but the tests, surveys, and intervention took place during their Spanish/ German lessons. After three weeks of the intervention, I monitored fidelity of implementation via a Google Form survey with colleagues. This revealed some discrepancies between frequency of the activities. We agreed to limit the activity to around once a week after Easter to ensure students remained motivated and to allow classes enough lesson time to complete the ordinary scheme of work and vocabulary or grammar tests often conducted at the start of lessons.

The whole year group took a series of tests and surveys before and after the intervention to measure any resulting changes. Small group interviews were also conducted after the intervention with the 9K students to further investigate the project's impact. As with any in-school educational research, it cannot be assumed that changes in results after the intervention for the test group were solely down to the intervention, or that no changes would occur with the comparison group, as throughout the intervention both groups had their usual language lessons, which in themselves might influence outcomes.

Table 1 below outlines the project timeline, including some adaptations due to school closure and reopening in 2021:

Table 1 Project Timeline

Project Stage	**Completion Date (w.c.)**	**Notes**
Pre-intervention survey	13/01/2021	*Assigned online during remote T&L on Google Classroom (GC).*
Pre-intervention Latin/Swedish test	08/02/2021	
Pre-intervention 'spot the differences' test	08/02/2021	
Intervention with 9K	15/03/2021	*Delayed start due to return to school.*
Mid-intervention review	12/04/2021	*Conducted in Easter holidays after 3 weeks of intervention.*
Continuation of intervention	19/04/2021	
Intervention end	17/05/2021	
Post-intervention survey	24/05/2021	*Conducted in last week of term. Set on GC and explained by class teacher.*
Post-intervention Latin/Swedish test	24/05/2021	
Post-intervention 'spot the differences' test	24/05/2021	
Post-intervention group interviews 9K	From 07/06/02021 - 21/06/2021	*3 separate group interviews conducted, one per class.*

The Intervention

The intervention itself took the form of multilingual translation starters, encouraged by the poetry translation projects of the Stephen Spender Trust (2019) and Creative Multilingualism (2020). Both suggested that translation was an ideal medium to promote discussion and encourage recognition of students' language skills from outside the classroom. It is also an activity that students are very used to, making it easy for colleagues to integrate into lessons and for students to tackle. This meant the translation students would be asked to do would not be as lengthy as those in the Stephen Spender Trust and Creative Multilingualism projects, and instead took the form of sentence translation.

However, I also wanted the project to have an impact on all my students and encourage not just discussion of different home languages, but also those taught in school, inviting all students to compare all the languages they know. This aspect of the intervention therefore drew on the work of the Swiss Passepartout (2009) project, the Luxembourg curriculum (Tonnar et al., 2010), and the *riflessione lingua* classes in South Tyrol and multilingual seminars in Austria (Jessner et al., 2016).

The intervention integrated these two aspects, translation, and encouragement to compare and contrast languages, by asking 9K students to begin each lesson with one English sentence, which they had to translate first into either Spanish or German, then French, and then any other languages they knew. The English sentences were based on the topics students were studying, so they would have the vocabulary and tenses required for the Spanish/German. They were then invited to reflect on any similarities and differences they spotted between the languages. After

students had completed their translations and reflections individually, a short whole-class discussion took place, led by the teacher to check translation work in Spanish/German and French, allow students to share other languages they knew, and compare ideas about patterns, similarities and differences they had spotted. An example of the sentences can be seen in the appendix.

Research Instruments

To measure the impact of the intervention a number of instruments were designed: a survey to test attitudes towards languages, a 'spot the differences' activity to test students' XLA and an *ab initio* Latin/Swedish task to measure students' language-learning skills with an unknown language. Two versions of the 'spot the differences' test and two versions of the language-learning test were created and administered in counterbalanced order. This avoided the risk of a practice effect and the original plan also allowed students sitting next to each other in the classroom to receive different versions of the test.

Unfortunately, this plan was not possible due to Covid restrictions. Instead, for ease of working during online learning, it was decided to divide the class in half with the top half of the register sitting one test, and the second half doing the second test. The post-intervention tests took place back in school and students sat the version of the test that they had not done pre-intervention. However, Covid restrictions meant that students had to be sat alphabetically by surname for contact tracing, which meant that most students were sat next to someone doing the same test. They were nonetheless asked to complete it in test conditions, supervised by their normal class teacher, thus hopefully minimizing, or indeed eliminating, any copying.

In addition, a small focus group interview of students who took part in the intervention was used at the end of the project, to delve deeper into student attitudes and what they felt they had learned from a multilingual approach. Table 2 below summarizes these different instruments and the questions they addressed. Detailed discussion of each of the instruments follows.

Table 2 Research Questions and Instruments

Research Questions	**Data Collection Methods**			
	Survey	Latin/Swedish Test	'spot the differences' test	Post-intervention group interviews
1. *What are current Year 9 attitudes towards languages in my school?*	✓			
2. *To what extent do Year 9 students currently see links between different languages?*	✓		✓	
3. *a. Would a multilingual approach in lessons enable Year 9 students to improve their cross-linguistic awareness (XLA)?*			✓	✓
3. b. Would a multilingual approach in lessons enable Year 9 students to their attitude towards studying languages?	✓			✓
3. c. Would a multilingual approach in lessons enable Year 9 students to enhance their language- learning skills?		✓		

Survey and focus group: question 1 and 3b

To get a picture of Year 9 attitudes to languages before and after the intervention, a Google Form survey was used. The questions were largely based on surveys developed by Dörnyei and others (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). Not all the aspects of motivation and attitudes towards language-learning covered in Dörnyei's (2009) survey were relevant to my own study. Several surveys based on Dörnyei's work, including Csizér and Konnos (2009) and Ryan (2009) were also examined. Many of these were designed for TEFL or university contexts and were given to students all studying the same foreign language, whereas my survey needed to be relevant to younger students of both Spanish and German. It was also important to devise a survey that was not overly long, in order for it to be completed at the start or end of a lesson by the whole year group and to ensure the participants remained focused and gave honest answers, avoiding question-fatigue, and I needed to add statements about connections between languages to address this vital part of my project. All the previous surveys asked participants to rate their relative agreement or disagreement with the statements using a 5-point Likert scale. For my survey I decided to use a 4-point scale, removing the middle option of 'neither agree nor disagree', following Cohen, Manion & Morrison's argument (2018) that with 5-point scales, participants can end up choosing the mid-point, rather than expressing an opinion. The questions used in my survey can be found in the appendix.

The survey was initially piloted with five mid-high attaining Year 8 students, including one EAL student, and with all of Year 9 in February 2020, as the project which was originally planned for 2020 had to be postponed due to school closure in the pandemic. The two waves of piloting showed that students did have definite opinions on the statements. It also helped to clarify wording of some questions for comprehension and ease of data analysis. Adaptations were made to earlier questions in the survey, designed not to gain a picture of Year 9 attitudes, but rather a

picture of which languages they knew/were learning outside school and how aware others in the class were of this. All this allowed me to gain a comprehensive picture of the linguistic diversity of the year group, their awareness of this, and their views and attitudes towards language-learning. Students completed the survey in lesson time to ensure a high, representative completion rate. 93% of the year group completed the survey before the intervention and 84% completed it afterwards. It was slightly surprising that participation rates were lower after the intervention when students were back in school, but this could be explained by the fact that most students were asked to complete the survey in their last lesson of term, after the other tests, and some may therefore have run out of time.

The focus group interviews after the intervention allowed me to delve deeper into student views from those who had taken part in it. To ensure the group was as representative as possible, the class teacher asked who was available at lunchtime and wanted to take part. From within that group of volunteers they then tried to choose students with a range of characteristics: (a) those who (according to their perceptions) had participated well in the intervention; (b) those who had been more reluctant; (c) those who they knew spoke another language at home; (d) those who they knew did not speak another language at home; (e) a higher-attaining student; and (f) a lower-attaining student. There was inevitably some crossover between these categories, and I interviewed six volunteers from my class, four from another class and four from the third class, as three separate groups. Of course, by relying on volunteers, however representative my colleagues and I tried to make the group, there would always be the risk of only hearing from more motivated students willing to give up their lunchtime to talk, but short of unethically forcing reluctant students to take part, there was little else that could be done to get round this.

A semi-structured interview format was used to allow me to gain a picture of what students had got out of the project, but also to adapt the questions according to what students said. Example questions and the interview transcripts can be found in the appendix. Group rather than individual interviews were used to ensure that students felt comfortable being asked questions about their lessons and to enable students to pick up on what others had said and challenge each other as they compared and contrasted experiences, in line with the recommendations of Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018). All students were encouraged to participate and given a chance to talk. Whilst students did not often disagree with each other, they all raised slightly different points in their answers and did have different experiences of the intervention due to their different attainment and language profiles.

'Spot the differences' test and focus group: questions 2 and 3a

Whilst the surveys and interviews were designed to measure any changes in attitudes towards language-learning and the learning of multiple languages, more formal tests were needed to measure any changes in XLA. However, an extensive literature search revealed no tests suitable for measuring this construct for the population that I wanted to investigate. The only study I found that tried to measure XLA was Simard's (2004) project through her use of reflective diaries and a written reflection task. It was with Simard's reflective diaries in mind that I designed a test to measure XLA. I thought it best to try and capture this at the start and end of the project, to see if students improved at all in this kind of activity. Like Simard I wanted to invite students to reflect on similarities and differences they spotted between their L1 (or for EAL students their L2) and the two languages they were learning in school. I also wanted to build in an extra level of challenge by seeing if they could spot these similarities and differences in the language they were no longer learning but had done for half a year in Year 7.

Accordingly, I devised a 'spot the differences' test in collaboration with colleagues which consisted of students being presented with the same sentence in English, French, German and Spanish and being asked to record any similarities and differences they spotted, prompted by familiar categories such as word order, pronouns, adjectives, and vocabulary links. The sentences were written using common vocabulary from KS3 topics, most of which were also in the 500 most frequent words in all three languages (Davies, 2006; Jones & Tschirner, 2006; Lonsdale & Le Bras, 2009). Across both versions of the test, familiar past, present and future tenses were used, and both versions were three clauses long to allow for a range of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax features to be spotted.

Devising a mark scheme proved more challenging but was done through careful collaboration with colleagues and piloting. All colleagues in the department were invited to list the similarities and differences between the sentences which occurred to them in the different categories. This was then used to prepare a pilot version of the test, where the number of possible answers in each category was given to help students know how many things they were looking for. It was piloted by one SEND Year 10 student and four Year 11 students in January and February 2020. All the students found the task challenging, but their answers helped to refine the mark scheme and gave a good idea of the average number of items spotted by students. At the end of February 2020, the whole of Year 9 sat the tests. This showed that the mark scheme was usable and gave a much more comprehensive picture of the test's level of difficulty. All but the highest-attaining linguists in the year found the test very challenging. The average scores were 13% and 17% for the two versions of the test, although the range was 0-56% and 0-73% for version one and version two respectively. Following the second wave of school closures in January 2021 a Google Quiz version of the original test was devised, although the answers were still manually marked due to the variety of ways students could express their answers. The test can be seen in the appendix.

As the test I devised was completely new I also asked students in the group interviews to reflect on what they thought they had learned about comparing and contrasting languages and used some teacher observation in the form of my own research diary and notes. After each intervention lesson, I jotted down observations about participation, the range of languages offered for translation, and similarities and differences noticed by students. The two other teachers offered some informal reflections on this at the end of the project via email. The test itself relied on students recording their observations about similarities and differences in writing. What they were being asked to do was quite different to their normal language-learning activities and so there was a risk many would struggle to articulate their thoughts. I therefore wanted to supplement the test results by using observation notes and interviews.

Latin/Swedish test: question 3c

The final test before and after the intervention tested language-learning skills. As with the survey, careful selection and adaptation of existing tests was needed to ensure that the test was suitable for my context and could be done at the start or end of a lesson. The most widely cited test of language-learning skills is the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) and its version for middle school students, the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB). These are both designed to test foreign language-learning skills, in areas such as memorization, listening, making phoneme-grapheme links and grammatical analysis. However, the PLAB is designed to be used before students start learning a foreign language, and very much for an American context (LLTF, 2020a, 2020b).

Within the UK context, an adaptation of the PLAB test was developed by the University of York between 1967 and 1970 with Year 7 German students at an all-boys grammar school (Green,

1975). This test used pattern spotting, listening and vocabulary learning exercises in new, unknown languages to see if the results were good predictors of future language-learning skills. What the study found was that the most effective part of the test was a language/grammatical analysis test in Swedish, which required students to work out grammatical patterns from tables and then apply this in translation.

This part of the York test has been used by secondary schools to try to gauge incoming Year 7 students' aptitude for learning foreign languages. The full test takes an entire lesson and so some adaptation was needed to ensure it could be done as a starter or plenary activity. The number of questions students had to answer on each grammatical feature was reduced and a section on plural nouns with the definite article was cut.

I needed a second version of the test for students to complete after the intervention, to track if there was any improvement in their pattern-spotting skills. If they had sat the same test in the same language both pre- and post-intervention this could have led to a practice effect, threatening the validity of the findings. I therefore created a Latin test, in the same format as the Swedish test. The grammatical features picked out were slightly different, as Latin makes no use of definite articles, but instead students had to spot and apply patterns related to the case system. Then, like the Swedish test, they also had to spot and apply patterns with plurals and verb conjugation and use all these together with translation at the end. Both tests can be seen in the appendix.

The two tests were piloted with six mid-high attaining Year 8 students one of whom was EAL. They were encouraged to think aloud whilst doing the test to allow me to see if it was indeed a

test of participants' pattern-spotting abilities. The general commentary from the students was that it was easy, particularly when it came to verb conjugation, as they are very used to doing this in the two languages they currently study. The Latin test was seen as slightly harder due to the differences in word order, but all students found the instructions and format clear, and it took them 10-15 minutes to complete. This pilot had a fairly narrow spread of marks, from 79% to 100%, which led to concerns that perhaps – given that the original test was for Year 7 students before they start formal language-learning – it would be too easy for Year 9. However, the first run of the test in February 2020 with the whole of Year 9 showed a much greater range of scores, although the average score for the Latin test was 60% compared to 70% for the Swedish test.

The school closures in January 2021 meant a further adaptation of both tests was needed, converting them to online Google Quizzes. However, this became an advantage as they could be assigned in 'locked mode', meaning students could not look up answers on another tab. Although of course they could have used another device to do so when doing the first round of the tests at home, the timing was made clear to students, as it was set as either the first or last 10 minutes of their lesson, as one of several lesson tasks. There was very little evidence, based on analysis of their answers, of them having cheated. The use of Google Quizzes also meant the bulk of the questions could be self-marking, with just a manual check needed of the final translation section.

Data Analysis

Results from the tests and surveys were analysed using SPSS to see if the intervention had had an impact on 9K classes and to track changes for both groups before and after the intervention. The SPSS analysis showed some outlier results for both tests pre- and post-intervention. However, in the end it was decided to include any outliers in all the analysis as although some could be

explained by the fact that they are known high-achieving students in languages at one end of the scale or SEND/lower-achieving students in languages at the other end of the scale, for others there was no easily identifiable reason why they had emerged as outliers. More importantly all these students were still part of the year group and class, and so there was no clear justification to excluding them, given they had participated in the intervention and tests, and the study was designed to truly reflect the realities of running such a project in an ordinary secondary school classroom, where teachers routinely encounter 'outliers' at both ends of the scale. An initial snapshot of survey responses from the whole year group was also gained from the Google Forms' automatically produced charts and spreadsheet, which was useful to examine before making a more detailed comparison of results using SPSS.

For the interviews a transcript was made from the recordings, although a change in the device being used to record due to internal school exams meant some student responses were not audible for interviews two and three. Nonetheless enough was audible that the data collected was still useful to allow for comparison against the quantitative data collected from the surveys and tests. Full transcripts can be seen in the appendix.

Collaboration

This project took place in active collaboration with colleagues. Several were involved in producing the 'spot the differences' test and mark scheme and all six Year 9 teachers helped deliver the tests and surveys in lesson time. The two other 9K teachers also participated fully in the intervention, devising suitable sentences for their classes to translate into multiple languages. They offered feedback part way through and at the end which helped to gain an overview about how the project had gone across all three classes. At the end of the year the initial findings were

presented to the whole department and a presentation of the project is planned for my school's senior leadership team and teaching and learning research group in September 2021.

Ethics

Before beginning the project, ethical approval was sought from CUREC, my school and my department, and several ethical issues were considered around the research instruments used and the intervention itself. It was important to strike a balance between ensuring results were as representative as possible and not forcing students to participate. For this reason, the tests and surveys were conducted during lessons, but the purpose behind them and their voluntary nature was explained beforehand. The pre-intervention tests and survey were conducted during remote teaching and learning but were set as a Google Classroom lesson task to ensure a high completion rate. Students were told why the survey and tests were being conducted before they started, via a video made by me, and it was made clear that participation was entirely voluntary. It was also made clear that students' answers to the survey and tests would not be used as part of any formal assessment or grading, and indeed that their answer to the question about GCSE language options did not commit them to anything and was separate to their GCSE options form. In line with any other work completed in class, students were asked to give their names, for purposes of tracking results; in the final version of the data, names were replaced by numbers. A similar process was used for the post-intervention tests and surveys, with the class teacher reminding students of the voluntary nature of the project and that their answers would not be used as part of any formal assessment or grading. Some students chose not to complete the survey and tests, but unlike with failure to complete regular class or homework there were no consequences for this.

Participation in the group interviews was also voluntary and students were thanked for giving up their time. The interviews were audio recorded to allow me to focus on asking the questions rather than making notes, but no student names were given on the recording and responses to questions were kept anonymous. Students were made aware that the interviews were being recorded, whilst being reassured that only I would have access to the recordings. They were able to opt out if they felt uncomfortable with this, although none of them chose to. Both my own students and those from colleagues' classes were open about aspects they had not enjoyed as much and aspects which could be improved.

With the intervention itself there was a risk that students would find the activity itself more challenging than normal translation activities. However, the purpose of the project was explained to participants, and their teachers gave students plenty of encouragement and support, as would normally happen in more challenging lessons. The activity in fact became extremely popular and even after the intervention had finished, many of my own students asked at the start of lessons if we would be doing multilingual translation today!

The other risk was that those participants who know or are learning another language outside school might have felt embarrassed about sharing this during the translation activities, particularly if they lacked confidence in these other languages and/or did not regularly talk about their cultural background or personal interests. However, it was hoped that the project would enable students to feel more positive about their knowledge of other languages and that they would see a role for them in their regular language lessons. Participants were at no point pressurized to share their knowledge of other languages; rather, gentle encouragement and praise was used for those who chose to share, in the hope that this would create a positive environment, enabling more reluctant

students to share their knowledge too. Whilst this reluctance to share home languages was observed across all three classes, my colleagues and I noticed a gradual increase in the number of students participating and the variety of languages being publicly shared. Although some students did remain reluctant to share, some of the issues behind this ended up being explored in the group interviews.

There was a final ethical issue surrounding workload, particularly considering the fact that the intervention took place during an extremely challenging school year. However, for colleagues delivering the intervention, tests, and surveys, and collaborating on the 'spot the differences' test, careful attention was paid to workload, particularly during periods of school closure and blended learning when school reopened, and I regularly checked with colleagues that participating in the intervention was not proving overly burdensome.

Findings and Discussion

All the different research instruments then provided a range of interesting answers to the research questions. In this chapter the results are reported alongside the discussion and analysis of them.

Pre-intervention: What are current Year 9 attitudes towards languages in my school and to what extent do Year 9 students currently see links between different languages?

The pre-intervention survey gave a clear picture of attitudes towards languages in Year 9, which were generally pleasingly positive when it came to enjoyment, seeing them as important subjects and intention to use the in the future (Figures 2-5):

Figure 2 Student responses to statement 'I enjoy studying languages' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)

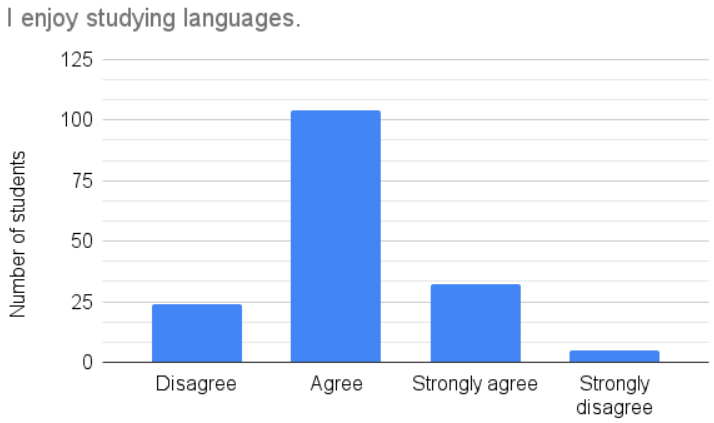


Figure 3 student responses to statement 'I think languages are important school subjects' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)

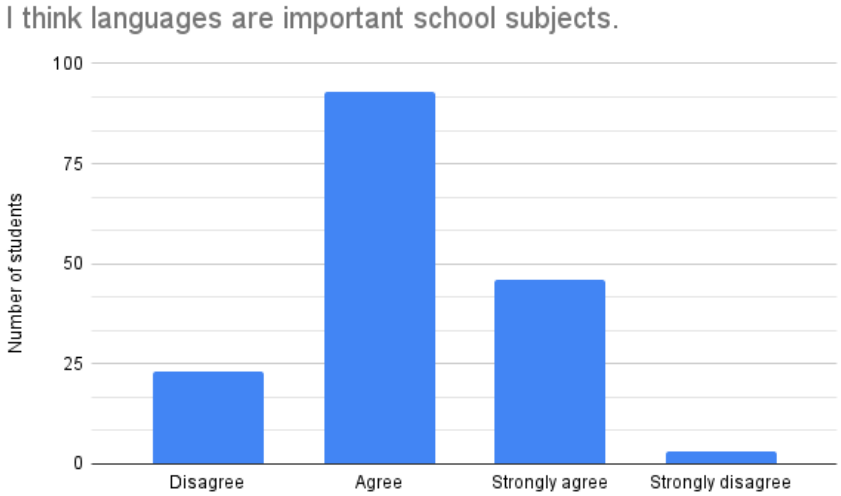


Figure 4 student responses to statement 'I think I will use languages in the future' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)

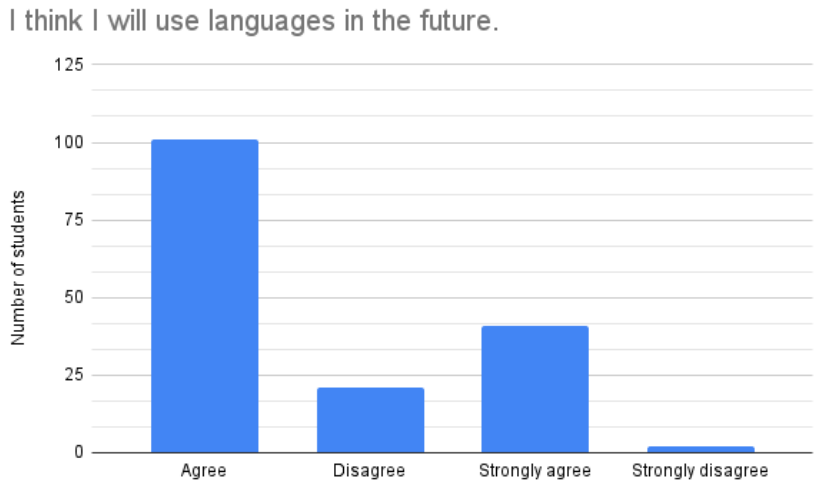
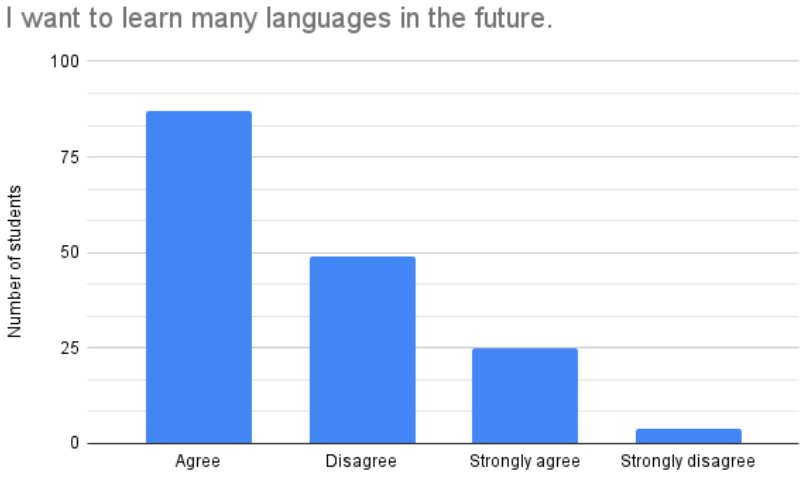


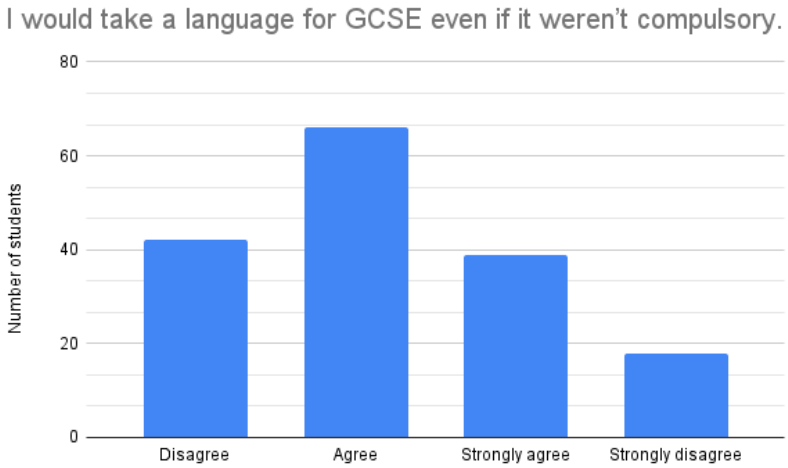
Figure 5 student responses to statement 'I want to learn many languages in the future' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)



Students did of course know that their teachers would be able to see their responses and when initially completing the survey were asked to give their name, so there is a risk that they gave answers they thought they were expected to give, or that they thought would please their teacher, despite being told at the start of the survey, 'Answer all the questions as honestly and completely as you can. Your teachers will not use the answers to make any kind of judgement about you as an individual student.' However, the more divided response to the statement 'I would take a

language for GCSE even if it weren't compulsory' suggested students were being honest in their reactions (Figure 6).

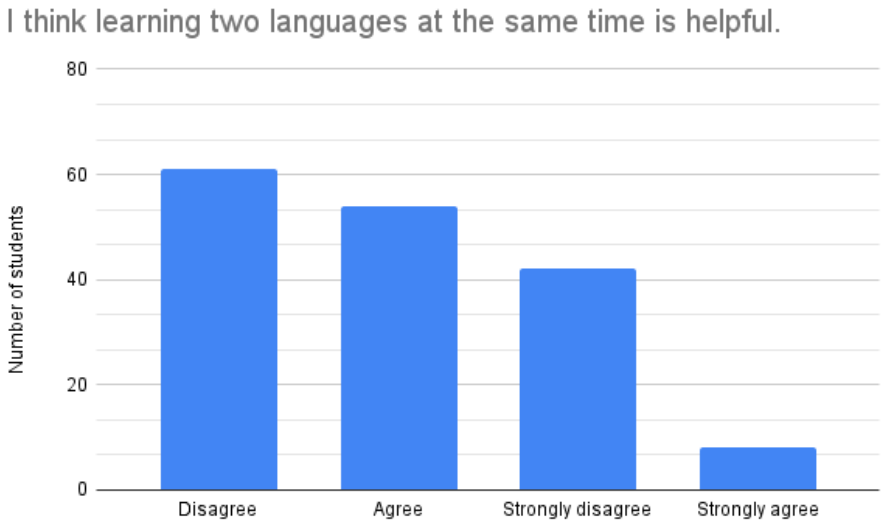
Figure 6 student responses to statement 'I would take a language for GCSE even if it weren't compulsory' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)



Clearly, enjoyment of the subject and acknowledgement of the subject's importance and usefulness in the future did not always translate into a desire to take it beyond Year 9, although those who would take it to GCSE voluntarily were still in the majority.

Where students were less positive was in their views on 'I think learning two languages at the same time is helpful' (Figure 7).

Figure 7 student responses to statement 'I think learning two languages at the same time is helpful' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)



Here only 38% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, compared to 62% who either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, showing that attitudes to multilingualism in the curriculum and its value were decidedly less positive. This is despite the fact that nearly everyone in the year studies two languages and appears to enjoy them, and indeed despite the high percentage of students who either speak or are studying another language outside of school (Figures 8 and 9).

Figure 8 student responses to question 'Apart from English, is there another main language used at home?' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)

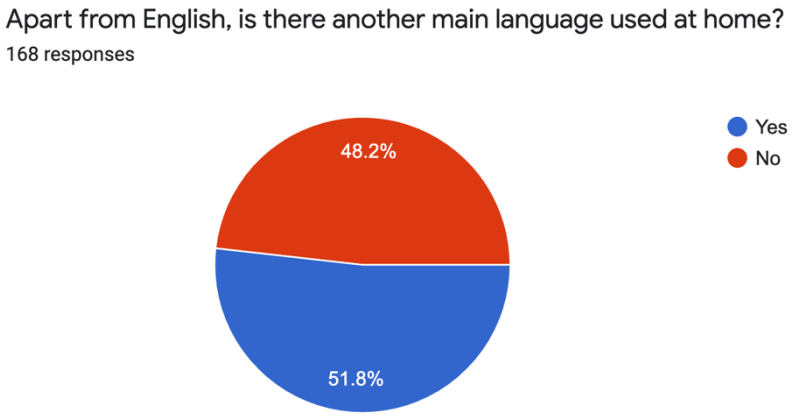
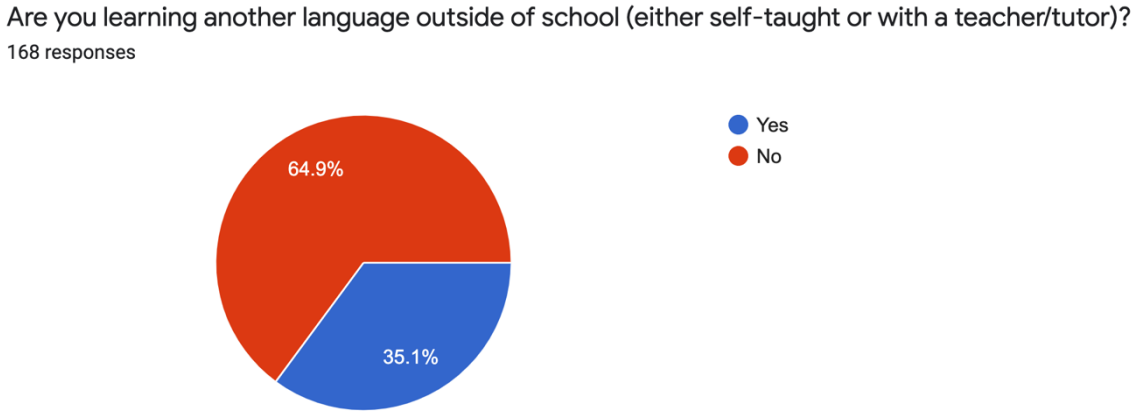
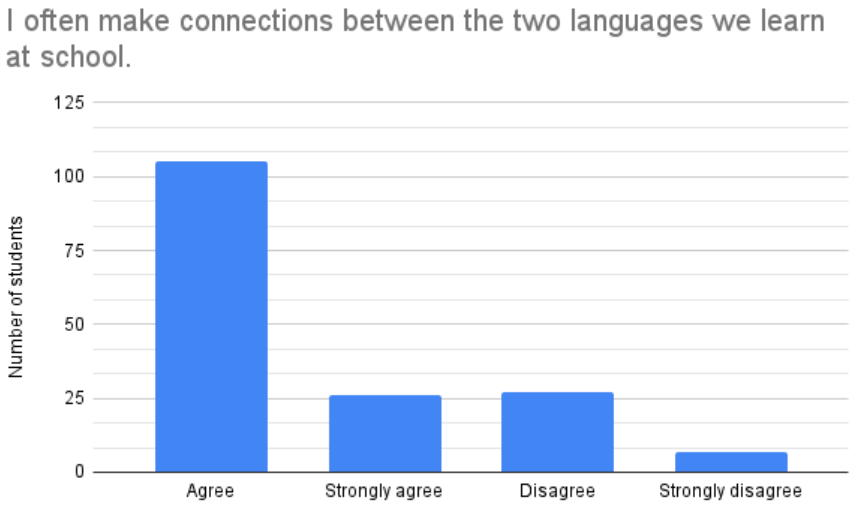


Figure 9 student responses to question 'Are you learning another language outside of school?' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)



Interestingly, despite a fairly negative attitude in terms of seeing learning two languages as helpful, students self-reported on the survey as frequently making connections between the two languages they were learning at school (Figure 10).

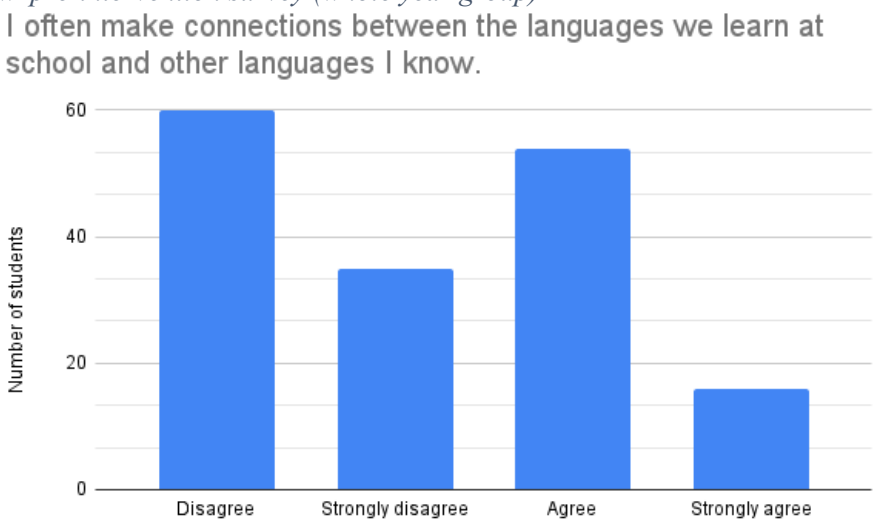
Figure 10 student responses to statement 'I often make connections between the two languages we learn at school' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)



This contrasted quite heavily with their initial scores on the 'spot the differences' test pre-intervention, where the mean score from both versions of the test for the year group as a whole pre-intervention was 19% and the median was 13%. Admittedly, these tests were asking students to make connections between their two languages in ways they were unaccustomed to from lessons, but the contrast between their self-reported ability to see connections, and their actual difficulties in articulating these on the tests is interesting to note.

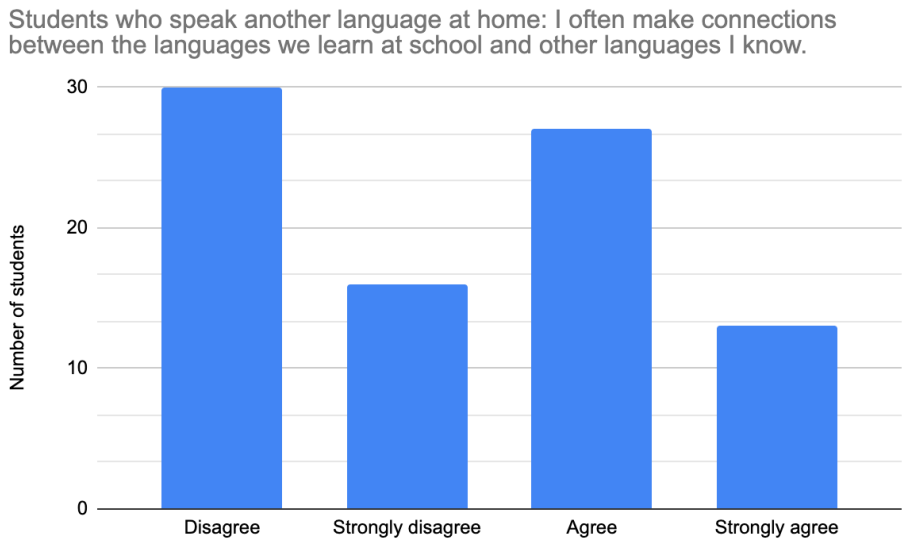
However, far fewer students self-reported as making connections between the languages they knew from home and the languages they were learning in school (Figure 11).

Figure 11 student responses to statement 'I often make connections between the languages we learn at school and other languages I know' pre-intervention survey (whole year group)



Part of this can be explained by the fact that not all students do know other languages outside of school. However, even when filters were applied to the data to just look at students who speak or are learning another language at home, they still often self-reported as not making connections between these languages and languages in school (Figures 12-13).

Figure 12 student responses to statement 'I often make connections between the languages we learn at school and other languages I know' pre-intervention survey (students who speak another language at home)



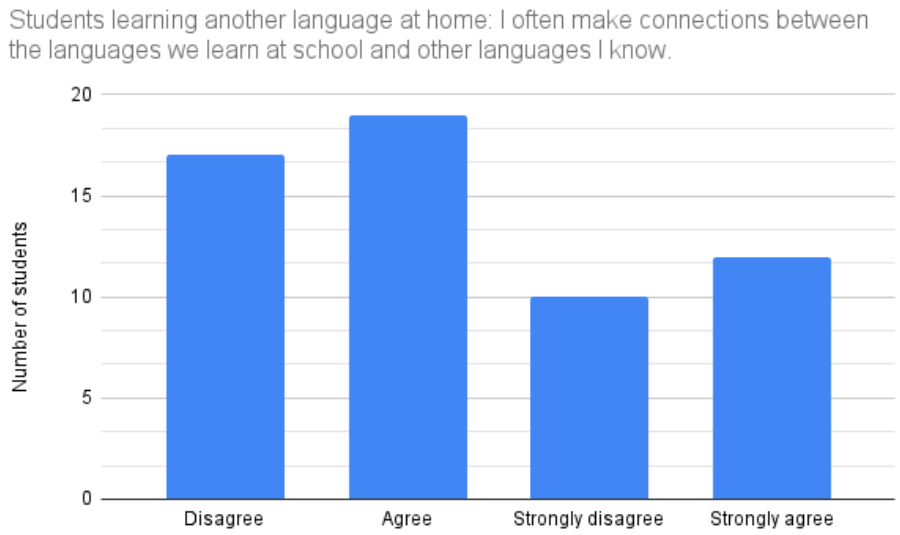
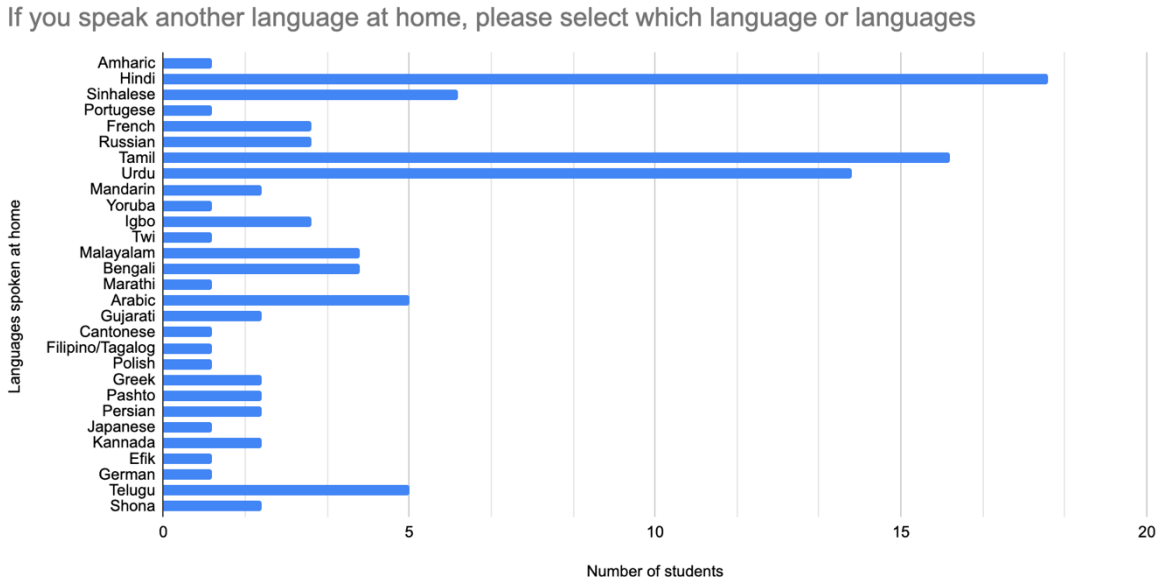


Figure 13 student responses to statement 'I often make connections between the languages we learn at school and other languages I know' pre-intervention survey (students learning another language at home)

Indeed, the split between those who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and those who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement remained broadly similar. Whilst some students did self-report as making these connections, more than half did not, which is quite a contrast to the overwhelming majority who did self-report as making connections between the two languages they were learning in school. Some of this might be explained by student perceptions of languages in school as an object of study as opposed to languages used at home as a medium of communication. Indeed, several students pointed out in the group interviews afterwards that if they do speak another language at home, they often do not know how to write it and lack confidence in how it works as a language, making it harder for them to draw connections with languages in school they study more formally.

Furthermore, prior to the intervention, students have never normally been asked (at least in school) to make connections between in-school and out-of-school languages, which might well also partially explain this initial result. This correlates with my own findings from my Part 2 project, where Year 7 students did not see the value of home languages or their primary school language experience, if it did not directly match up with the language they were taught in secondary school. Indeed, the survey showed a great diversity of languages spoken at home in the year group, none of which are referenced in MFL lessons (Figure 14).

Figure 14 students' home languages (pre-intervention survey whole year group)



Clearly, therefore, while languages in general were regarded as enjoyable and important by the students, multilingualism was not always seen as helpful or useful, and it was this attitude on which the intervention was designed to have an impact.

Would a multilingual approach in lessons enable Year 9 students to improve their cross-linguistic awareness (XLA)?

'Spot the differences' tests

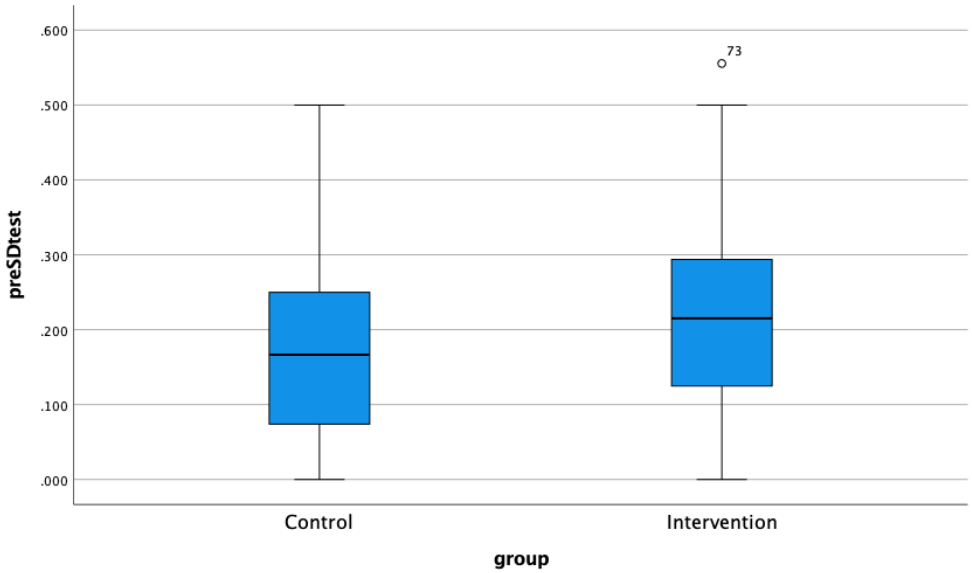
The main measure of students' XLA was the 'spot the differences' tests taken by the whole year group pre- and post-intervention. Analysis of the results was conducted using SPSS to see whether any differences could be observed between the intervention classes (9K) and the comparison classes (9L). The results from the two different versions of the test were combined to enable a comparison to be made of results before and after the intervention, as piloting the previous year revealed that the tests were broadly similar in terms of difficulty. Pre-intervention 9K students did in fact record slightly higher scores on the test, as can be seen in Table 3 and

Figure 15. No discernible reason can be found for why this was the case, as students are not set in languages.

Table 3 Results for pre-intervention 'spot the differences' test

Group	**Mean**	**Median**	**Standard Deviation**
9K (intervention group)	22%	22%	13%
9L (comparison group)	17%	17%	12%

Figure 15 Results for pre-intervention 'spot the differences' test

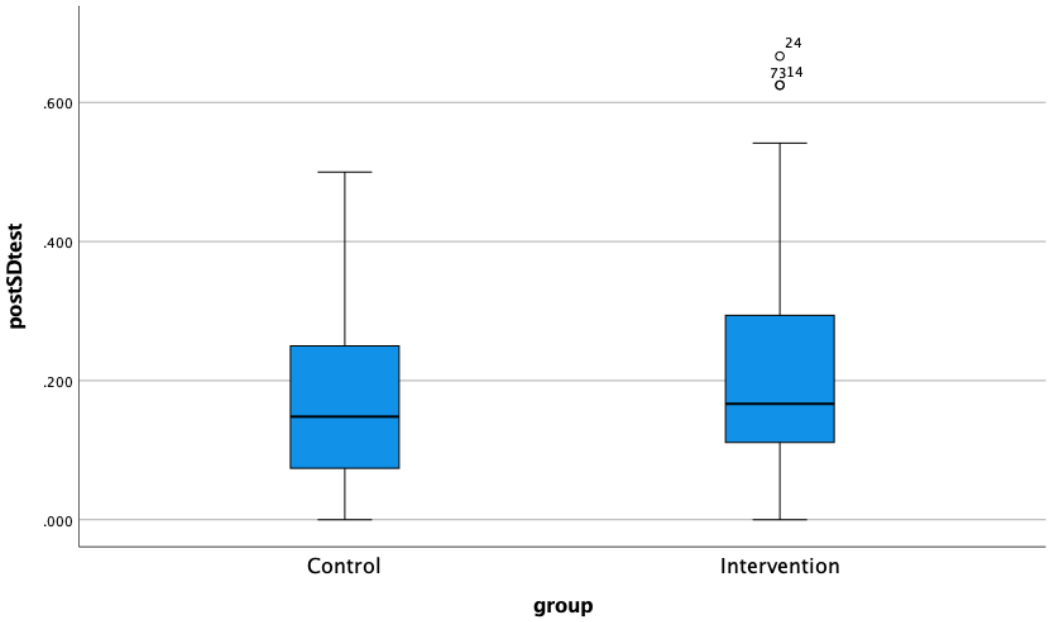


Scores on the 'spot the differences' tests post-intervention, however, did not reveal any significant improvement for either group, and in fact scores for the comparison group as well as the median for the intervention group had got worse (Table 4 and Figure 16).

Group	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
9K (intervention group)	22%	16%	17%
9L (comparison group)	16%	15%	12%

Table 4 Results for post-intervention 'spot the differences' test

Figure 16 Results for post-intervention 'spot the differences' test



Visual inspection of histograms indicated that the results for these tests were non-normally distributed. Therefore, a non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was used to check whether the lack of improvement in scores, or indeed slight worsening of scores was statistically significant. No statistically significant difference was found (U=882.500 p=0.077).

The lack of improvement in scores for the intervention group (barring a few outliers as seen above) was despite the fact that the task was very similar to what students had been doing in their multilingual translation and discussion starters in the previous eight weeks. However, there is a big difference between participating in a whole-class discussion guided by a teacher about similarities and differences and having to articulate these differences for yourself in writing. One

could argue that this was a flaw in the intervention. If students were not used to articulating the similarities and differences for themselves in writing, then should one expect them to get better at it on a test of this? Yet at the same time it was important to avoid a test washback effect and simply teaching the intervention class to the test. Certainly, the intervention itself directly encouraged students to develop their XLA and teachers reported improving and ultimately high participation levels in the class discussions. Colleagues and students expressed enthusiasm to continue the project beyond eight weeks, enthusiasm that may not have occurred if they had done both the translation and observations of similarities and differences individually and in writing. If students were to develop their XLA, they needed to hear these elements articulated by others in the class and have their attention drawn to key aspects by their teachers. For example, when class discussion sometimes faltered, I would ask students to focus on certain elements by asking questions such as, 'What about the words used for … in each of the languages?' or 'What about how the past tense works in each of the languages? How many verbs are being used? What's the word order?'.

The timing of when students sat the tests, and the environment in which they sat them, may have also been a factor. Whereas pre-intervention, students sat them at home, post-intervention, they sat them in a classroom with other students towards the end of the year. Although one might expect that students would be more focused in a classroom than at home, that may not have necessarily been the case when it came to completing Google Quizzes. Students tired at the end of the year (and an exceptionally demanding year at that) may also have struggled on what remained quite a challenging task for them. It must also be remembered that the test developed here was entirely new, as no previous test for XLA was found in the literature.

Survey: students' self-reported XLA

Another measure of students' XLA was in their responses to statements 17 and 18 of the survey pre- and post-intervention:

- Statement 17 'I often make connections between the two languages we learn at school'
- Statement 18 'I often make connections between the languages we learn at school and other languages I know'

As previously discussed, students reported that, before the intervention, they frequently made connections between the two languages they learn at school, but then did not score particularly highly on the 'spot the differences' test. Nonetheless, closer analysis of both groups' responses to this question pre- and post-intervention took place, to see whether students self-reported as making more connections between in-school and out-of-school languages after the intervention.

For analysis, the responses to these statements were coded as follows:

- Strongly disagree = 1
- Disagree = 2
- Agree = 3
- Strongly agree = 4

This meant that an average score of more than 2.5 across the group as a whole indicated overall agreement with the statement and analysis took place to see whether the strength of agreement with the statement increased after the intervention. The results for statement 17 can be seen in Table 5 and Figures 17-18 below.

Statement	Group	Mean pre-intervention	Median pre-intervention	Standard deviation	Mean post-intervention	Median post-intervention	Standard deviation
17 'I often make connections between the two languages we learn at school'	9K intervention group	3.0	3	0.588	3.0	3	0.642
	9L comparison group	2.9	3	0.661	2.9	3	0.746

Table 5 Student responses to statement 17

Figure 17 Student responses to statement 17

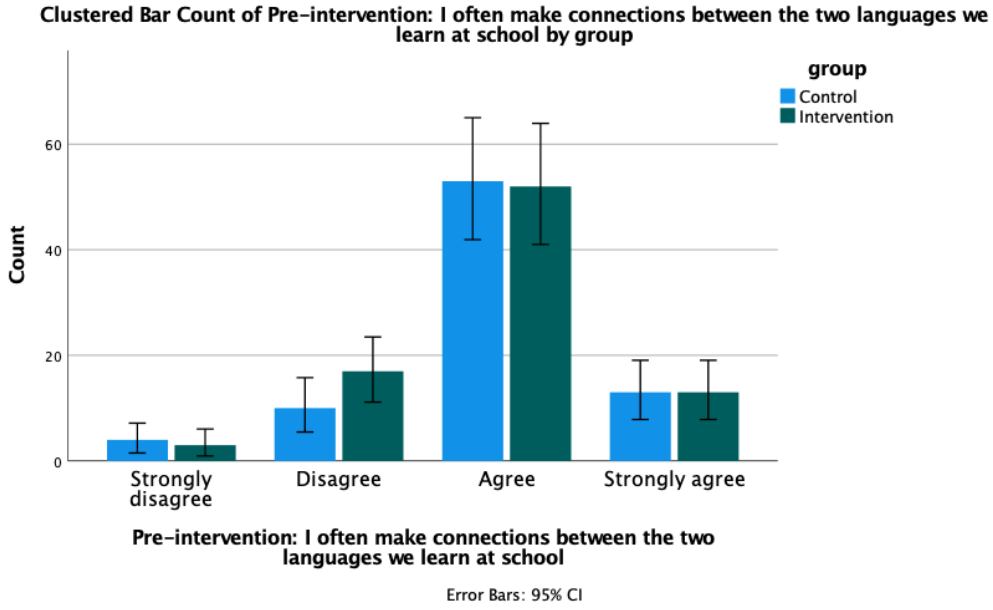
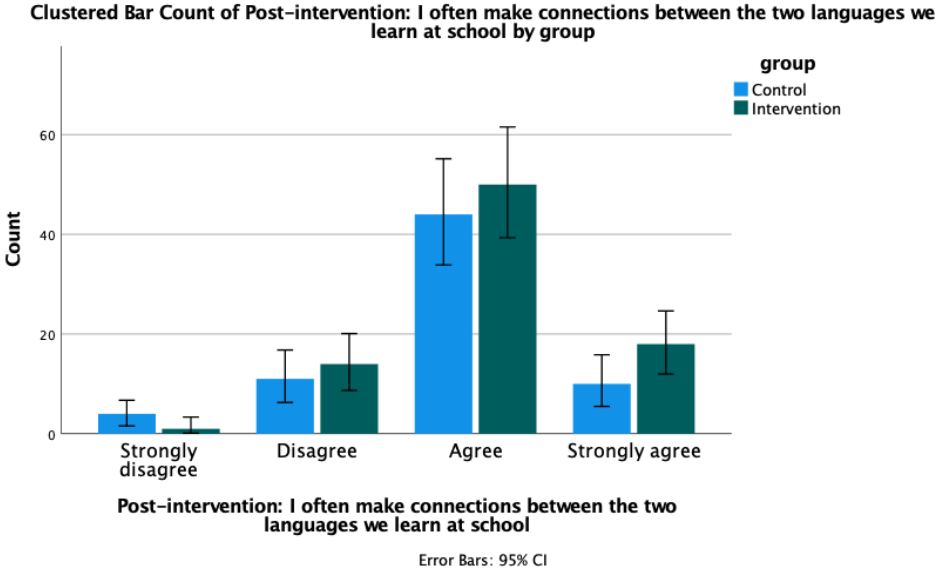


Figure 18 Student responses to statement 17



As can be seen, there was not really an increase in students in the intervention group self-reporting as making connections between the two languages they learn at school, even if visual inspection of the bar charts shows a slight increase in more students strongly agreeing with the statement. However, when a Mann Whitney U test was applied to the post-intervention results, any slight increases were not found to be statistically significant (U=2138, p=0.363).

When it came to making connections between the languages they learn at school and languages they might be learning or speak outside of school the results are shown in Table 6 and Figures 19-20.

Statement	Group	Mean pre-intervention	Median pre-intervention	Standard deviation	Mean post-intervention	Median post-intervention	Standard deviation
18 'I often make connections between the languages we learn at school and other languages I know'	9K intervention group	2.3	2	0.905	2.3	2	0.950
	9L comparison group	2.3	2	0.944	2.4	2	0.941

Table 6 Student responses to statement 18

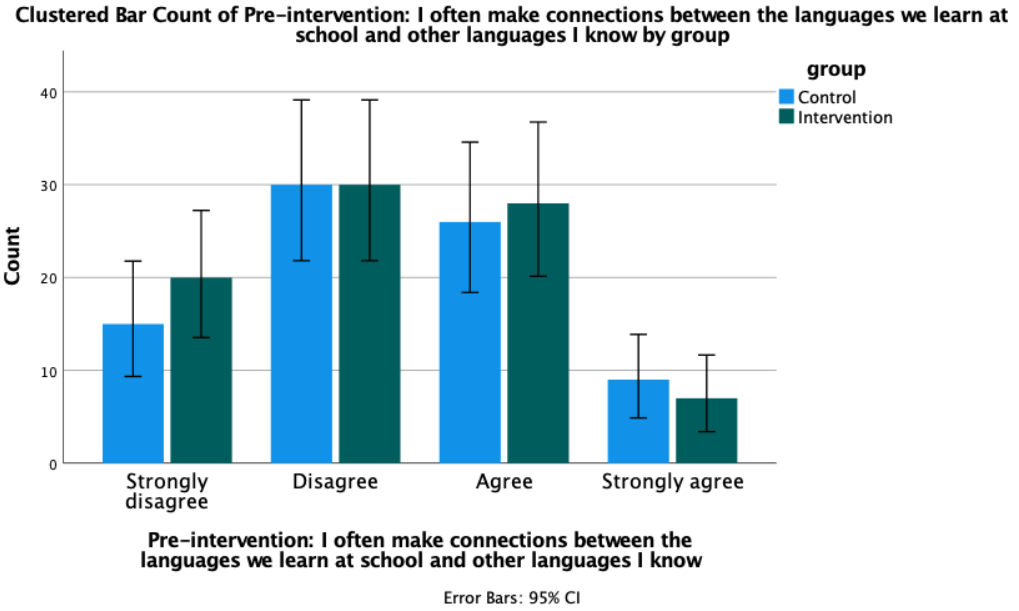
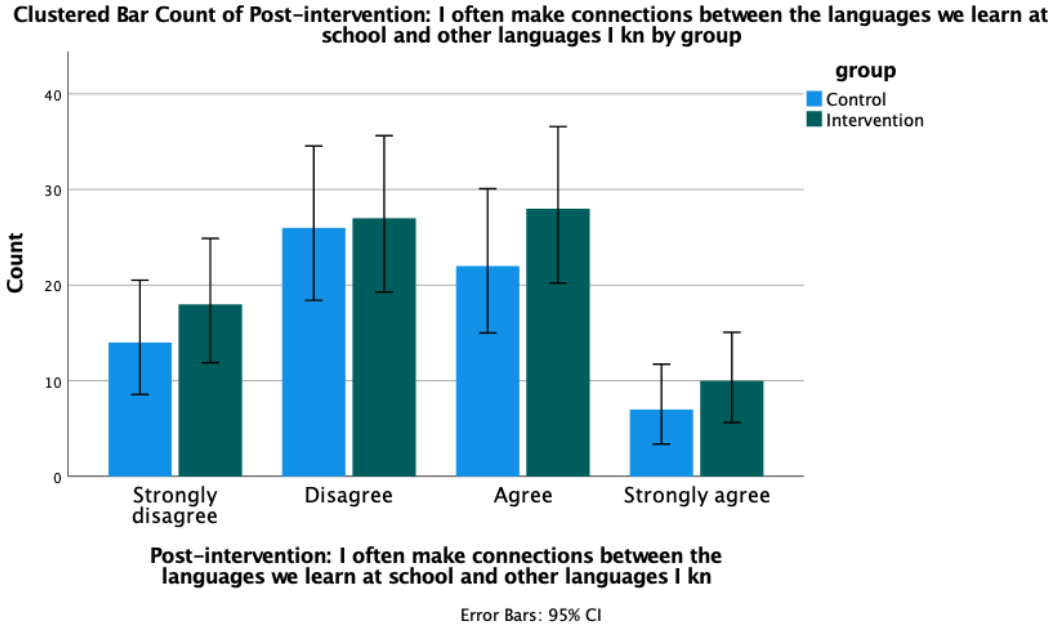


Figure 19 Student responses to statement 18 pre-intervention

Figure 20 Student responses to statement 18 post-intervention



Any change in self-reporting of making connections between the languages learnt in and out of school was therefore extremely minimal in the intervention group and indeed the very slight changes in numbers strongly agreeing was not statistically significant (Mann Whitney U=2789.000 p=0.773). Again, this might seem frustrating for the teachers involved in the

intervention who had spent eight weeks encouraging their classes to make these connections and talk about other languages they know for the first time in the MFL classroom. However, one could also argue that it might take more than eight weeks of fairly short starter activities to make students really feel they can make those connections for themselves on a regular basis.

Observations and Interviews

On the other hand, although the test and survey scores did not reveal an improvement in the intervention group's XLA, observations made by the teachers involved and interviews with students afterwards did suggest developments here. All the teachers involved reported that there were increasing levels of engagement from their classes in the whole-class discussion about similarities and differences, with a greater variety of students contributing as the weeks went on.

The focus group interviews with 14 students after the intervention also made it clear that students felt their XLA had developed, both in terms of their abilities to make connections between the two languages learnt at school, but also with students' home or self-taught languages. For example, student 6 commented on how easy it was to make connections between French and Spanish, particularly in terms of vocabulary, and this was echoed by several other students studying these two languages. Students from my own class studying French and German were also able to make connections at a vocabulary level, particularly as they were doing the same topic in both languages when the intervention took place. Students expressed this in terms such as being able to 'take vocab across' and that seeing the languages alongside each other in the translation work enabled them to spot differences and similarities in word order and vocabulary. In the third group interview, student 12 highlighted the fact that she used to mix up French and Spanish but seeing them alongside each other in whole sentence translation helped her differentiate them better and

see differences between them in structures and tenses. Even if students were not as good at articulating these differences in writing on the formal tests, they could explain them orally and clearly felt they were good at spotting the similarities and differences, particularly when it came to vocabulary, and indeed this was often the area of the tests where students did best.

These connections extended beyond school languages, as one EAL student commented in her group interview:

> There were like some similar languages, I think, from India, languages from there they had similar words that I could hear. Like some people would say and they could like add onto each other so that was cool….

This was particularly interesting in her group interview, as others in the discussion had said it was difficult to pick up on the differences and similarities in the non-school languages, as they had not seen them written down and had just heard them from their classmates. Nonetheless, they all agreed that the project had really opened their eyes to just how many languages their classmates spoke or were teaching themselves, even if several students had found it awkward that they were unable to translate whole sentences into their home languages, or to write them down, as some only knew how to speak their home language or were still in the process of learning it themselves. This sentiment that it was 'interesting to see other people's languages' was echoed in all the group interviews and the project certainly increased awareness of the variety of languages in the class.

Another student in the first interview group had been teaching herself Latin and had been quite pleased to share that knowledge with the group, commenting that,

> Latin's the root of so many modern languages that we speak so then you can see how links between words are actually formed through time. That was interesting to see.

In the second interview group, comments were made about how 'cool' it was that sentences and words were so long in Mandarin, and those who had contributed their home languages often felt a real sense of pride in sharing. For example, student 8, an Urdu speaker, said, 'I felt like so happy, like yes, I know this, I know a different language.' Although others were shyer about sharing their home languages or embarrassed that they could not translate all the words, those who did have the confidence quickly became aware of connections that could be made. For example, student 8 who knew her friend, student 9, was a Pashto speaker and was keen to see the connections between Urdu and Pashto, as she was aware of their shared history as languages of Pakistan where their families are from. In general, all the students interviewed, no matter their attainment level or levels of active engagement in the class discussions, all showed a real fascination with their class' multilingualism, as student 6 commented:

> Once you found out what a certain word or key term was in one language you kind of link it back to other languages and find out more about them, so it was quite nice to get a more, a wider sense of another language you don't really know.

Thus, even if the short period of eight weeks was insufficient to cause a measurable impact on XLA in terms of test scores, initial connections between languages were clearly being made. When comparing this project to some of the European ones which were examined as part of the literature review, it must be remembered that many of these were running over a year or several years and were integrated as part of the curriculum (Jessner et al., 2016; Passepartout, 2009; Tonnar et al., 2010). Therefore, the next step for this project is to fully integrate it into KS3 schemes of work for the new academic year, so that students get used to working across their languages and comparing them from Year 8 onwards on a regular basis, hopefully making a greater impact on their XLA.

Would adopting a multilingual approach in lessons enable Year 9 students to improve their attitude towards studying languages?

As previously discussed, the initial pre-intervention survey showed a generally positive attitude towards studying languages in Year 9, although willingness to study a language to GCSE level voluntarily and appreciation for being a student of multiple languages were more mixed. Responses to statements 10-16 and statement 19 were analysed for both the comparison and intervention groups with SPSS, using the same coding for the Likert scale as before (i.e., where a score of 2.5 or more indicated agreement with the statement).

Statements 10-12: Student perceptions of future use of languages

Results for statements 10-12 on student perceptions of the future use of languages are shown in Table 7:

Statement	Group	Mean pre-intervention	Median pre-intervention	Standard deviation	Mean post-intervention	Median post-intervention	Standard deviation
10 'I want to learn many languages in the future'	9K intervention group	2.8	3	0.735	3.0	3	0.698
	9L comparison group	2.8	3	0.689	2.9	3	0.856
11 'I think I will use languages in the future'	9K intervention group	3.1	3	0.660	3.2	3	0.706
	9L comparison group	3.1	3	0.682	3.2	3	0.712
12 'I would take a language at GCSE even if it weren't compulsory'	9K intervention group	2.9	3	0.813	2.9	3	0.917
	9L comparison group	2.8	3	0.946	2.8	3	1.030

Table 7 Student responses to statements 10-12

Looking more closely at statement 10 there seemed to be a fairly marked increase in agreement for the intervention group, although there was also a slight increase in agreement for the comparison group, as can be seen in Figures 21-22.

Figure 21 Student responses to statement 10 pre-intervention

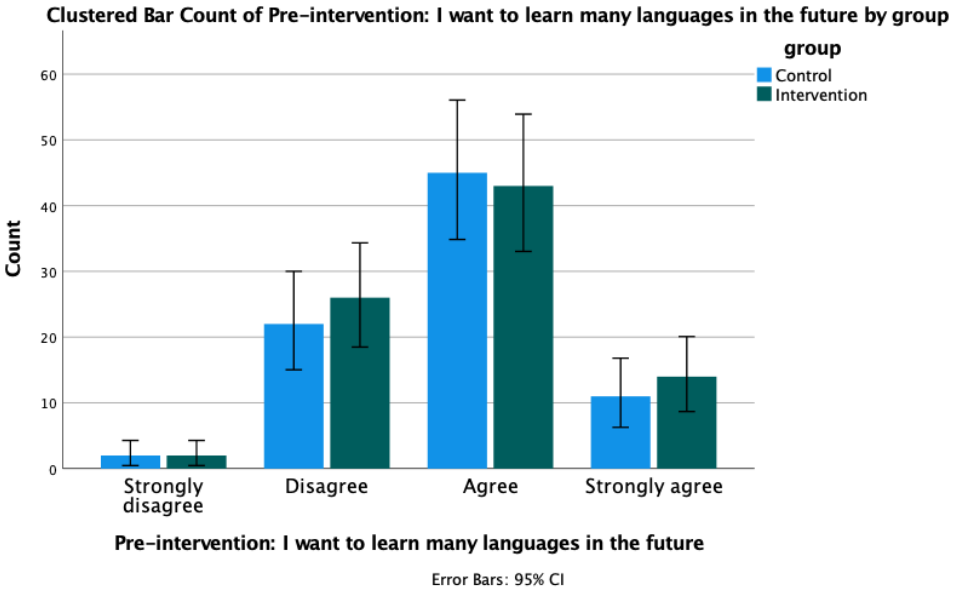
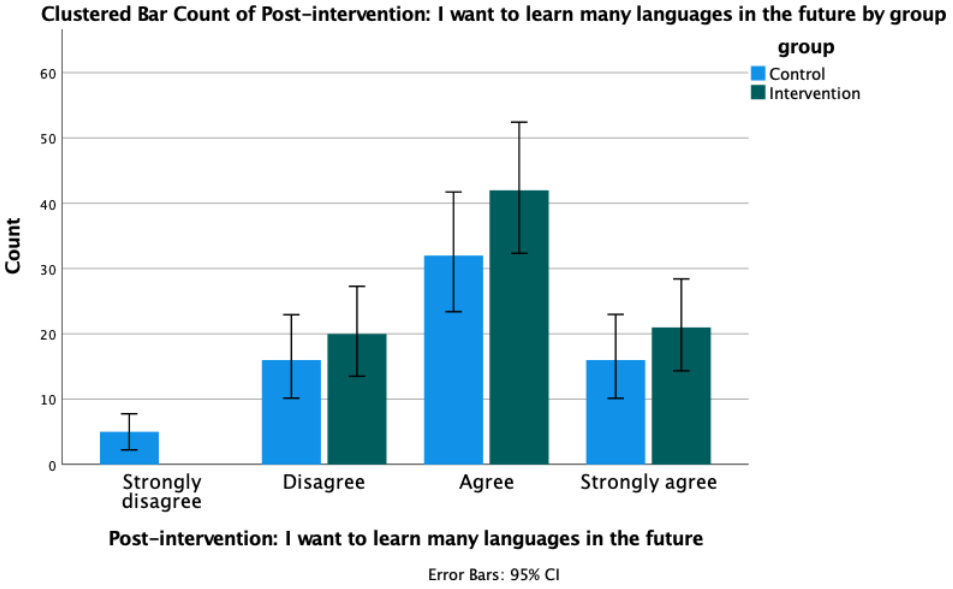


Figure 22 Student responses to statement 10 post-intervention



The intervention's group increase in agreement with this statement after the intervention can be seen more starkly in a comparison of stem and leaf plots (Figures 23-24).

Figure 23 Comparison of student responses to statement 10 pre-intervention

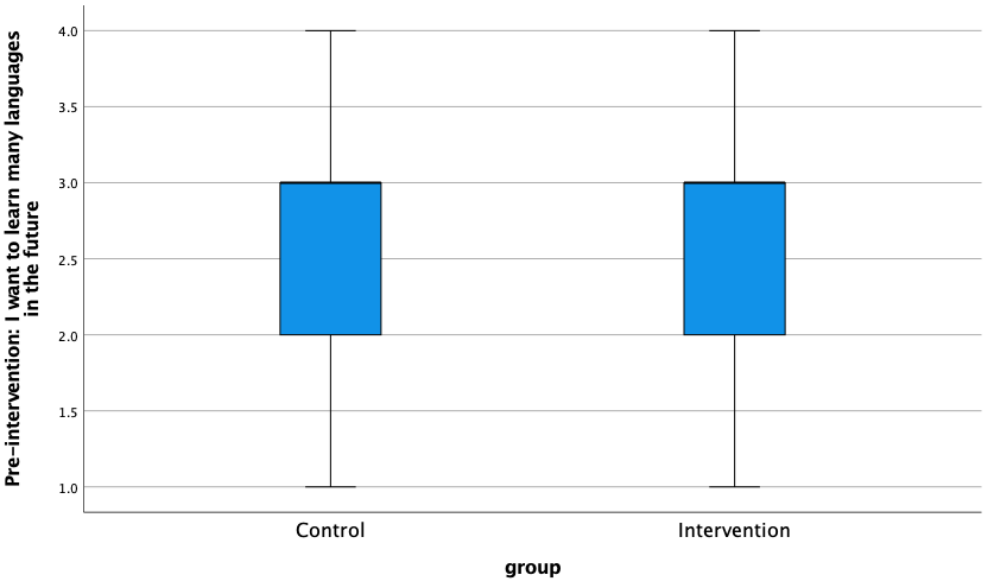
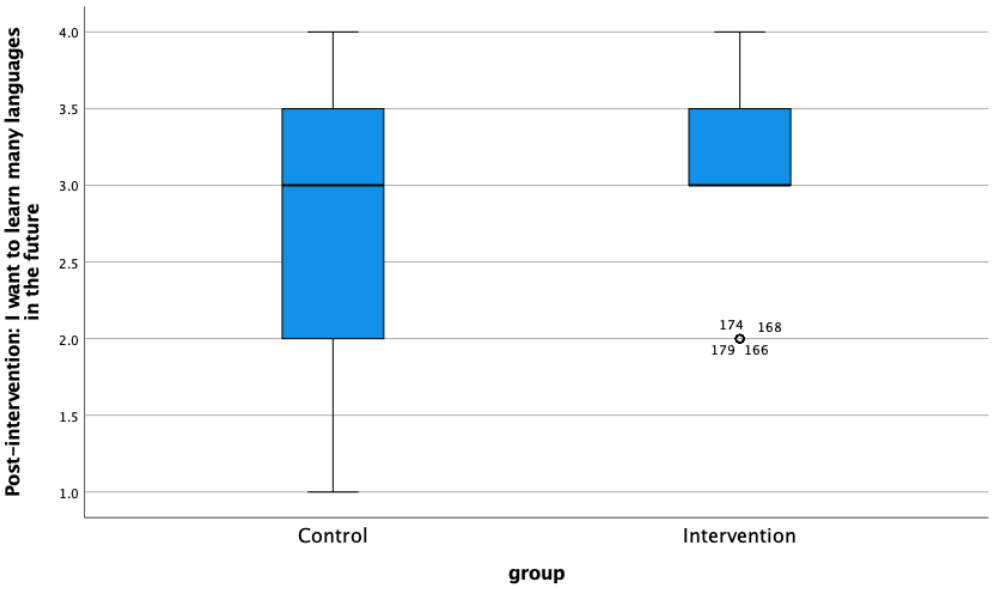


Figure 24 Comparison of student responses to statement 10 post-intervention



However, when a Mann-Whitney U test was applied, this increase after the intervention was not found to be statistically significant (U=2632.000, p=0.355).

Looking more closely at statement 11 ('I think I will use languages in the future'), both groups appeared to show a slight increase in agreement with this statement after the intervention period, as can be seen in Figures 25-26.

Figure 25 Student responses to statement 11 pre-intervention

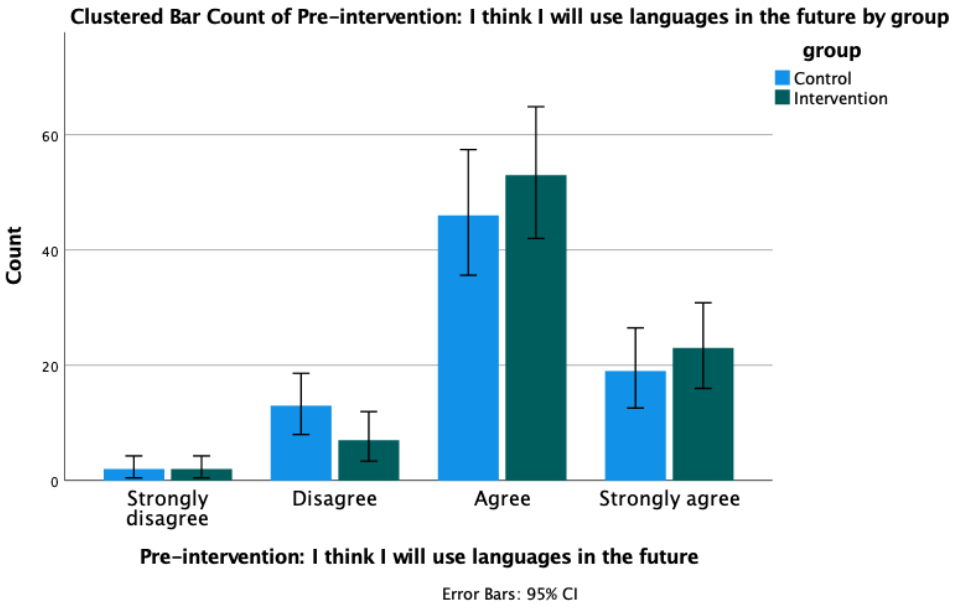
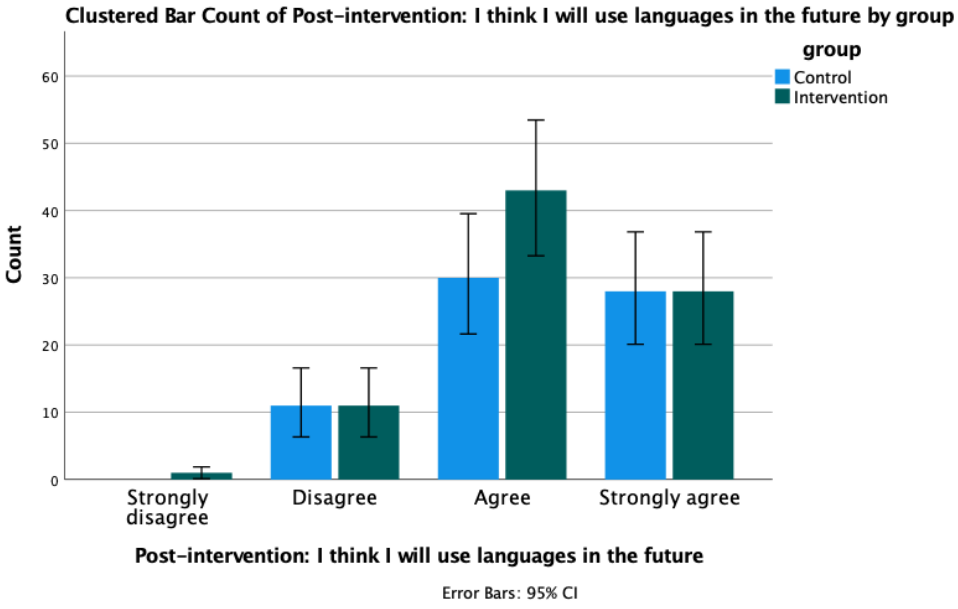


Figure 26 Student responses to statement 11 post-intervention



However, again this change was not found to be statistically significant when the Mann Whitney U test was applied (U=2718.500 p=0.557).

Looking more closely at statement 12 ('I would take a language at GCSE even if it weren't compulsory') there appeared to be almost no change for either group in their agreement with this statement, which can be seen in the average scores in Table 7 above and in Figures 27-28 below.

Figure 27 Student responses to statement 12 pre-intervention

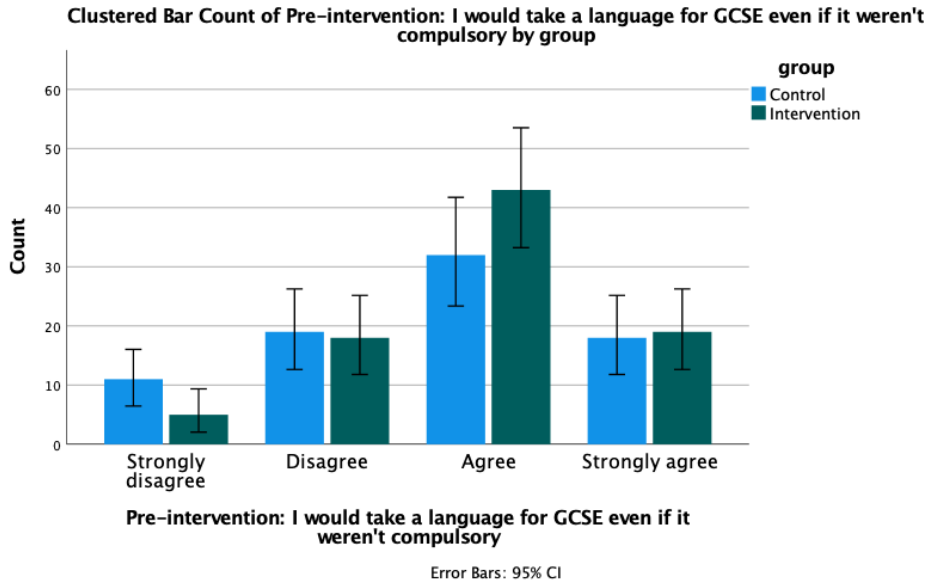
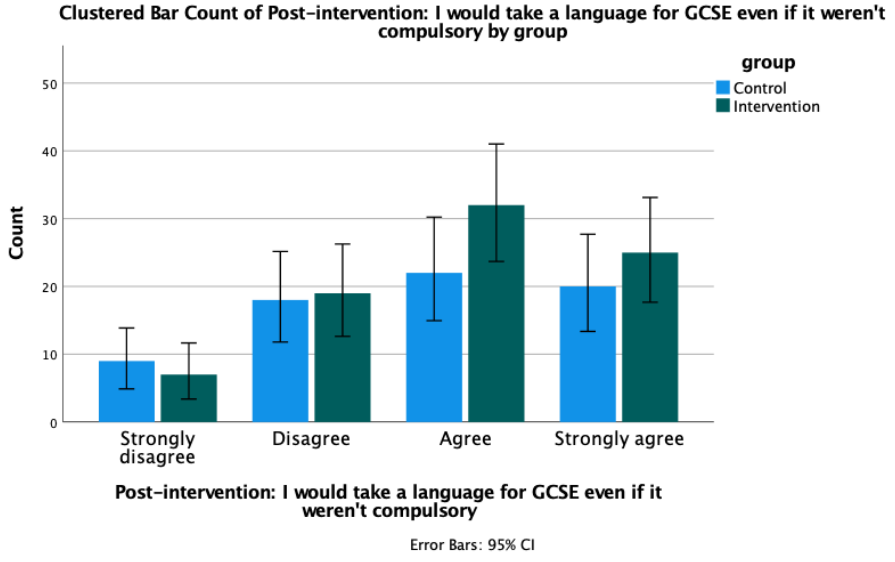


Figure 28 Student responses to statement 12 post-intervention



Although a visual inspection of the bar charts reveals a slight increase in the intervention group strongly agreeing with the statement after the intervention, this increase was not shown to be statistically significant (Mann Whitney U=2662.500 p=0.436).

Overall, therefore there was no real change in students' already positive attitudes towards the future usefulness of languages. It must be remembered that neither group experienced anything in lessons that directly targeted these statements. Therefore, perhaps it was not surprising that there was no change in attitudes either positively or negatively as a result.

Statement 13: student attitudes towards importance of languages as a school subject

Here, again, initial whole year group pre-intervention survey results showed very positive attitudes towards the statement 'I think languages are important school subjects', but SPSS was used to analyse any changes in attitude among both groups. The results can be seen in Table 8 and Figures 29-30:

Table 8 Student responses to statement 13

Statement	Group	Mean pre-intervention	Median pre-intervention	Standard deviation	Mean post-intervention	Median post-intervention	Standard deviation
13 'I think languages are important school subjects'	9K intervention group	3.1	3	0.648	3.3	3	0.588
	9L comparison group	3.0	3	0.718	3.0	3	0.761

Figure 29 Student responses to statement 13 pre-intervention

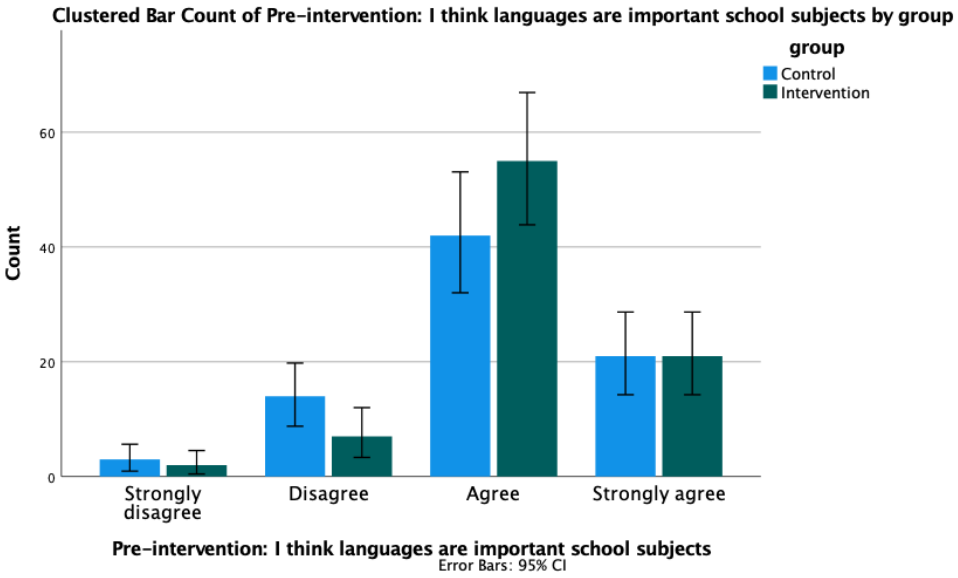
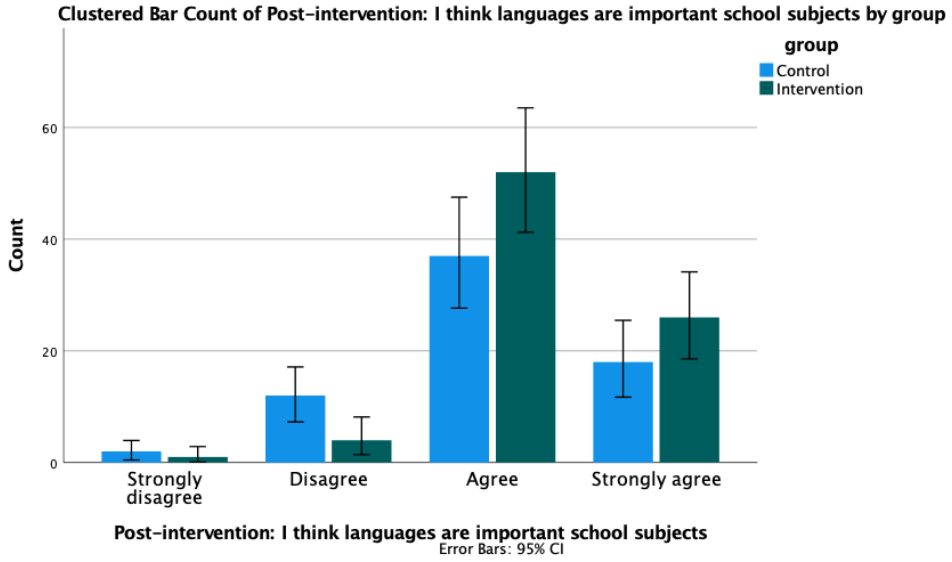


Figure 30 Student responses to statement 13 post-intervention



Here there appeared to be a slight increase in agreement with this statement amongst the intervention group. As with statements 10-12, nothing had taken place in the intervention that directly addressed this statement. Although the intervention group was, on average, more in agreement with this statement before the start of the project, the slight shift for some towards even greater agreement after the intervention is interesting. It could be that the acknowledgement of home languages and the deliberate teaching 'across languages' that went on in the starter activities made students see languages as a more holistic skill set, rather than discreet,

compartmentalized subjects as they have previously been used to. However, when Mann Whitney U tests were applied, this change was found to approach but not to be of statistical significance (U=2444.000, p=0.078) and so it would be unwise to attach great importance to these results.

Statements 14-16: student enjoyment of languages and perceptions of difficulty

Results for questions 14-16 on student enjoyment of languages and perceptions of difficulty are shown in Table 9 below:

Table 9 Student responses to statements 14-16

Statement	Group	Mean pre-intervention	Median pre-intervention	Standard deviation	Mean post-intervention	Median post-intervention	Standard deviation
14 'I enjoy studying languages'	9K intervention group	3.0	3	0.669	3.1	3	0.624
	9L comparison group	3.0	3	0.671	3.0	3	0.771
15 'Learning languages is sometimes difficult'	9K intervention group	3.5	4	0.617	3.5	3	0.573
	9L comparison group	3.4	3	0.555	3.4	3	0.501
16 'Learning languages is always difficult'	9K intervention group	2.3	2	0.767	2.3	2	0.733
	9L comparison group	2.3	2	0.846	2.3	2	0.621

Looking more closely at statement 14 student enjoyment of languages remained high for both groups after the intervention period, as can be seen in Figures 31-32.

Figure 31 Student responses to statement 14 pre-intervention

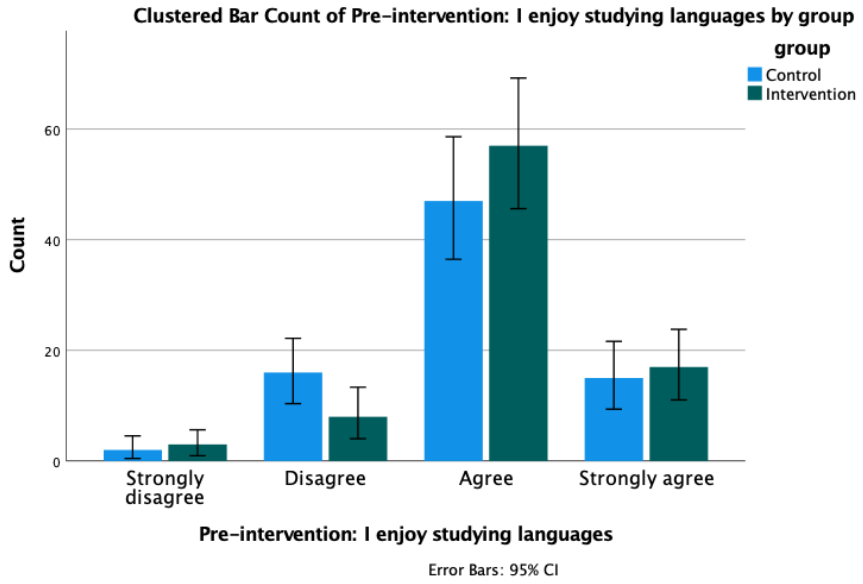
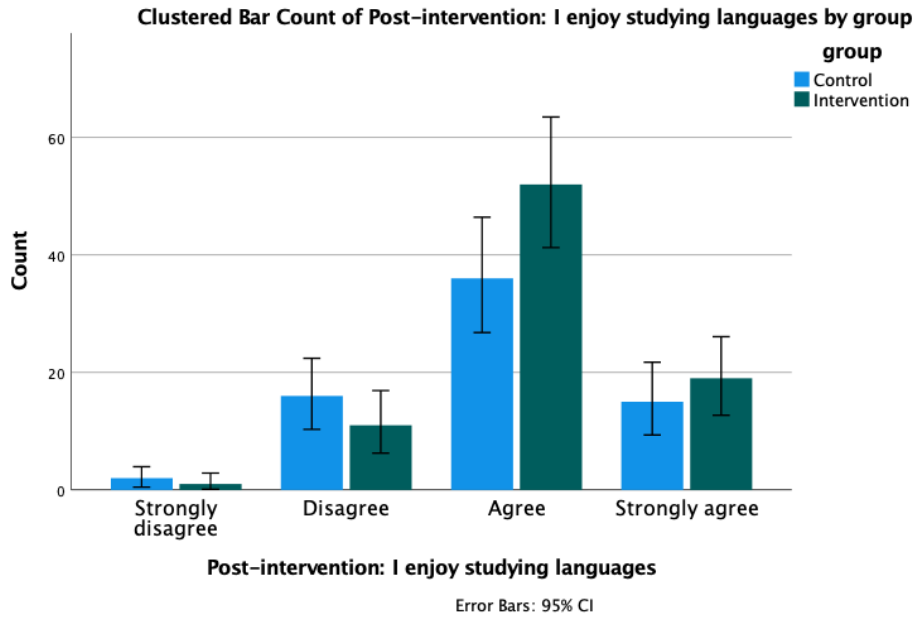


Figure 32 Student responses to statement 14 post-intervention



The very slight increase in agreement with this statement among the intervention group was not found to be statistically significant (Mann Whitney U=2575.500, p=0.230). Certainly, it must be remembered that many factors influence a student's enjoyment of a subject and enjoyment may

fluctuate within a school year for a student, as different topics are taught and a student's relationship with a teacher may change over time, so it would have been difficult to attribute any change in this to the intervention had one taken place.

Looking more closely at statements 15 and 16, students in both groups tended to agree that 'learning languages is sometimes difficult' and to disagree that 'learning languages is always difficult', showing a realistic but not defeatist attitudes towards their studies. There was little change in either group's attitudes from pre- to post-intervention (Figures 33-36).

Figure 33 Student responses to statement 15 pre-intervention

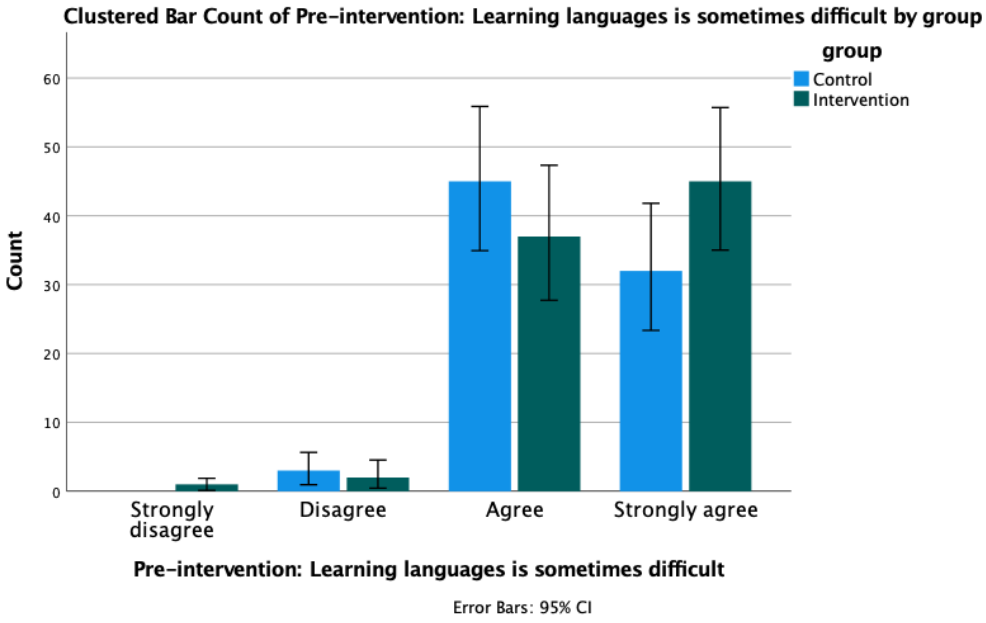


Figure 34 Student responses to statement 16 pre-intervention

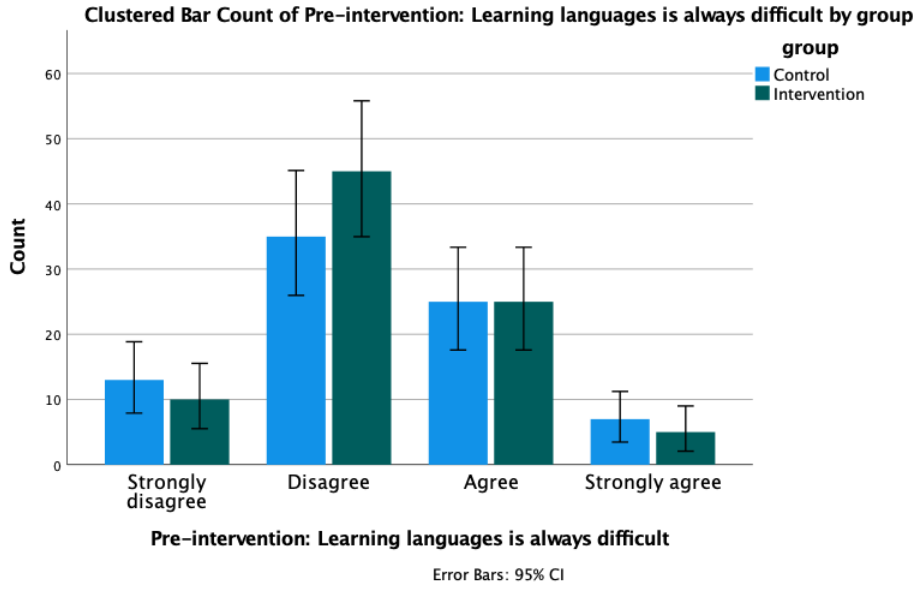
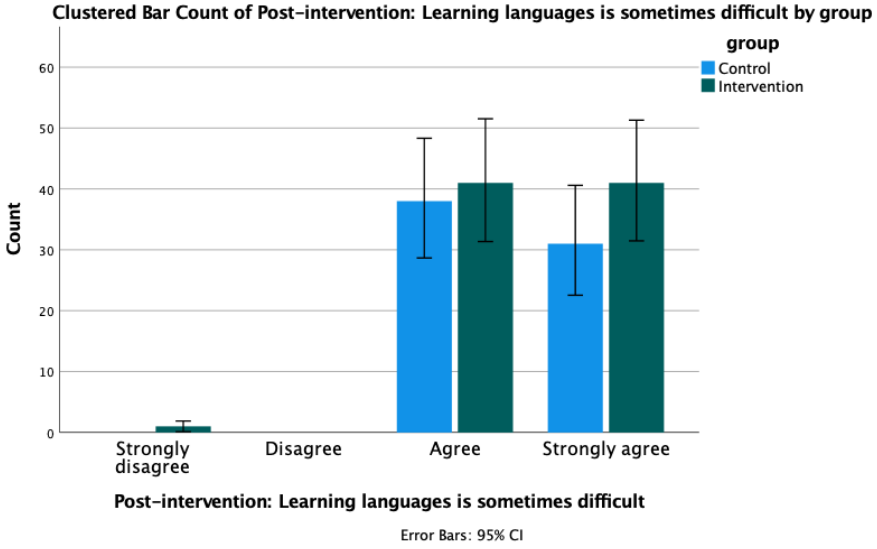


Figure 35 Student responses to statement 15 post-intervention



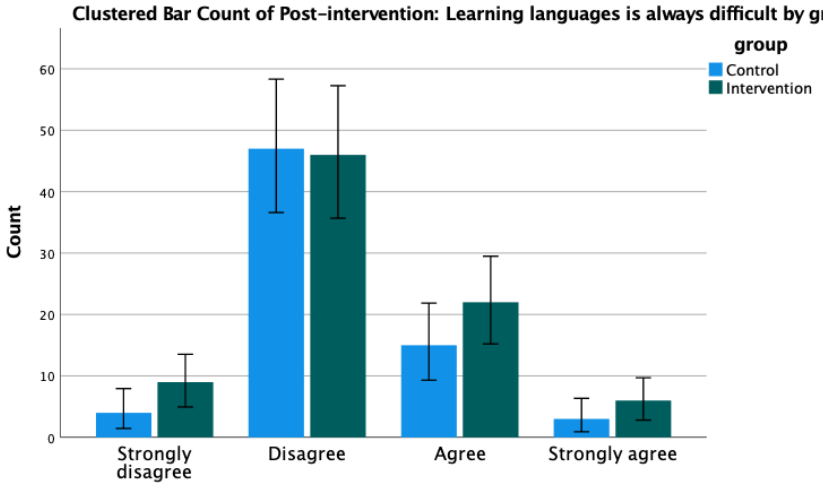


Figure 36 Student responses to statement 16 post-intervention

In a context where students already had positive attitudes towards languages, it was perhaps unsurprising that the intervention did not do much towards increasing that positivity, but it was at least reassuring to note that the intervention had not had a negative effect and did not make them see languages as more difficult.

Indeed, this was particularly reassuring given that several students in the interviews had commented on the challenges posed by what were seen as the more difficult aspects of the project. Across the interviews, students of all attainment levels commented on the challenge presented by being asked to think about more than one language in the MFL classroom. This was expressed well by student 1, who had been teaching herself Latin at home:

> you know I walk into a German class and then I have to translate something in Latin like it gets me into Latin mode and then I find it more difficult to switch back into German.

Student 4 described the feeling that 'when you walk into a German classroom for me, I just think in German' and student 12 said she had been reluctant to translate into her home language and into French because:

> it just felt a bit out of place like you know the, when you're in Spanish class you just kind of get your mind into Spanish only… because we're in a Spanish a lesson and surrounded by Spanish things and then we were suddenly going into French and doing that was kind of awkward.

This echoes Jessner's (2006) argument that students and teachers are very used to compartmentalising their languages, and the intervention sought to overcome this. Indeed, once students got used to it, they commented that it was not as difficult as they first thought, as expressed by student 7:

> Yeah, but it was good consolidation like I do know how to say this. Looking at the sentence, sometimes I realised it was quite easy.

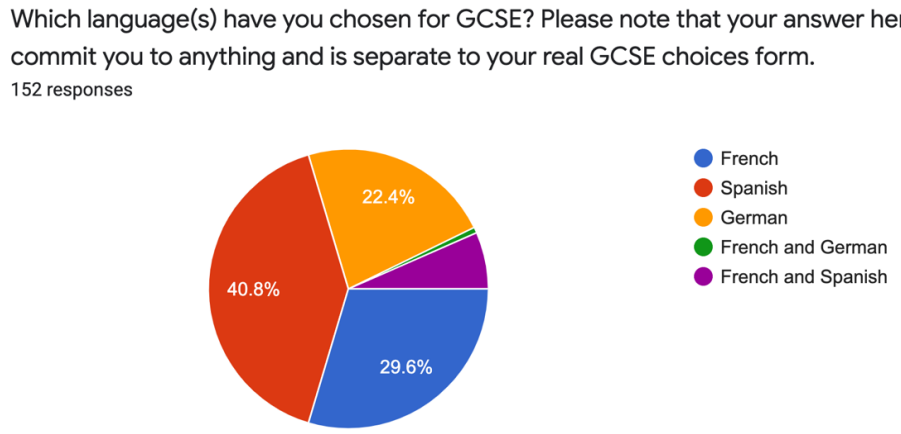
This theme of the project acting as consolidation for their two languages came up several times in this group interview, as although students said they had found it challenging if they did not know a French equivalent for a word they did know in Spanish or German, they liked the fact that once the teacher had gone over it with them, they had gained extra vocabulary that they could then use in their French lessons. Those students intending to take two languages at GCSE also found it helpful to have extra practice in switching between their languages.

The other difficulty mentioned by students, particularly in the first group interview, was finding it harder to spot and similarities and differences with other students' home languages, as they could not see them written down and just heard them out loud. This was a useful comment in terms of future developments of the project, but again it did not seem to affect students' interest in and enjoyment of the intervention. Those interviewed were generally very positive about the project, although one could argue that those volunteering to be interviewed were a self-selecting group, even if the class teachers had tried to ensure a representative group of students was chosen. There was also a risk, particularly with the students taught by me, that they would just give views they thought I would want to hear, although every effort was made to encourage them to be entirely honest. The fact that they were willing to be critical about some of the more difficult aspects of the intervention suggested that this exhortation to honesty was effective, and although the overall reaction to the project in the interviews was very positive, this did seem to match teachers' observations each week. It was certainly reassuring to note that, although the starter activities were not necessarily easy for the students, they did not have a negative effect on students' perceptions of the difficulty of languages in general.

Statement 19: student attitudes towards learning two languages

This was probably the most crucial of all attitude questions to address, as the snapshot of attitudes across the whole year group towards statement 19 'I think learning two languages at the same time is helpful' was often negative. The hope was that the intervention might then have an impact on this, by highlighting the usefulness of being multilingual in terms of being able to see connections between languages. The original plan for the project timeline was then to see whether this had an impact on the numbers of dual linguists at GCSE, but the decision to delay the intervention until students were back in school meant that students only had a few sessions before making their GCSE choices. Therefore, it was unsurprising that no impact on dual linguist numbers was observed (Figures 37-38).

Figure 37 Pre-intervention responses to 'Which languages are you currently thinking of taking for GCSE?'



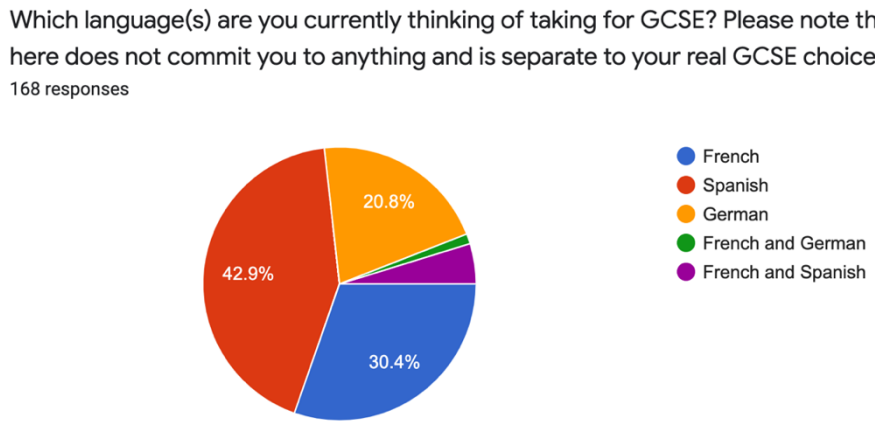


Figure 38 post-intervention responses to 'Which languages have you chosen for GCSE?'

Although the numbers choosing French and Spanish increased slightly from 8 students to 10 students, the numbers choosing French and German decreased from 2 students to just 1, although the participation rate for the post-intervention survey was down slightly which might also explain this decrease. Nonetheless, the total number of those intending to be dual linguists at GCSE was almost the same, 10 before the intervention and 11 afterwards, so it was arguably more important to look at any changes in attitudes to statement 19, 'I think learning two languages at the same time is helpful'. The results for this are shown in Table 10 and Figures 39-40.

Statement	Group	Mean pre-intervention	Median pre-intervention	Standard deviation	Mean post-intervention	Median post-intervention	Standard deviation
19 'I think learning two languages at the same time is helpful'	9K intervention group	2.2	2	0.887	2.2	2	0.927
	9L comparison group	2.2	2	0.846	2.2	2	0.859

Table 10 Student responses to statement 19

Figure 39 Student responses to statement 19 pre-intervention

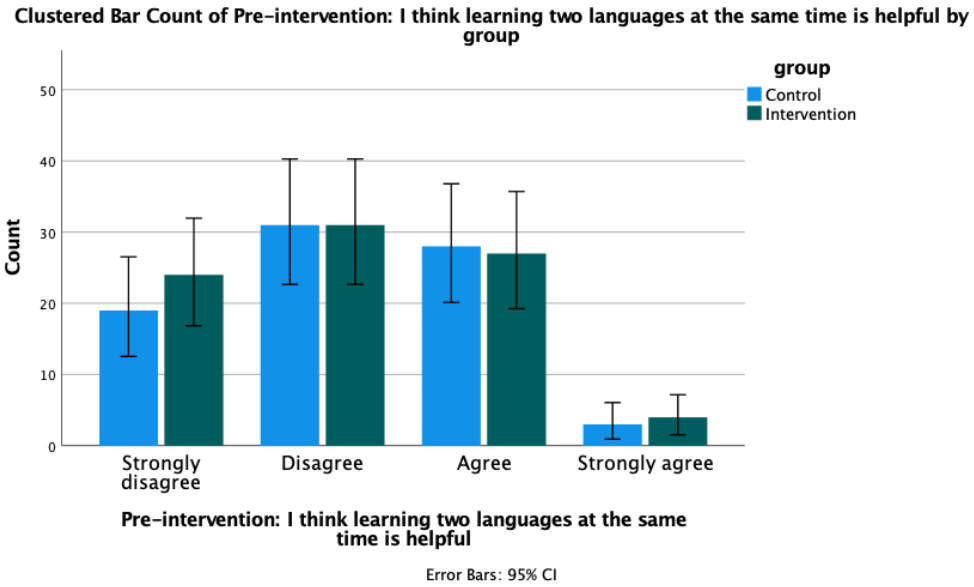
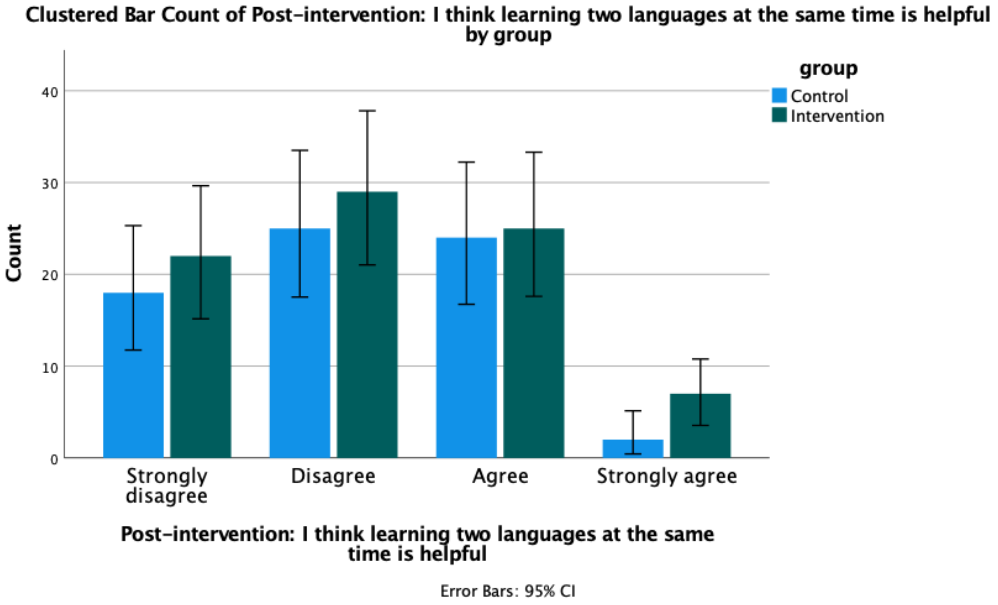


Figure 40 Student responses to statement 19 post-intervention



There was no real change, therefore in student attitudes towards this statement. Although visual inspection of the bar charts reveals a slight increase in students in the intervention group strongly agreeing with the statement, when Mann Whitney U tests were run this was not found to be statistically significant (U=2.793.500, p=0.785). Therefore, overall, it can be said that despite the intervention the majority of students still did not see learning two languages as helpful.

However, the picture that emerged in group interviews was somewhat different. Although students did at first perceive it as being quite difficult to translate into more than one language in an MFL lesson, there was general agreement that it had become easier as they went on and that although it was challenging and sometimes confusing, it was also interesting to compare their languages. There was great admiration for their multilingual classmates, both from students who knew other languages from outside of school and those who did not, as student 3 expressed: 'Like it was good because I didn't know that people could speak other languages, so yeah it was nice to hear that.' This very much echoed findings from previous studies: activities which encourage

students to share their home languages have been found to improve student attitudes in terms of tolerance and awareness of diversity in school (Candelier, 2004; Christine Hélot & Young, 2006).

In my own context, the fact that the project took place during a year in which there had been a whole-school focus on improving staff and student awareness of diversity, culminating in a diversity week just after the end of the project, gave it extra significance. Student 9 picked up on this in her interview: 'It kind of shows connections, like especially given it's diversity week as well, so it's quite nice to learn about other people's languages'. Despite not having felt confident enough to share her own home language in front of the class, she still appreciated the fact that others had come forward and that linguistic diversity was being openly acknowledged in her lessons.

In a similar way to the impact on students' XLA, the interviews picked up on the beginnings of a possible change that were not necessarily reflected in the quantitative data from the surveys. This seems particularly important when looking at changes in attitudes, as whilst Likert scales are useful in capturing a snapshot of views, they are not able to drill down into the subtleties of thinking behind such views (Cohen et al., 2018). As with changes in XLA, it may be that a more long-term version of the project would have had a more quantifiable impact on attitudes towards multilingualism. Certainly, it was not perceived negatively amongst those interviewed, but instead as something 'cool' and 'interesting'. A curiosity about other languages spoken by peers and a real interest in finding out more about them was precisely the benefit picked up on by Candelier (2004, 2008) in his assessment of the *janua linguarum* and *Evlang* projects.

Overall changes in attitude towards languages

Broadly, then, it seems that the current project did not have a quantifiable impact on student attitudes towards languages, which were to begin with fairly positive, particularly in the intervention group. Looking at the make-up of the two groups, there was no particular reason why attitudes appeared to be slightly more positive with this group to begin with. However, it is important to be aware of this when comparing these results to other projects found in the literature. Here there often appeared to be a direct positive impact on student attitudes, in particular towards linguistic diversity, such as in the Diddenheim project (Hélot & Young, 2006). However, this was often in a context where attitudes to languages and linguistic diversity were decidedly more negative than in my own context. In a school where attitudes were generally good to begin with, it is perhaps not surprising that student attitudes did not rapidly improve still further.

What was more important to the project in my context was student attitudes towards multilingualism. Here, although the survey did not reveal much change, the group interviews definitely indicated the beginnings of a positive change. Student awareness of the linguistic diversity within their classes certainly increased and although some students were shy to share their linguistic knowledge from outside of school, others were proud to do so. Indeed, teacher observation and some of the students' own comments in interviews revealed that many of those sharing home languages were not necessarily the highest-attaining or most engaged linguists in 'normal' circumstances, i.e., when just the curricular languages of Spanish and German were being discussed. For some, this was an exciting moment, when their linguistic skills from home were being acknowledged and praised in the MFL classroom for the first time. For those without other languages outside of school, it was still 'cool' to hear more than one language being used in

the classroom. Comments in interviews and teacher observations showed increasing confidence with this and with the idea of comparing different languages.

Would adopting a multilingual approach in lessons enable Year 9 students to enhance their language-learning skills?

Finally, I also wanted to see whether the intervention had had an impact on students' language-learning skills and specifically their capacity to spot patterns in a new language. This was measured using the Latin/Swedish test. Here, the scores from both versions of the test were combined to enable a comparison to be made between pre- and post-intervention scores. Although pre-intervention scores from the tests did reveal that the Latin test was slightly harder than the Swedish (mean score for Swedish pre-intervention=82%, mean score for Latin pre-intervention=69%), this did not invalidate between-group comparisons, since the tests were administered in counterbalanced order to half of the students in both groups before and after the intervention. The fact that those students who took the harder Latin test pre-intervention then took the Swedish test post-intervention, and vice versa, enabled any rise in scores by going from Latin to Swedish, or any decline in scores by going from Swedish to Latin, to be equalized across the groups.

The mean score of the combined pre-intervention Latin/Swedish tests across the whole year group was 75% and post-intervention it was 79%. Table 11 and Figures 41-42 show these results broken down into the comparison and intervention groups, pre- and post-intervention.

Group	Mean pre-intervention	Median pre-intervention	Standard Deviation pre-intervention	Mean post-intervention	Median post-intervention	Standard Deviation post-intervention
9K intervention group	75%	83%	21%	81%	88%	17%
9L comparison group	75%	79%	20%	77%	75%	15%

Table 11 Combined results from Latin/Swedish tests pre- and post-intervention

Figure 41 Combined results from Latin/Swedish tests pre-intervention

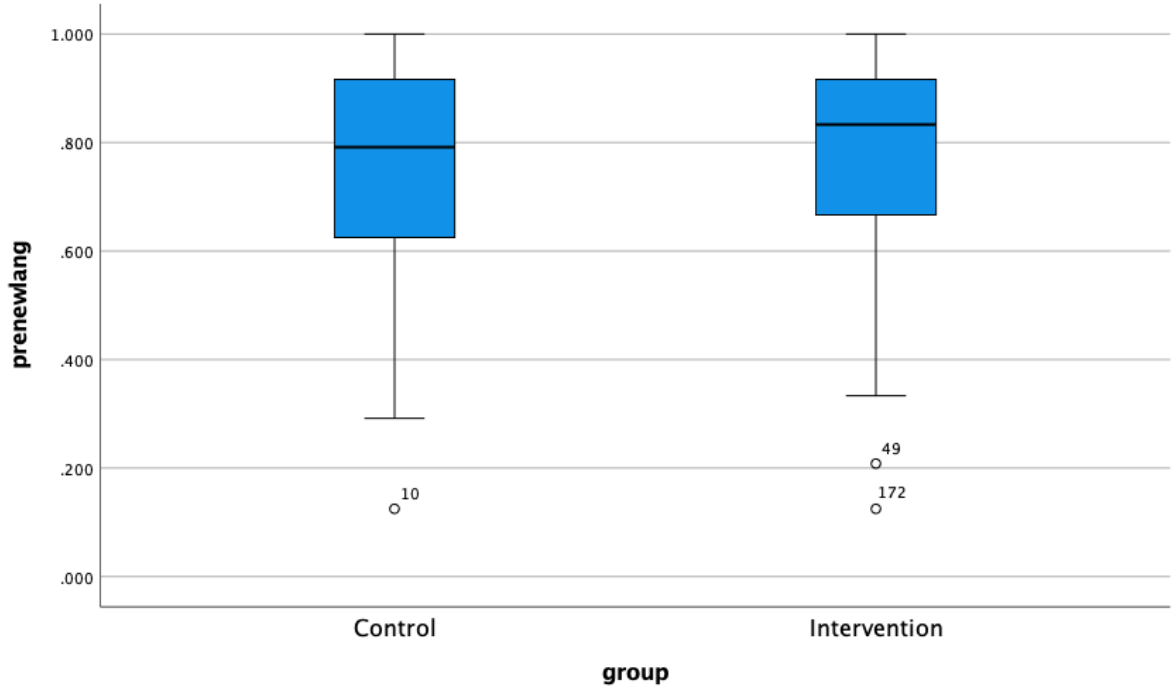
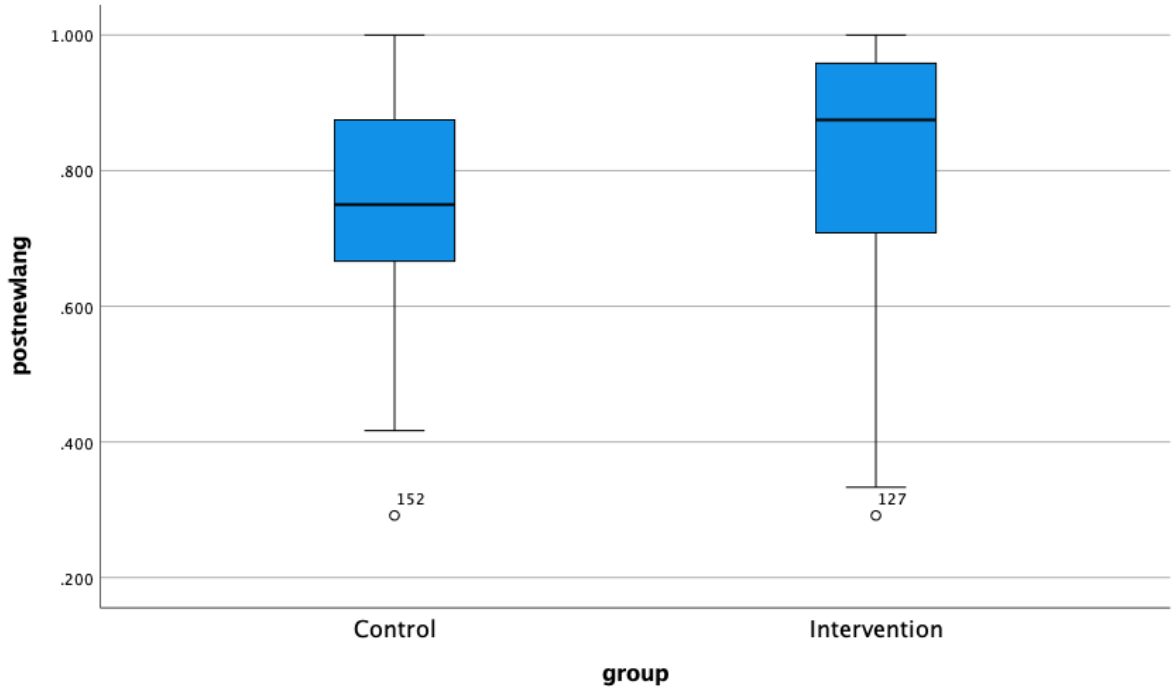


Figure 42 Combined results from Latin/Swedish tests post-intervention



As with the 'spot the differences' test results, it was decided to include the outliers (indicated by the circles in Figures 41 and 42), since there was no principled basis for excluding them, given that they were members of the project, and such students are part and parcel of ordinary classroom teaching. Despite these outliers, the results for both groups pre-intervention were broadly similar, only differing in their median result, but with the same mean result.

Post-intervention, however, on a descriptive level, there appeared to be a difference between the intervention and comparison groups. The intervention group's mean and median scores on the new language tests appeared to have improved. These differences were tested for statistical significance. As the scores for these tests were non-normally distributed (as determined by visual inspection of the histograms), non-parametric Mann Whitney U tests were again used. A significant difference was found between the results on the post-intervention test between the comparison and intervention group (U=2951.500, p=0.039). This result would seem to back up Hawkins' (2005) theoretical argument that developing a curriculum that focused on students'

MLA would be a useful language apprenticeship model, giving students the necessary pattern-spotting skills to acquire new languages in the future. As with any small-scale practitioner research, it would be foolhardy to assume that any change is solely down to one particular intervention, given the complexity of teaching and learning. Nonetheless, given that the only known real difference between the comparison and intervention group was the intervention itself, it seems possible that this at least partly contributed to the improvement in test scores.

Conclusions and Implications

Adopting a multilingual approach with Year 9, by asking them to translate into more than one language and compare these languages, was an innovative approach that initially confused some students, who were apparently used to thinking about one language at a time. However, it rapidly became a popular activity, with students interested to hear the other languages spoken by their classmates and increasingly able to spot similarities and differences between languages, at least during whole-class discussions. This was recorded in teacher observations and in the group interviews after the intervention, although it did not emerge in the test results for XLA, possibly due to the new nature of the test and the relatively short period of the intervention.

In terms of the project's impact on attitudes towards languages, the intervention had a limited impact, as it took place in a context where attitudes towards language learning are already largely positive. However, evidence from interviews suggests that those students who do speak another language at home, and felt confident enough to share it, had a real sense of pride in doing so. If the intervention were to be carried out in a different context and even in my own context over a longer period, it would be interesting to see whether it had a greater impact on student attitudes, and whether those students who were reluctant to share their home languages would become more confident in doing so.

Where the intervention had its greatest impact was on students' language-learning skills, in terms of their ability to spot patterns in a new language. This very much corroborates Hawkins' (2005) vision of school language learning as a language learning 'apprenticeship', where language awareness is taught and encouraged, in order to equip students with the skills to learn further languages in later life. In a fast-changing and diverse world, where it is difficult to predict which

languages society might need or want in ten- or twenty-years' time, and where those language requirements might well change, it is arguably the MFL teacher's task to equip their students with language-learning skills, not just the knowledge of the specific language being taught. In such a scenario the aim is to create linguists, not just learners of an individual language, and so activities that go beyond just one language and are about language-learning skills, such as pattern spotting, are important.

Part of this pattern spotting ability comes from students' ability to compare languages, and so it makes sense to draw on students' whole language repertoire. In a school such as mine, where a great number of students speak or are learning another language outside of school, it then arguably becomes vital to acknowledge and allow students to use these languages in the MFL classroom. One could also argue that even for those students who do not have another language from outside school, hearing and recognizing the linguistic diversity of their peers is important in itself. Furthermore, in a context where they are learning more than one language in school, it could also be argued that it is the MFL teacher's task to encourage students to see these as linked subjects, not separate entities. The current study has shown that bringing multiple languages into the MFL classroom, rather than continuing to teach each individual language separately, encourages pattern spotting and develops an awareness of how different languages work in terms of syntax, word and tenses formation. These skills were clearly emerging in the student interviews and teacher observation of the project, even if the test of XLA did not show an improvement in scores for the intervention group. It could be argued that these are skills that would go onto serve students well in any future language-learning endeavours, as the results from the Latin/Swedish test might tentatively suggest. Some of the student comments in interviews also pointed towards this, as several commented that this kind of similarity-spotting facilitated their language learning in the classroom, as similarities in vocabulary or the commonality of the use of auxiliary verbs in

different tenses were made clear to them. It could also be argued that being introduced to different ways of structuring sentences and talking about time and different tenses might also broaden students thinking about how languages work, perhaps making them more receptive to more difficult aspects of a new language which differ greatly from their L1, although this aspect was not observed within the scope of this project.

This idea of teaching 'across the languages' (Jessner, 2006, p. 125) and encouraging students to compare and contrast all their languages has been advocated for some time with various state or country-wide curriculum projects in multilingual states such as Luxembourg and Switzerland (Passepartout, 2009; Tonnar et al., 2010). The idea behind my own intervention was to easily integrate this multilingual approach into already existing schemes of work and into activities students and teachers are already used to doing. It proved popular with students and teachers and was easy to integrate into the curriculum and so in that sense it was a successful intervention. Its potential impact on students' language-learning skills and capacity to begin to develop their XLA as future linguists means it is an approach that will now be adopted across Year 8 and 9 next academic year with multilingual translation becoming a routine departmental activity when consolidating knowledge towards the end of topics or grammar points. The hope is that this will get students increasingly comfortable with sharing their home languages and seeing them as useful tools in the MFL classroom, as well as encouraging students to see the links between the three languages taught in school. Implemented over a longer period, it will be interesting to see if the project then starts to have a greater and more measurable impact on students' XLA.

This exploratory study allowed students to stop seeing their languages as separate subjects and acknowledged and utilised their language repertoires from outside of school for the first time in

the MFL classroom. It created an activity that was easily integrated into already established schemes of work and that developed students' skills, not just in one language but in multiple languages, as well as linguistic skills such as translation itself, pattern-spotting, and XLA. For MFL teachers who seek to cultivate linguists not just learners of one particular language and for those teaching in a diverse society, it is an approach very much worth exploring and one that my department will continue to explore.

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Appendix

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Language Attitudes Survey Pre-intervention (Paper version of Google Form)

Languages Survey Y9

This year the MFL department is conducting a project about how students make connections between languages and use all the languages they know during MFL lessons. Your answers to this survey will help us to find out a bit more about this. Answer all the questions as honestly and completely as you can. Your teachers will not use the answers to make any kind of judgement about you as an individual student. *Required

1. First name *

_____

2. Surname *

_____

3. Apart from English, is there another main language used at home? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

4. If your answer to the previous question was yes, please select which language or languages

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] Yoruba
- [ ] Igbo
- [ ] Telugu
- [ ] Twi
- [ ] Malayalam
- [ ] Bengali
- [ ] Hindi
- [ ] Marathi
- [ ] Urdu
- [ ] Tamil
- [ ] Cantonese
- [ ] Mandarin
- [ ] French
- [ ] Arabic
- [ ] Italian
- [ ] Russian
- [ ] Polish

Other: [ ] _____

5. How is this language used at home? Select all that apply.

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] My parents speak to me/my siblings in it
- [ ] I talk to my parents in it
- [ ] I talk to my siblings in it
- [ ] My grandparents/wider family members (e.g. aunts/uncles, cousins) speak to me/my siblings in it
- [ ] I talk to my grandparents/wider family members (e.g. aunts/uncles, cousins) in it
- [ ] It is used every day at home
- [ ] It is used sometimes at home Other:

[ ] _____

6. Are you learning another language outside of school (either self-taught or with a teacher/tutor)? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

7. If your answer to the previous question was yes, please please select which language or languages

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] Arabic
- [ ] Urdu
- [ ] Mandarin
- [ ] Tamil
- [ ] Hindi
- [ ] Korean
- [ ] Japanese
- [ ] French
- [ ] Spanish
- [ ] German
- [ ] Italian
- [ ] Dutch
- [ ] Other: _____

8. How are you learning it? Select all that apply

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] With an app e.g. Duolingo
- [ ] With a tutor
- [ ] From my parents/wider family
- [ ] Attending a Saturday/Sunday school or after school classses
- [ ] Other: _____

9. Some people in this class know a language other than English from outside of school. How many people do you think this is? * *Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ 1-5
- ◯ 6-10
- ◯ 11-15
- ◯ 16-20
- ◯ 21-25
- ◯ 26-32

10. Which other languages do you know are used by people in this class outside of school? Select all that apply

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] Don't know
- [ ] Arabic
- [ ] Urdu
- [ ] Mandarin
- [ ] Tamil
- [ ] Hindi
- [ ] Korean
- [ ] Japanese
- [ ] French
- [ ] Spanish
- [ ] German
- [ ] Italian
- [ ] Dutch
- [ ] Other: _____

11. Which language(s) are you currently thinking of taking for GCSE? Please note that your answer here does not commit you to anything and is separate to your real GCSE choices form. * *Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ French
- ◯ Spanish
- ◯ German
- ◯ French and German
- ◯ French and Spanish

12. Read the statements below and indicate if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree with them *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I want to learn many languages in the future.				
I think I will use languages in the future.				
I would take a language for GCSE even if it weren't compulsory.				
I think languages are important school subjects.				
I enjoy studying languages.				
Learning languages is sometimes difficult.				
Learning languages is always difficult.				
I often make connections between the two languages we learn at school.				
I often make connections between the languages we learn at school and other languages I know.				
I think learning two languages at the same time is helpful.				

Language Attitudes Survey Post-intervention (Paper version of Google Form)

Languages Survey Y9

This year the MFL department is conducting a project about how students make connections between languages and use all the languages they know during MFL lessons. Your answers to this survey will help us to find out a bit more about this. Answer all the questions as honestly and completely as you can. Your teachers will not use the answers to make any kind of judgement about you as an individual student. This is very similar to the survey you did earlier in the year, but we want to see if your views have changed since you took the last version of the survey. It's fine if your answers are the same, but it's also fine if they've changed a bit.

*Required

1. First name *

_____

2. Surname *

_____

3. Apart from English, is there another main language used at home? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

4. If your answer to the previous question was yes, please select which language or languages

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] Yoruba
- [ ] Igbo
- [ ] Telugu
- [ ] Twi
- [ ] Malayalam
- [ ] Bengali
- [ ] Hindi
- [ ] Marathi
- [ ] Urdu
- [ ] Tamil
- [ ] Cantonese
- [ ] Mandarin
- [ ] French
- [ ] Arabic
- [ ] Italian
- [ ] Russian
- [ ] Polish
- [ ] Punjabi
- [ ] Sinhalese
- [ ] Persian
- [ ] Pashto
- [ ] Kannada
- [ ] Shona
- [ ] Greek
- [ ] Gujarati
- [ ] Efik
- [ ] Portuguese
- [ ] Amharic

Other: [ ] _____

5. How is this language used at home? Select all that apply.

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] My parents speak to me/my siblings in it
- [ ] I talk to my parents in it
- [ ] I talk to my siblings in it
- [ ] My grandparents/wider family members (e.g. aunts/uncles, cousins) speak to me/my siblings in it
- [ ] I talk to my grandparents/wider family members (e.g. aunts/uncles, cousins) in it
- [ ] It is used every day at home
- [ ] It is used sometimes at home Other:
  - [ ] _____

6. Are you learning another language outside of school (either self-taught or with a teacher/tutor)? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

7. If your answer to the previous question was yes, please please select which language or languages

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] Arabic
- [ ] Urdu
- [ ] Mandarin
- [ ] Tamil
- [ ] Hindi
- [ ] Korean
- [ ] Japanese
- [ ] French
- [ ] Spanish
- [ ] German
- [ ] Italian
- [ ] Dutch
- [ ] Punjabi
- [ ] Estonian
- [ ] Latin
- [ ] Greek
- [ ] Russian
- [ ] Malayalam
- [ ] Welsh
- [ ] Turkish
- [ ] Sinhalese
- [ ] Portuguese

Other: ☐ _____

8. How are you learning it? Select all that apply

Tick all that apply.

- [ ] With an app e.g. Duolingo
- [ ] With a tutor
- [ ] From my parents/wider family
- [ ] Attending a Saturday/Sunday school or after school classses
- [ ] reading
- [ ] with textbooks

Other: ☐ _____

9. Some people in this class know a language other than English from outside of school. How many people do you think this is? *

Mark only one oval.

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-32

10. Which other languages do you know are used by people in this class outside of school? Select all that apply

Tick all that apply.

- Don't know
- Arabic
- Urdu
- Mandarin
- Tamil
- Hindi
- Korean
- Japanese
- French
- Spanish
- German
- Italian
- Dutch
- Polish
- Russian
- Greek
- Albanian
- Persian
- Other: _____

11. Which language(s) have you chosen for GCSE? Please note that your answer here does not commit you to anything and is separate to your real GCSE choices form. *

Mark only one oval.

- French
- Spanish
- German
- French and German
- French and Spanish

12. Read the statements below and indicate if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree with them *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I want to learn many languages in the future.				
I think I will use languages in the future.				
I would take a language for GCSE even if it weren't compulsory.				
I think languages are important school subjects.				
I enjoy studying languages.				
Learning languages is sometimes difficult.				
Learning languages is always difficult.				
I often make connections between the two languages we learn at school.				
I often make connections between the languages we learn at school and other languages I know.				
I think learning two languages at the same time is helpful.				

Latin Test (Paper version of Google Quiz)

Language Patterns Spotting Activity: Latin

This year the MFL department is conducting a project about how students make connections between languages and use all the languages they know during MFL lessons. As part of this we want to see how you get on with a totally new language: Latin. Your marks on this do not count towards any grades. Don't worry if you find it hard as it's all about something entirely new!

The respondent's email (**null**) was recorded on submission of this form. *Required

Email *

_____

First name *

_____

Surname *

_____

Do you know any Latin already? (If you do, it's still fine to do the test). *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Plurals

Most English nouns form their plural by adding -s, e.g. book - books, but there are several other ways of forming the plural in English, e.g. child - children, ox - oxen, mouse - mice, sheep - sheep. In Latin there are several different ways of forming the plural of nouns, some of which are shown below. You may notice that Latin has no word for 'a' or 'an'. Read carefully through the tables and see if you can work out the missing words in the spaces. Write your answer in the answer box beneath each table

a girl	puella	four girls	quattuor puellae
an island	insula	four islands	quattuor insulae
a table	mensa	four tables	quattuor mensae
a teacher	magistra	four teachers	**1.**

Four teachers 1 point

a garden	hortus	four gardens	quattuor horti
a couch	lectus	four couches	quattuor lecti
a prisoner	captivus	four prisoners	quattuor captivi
a son	filius	four sons	**2.**

Four sons 1 point

a gift	donum	four gifts	quattuor dona
a town	oppidum	four towns	quattuor oppida
a bedroom	cubiculum	four bedrooms	quattuor cubicula
a dining room	triclinium	four dining rooms	**3.**

Four dining rooms 1 point

a tree	arbor	four trees	quattuor arbores
a sister	soror	four sisters	quattuor sorores
a woman	mulier	four women	quattuor mulieres
a wife	uxor	four wives	**4.**

Four wives 1 point

Prepositions

In Latin ‘in’ can mean either ‘in’ or ‘on’. The examples below show you how the endings of nouns sometimes change if ‘in’ is put in front of them. Read through the examples in the tables below and try to work out the missing words in the spaces. (You may notice that Latin has no word for ‘the’.) Write your answer in the answer box below each table.

the country house	villa	in the country house	in villa
the inn	taberna	in the inn	in taberna
the table	mensa	on the table	in mensa
the chair	sella	on the chair	**5.**

On the chair 1 point

the couch	lectus	on the couch	in lecto
the garden	hortus	in the garden	in horto
the eye	oculus	in the eye	in oculo
the park	campus	in the park	**6.**

In the park 1 point

the town	oppidum	in the town	in oppido
the dining room	triclinium	in the dining room	in triclinio
the marketplace	forum	in the marketplace	in foro
the cave	antrum	in the cave	**7.**

In the cave 1 point

the mind	mens	in the mind	in mente
the fountain	fons	in the fountain	in fonte
the mountain	mons	on the mountain	in monte
the bridge	pons	on the bridge	**8.**

On the bridge 1 point

Verbs

In English we say “I sit”, “they sit” but “she sits”. Look at the Latin examples in the tables below and work out what goes in the gap. Write your answer in the answer box below each table. (You may notice that Latin doesn’t use pronouns such as “I” or “she”.)

I play	ludo	I run	curro
she plays	ludit	she runs	currit
they play	ludunt	they run	**9.**

They run 1 point

I have	habeo	I remain	maneo
she has	habet	she remains	manet
they have	habent	they remain	**10.**

They remain 1 point

I love	amo	I praise	laudo
she loves	amat	she praises	laudat
they love	amant	they praise	**11.**

they praise 1 point

I am praising	laudo
she is destroying	delet
they are running	currunt
I am playing	**12.**

I am playing (you can scroll up to previous tables to help) 1 point

_____

Translation

Now have a go at putting all the information from the activities together to translate the sentences. 1-3 Latin to English and 4-6 English to Latin. You can go back to previous sections to check vocabulary. Note that all verbs go at the end of a sentence in Latin.

17. Puella dona amat. 2 points

_____

18. Mulieres in oppido manent. 2 points

19. Magistrae in campo currunt. 2 points

_____

20. The girls are playing in the park. 2 points

_____

21. The woman loves gifts. 2 points

_____

22. The prisoners remain in the cave. 2 points

Swedish Test (Paper version of Google Quiz)

Language Patterns Spotting Activity: Swedish

This year the MFL department is conducting a project about how students make connections between languages and use all the languages they know during MFL lessons. As part of this we want to see how you get on with a totally new language: Swedish. Your marks on this do not count towards any grades. Don't worry if you find it hard as it's all about something entirely new!

The respondent's email (**null**) was recorded on submission of this form. *Required

1. Email *

_____

2. First name *

_____

3. Surname *

_____

4. Do you know any Swedish already? (If so it's still fine to do the test)*

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Plurals

Most English nouns form their plural by adding -s, e.g. book - books, but there are several other ways of forming the plural in English, e.g. child - children, ox - oxen, mouse - mice, sheep - sheep. In Swedish there are several different ways of forming the plural of nouns, some of which are shown below. Read carefully through the tables and see if you can work out the missing words in the spaces. Write your answer in the question below each table.

a girl	en flicka	three girls	tre flickor
a pencil	en penna	three pencils	tre pennor
a picture	en tavla	three pictures	tre tavlor
a lamp	en lampa	three lamps	**1.**

5. three lamps 1 point

a dog	en hund	three dogs	tre hundar
a sock	en sock	three socks	tre sockar
a spoon	en sked	three spoons	tre skedar
a car	en bil	three cars	**2.**

6. three cars 1 point

a house	ett hus	three houses	tre hus
a leg	ett ben	three legs	tre ben
a glass	ett glas	three glasses	tre glas
a table	ett bord	three tables	**3.**

7. three tables 1 point

a bee	ett bi	three bees	tre bin
a reed	ett rö	three reeds	tre rön
a mare	ett sto	three mares	tre ston
a moth	ett fly	three moths	**4.**

8. three moths 1 point

Definite Article (the)

'The' is not a separate word in Swedish but an ending added to the noun. Read carefully through the tables and see if you can work out the missing words in the spaces. Write your answer in the question below each table.

a book	en bok	the book	boken
a chair	en stol	the chair	stolen
a spoon	en sked	the spoon	skeden
a cat	en katt	the cat	**5.**

9. the cat 1 point

a pencil	en penna	the pencil	pennan
a lamp	en lampa	the lamp	lampan
a picture	en tavla	the picture	tavlan
a girl	en flicka	the girl	**6.**

10. the girl 1 point

a bridge	en bro	the bridge	bron
a cloud	en sky	the cloud	skyn
a shoe	en sko	the shoe	skon
a village	en by	the village	**7.**

11. the village 1 point

a leg	ett ben	the leg	benet
a glass	ett glas	the glass	glaset
a letter	ett brev	the letter	brevet
a house	ett hus	the house	**8.**

12. the house 1 point

Verbs

In English we say “I sit”, “they sit” but “she sits”. Look at the Swedish examples in the tables below and work out what goes in the gap. Write your answer in the question below each table.

I sit	jag sitter	I play	jag leker
she sits	hon sitter	she plays	hon leker
they sit	de sitter	they play	**9.**

13. they play 1 point

I speak	jag talar	I draw	jag ritar
she speaks	hon talar	she draws	hon ritar
they speak	de talar	they draw	**10.**

14. they draw 1 point

I am	jag är	I live	jag bor
she is	hon är	she lives	hon bor
they are	de är	they live	**11.**

15. they live 1 point

I am writing	jag skriver
she is washing	hon diskar
they are playing	de leker
I am sitting	**12.**

16.I am sitting (you can scroll up to the previous table to help) 1 point

_____

Translation

Now have a go at putting all the information from the activities together to translate the sentences. 1-3 Swedish to English and 4-6 English to Swedish. You can go back to previous sections to check vocabulary. To get the accents for the Swedish, copy and paste from the Swedish examples (or those doing German can use their international keyboard).

17. Katten leket med en sko

2 points

_____

18. Flickan bor i byn 2 points

_____

19. Stolen är i huset. 2 points

_____

20. The girl is in (i) the house. 2 points

_____

21. They draw three cars. 2 points

_____

22. The cat is playing. 2 points

Spot the differences test Version 1 (Paper version of Google Quiz)

Languages: Spot the difference (and the similarities)! Version 1

This year the MFL department is conducting a project about how students make connections between languages and use all the languages they know during MFL lessons. Look at the following sentence in English, French, German and Spanish. It has the same meaning in all 4 languages. You will notice that there are some things in common between the different languages, whilst other things are different. List as many of these similarities and differences between the languages in as much detail as you can. The number beside each category should give you a rough idea of how many differences and similarities there are to spot but don't worry if you don't spot them all.

The respondent's email (**null**) was recorded on submission of this form. *Required

1. Email *

2. First name *

3. Surname *

Sentences

English: Last weekend I went to the cinema and watched a film with my friends, which was great.

German: Letztes Wochenende bin ich ins Kino gegangen und ich habe einen Film mit meinen Freunden gesehen, was toll war.

French: Le week-end dernier je suis allée au cinéma et j'ai regardé un film avec mes amis qui était super.

Spanish: El fin de semana pasado, fui al cine y vi una película con mis amigos que fue fantástica.

4. What do you notice about similarities and differences in word order? 2 points

5. What do you notice about similarities and differences in past tense verbs? 4 points
Sentences (same as before but just to save you scrolling!)

English: Last weekend I went to the cinema and watched a film with my friends, which was great.

German: Letztes Wochenende bin ich ins Kino gegangen und ich habe einen Film mit meinen Freunden gesehen, was toll war.

French: Le week-end dernier je suis allée au cinéma et j'ai regardé un film avec mes amis qui était super.

Spanish: El fin de semana pasado, fui al cine y vi una película con mis amigos que fue fantástica.

6. What do you notice about similarities and differences in pronouns (e.g. I)? 1 point

7. What do you notice about similarities and differences in articles (a/the)? 3 points

8. What do you notice about similarities and differences in adjectives (e.g. 1 point last)?

Sentences (same as before but just to save you scrolling!)

English: Last weekend I went to the cinema and watched a film with my friends, which was great.

German: Letztes Wochenende bin ich ins Kino gegangen und ich habe einen Film mit meinen Freunden gesehen, was toll war.

French: Le week-end dernier je suis allée au cinéma et j'ai regardé un film avec mes amis qui était super.

Spanish: El fin de semana pasado, fui al cine y vi una película con mis amigos que fue fantástica.

9. What do you notice about similarities and differences in prepositions (e.g. 1 point to)?
10. What do you notice about similarities and differences in vocabulary? 15 points Which words look related and how?

Spot the differences test Version 2 (Paper version of Google Quiz)

Languages: Spot the difference (and the similarities)! Version 2

This year the MFL department is conducting a project about how students make connections between languages and use all the languages they know during MFL lessons. Look at the following sentence in English, French, German and Spanish. It has the same meaning in all 4 languages. You will notice that there are some things in common between the different languages, whilst other things are different. List as many of these similarities and differences between the languages in as much detail as you can. The number beside each category should give you a rough idea of how many differences and similarities there are to spot but don't worry if you don't spot them all.

The respondent's email (**null**) was recorded on submission of this form. *Required

1. Email *

2. First name *

3. Surname *

Sentences

English: I love languages because they are interesting and next year I am going to choose two languages and history.

German: Ich liebe Sprachen, weil sie interessant sind, und nächstes Jahr werde ich zwei Sprachen und Geschichte wählen.

French: J'adore les langues parce qu'elles sont intéressantes et l'année prochaine je vais choisir deux langues et l'histoire.

Spanish: Me encantan los idiomas porque son interesantes y el próximo año voy a elegir dos idiomas y la historia

4. What do you notice about similarities and differences in word order? 2 points

5. What do you notice about similarities and differences in future tense 4 points verbs?

6. What do you notice about similarities and differences in present tense 1 point verbs?

Sentences (same as before but just to save you scrolling!)

English: I love languages because they are interesting and next year I am going to choose two languages and history.

German: Ich liebe Sprachen, weil sie interessant sind, und nächstes Jahr werde ich zwei Sprachen und Geschichte wählen.

French: J'adore les langues parce qu'elles sont intéressantes et l'année prochaine je vais choisir deux langues et l'histoire.

Spanish: Me encantan los idiomas porque son interesantes y el próximo año voy a elegir dos idiomas y la historia

7. What do you notice about similarities and differences in pronouns (e.g. I, they)? 1 point
8. What do you notice about similarities and differences in articles (a/the)? 2 points

Sentences (same as before but just to save you scrolling!)

English: I love languages because they are interesting and next year I am going to choose two languages and history.

German: Ich liebe Sprachen, weil sie interessant sind, und nächstes Jahr werde ich zwei Sprachen und Geschichte wählen.

French: J'adore les langues parce qu'elles sont intéressantes et l'année prochaine je vais choisir deux langues et l'histoire.

Spanish: Me encantan los idiomas porque son interesantes y el próximo año voy a elegir dos idiomas y la historia

9. What do you notice about similarities and differences with adjectives? 3 points

10. What do you notice about similarities and differences in vocabulary? 11 points Which words look related and how?

Example Multilingual Translation Starter Activity

English sentence displayed first for students to translate into German, French, and any other languages they know. Answers then revealed during class discussion and similarities and differences then discussed.

Group Interview Questions

Thank you for giving up your lunchtime to speak to me about the new kind of translation work we have been doing in Spanish and German this term. If it's OK with you, I'd like to record our conversation so I can listen to you without making notes. The only person who will be able to listen back to the recording is me.

1. What did you like about translating into multiple languages?
2. What did you not like about it?
3. Which aspects of the activities were helpful?
4. Which aspects did you find unhelpful?
5. What did you learn from translating into multiple languages?
6. What did you learn about similarities and differences between languages?
7. Do you think it had an impact on your French lessons?
8. Did you get to share other languages you know with the class? How did you feel about doing this?
9. What did you think about hearing about other languages during your Spanish/German lessons?

Transcript Interview 1

Teacher: How did you find it? [the multilingual translation starters] You can be as honest as you like. If you hated it, that's fine.

Student 1: I feel like I have a slightly biased opinion, being a person that likes quite a lot of languages. I found it really interesting just to look at particularly Swedish. You know I've never seen Swedish before. So, it gave me a good idea about what different languages are like

Teacher: Ok so the tests, and what about the different, all those starters we were doing, translating into German and then into French?

Student 1: Yeah, that was really cool and interesting.

Teacher: And what did you like about it?

Student 1: I think just not only like comparing languages but also, you know, hearing how many different languages there are in the class. Everyone was contributing and it opened your eyes that people speak so many different languages.

Teacher: Yep ok. …. [student name] what about you?

Student 2: Umm, yeah, I think it was quite easy, umm the actual translation bit. Umm the Latin one.

Teacher: Oh, I mean more the translation starters that we did not the Latin test. When we did the German and then the French and then other people's languages.

Student 2: Oh yeah.

Teacher: what did you think about that?

Student 2: it was very interesting

Teacher: Hmm and what was interesting about it?

Student 2: there were like some similar languages I think from India languages from there they had similar words that I could hear like some people would say and they could like add onto each other so that was cool.

Teacher: Hmm, nice…[student name] how did you find it?

Student 3: like it was good because I didn't know that people could speak other languages so yeah it was nice to hear that.

Teacher: yeah, interesting, and how about you… [student name] how did you find it?

Student 4: I really liked it because you could see the differences and the similarities between German and French and the other languages people speak and like the others have said I didn't know but some of the people in our class spoke different languages, so it was quite interesting to see that

Teacher: how about you… [student name] how did you find it?

Student 5: Um, it was pretty fun actually to learn about like other languages that people like spoke at home

Teacher: [turning to student 6] and you did the translating into other languages in your Spanish lessons as well didn't you what did you think about it?

Student 6: Um I thought it was nice because you could um with Spanish and French you could make the connections between them quite easily and it would help kind of getting the vocabulary for each one, each language and comparing them so which order the words would go in and world classes and things like that so yeah

Teacher: hmm was there anything about it that you didn't like? Or anything that was less good?

Student 6: Err, sometimes it was a bit confusing because some of the vocabulary and stuff like that the grammar as well you'd get confused between them because they're quite similar, so I found that a bit hard but overall it was fun.

Teacher: Ok, yeah anything else that you found less helpful or less good about it?

Student 4: in like French we hadn't learned all of the words that we've done in German, so sometimes it was harder to write if it was in French and not German

Teacher: yes, no that makes sense. Anything else you didn't like as much?

Student 1: I guess, cos, um because everyone was contributing verbally to it, it was kind of you could compare the German and French, I guess maybe because of covid restrictions couldn't really hear because people were wearing masks and things. When people contributed other languages they speak at home you couldn't really properly compare them, just cause you couldn't quite hear or see them written down or things so that kind of limited the comparisons you could make just because you couldn't see them properly.

Teacher: yeah I guess if I had thought about it we could have done things like looking at peoples Google Docs on screen. How about you…[student name] anything that was less good?

Student 3: yeah like she said sometimes if people speak them often they were speaking quite fast so you couldn't see the different sections and stuff.

Teacher: How about you…[student name]? Anything that was less good about it?

Student 5: You know how like when other people speak their own language you could perhaps write it down so you could visually see the differences because it's kind of hard to remember it like with the German and French.

Teacher: yeah, it was harder without it written down. Anything else? Anything we haven't mentioned? That was less good about it

Student 2: I think, um, it's not like a bad thing but sometimes people who speak the languages weren't that fluent in it so they didn't know all the words so there wasn't, there was only part of the sentence.

Teacher: yes, it wasn't always possible to do the whole thing… Did it make you think more about French? Or did you think about what we'd done when you were in your French lessons? Or not so much?

Student 1: yeah, I'd say so cause I mean we're doing the same German and French topic at the moment so kind of, it's sometimes quite easy to carry the vocabulary across from topic to topic and then you know it's easier to compare because obviously you're doing the same thing and you like take vocab across.

Teacher: yep, yep, anything else do you think? [silence]…. And did you share other languages that you know with the class? [turns to student 1] you did a bit of Latin didn't you?

Student 1: Yeah.

Teacher: and how did that feel? Sharing your Latin knowledge with everyone?

Student 1: I mean obviously the limitation of Latin is it's an old language so you can't apply sometimes the more modern vocab to the older language it makes it more difficult but it's also quite interesting to see because you know Latin's the root of so many modern languages that we speak then you can see how links between words are actually formed through time. That was interesting to see.

Teacher: yep, cool, what about you?

Student 6: one thing I thought was a bit confusing with them when other people were sharing their languages and things like that I think they were giving more local and colloquial terms so rather than the formal language itself and so that might have made it harder for people to make connections if they can between the more formal stuff that we've learned in class and like the mixture of the words that we use.

Teacher: yeah, did you share any languages? have you got another language at home?

Student 6: Um, I didn't really share anything but like other people did

Teacher: other people did, fair enough. I can't remember… [student name] did you do any translation for us?

Student 5: Um, I think I did like part of a sentence.

Teacher: Yeah? And? Was it good? Was it bad? Awkward? [silence]…. How did you feel about doing that? When you did that bit of translation in front of everybody?

Student 5: well, um, I didn't know the whole thing, so it was really awkward.

Teacher: yes, no, fair enough. It's tricky isn't it if you don't know all the words for things? Any other thoughts or things the project made you think about? Would you like to do more of it in German lessons or even in French lessons because you haven't done it in French lessons yet? Was it helpful or was it confusing?

Student 6: I thought it was pretty helpful because once someone said or once you found out what a certain word or key term was in one language you kind of link it back to other languages and find out more about them, so it was quite nice to get a more, a wider sense of another language you don't really know.

Teacher: hmmm, rather than just always thinking about Spanish in your Spanish lessons. Any other thoughts?

Student 1: for me this is just a personal opinion, but you know I walk into a German class and then I have to translate something in Latin like it gets me into Latin mode and then I find it more difficult to switch back into German, but at the same time it's interesting to start the lesson comparing the languages. I did enjoy it, so...

Teacher: yeah, but it was it was a bit tricky switching between some people said that didn't they when they were translating either into French. Was it quite hard to think about French in a German lesson, or French in a Spanish lesson? Unhelpfully hard? Maybe or not so much? [student name] was our resident French translator. Was it helpful or unhelpful to think about both?

Student 4: well I quite like it because next year I'm doing German and French so I think it was quite useful to switch between the vocabulary I sort of like but as…[student name] said when you walk into a German classroom for me I just think in German, so my pronunciation of French was so bad, just because I was thinking about German, so yeah I did like the multilingual translation.

Teacher [turning to student 3] [student name] you're doing French next year, aren't you? Was it confusing having to think about French in a German lesson?

Student 3: I think it was confusing, but it was also interesting to see the different words and what they look like and the way they sounded.

Teacher: hmm, yep, and make that comparison. Any other thoughts before I let you go? Any other thoughts? Nope thank you very much that's really, really useful.

Transcript Interview 2

Change in recording device due to normal recording devices in use for exams. This meant poorer quality recording and not all parts audible.

Teacher: Shall we start with what you thought about that as an overall activity that you were doing for the last eight weeks or so?

Student 7: I thought it was really interesting it was a bit difficult because like if you were in Spanish you had to like remember back to French….[inaudible] But like it was quite interesting to see other people's languages

Teacher: yep, cool, how about you?

Student 8: yeah I think it was tricky but not really not that difficult….[inaudible]

Teacher: So did you find it quite easy to switch between French and Spanish?

Student 8: yeah

Teacher: you said it was a bit difficult thinking about French in your Spanish lessons?

Student 7: yeah, but it was good consolidation like I do know how to say this looking at the sentence sometimes I realised it was quite easy

Teacher: yes I guess it reminded you of the topics again. [turning to student 9] how about you, how did you find it?

Student 9: It was alright because…[inaudible] obviously like last year different people learnt different topics a bit more than others, but apart from that even with French…[inaudible] it would help with that because we're doing slightly the same topics as well [inaudible]

Teacher: yes, so it was a chance to go over things. Anything you didn't like about it or found less good?

Student 9: not really

Student 8: so I think…so I spoke Urdu and [inaudible] um yeah, I think it was quite good with other languages but [inaudible] if no one in the class spoke another language you wouldn't get that variety, but we're quite lucky aren't we?

Teacher: yeah, so my German class did the same thing and they had lots of languages [inaudible] that's the nice thing about this school in fact, even if you're not so aware of it, there probably are people who speak another language. [turning to student 8] So, did you say you translated into Urdu? And how did you find that? Did you share that with the class at all?

Student 8: yeah I did. [inaudible] Miss kept asking as well.

Teacher: And how did that feel, being picked on for Urdu all the time?

Student 8: it was fine, because I'm fluent in it, so fine really.

Teacher: was it odd to talk about it or bring it up in a Spanish lesson or was it?

Student 8: nah, I felt like so happy, like yes, I know this, I know a different language.

Teacher: yes, cool. And how did feel? You also said you had Mandarin in the class?

Student 8: yeah that was cool as well. It was so much longer, like I thought the sentence had ended and then she just continued and I was like oh.

Teacher: [turning to student 7] how about you? Did you give other languages or?

Student 7: I mean I thought it was really interesting that you could hear different languages, but the thing was like the same people were saying it like every single week, like it was always Mandarin and Urdu, so we didn't really have a variety of languages

Teacher: do you think there were more languages in the class but?

Student 7: probably

Teacher: but people were less keen, a bit shyer maybe to share.

Student 8: also she kept picking on me, but I know [student name] also speaks Urdu and Pashto which is similar

Student 9: yeah similar you know.

Student 8: They're quite like close languages so like I think it would be quite interesting to compare like

Teacher: [turning to student 9] so did you end up sharing any of yours or?

Student 9: er no, but like, there's also a history behind it, so it kind of shows connections like especially given it's diversity week as well, so it's quite nice to learn about other people's languages

Teacher: definitely

Student 8: seeing as I'm probably taking French it's good to know like the history behind it. Urdu is really old language, like it takes bits of Latin but before that. It's older than Latin so there are a lot of words that are quite similar, so it would be quite interesting to learn how different languages branch off from Latin like that would be quite useful

Teacher: yes, so French and Spanish are also related Latin, so were there connections that you managed to make?

Student 8: er yeah [inaudible] like you could see with certain words

Teacher: that's cool. [turning to student 9] so you didn't share your language, was it Pashto?

Student 9: yeah

Teacher: so you didn't share yours and why was that? You just didn't kind of?

Student 9: yeah, I didn't really, I'm still learning it, but um so I guess I just didn't have the confidence.

Teacher: yeah, fair enough, it's quite tricky to share that kind of thing. Fair enough. And what do you think you learnt from hearing, well translating into Spanish and French and then hearing the other languages? What were the main things you thought you got out of it?

Student 8: well with Mandarin as well there's a lot of er structure change, but the pronunciation didn't quite [inaudible] so hearing the differences was quite hard as well

Teacher: yeah they've got a different sound system and all the rest of it. [turning to student 7] How about you? What do you think you learnt?

Student 7: I thought it was really interesting because you could hear like different sounds and different accents and stuff [inaudible]and that shows you, like you can compare the English and the Spanish and you can like see the similarities

Teacher: excellent, great. [turning to student 9] how about you?

Student 9: I agree with the others. It was quite interesting because the word order switches around and [inaudible] and Spanish and French weren't always the same as the English

Teacher: ah yes, so the word order was different. So that was really interesting in my, the other class, in German. Do you remember about German having a different word order and things like that? So that was quite interesting for us to see that it wasn't just German that had different word order. Do you think it had an impact on your French lessons?

All students : no

Teacher: no, not so much. Fair enough.

Student 8: we only did it in Spanish.

Teacher: well I know you only did it in Spanish but obviously then you were having to translate into French, so do you think that kind of helped your French? Or your Spanish? Or not so much?

Student 7: There were kind of like some words that we knew in Spanish but not in French cos we do different topics at different times, so if we learnt like different vocabulary in Spanish then we could like put that to use in French

Teacher: yep

Student 8: cos er we had to translate into French and other languages that we know and er some of the words we didn't know in French and then when she taught us it kind of like helped.

Teacher: yeah so you got a bit of extra vocabulary. And what did you think about hearing French in your Spanish lesson? And Urdu and Pashto and Mandarin? What did you think about coming into your Spanish lesson and hearing other languages that weren't Spanish?

Student 9: I don't know, personally, like I found the translating into French harder cos I'm not doing French GCSE I don't, French isn't my thing, but then a lot of people did find that easier.

Student 7: I think it was really interesting

Teacher: cool [turning to student 8] how about you? What did you think about hearing the different languages?

Student 8: I think it was um useful like translating it into French and Spanish because it gave us like practice for another subject in Spanish. Personally, for me, I'm doing French and Spanish for GCSE so like it gave me practice like in Spanish and French early on and finding I could switch

….

Student 8: um cos it was on the spot as well, it prepared us a bit for the assistant we now have in Spanish and that puts us into the everyday life situation [inaudible] so it as really helpful for that.

Teacher: any other comments or things that occur to you? [silence] Well you've said lots of useful and interesting things, which is good, thank you.

Transcript Interview 3

Change in recording device due to normal recording devices in use for exams. This meant poorer quality recording and not all parts audible.

Teacher: so, have you got any general comments? How did you find that translating into not just Spanish or not just German but also into other languages?

Student 10: um I thought it was like quite interesting cos when you're doing a language that you don't really know…[inaudible]

Teacher: hmm, yeah, actually making you aware of the differences….[turning to student 11] [student name] what did you think? How did you find it?

Student 11: um I found it OK, sometimes it was kind of hard to translate because sometimes we'd learnt the word in one language but not in the other language but other than that it was good.

Teacher [turning to student 12] [student name] how did you find it?

Student 12: well I found it quite nice like usually in languages you're comparing different things but with the same sentence you could see, you could compare the words more and you could hear how each language sounds when the teacher says it at the end that was good. You can kind of see how similar it is or how different it is.

Teacher: hmm from the sounds as well. Cool. And [turning to student 13] got any views? You can be entirely honest as well if you thought it was terrible! How did you find it?

Student 13 [inaudible]

Teacher: yeah so different languages you can hear different things. [turning to student 14] and how about you? How did you find it?

Student 14: um I thought it was good and um like [student name] said it was only when we did stuff at different times it was a bit hard to translate it

Teacher: yeah if you didn't know the word in the French or things. OK, so anything else that was less helpful or you didn't like about it? So, it was tricky if you didn't know words.

Student 12: um I think with our class there was a section of it where people said the sentence in their own language and then there were some restrictions with that because like while people did have their own language that they do, I don't think many people did, so we just ended up doing French and Spanish. We didn't get to do any other things which would have been nice.

Teacher: hmmm did you think there were other people in your class who did know another language but just weren't saying it or was it just that in your class there happened not to be?

Student 12: There are other people in our class who definitely knew other languages but just didn't put their hand up

Student 11: I think some people didn't know how to say the sentence. They aren't always things you learn [inaudible]

Teacher: yeah so it might depend if they're learning that language as well, a bit like you didn't always the words in Spanish and things

Student 12: and because it was more of a writing task, not many people while they know how to speak it, knew how to write it or read it

Teacher: yeah, that makes it trickier doesn't it? Did any of you fall into the category that you knew another language, but you didn't say it at the time?

Student 12: yeah

Teacher: and why do you think that was? Was it the writing or?

Student 12: I don't know, it just felt a bit out of place like you know the, when you're in Spanish class you just kind of get your mind into Spanish only and then you're required to go into the other language and think like that and so like with French I think the teacher was a bit annoyed not many people got it because we're in a Spanish a lesson and surrounded by Spanish things and then we were suddenly going into French and doing that was kind of awkward.

Teacher: yeah, that switching thing. [turning to student 11] did you also have another language you weren't sharing?

Student 11: err yeah it was more sometimes I wasn't sure of the word I had to translate [inaudible] so it was more just sometimes I do know it but didn't say it.

Teacher: yeah so you weren't super confident. [turning to student 13] [student name]?

Student 13 [inaudible]….at home the language we're not really taught how to write it [inaudible]

Teacher: yeah so it's then hard to write it down isn't it? Yeah, fair enough. Did you have a go at what I would call transliterating where you might use the Latin alphabet to write it down or is that still quite difficult if you haven't really thought how to write it?

Student 13: no

Teacher: fair enough and you're right if you're not used to writing it and just used to speaking it, it's tricky isn't it? Do you think it had an effect on your French or on your French lessons?

Student 12: I thought it was pretty helpful just to learn like in Year 7 I used to confuse French and Spanish all the time cos they do have like quite similar languages and so sort of it was quite nice just to differentiate and to see how they are different like with tenses and things like that just to help.

Teacher: OK so it didn't mean you mixed them up more? You felt it made you separate them out more or?

Student 12: um half and half I would say like with vocabulary they are basically the same but then I guess translating them like that can help you differentiate them

Teacher: and see how tenses work in different ways? [turning to student 11] How about you?

Student 11: Um I think that sometimes it's helpful with understanding structures and [inaudible] but then also some of the words are also quite similar so it was bit confusing which ones were which.

Teacher: [inaudible] [turning to student 10] how about you? Do you think it impacted your French?

Student 10: um well, I think it kind of helped with…[inaudible]

Student 14: I guess it kind of helped with vocabulary but like I said there some words I didn't know how to translate into French and when I did eventually translate it [inaudible]

Student 12: also another thing that I thought was nice was before we learnt words and stuff like that but putting them into sentences actually making compound sentences and putting them in a structure that was pretty helpful.

Teacher: yeah, so you could see the structure. [turning to student 13] how about you? Did it impact on French?

Student 13: um yeah, seeing the sentence [inaudible]

Teacher: yeah, cool and do you think it had, what did you think about hearing other languages? So, in Spanish hearing the French or hearing French in the German lesson? Or other languages in the class?

Student 11: I think it was good, but our class didn't do much other languages.

Teacher: no but was it, how did it feel just even hearing French in the Spanish classroom?

Student 13: [inaudible]

Teacher: what was good about it?

Student 13: [inaudible]

Teacher: it was just good? Fair enough. [turning to student 10] [student name] what did you think?

Student 10: well sometimes hearing French reminded me that you're doing French again and like after [inaudible] but it's not very big but a little bit of a jumble.

Student 14: yeah, I thought it was quite strange hearing French in Spanish [inaudible] like you think have I got my timetable wrong, it's quite strange but other than that it was good

Teacher: Ok, yep, [turning to student 12] how did you find it?

Student 12: like with other languages?

Teacher: yes

Student 12: well, I thought it was, even though we didn't do much, I think one or two people did do it and that was really refreshing just to hear like another person's language that they were comfortable with even if they just did speak it at home and kind of like when we learn languages at school I do sometimes think in my head I wonder what's that in this language, you know like try to connect it, so that was nice.

Teacher: yes, yes [turning to student 10] how about you? We had lots of languages in our classroom, didn't we?

Student 10: sometimes it was hard [inaudible] to see like what the words looked like.

Teacher: yes, and then we're back to can you write it down etc? but yes, it is a bit difficult without seeing it. OK and what do you think you learned from it? If you learned anything? Did you learn anything from it as an exercise?

Student 11: I guess just learning some similarities and differences between languages and just because normally you do them in separate lessons [inaudible]

Teacher: yes and someone like [teacher's name] teaches French and Spanish so she's always doing that. Anything else you think you learned?

Student 12: I think just like also learning words, say some of the French stuff that we had to have help with cos we didn't know all of it then we learnt it and could use it in French lessons.

Teacher: hmm yes, anything else? [silence] OK anything else you want to add? Any other views you want to express about it? [silence] Great, well thanks for coming.