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Modern languages and inclusion in the context of Scotland's 1+2 language policy

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Abstract: In 2012, the Scottish Government published a policy document entitled 'Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach'. By 2020, conditions should be in place that will allow all children in Scotland to learn an additional language to their mother tongue from the first year of primary school and a second additional language from Primary 5 at the latest. In conjunction with this, the Scottish Government has expressed its commitment to equality of access to all aspects of education for students with Additional Support Needs. This article discusses equality of access to modern languages education for all students and looks at changes in thinking about who should be included in language lessons. The author argues that policies relating to modern languages education in Scotland need to be refined in order to help all teachers to develop good practice and strategies to ensure that language learning is fully inclusive.

Keywords: ASN, modern languages, entitlement, inclusion, Scotland, Corseford School

Introduction

The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994) was one of the seminal developments and stated that education for all is necessary, in all schools, in all societies and countries. In Scotland, the Additional Support for Learning Act (Scottish Parliament, 2004, amended 2009) introduced the term Additional Support Needs (ASN). It defined Additional Support Needs as factors that would impact on a student's ability to benefit from education if they were not supported. Notions of equality and entitlement are further reinforced by key pieces of legislation such as The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (Scottish Parliament, 2014), The Equality Act (UK Parliament, 2010) and by guidance documents such as GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child; Scottish Government, online). Arguably then, the framework to ensure that students with additional needs are able to access the whole curriculum is in place. However, I am not sure as to whether this is consistently happening. In my own previous experience as ASN teacher, inclusion and mainstream class teacher I have seen students with ASN routinely excluded from lessons deemed unsuitable for them. Commonly cited reasons include behavioural difficulties and 'already struggling enough with English'. In contrast, a report by the European Commission (2005: 37) quoted the following statement by a Scottish HM Inspector of Education:

Pupils with specific learning difficulties or special educational needs can benefit greatly from studying a modern language. There should be no assumption that such pupils will be excluded from learning a second language.

I am aware of good practice happening in some Scottish schools at the moment. However, a move towards a universal understanding of why and how to include students with ASNs in ML lessons is arguably required.

Personal Experience

Corseford School in Renfrewshire is a grant-aided special school run by Capability Scotland that caters for students with complex learning, physical, language and health needs aged 5-18. When I arrived at the school and my role was negotiated it was worked out that teaching of Spanish across the school was to be a significant part of it. Previously I had worked in Spain as a nursery and P2/3 teacher, therefore I could speak some Spanish. Despite being in ASN for 16 years, this was a huge learning curve for me. I wondered how on earth I would teach an additional language to students who use alternative communication forms! Commonly referred to as AAC (Alternative and Augmentative Communication), these systems allow those with communication difficulties to express themselves through alternative methods such as picture symbols, voice output communication aids and even eye-gaze technology. Despite my commitment to equality of access to the curriculum, I started to doubt my own skills. I was about to be amazed by the hard work and determination of our students and the sheer dedication and skill of the staff team that support them here at Corseford! Through getting to know the students as individuals and adapting lessons and materials to meet their needs we developed Spanish as part of everyday school life and have never looked back. However, whether this approach is universal remains to be seen. In a critical review of research and policy relating to disabled children, Stalker & Moscardini (2012) argued that despite Scotland's commitment to inclusion, children with disabilities do not always receive the same opportunities to participate in all areas of the curriculum as their peers. In terms of Modern Languages education, some researchers have argued that students with additional support needs are more likely to be excluded from lessons. Wight (2015) noted that the likelihood of being excluded from ML lessons was higher for students with disabilities. My own belief is that the real picture of what is happening in ML for students with ASN needs to be elucidated, particularly with the advent of 1+2. A report by the European and External Relations Committee (Scottish Parliament, 2013) on language learning in primary schools argued that students with ASN have been insufficiently considered during the planning and implementation of the 1+2 initiative in Scotland. Furthermore it suggested that an assessment of the impact for those students must be considered.

Research on Modern Languages and ASN

Previous researchers have given credence to this and argued that there is not enough research on the relationship between ASN and ML education. Abrams (2008) highlighted the 'extremely limited' research on this subject. In Scotland, following on from McColl's work (e.g. McColl 2005), the current, up to date picture in light of political developments such as the 1+2 approach needs to be considered. While the benefits of learning additional languages have been spelt out in the Modern Languages Excellence Report (SCILT, 2011), little appears to be known about whether all students undertaking their broad general education in Scotland are enjoying language learning. In Scotland, all children are entitled to learn a modern language

during their broad general education. Questions now need to be asked to how this entitlement translates into practice and in cases where exemption has occurred, why is this? Is the decision an individual one? Up to now, these questions have been difficult to address due to lack of available data on the matter. It is difficult to find statements about equality of entitlement for students with ASN within policy and guidance relating to the 1+2 approach. For example, in the Ministerial Working Party's report on 1+2 to the Scottish Government report (Scottish Government 2012) the section on equality only pertains to areas of social deprivation. Whilst social deprivation and poverty are contributing factors, they do not accurately reflect all additional support needs in Scotland. Children with disabilities are not mentioned. Riddell & Weedon (2014) refer to Scottish social policy discourse in relation to children with ASN. They define Additional Support Needs as resulting from 'a range of factors including social, sensory, physical or cognitive difficulties' (Riddell & Weedon, 2014, p.364) Arguably failure to specifically mention students with ASN and how they fit into the picture risk omissions in practice and misunderstandings.

The intention by the authors of the 2005 European Commission report was that all young people, regardless of disability should have equality of access to ML education. Their findings indicated that only between 50 and 70% of children with special needs were receiving this, setting dependant. Therefore the authors wanted to offer advice and guidance on making ML education accessible to more learners with special needs. Unfortunately, there seems to be a lack of current research that examines whether this has been achieved in Scotland. The Ministerial Working Party's 1+2 report (Scottish Government 2012: 20) stated that 'language learning [needs to] be recognised as an entitlement for all young people through to the end of their broad general education (S1-S3)

However, actual practice on the ground still needs to be addressed in light of these recommendations. Arguably, once data has been gained on the current picture, some guidance is required to help teachers to include all students in ML lessons. As yet, this does not appear to have happened. Teachers are presented with a wide range of needs and circumstances daily. Building the Curriculum 3 (Scottish Government, 2008) states that the learning experience should be personalised and suited to the needs of every child. However, as Hamill and Clark (2005) argued previously, planning and delivering a curriculum that includes meaningful learning experiences for all children takes a great deal of skill. This implies that policy implementation needs to be thought through in relation to actual practice a little more carefully, including what teachers' understanding of inclusion really is and how best to include students with ASN in ML lessons. As part of the implementation process of 1+2, in mainstream primary schools in particular, teachers are having to contend with learning and teaching new languages, which can seem daunting to those with little experience in the subject. In addition to this they are managing increasingly inclusive classrooms (Doran 2012). These two developments mean that significant changes need to be made to practice and arguably guidance is needed to reflect this. Any school may theoretically be able to argue that ASN students are included in lessons, however, being included is so much more than being present in a classroom during a lesson. The distinction needs to be clear- taking part and having resources that allow you to participate effectively accessible to you (SCILT, 2015) means that you are fully included. This may be a new way of working for some teachers in Scotland. In my

view, staff development must be considered to ensure that all teachers feel comfortable in creating inclusive environments for all students in all lessons.

Edgin et al (2011) argued that the social benefits of learning an additional language outweighed any effort required for students with Down Syndrome during a ML project. Indeed, the bulk of research appears to give credence to this notion (SCILT, 2011). Wight (2015) cites Sparks and Javorsky (2002) who argue that students with learning disabilities do not necessarily have any more difficulties in learning languages than their peers. This is especially true if resources and methodologies are adapted to meet the needs of different learners. Historically, ML education has been seen as more suited to students who are academically able (SCILT, 2011) perhaps due to the perceived language demands of the subject. Skinner & Smith (2011) argue that these notions are 'antiquated'. In addition, according to Wight (2015), much research reports on the arguable misconception that ML learning may be too difficult for those with ASN.

Examples of good practice at Corseford School and elsewhere

In my own experience I have been amazed at the ability of our students not only to participate in lessons but retain language learnt and use it functionally.

At Corseford we do not want our students to simply be able to reel off a string of vocabulary in Spanish or in Gaelic, which is our L3. We want much more for them than that. The learning of an additional language is first and foremost embedded in culture and we always begin with this to ensure that our students become 'responsible, global citizens who value diversity and who demonstrate tolerance, respect and understanding of other countries and cultures' (SCILT, 2011: 6). Indeed, for some of our students learning Spanish may purely involve a sensory experience with Spanish-related objects and sounds of the language. For others though, we are working at age-appropriate level and beyond. Something even I doubted was possible in the beginning. My own misconceptions have been well and truly driven away.

Last year Corseford was honoured to receive the 2015 Education Scotland Award for Languages. At Corseford I teach Spanish as our L2 and use a range of adapted methodologies to make ML accessible to all students. In addition to this, we have recently introduced Scottish Gaelic as our L3. The school featured as a recent case study (SCILT, 2015), which highlighted that inclusive pedagogies are being used to help young people to access Spanish and in some cases achieve recognised qualifications at National 1 and 2 levels. Corseford has integrated Spanish into the daily life and culture of the school. Whole school events are held such as a Spanish café and a sensory theatre trip to Spain in which all students are included. Technology such as interactive screens, communication devices and a digital sensory theatre are used to bring learning to life for the students.

At Corseford we make resources accessible to children with complex needs by utilising technology and reducing the environmental barriers to learning that can be an issue for those with disabilities. Methodology has been adapted to include multi-sensory experiences. These are cited by researchers as a way of ensuring that students with ASN can access learning in ML lessons (Wilson, 2011). These types of activities make sure that students are able to actively engage with lessons, so that no student should feel excluded because activities do not meet their needs. Key to this is planning in advance in order to allow our highly skilled staff team to

programme vocabulary into communication aids for the upcoming term. Learning is also reinforced with Boardmaker symbols, puppets and practical activities.

Increased publicity through organisations such as Education Scotland and SCILT has seen an increase in examples of existing practice highlighted on websites and in publications. Most of these are related to practice with mainstream students, but one or two have also highlighted inclusive methodologies, such as the case study of St Roch's Secondary School in Glasgow (SCILT, 2011). This project involved students with low motivation and who were deemed to have limited resilience. During the project these students undertook a skills-based interdisciplinary learning project in French based on food, music, cafes and currency. The project involved confidence building and utilised external business partners to develop skills and the confidence to use them in the ML. Through this approach to learning a ML the students appeared more motivated and developed skills in a contextualised, relevant, interdisciplinary environment. As previously mentioned, language learning is so much more than learning lists of vocabulary. It is intertwined with culture, citizenship and tolerance.

Characteristics of inclusive practice

Common to both of these cases, as well as being inclusive of ASN, is the fact that learning a language is achieved through innovative methodologies. Wilson (2011) lists important points to consider when making ML lessons accessible to all learners. These include 'multisensory approaches, structured and explicit content, over-learning of key points and praise and reward' (Wilson, 2011). Skinner & Smith (2011: page ref) make similar suggestions. They argue that the following accommodations can increase motivation and positivity amongst ML learners with learning disabilities:

- Highly structured instruction
- Multi-sensory approaches
- Frequent review and repetition
- Familiar instructor
- Positive class climate

Wight (2015) highlights ML education as an opportunity to become more aware of one's own language and culture and compare it with that of other countries. Wight argues that learners will have increased opportunities to critically consider the world that we live in and become more accepting of others. For students with disabilities these developments could potentially be life enhancing. In light of this, I would argue that there is rarely a valid reason for exclusion or exemption from ML lessons. There are benefits to be had for every student. However, there may be the occasional exception to this statement which should be decided on a case-by-case basis. It is pleasing to note that one or two examples of good practice relating to ASN and inclusion are beginning to appear. It is hoped that these will forge the way for ML for all to become the norm. However, including students of differing abilities in ML lessons is one thing, but providing a meaningful learning experience that meets all of their needs is quite another. By including them in a class where they cannot participate to the best of their ability, we are arguably excluding them. This is why it is important to again reinforce the idea that teacher

knowledge about a range of needs and methodologies is fundamental, along with the funding to allow for professional development as necessary.

Concluding Thoughts

What should success in ML education look like? In my view, it should not be measured by the amount of vocabulary one can recite, but by participation, enjoyment, knowledge of the culture of the language, amongst other things. I believe that it is critical that specialist and mainstream teachers have the opportunity to work together in order to facilitate ML learning for students with ASN and provide opportunities for both to learn from each other. Arguably, policy, strategy and funding to allow for this would be highly beneficial.

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Cultural capital, habitus and capabilities in modern language learning

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Abstract: This article originates from the findings of an ethnographic research which explored the perceptions and experiences of pupils learning a modern language in a school in England. All pupils in Key Stage 2 (primary, aged 7-11), including those identified with special educational needs, are entitled to study a modern language as part of the school curriculum. Thus, in the classroom, differentiation is a must. This means that learning activities are designed to provide for all abilities and ensure proficiency in the target language. This article draws on a combination of Bourdieu's concepts of capital and habitus, and Nussbaum's central human capabilities as theoretical tools to gain insights into the second language classroom, a learning environment where the learners' abilities and needs are diverse. The findings highlight nuanced distinctions that can be missed as language learning in the classroom is often met with resistance, reluctance or compliance more so than enthusiasm or enjoyment.

Keywords: language learning, inclusion, Nussbaum, Bourdieu, ethnography

Introduction

The modern languages classroom usually abounds with learners who perform; those who struggle as well as learners who prefer to hold back on the learning activities. Performances in the classroom depend among other things on ability interest and social backgrounds. The importance of language learning is highly promoted by the Department for Education and Skills (2002), entitling every key stage 2 pupil in England, including those identified with special educational needs, the opportunity to study a modern language as part of the school curriculum. Modern language studies (see McColl, 2000; McKeown, 2004) support all pupils learning another language and suggest that it increases children's self-esteem, enhances their enthusiasm and contributes to the development of positive attitudes towards other cultures. Modern languages classrooms thrive with learners of different abilities, interests and needs, who endeavour to study the target language. Owing to learners' diverse backgrounds and abilities however, inequality is produced and reproduced in the language classroom. In this paper, I explore the value of Bourdieu's concept of capital combined with Nussbaum's capabilities as a framework for understanding the modern language classroom negotiations. In particular, I draw upon the roles played by cultural capital and the central human capabilities in explaining the experiences of the pupils as they strive through the learning activities.

Bourdieu's concepts of capital and habitus

Bourdieu (1984) introduces and applies the terms capital, habitus and field to examine social class inequality that exists in society and considers differences in status (that is, of lifestyle) as manifestations of social class differences. Bourdieu defines class as a group of people who take up similar positions and who, when put in similar conditions usually display similar interests and adopt similar stances. Bourdieu offers a framework of class analysis which plays a significant role in the reproduction of social inequality in educational institutions. For Bourdieu, capital is any resource effective in a given social field that allows the individual to seize the specific profits that arise out of participation in it. In *La Distinction* (1984) Bourdieu explores the ways in which the features of middle class cultivation and taste are used by people as cultural signifiers as they seek to identify themselves with those who are 'above' them on the social ladder, and to show their difference from those who are 'below' them. *La Distinction* is a detailed study of the ways in which knowledge and cultural artefacts are brought into play, alongside basic economics, in the dynamics of social class relations. Bourdieu (1977b) asserts that cultural capital can be a significant resource where education is concerned as it contributes to individuals' educational success.

Cultural and social capital can define the chances of success in a society as the more of these we possess, the more successful we could be in our field. Bourdieu (1986) uses this term to refer to information or knowledge about our specific cultural beliefs, traditions and standards of behaviour that promote success and accomplishment in life. He states that cultural capital is made up of familiarity with the dominant culture in a society, and especially the ability to understand and use educated language (Bourdieu, 1977b). Cultural capital is passed through the family from parents to their children. It is knowledge of high status ideas and artefacts that are 'worth' transmitting and is noticed when economic resources are spent on cultural valuables and specific items such as tickets to the museums or the theatre, books and other specific cultural artefacts.

With regard to language learning, cultural capital could have an impact on many factors including pupils' interests in the target language, their motivation and their participation in the classroom. The ownership of cultural capital varies with social class and comes in three forms: objectified, embodied and institutionalised. Each form of cultural capital, Bourdieu (1977b) explains, serves as instrument for the appropriation of symbolic wealth socially designated as worthy of being sought and possessed. The objectified form manifests in items such as qualifications and books; the embodied form which Bourdieu terms habitus is demonstrated in the educated character of an individual such as learning dispositions derived from past familial experience and actively organising future experience. The institutionalised form represents the places of education such as types of schools, colleges or university attended. Bourdieu (1977b) explains that the education system expects every learner to be equipped with cultural capital thus making it difficult for 'lower class' learners to succeed at school.

Bourdieu (1977b) further argues that although the education system ignorantly assumes that every learner possesses cultural capital, only a few higher class learners possess this

which therefore could result in teaching and learning being inadequate. He suggests that the 'lower class' students, simply do not have the resources to understand what their teachers are trying to get across.

In considering the entitlement for every pupil to study another language, social class is a major factor at work in the classroom. In Britain, people's socio-economic situations can speculate success or failure in education (Office for National Statistics, 2005). Social class which comprises of middle-class and working-class, represents economic and different forms of capital among other factors. Bourdieu (1990:163) notes that middle-class families are often able to 'move in their world as a fish in water' and in this, can be included the world of language learning. Working-class people however are "unknowing and tasteless" (see Skeggs, 2000).

I acknowledge that what constitutes working-class is difficult to operationalise (see Archer and Francis, 2006; Perry and Francis, 2010) and involves much more than the lack of economic capital, and I share Archer and Francis' (2006) view that the level of income only constitutes one aspect of class and does not provide the full picture. Besides economic capital, social class comprises cultural, social and symbolic capital, to name just a few. In this research, I use the terms middle-class and working-class to refer to the different economic and social backgrounds of the pupils in keeping with Bourdieu's concepts of capital.

The reception of Free School Meal (FSM) represents one of the predictors of educational attainment but working-class here describes pupils from families on low income whether or not they are allocated and receive FSM at the school. At the time of this research, FSM is allocated to working-class and low income families who are eligible and have applied through the relevant process. Research (Hutchison, 2003; Schagen & Schagen, 2005) show that FSM is used as a factor to indicate economic disadvantage in educational attainment. Here I use working-class to represent pupils in receipt of FSM and acknowledge that not all working-class pupils claim or receive FSM. It is my contention that many pupils come to the school more or less prepared to manage the learning activities provided in the French classroom, therefore the field of ML can be compared to a game with rules where some pupils have 'trump cards' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:98) and different amount of cultural capital with which to play.

Research findings on socio-economic gap in educational achievement by Norris (2011) suggested that students from low-income families experience among other things cultural barriers compared to students from higher-income backgrounds. She claims that 'cultural, economic and institutional capital – or the lack of it – has a detrimental effect on young people from low-income backgrounds in the Further Education sector, and their progression into education or the workplace' (Norris, 2011: 3). Similarly, Irwin (2009) found that although emotional support and academic motivation are fairly constant across classes, educational achievements and successes are significantly shaped by class and family educational background.

Claiming there is a connection between social class and achievement in language learning, Ellis (1994) asserts that social classes are based on levels of income, occupation

and education. Ellis further notes that working class students usually quit language learning earlier than middle-class students. Several studies (Cassen & Kingdon, 2007; Dyson et al., 2010; Kerr & West, 2010), stress that social class is the strongest predictor of educational attainment in the United Kingdom. This was reiterated by the former Education Secretary Michael Gove, when he bluntly stated that “rich, thick kids achieve more than their poor clever peers, even before they start school” (Shepherd, 2010). Children and young people from different social backgrounds have different experiences in school, get different provision in terms of resources and arguably achieve different outcomes. These differences show during the early years, (see National Equality Panel, 2010), and by the time children reach three years of age, their assessment revealed children from poor backgrounds to be a whole year behind economically wealthy children in language and communication skills. This inequality is recognised by education professionals and policy makers, hence, attempts are made through a variety of initiatives and reforms to raise standards of performance of every pupil. It would therefore be fair to claim that the entitlement to language learning is one of such initiatives as its objective is to assist every pupil regardless of their social background or ability to study and to benefit from learning another language.

Cultural capital and language learning

Where ML learning is concerned, habitus generated by pupils within their homes and families is likely to have a significant impact on the cultural capital that they can gather throughout the language learning process. Owing to habitus, an individual could have a feeling in certain practices or places like a ‘fish in water’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 127). In the ML classroom, the opposite could be experienced by some pupils and this could imply a feeling of alienation. Bourdieu (1977a) explains that the dominant habitus is transformed into a form of cultural capital that schools take for granted and which acts as a filter in the reproductive process of hierarchical society.

If we consider cultural capital to be essential in ML, then it makes sense to look at findings on attitudes and motivation (Dörnyei, 1998; Bartram, 2012), and findings on parental involvement (Gardner, 1975; Bartram, 2012). For example, Dörnyei (1998) suggests that motivation bestows the principal driving force to initiate the learning of the foreign language and later the impetus to continue the long and often tedious learning process. He goes on to say that without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most exceptional abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals. He adds that appropriate curricula and good teaching are not enough on their own to ensure student achievement. Both Gardner’s (1975) and Bartram’s (2012) studies concluded that positive atmosphere in the home play a part in language learning as parents would readily encourage and support their children if they themselves have some background in language learning.

Nussbaum's capabilities approach

The basic principle of the capabilities approach is to address 'human problems and unjustifiable human inequalities' (Nussbaum, 2011: xii), thus the approach aims at the struggles society faces in managing humanity, human development and human rights. There are several concepts which emerge from an application of the basic tenets of the capabilities approach to frame our understanding of humanity and political equality. Nussbaum (2006: 76 - 77; 2011: 33 - 34) draws up a list of capabilities that she explains would enable human beings to function and to fulfil their potential in society. She acknowledges that although her list of capabilities is just a proposal and is continuously under review, it gives a good indication of the central capabilities that are essential to all human beings, therefore, society needs this list as guidance to ensure that every person's capabilities are protected at least up to the minimum threshold.

The central capabilities list has been used in education to address inclusion and exclusion, discrimination and inequality (see Hedge & MacKenzie, 2012). It has also been useful in addressing cognitive disability and 'inclusive' education (see Rogers, 2013) in an attempt to respond to the two simple yet intricate questions that the approach asks: 'What are people actually able to do and to be?' and most importantly 'What real opportunities are available to them?' (Nussbaum, 2011: x). For Nussbaum (2006), society urgently needs to do justice to all people, whether they have a disability or not. As it stands, a large number of young people still do not have flourishing experiences and fail in the education system because of their additional learning needs (see Hedge and MacKenzie, 2012; Rogers, 2013). The capabilities approach considers each individual as 'a source of agency and worth in their own right, with their own plans to make and their own lives to live' (Nussbaum, 2000: 58). As far as education is concerned, this implies that every pupil is of moral worth in all their diversity and the educational system needs to ensure their human rights. The concept most pertinent to this study is the need for an education which must reflect what pupils are able to do and be (Nussbaum, 2011) and this is explored within the context of ML learning. In the ML classroom, what pupils are 'actually able to do and to be' (Nussbaum, 2011: x) is a fundamental question that not only the learners ponder over but also the teachers reflect on regularly. Such a seemingly simple question secures complex and challenging responses in the ML learning process as it implies that all pupils have the same rights to learn regardless of their abilities, and, opportunities should be available to enable them to flourish.

Capabilities and language learning

If we take the capabilities into account, at least six of the ten items appear to be particularly significant and applicable in the language classroom: senses, imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; play; and control over one's environment. These six capabilities can be used to explore, if in the language learning process, pupils are able to reflect on their own life choices, enjoy the language learning experience while engaging in social interaction with peers, and enjoy recreational

activities as well as participate in political choices that regulate their own life in the ML classroom. The goal of the capabilities approach however, is not to entirely match what the list provides but instead, to focus on 'ample threshold on each of the ten capabilities' (Nussbaum, 2009: 334).

The fourth in Nussbaum's (2011: 33) list of capabilities is senses, imagination and thought: 'being able to use the senses to imagine, think and reason'. As a school subject, the very nature of French being a 'foreign' language can be thought of by some pupils as a barrier to learning it (Williams et al., 2002; Kissau, 2006; 2007; Bartram, 2012). This view is also shared by some adults (McColl, 2000; McKeown, 2004). The capability to 'be cultivated by an adequate education' (Nussbaum, 2011: 33) might not exist for pupils who have poor literacy skills in English thus they could find various aspects of French learning difficult (McColl, 2000) and struggle with most tasks. To assist with this, learning activities are planned to suit the diverse needs of pupils by differentiating tasks and activities (Morgan & Neil, 2001; Ramage, 2012), hence, this capability could be used to explore whether the differentiation of activities provides pupils with their performances, what they are able to do in the French classroom.

The fifth central human capability on Nussbaum's list is that of emotions: 'being able to have attachments to things and other people, to experience longing, gratitude and justified anger and not have any of these stifled by fear of anxiety' (Nussbaum, 2011: 33-34). This capability can be used to appraise the ML classroom for emotions as well as investigate whether pupils experience apprehension and discomfort when attempting to acquire or speak the target language. MacIntyre & Gardner (1991a: 86) assert that 'anxiety poses several potential problems for the student in ML, because it can interfere with the acquisition, retention, and production of the new language'.

The sixth, seventh, ninth and tenth capabilities (practical reason; affiliation; play; and control over one's environment) could be applied to foreign language learning. In evaluating the ML classroom against these capabilities, we could conclude that through pair and group work, pupils are encouraged to engage in critical thinking about the learning objectives and the tasks at hand (see Ramage, 2012). Some pupils may not be able to join in critical thinking about activities and in a case as such, 'functioning rather than capability will be an appropriate goal' for them (Nussbaum, 2006: 173). Participating in learning activities is a functioning, and these capabilities could be used to appraise whether the opportunity to participate in the learning activities is available for pupils of all abilities and needs in the classroom. Parents could also be capable of reasoning and making choices for their children in terms of their children's schooling and future development with regard to school subjects however, pupils' voices should be privileged and pupils should be 'left free to make their own choices as to what they would like to do with the provided real opportunities' (Harnacke, 2013: 771), if pupils are able to do so. In cases where pupils are not able to make certain choices regarding their central capabilities, Nussbaum (2006) suggests guardians or proxy representations should make the choices, particularly for people who have complex needs. In the educational system, many choices are made for pupils regardless of their abilities. For

example, the entitlement to language learning, although not statutory for key stage 2 pupils, is not something pupils can choose not to have on their time-table if their school offers it.

The seventh item on Nussbaum's (2011) list is affiliation: 'being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another. To have the social bases of self-respect and make provisions for non-discrimination.' The ML classroom can be examined against this capability to consider whether the varied range of ability of pupils is taken into account and tasks and activities are differentiated to cater for every pupil's need and ability. This capability can also identify whether, when pupils work in pairs or groups they are able to show consideration for each other in the classroom.

Play is the ninth item on the list: 'being able to laugh, play and enjoy leisure'. This capability could be the most valued for any language learner for its mention of leisure. Guidance for pedagogy recommends making the learning environment enjoyable for the learners through the use of role-plays, video clips, games and information technology (see Edwards, 1998; McKeown, 2004; Ramage, 2012). This capability could be used to evaluate the ML classroom for opportunities given to enjoy interactive and competitive games as well as role-plays.

Control over one's environment, the tenth item on the list is significant and could be used to appraise teaching and learning in relation to pupils' involvement in the decisions on the language topics and learning objectives which both teachers and pupils could reflect on (Ramage, 2012). It could also be used to examine if pupils' responses and abilities are taken into account to plan subsequent learning (DfEE, 2000; Morgan and Neil, 2001). This capability is intrinsically linked to two others; senses, imagination and thought as well as practical reason in that they all encourage critical thinking which an 'adequate education' entails (Nussbaum, 2011: 33).

With regard to the six capabilities described above, it could be argued that at macro level, the ML entitlement focuses to a certain extent on the individual pupil and considers each pupil worthy of equal respect and esteem. At micro level, attempts are made in the ML classroom to initiate equal opportunity and equal outcomes for pupils regardless of their abilities. The central human capabilities list, Nussbaum stresses, is not intentioned to provide answers to all issues that society faces. Instead the list is founded on the idea that capabilities are needed as basic human rights for a quality of life and all 10 items are crucial prerequisite of social justice.

Preferences and possibilities in language learning

The findings suggest that pupils from middle class families appear to be more positive about learning French and tend to demonstrate the 'sense of one's place' (Bourdieu, 1987: 5) in the classroom even if they struggle with the subject or are on the SEN register. This is because some of them have the opportunity to visit France on occasions for holidays, or, have parents speak French a little, and support the target community as

well as the teaching and learning of the subject. Home conditions, and access to cultural capital enable such pupils to be more open to the foreign language as shown below in Ellie's response:

I think French is a really good idea because in the future, like, if we wanted to do French for GCSE it's good to know the basics like 'bonjour' or 'je m'appelle' and that. And I want to do GCSE in French. Umm [pause] I also want to get like a pen-pal from France [pause] I could write messages back in French and maybe I could meet up and we could talk umm to each other in French yeah. (Ellie –year 7 pupil)

Taking GCSE in French and possibly conversing with a pen-pal in the language in due course has an external point of reference in terms of the fulfilment of a functional purpose (Gardner, 1985) for Ellie. Her response suggests that a GCSE in French is something she has reason to value. GCSE could be seen as a functioning and the extent to which she is enabled to study for her GCSE could be seen as a capability. The capabilities approach highlights the central capabilities for human beings; what individuals are actually able to be and to do and what real opportunities are available to them. Ellie appears to know the rules of the game and shows awareness that to get her GCSE in French requires working at the basics and her determination would make her feel like a fish in water (Bourdieu, 1990) in the language classroom. Evaluating Ellie's response against the capabilities, it can be concluded it can be concluded that she is able to form a conception of the good and engage in critical reflection about the planning of (Nussbaum, 2011) her educational experience.

However, French for Bethan below, is not something she has reason to value:

I think French is a waste of time because what happens if you go to a different country it's not going to be any help because you won't know much and it's quite hard to learn it and it's very boring compared to maths and English. It's also hard to remember the words and letters. My dad says it's a waste of time because we're never going to go to France so there's no point learning it really. (Bethan – year 7 pupil)

Bethan's excerpt reflects negative attitude toward French as well as interests, motivation, identity and what pupils value. Although Bethan did not express that she would prefer to go to a different country, she implied that knowing French would only be useful if one went to a French speaking country. She also voiced that French was a waste of time and she recalls her father's position regarding French. This reflects continuity with habitus and field as Bethan takes to the classroom her father's views on the subject; an indication of her disposition against learning French is reinforced. She will not embrace French as a subject and will always draw on her father's support. Her 'conception of the good' is a curriculum that does not include learning French. It could be said that her negative opinion put her off the language and caused her to claim that it is a difficult language to learn. It could also be said that her reasons for not being positive about the subject is based on hearsay from her father. Her cultural identities hence remains closely linked with her family histories and her social class (Nayak, 2003).

Some pupils, whether or not they are on the SEN register and regardless of class, only enjoy French when playing a game in the lesson is involved as in the field note below.

I stood in the corridor, outside my room to let my pupils in for their French lesson, as usual, I started greeting them one by one in French as they entered the room: “Bonjour! Ça va?” Some pupils replied back nicely in good French. Some others shouted back in English, “Hi, Miss” or “Yo, Miss” or “Alright, Miss?” Some pupils walked pass in silence. But most of the pupils asked their usual questions in English before going in: Some asked: “can we play a game today, Miss?” Some others asked: “are we having a fun lesson today?” I ignored their questions and kept on my greetings routine in French. Guessing that I’m deliberately ignoring their questions, some pupils huffed out loud as they entered the room then slumped in their seats. The last two pupils chorused: “So, are we playing any games this lesson, Miss?”

This greetings routine is habitual and carried out before pupils enter the classroom, but as we see in the extract, pupils would rather not participate and prefer to respond with the same question every time: when or if they are going to play a game in the lesson. Bourdieu (1989) and Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) discuss language and claim that it is a form of capital which can be exchanged for other forms of capital such as social, economic or cultural. They suggest that access to legitimate language is not equal and linguistic competence is dominated by some. The legitimate language was the greetings routine and in this instance, it could be argued that some linguistic competence was achieved by pupils who responded in the target language.

While I use the greetings routine to enhance exposure to the language and encourage pupils to use the target language to participate in the short conversation, some of the pupils do not regard the exercise as necessary or indeed valuable and consequently, they never share my drive. They have their own routine which is to ignore the teacher; greet the teacher back in English; or query about what they value, which is, playing a game as they walk in. That, to them, is more important than responding to greetings in French. Pupils who regularly refuse to respond to my greetings in the target language are generally pupils who show that learning a language is of no value to them, and who express strong feelings about English being the only language they desire to converse in, as seen above, some pupils replied back in English instead of repeating the simple greetings word they regularly hear.

Habitus can be conceptualised as unconscious or mental habits which include beliefs and values of an individual. According to Bourdieu (1998), habitus is produced through practice and could also influence the way I, as a teacher involve my pupils in learning activities and here, the choices I make using this greetings routine prior to starting lessons could be generated and determined by habitus. Clemente’s (2007) study of students learning English as a second language also found that some students steadily took part in and paid attention to classroom activities whereas others did not regard the subject as important for their career and therefore did not value the learning activities. Findings by Edwards (1998) show that success for pupils arises from enjoyment and enhances learning, and through games, reluctant pupils are inspired. In considering the

ninth capability, Play, we can reason that to a certain extent, the language classroom should be equipped with recreational activities, and learning French should be about having fun and enjoying the classroom experience. This however, if carried out continuously would not lead to the recognised level of competence (DfES, 2002) in the target language but could arguably positively impact the well-being and learning experience of the pupils.

For a number of parents, cultural capital needed for success in language learning is constrained. Family background and educational experience frame what they have reason to value and arguably shape the subjects they would prefer for their children to study at school. What French learning mean to some parents revealed much about their habitus. Mr Barran explained:

We struggle with the work in this subject. I struggle. He struggles. I never did French at school so I don't find it easy when John asks for help with homework. What I don't understand is he is not very good at English, he finds reading and writing quite a challenge so why he is made to learn another difficult language is beyond me. When he brings his French book home, there's not much in it that he can remember or even read on his own. I know his teacher gives him the easy stuff and he gets extra help in the classroom but he's not getting anywhere with this subject. It's not right for him. He might say he likes it when you ask him, being his teacher and that but ... he doesn't, not really. The truth is he hates it. This is not a subject for him. With his learning difficulties how can he ever excel at this?" (Mr Barran at parents' evening)

Mr Barran does not see his son John as a linguist and states the lack of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) in terms of knowledge of the subject on his own part where French learning is concerned. This indicates that he does not have 'the feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1998: 83) when it comes to supporting his child with work in French. It is also apparent that John's teacher gives him differentiated work, from what Mr Barran has said, therefore the teacher is mindful and considerate to John's needs and appears to know what he is capable to do. Equally, the excerpts also show that Mr Barran appears to know what his son is able to do (Nussbaum, 2011) hence he affirms that French is not a subject for him. In considering the fourth central capabilities, French does not appear to enable John to have pleasurable experiences, instead, he faces difficulties and distress that are not productive (Nussbaum, 2011) to him.

Concluding remarks

The capabilities approach stresses the importance of what people can actually do and be and what real opportunities are available to them. Drawing on Bourdieu's concepts, the findings show that what the individuals in this research can actually do particularly in the learning process of an additional language is framed to a large extent to family background and personal expectations of what is important. For pupils who are on the school's SEN register what they are actually able to do in the French classroom may be limited due to their special needs. For other pupils what they are able to do is constrained or aided by the forms of capital which they can access. The basic claim of

Nussbaum's capabilities approach is to measure the well-being of a person by taking into account what he/she succeeds in doing and being. For Bourdieu, social advantages/disadvantages are produced and reproduced by habitus (people's actions and dispositions), capital (resources available to people), and field (the structure of the situation people are in). Performances in this school subject appear to be dependent on Bourdieu's theoretical concepts and the availability of Nussbaum's central capabilities. Both theories complement each other to provide insights into the processes and experiences of what teaching and learning of a modern language in a school setting entail.

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My thoughts on language learning and teaching: Interdisciplinary Project Report for the Scottish Baccalaureate in Languages

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Abstract: This article is an edited report on what I have learned about language teaching methods through researching the subject for the Interdisciplinary Project part of the Scottish Baccalaureate in Languages. I offer my views on why the UK seems to be behind in language learning, why the focus of our curriculum seems inappropriate and present an analysis of my survey results. I also propose some common language learning principles that we could use in everyday teaching.

Keywords: motivation, fluency, language learning techniques, language teaching methodology

Introduction

At the beginning of my sixth and last year in secondary school I decided to take on the Scottish Languages Baccalaureate. I knew it would be a challenge but I was sure that it would allow me to improve important skills, particularly in research and independent learning. I decided to study how languages are taught in different countries. The topic has always interested me because I never really understood how people have learned English fluently in contrast to us learning another language. As a result of my investigation I think I have a better idea.

I believe that one reason is that learners in non-Anglophone countries have an extra motivation. They seem to think they will not be understood in the wider world unless they have at least *some* knowledge of English. Nevertheless, although this motivation appears to be prevalent in classrooms in other parts of the world and hence the minds of pupils, I still find that there are always some pupils who simply enjoy languages and are really good at them whereas others just don't care. However this does not mean that the less engaged pupils cannot speak the language.

Within my recent classroom experience I have observed, that when learning the basics pupils are less receptive because most of them are reluctant, and even embarrassed, to act like a small child and repeat words and numbers in order to increase their vocabulary (although in my view by not repeating words aloud they miss a crucial part of language learning that our brains are virtually wired to do). However, it seems that this initial reluctance then leads to a wider lack of motivation which could be the explanation as to why there are only have a few pupils in a language class (and I count myself amongst these) who appear to have a "knack" for learning languages. In my view, however, it's not about being somehow more gifted in languages. Rather, the earlier we begin to learn languages in a fun and interesting environment the less pupils say that

languages are difficult thus discouraging them from continuing their studies. Although arguably language learning *is* difficult this does not need to be so directly addressed. Languages are skills and just like any skill there comes a time when it becomes quite difficult but each of us can overcome this difficulty and move on to the next level. However, according to Williams et al (2002), pupils in the UK are not willing to confront these challenges, i.e. they are not motivated to continue with languages. A quote from a pupil included in an article by Jones & Doughty (2015) hints at another reason:

It's good starting to learn [a modern language] earlier so you're not playing when you get to high school.

This suggests that an early start to language learning is not enough. Pupils would also like to be continually challenged in their language learning.

My investigation

History of language teaching techniques

In terms of my Interdisciplinary Project, my first steps were taken mid-October when I began my investigation into the history of language teaching techniques. I found the background information presented on the website created by Jill Kerper Mora (online) easy to understand which allowed me, someone completely new to the field, to understand the basics. I was surprised to find that many of the techniques listed are still used today, the main four being the following:

1. Reading approach
2. Audiolingual approach
3. Communicative approach
4. Functional-notional approach

According to Mora (ibid), the reading approach is useful for those who do not travel abroad or for whom reading is the one usable skill in the target languages. It focuses firstly on the reading aspect and secondly on improving the learner's knowledge (current and/or historical) of the country where the target language is spoken.

The audiolingual method evolved from the so-called direct method (where all instruction is in the target language) whereby students essentially to listen to, repeat and then learn by heart grammatically correct phrases in the target language. The teacher (but not the learner) may use the mother tongue at his or her discretion.

The communicative approach revolves around the idea of slowly encouraging pupils to communicate in the target language, starting with yes or no answers, and through a long transitional process, build up to more elaborate utterances.

The functional-notional approach is a specific form of the communicative approach. In this method language is broken down into understandable, context-specific chunks. The teacher creates vivid situations that include details of things like where and when the

conversation takes place and what subject is being talked about. This role-play technique creates a uniquely immersive experience for the pupils within a controlled environment, to help build confidence.

Finding out about all of these different techniques was a revelation as I thought that there were only limited ways of learning a language. From my experience in school, most language learning should be done through reading passages and answering questions or answering questions on a pre-recorded dialogue.

Surveys

After reviewing carefully what I had learned I constructed a survey for S3 pupils in my school that allowed me to gain an insight into their thoughts on whether or not we should use these approaches more often. I also sent my survey to a Professor at Strathclyde University and asked him to distribute it among his learners.

I received 20 responses from students at various stages of their university career, and who originated from across the UK. The 60 school pupils comprised of two 3rd year classes at my school all of which completed the survey. Both of these groups contribute to the overall result of the survey. According to the responses the majority of pupils learn the basics in secondary school at the age of about 12-13.

These findings are in contrast to those of my other survey in which I received 80 responses from people who had studied English as their second language, in another country. They consisted of 10 language assistants and 70 pupils (59 from France, 9 from Spain, 5 from China, 2 from Italy, 2 from Germany and 3 from Latin America) and the results were acquired by sending my survey link to the relative embassies and also getting in touch with my town's link school in France, Andernos-les-Bains.

In the countries listed above, the schools begin the introduction of languages as young as age 6 which arguably gives the pupils an early understanding of the inner workings of the target language even though they may not be able to speak it completely fluently. Abroad, these early years' classes comprise mainly of games and songs which further aids the previous point about how it gives them a strong base for continuing to learn. Fortunately, the Scottish Government has plans to give every child in Scotland the chance to learn an additional language from Primary 1, and a further language no later than Primary 5 by 2020 (Scottish Government, 2012)

However, in my view at the moment our languages classes are too full of perfecting the skills for the test (reading, listening etc.), but only listening can be practiced when engaging in conversation. Both listening and speaking skills are absolutely imperative to language learning because it allows us to acquaint ourselves with the language's syntax which can then be transferred to the other two skills learned in secondary language education- reading and writing. When a child learns their mother tongue which means of learning do they engage in first? They hear the words (listening) and then practice repeating them (speaking) until they innately understand the word's meaning. Only from there do they begin to read and write.

Data to support my view can be seen in the responses to my survey (cf. Appendix 1) in which I ask in what situations students (UK-based) learn vocabulary best. 56% of respondents said that they memorised words better when using them in speech and conversation. I believe that this is because it is how our brains have learned our first language. For example, when learning how to speak with an accent the pupil should listen to native speakers (for our mother tongue this would be our parents) and then repeat them in our own time in order to say them correctly and be understood.

This same information is reiterated in another response where over 50% said that they learn best in an environment in which they are surrounded by speakers of the language. 60% said languages are learned better after you have stayed in a country where the target language is spoken.

Lastly, around half of the UK survey participants felt that it would be better if the majority of the lessons were taught in the target language. This makes sense as it means that they can listen to the syntax and natural flow of the language and copy it to ensure a higher feeling of fluency.

From comparing my two previously mentioned surveys it seems as though foreigners learning English find it harder to speak the language and understand people talking to them whereas the majority of UK pupils say the most difficult part for them arises even before the conversation has initiated. They struggle “finding the confidence to use the language”. This may be a reflection of our classes which are a reflection of our culture. For example, when we are on a bus we do not tend to engage in conversation with the stranger next to us. By contrast, I have found during my stays in Europe that people, particularly in France and Spain, are more likely to talk to you, even if it’s only about the weather. They certainly start conversing more confidently than a native English speaker would. This lack of confidence is then transferred into the classroom where we tend to read and listen to pre-recorded tapes of people that are occasionally of native speakers and do not do much in order to purposefully use the language in the classroom.

I wonder also if this is a reflection of the teacher’s own self-consciousness in using the language. For example, some teachers will not willingly even use native language assistant’s mother tongue, which would help with their own learning, and some only use language assistants to translate words during a class lesson. Surely language assistants have so much more to offer!

In contrast, 44% of Scottish student sample (from university and secondary) said that they would like the whole, or most of the class to be taught in the target language.

Interviews with native speakers

Two of my proudest moments during my research were maintaining intellectual conversations in both French and Spanish during my interviews with my school’s language assistants. During these conversations I asked them questions on what they thought about using more of the target language in class and they both said that we do not do enough of this in Scotland as in France and Spain this is very frequently done.

This leads back to my first point: Are we starting language learning too late? Certainly it would be better to start acquiring languages at a younger age as it means we are developing the skills needed to learn languages and also learning basic vocabulary and constructs that save time later on when lessons should be focused on more advanced skills like speaking or reading and complex structures like subjunctives or forming gerunds. However, language can, of course, be acquired at any age.

Participatory Investigation

To further this point I have been going through a few different self-teach courses for a few different languages and the best one to date that which I am using for Catalan as it encourages that you listen to the audio given first at least two times before trying to read the words and memorise them. This in turn helped me memorise these words by priming my brain to recognise them (through hearing them) and then I could actively recall them better afterwards.

Of course there is no one correct way to teach a language. Rather, pupils should be taught in multiple different ways in order to give an all-round experience. However in my opinion the preferred order would be one which mimics learning one's native tongue i.e. hearing words and phrases and repeating them and only then learning to read and write them and use them in one's own sentences.

Concluding thoughts

In conclusion, we can see that currently pupils in UK schools start learning additional languages a lot later than our foreign counterparts and this may be the reason that we fall behind in the language learning race. Next, we can argue that teachers need to work on building the pupil's confidence as many pupils find that they have confidence problems. Improving this may need to start by the teacher themselves becoming more self-confident which means they will start speaking more in their target language to ensure maximum increase of the pupil's self-belief. Moreover, it actually seems that because other languages are introduced so early in other parts of the world it aids in creating a more receptive student when it comes to further study of languages. The 1+2 initiative is therefore a welcome strategy because it should become easier to develop pupils that genuinely enjoy the language as they will be able to have their "child-like" way of learning taught to them at a suitable age that won't lead to embarrassment. Contrary to popular belief, the survey conducted shows that many pupils say that they learn better when surrounded by speakers of the language and feel they would benefit from a higher percentage of their classes being in the target language. Furthermore, it is evident that there are many efficient ways to learn but the only way to find the best one for you is to experiment and adjust existing ones in a way that suits your preferences. This may be anything from simple rote memorisation techniques or creating a dance routine that associates movements with vocabulary.

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Appendix 1: Survey Questions

1. Survey Questions for University and Secondary Pupils in the UK:

Where are you studying?

How do you feel you learn vocabulary and language in general, best?

What do you do to further your knowledge of the language?

In what kind of environment do you learn best?

What aspects of language learning do you find most difficult?

If at all, how do you overcome these difficulties?

Do you find it easier to learn the language if you have been to the country and used it?

Would you find it beneficial if the whole class were taught in the target language (if not already)?

2. Survey Questions for Language Assistants and Pupils Overseas:

What country do you come from?

What languages did you learn at school?

At what age do pupils start learning a foreign language, in your country?

What aspects of language learning do you find most difficult?

In your country, were languages taught differently between primary and secondary? If yes explain further

In your opinion what percentage of a lesson should be taught in the foreign language?

Why do you believe this? Explain briefly

Are your foreign language students more proactive in their learning or are they more inclined to wait for instruction from the teacher?

The Use of iTunes U with Advanced Higher French Learners: Impact on the Development of Independent Learning Skills

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Abstract: Increasingly, digital learning is being used in classroom practice to enhance learning experiences. In this small scale enquiry I investigated, using quantitative and qualitative data, the impact of using an app on the development of Advanced Higher French learners' skills for independent learning. The research also explored how the use of mobile technology can impact (positively or negatively) on learners' metacognition within the context of Modern Languages, and its importance in the development of independent learning skills. The findings suggest that while learners enjoy the flexibility afforded to them by accessing their learning via app, the role of the teacher and the training of both teacher and learner are essential if the learning is to be effective. Attention also needs to be given to how skills for independent learning can be developed effectively both before and during the course. The role of metacognitive ability is pivotal here and opportunities for metacognitive development need to be integrated into course content.

Keywords: Skills, Independent learning, Metacognition, Training, Reflective Logs, iTunes U

Background to Study

Metacognition has a critical role to play in influencing the development of skills for independent learning. Flavell (1979: 223) defines metacognition as embracing both knowledge and skills: "The individual's own awareness and ability to monitor and regulate strategies for learning, including planning, prioritising and monitoring". Chamot & O'Malley (1994: 372) even argue that "It may be the major factor in determining the effectiveness of individuals' attempts to learn another language". Mobile technology can offer valuable opportunities in terms of the development of skills in self-direction and managing one's own learning (White, 2006:247). In line with national priorities teachers must ensure that they prepare learners for life beyond school and support them in the development of skills for lifelong learning.

With the national requirement for the use of ICT across the curriculum and for the development of skills for work and lifelong learning, it is vital that if we are to combine the two, as in with the French app, we need to ensure we get the process right. However, learners also need to be ready and have the skills to access and progress their learning in this way (Hattie & Yates 2013:127). Furthermore, while it is the responsibility of the teacher to "help learners achieve metacognitive awareness and skills, to act as counsellor, helper and facilitator, and to withdraw gradually as learners become more independent" (Hurd 2008: 30), learners need to have a clear understanding of how they learn and what they need to do to learn effectively if they are to make real progress. Through a small scale research project I sought to ascertain

the impact of four Advanced Higher French learners' use of the app on the development of independent learning skills. As part of a Local Authority pilot, the four learners were given an iPad for the session and teachers were offered training on how to construct an app on iTunes U. The app was created to incorporate skills for independent learning into the various sections, in the first instance by myself with support from the City of Edinburgh Council Digital Learning Team and then, throughout the session, with additional input from the Modern Languages team at a semi-urban secondary school. The sections were constructed as follows:

- an introduction about how to plan and structure work
- feedback and next steps sheets to encourage reflection
- a progress and self-evaluation chart along with the pegged marking schemes and criteria for self-assessment and peer assessment
- a guide to maximising success throughout the year to help prepare for exams

Throughout the year, students had continual access to these sections whenever desired and were encouraged to explore and select the sections they needed most at any given time.

My aims were to ascertain whether learning in this way had an impact upon the development of the students' skills for independent learning, try to find out if they had an improved understanding about their skills for independent learning by the end of the course and explore whether they felt they were better able to use their skills as a result.

Research Question and Data Collection Methods

The research question was: What impact, if any, does the Application we produced for Advanced Higher French have on the development of independent learning skills?

In order to gather evidence, a triangulated approach was taken to obtain both quantitative and qualitative evidence. A baseline was obtained by interviewing learners in October 2014 about their understanding of skills for independent learning and how often they felt they used them. Learners rated their understanding and use of skills on a scale of 1 – 10. They were also asked to keep a log of their learning in AH French over a period of three weeks. This was to help them to reflect, and I was looking at how their skills were developing.

In December, an online survey was issued to staff who taught other AH subjects to ascertain the focus they place upon developing these skills in their courses in order to gain an idea of the experiences learners had in other subject areas and, due to its anonymity, this allowed for honest responses.

Additionally, for the learners, semi-structured interviews were set up and recorded (10 questions) in April 2015. The first two questions asked learners to rate their understanding and use of skills for independent learning on a scale of 1 – 10 and this was compared to the baseline data. The other questions and student responses are illustrated in [Appendix 1](#).

Each response was transcribed and analysed individually, summarised collectively and presented as statements and in chart form. I was looking for frequency of skills mentioned and progress in understanding and use of skills.

Discussion of Findings

Analysis of Online Survey

I wanted to find out how aware teachers were of the development of skills for independent learning in their learners and how they felt they contributed towards their development. I asked a random cross-section of teachers, eight in total, who taught the same stage, Advanced Higher, in different subject areas and in different schools. Their responses are summarised in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Summary of Teacher Responses

Question	Question focus	Most frequent response	(n=8)
1.	Teachers' perception of how frequently AH students apply metacognitive skills in class	Sometimes Regularly	4 3
2.	Degree of teachers' planning for the development of metacognitive skills	At a certain stage of my lesson	5
3.	Teachers' perception of AH students' ability to develop metacognitive skills on their own	Students would cope some of the time but would require support	7
4.	Teachers' perception of when AH learners reflect on their learning	When they are asked to do so	6
5.	Teachers' perception of main metacognitive skills acquired by AH students throughout courses	Planning work Organising work Self-assessment	6 5 5
6.	Teachers' perception of skills AH students still need to develop throughout courses	Students need help identifying where they are in their own learning and in planning their own progress	4

Comments on Responses to Question 1:

Just under half of the respondents think their learners apply metacognitive skills regularly. More than half think they do this sometimes but may need reminding. It is clear from this that teachers feel learners could do more to develop their independent learning skills on a regular basis.

Comments on Responses to Question 2:

Only one respondent planned for the development of metacognitive skills as an integrated part of their course. Five respondents – over half- planned this into certain stages. From this feedback, the majority of the participating teachers seem to be aware of when they support the development of independent learning skills but, in the main, did not see this as an ongoing process which runs alongside the course content

throughout the year. Most teachers saw it as a separate aspect of their teaching which was built in at certain points. This suggests that there is awareness but no consistency in how skills are developed and integrated into courses or in expectations of what role students play in taking responsibility for this. The process of developing independent learning skills does not feature in continuously throughout the course but mainly on a continuum of times of year and expectations depending on which subjects students study.

Comments on Responses to Question 3:

None of the teachers thought their students would be able to cope alone when accessing their courses, but most of them thought they would cope some of the time and would still require teacher support. One respondent raised maturity and training as being a potential issue. Teachers indicated that, even at this stage, they think that students are not ready to be fully independent in their learning.

Comments on Responses to Question 4:

Three quarters of respondents indicated that their learners only reflect upon their learning when they are asked to do so. This evidences the responsibility teachers still feel in helping students in this area and the reliance students still have on their teachers. In the main, they still await instruction and direction to reflect upon their learning and to plan for improvement.

One respondent indicated this varies depending upon the student. All learners are different and at this stage, the level of independence students are happy to take and demonstrate inside and out with the classroom will depend upon a range of factors such as confidence, independence generally and intrinsic motivation.

Comments on Responses to Question 5:

Planning and organising were the main skills identified as being developed in courses. These skills were identified by six and five of the respondents respectively, more than half of respondents in each case. Self-assessment was also highlighted by half of the respondents. Planning for improvement, self-evaluation and setting next steps were mentioned by three respondents. The ability to work independently was also mentioned by three respondents.

Overall, teachers had identified the independent learning skills they felt students developed most in their courses. Planning and organising stand out amongst the replies. Self-assessment was the next most apparent skill identified by teachers. This begs the question whether students may have developed these naturally in any case as is the nature of courses at AH level. However, teachers were not identifying any of these skills as being completely integrated into their course delivery as a whole or ongoing throughout the year.

Comments on Responses to Question 6:

Half of respondents identified knowing where students are in their learning as a skill which still needed to be developed – this included self-assessment, reflection and self-evaluation. Planning and organising work were mentioned but to a lesser extent which would complement answers in the last question. One respondent felt all skills for independent learning still needed to be developed.

The importance of reflection and identifying where learners are in their own learning is particularly important here given the nature of the courses and independence required at AH level. This was a skill highlighted by half of the respondents for development and was most popular as a response to this question.

Analysis of semi-structured interviews with Advanced Higher Learners:

As mentioned earlier, learners were asked to rate their understanding of skills for independent learning on a scale of 1 to 10 before and after the course. The code names AH1, AH2, AH3, and AH4 stand for Advanced Higher Candidate 1-4 respectively. **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** illustrate how students rated their 'understanding skills for learning' and their 'use of skills for independent learning' in October 2014 and April 2015 respectively. The responses indicate all learners perceived that they had improved their understanding of and their use of skills for independent learning by the time of the second interview.

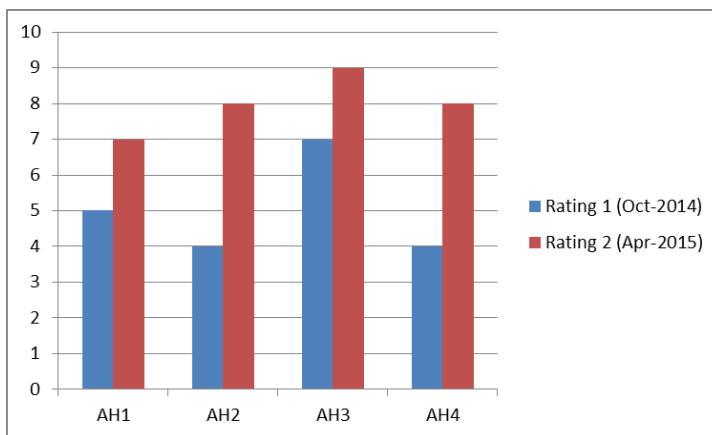


Figure 1: Rating comparison for 'Understanding Skills for Learning'

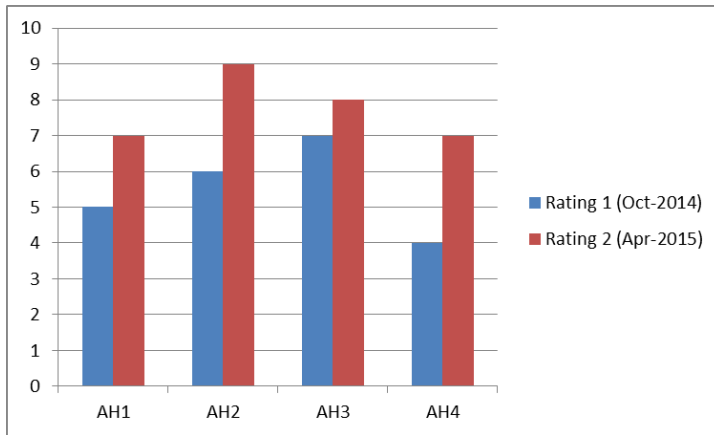


Figure 2: Rating comparison: 'Use of skills for independent learning'

Figure 3 below illustrates the skills learners felt they had most developed, where the blue bar represents the number of learners who identified with each skill:

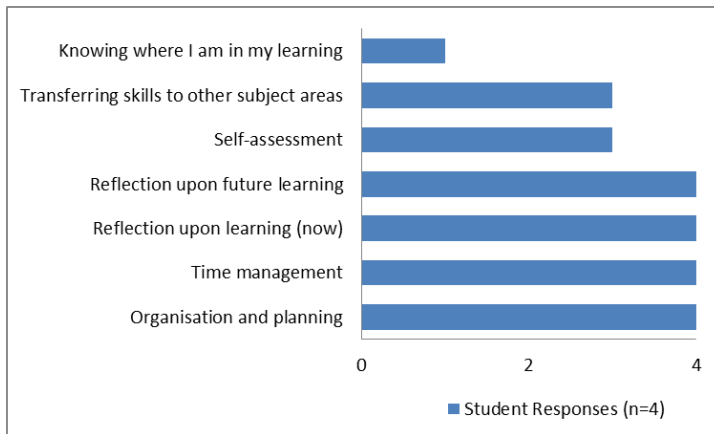
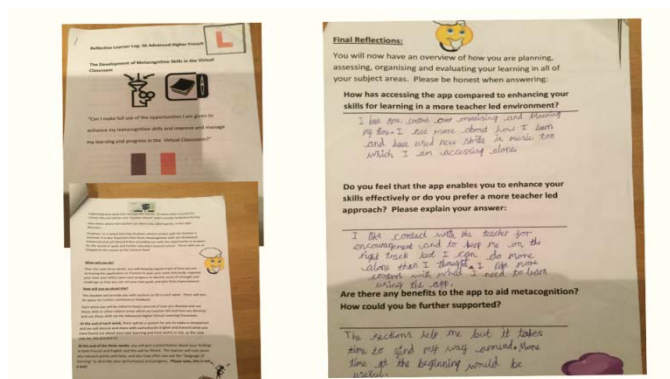


Figure 3: Perceived impact on students’ skill development

The responses suggest that there has been progress in how learners perceive their understanding of skills for learning and how they use them. In their interviews, all learners made reference to the flexibility afforded by being able to access the app at any time and select the sections they felt they most needed. All learners felt they had improved in organisation and planning, time management and reflecting upon learning. However, only two were confident about identifying where they were in their learning. This concurs with the results of the teacher online survey in which it appeared that learners still needed to develop this skill. One learner felt she had not transferred her independent learning skills to other subject areas. This was the same learner who indicated a reliance on a teacher led environment in her interview. All learners claimed this style of learning made them reflect upon future learning and what it will be like to progress their learning to further education and to the world of work.

Reflective Learning Log

I gathered evidence based upon the frequency of a selection of common statements made by the learners in their reflective learning logs.



The student responses are summarised in **Figure 4** below:

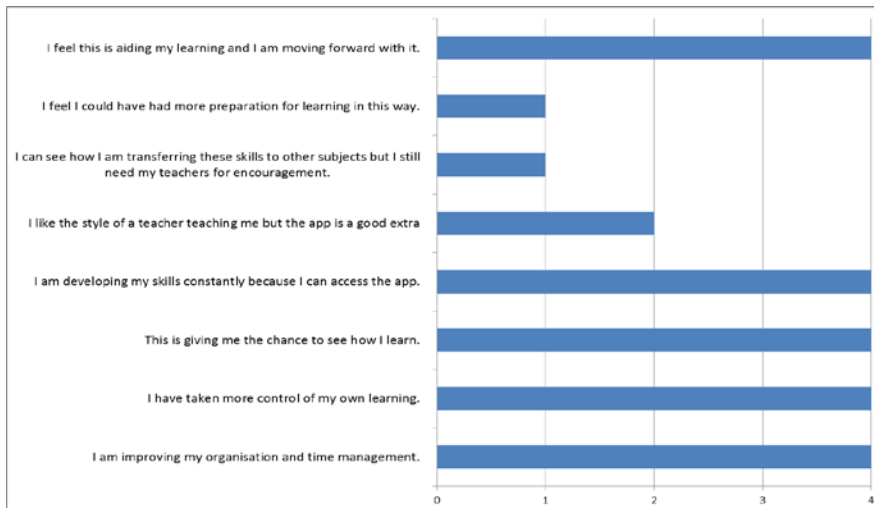


Figure 4: Student responses (n=4)

The statements indicate that progress is being made in skills and understanding of learning but the importance of the teacher and preparation time are highlighted. Upon closer inspection we see that **all** learners felt they were improving their skills for independent learning but that **two** liked or needed teacher input and **one** would have liked more preparation for progressing her learning on iTunes U.

Evidence indicates a positive shift in understanding and using skills for independent learning but it must be stressed that this is partly based upon learner perception, and the focus only involved four learners. The importance of the role of the teacher was obvious in learner interview responses and in learning logs. This would concur with Vygotsky's theory (1978: 127) which involves explicit teacher led instruction, modelling and guided practice of metacognitive strategies. Preparation for being able to effectively progress their own learning using the app was also highlighted by one of the learners. This is upheld by Hattie & Yates (2013) who state that learners need to be trained in order to access their learning in this way and time is required to ensure adequate skills are developed.

From this research, it is clear that just because learners are at the stage of Advanced Higher, it does not mean they are adept at understanding or using skills for independent learning. Donaldson (1978) emphasises that metacognitive development is not as dependent upon age as experience and our own interventions. Ongoing dedicated support and training is needed throughout school education and across subjects. Recognising where they were in their own learning using the app was the skill learners found most challenging to develop. This was also the skill Advanced Higher teachers identified in the online survey for development in their courses. It would appear that learners became more aware of their skills and how and when they used them, and were better able to reflect due to the app's flexibility and ease of access. The impact

seemed to lie more upon their awareness and understanding rather than their development and application of skills for independent learning.

Conclusions

It must be emphasised that there are limitations to the research gathered. The sample size was small and was located in one school. The start of the authority pilot coincided with the beginning of my seconded post at the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools. Having been the first teacher in the department to participate in the training of the development and delivery of a course using iTunes U, there were inconsistencies in approach when the leadership fell to another teacher. However, in light of the evidence gathered, it is useful to highlight similarities and differences in perceptions between teachers and learners as summarised in **Table 2** below:

Table 2: Comparison of Teacher and Student Responses

Researcher Perception	Teacher	Student
Planning and organising were skills students most developed in AH courses	Agreed	Students also improved greatly in reflecting upon learning and were better able to think about their learning using the app
Students are better able to navigate technology than teachers	Not agreed – when it comes to course content, students need to know how to access the work and use the course effectively	Not agreed – two of the students indicated they needed teacher support and emphasised the importance of the role of the teacher
Teachers only build the development of skills for independent learning into course content at certain points and not as an integrated part of their usual courses	Agreed – there is not a consistent approach to how metacognition is developed or our own interventions across authorities, sectors or subject areas	Not agreed in this case – all students felt they were developing skills for independent learning constantly because of the flexibility of the app
The app cannot not replace the teacher but is an effective enhancement to the support given by the teacher	Agreed – teachers indicated that students would cope some of the time accessing a course alone but would need support	Agreed by three out of four students who liked the style of having a classroom teacher and the encouragement they received
Students need to develop a better sense of where they are in their own learning in order to plan next steps	Agreed by four out of eight teachers	Agreed by two students who felt they still needed to develop this skill. However, two felt they were now better able to do this due to accessing the app
More time for training required	Agreed by teachers using app	Agreed by students using app

The question as to whether the app has had an impact upon skills for independent learning is difficult to answer at this stage. Although a range of evidence was sampled, due to the opportunity to take up a seconded position, I was not in school to oversee the completion of learning logs so feedback varied depending upon learner. I relied greatly upon learner perception and honesty.

I had started leading the pilot as Curriculum Leader in the department but the course was subsequently overseen by another teacher. The teacher reported that the app had positively impacted the way she taught and she is now modifying it to facilitate the new Advanced Higher course. Introducing this means of enhancing learning has also enabled me to develop another app to support teachers in my current role.

From a survey of eight staff from other subject areas at Advanced Higher level, teachers did not see the development of skills for independent learning as an ongoing process

which ran alongside course content throughout the year, but rather as a separate aspect of their teaching which was built in at certain points. Teachers identified planning and organising as the independent learning skills they felt learners developed most in their courses but half of respondents identified that “learners knowing where they are in their learning” was a skill which still needed to be developed – this included self-assessment, reflection and self-evaluation. Three quarters of respondents indicated that their learners only reflected upon their learning and planned for improvement when they were asked to do so. This gave me a general indication of the expectations teachers had of their learners and the experiences learners were having across subjects and across schools.

From the semi-structured interviews, it was clear that most learners were recognising how they were transferring skills to other subjects and they had become more aware of their learning. Pleasingly, all learners felt that thinking about their learning while accessing the app would help them in future learning contexts.

However, next steps would be to have more planned preparation of learners for accessing learning in this way, further support for speaking preparation that are accessible via mobile technology, and more reflection upon interventions in supporting the development of skills for independent learning using the app as an ongoing process throughout the course. More research based upon the next steps of these learners and their future learning beyond school is necessary to gain a better, reliable insight into the impact of the app on their skills.

Learners had very much appreciated the opportunity to access the app at their own convenience and to focus upon the sections they found were most useful to their own learning at a given time. They also liked the independence this type of learning afforded them out with the classroom although the role of the teacher is definitely essential in ensuring adequate preparation for accessing a course in this way. The teacher also needs to feel fully confident in how to construct, update and monitor the app and ongoing support for both teacher and learner is vital, especially in the initial stages or in a pilot project.

The focus of this research was based around the impact upon the development of skills for independent learning. It would be interesting to look beyond this to the wider benefits and challenges of accessing a course in this way. There would certainly also be opportunities to develop critical, analytical and research skills by accessing learning by using this method.

Recommendations:

Given the findings which culminate from the evidence gathered, I would make the following recommendations for future learning in this way:

1. Ensure teachers involved in the delivery of a course in this way are all trained and feel confident.

2. Before beginning such a course, build up its use to learners and give plenty of time for training in the run up to using it.
3. Involve parents and seek feedback at regular points throughout the course.
4. Set up an effective means for learners to submit assignments and for receiving effective, useful feedback.
5. Do not add the whole course content at the very beginning. Update the coursework at regular intervals ensuring learners are aware of when to expect this and deadlines are clear.
6. Set up a discussion forum between learners and teachers.
7. The app can be used in a variety of contexts and, once familiar and confident with how to use it, teachers can share professional learning, ideas and resources to create new apps.
8. Metacognition is essential in the acquisition and development of skills for independent learning. There needs to be dialogue across sectors and consistency and knowledge in how to support learners in the development of metacognitive awareness and ability from an early age.

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Appendix 1: Student responses to semi-structured interview

Which of the skills do you feel you have most developed and why?	All four learners said the skills they had most developed were in planning their work, time-management and organisation. They also reported having more of an awareness of what to work on for exams and the usefulness of the i-pads in planning for progress in their other subjects as well as French.
How do you feel about the development of your skills in AH French in comparison to other subjects?	Three of the learners mentioned the level of teacher support in their other subjects and that the more support and lead from the teacher, the less responsibility they felt for developing their skills for independent learning. One learner expressed the preference for teacher support and direction in all subjects.
Has using the app in a virtual learning environment helped you to transfer the independent learning skills you were developing in French to other subjects?	Three of the learners mentioned that they had been able to transfer the skills they had developed for independent learning in French to other subjects. One learner still felt reliant on the teacher to help her to see the skills she was able to develop and transfer.
Have other subjects allowed you to place as much focus upon the development of your independent learning skills as AH French?	Only one student mentioned opportunities throughout the year to focus upon the development of independent learning skills in another subject and this was a self-access course. One student indicated that it was only during periods of revision that she felt she was able to apply more skills for independent learning. All learners felt they had the opportunity to take charge of their own learning throughout the year in French and this had helped them to develop more skills for independent learning.
Which skills do you feel you could better develop and could the sections of the app be enhanced in order to allow for this?	Three of the learners did not mention how the app could be enhanced to better support the development of their independent learning skills but talked about the skills they had already made progress in developing. They all mentioned self-assessment and knowing where they are in their learning as a skill they wished to further improve. One learner would have liked more support with the inference question in the reading paper and felt exam technique advice could have been more evenly distributed over each section of the app rather than being contained in just one section.
Do you feel there is an advantage in learning this way for your future learning or work?	Three students mentioned how useful this way of learning will be to their future at university. They mentioned that they now felt more aware of what was to come. One student was unsure how learning this way would be an advantage to her future learning. The same student had also accessed the app the least and still felt reliant on the teacher.
Have you noticed your own progress as a direct result of using the app?	The students were able to talk about their progress to varying degrees. One student could see clearly where her understanding had improved but not necessarily her performance/attainment. Two students mentioned specific elements of the course the app had helped them to improve upon. One student talked about her progress more generally and could see that her whole approach to learning and planning for progress had improved. She mentioned the choice within the app afforded her to do this.
Do you feel this was the right stage for you to learn via virtual classroom and do you feel you would have benefited from earlier preparation?	All of the students felt ready to learn in this way. One of the students felt she would have benefited from more preparation prior to commencing the course in this way.

Mother Tongue Other Tongue multilingual project for schools: Add your voice to the Poet-Tree

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Abstract: Language and culture are arguably central to identity and it is also the right of every child to maintain these elements of 'self'. Nevertheless, the Home Office mantra of quickly learning English and 'new arrivals' homogenising with British culture and values is at odds with current Scottish educational policy aiming to foster children's home language. This paper outlines the impact of the recent Mother Tongue Other Tongue multilingual poetry project which allowed pupils to use their home language, or a language they are learning in school creatively, and also reflect upon culture within a mainstream school environment. The themes of multilingualism and multiculturalism explored within the project will contribute to my PhD thesis which explores the extent to which Scottish educational policy is meeting the needs of multilingual children. Regarding the benefits and importance of plurilingualism, I argue that there is a lack of awareness and knowledge on the part of teachers and parents. Furthermore, children's well-being would be enhanced if their linguistic and cultural heritage were nurtured. The impact of the project on the children and young people involved has been profound - it has given them a voice!

Keywords: Bilingualism, languages, culture, multilingualism, identity

Background

As a former Development Officer for Ethnic Minority Achievement, my working practice has developed in line with government policy for meeting the needs of 'newly arrived' children and their families within the education sector. This Local Authority role involved working with schools to upskill teachers in pedagogical theory, planning and practical activities for pupils with *English as an Additional Language* (EAL) and those from ethnic minority backgrounds. Although some emphasis is given to meeting the holistic needs of immigrant children and their families (DCSF, 2007; Scottish Government, 2012), the main focus is placed upon learning English as the most efficient way which some believe to increase academic achievement and facilitate integration into the school and wider community (May, 2010). However, this strategy risks reducing the status of the family's home language; Safford & Drury (2013) believe that plurilingual children are being prevented from activating their linguistic, cultural and community expertise through institutional and professional lack of recognition and skill. In addition, Conteh (2012) argues that there is still a substantial void between EAL policy and practice in schools.

Working in cooperation with parents and the extended family is vital to good pedagogical practice (Baldock, 2010; Siraj-Blatchford and Clarke, 2000). Families should not need to cast off the language and culture of the home, and live and act as though

school and home represent two totally separate and different entities which have to be segregated (Bullock, 1975). Fostering additive bilingualism to maintain 'home' language is promoted as best practice (Thomas and Collier, 2003; Cummins, 2008; NALDIC, 2013; Cameron, 2001) yet UK government policy contradicts the maintenance of home language (Cameron, 2012; Pickles, 2013; DCSF, 2007; Ofsted, 2013) as the aforementioned strategy of English language immersion is endorsed in schools.

Whilst we have been aware for some time that the social, emotional and physiological needs of human beings must be met to ensure optimum cognitive and behavioural function (Maslow, 1943), policy makers may be placing economics before the holistic development of pupils. It could be argued that policies are developed from a rather egotistical stance benefitting the host society and meets the needs that they perceive the citizens to have, rather than listening to voices and experiences in order to best meet the unique needs of various ethnic minority communities in our country. Politicians and civil servants could be more effective in supporting linguistic and cultural development of children and young people by listening to their stories, meeting their expectations and understanding their needs. The MTOT project contributes to my further PhD research which intends to bridge the gap between policy and practice to best meet the needs of the 'end users', i.e. the children and families from ethnic minority communities and those who have EAL. This process of discovery may challenge current policy and attempt to persuade that a more holistic and innovative approach is necessary.

Recognising that language and culture are integral elements of one's identity and self, therefore how is the holistic development of children growing up plurilingually and pluriculturally being facilitated in practice in Scotland?

In 2011, the Scottish Government launched Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), a new approach to improving outcomes for children and young people and supporting their well-being through joined-up provision across the various public services such as health, education, housing, social care. Based on Article 12 of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

Children and families are valued and respected at all levels in our society and have the right to have their voices sought, heard and acted upon by all those who support them and who provide services to help them. (United Nations, 1989)

GIRFEC sets out eight indicators of well-being and aims to ensure every child in Scotland is:

- Safe
- Healthy
- Achieving
- Included
- Nurtured
- Active
- Respected
- Responsible

(Scottish Government, 2011)

It could be disputed that if a child's home language and culture are not celebrated and given the opportunity to be developed, then they are not being 'respected' and treated as individuals. Moreover, 'included' does not have to be interpreted as included and homogenised into the host Scottish/local community; it can also be viewed as being

able to be included in ethnic minority communities, religious communities or one's own family community. Therefore, the right to maintain one's language and identity is paramount. Crucially, Article 30 of the aforementioned United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Also consider Article 13.1:

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

In other words it is a child's legal right to be able to maintain their own language and culture in order to be able to express themselves freely and so that their voice is heard. From my experiences working with teachers and pupils, I would argue that this is not true for the vast majority of children with a home language other than English in Scotland, where the 'assimilation' that Cameron (2012) describes is more accurate. She describes how social anxieties regarding immigration have affected UK immigration policy (in which Scotland does not have devolved powers) which in turn is driving other policies and strategies. She says:

Speaking English has become a touchstone in discussions of what is now referred to as social "cohesion", "integration", or "inclusion". Essentially these terms are code for "assimilation": both new immigrants and settled minorities must demonstrate their allegiance to British culture and values. (Cameron 2012: 240)

The Project

Developed from the highly successful 'Routes into Languages' initiative in England, the Mother Tongue Other Tongue (MTOT) project was rolled out across Scotland by SCILT, Scotland's National Centre for Languages after a pilot in the Glasgow area in 2015. The multilingual poetry project comprises two categories – 'Mother Tongue', which asks non-native English speakers to write poetry in their mother tongue language, and 'Other Tongue', which gives young people the opportunity to write poetry in a language they are studying in school.

The broad aims of MTOT are to celebrate and promote plurilingualism, to promote the use of mother tongue languages, and to give all children and young people the opportunity to enjoy using their language learning in an expressive way so that their 'voice' is truly heard. MTOT also supports the Scottish Government's 1+2 approach to languages by allowing pupils to apply languages they know, or are learning, in a creative context and strengthen their literacy skills.

Pupils from P1 – S6 entered poetry, raps, rhymes or songs and worked either collaboratively or individually. Over 400 learners aged between 5 and 17 participated, using their language skills to create poems, songs and rhymes in 36 different languages including, for the first time ever, British Sign Language and Gaelic.

In March 2016, twenty award winners received their prizes on the main stage at the SECC as part of the wider Languages Show Live Scotland event and took the opportunity to perform their poems and rhymes to the audience, showcasing the many languages used by children and young people both in school and at home. The award winners, their families, friends, teachers and audience members were asked for feedback on the event, and the competition in general, by adding their voices to our Poet-Tree.



Pupil – “It was breath-taking to see and hear everyone’s poems and how they are all so different”

Pupil – “What a great day! I really enjoyed taking part and meeting lots of nice people”

Parent – “A wonderful event! Great to showcase the talented youngsters. Love languages!”

Teacher – “The proudest moment of my teaching career”

Teacher – “An opportunity for children to let their souls fly!”

Audience member/guest – “Every language is a window to a new world”

Perceived Benefits

Over the past two years, Malika Pedley (Bordeaux University) has supported SCILT and the MTOT project as it aligns with her own PhD research. She conducted qualitative research in the form of group interviews with primary school pupils aged between 8 and 11 years old who participated in the Mother Tongue category. The following are the main perceived benefits of participating in the project and using their home language and improving their skills:

A novel and unique opportunity to use and improve home language skills

I liked the competition because I could speak my language and I could write it. My poem is a song it's Lion King, the circle of life that my mum likes. That's why I wanted to come here, because I could learn more my language.

[The teacher] helped me chose a poem; at first I couldn't write in Polish and then I started writing in Polish.

Children were also able to talk about aspects of their mother tongue, as they perceive it, whether they are formal or social aspects of the language; They developed thoughts on the mother tongue / metalinguistic skills:

There's eleven languages that in South Africa they speak. There's Afrikaans, IsiNdebele, Zulu and there's many others and they've got the same similarities of the pronunciation of words and, hm, some of the words are the same but they'll have different meanings to it.

Development of creative literacy skills

Many children reported their writing skills in the mother tongue to be low. If parents were unable to assist their children in this process, the pupils still managed to produce a piece of poetry by transcribing the sounds of their mother tongue based on English phonics:

I found it was great because it was actually my first time spelling in my own language and I remember I was at home and my mum was in the bedroom and I was just thinking of using syllables

[...] nobody knows how to write it in my house so I just thought why don't I just use English letters to spell the word

Prevention of language attrition

A lot of children expressed their fear of losing their mother tongue as English becomes dominant in their everyday life so MTOT has been a real relief for them:

[The project] helps me because I normally used to talk a lot of Polish and I've known how to talk Polish but now because I talk in English a lot with my friends and the teachers, I kind of forget some words in Polish now.

I was really happy because I thought I would never ever be able to speak my language in school ever again and that I might forget it [...]

Overall, participating in Mother Tongue Other Tongue was seriously seen as an important task of representing one's own language and culture:

I think actually it saved my life (...) it did because see if there were no languages well maybe / no languages, poems they wouldn't actually exist

It's like betraying your own language, if you just don't wanna use it ...you feel bad

Sharing knowledge and memories about home languages

Despite having a real impact on each child's individual perceptions, Mother Tongue Other Tongue has also been felt as a genuine collaborative experience. Children enjoyed sharing languages, being part of a group and learning about others' languages too.

[...]I can share my own language with far more other people in the group and we were all excited to learn what other languages everybody speaks.

For many, finding or creating a poem in the mother tongue meant recalling memories from their early years. Children were happy to share these memories, whether they were stories, songs, life experiences or parts of their cultural heritage.

I'd look to see other things that I liked when I was younger maybe when I was 2 or 3 that my mum and dad used to say or things that go on in the family like sayings or songs that they used to sing to my big brother and sisters.

As a follow-up project to MTOT, some children have expressed the idea of then teaching their mother tongue to the rest of the school and sharing their knowledge of languages. Along with the language itself, some children feel it is important to pass on both their linguistic and cultural heritage to make other pupils aware of language diversity:

Yeah and like other people who like want more information about your background and where you come from and what languages you speak and they would want to know how you say some stuff and I think sharing that a bit of your language with other people will actually have a change because they never know they might go to these countries that you're from and they might end up speaking the language.

Confidence Booster

Children's first reaction when the competition project was put forward was not always a positive one; reluctance to participate was sometimes due to a lack of confidence using their mother tongue in the school setting. The project boosted their confidence:

I think that once you do something that you've never done before then you overcome your fear about it.

Valuing ALL languages

Writing the commentary in English has also been appreciated. Children got to express their feelings and feedback on the experience. Children appreciated using both languages and felt it was important to keep bilingualism balanced:

I would like to do it in Polish and English (other pupil) or half Polish half English.

Concluding Thoughts

Mother Tongue Other Tongue has given multilingual pupils a unique opportunity to use their home language(s) in a mainstream education context and has allowed practitioners and the wider public to see the benefits of celebrating children's linguistic and cultural heritages. Although evaluations from teachers via an on-line questionnaire is still pending at the time of writing this article, informal feedback indicates just how powerful the process has been for them and their pupils:

Being part of the Mother Tongue Other Tongue project has been a privilege. I have heard the 'other voices' of my bilingual pupils, witnessed them careful craft their poems, laugh about the differences in language and, above all, feel valued and respected for their ability to speak with another voice. This event has opened my eyes to the importance of supporting children to continue to learn in their mother tongue and of engaging with my pupils' voices, in whatever language that may be. (Teacher, Renfrewshire Council)

Congratulations to these hardworking and creative pupils. They have demonstrated excellent language skills against a very competitive field. Knowing other languages is such a great skill for life and this project shines a light on some excellent work throughout the country. (Convener of Education, East Dunbartonshire Council)

Don't stop using your mother tongue! It helps us remember who we are! (Teacher, Glasgow City Council, via Twitter)

Many practitioners, especially those involved in the teaching of EAL and complementary education, consider the recent 1+2 Languages Approach (Education Scotland, 2012) as a unique opportunity to encourage language diversity and move away from the MLPS model of one European language being taught (Crichton & Templeton, 2010). The Scottish Government committed to introducing a new norm for language learning based on the European Union 1 + 2 model, Action 44 of the EU 'Barcelona Agreement' (EU European Council, 2002). In practice this means it will create the conditions so that every child can learn two languages (L2 and L3) in addition to their own mother tongue (L1). This new model for language learning in Scotland will be implemented with an ambitious plan for all children entitled to be learning at least three languages by 2020. This policy advocates that the teaching of EAL is incorporated into local authority strategies so that, in theory, pupils with EAL will have their home language recognised as L1 with English as L2. Furthermore, schools and local authorities have the flexibility to celebrate community languages and cultures via teaching of the L3 which starts no later than Primary 5 at the age of 9. This freedom for schools to respond to local

language and cultural contexts is arguably vital in appreciating diversity and promoting community languages (Leung and Creese, 2008; HM Inspectorate of Education, 2009).

In reflection, this could be a chance to perhaps finally capitalise on the recommendations made in the report 'Citizens of a Multilingual World' (Ministerial Action Group on Languages, 2001) which was one of the first policy documents to acknowledge the fact that an increasing number of Scottish pupils no longer have English as their mother tongue language (L1). The Ministerial Action Group made reference to these additional languages in the body of its report and recommended that local authorities should diversify to enhance the learning and teaching of community languages, as well the more customary modern European languages:

Ministerial Action Group Recommendation 5: At the national level, a variety of languages rather than French alone, and including heritage or community languages such as Scottish Gaelic and Urdu, should be taught as a first modern languages. (Scottish Executive, 2001)

An appreciation and inclusion of community languages within mainstream education could also strengthen links with community language groups and complementary or supplementary schools (McPake, 2006) so that school and home languages, identities and cultures need not be isolated.

For more information see the MTOT page on the SCILT website: <http://www.scilt.org.uk/MTOT201516/tabid/5255/Default.aspx>

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Recent Publications – Abstracts and Weblinks

British Academy (2016) Born Global – Overview of project

<http://www.britac.ac.uk/born-global>

Born Global: Implications for Higher Education

Economic Development Association Scotland (2016) Culture, Outlook and Scottish Internationalisation

Report

A number of official and independent studies have examined Scotland's international trade and export performance, with debate and recommendations focusing on issues such as systems of support and finance, infrastructure and connectivity, and diaspora networks. While these are all important, an EDAS-commissioned review of recent research on the topic found that culture and outlook is often seen as a further potential factor impacting Scotland's performance. There is a perception that a lack of global outlook and intercultural awareness among the Scottish labour force and young people, in conjunction with shortages in sales, marketing and **language skills**, may be negatively affecting internationalisation activity. A 2014 British Council Scotland-commissioned survey of businesses, young people and educational institutions appeared to give support to this view.

European Centre for Modern Languages (2016): Project Reports (2012-2015)

[PDF with list and weblinks to recent ECML research publications](#)

The results of 14 projects from the *Learning through languages* programme are now available online. A summary of the resources and websites is presented in the online brochure, offering

- a brief description of each resource, including the key target audience;
- the languages in which each resource is available;
- the thematic area on the ECML website where each resource has been located.

The results from each of the projects will also be showcased individually on the ECML website.

Council of Europe (2015) The Language Dimension in all Subjects – A handbook for curriculum development and teacher training

[CoE2015 The Language Dimension in All Subjects](#)

Mastery of the language of schooling is essential for developing in learners those skills that are necessary for school success and for critical thinking. It is fundamental for participation in democratic societies, for social inclusion and cohesion. This Handbook is a valuable resource for education authorities and practitioners in Council of Europe

member states. It will help them to reflect on their policy and practice in language education, and support them in developing responses to the current challenges of education systems.

[European Commission \(2015\) Language teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms](#)

For the children of migrants, learning the language of instruction and assessment so that they can enter school or carry on their education is paramount. Education authorities in many parts of the EU are faced with this challenge because of growing levels of mobility. Enabling such children to access teaching and learning quickly is critical to ensuring they can reach their potential and progress to higher education and employment to the same degree as non-migrant children. In the process the children themselves gain linguistic and meta-linguistic skills from learning the language of instruction and assessment in addition to their mother tongue. This research is designed to gather, analyse and synthesise existing data and research on:

- What works to enable migrant children who use a language at home different to the language of school instruction to participate in learning, attain proficiency in the language of instruction, and achieve results (qualifications, progress to higher education, progress to employment) that match their potential; and
- What works to maintain and develop the multilingual skills of migrant children which will enable them to use these competences for cultural and economic purposes.

[European Second Language Association \[EuroSLA\] \(2015\) Social interaction, identity and language learning during residence abroad](#)

[EuroSLA 2015 LanguageLearning ResidenceAbroad](#)

Study and residence abroad are significant contexts for second language learning and development, which are known to promote oral skills, fluency and socio-pragmatic competence in particular, alongside broader intercultural competence. However learner achievements during residence abroad are variable and cannot be fully understood without attention to the social settings in which learners engage, and the social networks they develop. This edited collection sets out to explore the relationship between sociocultural experience, identity and second language learning among student sojourners abroad.

[Go International and British Council \(2015\) Student Perspectives on Going International](#)

The research aims to provide evidence for UK higher education institutions and policy makers who are developing and implementing initiatives to increase the number of UK-domiciled students accessing international opportunities. The findings are based on the responses to an online survey by 1588 UK-domiciled undergraduate students (out of a total of 3010 responses) in 36 institutions and on focus group interviews in eight of these institutions.

Key findings include:

- The majority of students surveyed perceived a relationship between spending time abroad during their studies and their employability, academic success and personal development.
- Students perceive very short mobility periods to result in similar impacts to longer periods of mobility of one semester or a full year
- The principal motivations to go abroad, whether studying, working or volunteering, were a desire for an enjoyable experience and to enhance employability and career prospects.
- Key factors in the decision to go abroad were the availability of funding, personal safety and security and perceived quality of host and location
- Services and information offered by institutions such as help completing an application were considered the most valuable in decision making, especially for students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- While students are motivated by the experiences and opinions of other students when making a decision, the encouragement of academic tutors was a significant factor

Barriers to mobility cited by students considering a period abroad included:

- fear of isolation,
- insufficient funding
- lack of knowledge of available opportunities
- lack of language skills *and*
- potential impact on degree length

Jalkanen, J *et al* (Eds). (2015). *Voices of pedagogical development – Expanding, enhancing and exploring higher education language learning*. Dublin Ireland: Research-publishing.net.

[Voices of pedagogical development](#)

The publication is a collection of articles written by teacher-researchers at the University of Jyväskylä Language Centre. **Part 1** aims at establishing and expanding perspectives on the multilayered and multivoiced reality of pedagogical development in higher education. **Part 2** looks at how practices can be enhanced by engaging teachers, students and other cooperating partners in reflection and development. **Part 3** focuses on exploring perceptions of language, language learning, and literature. As a whole, the collection represents a spectrum of approaches and shows the various stages of pedagogical thinking and perception. It provides insights into pedagogical development in higher education language teaching through an examination of policies, perceptions, and practices.

London Centre for Languages and Cultures [LCLC] (2015) A Future for Languages in Schools? Report on Proceedings of a Colloquium held in July 2015

[LCLC2015 A Future for Languages in Schools Report](#)

The Colloquium was hosted by LCLC to address the future of modern foreign language learning and teaching. Various interested parties including representatives from schools, universities, government, and language organisations came together to discuss the issues facing modern foreign languages as a subject. The opening keynote speech saw Peter Horrocks, new Vice-Chancellor of The Open University, talking about his experiences of modern foreign languages both at the OU and previously as Director of the BBC World Service. The second keynote of the day was a varied and often humorous speech delivered by Oliver Miles, former British Ambassador to Libya, Luxembourg and Greece, about his life as a serial language-learner. Delegates also heard from Kathryn Board and Teresa Tinsley – authors of the British Council and CfBT’s Language Trends Survey and external evaluators of the LCLC project.

[LCLC2015 Further Details and Links](#)

[LCLC2015 VideoClip](#)

Report on Slideshare on the State of Foreign Languages in the US (based on the findings of the 2015 Census Report)

<http://www.slideshare.net/TransparentLanguage/the-state-of-foreign-languages-in-the-us-2015>

Associated press release:

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-185.html>

Cambridge Public Policy (2015) The Value of Languages Report.

<http://www.languagesciences.cam.ac.uk/national-languages-policy/report-the-value-of-languages/view>

Other Academic Journals – Weblinks

Date checked: 25 August 2016

1. Foreign Language Annals

Journal published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Inc.

2. Language Learning & Technology (LLT)

Open and free-access journal. Selected titles from [Volume 20 Issue 1 February 2016](#):

- Becoming Little Scientists: Technologically-Enhanced Project-Based Language Learning
- Language Learning Through Social Networks: Perceptions and Reality
- Learning to Express Gratitude in Mandarin Chinese Through Web-Based Instruction
- Effects of Web-Based Collaborative Writing on Individual L2 Writing Development

3. Language Learning Journal - Current Issue

LLJ is the official journal of the Association for Language Learning (ALL) and its focus is on language education in the UK. Although full access is only available to subscribers you can glean the most important details of the articles from their abstracts. The most recent issue at time of going was a special issue on *Internationalisation policies and practices in European universities: Case Studies from Catalonia*.

Most cited articles <http://tiny.cc/LLJmostread>

The list of most read articles is updated every 24 hours and based on the cumulative total of PDF downloads and full-text HTML views from the publication date (but no earlier than 25 June, 2011, launch date of the website) to the present.

Most cited articles (<http://tiny.cc/LLJmostcited>)

This list is based on articles that have been cited in the last 3 years. The statistics are updated weekly using participating publisher data sourced exclusively from CrossRef.

4. List.ly of online journals for language learning

Compiled by Teresa Mackinnon (University of Warwick) – some journals are available without subscription.

5. Language Learning Research

Language Learning Research (formerly YazikOpen) is an online directory linking to over 4000 items of FREE open access research into the teaching and learning of modern languages.

6. General Teaching Council for Scotland

You can access a range of educational journals via your MyGTCS login <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/research-engagement/education-journals.aspx>

Selected Events from August 2016

Check our Events pages: http://tiny.cc/SCILT_Events for further details and more recent editions. If you come across an important language-education related event we have missed please inform us by emailing scilt@strath.ac.uk.

Date	Details
24 – 27 August	EUROSLA 2016 , University of Jyväskylä, Finland. https://www.jyu.fi/en/congress/eurosla26
01 – 03 September	BAAL Annual Conference. ‘Taking Stock of Applied Linguistics – Where are we now?’ Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge https://baal2016aru.wordpress.com/
09 September	University Council for Modern Languages Scotland: National Cross-Sector Conference ‘1+2’: Looking Back and Moving Forward. University of Dundee, http://bit.ly/1X8od6o
13 September	Erasmus Plus and eTwinning Information Session , British Council Scotland, Edinburgh.
22 – 25 September	35th Second Language Research Forum 2016. Thirty Years of Instructed SLA: Learning, Instruction, Learning, and Outcome. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, USA. http://www.tc.columbia.edu/slrf2016/
14 – 16 October	Language Show Live , Olympia, London. http://www.languageshowlive.co.uk/london/Content/Welcome
20 – 21 October	MOOCs, Informal language learning, and mobility , The Open University, Milton Keynes. http://movemeproject.eu/en/conference/
05 November	SALT Annual Conference. Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow. Check the website for details nearer the date. http://www.saltlangs.org.uk/
	2017 onwards
10 – 11 March	Language Show Live Scotland , SECC, Glasgow. Please check back nearer the date. http://www.languageshowlive.co.uk/scotland/
24-25 March	Language World 2017 ‘Progress for All’. East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham. http://www.all-languages.org.uk/calendar_events/language-world/language-world-2017/
09 – 12 July	21st AFMTLA National Languages Conference , Gold Coast, Australia Check back for details nearer the date
November 2017	Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) Bi-annual Conference. ‘Tasks in Context’ University of Barcelona, Spain. http://www.tbtl.org/conferences/2017/
November 2019	5th International Conference on Language, Education and Diversity. University of Auckland, New Zealand. Check back for details nearer the date

