University of Southampton Research Repository

ePrints Soton

Copyright © and Moral Rights for this thesis are retained by the author and/or other copyright owners. A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge. This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the copyright holder/s. The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given e.g.

AUTHOR (year of submission) "Full thesis title", University of Southampton, name of the University School or Department, PhD Thesis, pagination

http://eprints.soton.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

School of Humanities

Moving from primary to secondary education: An investigation into the effect of primary to secondary transition on motivation for language learning and foreign language proficiency.

By

Louise Mary Courtney

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

January 2014

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

Doctor of Philosophy

MOVING FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY EDUCATION: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECT OF PRIMARY TO SECONDARY TRANSITION ON MOTIVATION FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

By Louise Mary Courtney

Despite the fact that the primary languages initiative was not made compulsory in 2011, excellent progress has been made in implementing primary language teaching in the majority of English schools. However, previous research in a range of contexts has shown that a critical success factor for the success of early foreign language teaching lies in the successful transition of pupils from primary to secondary school. Transition studies focused on the core subjects of English, maths and science have shown that there are issues related to social adjustment as well as evidence of a drop in learner motivation across the first year of secondary school along side a hiatus in academic progress. In relation to foreign language teaching, it is well-documented that poor transition and liaison arrangements contributed to the failure of the last major primary languages in England. Several other studies report a lack of clear evidence of a sustained advantage for early starters and a drop in learner motivation following transition which has been attributed to a lack of continuation in teaching approaches and a tendency for secondary schools to start language teaching from scratch.

Taking a longitudinal mixed-method approach to the investigation of learner motivation and linguistic progression, with a cohort of 26 students from two primary schools, the study provides detailed information firstly on the levels of French attainment reached at the end of the primary phase as well as motivation for language learning. Data collected at two points post transition show that motivation developed qualitatively and quantitatively across the year, particularly in relation to the learning situation and the perceived instrumentality of language learning. There was no evidence of a hiatus in terms of learner progression in French learning however the results emphasise the role of individual differences in learner outcomes. This study contributes to an increased understanding early learner motivation and provides detailed, insightful and original evidence regarding the learning of French by early learners within an instructed setting.

LIST OF CONTENTS

PAGE

ABSTRACT 2

LIST OF CONTENTS 3

LIST OF TABLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS 7

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION 11

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 12

CHAPTER

1. An investigation into the effect of primary to secondary transition on motivation for language learning and foreign language proficiency: an overview

1.1 Introduction 13
1.2 Thesis Outline 16

2. Foreign Language education in England: recent history and current challenges

2.1 Introduction 18
2.1.1 The National Curriculum 18
2.1.2 The Post-14 Languages Drop Out 21
2.1.3 The Primary Language Initiative 24
2.1.4 The Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages 25
2.1.5 Implementation of primary languages in England 25
2.2 Primary to Secondary School Transition: An overview 27
2.2.1 Research into the social adjustment to secondary school 28
2.2.2 Research investigating academic attainment across transition 29
2.2.3 Transition issues specific to language learning 32
2.2.4 Curriculum Continuity 35
2.2.5 Curriculum continuity within an outcomes-focused secondary education system 36
2.2.6 Assessment at the primary level 37
2.2.7 The outcomes of primary languages programmes 38
2.2.8 The development of the main research questions 39

3. Attitudes, Motivation and Second Language Learning

3.1 Introduction 42
3.1.1 Motivation theory and language learning 42
3.1.1.1 Situating learner motivation 44
3.1.1.2 Poststructuralist approaches to second language learning and motivation 46
3.1.2 Emotional development in adolescence 48
3.1.3 The development of motivation over time 50
3.1.4 Motivation studies in the English context 52
3.1.5 Young learner motivation and age-related differences 55
3.1.6 Primary to secondary transition and the effect on learner motivation 57
3.1.7 Summary of research findings 58
3.1.8 The development of learner motivation: the approach taken in the current study 60

4. Linguistic Progression Part I: Second Language Learning and Vocabulary Development
4.1 Introduction 63
4.2 Second Language Learning: theory and research 63
4.2.1 Cognitive perspectives on SLA and instructed language learning 64
4.2.1.1 Learner-internal factors that influence second language Development 65
4.2.1.2 Implicit vs. explicit language instruction 68
4.2.2 The pluralisation of SLA approaches 70
4.3 Measuring linguistic progression across transition phase: the current study 72
4.4 Vocabulary Development 75
4.4.1 What does is mean to know a word? 76
4.4.2 Receptive vs. productive vocabulary 77
4.4.3 The teaching and learning of vocabulary 79
4.4.4 How should we measure lexical knowledge? 81
4.4.5 The operationalisation of lexical competence 82
4.4.6 Previous studies of vocabulary development 83
4.4.7 Summary and research questions 87

5. Linguistic Progression Part II: Grammatical Development
5.1 L2 Grammatical Development 89
5.2 Grammatical Gender in French 90
5.2.1 Gender classification in French 93
5.2.2 Theoretical perspectives on the acquisition of gender assignment and Agreement 93
5.2.2.1 How do learners acquire grammatical gender? 97
5.2.3 Results of previous studies of the acquisition of grammatical gender in L2 French 98
5.2.4 Outcomes of FFI related to gender 102
5.2.5 Conclusions and research questions related to grammatical gender 102
5.3 Acquisition of verb morphology and syntax 104
5.3.1 Finiteness, subject clitics and auxiliaries 105
5.3.2 The development of verb morphology in child L2 French 107
5.3.3 The development of verb morphology in adolescent and adult instructed learners of L2 French 108
5.3.4 Dual processing in language learning 112
5.3.5 The role of formulaic language in beginner learner interlanguage 113
5.3.6 The relationship between lexical and morpho-syntactic development 116
5.3.7 Conclusions and research questions in relation to verb morphology 117

6. Research Design and Methodology
6.1 Introduction 119
6.2 The methodological approach taken in the current study 119
6.3 The participants and participating schools 122
6.4 Ethical considerations when working with children under 16 years of age 125
6.5 Data collection schedule 125
6.6 Data collection instruments 126
6.6.1 Teacher interviews 127
6.6.2 Lesson observations 128
6.6.3 Measurement of target language attainment 129
6.6.4 Considerations when assessing young learners 129
6.6.5 Oral Role-play Task 130

6.6.6 Photo Description Task 131
6.6.7 Literacy-based Tasks 132
6.6.7.1 Writing task 133
6.7 Measuring learner attitudes to and motivation for language Learning 134
6.7.1 Motivation Questionnaire 135
6.7.2 Questionnaire design and layout 137
6.7.3 Focus Group Interviews 138

7. Results Section Part I: Curriculum, Pedagogy and Learner Motivation
7.1 Curriculum, pedagogy and transfer activities from the end of Year 7 140
7.1.1 The delivery of primary languages in Year 6 141
7.1.2 Lesson observations in Year 6 142
7.1.3 Transition activities in School C 145
7.1.4 Lesson observations in Year 7 147
7.1.5 Continuity in content and pedagogy across the primary to secondary transition 150
7.2 Attitudes and Motivation data processing, analysis and results 151
7.2.1 Questionnaire data processing and analysis 152
7.2.2 Questionnaire results 154
7.2.2.1 Summary of questionnaire findings 161
7.2.3 Results of focus group interviews 162
7.2.3.1 The Language Level: motivational orientations 162
7.2.3.2 The Language Level: attitudes to learning different languages 164
7.2.3.3 The Learning Situation Level 165
7.2.3.4 The Learner Level 170
7.2.4 Discussion of focus group interview results 172
7.2.4.1 L2 motivation and emotional development 172
7.2.4.2 Changing attitudes to the learning situation 175
7.2.4.3 The role of the teacher 176

8. Results Section Part II: Linguistic progression across transition
8.1 Vocabulary Development: analysis and results 178
8.1.1 Data processing: lexical development 178
8.1.1.1 The lemmatisation of CHILDES transcript 179
8.1.1.2 Data processing for the written task 180
8.1.2 Analytic procedures 181
8.1.3 Results 183
8.1.3.1 Lexical Diversity Scores 186
8.1.3.2 Productivity and lexical diversity of individual word classes 189
8.1.3.3 The role of contextual and individual factors in lexical development 191
8.1.3.4 Individual factors and lexical development 193
8.1.4 Qualitative analysis of productive vocabulary 195
8.1.4.1 French noun production 195
8.1.4.2 Verb production 196
8.1.4.3 Production of adjectives 197
8.1.5 Discussion – vocabulary development 198
8.1.5.1 Individual factors and vocabulary learning 198
8.1.5.2 Development of word knowledge 199
8.1.5.3 Language attrition 200
8.1.5.4 The role of cognates 200
8.2 Development of grammatical gender – analysis and results 201
8.2.1 Data processing 201

8.2.2 Results – grammatical gender 203
8.2.2.1 French articles as clitics 209
8.2.2.2 Adjective-noun agreement 210
8.2.2.3 Contextual and individual factors and the development of grammatical gender 213
8.2.2.4 Grammatical gender development and the role of individual factors 214
8.2.3 Discussion – grammatical gender 216
8.3 The acquisition of Verb Morphology and Syntax – analysis and results 218
8.3.1 Data processing and results 218
8.3.1.1 The emergence of the verb phrase 218
8.3.1.2 The development of verb morphology 222
8.3.1.3 The use of subject clitics 225
8.3.1.4 The role of formulaic chunks in interlanguage development 226
8.3.1.5 The role of contextual and individual factors in learner performance 229
8.3.1.6 The relationship between the development of vocabulary and verb morphology 232
8.3.2 Discussion – the development of verb morphology 233

9. Conclusion and Recommendations
9.1 Introduction and evaluation of the study 236
9.2 Curriculum, pedagogic continuity and motivation across primary to secondary transition 237
9.3 Linguisic progression across transition 240
9.3.1 Vocabulary development 240
9.3.2 Grammatical gender 242
9.3.3 Verb morphology 243
9.4 Individual differences and second language development 244
9.5 Final conclusions and recommendations 245

APPENDIX A: Initial school contact letter 248
APPENDIX B: Ethics checklist and research protocol 249
APPENDIX C: Information sheet and consent forms 253
APPENDIX D: Primary teacher interview schedule 256
APPENDIX E: Secondary teacher interview schedule 258
APPENDIX F: Lesson observation schedule 259
APPENDIX G: Role play cards A and B 262
APPENDIX H: Images for photo description task 264
APPENDIX I: Writing task 265
APPENDIX J: Motivation Questionnaire 266
APPENDIX K: Focus Group interview schedule 270
APPENDIX L: School B Scheme of Work 271
APPENDIX M: Example transcriptions for oral tasks 273
APPENDIX N: Example transcription of written task 274
APPENDIX O: List of nouns produced Rds 1-3 275
APPENDIX P: List of verbs produced Rds 1-3 279
APPENDIX Q: List of adjectives produced Rds 1-3 280

BIBLIOGRAPHY 281

LIST OF TABLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Chapter 2 **Page**

Fig. 1.1 – Percentage of key stage 4 pupils taking a language GCSE in England1998-2012 23

Chapter 4

Table 4.1 – Characteristics of implicit and explicit instruction 69

Table 4.2 – Components of word knowledge 79

Fig. 4.1 – Analytic framework for investigating L2 proficiency 83

Chapter 5

Table 5.1 – Gender marking of articles and some French pronouns 91

Table 5.2 – Results of studies of grammatical gender 99

Table 5.3 – French verb inflections for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular forms 104

Table 5.4 – Present tense inflection for the verbs être (to be), avoir (to have) and aller (to go) 105

Table 5.5 – Participant details adapted from Rogers (2010) 111

Table 5.6 – Use of verb morphology with subject types (numbers out of 225) and proportions in % 112

Table 5.7 – Use of j' with aime/adore/habite and with other verbs 115

Table 5.8 – Descriptive statistics for gender concord 117

Chapter 6

Fig. 6.1 – Boundary definitions for the three levels of analysis 122

Fig. 6.2 – Visual representation of the data collection schedule 125

Table 6.1 – Data collection instruments 127

Table 6.2 – Items used for each scale 136

Chapter 7

Table 7.1 – Cronbach alpha internal reliability coefficients and descriptive information for each of the motivation scales 154

Fig. 7.1 – Attitude and motivation scales means Year 6 155

Table 7.2 – Round 1 inter-scale variance statistics 156

Table 7.3 – Motivation mean scores by gender School A and School B 157

Fig. 7.2 – Round 1 motivation scale mean scores by school 157

Fig. 7.3 – Mean motivation scores for all learners rounds 1-3 158

Table 7.4 – Results of Wilcoxon signed-ranks tests for means scores rounds 1-3 158

Fig. 7.4 – Motivation scale mean scores rounds 1-3 159

Fig. 7.5 – Learning situation means by primary school 160

Fig. 7.6 – Self-confidence mean scores rounds 1-3 by school 161

Fig. 7.7 - Percentage of integrative and instrumental orientations split in learner responses rounds 1-3 163

Figs. 7.8-7.10– The distribution of reasons for language learning Rds1-3 164

Table 7.6 – Percentage of learners happy to continue learning French and another language 165

Table 7.7 –% of learners who enjoyed French lessons 166

Fig. 7.11 – Perception of difficulty of French rounds 1-3 (%) 170

Chapter 8

Table 8.1 - Examples of written French Rds 1-3 180

Fig. 8.1 – Standard measures of productivity 184

Table 8.2 – Inferential statistics doe measures of productivity 185

Table 8.3 – Absolute gains in productivity Rds 1-3 185

Table 8.4 – Descriptive statistics for measures of lexical diversity 186

Table 8.5 – Spearman correlations for D and G 187

Fig. 8.2 – Scores for Giraud’s Index Rds 1-3 187

Fig. 8.3 – VOCD scores Rds 1-3 188

Table 8.6 – Standard measures of lexical diversity – inferential statistics 188

Fig. 8.4 – Productivity by word class Rds 1-3 189

Table 8.7 – Productivity measures for different word classes – inferential statistics 190

Table 8.8 – Lexical diversity measures for different word classes 191

Table 8.9 – Lexical diversity measures for different word classes – inferential statistics 191

Table 8.10 – Productivity and diversity statistics by schools Rds 1-3 192

Table 8.11 – Spearman correlations coefficients between lexical measures and individual factors 194

Fig. 8.5 – Mean number of types for learners with the six highest and lowest CAT mean scores Rds 1-3 195

Table 8.12 – Measures used to investigate gender agreement and assignment 202

Table 8.13 – Gender assignment means scores Rds 1-3 204

Table 8.14 – Number of learners for each range of determiner production 204

Table 8.15 – Number of determiners and gender-marked types and tokens Rds 1-3 – inferential statistics 206

Fig. 8.6 - % determiners, accurate types, tokens and lexical types produced Rds 1-3 207

Fig. 8.7 – Number of lexical types produced by % gender assignment correct – Rd1 208

Fig. 8.8 - Number of lexical types produced by % gender assignment correct – Rd2 208

Fig. 8.9 - Number of lexical types produced by % gender assignment correct – Rd3 209

Table 8.16 – Mean scores for measures of adjectival agreement Rds 2-3 211

Table 8.17 – Grammatical gender statistics by school Rds 1-3 214

Table 8.18 – Correlations of grammatical gender and individual variation Rds 1-3 215

Table 8.19 – Number of propositions, no. of VPs, verb/proposition ratio and standard deviations 219

Table 8.20 – Inferential statistics for the measures of verb production Rds 1-3 220

Table 8.21 – Measures used to investigate verb morphology 222

Table 8.22 – Measures of the production of finite and non-finite verbs Rds 1-3 223

Table 8.23 – Inferential statistics for the production of finite and non-finite verbs Rds 1-3 223

Table 8.24 – % of finite verbs with subject type 225

Table 8.25 – Mean and total scores for measures in the expression of 3rd person reference Rds 1-3 227

Table 8.26 – Inferential statistics for the measures of chunk production Rds 1-3 228

Table 8.27 – Verbs produced in the final section of the role play task by learners P4 and P11 Rds 1-3 229

Table 8.28 –Mann Whitney U-Tests Rds 1-3 to measure the difference between learners from Schools A and B 230

Table 8.29 – The results of Spearman correlations between measures of the verb morphology and individual factors Rds 1-3 231

Table 8.30 - The results of Spearman correlations between measures of lexical diversity and measures of verb morphology 233

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Louise Mary Courtney declare that the thesis entitled 'Moving from primary to secondary education: An investigation into the effect of primary to secondary transition on motivation for language learning and foreign language proficiency' and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
- where any part of this thesis have previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
- where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- none of this work has been published before submission

Signed:……………………………………………………………………………………….

Date:…………………………………………………………………………………………..

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following PhD thesis, while an individual work, benefited from the assistance and direction of several people.

Firstly I wish to thank my husband, Stephen Courtney, without whose love and support I would not have been able to undertake this huge task and for putting up with my paperwork filling up our office.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Rosamund Mitchell, who first gave me the opportunity to continue with my studies at Southampton and has provided invaluable and on-going support and encouragement throughout the entire process.

I wish to say a big thank you to my good friend, Jennifer Rimmer, for the unwaivering support and kindness.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the teachers and learners who participated in the study for their enthusiasm and willingness to help, without this the study would not have been made possible.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to my children Finley, Alfie and Lucas who have had to live with me and my books for the last four years. I hope I have managed to instil in them my love of languages.

CHAPTER 1

An investigation into the effect of primary to secondary transition on motivation for language learning and foreign language proficiency: an overview

1.1 Introduction

The National Languages Strategy for England, launched in December 2002, set a new strategic framework for the teaching of foreign languages (FLs) (DfES 2002). The overarching objectives of the Strategy were to improve the teaching of languages at all levels of education, to develop a consistent and robust system of assessment and to increase the number of people studying languages beyond compulsory language education. The National Languages Strategy sought to provide children with the opportunity to communicate in a different language, with the aim of gaining an understanding and tolerance of other cultures, for personal fulfilment and to 'harness learning potential and enthusiasm' for languages (DfES 2002a:5). Of particular importance to this study was the announcement of the introduction of foreign language learning in Key Stage 2 (ages 7-11), with the original goal being that by 2010, a language would be taught throughout the Key Stage in all primary schools: "every child should have the opportunity throughout Key Stage 2 to study a foreign language and develop their interests in the culture of other nations" (DfES 2002:15). However, research has shown that a critical factor for success of Primary Languages initiatives lies in the successful transition of pupils from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14). So what is it about the transition period that makes it so crucial?

Transition refers to a point at which a child moves from one educational institution to another and primary to secondary transition has long been recognised as a major issue in the UK education system. As far back as 1977 the document 'Education in Schools' (DES 1977) observed notable problems at the point of transition. Successive transition research studies have highlighted several key recurring issues relating to both social adjustment to secondary school and academic attainment following transition. Reported issues related to social adjustment are: anxieties over workload, larger school size, travel/distance to school, new teachers and new rules, bullying and the creation of new friendship groups (West et al. 2008, Chedzoy & Burden 2005). The key themes to emerge from transition studies examining

academic attainment for the core subjects of English and Maths (Galton & Willcocks 1983, Delamont & Galton 1986, Galton et al. 1999, Galton et al. 2000, Galton, Gray & Ruddock 2003; Boyd & Simpson 2000, Schagen & Kerr 1999) are little evidence of continuity in curriculum or pedagogy and a 'hiatus' in progress from the end of primary school to the end of the first year of secondary school. In terms of motivation and enjoyment, the studies demonstrate that pupils are excited and looking forward to going to secondary school in the term prior to transition. These positive attitudes to secondary school remain for the first three months but by the end of Year 7 the pupils' reported level of enjoyment of school dropped significantly. The apparent decrease in positive attitudes and the lack of progress in Year 7 are attributed to secondary teachers' preference for a 'fresh start' approach, lack of transfer data and the failure of the secondary teachers to appreciate the work undertaken in the final years of primary school.

In addition to the general transition issues previously mentioned, it would appear from previous studies that the problems of transition are further exacerbated for foreign language teaching and learning (e.g. Burstall 1974, Low et al. 1993, Edelenbos and Koster 2003, Bolster et al. 2004, Evans & Fisher 2009). As a result of the non-uniform and inconsistent nature of primary provision, which in turn leads to an increasingly heterogeneous intake in Year 7, secondary schools face difficult decisions regarding the organisation of Year 7 languages classes and the appropriate scheme of work to follow. The lack of transition data from primary schools, the oracy-focused primary pedagogy and the lack of assessment at the primary level all further contribute to the problem of continuity. Previous primary languages studies have questioned the benefits of an early start, attributing the observed lack of learner progress and the resulting drop in motivation to failings at the transition phase. The failure of the 'Pilot Scheme for the Teaching of French in primary schools in England and Wales', the last major primary languages initiative in England (Burstall 1974, Stern et al. 1975) was attributed to poor transition arrangements. In a later Scottish study, however, Low et al. (1993) observed that there were tentative signs that the advantage was maintained for early starters. The study found that the more literacy-focused approach at secondary school was met with mixed responses, with less able pupils anxious and the higher ability pupils coping well and viewing the focus on literacy as 'real' French learning. Some pupils complained about mixed-ability grouping in S1 believing they were held back by beginners. Several subsequent studies, Bolster, Balandier-Brown and Rea-Dickens (2004), Evans & Fisher (2009) and McElwee (2009) report similar issues of

discontinuity and pupils' perceived lack of progress leading to frustration and de-motivation.

Learners need to be motivated in order to be a successful language learner and one principal reason for the introduction of primary languages in England is to foster positive attitudes to language learning, so that more learners would opt to take languages at a later stage of their education. The transition studies looking at the core subjects of Maths and English demonstrate that learners' enjoyment dips by the end of Year 7; however the lack of enjoyment did not imply a lack of motivation. Pupils displayed extrinsic motivation for Maths and English: they want to do well at school and get a good job and therefore see these subjects as important, although they may not particularly enjoy them. However, for a lower status subject such as foreign languages there are question marks over the influence of what could be considered weaker extrinsic motivation in combination with the de-motivation and frustration, reportedly caused by repetition of content in Year 7 and the learners' perceived lack of progress.

It is evident that primary to secondary transition will be a critical factor in the desired long-term success of primary languages in England. In order to fully appreciate, understand and describe the multiple factors that come into play during this time of transition, longitudinal research incorporating not only learners' target language attainment but also the children's attitudes to the language teaching and learning is an absolute requirement. To this end, the current study has been designed as an 'explanatory' case study (Yin 1993) involving 26 learners of French from a cluster of schools encompassing two primary feeder schools and one secondary school. The data collection period covers 12 months from the end of Year 6 (June/July 2010) to the end of Year 7 (June/July 2011). This study evaluates how this school cluster attempts to mediate the issues of the varying approaches to language teaching at primary level and the resultant diversity in pupils' foreign language capability within the wider year group. Furthermore, the study will examine the effect of provision on the learners' linguistic progress and attitudes to language learning. This study is centred round three principal research questions:

1. *What are the similarities and differences between the primary and secondary foreign language curricula and pedagogic practices?*

2. *What effect does the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 have on the children's motivation for foreign language study and their confidence in the classroom?*

3. *How does the children's target language proficiency evolve during the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 and is there evidence of linguistic progression?*

1.2 Thesis Outline

To enhance readability this thesis is presented in nine chapters and these are described in detail below:

Chapter 2 describes the recent history of the teaching of Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) in England culminating in the launch of the Primary Languages (PLs) initiative in the early 2000s. The second part of this chapter reviews the previous studies of primary to secondary school transition in general and specifically related to language learning.

Chapter 3 provides a brief review of the development of L2 motivation theory and presents the motivational theoretical framework employed in this study. Moreover, this chapter also contains a discussion of emotional development in adolescence, a key factor in any transition study due to the age of the learners. The final part of this chapter reviews previous studies of second language (L2) motivation and lists the research sub-questions relevant to this section.

Chapter 4 firstly presents an overview of second language acquisition (SLA) theory and research, particularly in relation to instructed language learning, and recent theoretical developments in the field of SLA. The final section presents a detailed discussion of the teaching and learning of L2 vocabulary (the first element of linguistic progression examined) and the results of previous studies of the lexical development of young learners of French. The research questions related to vocabulary development are presented at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 5 discusses the final two areas of linguistic progression examined in the study: grammatical gender and verb morphology. This chapter presents the

theoretical underpinnings related to both areas of French grammar and also previous studies investigating the development of both these areas in young and instructed learners of French. The end of each section includes the research sub-questions related to each area of investigation.

Chapter 6 is focused on a detailed presentation of the methodological approach taken in the current study and includes a justification for the case study approach, the rationale for the design of the data collection instruments for each area of investigation, a description of the research participants and the data collection schedule.

Chapter 7 reports on the results of the lesson observations, motivation questionnaires and focus group interviews. There is first a description of the data analysis undertaken for each instrument followed by a detailed discussion of the results in light of previous research findings.

Chapter 8 contains the second part of the results relating to linguistic progression across transition. The first section looks at vocabulary development, followed by grammatical gender and finally verb morphology. The transcription of task data is described and the analysis of data for each area of investigation is presented within each section. The end of each section contains a discussion of the findings in relation to previous studies of beginner learners.

Chapter 9 firstly contains an evaluation of the current study. Following that is a discussion of the results in relation to each principal research question and the final conclusions of the study. Lastly, recommendations for future research, language pedagogy and foreign language curriculum and policy are suggested.

Chapter 2

Foreign Language education in England: recent history and current challenges

2.1 Introduction

To accurately interpret the findings of any research project it is crucial to fully understand the context in which the research takes place. Language teaching in the UK has had a tumultuous two decades in which successive governments have continuously changed and reformed languages education policy and these changes have occurred alongside the continuing rise of English as a global language. This chapter will outline the reforms in education policy in England since the late 1980s which is of key importance not only to understand how and why language education in the secondary sector has developed over time to its current form, but also to recognise the rationale behind the introduction of language teaching in primary schools.

2.1.1 The National Curriculum

In England and Wales the 1988 Education Reform Act brought about the introduction of the National Curriculum for all pupils aged 5-16 years. Born out of dissatisfaction with secondary school curricula and attainment results (Department of Education and Science 1977, 1978, 1981, 1983a, 1983b Lawton 1992), the National Curriculum was devised to promote greater continuity in content and approach in all subjects, across the various phases of education. It was comprised of core subjects (English, maths and science) and foundation subjects (Design & Technology, ICT, history, geography, art, PE, modern foreign languages). At the time MFL was included in the curriculum as a foundation subject (in secondary schools) which meant that all pupils would be required to study a language as part of the curriculum up to age 16. This constituted a major change from the 35% of 14 year olds and 33% of 15 year olds who previously decided to continue studying a foreign language, as reported in a HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectorate) study in 1977 (Hawkins 2002). As a result of the elevated status of language teaching by 1997, 78% of 16 year olds were studying at least one foreign language. However, it is important to note that not all pupils sat a language GCSE examination (Bell 2001).

The first iteration of the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages (Department of Education and Science/Welsh Office, 1991) detailed 'attainment targets' in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. These attainment targets were in turn sub-divided into 10 'levels' of achievement, to be reached within five years of secondary school. This proved especially problematic for languages as although the other subjects also contained 10 attainment levels these were to be attained over twelve years of study, covering primary and secondary education. In addition to the four key skills, pedagogic documents made reference to the development of other areas of language learning such as knowledge about language and intercultural communication. Nevertheless, assessment was focused on the key four skills by way of descriptors for each attainment level and emphasised a focus on form and accuracy in production (Mitchell 2003). Several versions of the National Curriculum ensued during the next decade with the most recently implemented version published in 2007 (Quality and Curriculum Authority 2007). Over time the modifications to the curriculum led to a reduction in the age range to 5-14 years and the number of levels to 8 instead of 10.

The 2010 coalition government announced a National Curriculum review which has just very recently been completed. The review has reached the decision to make language teaching compulsory in both Key Stages 2 and 3, however language learning in KS4 remains optional (following a decision taken in 2004 that is discussed in more detail in section 2.1.2 below). The rationale for the teaching of languages in the 2013 curriculum for MFL is:

> 'Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purposes, learn new ways of thinking and read great literature in the original language. Language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries' (Department for Education 2013:212).

The new curriculum remains focused on the four discrete skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing but somewhat surprisingly, given the rationale stated above, no explicit mention of the inclusion of intercultural understanding. There is currently no published detailed programme of study nevertheless there are details of what content should be covered across both key stages. Another significant change is the

abolition of detailed level descriptors for each curriculum subject. The current curriculum framework document simply states the all learners are expected, by the end of each key stage, to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes set out in the relevant programme of study.

In an evaluation of the previous National Curriculum (abbreviated to NC) for modern foreign languages, Mitchell (2003) directed criticism to several areas. Firstly, the division of the second language capability into the four discrete skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing at the same time as defining communicative objectives. Mitchell (2003) argues that this separation of different strands of language learning is artificial and problematic for a curriculum focused on practical communication (as stated in the new NC documents) since during authentic communication, language skills are integrated: 'we commonly read in order to write and listen in order to speak' (p.17). Although there may be disputes within the second language research community regarding the exact relationship between linguistic input and output, and the role of this association on the development of a learner's underlying linguistic system, the existence of a relationship is beyond doubt and should therefore not be discounted. Mitchell (2003:22) also recommended several courses of actions to revise the National Curriculum for MFL: the inclusion of a 'language specific grammar spine' to complement rote-learned chunks, greater emphasis on meta-linguistic analysis and knowledge about language alongside increased opportunities for spontaneous, scaffolded interaction to provide the learners with the opportunity to creatively use and re-use new language. Despite the criticisms and suggestions noted above, the most recent version of the NC programme of study for languages continues to be arranged into four discrete skills areas. However, over recent years there was a deliberate move towards more explicit grammar teaching which is demonstrated by the following statement taken from the new KS2 subject content document for languages which states that pupils should be able to:

> 'understand basic grammar appropriate to the language being studied, including (where relevant): feminine, masculine and neuter forms and the conjugation of high-frequency verbs; key features and patterns of the language; how to apply these, for instance, to build sentences; and how these differ from or are similar to English (Department for Education 2013:213-214).

Notwithstanding the attempt to move away from detailed level descriptors, there remains an overarching focus on accuracy at both Key Stages 2 and 3. Section 2.2.5 will return to this issue and will consider how the focus on accurate production

influences pedagogy and assessment in the secondary phase, which in turn creates issues for transition due to the less controlled and assessment-free language teaching in primary schools.

2.1.2 The Post-14 Languages Drop Out

Despite the increase in the numbers of pupils studying languages at secondary school in the 1990s, there was increasing disquiet among educators and politicians regarding the decline in the UK's foreign language capability (Coleman et al. 2007) which was echoed in the findings of the Nuffield Languages Inquiry: 'while more pupils now learn a language to age 16 than ever before, too few leave school with an adequate level of operational competence' (Nuffield Languages Inquiry 2000:7). In response to the concerns raised, the government of the day introduced the National Languages Strategy (DfES 2002a). The overarching objectives of the 'strategy' were to improve the teaching of languages at all levels of education, to develop a consistent and robust system of assessment and to increase the number of people studying languages in and beyond secondary education.

However, the implementation of the National Languages Strategy occurred, concomitantly, with a notable decrease in the number of pupils continuing with languages post-14. In 2007 it was reported that:

> 'at the secondary level the number taking languages fell sharply. Last summer, the numbers continuing with a language to the GCSE at secondary level had fallen to 51%. Inclusion of those taking other language qualifications increases this to only 52%. A survey showed that there will be a further fall this year', 'the Languages Review' (DCSF 2007a:3).

This decrease is frequently attributed to a decision that was taken in 2004, that pupils could opt out of languages at key stage 4 (ages 14-16). As a response to this rapid decline, in December 2005 the then schools minister Jacqui Smith announced that secondary schools would be required to set a benchmark for language GCSE uptake. The announcement culminated in a letter to secondary schools in January 2006 requesting a benchmark of 50% to 90% uptake. However, on the whole this benchmark was not met. Several reasons were cited for not attaining the benchmark figure; the perception that languages are a difficult subject, uninteresting lessons that lack value and relevance and the competition with vocational language courses and other seemingly more 'exciting' subjects in the options system (Ofsted 2008 pp40-

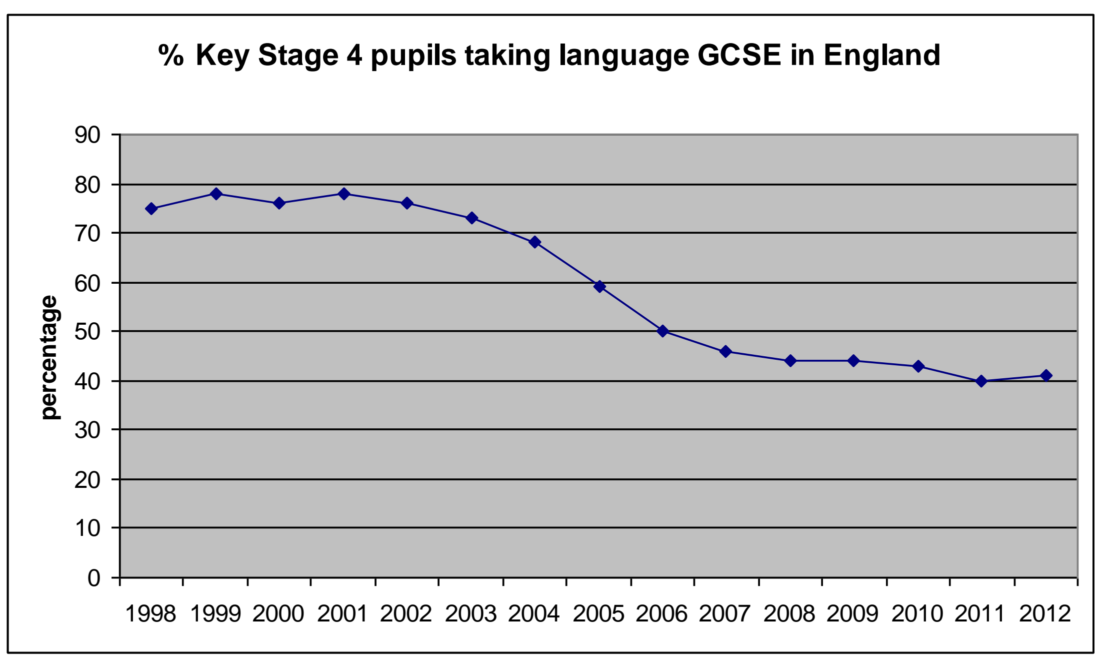
41). Macaro (2008) asserts that the decline in motivation began long before the abolishment of the 'Languages for All' policy and was due to two principal factors; the diktat that teachers should teach exclusively in the target language and secondly that the all pupils were obliged 'to take a subject that they might not enjoy, might not make much progress with, and might not see as relevant' (p.105). As a result 'students began voting with their feet' (p.105). A detailed discussion of the many reasons, not just school/teacher related, for the lack of KS4 uptake and the continuing decrease in student numbers, will feature in section 3.2 related to learner attitudes and motivation and therefore will not be discussed here.

Despite the rapid decline in take up of pupils for languages GCSEs the 'Languages Review' of 2007 (DCSF 2007a) did not recommend the reintroduction of mandatory language learning in KS4 stating that languages for all was never fully attained and even as far back as 2000 20% of learners were exempted from studying languages (p4). The 'Languages Review' did, nevertheless, make a string of recommendations in an attempt to alleviate the flow of KS4 pupils away from language learning. The report proposed the creation of a wider range of more flexible language courses to enable pupils to continue learning languages even if they choose not to take a GCSE examination, incentives for schools to continue teaching languages post Key Stage 3, an increase in the number of Specialist Languages Colleges to 400, increased investment for staff and teaching materials and that there should be a review of the secondary language examinations. Furthermore, higher and further education institutions were requested to visit schools to discuss and promote the value of learning languages and the report suggested that increased cooperation with employer organisations is required in order to promote the value of languages with a view to skills and employability. The review also stated that if there was no evidence of an increase despite the report's proposals then they would recommend 'a return to some form of mandatory requirement' (p4). Alongside the proposals set out for secondary schools in the 'Languages Review', it would also appear that there was an expectation that the Primary Languages Initiative, discussed in the following section, would play a key role in motivating pupils to learn languages at a young age with a view to providing continuing motivation in Key Stages 3 & 4.

A recent Language Trend survey indicates that the numbers for the uptake of languages at KS4 declined from 2001 to 2011, though the figure rose by 1% between 2011 and 2012 (CfBT 2013). Figure 1 below is based upon the results of the

Language Trends 2012 survey and displays the overall number of learners in England taking GCSEs in languages from the years 1998-2012.

Figure 1: Percentage of Key Stage 4 pupils taking a language GCSE in England 1998-2012 (adapted from Language Trends 2012 CfBT)



The Language Trends 2012 document attributes the slight increase between 2011-2012 to the current government's introduction of the EBacc in January 2011 and changes to school performance league tables. The EBacc was introduced to encourage more pupils to sit GCSEs in what are considered 'core' academic subjects; if pupils gain a C grade or higher in English, Maths, a language, History or Geography and two sciences they would be awarded the additional EBacc qualification and schools were to be measured on the proportion of their pupils that achieve this award. A government press release in 2012 (DfE 2012) claims that as a result of the introduction of the EBacc 54% of pupils will sit a language GCSE in 2014, the highest proportion for nine years. The Language Trends 2012 report also states that the traditionally taught languages, i.e. French and German, have seen a dramatic decrease in the numbers of pupils taking GCSE where the numbers have more than halved from 2003-2012. Mumbers of learners taking GCSE Spanish have risen gradually over the same period of time, although, this unfortunately, does not compensate for the decrease in language uptake across the board.

2.1.3 The Primary Languages Initiative

Despite the failure of the first attempt to teaching languages in the primary school in the 1960s (discussed in section 2.2.3) the National Languages Strategy incorporated the introduction of Foreign Language Learning in KS2 (ages 7-11), with the original goal that by 2010, a language will be taught throughout the Key Stage in all primary schools: "every child should have the opportunity throughout Key Stage 2 to study a foreign language and develop their interests in the culture of other nations" (DfES 2002a:15). There were various factors contributing to the reintroduction of primary languages; as mentioned above it was considered an effective way to generate long-term, and enduring, favourable attitudes to language learning, it was partly a response to the increase of primary language teaching globally and also a result of parental pressure due to the perception of the increased benefits of an 'early start', the inclusion of primary languages in private education and of course the declaration of Tony Blair (the former English prime minister) that: 'everyone knows that, with languages, the earlier you start, the better' (Hawkins 2005:8).

In support of the Primary Languages initiative, The National Languages Strategy (DfES 2002a) introduced a series of measures. Firstly, Primary Language Pathfinder partnerships were put in place in 19 LEAs, incorporating 888 primary schools, 179 secondary schools and 31 Specialist Languages Colleges. There was heavy investment in initial teacher training and CPD for existing teachers, including funded places on the Primary Modern Foreign Languages (from now referred to as MFL) Graduate Teacher programme. In addition, the Primary Languages website (www.primarylanguages.org.uk) was set up to provide information on professional development, teaching ideas, research and resources. The Foreign Language Assistant programme was extended to primary schools as well as secondary schools providing the primary school children with native speaker contact. Moreover, in April 2009 'Links into Languages' was launched, a consortium, commissioned by the DCSF, to build and develop the existing learning community of languages teachers and all those involved in language teaching from primary schools through to further education.

2.1.4 The Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages

The cornerstone of the Primary Languages Initiative was the 'Framework for MFL at Key Stage 2' (DfES 2005) which was launched in 2005 to assist primary school teachers to develop their own schemes of work and language lessons. It was hoped that it would be used as a practical tool to provide guidance on planning, teaching and monitoring progress. The QCA (The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) developed KS2 schemes of work in French, Spanish and German[1] to correspond with the new KS2 Framework (DfES 2005). The KS2 framework for MFL focused on three core strands: literacy, oracy and intercultural understanding, alongside two further intersecting strands: knowledge about language and language learning strategies, with the overall emphasis on the development and progression of communicative ability in the L2. The Key Stage 2 framework set out progressive learning objectives for years 3-6 for the three key strands, and also provided a set of desired outcomes within each strand for each year of teaching.

2.1.5 Implementation of primary languages in England

In June 2004 the 'Languages for All: From Strategy to Delivery' (DfES 2004a) report was published detailing the progress of the National Languages Strategy at that time. According to the report, 1 in 5 primary schools were offering 'some form of language provision' (p5). The DfES also commissioned various studies to specifically investigate primary language learning in England including Driscoll et al. (2004), Muijs et al. (2005), Ofsted (2005), Wade et al. (2009) and Cable et al. (2010). The 2004 study undertaken by Driscoll, Jones and Macrory stated that 44% of the schools in England provided language teaching to some of their children. However, of these schools only 3% taught languages across the school years 3-6. 40% of schools reported that 'their provision was vulnerable to changes in circumstances' (p10) with time cited as one of the major barriers to implementation of primary languages. 27% of schools that had ceased to provide PLs cited lack of time as one the reasons for withdrawing. On average the lessons provided were of 20-30 minutes duration and happened once per week. French was the most commonly taught language (40%), although 8% of schools offered more than one language.

---

[1] http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes3/ accessed 20/10/9

More recent studies revealed that the situation developed further and that the coverage became much more widespread. Wade et al. (2009) who undertook a survey of all LEAs in England from 2006-2008, stated that, in 2008, 92% of schools were offering language teaching in class time, a huge increase from the number reported by Driscoll et al. (2004). Again French was the most common language and Spanish was offered in 25% of schools and German in 10% of schools. Of key importance are the findings that 69% of schools in 2008 were meeting the entitlement for all year groups (years 3-6) and that the majority of the schools surveyed were confident that they would meet the anticipated statutory requirements in 2011. Lack of time, inconsistent staff competence and budgetary issues were all cited as barriers to provision. Ofsted (2011) reported that French remained the most popular language taught and that almost all schools provided the recommended one hour per week. The Language Trends 2012 survey contains the most up-to-date statistics regarding the teaching of primary languages. According to the report 97% of primary schools now claim they are offering languages during class time, although there is a lot of variation in the teaching model employed. Again, the majority of schools are still teaching French with Spanish as the second most popular language. In relation to the main theme of the thesis, only 40% of primary schools reported having any contact with their local secondary school in terms of language teaching, a worryingly low figure for reasons that will be expanded upon in the following sections.

The aim of the previous government was for the language teaching in primary schools to be compulsory by September 2011. However, after their defeat in 2010, the policy was changed so that primary language teaching was reframed as a non-compulsory entitlement. Moreover, in 2010 the coalition government stated that the decision to retain primary language teaching was dependent upon a spending review and they only announced their desire to make it a compulsory subject in KS2 in Spring 2013, some three years later. Whilst the latest surveys show that there has been good progress made in provision over recent years, there is a lot of evidence to suggest that a great deal of impetus has been lost in terms of resources, funding and professional development. For example, funding for foreign language resources and training is no longer ring-fenced and many LEA languages support staff were made redundant over the last few years. Whilst the decision to continue with primary languages is a welcome one, a lot of money, time and resources will be required to get the initiative back on track and implemented fully in all schools.

2.2 Primary to Secondary School Transition: An overview

Although there has been good progress made in the implementation of a primary languages programme in a large number of schools, one major challenge facing the initiative is in ensuring an effective transition to secondary school in terms of curriculum content and pedagogy. Therefore, the objective of the current study is to evaluate how young language learners' foreign language competency and their attitudes to language learning develop over time, during the transition period from primary to secondary school. To this end, sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 describe the nature of the primary to secondary transition process in English schools in general and detail the findings of several key studies in relation to this important and influential time in a young person's educational career. Section 2.2.3 will discuss in detail the transition issues related to foreign language teaching in particular and the results of previous foreign language related transition studies.

Transition refers to the point at which a child moves from one educational institution to another. There are several possible points of transition in the UK education system: at age 7/8 when children move from key stage 1 (ages 4-6/7) to key stage 2 (ages 7-10/11), and at age 10/11 when the pupils move from KS 2 to KS 3 (ages 11-14); there is another possible transition from secondary school to sixth form college at age 16. In regions that operate a 3-tier system incorporating middle schools, transition to secondary school will occur at age 12/13; however this is not pertinent to the current study. The primary to secondary transition has long been recognised as a major issue in the UK Education system. As far back as 1977 the document 'Education in Schools (DES 1977) observed notable problems at the point of transfer[2] and suggested that the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) promptly investigated the issues (Galton et al. 2000). Unfortunately, despite increased awareness and the improvements made in terms of the social aspects of transition (see section 2.2.1 for an explanation), there still currently exist discontinuities in curricula and pedagogy (Ofsted 2008).

Educational research has also corroborated the aforementioned issues related to primary to secondary transition. Described by Zeedyk et al. (2003:67) as 'one of the most difficult [steps] in pupils' educational careers' and by Pratt and George (2005:16) as a 'key rite of passage for boys and girls', primary to secondary transition

[2] Transfer and transition are used interchangeably in the literature

engenders a plethora of potential issues for each one of the pupils that experience it. Transferring from the small, safe, familiar primary school environment, to the big, frightening world of the secondary school can instil fear and dread into many a Year 6 child. There are multiple factors that contribute to the problem of transition and these can be categorised into two main areas, 'school concerns' and 'peer concerns' (West et al. 2008: 5). School concerns include anxieties over work load, larger school size, travel time/distance to school, new teachers and new rules to adhere to. Peer concerns incorporate the fear of bullying, older children, separation from peer groups and the forming of new friendships. In addition the new ethos of parental choice of secondary education has eroded the traditional secondary/feeder route and has led to children who transfer without their peers and to children who are not able to take part in local transition programmes. Due to the multifaceted and complex nature of the transition process, previous transition studies have had very distinct foci and have employed many different methodologies. Nevertheless, previous transition research can, broadly speaking, be bifurcated into the two groups suggested by West et al. (2008); peer concerns (social adjustment) and school concerns (curriculum and progression).

2.2.1 Research into social adjustment to secondary school

A 2003 study by Graham & Hill surveyed children approaching the end of primary school and others who were beginning their secondary education. The primary school children were surveyed again after transferring to secondary school. The study revealed that: 'from a fixed choice list, the items they chose more often were social or non-academic, i.e. concerns about getting lost (77%), not knowing anyone (55%) and getting picked on (53%)' (p4). Chedzoy & Burden (2005) carried out a survey of pupils prior to and after transition to secondary school in order to obtain up-to-date information in pupils' expectations of and responses to the primary to secondary transition. The children's preoccupations were consistent with those found in previous studies: size of the new school, older children, school work and new teachers and teaching styles. One noteworthy observation is that the majority of pupils appeared to resolve any issues and anxieties regarding transition within the first term of secondary school. The researchers attribute the resolution of issues to the improvements that schools have made in terms of induction programs and transition arrangements that are designed to alleviate the children's anxieties, many of which stem from 'horror stories' told to them by older children (Lucey & Reay 2000). A series of transition studies (Galton, Gray & Ruddock 1999, Boyd &

Simpson 2000, Galton, Gray & Ruddock 2003, Graham & Hill 2003) corroborate these findings showing that schools' transition procedures are in general effective in alleviating many of the children's fears and anxieties. This is due to the fact that contemporary transition activities provide the children with an opportunity to visit the secondary school within a protected context that enables the pupils to view the reality of secondary school life rather than their imagined version.

2.2.2 Research investigating academic attainment across transition

The ORACLE transition study (1975-1980) carried out by Galton and associates (Galton & Willcocks 1983 and Delamont & Galton 1986) observed a cohort of pupils for their final two years of primary school and first year in secondary school. The main focus of the study was on curriculum continuity and regular classroom observations concentrated on the curriculum, how the teachers delivered it and how the pupils responded to this delivery. Unsurprisingly, considering the findings of the studies mentioned in the previous section, anxiety was at its highest in the June prior to transition and then fell steadily in November and even further in June. In addition, the pupils were assessed in English, Maths and reading comprehension in the final term of primary school and again at the end of the first year in secondary school. Special emphasis was placed on the very beginning of the new secondary school year where the children were observed for the first three days and then were observed at regular intervals in the year thereafter. The observations demonstrated that there was very little continuity in curriculum or pedagogy between the primary and secondary sectors. The test results of the ORACLE study revealed that 40-50% of pupils failed to make any progress between the end of primary school and the end of the first year of secondary school.

In 1999 Galton et al. replicated the ORACLE study although on a smaller scale. The results of the replication study revealed a 'hiatus' in terms of academic achievement mirroring the results of the first study. Again around 40% of pupils failed to make progress in their first year after transition. Qualitative data including findings on pupils' anxiety, motivation, engagement in lessons and enjoyment of school was elicited in the summer prior to transition, in the following November and again in the summer term of the first secondary year. In the first term of Year 7 the pupils found school slightly more enjoyable, however their keenness seriously waned by the end of year 7. Again, anxiety was at its highest just prior to transition but decreased throughout year 7. In primary school around 60% of pupils were 'fully engaged'

during maths and English lessons, while during year 7 the figure dropped to 34%. Results for motivation displayed a similar pattern with motivation at its highest immediately following transition then declining consistently throughout the year. In addition, the discovery of a 'significant negative correlation between pupils' academic performance, motivation, and enjoyment of school' (Galton et al. 2000) is worthy of further investigation since it challenges the common perception that children who perform well at school are more motivated to work hard. Galton et al. (2000) attribute the lack of attainment, enjoyment and motivation for school observed in this study to lack of curriculum continuity, the variation in teaching approach, lack of transfer data and the failure of secondary teachers to appreciate the work undertaken in the final years of primary school.

These findings are also corroborated by a further transition study carried out by Galton, Gray and Ruddock in 2003 which measured pupils' attitudes and attainment for English, Maths and Science. Similar data from the 1996 ORACLE replication study (Hargreaves and Galton 2002) were also available for comparison. Once again there was a noticeable dip in attainment following transition. By the end of year 7, 49% of pupils had made no gain on their national curriculum level score. However, one must exercise caution when interpreting this data as the attainment data for year 7 is based on teacher assessment and judgement and not on standardised test results. Nonetheless, the researchers still assert that there is a 'hiatus' in progression but that 'there may well be some uncertainty of the magnitude of the dips' (p. 58). In 1996 the pupils had the same level of enjoyment of school in the July pre-transition and in the November post-transition and this then decreased at the end of year 7. This pattern was also observed in the 2001 and 2003 data, although with the dips becoming more prominent. The lack of enjoyment did not imply a lack of motivation. However, it is important to note that the pupils displayed extrinsic motivation; they want to do well at school and get a good job. It would appear that they are not motivated because they are inherently interested in school. For the researchers, the cause of the lack of motivation lies in the structure of the National Curriculum and the focus on end of level assessments:

> 'the methods currently advocated for raising achievement levels appeared to be incompatible with those they [the teachers] felt were more appropriate for improving intrinsic motivation and inculcating positive attitudes towards their subject' (p.107).

To evaluate the impact of England's National Curriculum on continuity and progression in the transition from year 6 to year 7, Schagen and Kerr undertook a

study in 1999 which aimed to assess three different aspects of the transition process: pastoral concerns, curriculum continuity, and individual progression. The conclusions of the study mirror the findings of the studies detailed so far; the schools were relatively successful in implementing liaison activities focused on the social aspects of transition but less so with curriculum-focused activities. It was reported that teachers did not use the end of KS2 test results as either the information did not reach the relevant teachers, or did not contain adequate detail. Some year 7 teachers preferred to make their own judgment regarding the pupils' ability, whereas some teachers preferred the use of standardised tests such as Cognitive Abilities Tests (CATs). This study demonstrates that despite attempts to move to a more consistent approach to the curriculum, major issues with continuity remain across different phases of education. It would appear from this study that there is disparity between the rhetoric of the NC and what is actually happening in classrooms, where there seems to be an inclination towards the 'new start' approach; mirroring the findings of Boyd & Simpson (2000).

What becomes clear from a review of previous transition studies is that the process of transition is complex and can both impact and be impacted by many variables. In addition, the question of what constitutes a successful transition remains unclear. It has been shown that a successful social adjustment does not necessarily lead to academic success following transition and vice versa. It would be beneficial to have a greater number of longitudinal studies which also evaluate the pupils' motivation for learning which has featured very little in transition studies up to this point.

2.2.3 Transition issues specific to language learning

Historically, it is well documented that poor transition and liaison arrangements contributed to the failure of the 'Pilot Scheme for the teaching of French in primary schools in England and Wales', the last major primary languages initiative in England (Burstall 1974, Stern et al. 1975). The study, which spanned ten years, running from 1964 to 1974, aimed to evaluate the feasibility of teaching languages to students from an earlier age and from across the ability range. The study concluded that there was no 'significant influence' (p.242) on pupils' overall attainment across the curriculum although, on the other hand, it had not led to a decline in attainment. The results showed that even some of the least able children could achieve some success in their foreign language learning 'although this success was rarely of the lasting kind' (Burstall 1974:242). Conversely, large numbers of pupils 'failed to

achieve even a modest and impermanent measure of success' (p.242). The report attributes this failure to the overwhelming use of the target language and the lack of differentiation in lessons. Burstall concluded that: 'pupils taught French from the age of eight do not subsequently reveal any 'substantial' gains in achievement' (p.243).

In the Burstall study, an experimental group of children started French in primary school aged 8. At aged 13, after 5 years of French teaching the performance of the experimental group was compared to a control group who had begun learning French aged 11. The results showed that the early starters attained higher marks in the speaking and listening tests but the aged 11 starters were equal or sometimes better in reading and writing. The experimental group's results were also compared to those a group of pupils that were two years older and had had the same amount of French teaching. The older group persistently out-performed the early starters. By the age of 16 the experimental group appeared to have lost any advantage they had in terms of speaking, whereas the control group maintained their superiority in the reading and writing tests. It is important to note that there was criticism of the assessment tasks used as the nature of the tasks seemed to disadvantage the early starters by not allowing them to make full use of the skills gained at the primary stage (see Buckby 1976, Bennet 1975 and Hoy 1977).

The main organisational problem highlighted in the report was the mixed intake received by the secondary school. This was caused by a lack of collaboration leading to inconsistent approaches to teaching French within the feeder primary schools and the resulting difficulty in placement of the study children within streamed classes. Some secondary schools initially set the French groups based on general academic ability but had to regroup the learners swiftly taking into account their previous French experience. Furthermore, the more experienced teachers tended to opt for the early starters leaving the secondary beginners with the less experienced teachers, further disadvantaging the non-project children. The report contained little information on liaison arrangements and any attempts at curriculum continuity but did state that only 42% of the primary teachers were satisfied with the transition arrangements and collaboration with secondary school teachers. Primary teachers suggested that there should have been reciprocal lesson observation in the project schools and, even though there was agreement between all teachers involved that effective liaison was essential to the success of the project, this was a neglected area.

Another major UK study into primary languages was undertaken by Low et al. (1993 & 1995). In their 1993 study of primary languages in Scotland, Low et al. investigated whether children with primary languages experience maintained an advantage over secondary school starters. There were 'tentative signs that this advantage was maintained to national examinations at age 16' (Blondin et al. 1998:8). Data from the lesson observations showed that primary school pupils were exposed to a wider range of linguistic input since the secondary teachers relied heavily on the existing course materials. The researchers claim that the use of games, songs, miming and making things at primary schools provided opportunities for a greater variety of input with more complex structures. It was noted that the same topics were covered in secondary that had been covered in primary, even when the same teachers were involved, although there was more emphasis on written tasks in the secondary classroom. However, there were few changes in the demands placed on pupils during the classroom interaction from P7 (final year of primary school) to S1 (first year of secondary school). From observable behaviours in the S1 classroom, 'number of hands up, eagerness to answer, spontaneous utterances, time spent on and off task' (p71), pupils with lower ability, and in particular boys, showed a marked reduction in their classroom participation compared with that in P7.

The pupils confirmed the difference in approach from games and songs in primary school to vocabulary learning, tests, spelling and punctuation in secondary school. The more literacy-focused approach was met with mixed responses. The less able pupils showed some anxiety around the spelling of the words which left them less motivated to go to class. However, for some higher ability pupils the focus on literacy seemed to relate to their need for a more adult style of learning and desire to move on from primary school. There were complaints about the mixed-ability grouping in S1 with some pupils believing that they were held back by the beginners:

> "[I don't like] the beginners. I know they've got to learn but they should be put into a different class or something 'cos they're keeping us back".

Using paired interviews and a vocabulary retrieval task the P7 and S1 pupils' linguistic competency was assessed. The data does not allow the research to state categorically that PLs led to improved performance at Standard Grade. However, the performance in schools is no worse than before PLs was introduced. Moreover, it

would suggest that a larger number of pupils are taking a language at certificate level.
Research into primary languages undertaken in the Netherlands by Edelenbos & Koster (1993) also demonstrated a lack of continuity in the learning processes in the transition from primary to secondary education. This research revealed that pupils who had had exposure to MFL in primary school "were only able to maintain a short-term advantage over pupils beginning at secondary" (Blondin et al. 1998:28). There was very little mutual classroom observation by primary and secondary teachers and therefore very little knowledge of the differing approaches to teaching MFL. Genelot (1996) found that if children that had had primary MFL in France were placed in a secondary class with other initiated pupils they had a slight advantage over those pupils who had received primary MFL who were then placed in mixed classes. However, very interestingly, for those pupils that had not received primary MFL who were placed in mixed classes "there was a very negative impact" (Blondin et al. 1998:29). Hill et al. (1998) looked at the effects of the transition from primary to secondary education in Australia. The investigation discovered little linguistic progression from primary to secondary education and found that the pupils that had not been initiated in languages in primary school caught up with the pupils who had been initiated at primary school after only two years of secondary education.

In their 2004 study in the UK, Bolster, Balandier-Brown and Rea-Dickens undertook a one-year study to identify some of the main issues of transition from primary to secondary foreign language education. The findings highlighted a 'total lack of liaison between primary and secondary phases' (p.36) There was no evidence that foreign language attainment was ever reported upon by the primary school. Continuity was virtually non-existent with all pupils, no matter what level, starting from scratch. Fortunately, some pupils maintained a positive attitude towards their language learning up to year 7; however, by year 8 a certain number of pupils felt 'disillusioned' (p.38) as they had to effectively restart their French learning. To conclude the authors state that; 'the challenge of ensuring a smooth transition centres on decisions across a wide range of dimensions, all of which have a fundamental effect upon pupil progress, attainment and motivation' (p.35).

An Ofsted report published in 2011 confirmed that for many primary and secondary school clusters the process of transition for modern languages is still problematic and under-developed and that most of the secondary schools visited had not modified their year 7 scheme of work to take into account the increasing linguistic knowledge

and experience of the incoming Year 7 learners. The reports reiterates recommendations that have been put forward since the inception of the primary languages initiative, that local authorities and school clusters should: ‘support increased liaison between primary and secondary schools to bring coherence and continuity’ and for secondary schools to:

> ‘consider, as a matter of urgency, the implications of recent developments in primary languages for their curriculum in Year 7 and how they build on students’ prior attainment’ (p.8).

2.2.4 Curriculum Continuity

Many of the studies described up to this point have discussed the notion of continuity seemingly with the assumption that the term is clearly defined and consistently used. But what exactly do we mean by continuity? The notion is more complex than it first seems since it encompasses a variety of factors including curriculum content, pedagogy and progression. For Sharpe (2001:192) continuity implies the ‘systematic planning of teaching in order to secure effective pupil learning’ which should not simply be thought as just working through the curriculum and achieving levels at defined stages, but also needs to thought of in terms of the ‘planned advances in pedagogy and acknowledgement of pupils’ social maturity’ (Galton, Gray & Ruddock 2003:114). As demonstrated in previous studies (e.g. Schagen & Kerr 1999), the introduction of a continuous curriculum does not necessarily ensure continuity. A common curriculum may help to avoid the repetition of previously covered content but may neither guarantee continuity in teaching approach nor progression based upon previous attainment. According to Derricot (1985:148-149), in order to successfully implement curriculum continuity there are fundamental questions that need to be considered and resolved, both practical and philosophical. The practical resources that are required include time for the teachers to visit the schools and work with primary teachers, money to fund the exchanges and joint production of materials and schemes of work. Teachers need to be equipped with the required competencies through training along with support from personnel to coordinate the transition.

Despite the fact that successful continuity is considered necessary for many reasons Derricot (1985 p.146-147) points out that: ‘discontinuity may also be desirable’. During the difficult transition period there is a need to maintain the right balance. As has been previously discussed, the move to secondary school can be seen as an important ‘rite of passage’ for the children and as a consequence they may wish to

distance themselves from the primary way of doing things and move to a more adult style of teaching. However, an abrupt shift in teaching style and content can have adverse effects on pupils' attitude and performance: 'a life which is unerringly smooth, with no ups or downs, would be dull indeed. And yet, if the discontinuities are too great, too traumatic, and too final, then the losses may be irreparable, at least in the short term' (Boyd 2005:140). The lack of systematic planning, the repetition of previous work and sudden changes in teaching styles and assessment methods have all been referred to as factors contributing to the documented 'hiatus' in progress across transition. Therefore, in order to avoid this abrupt change Derricot (1985:156) introduces the notion of 'planned discontinuity' in order 'to kick start progression and learning'. Galton, Gray and Ruddock (2003) reiterate Derricot's (1985) view of the need for 'planned discontinuity' stating that:

> 'while continuity is important to reduce the level of anxiety at transfer, a degree of discontinuity it is also essential since it provides an external indicator of pupils' newly acquired status as secondary pupils'. (p.107)

The idea of 'discontinuity' underlines the complexity of the transition problem; there needs to be a balance between making secondary school work new and exciting, at the same time as ensuring even progression.

2.2.5 Curriculum continuity within an outcomes-focused secondary education system

For Boyd (2005:58) there is a fundamental question of teaching philosophy which appears to lie at the heart of the continuity issues mentioned above. It is indeed true to say that the approach to language teaching across the two phases differs. Evans & Fisher (2009) describe a secondary pedagogy that focuses on 'explicitness' in terms of the presentation of grammar and grammatical concepts and also in terms of reference to attainment target levels in relationship to the learning objectives for the lessons. The findings of their survey also corroborate Boyd's view of secondary language teaching inasmuch as they observed few examples of independent learning with most lessons 'heavily teacher-led and teacher-centred' (p44). Moreover, opportunities for the learners to use the target language were tightly defined and controlled by the teacher and there was an observed reliance on textbooks. In previous studies primary schools, on the other hand, are reported as taking an interactive whole-class approach predominantly focused on listening and speaking in the target language. Primary languages classes are described as fast-paced, fluid,

varied and 'fun'. The primary lessons incorporated the use of a variety of activities, including songs, stories and games using technology, flashcards, props and realia that, on the whole, most of the children found enjoyable. Furthermore, pair work was often used to reinforce vocabulary that had been introduced, and also group work to a lesser extent (Driscoll et al. 2004; Muijs et al.2005; Ofsted 2005; Wade et al. 2009; Cable et al. 2010; Ofsted 2011).

Are the distinct primary and secondary pedagogies employed solely due to the teachers' differing theories of learning as Boyd asserts, or do they have more to do with the educational system in which they work? Mitchell (2010), in a report from the LINEE Research network (www.linee.org) into language education policy and practice in England, Hungary and Italy, posits that the centralisation of the education system in England and the creation of a National Curriculum has meant that for language teaching in the secondary school there is a focus on outcomes and targets. Moreover, the report states that 'the lessons distinctively preoccupied with outcomes and 'performance' were those observed in England' (p.170). The teachers observed were preoccupied with eliciting student oral production in German with a strong focus on accuracy. Teachers did use games, visuals and jokes to try and maintain the interest of the learners but this was at the expense of more creative and meaning-focused language use. Furthermore, the researchers observed 'evidence that the children are trying to make meaningful sentences but the teacher's attention is on matters of form' (p172). As observed by Evans and Fisher (2009) and Ofsted (2011), secondary language teachers frequently explicitly referred to 'levels' and objectives' and appeared to be concerned with target-setting and 'direct output-focused instruction towards these' (p.172). The findings of Ofsted (2011) also provide evidence for the effect of the outcomes-focused system observing that many students were relying on rote-learning and written work when learning for GCSE examinations which in turn lends weight to Mitchell's (2010:176) conclusion that:

> 'the promotion of outcomes-led culture in England has had direct effects on teachers' instructional priorities and consequently on their classroom practice; the insistent focus on oral production of accurate sentences and phrases, the neglect of meaning and of intercultural understanding, and the explicit links made to learning targets, have at least been encouraged by this wider culture'.

2.2.6 Assessment at primary level

It is clear from the latest NC documentation that the current government views primary languages as a means for learners to make substantial progress in one

language through KS2 and therefore that there is an expectation that the learners will reach a certain level of proficiency by the end of Year 6. However previous studies have observed that assessment is underdeveloped in many primary schools (Driscoll et al. 2004, Muijs et al. 2005, Ofsted 2005, 2008 and 2011). When assessment does occur it is often through the use of in-house systems on an informal basis using 'can-do' statements, workbooks and worksheets and through teacher assessment during lessons (Muijs et al. 2005). But is assessment necessary at this level? Language teaching in primary schools currently allows a certain freedom for the teachers and the delivery of the subject. Many teachers surveyed were resistant to assessment concerned that it would 'change the whole nature of the experience' (Muijs et al. 2005:75) and were worried that the children's perception of the subject as 'fun' will be diminished if assessment it brought into play. Secondary schools have complained about the lack of information from the primary schools regarding the level of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6. However, Ofsted (2011) reports that some primary teachers have found that even when available the secondary schools showed little interest in individuals' records and preferred to assess the children themselves.

2.2.7 The academic outcomes of primary language programmes

As a result of the lack of assessment at the primary level and the dearth of research into primary language learning we currently have little data on what level of performance we can realistically expect to achieve by the end of primary school. However, the first major study of primary language outcomes was undertaken by Cable et al. (2010) and focused on several areas of linguistic progression including pronunciation, interaction, vocabulary learning, listening, knowledge of phoneme-grapheme correspondences (PGCs) and the development of L2 writing. The analysis of the pupils' pronunciation showed that, for the most part, the pupils made attempts to use target language phonology and the results indicated an improvement from 2006/07 to 2008/09 for most year groups. The improvement was not so evident for the year 6 children. However, the researchers posit that this may be due to a 'greater influence from literacy activity (and possibly the greater use of literacy prompts within the Year 6 assessment tasks; when using familiar language the Year 6 children's pronunciation was much less influenced by interference from spellings) (p105). In terms of vocabulary production, performance was consistent for years 4-6 with evidence of improvement in vocabulary learning across three successive cohorts for year 3. Nouns were the most commonly known category of words along with greetings and colours.

The study also evaluated the children's interaction in the target language by examining their ability to carry out a test role play with/without scaffolding and their capacity to ask and respond to questions. No Year 3 groups could engage in the role play without scaffolding although some did succeed with support. Years 4, 5 and 6 again could engage in the role play although most of them still required some scaffolding in order to do this. For 2007/08 and the following year, the results for a listening comprehension test were very similar. A majority of the children were able to follow the story, showing this by placing pictures in a suitable sequence and some could retell parts of the story. For the Year 6 listening comprehension task there was again little variation in performance from 2007/08 and 2008/09. The pupils were asked to read aloud in order to assess their knowledge of the target language PGCs. In 2006/07 there were no groups who showed they had good knowledge of these. However in subsequent years some groups did so. Encouragingly, there did appear to be progression across the year groups with Years 3 and 4 having some degree of knowledge and Years 5 and 6 demonstrating a better grasp of the PGCs. The results of the writing tasks exposed great variation across and within year groups, though the overall trend was positive over the lifetime of the study. The Year 4 and Year 5 children did appear to find the task difficult; the researchers attribute this weak performance to the children's lack of verb knowledge where the children either did not know any verbs at all or they knew the verbs but could not spell them correctly. The results of the Year 6 writing task were more positive and there was evidence of progression. The children used the writing frame effectively and demonstrated an enthusiasm for writing in the target language. Once again the stumbling block appeared to be with the use and inflection of verbs in writing and independent sentence construction.

2.2.8 The development of the main research questions

The previous studies discussed in this chapter suggest that an apparent lack of long-term benefits of primary language teaching can be attributed at least in part to the lack of continuity in teaching across educational phases and that simply beginning language learning early is not sufficient to attain high levels of proficiency. As Marinova-Todd et al. (2000:28) maintain:

> 'Research has shown that in formal settings early L2 instruction does not prove advantageous unless followed by well designed foreign language instruction building on previous learning.

> Children who study a foreign language for only a year or two in elementary school show no long-term effects; they need several years of continued instruction to achieve even modest proficiency'.

Blondin et al. (1998:28) go further arguing that 'the lack of continuity within primary, and between primary and secondary is without doubt a major negative factor influencing outcomes.' Furthermore, studies into the implementation of primary languages in England highlight primary and secondary transition and curriculum continuity as a major problem that currently remains unresolved in many cases. For example, in her evaluation of the effectiveness of the primary languages initiative in England, McLachlan (2009) describes a situation where:

> 'the start of KS3 in languages risks being chaotic, with secondary departments attempting to cater for the broadest possible range of ability and prior knowledge. Repetition is inevitable; repetition demotivates; demotivation contributes to negative attitudes; negative attitudes will simply fuel the rate of KS4 drop-out. Viewed as whole, it is extremely doubtful that the current conditions in primary languages will facilitate a true 'renaissance' in language learning' (p.202).

Considering the findings of the studies detailed in this chapter, it is evident that primary to secondary transition will be a critical factor in the success of primary language teaching. In order to fully appreciate and understand the multiple factors that come into play during this time, and to provide insights into the barriers to success, longitudinal research (following the same children over a length of time) incorporating not only learners' target language attainment, but also the rationale and approach to language teaching, as well as the children's attitudes to language teaching and learning, is an absolute requirement. Furthermore, to assess the development of the learners' L2 knowledge it is crucial to measure individual learner progression based on detailed linguistic analyses of their underlying L2 system. To this end, the current study has been designed as an 'explanatory' case study (Yin 1993) involving 26 learners of French from a cluster of schools encompassing two primary feeder schools and one secondary school. The study is centred round three principal research questions:

1. *What are the similarities and differences between the primary and secondary foreign language curricula and pedagogic practices?*

2. *What effect does the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 have on the children's motivation for foreign language study and their confidence in the classroom?*

3. *How does the children's target language proficiency evolve during the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 and is there evidence of linguistic progression?*

Full details of the research design will be presented in Chapter 6 and therefore will not be discussed further here. The following chapter provides an overview of recent research into learner attitudes and motivation for language learning. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the term 'linguistic progression' and review previous research that has examined various different aspects of language proficiency; vocabulary development and morpho-syntactic development. For the analysis of each aspect of progression and learner attitudes a number of sub-questions were devised that were used to guide the analysis and these will be detailed in the following chapters.

Chapter 3

Attitudes, Motivation and Second Language Learning

3.1 Introduction

As stated in the previous chapter, one of the main arguments for the provision of primary language teaching is to create and sustain positive and resilient attitudes to language learning within UK schools and foster interest in the culture of other nations. It is thus clear that there is an expectation that early exposure will play an important role motivating pupils to continue with their language studies at KS4. However, review of previous transition studies have shown that transfer to secondary school can have an adverse effect on learner motivation and therefore an investigation of the development of learner motivation and attitudes across the transition phase needs to be a key feature of the current study. Accordingly, this chapter first presents and discusses the theoretical underpinnings of L2 motivation research followed by a review of the findings of relevant previous studies of second language motivation from a variety of contexts. The review will focus on a number of factors that have been associated with learner attitudes and motivation: issues specific to UK context, the instructional setting, emotional development and the role of age in developing learner attitudes and the effect of primary-secondary transition.

3.1.1 Motivation theory and language learning

There is universal agreement that motivation is crucial for learning in general and languages are no exception. Motivation has been found to be a key factor in explaining individual difference in language learner attainment:

> '[motivation] provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process: indeed, all the other factors involved in SLA presuppose motivation to some extent. Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement'. (Dörnyei 2005:65).

Widely regarded as a pioneer in L2 motivational research, Robert Gardner developed a theory of second language acquisition named the 'socio-educational model' (Gardner and Lambert 1972, Gardner 1985). The model emerged from an evaluation

of the complex linguistic context in Canada in which there are two official languages, English and French, with two strong ethnolinguistic communities. Gardner's socio-educational model is comprised of four key factors: social milieu (the cultural context of second language learning), individual differences (intelligence, aptitude, motivation and anxiety), second language acquisition contexts (formal or informal learning) and outcomes (linguistic proficiency).

A key tenet of L2 motivation theory is the idea that learning languages is different from learning any other subject in that it is not merely an accumulation of facts or the acquisition of a new skill; learning a language involves not only learning the nuts and bolts of a language, but also identification with the language being learnt (Gardner 1979). M. Williams (1994:77) expands on the notion of identification stating that language learning: 'involves alteration of self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of being, and therefore has a significant impact on the social nature of the learner'. For L2 researchers coming from the social psychological view point, language learner identity is socially-constructed over time with the learner as an active participant. Research in the social psychological vein focused on learners' perceptions of, and attitudes to, the target language, the L2 speakers and the L2 culture and examined the effect these have on the learner's willingness to learn the language.

Forming part of the individual difference component of the socio-educational model and labelled as *'integrative motivation'*, Gardner's motivation construct incorporates three main elements (or motivational antecedents) that are deemed to contribute to an increase or decrease in motivation:

- *Integrativeness* - comprises integrative orientation, a general interest in language learning and positive attitudes to the L2 community
- *Attitudes towards the learning situation* – attitudes towards the teacher and the language course
- *Motivation* –desire and attitude to learning and the amount of effort expended

The term 'orientation' in the domain of motivation research refers to the reasons for learning the L2. People who learn the L2 in order to identify with the target culture and L2 speakers are said to have an *'integrative orientation'.* Those who are learning a language to obtain a job or a qualification are said to have an *'instrumental orientation'*. Some learners have a *'knowledge orientation'* where they are learning

the language to become a more cultured and erudite person whereas others learn a language to facilitate travel. For some the ultimate aim is to forge friendships. The reasons for learning a language can be manifold and of course, the orientations noted above are not antithetical: one learner can have several orientations simultaneously and these can vary in degree over time.

In the first iteration of Gardner's model there is an emphasis on the affective dimension of motivation and the instrumental (pragmatic or utilitarian) motivational orientation does not feature at all. Nevertheless, Gardner (1985) does incorporate the notion of instrumental orientation/motivation within his Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). In 2001 Gardner added instrumental orientation formally to his overall model: 'we could label this combination of instrumental factors and Motivation as Instrumental Motivation' (p7). A further important addition to Gardner's model was made by another Canadian, Richard Clément (1980, Clément et al. 1994), who introduced the notion of *'linguistic self-confidence';* a person's belief that they are able to perform in the L2 and achieve their goals which links to the mainstream psychological notion of *'self-efficacy'* (Bandura 1997). A learner's perceptions and sense of competence will influence their choice of activities, how much effort they expend and how long they are willing to persevere with an activity. Furthermore, previous research has shown that self-confidence indices correlate with L2 proficiency (Clément, Dörnyei and Noels 1994; Clément, Gardner and Smythe 1977, 1980; M. Williams et al. 2002).

3.1.1.1 Situating Learner Motivation

Following Gardner's earlier work, Crookes and Schmidt's 1991 article *'Reopening the research agenda'* called for L2 motivation studies to align themselves with more current theories of motivation. Their purpose was two-fold; firstly to catch up with motivational psychology in the mainstream and secondly to move away from the macro view of the societal values of language learning toward a more micro-view of the language learning situation as researchers had begun to question the relevance and applicability of Gardner's model of L2 motivation for unilingual contexts where the L2 is a foreign language taught in schools. For cognitive psychologists: 'how one thinks about one's abilities, possibilities, potentials, limitations and past performance, as well as various aspects of the tasks to achieve or goals to attain is a crucial aspect of motivation' (Dörnyei 2005:75) and therefore, consideration of the effect of the learning situation was seen as essential in understanding learners' attitudes in

instructed settings. In response, there was an increase in research examining the effect of the learning situation on learner motivation in formal educational settings. International research has shown that in a multiplicity of contexts the quality of language teaching and the overall learning experience are key factors in determining learner attitudes and motivation. For example, Nikolov (2001) observed that learners who had very positive attitudes towards the L2 yet attributed their lack of success directly to the learning situation.

Building on Gardner's work, in 1994 Dörnyei developed an educational framework of L2 motivation comprised of three levels:

- ***Language Level*** – incorporating the Gardnerian notions of integrative and instrumental motivational sub-systems
- ***Learner Level*** – encompassing the need for achievement and self-confidence (anxiety, perceived competence and self-efficacy)
- ***Learning Situation Level*** - this is split into three distinct areas:
    - Course specific components – interest, relevance, expectancy and satisfaction
    - Teacher-specific components – affiliative motive (to please the teacher), authority type (controlling vs autonomy supporting), socialisation of motivation (modelling, task presentation, feedback)
    - Group-specific components – goal-orientedness, norm and reward system, cohesiveness, classroom goal structure (cooperative, competitive or individualistic). (Dörnyei 2001b:18)

This framework encompasses the motivational constructs formulated by Gardner and the notion of linguistic self-confidence introduced by Clément, but rebalances the view somewhat by placing greater emphasis on the situational specific elements involved within the immediate language learning situation. Dörnyei's multi-faceted view of learner motivation in relation to instructed learning situations stimulated further studies of motivation which encompassed both individual learner and classroom-specific items. A volume edited by Chambers (2001) includes a series of studies undertaken within the UK context by educational practitioners. These studies concentrated on the learner and learning situation levels of Dörnyei's framework and provided insights into which activities appear to motivate learners and also the role of the language teacher. Thus it is clear that the framework can be usefully applied to

classroom-based foreign language learning situations which provide valuable insights into learner motivation.

3.1.1.2 Poststructuralist approaches to second language learning and motivation

More recently, many researchers have rejected the binary categorisation of learners apparent in traditional social psychological approaches:

> 'whereas humanist conceptions of the individual – and most definitions of the individual in SLA research – presuppose that every person has an essential, unique, fixed, and coherent core (introvert/extrovert; motivated/unmotivated; field dependent/field independent), poststructuralism depicts the individual as diverse, contradictory, and dynamic; multiple rather than unitary, decentered rather than centred' (Norton Pierce 1995:15).

More recent poststructuralist approaches to L2 motivation developed from dissatisfaction with the social psychological approaches and they allow for a more complex, multi-levelled and detailed examination of learner identity. For example, Norton's (2000:5) definition of identity states that it is:

> 'how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across space and time, and how the person understands possibilities for the future'.

For poststructuralist identity theorists, language learning is not simply seen as the appropriation of a set of linguistic rules and vocabulary, but as the increasing participation in a 'community of practice' (Lave and Wenger 1991) in which identity construction is on-going and where learners; 'struggle to appropriate the voices of others; they need to learn to command the attention of their listeners; and they need to negotiate language as a system and as a social practice' (Norton and McKinney 2011:81). Rather than focusing on variables such as age, race, gender et cetera, the poststructuralist view of identity introduces the notions of 'agency' and 'investment' (Norton Pierce 1995) in place of motivation (Pavlenko 2002), meaning that learners are considered as agents in control of their learning, and attitudes as ideologies which are dynamic and co-constructed within a social structure. However, one must be mindful that these learner 'agencies' are also socially co-constucted and therefore 'individuals may act upon their wishes only if their present environment allows for such agency (Pavlenko 2002:293). Furthermore there is an extension of the notion

‘target language community’ to incorporate ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson 1991; Norton 2001):

> ‘imagined communities’ – refer to groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible with whom we connect through the power of imagination. Imagined communities provide insights into imagined identities’ (Norton and McKinney 2011:76).

SLA research in many contexts has shown that for many learners these ‘imagined communities’ are a reality which can strongly influence the formation of identities and investments (Norton 2001, Yashima 2002).

The construct of investment relates to ‘the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it’ (Norton and McKinney 2011:75). It is best explained using Bourdieu’s (1977) notions of ‘cultural’ and ‘symbolic capital’ by which the acquisition of certain skills and knowledge can lead to a person gaining a higher status in society. Norton (2001) argued that learners expect a good return on investment when learning a second language so that they can acquire resources to enhance their cultural capital, which in turn can lead to economic and social enhancement. However, Norton and McKinney (2011) point out that investment does not equate to instrumental motivation which visualises a static, fixed learner who learns for purely utilitarian reasons. In fact, the construct of investment presupposes that learners have many needs and wishes and they also maintain an array of identities. Moreover, the learner’s investment in second language learning will, over time, lead to the alteration and transformation of their identity. In this view, the question is not whether the learner is motivated or unmotivated, but to what degree is the learner invested in the practices of the learning situation? For example, despite being highly motivated to learn languages, a learner may not be invested in the practices of the language classroom and as a result may choose not to partake. This is turn can lead to the learner being considered as unmotivated, as reported by Duff (2002). Moreover, McKay and Wong (1996) reported that some learners in their study demonstrated ‘selective investment’ in different linguistic skills depending on their ultimate end goals; for some oral proficiency sufficed and therefore their participation in more literacy-based activities was minimal. The work of Norton Pierce and associates (e.g. Norton 2000; Kanno & Norton 2003; Norton Pierce 2005; Norton & Gao 2008; Pavlenko & Norton 2007), alongside Block (2007) and Lantolf (2000) has been central to the shift to a more social view of second language acquisition (discussed in greater detail in section 4.2.2). Their work provides empirical support

for the theoretical ideas presented above which in turn has enabled a more complete view of the learner motivation.

3.1.2 Emotional Development in Adolescence

An important factor in any study of primary to secondary school transition is an appreciation that, not only are the learners moving from one educational context to another, but that they are also experiencing a period of physical and emotional development inherent in progressing from childhood to adolescence. SLA studies that have investigated the role of age in second language learning have tended to centre on the development of enhanced cognitive processing capabilities and the validity (or not) of the Critical Period Hypothesis (Lenneberg 1967). However, when investigating learner attitudes and motivation one needs to also consider the socio-psychological and emotional development of learners who, when moving from childhood to adolescence, are experiencing an emotional 'no-man's-land' (Heaven 2001:28) which normally commences at around the onset of puberty. These elements of emotional development are frequently omitted from interpretations of L2 learner motivation. According to Heaven (2001:26) adolescence is a critical developmental stage in a person's life as it involves:

> 'the coincidence of developing an identity (an understanding of who I am) and self-concept (the collection of beliefs about myself). Thus, the teenager has the challenging task of integrating his or her physical, sexual, and psychological identities'.

As children mature physically and cognitively, and develop higher order thinking and abstract reasoning capabilities, they begin to develop a more complex and critical understanding of themselves as individuals. Their developing sense of 'self' has an increasing influence on the ways in which they attempt to make meaning of the world around them. The development of a 'personal identity' is based upon the individual's self-concept which is multi-faceted in nature, and is comprised of the cognitive aspect of self-perception - 'the particular view we have of ourselves'; the affective aspect of self-esteem - 'the evaluative feelings associated with self-image' and the expectancy aspect of self-efficacy - 'our beliefs about our capabilities in certain areas' (Williams and Burden 1997:97). Dermitzaki & Efklides (2001:277) suggest a fourth component to self-concept which refers to a person's 'perception of the reactions of significant others'. Pre-school aged children can be described as 'learning optimists' (Pinter 2011:33) and have simplistic self-concepts. They rate their abilities high, underrate

the difficulty of tasks and anticipate success. As learners progress through primary school their self-concept becomes more sophisticated; negative as well as positive characteristics are mentioned and they readily compare themselves to peers. On the whole their perceptions of self-concept become more realistic. Adolescent learners, on the other hand, display lower levels of self-esteem and judge themselves more negatively with a greater reliance on feedback from external sources (teacher feedback, assessment grades). Self-concept, however, does not develop in isolation and is socially constructed throughout a person's life through interaction with others. For very young children parents and care-givers are the main source for interaction and feedback, for primary school-aged children teachers are considered to have increasing importance, and in adolescence, the influence of peers assumes greater prominence.

According to Heaven (2001:6), following Havighurst (1972) and Newman and Newman (1987), the key developmental tasks for adolescents are;

- Development of relationship with peers
- Emotional independence
- Preparation for career (vocational identity)
- Sense of morality (or ethical system)
- Development of gender appropriate behaviours (sex-role identity)

The above list highlights the multi-dimensional nature of identity (or a person's sense of who they are) which suggests that adolescents are in the process of developing and maintaining several concurrent and possibly conflicting identities, for example:

- family identity – perceived role within the family, family values, cultural practices, ethics
- school identity – school-based group or collective identity
- vocational identity – envisioning possible future employment and further education- a crucial step towards independence and autonomy and as a way of reinforcing personal identity (Heaven 2001:30)
- sex-role identity – the understanding of being male and female and the appropriate behaviours for the sexes
- group/collective identities – can be related to ethnic identity in the case of immigrants, as well as notions of national identity and 'Britishness'

- religious identity

For adolescents the change in the sphere of influence from parents to teacher and then to peers, may well lead to conflict between personal and public identities. For example, peer pressure and a prevailing anti-school rhetoric may lead to a public identity that is in conflict with a more academically focused personal identity. For immigrant children there may be conflict between the values of the host culture and the family values expressed in the home.

A key aspect of identity formation is 'role experimentation' (Heaven 2001); whereas younger children readily assimilate views of acceptable behaviour, older children become aware of the wider range of roles, life-styles and value systems that are available to them in approaching adulthood. As a result, during the period of adolescence young people will go through a process of exploration in all aspects of their identity and will, through social interaction with significant others, finally commit to, and invest in, attitudes and behaviours that reflect their sense of who they are. To summarise, as learners progress through adolescence they will assume a greater need for control, independence, choice, exploration and the ability to work independently. Adolescents have greater social awareness compared to younger children and as a result more equitable pupil-teacher relations become increasingly desirable, as the learners seek ever increasing participation in the adult world and a sense of parity with adult role models.

3.1.3 The Development of Motivation over time

Numerous international longitudinal studies have shown that motivation for learning changes over time frequently on a downward trajectory, especially within instructed settings. Gardner et al. (2004) investigated the motivation of 197 1st year university students learning French at intermediate to higher-intermediate level. The results of the study showed that there was little change in the variables related to interest in foreign languages, attitudes towards French Canadians, instrumental orientation, desire to learn French, French use anxiety and attitudes towards learning French. There was, however, a significantly greater variation in the scores for the measures directly reflecting the language classroom. Although there is an overall mean decrease over the year, for the lower performing students this decrease became increasingly significant. Those who were less successful liked the course less and were less motivated to learn French; this link between motivation and attainment has

also been reported by Alabau (2002), Gonzalez Garcia (2004), Lasagabaster (2003) and Coleman (1996). The researchers conclude that overall the possibility of motivational change over the year is not great, but is larger for variables that are directly related to the classroom. Furthermore, despite the overall decrease in motivation, the learners' measures of Integrativeness (attitudes to French Canadians and interest in foreign languages) remained relatively stable.

In 1996 Ema Ushioda (2001) undertook a small-scale qualitative study into university-level learners of French in Ireland. In this study the focus of interest is not on whether the more motivated students prove to be more successful, but on how students differ in the way they formulate and value their language learning goals and how such differences in motivational thinking may affect their involvement in learning. Ushioda's approach draws upon a strand of cognitive psychology which considers that:

> 'positive motivation is more than the demonstration of effortful activity or time spent on task. It is reflected in how students think about themselves, the task, and their performance' (Ames 1986:236).

The aim of the study was to explore the qualitative content of language learners' motivational thinking, 'with a view to identifying thought patterns and belief structures that seem effective in sustaining and optimizing involvement in learning' (p.97).

The study involved 20 learners and data was collected at two different points, 15-16 months apart. In the first round the two factors most frequently mentioned by the learners were language related enjoyment/liking and positive learning history. Ushioda asserts that the learners' motivation at this time is not necessarily defined in 'teleological terms in relation to specific goals, future purposes or applications' (p.107) and that the students descriptions of their motivation is mainly framed by their language learning experience to date. Again, a link between attainment and motivation is observed; learners who were already relatively successful were inclined to feel intrinsically motivated and aimed for a high level of L2 fluency which may not be related to a particular future goal (see Ramage (1990) for similar findings). However, in the case of the less successful learners their motivational differences were qualitatively different from the more successful learners as they appeared less focused on language learning experience to date and more on the end goal.

The second round data showed that there had been a qualitative shift in the learners' motivational thinking to a much more instrumental orientation where future goals were much clearer and there was a greater focus on passing exams and future careers. The learners described their motivation at round 2 less in terms of L2 learning and experience and more in relation to other external factors such as other subjects, career and academic success. The results of this study highlight the dynamic nature of motivation throughout a language learning course; it may not be the case that learners always become less motivated but simply place importance on different factors at different times. At the beginning stages while future goals may not be clear in the learners' minds, the emphasis is placed on the language learning experience to date. The results lead Ushioda to state that:

> 'motivation is thus viewed not simply as cause or product of particular learning experiences, but as process – in effect, the ongoing process of how the learner thinks about and interprets events in relevant L2-learning and L2-related experience and how such cognitions and beliefs then shape subsequent involvement in learning'. (p.122)

A number of motivation theories have been reviewed and I consider that in order to achieve a comprehensive view of young learner motivation in instructed settings it is important to draw upon a combination of all of the ideas presented. The approach adopted in the current study will be discussed in section 3.1.8.

3.1.4 Motivation studies in the English context

Section 2.1 provided a detailed overview of language learning in England over the last 20 years and described the ever-decreasing number of pupils opting to study languages past age 14. Numerous reasons for the decline in up-take have been proffered; for Ofsted (2008:40-41) it is due to the perception of difficulty, uninteresting lessons that lack value and relevance and competition with other subjects that are deemed more vocational or more interesting. Macaro (2008) lays the blame at the excessive use of the target language, lack of enjoyment, relevance and progression. Coleman et al. (2007), on the other hand, holds greater societal attitudes, driven by the global prominence of English, the media and government policy, to account for the apparent reluctance of students to learn foreign languages. Over recent years many motivation studies have been undertaken in the English educational setting in an attempt to ascertain what motivates pupils to learn modern languages and to explain the overwhelming decline in interest through secondary school.

In 1984 and 1996 Stables and Wikeley (1999) surveyed Y9 pupils from 10 schools in order to investigate the pupils liking of foreign language learning and where they place it in terms of importance compared to other school subjects. Across both datasets both boys and girls ranked French and German in the bottom half of the subjects and in 1996 both boys and girls placed French and German equal bottom. Several reasons were cited for the pupils not liking French and German: perceived lack of ability, the subject content and subject processes. In 1997 only 8% of the learners placed a modern language among their top three subjects none of them boys. The subjects that dominated the rankings were English, Maths and Science; these are the subjects that are recognised to have value for a future career. During the interviews the learners frequently commented on the lack of perceived career value of languages. The pupils failed to see the association between language study and future employment believing that you only need to speak languages if you work in France or Germany. The researchers claim that the messages from employers requiring language skills were not reaching the school pupils and that those from a lower socio-economic background with lower work aspirations and less experience of travel struggled to see the point. These assertions are reinforced by Clark and Trafford's (1995,1996) statement that students from less privileged backgrounds require more concrete experience of other European cultures to increase their levels of motivation. For Stables et al. (1995:30) 'some subjects attract a level of positive engagement in the middle secondary years because they are seen as necessary (Maths and Science); others because they are enjoyable (Art, PE)'. However, there appear to be few cases when extrinsic need to learn a subject and intrinsic enjoyment of learning that subject are matched. The researchers conclude by stating that due to the lack of instrumental motivation for language learning, it is imperative that language teachers inculcate intrinsic motivation for languages, as well as communicating the potential career value that languages can bring.

Chambers (2000) undertook a longitudinal study over two years of secondary school pupils' perception of their foreign language learning. Chambers compared the attitudes of English learners of German and German learners of English between 1992 and 1994. Overall, the Y7 learners were enthusiastic and positive at the start of their secondary education with more than 80% reporting that they were excited about beginning languages or were quite looking forward to it. When asked to give reasons for their answers provided the learners cited the novelty factor and the positive or negative influence of prior language learning experience. What is interesting to note is that the learners with previous primary languages experience were more likely to

select the top end of the scale suggesting that the learners had enjoyed their primary languages experience and that it served to positively motivate them.

The key question is did they remain motivated? The Y9 data shows that 'the picture is not quite as bright as it had been in Y7' (p58). Those who did not enjoy the subject blamed the teacher, the teaching activities and the difficulty of the subject. The learners enjoyed pair work and group work with speaking, listening and reading cited as popular activities. Some learners just did not see the point in writing, 'we just copy and copy and copy'; 'sometimes all we do is copy out things we do not understand' (p61). The responses for the German learners in Y7 and Y9 were similar to those of the English; pair work and group work were most popular and writing was the least popular of the four skills. Both sets of pupils were in agreement as to the most important factors contributing to a positive view of their foreign language learning experience:

- The teacher
- The textbook
- The equipment
- Teacher-made materials

The differences in attitudes between the English and German pupils were much more marked in the cohort of fifteen year olds. The English pupils' responses displayed greater apathy whereas the German learners were much more forthright in their criticisms and attitudes. Chambers suggests that this may be due to the fact that they have to continue with English and therefore attach more importance to their English learning situation. Ultimately, 77.3% of the English pupils did not continue to learn German. The responses of the German pupils also showed that there is a decrease in enthusiasm for learning English at school. However this was counterbalanced by the perceived necessity of English for a future career; for the German learners Maths, German and English were the three most useful subjects.

Williams et al. (2002) surveyed 228 pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 to ascertain the development of their motivation for language learning over time. On the whole the learners were positively 'integratively' motivated and they generally wanted to do well at languages. Nonetheless, they did not express a strong need to learn languages. Once again, the results showed a decrease in motivation across KS3, with girls displaying higher levels of motivation than boys. Regarding motivation for different

languages, German received much higher scores than French especially for boys who considered French feminine. Yet again a link between attainment and motivation was observed; students at all proficiency levels expressed comparable views about the quality of teaching. However, higher achieving students reported a significantly greater wish to do well in foreign languages and found the lessons significantly more interesting and enjoyable. Furthermore, the need to learn languages was considered much greater than among the lower achieving students. By and large, the older the pupils became the less they saw the importance of learning languages and the less enjoyment they derived from the process.

A large-scale study of Y7-9 pupils conducted in 2005-2006 by Coleman et al. (2007) analysed the nature of learner motivation and its relationship with gender, year of study and type of school. This study incorporated a cross-sectional comparison of different age groups rather than an investigation of the development of motivation over time. The questionnaire results showed that overall motivation was positive (mean 2.67) with a higher mean score in Specialist Languages Colleges. Yet again the study reported that motivation decreased in KS3 especially from years 7-8 and again girls typically scored higher than boys. It is however important to note that overall the learners remained positively motivated by the end of KS3, even if less so that at the beginning. For the researchers the fact that the mean motivation scores remain higher in Specialist Languages Colleges suggests a link between pupil motivation and the nature of their school environment, especially the attitude of the school's senior management team. However Coleman et al., whilst acknowledging the effects of the learning situation on pupil motivation, also stress the importance of wider societal attitudes:

> 'given the sample size and the number of schools involved , it may be surmised that, over and above any factors such as individual classroom experiences, the wearing-off of initial novelty or a general loss of impetus as pupils settle into secondary school, acculturation into adult society's more insular attitudes plays a part here, and that the explicit and implicit messages of British media discourses remain stronger than the voices of Government agencies or those of the many champions of engagement with foreign languages and cultures.' (p.270).

3.1.5 Young learner motivation and age-related differences

The majority of studies that have evaluated age-related differences suggest that young learners display more positive attitudes to language learning than older learners. In general, primary aged learners are described as enthusiastic, interested and highly motivated with language lessons described as fun and enjoyable e.g. Low

et al. (1993, 1995), Mihaljevic Djigunovic (1993, 1995), Muijs et al. (2005), Ofsted (2005, 2011), Wade et al. (2009), Cable et al. (2010) and McManus and Myles (2011). Younger learners find language lessons inherently enjoyable and interesting, with songs and games frequently enjoyed, as well as creative and interactive activities. In general, there are few examples of things that younger learners dislike. Younger learners often perceive themselves as 'good at languages' (Mihaljevic Djigunovic 2009; Cable et al. 2010, Enever 2011) but as the learners grow older their increased language learning experience enables them to make more realistic judgements of their own abilities. Many see the wider value of learning languages at the primary stage and see a real purpose for communication at home and abroad. These findings support the claims of Mihaljevic Djigunovic (1993,1995) that for young learners the a positive view language learning at an early stage plays a major role in the development of favourable attitudes towards the target language and language learning in general.

Nevertheless, previous research of the development of motivation over time shows evidence of a decrease in motivation at around age 11 (Burstall 1974; Nikolov 1999; Lasagabaster 2003; Donato and Tucker 2010) which encompasses a more critical view of the language classroom, alongside a qualitative shift in learner attitudes from integrative (travel and communication) to more instrumental motives as learners grow older. As learners mature there is more of a focus on extrinsic gains for the future (Clément et al. 1994; Nikolov 1999; Tragant 2006; Lamb 2007). Moreover, the decline in attitudes appears to stop at some point in upper secondary education and stabilises later on; Lasagabaster (2003) found no age-related differences in 17-50 year olds. Several possible reasons have been cited for this general pattern of decline in attitudes at age 11-13. Firstly, as learners mature and reach puberty there is a general trend to view all school subjects negatively (Williams et al. 2002). It could also be that the initial novelty factor inflates motivation and once this has worn off, motivation diminishes. Often, due to the nature of language teaching in primary schools, language learning is seen as a respite, a less serious and more enjoyable part of the curriculum. However, as the learners move up to secondary school the status of the subject changes and it becomes part of the mainstream curriculum with a more adult teaching style and assessment, therefore, it can be said that the element of 'fun' is taken away.

It is also important to consider whether the drop in motivation is actually a function of biological age, or a focus on outcomes of the language course and how these two

factors interact. Comparative studies of older and younger learners have shown that it appears to be biological age, rather than the number of hours of study, that determines the types of motivational orientations observed (Tragant 2006; McManus and Myles 2011). However, Gardner et al. (2004) and Ushioda (2001) observed that the motivational orientations of adult language learners also changed over the period of their language learning course. As children move through secondary school, there is an ever increasing emphasis on educational outcomes and career goals, with a greater focus on extrinsic versus intrinsic motives. As a result, especially in situations with weak instrumental motivation, language learning falls down the pecking order of important subjects as the pupils focus on the core subjects of Maths, English and Science.

3.1.6 Primary to secondary to transition and the effect on learner motivation

Finally, returning to the main focus of the thesis, we have seen that language learning motivation fluctuates over time, and it is suggested that primary to secondary transition has a marked effect on learner motivation across many areas of the curriculum (see section 2.2.2). The findings of several large-scale surveys of early language learning have highlighted learner motivation as a key area of concern. Burstall et al. (1974) observed that pupils were initially highly motivated in primary school but became de-motivated following their move into secondary school. Several reasons were cited: the repetition of previously learnt content, teachers' use of the target language and the fact that pupils were placed in mixed-ability groups. Low et al. (1993,1995) also reported a drop in motivation from the final year of primary school to the first year of secondary. In primary school the lessons were seen as fun with songs, games and the use of a more diverse range of activities leading to more varied linguistic input. The secondary school lessons had a greater focus on literacy and for some pupils this led to anxiety around spelling and accuracy. The researchers perceived a marked reduction in pupil participation in the secondary classrooms. Concerns about mixed-ability groups were cited by the more able pupils who felt that they were being held back.

McElwee (2009) remarked upon the learners' loss of enthusiasm for language learning again due to repetition of content and the pupils' lack of perceived progress as did Hill and Ward (2003) in Australia. It is also important to also consider how the change in educational contexts can also affect learners' perception of self-concept. Stipek and MacIver (1989), as well as Dermitzaki & Efkides (2001) argue that, as

students move through learning contexts, for example in the primary to secondary school transition, the use of different and more externally regulated evaluation systems encourage the learners to use more external criteria for judging their abilities which, they argue, leads to a decrease in the perception of ability. When studying the transition from primary to secondary school in Maths, Dermitzaki & Efkides (2001) stated that the learners already had a 'maths self-concept' which was based upon their primary school learning experience. They went on to argue that: 'this self-concept is gradually being changed during transition to junior high-school because in junior high-school the criteria used for assessment of performance change, and therefore students have to revise their personal views regards their competence in Maths' (p.287). One would therefore expect the young learners to have already formed a languages self-concept that may be subject to change over the transition period.

3.1.7 Summary of research findings

The studies discussed in the previous sections exemplify the complex, multi-faceted nature of L2 motivation. Garcia's (1999:231) statement that motivation 'ebbs and flows' is clearly borne out in the research findings. It is clear that there are quantitative and qualitative fluctuations in L2 motivation over time. The causes may be dependent upon context, as well as an array of learner variables including the age of the learner. In the early stages of language learning, the learning situation helps to foster positive attitudes to the target language community and to language learning in general. Moreover, the research has shown that this positive 'integrative' motivation in older learners remains relatively stable over time. However, some studies of adolescent learners, such as Chambers (2000) and Williams et al. (2002), demonstrate that attitudes to particular languages and their speakers become less positive as they move through secondary school. In addition, as learners develop a more 'instrumental orientation' to language learning their pragmatic thinking takes precedence in forming attitudes. It is important to note that many of the aforementioned studies have examined the motivation of learners of English; however the findings can be quite different for learners of languages other than English. For example, the findings of Lamb (2004) and Tragant (2006) demonstrate that the instrumental motivation to learn English can override the lack of enjoyment in the lessons. Furthermore, the instructional setting is seen as only one of several possible venues for learning English. In situations where instrumental motivation is

weak, the learning situation continues to exert a strong influence on learners' attitudes and the teacher's role in this is paramount.

For language learners within Anglophone settings (UK, USA and Australia) the social milieu has a huge role to play. Learners do not have the same instrumental orientation for learning languages due to the global dominance of English and there is often confusion as to what language to learn and the rationale for learning it. It is also said that British language learners have a much weaker form of integrative motivation due to the lack of contact with the target language communities, where there is little opportunity to speak with TL members or to view digital media (films, music and television) in the target language. This situation leads to the conclusion that 'any MFL curriculum in the special UK setting faces real challenges in convincing learners of the value of sustained MFL study' (Mitchell 2003:21). It is not that UK language learners cannot learn languages, it just that often do not see the value: 'for very many, languages are irrelevant to life and career, and are more difficult, more demanding and less enjoyable than other school subjects (Coleman et al. 2007 p.255). Indeed, when evaluating the learning of French and German, for example, research has shown that learners from a range of nationalities have similar (negative) attitudes (Bartram 2010).

Despite the wealth of valuable information that has been generated by motivation studies to date, there are, however, certain limitations in the approaches that have been commonly used. Quantitative and psychometric approaches to motivation studies have dominated in recent decades. However, quantitative approaches assume homogeneity within a given group, and mask the variation between learners within the same, and different, contexts. Such approaches to categorising learners, although providing empirical data to form and validate theoretical constructs have narrowly viewed the individuals as simply language learners even though this is only one facet of who they are as individuals. Moreover, although 'learning context' has recently become increasingly explicit in motivation studies (for example see Coleman 2007) it is generally considered as a background variable which influences motivation but is not controlled by the learner. According to Ushioda (2009:218): 'context or culture is located externally, as something pre-existing, a stable independent background variable, outside the individual'. This conception of context is at odds with poststructuralist approaches that consider the learner and context to have an interdependent, complex and dynamic relationship, and that taking either the learner or the context in isolation presents an incomplete picture of learner motivation. It is

therefore important to keep sight of the individual learners that operate within a given context by including their subjective experiences. This means that, 'in order to have a better understanding of student motivation in learning context we need to consider three parameters a) the task and its context b) the general personal characteristics such as age, cognitive ability, personality and c) the subjective online experiences' (Dermitzaki and Efklides 2001:272). All these aspects will give us an insight into the mechanism through which context influences motivation through the students' awareness of themselves and their subjective experience in the classroom.

3.1.8 Measuring the development of learner motivation: the approach taken in the current study

The current study seeks to measure the intensity and quality of learner attitudes and motivation and how these develop across the transition period, drawing upon a combination of theoretical approaches to L2 motivation theory including Dörnyei's motivational framework alongside socio-cognitive and poststructuralist views of learner identity, attitudes and motivation. The study aims to evaluate and describe the cognitive and affective factors (that have internal and external influences) that lie behind these attitudes. Attitudes, in this sense, are seen to be socially constructed with influence from the L2 classroom and from the wider society. The notions of agency and investment will also be incorporated since young learners may have little or no choice over the language learnt or the activities presented in the classroom. They do, however, have some control over the level and types of participation they will engage with in the language classroom. This approach is taken in order to gain a greater understanding of the variety of factors that can influence individuals, in many different ways, in an attempt to move away from reductionist views of motivation in which the individual learner remains anonymous.

As previously mentioned in section 2.2.8, the second principal research question for the current study is:

> *What effect does the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 have on the children's motivation for foreign language study and their confidence in the classroom?*

In order to fully answer this question four sub-questions have been devised that are informed by previous motivation research:

a. *What is the nature of the learners' motivation for language learning at the end of their primary education?*

b. *How does their L2 motivation develop across the transition to secondary school?*
c. *How does learners' linguistic self-confidence progress over the 12 month period?*
d. *Is there a correlation between motivation and attainment?*

A mixed-method approach will be employed using questionnaires and focus group interviews. The analysis of results from both instruments will firstly be based on Dörnyei's (1994) motivational framework followed by a qualitative interpretation of questionnaire and focus group data. Dörnyei's (1994) framework was chosen as it was considered to be the most appropriate for evaluating motivation within a foreign language instructed setting since it incorporates the principal elements of Gardner's framework along with a further level focussed on the learning situation. Using a framework based upon Gardner's model increases the validity of the findings as the model is principled, empirically tested and well researched and this permits comparisons with research within other contexts and with studies of older learners. However, it is important to state clearly how each construct is operationalised within the current study so that even though the same term is used in different studies, what it is measuring and the findings may represent something different. As we have seen, the notion of integrativeness has been used frequently but has different meanings to different people.

Five key areas of motivation constituents are measured in the current study:

- integrative orientation
- instrumental orientation
- learning situation
- parental attitudes
- linguistic self-confidence

Integrative orientation in this questionnaire is predominantly focussed on the learners' attitudes to the native speaker L2 community in France for several reasons. Firstly, French does not have the global language status of English. Secondly, the learners are in relative geographical proximity to the TL community and thirdly due to the fact that the majority of intercultural understanding taught in the primary schools focused on life in France. However, it is also important to elicit the learners' attitudes to learning other languages as well as French to gain an insight into their view of

language learning per se. Instrumental orientation relates to the learners' perceptions of the usefulness of learning French and for language learning in general. It was imperative to include this as a lack of instrumental motivation has been cited in many UK-based research projects where languages are considered irrelevant for future life due to the expansion of English as a world language. Attitudes to the learning situation are an indispensable part of this transition study as it was in this area that the greatest fluctuations were expected. As a result of the change in learning situation, the age of the learners and the professed lack of instrumentality within the UK setting, it was considered that attitudes to the learning situation would be the most prominent feature within the learners' responses and would have the greatest influence on learner attitudes and their resulting investment in language learning practices. Moreover, the data from the focus group interviews and lesson observations will provide insights into how the learners' physical and emotional development influences their attitudes to language learning and also their investment in classroom practices.

It is believed that, at this stage, the learners' attitudes will still be influenced by the attitudes of parents and therefore it was considered necessary to explore the learners' perception of parental support and to evaluate if this has any relationship to overall motivation or attainment. Finally, linguistic self-confidence was operationalised using the general notion of self-confidence which 'refers to the belief that a person has the ability to produce results, accomplish goals, or perform tasks competently' (Dörnyei 2005:83). The term 'self-confidence' encompasses both Clément's notion of self-confidence which is claimed to be socially constructed via contact with the L2 community and Bandura's cognitive notion of self-efficacy. I take the view that the learners' feelings of confidence and competence are socially constructed within the language classroom, in general the only venue for L2 use, and for the majority of the learners their feelings of self-efficacy will be driven by experience in the classroom over which the teacher has a key influence. As the classroom is the key arena it is crucial to understand the influence the change in learning situation from primary to secondary school has on feelings of self-confidence in the language classroom. It is necessary to consider the role of the new teacher, the group dynamics of a language classroom full of unfamiliar pupils and the unfamiliar activities that are undertaken. Chapter 6 provides a detailed description of the methodological approach that was taken and Chapter 7 will discuss the data analysis and results.

Chapter 4

Linguistic Progression part 1:
Second Language Learning and Vocabulary Development

4.1 Introduction

As previously stated, the current project seeks to not only measure how learner motivation progresses over the transition period but also how the learners' knowledge and use of French develops over the year. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks from the field of second language acquisition (SLA) research the current study examines both vocabulary and two key areas of grammatical development: grammatical gender and verb morphology. Each area of investigation will be described in this and the next chapter. However the initial part of this chapter will present an account of the development of SLA research over recent decades and also some key theoretical constructs, whereas the final section will outline the approach taken in the current study.

4.2 Second Language Learning: theory and research

Learning a language requires the acquisition of multiple types of knowledge and skills; a learner requires knowledge of the linguistic properties (lexis, morphology, syntax, phonology, semantics) of the language and the procedural and situational knowledge in order to use the language communicatively and effectively in social situations (pragmatics and discourse). Myles (2010:227) proffers six core questions to be addressed by SLA research in order to gain a full understanding of how languages are learnt:

- what linguistic system underpins learner performance and how is it constructed and developed over time?
- what is the role of the L1 and L2 in the development of learner language?
- how do learners access their L2 knowledge in real-time language use?
- how do individual differences and learning styles influence development?
- what is the role of input and interaction in forming L2 knowledge and language processing and how do environmental or contextual factors influence the development of learner language?

These questions are focused on very different facets of L2 development including the formal system, the internal cognitive language learning mechanisms and the sociocultural factors involved in the language learning process.

4.2.1 Cognitive perspectives on SLA and instructed language learning

By the mid-1980s, there were two dominant approaches to SLA theory generation and research; on the one side were formal linguistic approaches (Chomsky 2005; Hawkins 2001; White 2003) and on the other cognitive-interactionist approaches (Long 1996; Gass 1997; Gass and Varonis 1989;1994; Swain 1995). Although relevant to first language and naturalistic second language learning contexts, formal linguistic approaches proved less directly applicable to explaining learning in instructed learning settings in which there is vastly reduced linguistic input and highly variable learner outcomes. As a result researchers interested in formal language instruction turned to concepts drawn from the field of cognitive psychology to help them explain observed phenomena and over recent decades, cognitive-interactionist approaches have dominated the domain of instructed SLA research (Ortega 2012). SLA research into cognition has been centred on several major assumptions drawn from the field of cognitive psychology (Ortega 2009).

Firstly, that the structure of human cognition encompasses both *representation*, referring to grammatical, lexical and schematic knowledge, and *access* which means the processing (activation or use) of this knowledge which can be either controlled or automatic. Key to the explanation of dual processing is the notion of *consciousness,* in that automatic processing is considered as unconscious and voluntary (or controlled processing) as conscious activity. It is also acknowledged that cognitive resources such as *attention* and *memory* are limited and that automatic processes require less effort and involve fewer cognitive resources meaning that many can run in parallel. Controlled processes allow learners to monitor their processing and to self-regulate; however this requires much greater effort and greater demands on the available cognitive resources. The ‘limited capacity model’ of information processing (Ortega 2009:84) predicts that performance reliant on controlled processing will be more inconsistent and susceptible to distractions than performance based upon automatic processing. Skill acquisition theory (Bialystok and Sharwood Smith 1985; McLaughlin 1987, DeKeyser 1997) posits that learning involves moving from controlled to automatic performance and that his process is enabled by relevant and sufficient practice. For example, L2 learners begin with explanations from their teachers and through practice, this knowledge should be converted into ability for use. Practice is central to reinforce the links in long-term memory and to restructure the mental representations of linguistic knowledge which in turn will lead to large gains in accessibility to available knowledge which is termed *automaticity* (Segalowitz

2003). In SLA terms *automaticity* is most frequently related to notions of *fluency* which may well lead to enhanced L2 performance in many areas or may motivate learners so that they become more engaged in the L2 learning process.

4.2.1.1 Learner-internal factors that influence second language development

A consistent finding of research focussed on instructed learners is that there is huge variability in learner outcomes, for instance some learners progress rapidly whereas others make little or no progress. Consequently a large field of SLA research into individual differences has emerged over recent decades. Previous research has shown that learner-internal factors such as latent cognitive abilities, L1 literacy levels, the age of the learners and the learners' attitudes and motivation correlate highly with learner outcomes. For example, research has shown that L2 use requires greater cognitive resources than L1 and that memory plays a key role in L2 ability (Atkins and Baddeley 1998). Human memory can be viewed as structured hierarchically into long-term and short-term or working memory. Long-term memory is related to mental knowledge representations and is practically unlimited. Knowledge can either be *explicit-declarative* (facts or events) or *implicit-procedural* (related to skills and habit learning). Working memory, in contrast, relates to knowledge access and is limited. A person's working memory capacity will designate what can be stored momentarily and how long the input can be active and available to be assimilated with pre-existing knowledge held in the long-term memory (see Baddeley 2000 for a model of working memory). Empirical studies have found that L2 working memory capacity is less for the L2 than for the L1 (Harrington and Sawyer 1992) and that there is evidence of an L2-L1 lag which becomes less marked with increased L2 proficiency (Ortega 2009:90).

Research on working memory has formed a large part of SLA research into individual differences and the findings support the assertion that different aspects of working memory hold an important role in L2 learning. Geva and Ryan (1993) found a close relationship between L2 proficiency and measures of L2 working memory as did Miyake, Friedman and Osaka (1998). Papagno et al. (1991), Service (1992) and Service and Kohonen (1995) observed a relationship between working memory and lexical acquisition, as did Alexiou (2010) in his study of primary-aged learners of English. Working memory has also been shown to be a factor in the learning of grammatical rules (N.Ellis & Schmidt 1997; J.Williams 1999; J.Williams and Lovatt 2003). Furthermore, Ando et al. (1992) and Mackey et al. (2002) observed that

learners with a higher working memory derived more lasting benefits from communicative instruction and interaction than those with lower working memory capacities. According to Engle (2002) working memory is not simply about how many items can be stored in memory but is about using *attention* to maintain or suppress information. Robinson (2003:631) states that:

> 'attention to and subsequent memory for attended language input are both essential for SLA, and are intricately related. Attention is the process that encodes language input, keeps it active in working and short-term memory, and retrieves it from long-term memory'.

It is clear that attention is limited and selective and can, in part, be controlled by the individual, or directed by another such as the class teacher.

Successive research studies conducted by Richard Sparks, Leonore Ganschow and colleagues suggest that L1 literacy skills provide the foundation for successful instructed foreign language learning (Ganschow and Sparks 1991; 2001; Sparks et al. 2006) and that native language ability has the greatest influence on outcomes. Sparks & Ganschow (1991), Ganschow & Sparks (2001) and Sparks et al. (2006) claim that learners with low overall L1 language skills will have greater levels of anxiety and lower levels of motivation; some of those at risk of failing will have difficulty with phoneme/grapheme correspondences (PGCs) and syntactic processing. Furthermore they assert that the native language difficulties that can impact foreign language learning can be recognised in elementary school. Sparks & Ganschow (1991) introduced the Linguistic Coding Differences Hypothesis (LCDH) which claims that L1 language skills serve as a foundation for learning a foreign language; according to LCDH, learners have innate differences in their ability to process and use language, and any difficulties with one aspect of language (e.g. phonology/orthography) will negatively impact L1 and L2 development. Subsequent research demonstrated that successful second language learners had significantly stronger native language skills in the areas of phonology/orthography and syntax, however not in the area of semantics (Sparks et al. 1992a; 1992b; Sparks et al. 1997; 1998). Their research has also emphasised the importance of FL word recognition and decoding in the development of a second language, where those learners with a greater knowledge of phoneme/grapheme correspondences (PGCs) and word recognition achieved higher levels of attainment in the L2. Koda (1997) also found that learners experiencing problems with orthographic processing had more difficulty with word retrieval and as a result poor reading skills.

It is crucial at this point to discuss how cognitive abilities, general academic ability, L1 literacy and school outcomes relate to each other. Working memory refers to the ability to process and remember information and is comprised of multiple components for the temporary storage and manipulation of information (see Baddeley 2000). Cowan & Alloway (2009) state that differences in working memory abilities have significant consequences for children's capacity to acquire new knowledge and skills within school and this is borne out in the findings of Alloway & Alloway (2010) who reported that working memory skills were the best predictor of literacy and numeracy over a six year period. Swanson et al. (2004) also claim that working memory predicts reading achievement, notwithstanding measures of phonological skills. Moreover, studies have also shown that working memory limitations can be related to L1 reading disability (Gathercole et al. 2006) and L1 language impairments (Alloway & Archibald 2008). It is therefore clear that studies from cognitive psychology are in line with SLA research that emphasises a key role for working memory in the acquisition of both first and second language abilities.

Furthermore, in the field of cognitive psychology there has been a debate over recent years as to the relationship between working memory and general reasoning abilities which are learnt through formal education. Reasoning abilities refer to the capacity to identify patterns and relations between objects and to infer rules for novel items. The current consensus is that they are related but not identical constructs (Alloway & Alloway 2010; Conway et al. 2003; Kane et al. 2004) and that working memory capacity should be 'regarded as an explanatory construct for intellectual abilities' (Oberauer et al. 2005). Working memory can be considered a 'pure measure of a child's learning potential' (Alloway and Alloway 2010:27) and the child's capacity to learn whereas general intelligence and academic attainment measure that which the child has already learned. Ganschow & Sparks' assertion that L1 literacy is vital in second language development is also confirmed. Since the findings indicate that working memory has a key function in the development of L1 literacy skills and that working memory is impaired with an L1-L2 lag, it then follows that those learners who have literacy difficulties in their L1 will also encounter difficulties in L2 development as the underlying cognitive processes used in both cases are the same. Moreover, the difficulty for L2 learners is further compounded over time by the fact that learning is an incremental and gradual process. Some learners will not only have difficulty in L2 processing but that they are likely to have less well-developed reasoning skills and as a result some learners will also have less previously learnt (crystallised) knowledge to call upon in order to help them process the new linguistic input.

Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that cognitive abilities are only one factor in successful language learning. Motivation is evidently a powerful influence on all aspects of L2 learning. According to Nation (2005), for example, motivation is a key issue in the development of L2 vocabulary and Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) also claim that motivation influences the retention of unfamiliar words in incidental learning tasks. As discussed in section 3.1.4 motivation for FL study is a particular issue with the British setting and this will therefore also need to be considered in the interpretation of any data relating to pupils' lexical or grammatical progress within the current study.

4.2.1.2 Implicit vs, explicit language instruction

Another main aim of cognitivist theories of language learning is to inform pedagogical practice within language classrooms. To this end many studies have examined the advantages of explicit vs. implicit instruction. Implicit instruction aims to create an environment where learners can learn 'experientially through learning how to communicate in the L2' (R. Ellis 2005:713). Explicit instruction, in contrast, frequently draws learners' attention to what is to be learned and draws upon a structural rather than a task-based syllabus. During explicit instruction learners are also encouraged to develop metalinguistic awareness of grammar rules, for example, either deductively by studying the rule, or inductively working out the rule for themselves. Table 4.1 below displays the differing characteristics of explicit vs. implicit form-focused instruction as conceptualised by Housen & Pierrard (2005). There are two main types of form-focused instruction that have been discussed in the literature: Focus on Form (FonF) and Focus on Forms (FonFs). These terms were both introduced by Long (1991) initially in the context of grammar learning but extended to vocabulary learning by Laufer (2005). Focus on Form involves 'drawing students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on the meaning or communication' (Long 1991:45-46). In this case form also includes the function of the form. FonFs refers to the teaching of 'discrete linguistic structures in separate lessons' (Laufer & Rozovski-Roitblat 2011:394). According to Long (1991) FonFs encourages learners to view language as an object of study, whilst FonF encourages the view of language as a tool for communication.

Table 4.1: characteristics of implicit and explicit instruction

Implicit FFI	**Explicit FFI**
Attracts attention to target form	*Directs* attention to target form
Is delivered *spontaneously* (e.g. in an otherwise communication-oriented activity)	Is *predetermined* and *planned* (e.g. as the main focus and goal of a teaching activity)
Is unobtrusive (minimal interruption of communication of meaning)	Is obtrusive (interruption of communication of meaning)
Presents target forms in context	Presents target forms in isolation
Makes no use of metalanguage	Uses metalinguistic terminology (e.g. rule explanation)
Encourages free use of target form	Involves controlled practice of target form

Housen & Pierrard 2005:10

Schmidt (2001) argues that form focused instruction is necessary for acquisition to take place in instructed settings, claiming that learners require opportunities to focus on the relationship of form and meaning. Also, form focused instruction permits the teacher to draw attention to learner errors and also to focus attention on specific linguistic items that learners need to notice, but do not. In their study of English speaking learners of French in an immersion setting in Canada, Swain and Lapkin (1982) observed that even after a large amount of instruction in the target language, learners clearly displayed non-native-like productive abilities. The learners continued to have issues with grammatical gender, agreement errors, absence of tense marking and a lack of politeness marking. Possible explanations are that the learners did not notice because these areas are neither communicatively problematic, nor conceptually similar to the L1, or perhaps not acoustically salient.

Norris and Ortega (2000) undertook a meta-analysis of research into the effectiveness of L2 instruction from 1980 -1998. The results showed instruction does make a significant difference to second language learning and, in terms of instructional types, the only clear finding is that there was an advantage for explicit over implicit types of L2 instruction. However, it is important to note that there has been a bias for testing explicit, declarative knowledge with an apparent insensitivity to interlanguage change and a lack of concern for the reliability of measures used (Doughty 2003:271). Furthermore, 90% of the studies used discrete-point or declarative knowledge-based measures rather than investigating any real language use under spontaneous conditions and therefore was investigating primarily

decontextualised, declarative knowledge under highly controlled conditions. Of greater concern is that due to the controlled nature of the tasks, highly restricted the outcome measures were used, raising questions about validity of measurement (Truscott 1998). Consequently, when considering the role of instruction we see a complex picture in which the effect of instruction can have many mediating factors such as: how the instruction is delivered, the nature of the target structure and the individual learners in the class. As an example, DeKeyser (2003:334) argues that the effectiveness of rule instruction is dependent on the rule being covered:

> 'abstractness and distance play a major role in the differential effectiveness of implicit and explicit learning, along with rule scope, rule reliability and salience. The harder it is to learn something through simple association, because it is too abstract, too distant, too rare, too unreliable, or too hard to notice, the more important explicit learning processes become'.

What's more the concept of rule difficulty is not only comprised of the inherent complexity of the rule but also the ability of the learner; what may be considered moderately difficult for one learner may be easy for another depending on individual factors such as their L1 background or levels of motivation.

4.2.2 The pluralisation of SLA approaches

Until the early 2000s the field of SLA was dominated by cognitively-orientated, mainly quantitative research. Despite the significant wealth of knowledge and insights that cognitivist research has generated in terms of our understanding of language processing and use and the development of fluency there were some limitations in the approach and for the implications of research results for real-life language classrooms. It is clear that the laboratory studies do not reflect real-life learning practices and it is questionable how far you can isolate variables that would be interacting in natural contexts. There is also little, or no, acknowledgement of the learner as an individual and a social being with their own thoughts, feelings and emotions and how these may affect, and be affected by, their learning environment. Due to these limitations some researchers turned to more social explanations of SLA phenomena, which mirrored the epistemological development that had taken place within other fields of social science. This arose from the conflict between biological endowment, on the one hand, and sociality on the other. According to Ortega (2012:208) these tensions originated from:

- 'a preference for nativist vs. empiricist theories;

- approaches to knowledge from the etic lens of researchers vs. the emic lens of human participants;
- the search for general vs. particular explanations; and
- the analytical emphasis on homogeneity vs. variability in human and social phenomena.

Following the 'social turn' (Block 2003) in SLA theory, and the ensuing call for greater theoretical pluralism, there has been an expansion and diversification of SLA research to include an increasing number of studies emphasising the importance of individual learner factors and also contextual variables, either specific to the learning environment or to wider societal values. These more socially-oriented studies have investigated for example: the co-construction of identities, the communicative needs of language users, the social status of the language and the use of language within *'communities of practice'* (Norton 2000, 2001; Norton & McKinney 2011, Lantolf & Genung 2003; Yashima 2005). Socio-cultural theories of language learning are concerned with dialogic interaction and afford greater prominence to the role of social context in language learning.

The epistemological diversity recently seen in SLA has bought about many benefits to the instructed SLA research community. Firstly, it thrust the notion of learner consciousness and agentivity to the forefront of SLA research. As a result learning is viewed increasingly as something that people actively participate in and make happen which means there is a greater tendency for the inclusion of the voices of the research participants. Social perspectives of SLA also acknowledge that learning a language is much more than learning a set of linguistic items and that it can also entail learning social conventions and is related to identity (as discussed in the previous chapter). For Ortega (2012:216) the changes seen as a result of the pluralisation of knowledge in SLA 'offer improvements over past excessively naive and simplified notions of what instructed SLA research can attain'. Nevertheless, the resultant theoretical pluralism has led to questions around the commensurability of different research perspectives and whether the diverse views of language learning can be combined to create an overarching theory of language learning. There are, of course, SLA researchers who believe the two opposing views (formal vs. cognitive) are not incompatible, who consider that language learning is driven by social and communicative needs, but also that there is an internal formal system to which language must conform (Mitchell and Myles 2004; Myles 2010; Ortega 2011; 2012; R. Ellis 2010; Seedhouse 2010). Evidence for a formal system can be found, for

example, in the wealth of literature describing the developmental sequences that learners progress through regardless of their L1. Nevertheless, it is clear from many L2 studies that the social context will shape a learner's willingness and ability to learn a language. Taking a middle-ground or a 'non-judgmental relativist position (R. Ellis 2010:30) perspective enables researchers to not feel constrained by strong versions of opposing theoretical perspectives so that they:

> 'can be primarily interested in the development of the processing system without denying that the nature of the linguistic system the learners construct is subject to certain constraints. And researchers can be interested in what learners actually do with their L2 when engaging in various social encounters, and how they co-construct meaning as well as a changing identity, without denying that these social processes interact with cognitive processes' (Myles 2010:232).

4.3 Measuring linguistic progression across the transition phase: the approach of the current study

To summarise, following the review of current literature related to language teaching and transition in chapter 1, three principal areas of enquiry were highlighted for an investigation of primary to secondary transition, namely: linguistic progression, motivation and pedagogy. The current study aims to not only provide a description of how these different areas change and develop over the transition period, but also will evaluate how they interact and influence each other. What is clear from the review of previous research studies is that there is very little classroom-based research undertaken with language learners in the UK and that there is a great need to obtain longitudinal data on the lexical and grammatical development of young learners, especially in relation to primary school-aged learners. Firstly we need an indication of what levels of performance can be expected at the end of a primary languages programme and of course, how learners progress over the transition to secondary school in terms of linguistic development. Previous studies have shown that progress is relatively slow in secondary school and that there appears to be a hiatus in progress after the first year. Although the current study covers the 12 months from the end of Year 6 to the end of Year 7 it will be interesting to see if a similar slow down can be observed.

One drawback of the approaches in the studies reviewed in the last two chapters is that they often focus on quantitative approaches to assessing language development and do not provide information on the development of individual learners or

information on the nature of the language instruction they have received, as well as contextual factors that may have influenced development. In order to gain a full insight into the development of L2 competence it is essential to examine the environmental and individual factors that may have influenced the results. Motivation appears to play a key role, not just in how learners perform in the research tasks, but also in relation to the attitudes and uptake from the language lessons themselves and yet this is often overlooked. Furthermore, L1 literacy levels have been shown to be influential in L2 outcomes in instructed settings and therefore this is an element that should not be neglected when monitoring developmental outcomes. In light of this, studies that can combine quantitative measures of lexical development, L2 motivation levels, scores on school based foreign language assessments and indicators of general academic ability, alongside a qualitative description of the nature of classroom L2 pedagogy should help to fill some of the gaps in current knowledge.

The current study takes the 'middle-ground perspective' described in the previous section and is focused upon gaining a comprehensive and holistic view of the development of L2 French within an instructed setting. The view that human beings are little more than language processing computers and that language learning is simply something that happens to them inside their head, divorced from their environment, seems overly simplistic; it should be acknowledged that environmental and contextual factors will indubitably impact outcomes and each person's learning process will be influenced by their own individual factors. That said, I do consider that cognitivist theories of language learning remain crucial to understanding the learning processes that take place with the L2 classroom and therefore these will play a key role in the evaluation of linguistic development and motivation across the primary to secondary phases of education. The approach taken, therefore, could therefore resemble what R.Ellis (2010) terms a 'composite theory', or Seedhouse's (2010) 'theoretical eclecticism', both of which incorporate cognitive and social elements, and this has much in common with theories that combine the two approaches such as Batstone's (2010) sociocognitive theory of language learning.

R.Ellis' (2010) framework for comparing of cognitive and social theories of SLA is a useful tool for understanding the approach employed in this study. The categorised constructs are listed below. After construct is followed by a brief description the view taken for the current study:

- **Language and mental representations** – encompasses a predominantly cognitive focus and considers language to be based upon rule-like competence.
- **Social context** – for this study a more social view will be adopted in which context is not just seen as influencing rate of acquisition but also as something that is socially-constructed and as a factor that will have a strong bearing on L2 use and consequently acquisition
- **Learner identity** – again this has a social focus inasmuch as learner identity is viewed as multiple, dynamic and socially co-constructed
- **Input** – the role of input stems from both cognitive and social viewpoints. On the one hand, it is considered as the source of acquisition, but on the other hand input is seen as both linguistic and non-linguistic and as derived from context and use
- **Interaction** – this is viewed as predominantly a source of input but it is also acknowledged that L2 interaction can determine how learners become involved in the L2 classroom community and can also have an influence on attitudes and motivation for language learning
- **Language learning** – the study calls upon a cognitive theory of learning in which L2 acquisition processes take place in the mind of the learner. However it is also acknowledged that this is undoubtedly affected by the learning environment. Learning in this study is seen as incremental and continuous and as something that needs to be investigated over time. Evidence of learning will be based upon change in L2 use. In order to say a learner has progressed, there needs to be evidence that a word or form is stored in the learner's memory and that the learner 'could recognise it's meaning and/or produce it unaided on a later occasion' (Ellis 2010:26).

To fulfil the aims of this approach a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used in order to gain a detailed insight into the language learning experience of a small number of learners, with a focus on commonalities as well as variability in performance, alongside an analysis of learner motivation. For each area of enquiry there will firstly be a quantitative approach to analysis, however this will then be coupled with a holistic, qualitative and interpretive focus in order to try and gain insights into the nature of learner development. The study does not aim to deliver a detailed examination of classroom practice, however, through the use of lesson observations and field notes it is possible to gain an insight into the learners'

language learning experience. The research methodology and instruments for this study will be presented in detail in the following chapter whereas the data processing, analysis and results will be discussed chapters 6 and 8.

4.4 Vocabulary Development

The first element of linguistic progression to be examined is vocabulary development and this section presents the theoretical background to vocabulary research along with the findings of previous studies. The acquisition of vocabulary is a key component of any language learning effort and is one of the main tasks facing language learners from the outset (Verhallen and Schoonen 1998, Tidball and Treffers-Daller 2008). Vocabulary learning is a life-long task in which L1 speakers and L2 learners continue to acquire new lexical items throughout their lifetime, long after the acquisition of the grammatical forms of the language. According to Long and Richards (2007:12) vocabulary is 'the core component of all the language skills'. Wilkins (1972:111) states that: 'without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary *nothing* can be conveyed'. Indeed it can be seen that lexicon plays a central role in all current models of language competence i.e. Bachman and Palmer (1996:68), and language acquisition theories originating from varying research traditions including minimalist, constructionist and connectionist frameworks among others. For example, in construction grammars (Croft 2001; Fillmore 1988; Goldberg 1995; Tomasello 1998a and 1998b) and Lexical Functional Grammar (Bresnan 1978; Kaplan and Bresan 1982; Bresnan 2001) the acquisition of grammar is driven by the lexis. The lexicon also forms the core element of The Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995, 2000) and the differentiation of languages is at the level of the lexicon (Mitchell and Myles 2004:54; Malvern et al. 2008:269). Vocabulary knowledge also figures prominently in the assessment of language proficiency. The results of numerous studies evaluating L2 speaking proficiency demonstrate that vocabulary knowledge plays a significant role in rater evaluations (de Jong et al 2012).

Research into vocabulary acquisition, relatively ignored by mainstream applied linguistics until the 1990s, has risen in prominence over recent years coinciding with technological advances in the capturing, processing and analysis of lexical data (Nation 2007xii). The results of L1 and L2 vocabulary research have proved relevant for many fields of knowledge, for example; forensic linguistics, clinical linguistics and SLI studies among others (see Malvern et al. 2004:5-15 for an overview). Lexical knowledge also plays a critical role in text comprehension (Hu and Nation 2000;

Nation 2006) and is regarded as an accurate indicator of foreign language ability (Milton 2006). Furthermore, several studies that will be detailed in the following sections found receptive vocabulary measures an effective predictor of overall MFL exam grade (Milton 2006, 2008). Language teachers as well as researchers have a keen interest in understanding how vocabulary develops (Macaro 2003:6) and the learning of vocabulary is also of key importance to the language learners themselves. Data from the focus groups interviews undertaken in this study (see section 7.2.3) show that learning vocabulary is a clear and tangible sign of progress for the learners. In round three, 50% of the learners attributed their perceived slow progress in French to forgetting vocabulary, which was an obvious source of frustration. On the other hand, those learners who said that they had improved frequently based this opinion on the fact they knew more words.

Despite the fact that vocabulary knowledge formed a key element of the KS2 framework for languages and also the NC for modern languages, we have little data on what can realistically be attained through a primary languages and secondary school programme. This is due to the absence of clear benchmark data, and the scarcity of evidence on how learners' vocabulary knowledge develops over the course of their instruction within the UK setting. As Milton (2006) points out there is little information in the current literature about French foreign language lexis and very little idea about what words are learnt and what variation there is amongst learners. Spoken vocabulary is particularly under-researched (Lorenzo-Dus 2007) and although there have been many L1 studies over recent decades evaluating the development of lexical knowledge over time, there are very few longitudinal L2 studies for languages other than English. There are exceptions including Myles (2003), who studied the development of vocabulary within L2 French narratives, Milton (2006); David (2008a, 2008b) and Cable et al. (2010). However in the main these are cross-sectional studies that did not follow the same learners over time. The findings of these studies will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

4.4.1 What does it mean to know a word?

The learning of L2 vocabulary is not just about coming across a word once and then knowing it. Word knowledge is multi-faceted and involves far more than simply word recognition. For example you need to learn what it means, how it is pronounced and also where it fits in a sentence. Firstly, one must consider the 'learning burden' (Swenson and West 1934; Nation 2001:23) of a word which refers to the amount of

effort required to learn a word. Word difficulty has been shown to be related to several factors such as: pronounceability, whether it is a content or function word and its part of speech (see Willis and Ohashi 2012 for an overview). The more typical a word is the easier it is to learn and 'the more the word represents patterns and knowledge that learners are already familiar with, the lighter the learning burden is' (Nation 2001:23).

The learning burden is also related to the L1 of the learner, their familiarity with the L2 and their language learning experience. For example, if a word is a loan word from the first language, following regular spelling and sound patterns and having roughly the same meaning as in the L1, then the learning burden will be light and it will be easier to learn and retain. This is corroborated by the findings of Szpotowicz (2009) who observed that learners in her study found were more able to recall words that contained the sounds of Polish, that were easy to pronounce and evoked associations with Polish words. The results of the study by Ellis & Ohashi (2012) also showed that cognates, defined by Lado (1956:32) as words: 'that are similar in form and in meaning', played an influential role in word learning and that learners required more encounters with non-cognates than with cognates in order to retain words. The important influence of French/English cognates was also noted by Laufer and Paribakht (1998) who found that French speaking ESL students performed better in a productive vocabulary task than learners from other nationalities due to the large number of French-English cognates. Furthermore, Horst and Collins (2006) showed that learners may initially use low frequency items such as *respond* than the more common form *answer* because it is closer to the French equivalent (*répondre* in this case). Tidball and Treffers-Daller (2008) also found that cognates played an important role in vocabulary development of English learners of L2 French.

4.4.2 Receptive vs. productive vocabulary

It is important to make the distinction between receptive word knowledge which relates to the ability to use the word in listening or reading, and productive word knowledge which involves the ability to use the word in speaking or writing. In both the L1 and L2 the passive (receptive) lexicon is larger than the active (productive) lexicon; Waring (1997) posits that productive vocabulary is only 50% of receptive vocabulary. Furthermore, productive vocabulary develops more slowly than receptive vocabulary and cannot be taken as an accurate indicator of productive vocabulary knowledge (Nation 2001; Read 2000). The assumption is that receptive knowledge

precedes productive knowledge and frequently gets more practice. Nation (2001) offers several reasons as to why receptive vocabulary develops more quickly; receptive use of vocabulary appears to be easier than productive use, productive use requires more precise knowledge of the word and the learning of output patterns, also there may be a lack of motivation for language use on the part of the learner. Furthermore, DeKeyser (2007) argues that if productive use is required than there must be opportunities for learners to practise their productive skills.

Research has shown that vocabulary learning is incremental in nature in terms of the size and the mastery of individual items and that items need to be met many times to be learned (Schmitt 2010). In his 1998 study, Schmitt found that it took time for learners to develop full word knowledge. Initially they knew the word class of the item and its core meaning sense, but not all the possible senses of the word. Rather than looking at a word as known/unknown or learnt/unlearnt, Henriksen (1999) argues that word knowledge should be placed on a continuum ranging from zero knowledge to partial to precise. The multifaceted nature of word knowledge is also demonstrated by table 4.2 below taken from Nation (2001:27). The table details what is involved in knowing a word and elaborates on the different facets of receptive and productive vocabulary. Another important point to consider is that vocabulary learning is not a neat linear affair and that learners also forget many words that they have been exposed to. Welten et al. (1989) observed that significant attrition occurred within the first 2 years of learning and then evened out. Moreover, even though research has shown mixed results according to different methods used, lexical knowledge appears to be more vulnerable to attrition than other linguistic aspects, such as phonological or grammatical knowledge. Furthermore productive vocabulary is more likely to be lost than receptive vocabulary (Cohen 1989). It is clear that vocabulary knowledge remains unstable and can fluctuate until the word is ‘fixed’ in memory (Schmitt 2010:23). So what does this mean for language teaching if vocabulary learning is incremental and gradual and forgetting is inevitable? There have been many studies evaluating the most effective methods for teaching and learning vocabulary and some of these will be reviewed in the following section.

Table 4.2: Components of word knowledge (Nation 2001:27)

Form	Spoken	R	What does a word sound like?
		P	How is the word pronounced?
	Written	R	What does a word look like?
		P	How is the word written and spelled?
	Word parts	R	What parts are recognisable in this word?
		P	What word parts are needed to express meaning?
Meaning	Form and meaning	R	What meaning does the word form signal?
		P	What word form can be used to express this meaning?
	Concepts and referents	R	What is included in the concept?
		P	What items can the concepts refer to?
	Associations	R	What other words does this word make us think of?
		P	What other words could we use instead of this one?
Use	Grammatical functions	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
		P	In what patterns must we use this word?
	Collocations	R	What words or types of words occur with this one?
		P	What words or types of words must we use with this one?
	Constraints on use	R	Where, when and how often would we meet this word?
		P	Where, when and how often can we use this word?

4.4.3 The teaching and learning of vocabulary

Many researchers (Elgort & Nation 2010, N. Ellis 2008, Laufer 2006, Nation 2001) argue that successful vocabulary learning within foreign language instructed settings requires high levels of language awareness, form-focused instruction and explicit learning. According to Laufer (2005 p.226-227) explicit instruction is required since L2 learners ignore difficult, unfamiliar words and often fail to retain words that they have guessed which may hinder the incidental learning of unknown words. Moreover Laufer (2005) asserts that FonFs may well be more effective for vocabulary learning than meaning-focused activities. Indeed many studies have shown that explicit learning is more effective for vocabulary learning than implicit engagement (de la Fuente 2006; Laufer 2005; Laufer & Rozovi-Roitblat 2012; Schmitt 2010) but there is no consensus as to whether FonF or FonFs is more effective (Laufer & Rozovi-Roitblat 2012). Several studies (reviewed in Laufer & Rozovi-Roitblat 2012) have shown varying results for different types of vocabulary activities such as: consulting a dictionary, reading with marginal glosses, post-reading productive tasks, sentence completing and word-pair matching. For example, Hulstijn et al. (1996) found looking

up words in the dictionary to be more effective than providing marginal glosses. A series of studies have also found productive tasks generally more effective than receptive tasks (Ellis & He 1999; Hulstijn & Laufer 2001; Laufer 2003; Webb 2005; Keating 2008; Kim 2008). Nonetheless, Laufer & Rozovi-Roitblat (2012:395) conclude that overall 'instructional activities of FonF and FonFs are both beneficial to vocabulary learning'.

So how does explicit instruction enhance vocabulary learning within the L2 classroom? Nation (2001:63-71) presents several key processing concepts that he considers beneficial to vocabulary learning, particularly for word meaning. The first concept is 'noticing' which entails giving attention to an item. Noticing can be affected by many different factors such as: the saliency of the word in the input, previous contact with the word, and the learner's realisation that the word fills a gap in their current knowledge. Teachers can also encourage noticing by highlighting a key word or by providing a definition of the word, or a synonym. Nation (2001) argues that motivation and interest are key conditions for encouraging learners to notice items, and learners need to be aroused and engaged in the process. Noticing can also be augmented via negotiation; an increasing number of studies demonstrate that lexical items that are encountered via negotiated interactions are more likely to be learned (Ellis et al. 1994). However, more time was required for this process and therefore it is unlikely to be the principal means of vocabulary teaching.

The second concept is retrieval (Baddeley 1990:156) which relates to the notion that if a word that is first noticed and the meaning comprehended, is then subsequently retrieved during a task the memory of that word meaning will be reinforced. Retrieval can be either receptive or productive. Nation asserts that repeated retrieval of meaning or form is a key activity for learning of a new word (p.67). The third key concept for word learning posited by Nation (2001) is 'generation'. Generation refers to when 'previously met words are subsequently met or used in ways that differ from the previous meeting with the word' (p.68). Generation will be low if the word is reused by the learner in a slightly different context but high if the use is expanded to a significantly different context. Rydland and Aukrust (2005) also claim that complex repetition involving an expansion and reformulation of previously learnt items is most beneficial. For many vocabulary researchers, the more a learner engages with a word the more likely he/she is to learn it.

Nation (2001) argues that repeat encounters need to be increasingly spaced with a short gap in early meetings and much larger gaps between later meetings which is based upon ideas suggested by Pimsleur (1967) and Baddeley (1990). Pimsleur's suggestion is that the older the piece of learning is the slower the forgetting with learners initially forgetting very fast and then slowing down. As a result, on the second repetition a piece of learning is older than on the first and so the forgetting will be slower. However if repetition is too far apart then it may not be considered as a repetition, but as another first encounter. Hulstijn (2003:372) also argues that in order for learners to retain words in the long-term, frequent exposure and rehearsal is required. Laufer (2005:322) points out that in limited-input instructed settings, aside from the most frequent words, new vocabulary will not necessarily appear in the input soon after initial exposure to it. In light of these findings, Laufer (2005) called for teachers to engage in 'planned lexical instruction' which proposes that teachers need to plan multiple exposures to the new words to compensate for the dearth of input. Schmitt (2008:343) asserts that educators need to 'think about vocabulary learning in longitudinal terms, where target lexical items are recycled over time in a principled way'.

4.4.4 How should we measure lexical knowledge?

The answer to the question 'what is a word' is surprisingly complex and tricky to answer but it is an important one since estimates of vocabulary size and reports on productivity are highly dependent on the unit of counting. *Tokens, types, lemmas,* and *word families* are all possible units of measurement Nation 2001:6-8; Daller, Milton and Treffers-Daller 2007:2-4). *Tokens* are a measure of productivity in that you count every word in a spoken or written text whereas *types* enable researchers to count the number of different words used. For example; the sentence

The dog and the boy are in the garden

contains nine *tokens* (different words) but only seven *types* (different kinds of words) as the word *the* appears three times.

A lemma is described by Nation (2001:7) as a 'headword and some of its inflected and reduced (*n't*) forms' and those items included under a lemma form the same part of speech. For a regular verb such as *play,* the inflected forms *play, plays, playing* and *played* will all be considered as one lemma *play* and therefore will only be counted as one word type rather than four. All four examples are still verbs just in different inflected forms. A practical advantage of using lemmas to model vocabulary

knowledge is that it reduces the amount of data and the figures to 'manageable proportions' (Daller et al 2007:4). Lemmatisation for oral French data is necessary when studying French productive vocabulary (Treffers-Daller 2007; David 2008; Marsden & David 2008; Treffers Daller forthcoming). For example in spoken speech the infinitive form of *jouer* (to play), the imperative form *jouez* and the past participle *joué* all have the same phonological representation and therefore to avoid over- or under-estimating a learners vocabulary, the words would all appear under one lemma *jouer*. Details of the lemmatisation of the data for the current study will be detailed in section 8.1.1.1.

4.4.5 The operationalisation of lexical competence

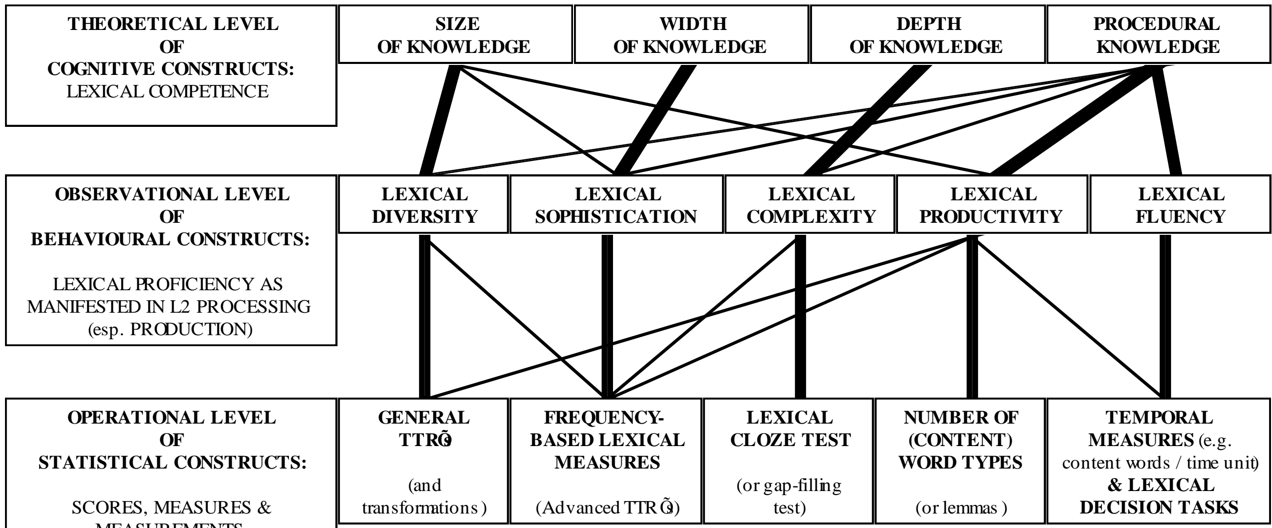
To reiterate, one aim of this study is to measure the productive lexical competence of young learners of French and at this point it is essential to further elaborate on the different components that make up this construct. Figure 4.1 below taken from Bulté et al. (2008:279) operationalises lexical competence on three different levels: from the higher-order cognitive constructs of size, width, depth and procedural knowledge, to the lower-order constructs of lexical diversity, sophistication, complexity, productivity and fluency. The final tier contains the concrete measures that are commonly used to measure these constructs. The second tier in the framework contains what Bulté et al. (2008:279) term as: 'the behavioural manifestations of the underlying cognitive constructs in actual L2 performance (production and reception)'. Therefore lexical proficiency (the observed L2 behaviour) can consist of several elements some of which mirror Read's (2000) classification of lexical richness.

Lexical diversity (or variation) is denoted by the number of different words produced and the learner's use of different words, rather than simply repeating a limited number of words. Lexical sophistication concerns the learner's ability to use more appropriate forms of a word and is defined by Read (2000:200) as the ability to select: 'low frequency words that are appropriate to the topic and style of writing, rather than just everyday vocabulary'. Lexical complexity refers to the ability to use words in a variety of appropriate contexts and is obviously linked to depth of knowledge. Lexical productivity, on the other hand, displays the number of words (tokens) a learner has produced in the task. Finally lexical fluency denotes the speed with which learners are able to recall or produce a word. The final level consists of various concrete measures that can be used in the assessment of productive lexical

proficiency and indicates how these measures can relate to a variety of higher-order constructs.

As can be seen in figure 4.1, the association is not necessarily a one-to-one matching of measure to construct, in fact one measure can have multiple purposes which is displayed by the multiple lines starting from the lower levels. However, Bulté et al (2008:281) argue that some measures are more relevant to some constructs than others and this is reflected in the weighting of the inter-connecting lines (see section 8.1.2 for details of the measures used in the current study).

Figure 4.1: Analytic framework for investigating L2 proficiency (Bulté et al. 2008:279)



4.4.6 Previous studies of vocabulary development

Studies of receptive vocabulary have dominated L2 vocabulary research since receptive data is easier to elicit through the use of well-developed tools such as X-Lex (Meara and Milton 2003) which provide an indication of the breadth or size of learners' lexicon (the findings of relevant studies will be presented later in this section). Productive L2 lexical development, in contrast, has been the focus of relatively few research studies over recent years (David 2008, Graham et al. 2008, Marsden & David 2008; Richards et al. 2008, Tidball and Treffers-Daller 2007). Read (2000) and Nation (2007) both argue that it is essential to measure vocabulary in use to obtain an accurate and balanced representation of learners' vocabulary. The evaluation of productive vocabulary development is interesting as it indicates learners' ability to access their vocabulary knowledge in communicative situations where the assessment of vocabulary is not the only objective of the task. This is

particularly pertinent to educational settings where the assessment of outcomes is predominantly focused on learner production. Furthermore, David (2008) asserts that tasks focused on language use could result learners providing richer and more varied data which she terms as ‘incidental productions’.

Over recent years there have been several studies into the learning of French within UK educational settings. Milton and Meara (1998) undertook a comparative study of the receptive vocabulary size of British learners of French and learners of English in Germany and Greece. The results showed that the UK learners on average had a passive vocabulary of 800 words by Y10 which equates to a learning rate of 200 words per year or 3-4 words per hour of teaching, which was deemed as normal as an average compared to other countries. The Greek learners on average had a larger passive vocabulary but also had more hours of English teaching than their French learning counterparts. Milton (2006) studied the vocabulary development of 449 learners of French in British schools from Y7 to Y13. The results of vocabulary uptake were similar to those found in Milton and Meara (1998) in that learners learnt about 170 words per year (2.7 words per hour) up to GCSE and 530 words per year (4.1 words per hour) at A level. A surprising finding is that on average learners took GCSE with under 1000 words known in French, while at A level this figure nearly doubled to 1930.

The results showed a pattern of implied progress across the year groups. Nevertheless, progress was not regular over the years of learning with an observed plateau in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th years of learning in which lexical growth was noticeably small. For instance, in the 3rd year of teaching the learners gained less than 50 words which equates to less than 1 word per contact hour. Laufer (1988) posits that plateaus in lexical production are due to the nature of memory and the learning processes. However, Milton attributes this plateau to the nature of French learning generally in British schools and could be related to unchallenging resources that are more focussed on depth or fluency rather than breadth. There was a lot of variation amongst learners and some of the good learners made remarkable progress in their first year of study. However, even the most able learners appeared to plateau after the first year of study. A further key finding of the study is that vocabulary size was an effective predictor of A level grade; learners with large French vocabularies are more likely to achieve A grade. A hiatus in progress was also observed by David et al. (2009) who investigated the oral production of instructed L2 learners of French in years 8, 10 and 12. The data showed no statistical difference between Y8 and Y10

which mirrors Milton's findings that relatively little progress is made in earlier years of UK secondary school. David (2008b) also measured the breadth of receptive vocabulary in 438 learners of French in the UK from Year 8 (second year of secondary school) through to final year undergraduate students (aged between 12 and 23 years). The mean size of the learners' vocabulary increased regularly and on the whole the difference was significant except between Y8 and Y11 which may corroborate Milton's (2006) plateau in lexical development in lower-mid secondary school. Vocabulary knowledge was related to word frequency, also observed by Milton (2006) meaning that more high-frequency words were learnt. The results of this study did not show a significant correlation between vocabulary size and exam grade. David (2008b) posits that this could be due to the fact that the learners did not expend as much effort on the vocabulary task as they would in their exams.

Turning to studies of productive vocabulary, David (2008a) investigated 80 learners from Years 9-13 in UK schools. The learners in Y9 had received around 150 hours of French teaching and Y13 a maximum of 600 hours. Data from oral semi-guided conversations show that the learners produced more tokens and types over time with significant differences across year groups. The scores of lexical diversity were significantly different in all years except years 12-13 which David attributes to potential informant fatigue or task effects as the same learners were tested in Y12 and Y13 whereas the rest of the data was cross-sectional. The scores for lexical diversity were lower than those found in Malvern et al. (2004) although it is important to note that David measured lemmas and Malvern et al. measured inflected forms. The proportion of nouns increased between Y9 and Y10 and then consistently decreased, whereas from Y10 onwards the proportion of verbs increased. At the earlier stages of development the noun-bias was more pronounced and mirrors the findings of other studies investigating the early stages of L1 and L2 lexical development (Bassano 2000, Caselli et al 1995; Myles 2003; Childers and Tomasello 2006; Treffers-Daller 2009).

The studies discussed so far have been cross-sectional in nature, however, Bulté, Housen, Pierrard and van Daele (2008) undertook a longitudinal study of the lexical L2 proficiency of Dutch speaking learners of French in Brussels over a 3 year period, which focused on lexical productivity, lexical diversity and lexical sophistication. Progress was tracked over 3 years starting in Y1 of secondary school age 12 to Y3 age 14. The same story description task was administered once every school year. The results demonstrate significant differences across the years with the differences

most pronounced between Y1 and Y2 and they also observed similar patterns to UK studies in that progress appeared to trail off after the first year. The authors attribute this to diminished task motivation and they go on to say that development is slow and one has to be patient and realistic about what can be expected within instructed settings. Interestingly, verbs formed the most frequent word class in these results, followed by nouns then adjectives, although this may well be due to the narrative nature of the task which would also explain the low number of adjectives produced.

Due the global expansion of primary foreign language programmes over the last decade, especially related to the teaching of English, there has been a rise in studies of L2 lexical development of young learners. Alexiou (2009) investigated the role of cognitive skills in FL vocabulary learning and found a significant relationship between young learners' aptitudes and their vocabulary development in English. Orosz (2009) measured the growth of young learners' receptive vocabulary as they progressed through primary school in Hungary. The results of the X-Lex test showed that young learners made significant gains in their English vocabulary in the first three years of language learning. The biggest spurt was seen in grade 5 where 500 new words were learnt coinciding with an increase in teaching time from 2 to 3 lessons per week. However, despite this increase, in 6th grade (around age 12) the rate dropped by nearly 50%. These findings mirror those of Milton (2006), and interestingly, the plateau occurs at around the same age (12 years). Once again there was big variability in learner performance over the four years.

As previously discussed, there is paucity of research examining the L2 development of young instructed learners in the UK setting and on the whole those studies featured in this section are evaluations of primary language programmes, of which vocabulary development formed one small part. Low et al. (1993) evaluated a pilot primary MFL programme in Scotland. The study was cross-sectional and aimed to measure progress from P7 (final year of primary school) to S2 (second year of secondary school). The results showed that there was increased use of nouns, verbs and modifiers over time and also an increase in range. However, pupils did not extend their repertoire of verbs. In sum, the study found that for many learners progress was slight or in some cases non-existent. A study by Myles et al. (2011) was different in nature as it aimed to investigate the performance of younger primary school learners vs. older secondary school learners. Included in the measures of linguistic attainment was a 50-item aural receptive vocabulary test which was unique as it was based purely on the linguistic input the learners received during their

French lessons; all classes had the same French teacher and the same amount of teaching hours. The aim of the task was to examine the factors (namely frequency, recency and types of input) that appeared to influence the uptake of vocabulary introduced in the French lessons and to investigate the variability of performance of learners of different ages. The study found that frequency in the input was the most important factor in vocabulary learning and demonstrated that recency appeared to be a more influential factor for the youngest learners.

4.4.7 Summary and research questions

What is clear from the discussion of previous vocabulary studies is that there is very little classroom-based research undertaken with language learners in the UK and that there is a great need to obtain longitudinal data on the lexical development of young learners, especially in relation to primary school-aged learners. Firstly we need an indication of what levels of performance can be expected at the end of a primary languages programme and of course, how learners progress over the transition to secondary school in terms of lexical development. Earlier studies have shown that progress is relatively slow in secondary school and that there appears to be a hiatus in progress after the first year. Although the current study covers the 12 months from the end of Year 6 to the end of Year 7 it will be interesting to see if a similar slow down can be observed. The results of earlier UK studies have shown a relationship between vocabulary scores and performance in overall language assessments.

The third principal research question of the current study is:

> *How does the children's target language proficiency evolve during the transition from year 6 to year 7 and is there evidence of linguistic progression/attrition?*

Based on the findings of previous research I have devised four research sub-questions related to vocabulary development that form part of the response to the main research question:

a. *How does the learners' lexical proficiency progress over time from Year 6 to Year 7 in terms of productivity and diversity and the nature of the language produced?*
b. *Is there a relationship between motivation scores and measures of lexical proficiency?*

c. *How do contextual and individual factors influence lexical development over time?*

The objective is to evaluate whether the lexical productivity and diversity of the young learners of French increases over time across the transition phase, and to describe the nature of their developing productive vocabulary during semi-spontaneous oral and written production. Chapter 6 contains details of the methodological approach used in the study and the tasks designed and used to collect the data. Sections 8.1.1 and 8.1.2 describe the data processing and analysis performed and the results are presented in section 8.1.3.

Chapter 5

Linguistic Progression Part II: Grammatical Development

5.1 L2 grammatical development

Grammatical knowledge has traditionally held a prominent role in language learning however its prominence was called into question with the advent of communicative teaching approaches. This led to a great deal of debate about grammar pedagogy which is reflected in the large body of SLA research into FFI discussed previously. Over recent years there has been a shift back towards explicit grammar teaching in the UK (Macaro 2003) and this is reflected in the content of recent National Curriculum documents. For example:

> *'pupils should be taught the grammar of the target language and how to apply it' (DfEE 1999)*

> *'Level 4 – They being able to use their knowledge of grammar to adapt and substitute single words and phrases' - National Curriculum for Languages (QCA 2007)*

The previous National Curriculum Programme of Study (DfES 2003) also stated that language teaching in schools is aimed at:

> *'the development of communication skills, together with an understanding of the structure of the language'.*

The Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages (DfES 2005) also included objectives related to grammatical knowledge:

Year 4 – *Reinforce and extend recognition of word classes and understand their function*
Year 4 – *Recognise and apply simple agreement: singular and plural*
Year 5 – *Apply knowledge of rules when building sentences*
Year 5 – *Recognise the different conventions of word order in a foreign language*
Year 6 – *Notice and match agreements*

It is clear that there was an expectation that learners at the primary level should be introduced to, and develop, explicit grammatical knowledge of the target language. Furthermore, grammatical knowledge remains a feature of the new primary languages framework. It is therefore crucial to include data on how, with the assistance of explicit grammar teaching, the learners' underlying knowledge of the

grammatical system of French develops, how this is initiated in primary school and how it progresses across the transition into secondary school. Moreover, according to the results of a questionnaire administered by Macaro (2003) research into grammar learning and instruction came second on the list of research most useful for teachers after vocabulary acquisition. Motivation studies of instructed learners have shown that grammar is perceived as difficult by instructed learners.

Instead of calculating overall grammatical accuracy I opted to examine two specific areas of development: grammatical gender and verb morphology. There are several reasons why I chose to focus on these specific features. Different areas of grammar develop at different rates and therefore looking at each area separately will provide more in-depth information on the learners' grammatical development over time. The developmental stages of these grammatical features are well-documented and this therefore permits an examination of how fast the learners progress through the stages of development as compared with instructed learners from previous studies. The acquisition of gender assignment and agreement appears early on in curriculum documents but has been shown to be problematic for even relatively advanced learners of French especially for learners for whom the L1 does not contain grammatical gender (such as English). Also L2 gender acquisition differs sharply from L1 acquisition where difficulties with gender acquisition are considered rare (Carroll 1989; Pérez-Pereira 1991). Verb morphology has also been shown to be difficult and slow to develop in L2 learners, especially for instructed learners of French who appear to have difficulty moving beyond the use of formulaic chunks of language. Details of both of these areas will be discussed later in this chapter.

5.2 Grammatical gender in French

Grammatical gender is a lexical feature belonging to nouns in French, along with other languages such as Russian, German, Italian, Spanish etc. Gender in French consists of two categories, *masculine* and *feminine,* and all nouns belong to either one of these categories. Grammatical gender is also manifested at the level of syntax whereby gender marking is also required for determiners, adjectives and pronouns within the noun phrase and throughout the sentence and this is termed gender agreement or concord. The focus of the current study is the noun phrase domain which includes determiners, head noun and adjectives, where the gender attribution of the determiner and adjectives is dependent upon agreement with the head noun. Determiners, pronouns and adjectives, usually will have several forms,

one masculine and another feminine form (although there are some exceptions when the adjectival form is the same for both masculine and feminine) and a form(s) to mark plurality. Grammatical gender is considered as a lexical property of nouns, while the features of number and person are assumed to be properties of the determiner (Carstens 2000, Ritter 1993). For example, Table 5.1 below shows some examples of gender marking of articles and some pronouns in French, although this is not an exhaustive list. Also marked for gender are partitives, demonstratives and interrogatives.

Table 5.1: Gender marking of articles and some French pronouns

	Definite article	Indefinite article	Possessive pronoun	Subject pronoun
Masculine	Le	Un	Mon	Il
Feminine	La	Une	Ma	Elle
Plural	Les	Des	Mes	Il(s)/Elle(s)

French nouns are ordinarily produced with a determiner and few nouns are determinerless, with the exception of proper nouns. According to Prévost (2009:239-240) French is one of the most restrictive languages in terms of the omission of overt determiners whereas languages such as English and Dutch allow the production of bare nouns in argument position. Due to the clitic status of French determiners (meaning that they cannot stand alone and are phonologically unstressed), there are noticeable differences in how determiners behave in French and English. Firstly, French definite determiners are elided when the noun begins with a vowel or an unaspirated *h*, for example; *l'eau* (water) and *l'hôtel*. When the masculine definite article is combined with the prepositions *de* (of/some) and *à* (at/to) it appears in contracted form, for example:

'du pain' – some bread

'au collège' – at school

Moreover French determiners must also be repeated in a sequence of nouns:

'la tortue, le poisson et le lapin' – the tortoise, the fish and the rabbit.

L1 learners of French appear to acquire determiners relatively quickly (approximately by age 2 years) although there is an initial stage where they produce determinerless nouns (Heinen & Kadow 1990). There then follows a brief period of optionality (around 6 months) after which determiners are then produced in 90% of obligatory contexts (Prévost 2009). Chierchia, Guasti & Gualmini (2001) also reported phases of omission, optionality and then target-like usage for languages such as English,

Swedish and Italian, although the period of optionality was reported to be much longer than for L1 French.

Adjectives in French must agree with the head noun that they modify and on the whole they have distinct masculine and feminine forms. For example:

Le petit garçon – the little boy

La petite fille – the little girl

Colour adjectives will be used to further exemplify gender marking on French adjectives as these are by far the most common adjectives seen in the data of early learners of French. For most colour adjectives in French the feminine form is denoted in writing by adding an -e to the end of the masculine form, such as:

Le crayon noir – the black pencil

La table noire – the black table

Un pullover bleu – a blue jumper

Une chaise bleue – a blue chair

The feminine morpheme –e is evident in the written form, but there is no phonological distinction between the masculine and feminine forms in the examples noted above. Moreover, there are also several colours adjectives that do not have distinct masculine and feminine forms, for example:

Rouge - red

Jaune - yellow

Marron – brown

Rose - pink

Orange – orange

There are, on the other hand, colour adjectives that do have discrete masculine and feminine forms which are phonologically distinct (i.e. feminine forms add a final consonant to masculine forms ending in a vowel):

Blanc (m) [blã] / *Blanche* (f) [blãʃ] - white

Vert (m) [vɛr] / *Verte* (f) [vɛrt] - green

Gris (m) [gri] / *Grise* (f) [griz] - grey

Brun (m) [brœ̃] / *Brune* (f) [brʏn] - brown

Violet (m) [vjɔlɛ] / *Violette* (f) [vjɔlɛt] – purple

Unlike adjectives of size such as *grand* (big) and *petit* (small) which can appear in pre-nominal position, colour adjectives typically appear after the noun in French as

can be seen in the examples above. Adjectives can also occur in predicative position, for example:

La table est bleue et blanche – The table is blue (fem) and white (fem)

As can be seen in the above example, the adjectives still must agree with the head noun in the sentence across phrasal boundaries. Results of previous studies such as Prodeau (2005) indicate that the position of the noun can have an effect on the correct production of adjectival agreement in real-time production and this will be discussed in greater detail in section 5.2.3.

5.2.1 Gender classification in French

French is a language that demonstrates inherent lexical gender as well as grammatical gender. This means that for some nouns the gender is predictable based on natural gender of the recipient, for example inherently female nouns are usually feminine i.e. *une femme* (a woman), *ma mère* (my mother) and inherently male nouns are usually masculine: *un homme* (a man) and *le père* (the father). Grammatical gender, on the hand, applies to all nouns and is often arbitrary. Indeed, according to Séguin (1969) only 10.5% of all French nouns' gender is semantically motivated. Tucker et al. (1969; 1977) proposed that the gender assignment rules for French are principally related to phonological rules, whereas some semantic rules have primacy over morphological rules. The rules do overlap but are argued to form a coherent and fairly stable, although highly complex system.

5.2.2 Theoretical perspectives on the acquisition of gender assignment and agreement

For native speakers of French the acquisition of gender seems to vary across children, however most (typically developing) children have mastered gender by the age of 3 or 4. Studies have shown that L1 French children initially tend to over-generalise masculine forms of determiners, however some children use the feminine as the default form (Prévost 2009). For L1 French children, gender agreement between the definite article and the noun is acquired before agreement between the indefinite article and the noun. Moreover, article noun agreement is mastered before adjective noun agreement (Dewaele & Véronique 2001; Prévost 2009).

.

In contrast to L1 learners of French, the acquisition of French gender has been shown to be a particularly slow and difficult process, even for L2 learners within naturalistic settings. For example, Ayoun (2007:147) posits that English-speaking learners are faced with five key tasks in the learning of French gender and these are made more difficult due to complex and ambiguous input. English speakers have to learn that:

a. French has inherent as well as grammatical gender
b. The proper gender assignment of each lexical item
c. The proper Det+Noun agreement
d. The proper Adj+Noun agreement
e. The proper word place of Noun+Adj

So once learners have fulfilled the first task of learning that French has grammatical as well as inherent gender, how do L2 learners then learn the gender assignment of nouns in French? As previously discussed the gender feature must be stored as an inherent property of each noun in French. But how is this established in the L2 lexicon from the L2 input?

Studies suggest that L1 French children tend to use morpho-phonological cues (word endings) to assign gender before around age 6 and that, as they grow older, L1 learners tend to rely more heavily on syntactic cues (Prévost 2009). Karmiloff-Smith (1979) also found that the young L2 French learners in her study relied more heavily on phonological cues (i.e. word endings) for learning gender assignment. As the learners became older there was increased attention to syntactic information which eventually won over the phonological cues. Overall, she concludes that the findings correspond with data from L1 acquisition studies which indicate that children focus on formal rather than semantic cues for gender classification. However, from studies of older L2 learners, it is not obvious that adults pay attention to phonological cues for gender assignment. According to Carroll (1999), older learners do not rely on endings since they are more sensitive to semantic and morphological cues.

There have been few studies of child L2 French, however Grondin & White (1996) and Paradis & Crago (2000) found that determiners are produced at early stages and accuracy in gender appears to be lower than for number and also lower than for L1 learners. It is posited that the major difference is the clitic status of L2 French which is not the same as for L1 French. Carroll (1989) reported that child English-speaking

learners of French produced stressed articles and did not repeat the article after a pause, unlike L1 learners. She asserts that determiners are learnt as independent phonological units in contrast to child L1 French where they are initially learnt as part of the noun. She also claims that it is the reliance on determiner cues that leads to the differences in perception of gender assignment seen in L1 and L2 learners of French. Carroll asserts that for L2 learners, the determiner and noun are already segmented and therefore since there is no need to work out determiner-noun segmentation, L2 learners are not sensitive to the gender information contained in the determiner and this assertion is echoed by Granfeldt (2005).

More recent cognitive-based research into the L2 acquisition of grammatical gender suggests that the phonological and semantic clues alone are not enough for learner to correctly assign gender to nouns. Grüter et al. (2012) argue that learners must rely on co-occurrence relations between nouns and gender-marked modifiers with determiners considered as most important. Sourdot (1977); Carroll (1989) and Saffran et al. (1996) all contend that children's failure to segment determiner+noun combinations, which are first considered as unanalysed chunks, are a key mechanism in early L1 language learning. Grüter et al. (2012) posit that the close associations between co-occurring elements such as determiners and nouns are at first likely to be lexically specific and then as vocabulary size increases these will lead to more rule-based associations. They state that 'lexical representation of grammatical gender in native lexicon is crucially shaped by early distributional learning' (p.209). As a result the strong associations between nouns and their gender-marked modifiers will be much stronger in the L1 lexicon compared to the L2 lexicon due to distributional learning and will therefore be more readily accessed and retrieved in on-line language production. Evidence from Tucker et al. (1977) may also lend support to this claim since they report that some native speakers of French have occasional difficulty with vowel-initial words, which have a non-gender-marked determiner for example; *l'arbre* (the tree).

Grüter et al. (2012) also state that a fundamental difference in L2 learning is that learners beyond childhood approach the task of language learning with existing knowledge of their own L1 which in turn permits them to exploit a number of cues that would not be available to young infants, such as the parallels between the L1/L2, metalinguistic information and, very importantly, information specific to written language such as gaps between words. As a result, it is claimed that they are unlikely to place the same emphasis on co-occurring elements as L1 learners. In

their 2012 study Grüter et al. observed that L2 learners performed very well on novel nouns preceded by a gender-marked determiner only. They claim that the task imitated L1word learning more closely and therefore enhanced the salience of the co-occurrence relations. These findings support those of Arnon & Ramscar (2009; 2012) who taught an artificial language to adults. It is reported that the learners that were exposed to determiner+noun sequences first learnt better, which they claim is as a result of them being forced to use distributional information. Learners who were exposed to the noun only first paid less attention to determiners in the second round of learning and therefore failed to learn the gender-class information encoded in them.

In contrast, Ayoun (2007) argues that the determiner on its own is not enough to provide the necessary input to learn the gender assignment of nouns since this is based upon learners having accurate phonetic representations of the determiners. For lower proficiency L1-speaking learners of French, the indefinite determiners *un* and *une* constitute a phonetic contrast that is problematic since the sounds are not part of the phonemic system of English. Ayoun claims that 21% of nouns begin with a vowel and therefore lack gender marking on the articles (only 3 out of 11 singular determiners are gender-marked for vowel initial words and 51% of these are feminine nouns). Moreover, Hawkins & Franceschina (2004) posit that it is syntactic cues (determiner and adjectives) that are critical to the acquisition of gender assignment and state that English learners of French 'will not proceed beyond the stage of probabilistic selection of the determiner forms on the basis of noun phonology' (p.187).

The results of the various studies noted above indicate that there are a variety of cues involved in the acquisition of French gender assignment; phonological, morphological, semantic and collocational and the availability and use of the cues depends upon the age of the learner, the learning situation and the nature of the input. Whilst providing useful information in terms of how gender assignment is learnt these studies are limited in their scope as they are frequently based upon an experimental approach in which variables are highly controlled and evidence of long-term learning is minimal. These studies fail to reflect the complexity of the input faced in a real-life language classroom and, furthermore, are mainly cross-sectional and therefore do not provide evidence of how individual learners' knowledge develops over time.

5.2.2.1 How do learners acquire L2 gender agreement?

There is general consensus in syntactic literature that the concept of gender agreement is best captured by the notion of checking relations between the gender feature on the head noun and the functional features on the determiners and adjectives (Bernstein 1993; Carstens 2000; Chomsky 1995; Ritter 1993). However, there are differing explanations of the exact function and mechanisms for this feature checking[3]. The learning of L2 grammatical gender has often been studied from a UG or Minimalist perspective (Chomsky 2000) although there is disagreement amongst different researchers. Some researchers working within this theoretical paradigm argue that gender agreement is an 'uninterpretable' feature that cannot be learnt after a 'critical period' of language acquisition since UG is no longer available. Hawkins & Franceschina (2004) named this concept the 'Failed Functional Feature Hypothesis' for which it is claimed that L2 learners may well be able to learn the gender assignment of a lexical item, but not the agreement.

At the other end of the spectrum is the 'Full Access Hypothesis' (e.g. Schwartz & Sprouse 1994; 1996) which argues that that all L2 features are acquirable, although there is some disagreement as to whether the features are available from the outset of L2 learning or whether they become available over time (Grondin & White 1993; Haznedar 2003). Other researchers have argued that functional categories are at first absent in early interlanguage grammars and gradually develop in stages on the basis of input ('Minimal Trees Hypothesis', also called 'Organic Grammar' Vainikka & Young Scholten 1998). An alternative idea is termed the 'Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (Haznedar & Schwartz 1997; Lardière 2000; Prévost and White 2000) which posits that functional categories are available in early L2 grammars but that the difficulty lies in mapping grammatical features to their surface morphological forms. White et al. (2004) and Ayoun (2007b) all challenge the impairment hypotheses arguing that empirical evidence has shown that L1 English-speaking learners of French can acquire French features that are not present in the L1 (studies of learners of L2 French will be discussed in detail in section 5.23). Nevertheless, Ayoun (2007b) states that, even though functional categories may, in principle, be acquirable the acquisition of L2 gender will be a difficult task that requires extensive input.

[3] There is not space in this thesis to provide a full discussion on this subject; however see Franceschina (2005) for an overview of the syntax of gender agreement.

Several researchers have offered cognitivist explanations for the results seen in the studies of L2 learners. It is argued that the focus should remain on individual cognitive factors such as attention, memory and motivation (Ayoun 2007b; Dewaele & Véronique 2001; Prodeau 2005). From a psycholinguistic perspective, acquisition of a feature such as gender agreement is not simply considered as the instantiation of a grammatical feature but rather as the transfer of processing routines from L1 to L2. For example, Sabourin and Stowe (2008) studied 45 high proficiency learners of Dutch using neuro-imaging to track processing patterns. The results showed that some degree of native-like processing is possible for late L2 learning but that L2 processing is slower. Also they argue that native-like processing is limited to processing aspects of syntax that are quite similar between L2 and L1. They conclude by saying that for rule-governed constructions similar in the L1 and L2, such as verb placement, the processing routines for native and non-native speakers are similar. On the other hand, constructions that are not grammatically similar, or are dependent on lexically specific features that are rarely the same in L1 and L2 (such as grammatical gender), are unlikely to result in similar processing routines. Foucart & Frenck-Mestre (2011) assert that learners proceed through different levels of syntactic processing and maintain for example that post-posed adjectives are easier to learn due to their more frequent occurrence in the input and the fact that they are unique in the L2 which in turn makes them more salient to the L2 learner. As a result the learner is more inclined to process post-posed adjectives. They also claim that pre-posed adjectives are initially not processed for gender and observed that accuracy with pre-posed adjectives increases with proficiency.

5.2.3 Results of previous studies of the acquisition of grammatical gender in L2 French

Numerous studies of the L2 acquisition of French gender have shown that even advanced learners of French display greater accuracy on determiner agreement than on adjective agreement (see table 5.2). Therefore, the evidence suggests that in earlier stages of L2 learning gender assignment appears to be more accurate than gender agreement. However, as seen by the results of Grüter et al. (2012) in table 5.2, gender agreement can be mastered by very high-level learners although issues at the level of lexical representation may still exist. A further key finding of previous studies is that agreement is also affected by the syntactic position of the various elements in the sentence. Bartning (2000) reported that agreement for post-nominal

adjectives was most accurate (in line with Foucart and Frenck-Mestre 2011), followed by predicative with pre-nominal agreement most difficult for learners. In addition, the errors were overwhelmingly due to lack of overt agreement in the feminine which was also seen by Dewaele & Véronique (2001).

Table 5.2: results of studies of grammatical gender

Author/date	***L1***	***Target Language***	***Level***	***Method***	***Results***
Bartning (2000)	Swedish (n=15)	French	Pre-Advanced – Advanced	Oral interviews Cross-sectional	Assignment errors Pre-adv – 26% Adv – 10% on Agreement errors Pre-adv – 20% Adv – 19%
Dewaele & Véronique (2001)	Dutch (n=27)	French	Pre-advanced – advanced	Oral conversations Cross-sectional	Assignment errors 5% Agreement errors 9%
Ayoun (2007)	English (n=27)	French	Low, Intermediate and High	Written production task Cross-sectional	Assignment errors Low – 5.1% Inter – 3.9% High – 1.5% Agreement errors Low – 9% Inter – 11.6% High – 3.7%
David et al. (2009)	English (n=60)	French	Lower Intermediate, Intermediate	Oral interviews	Assignment errors Year 8 – 28.28% Year 10 – 29.68% Year 12 – 21.62%
Grüter et al. (2012)	English (n=19) Spanish (n=19)	Spanish	Near-native proficiency naturalistic learners Native speakers	Elicited oral production Cross-sectional	Assignment errors NS – 1% NNS – 17.2% Agreement errors NS – 0.3% NNS – 1.5%

Prodeau (2005) studied 27 upper-intermediate L1 English learners of French within two British universities. The results of the first task showed that learners had good knowledge of the most frequently encountered nouns. In terms of gender agreement, the Noun+Adj agreement was much higher for masculine forms than feminine forms. The study also highlighted the importance of syntactic position for accuracy on gender marking. Phrases with post-nominal adjectives were more

accurate, followed by predicative adjectives with pre-nominal adjectives the least accurately marked. Prodeau argues that the infrequent pre-nominal position of the adjective leads to the syntactic module not running which means that the features are not checked against the head noun (although she does not expand on what the syntactic module is or how it works). She also argues that items which appear after the head noun in the sentence require use of additional attentional resources which explains why agreement varies proportionally to the distance from the head noun, although this is not applicable to adjectives in pre-nominal position for the reasons mentioned above. To conclude Prodeau (2005) makes several assertions based on the results of her empirical study:

- Lemmas are not systematically stored with gender and access depends upon the strengths of the links between the word and the gender feature (in line with Grüter et al. (2012))
- Even if a lexical item is stored with all its features the syntactic agreement may not be systematic and gender may be neglected when it is not fundamental to comprehension.

Granfeldt (2005) undertook a 15 month longitudinal study of Swedish L1 learners of French. The subjects were comprised of three Swedish/French bilingual children aged 2-4; five adult naturalistic learners and two instructed learners who had received around 500 hours of French instruction. Granfeldt reports that the acquisition of gender assignment and agreement was rapid for the bilingual children who produced few errors and consistently marked gender by the age of four years old although at time 1 the bilingual learners produced a substantial number of bare nouns and also the masculine form *un* was initially over-generalised. At time 2 the bilinguals were less accurate with gender assignment than at time 1 which Granfeldt attributes to the possibility that articles are learnt as parts of nouns initially and then segmented later (in line with Carroll 1999). The results for the adult untutored learners showed a progressive increase in agreement on articles and adjectives. In general, inconsistent gender marking was higher than for the child learners. Moreover, gender assignment was more correct in the adult (naturalistic) advanced learners (pre-advanced 80% correct; advanced 90% correct).

In terms of adjectival agreement, the bilingual learners were correct 96% of time whereas the adult untutored learners overall performed less well varying from 22% - 75% at time 1 to 59% - 100% at time 3 (although the learner with 100% only produced three tokens). At time 1 the tutored learners (after 500 hours of instruction)

produced correct article-noun agreement 75-80% of the time and correct adjectival agreement 50% of the time. After a further four months of instruction this rose to 89% for gender assignment and an average of 67% for adjective agreement which is higher than the results achieved by the less advanced untutored learner. The adult learners made more progress for adjectival agreement over the period of the study than for gender assignment although agreement errors are higher than assignment errors for most of the adult learners. Granfeldt also observed that the development of correct gender marking was not the same for all nouns.

David et al. (2009) studied the gender assignment of 60 instructed learners of French in British schools. The cross-sectional study included learners in Year 8 (aged 12/13), Year 10 (aged 14/15) and Year 12 (aged 16/17) and there were 20 learners in each group. The Year 8 pupils had received 100-120 hours of instruction, 240 hours for the Year 10 group and 525 hours for the Year 12 group. The learners took part in oral structured interviews which were analysed for accuracy in gender assignment. For the Year 8 learners gender assignment accuracy was at 71.64% which is fairly high when compared to the results of previous studies. The scores for the Year 10 were not statistically different and were in fact slightly lower for the Year 10 pupils at 70.32%. The Year 10 learners, however, produced a greater variety of nouns and this may have accounted for the drop in accuracy. Assignment accuracy in Year 12 was relatively high at 78.28% but not significantly different to the Year 10 group.

To sum up the results of previous studies, the evidence indicates that most learners make use of default forms at some point and in most cases this is the masculine form. For the most part errors decrease with proficiency, although advanced L2 learners of French still have difficulty with both gender assignment and agreement. Rather than difficulty at the level of syntax, recent psycholinguistic studies have suggested that errors may in fact be due to issues with gender knowledge at the lexical level. It is, however, difficult to compare results of the various studies since the learners involved have different L1s, there is a lack of information regarding the individual learners, there are different tasks used and different methods of analysis. For studies that are based upon free production the difficulty with grammatical gender may be due to limitations in working memory and processing constraints rather than the learners' lack of knowledge of gender assignment. For the most part the studies reviewed in this section have been cross-sectional in nature and frequently feature intermediate or advanced learners of French. The focus of the

studies tends to be ultimate attainment or comparison with native speakers of French. Only Ayoun (2007b) includes data on low proficiency learners of French; however they do not appear to be at the very beginning level comparable to the learners in the current study. To conclude, learning for L1 English speakers may be problematic for several reasons: lack of gender feature in L1, lack of perceptual salience, complex and ambiguous input, high processing load and low communicative load. In order to make progress in this area, it seems likely that L1 English learners will firstly require explicit explanations of French grammatical gender to enhance their metalinguistic knowledge, alongside extensive exposure to L2 input. However, longitudinal studies of young, very early stage instructed learners of French are required to evaluate what happens at the beginning stages of learning and what can reasonably be expected from a limited-input instructed setting.

5.2.4 Outcomes of FFI related to gender

In Canada a series of studies investigating the effect of explicit instruction of grammatical gender were undertaken with primary-aged immersion students (Warden 1997; Harley 1998; Lyster 2004). Warden (1997) delivered an 8 week programme raising awareness of word endings and providing practice in making gender agreement. Harley (1998) drew attention to the formal clues to gender, focussing on determiners le/un and la/une and word endings. The tests were oral object identification and picture description tasks. Lyster (2004) also trained learners to focus attention on noun endings and practised associating endings with gender. The results of all of the studies show that learners receiving FFI on gender out-performed the control group in both post-tests and delayed post-tests. Overall, the results of the studies in relation to grammatical gender suggest that conscious enhanced processing is beneficial (Skehan 1998) and that raising awareness of language forms, providing rich opportunities for language practice and feedback will lead to long-term gains Ranta & Lyster (2003).

5.2.5 Conclusions and research questions related to grammatical gender

It is clear that developmental data on gender acquisition is lacking (Prévost 2009), particularly for learners within instructed settings. The focus of previous research has been mainly cross-sectional and not developmental and therefore it is difficult to assess how knowledge of gender changes over time within the same learners. Even studies that involve low-proficiency or child naturalistic learners do not look at the

initial state of learning and therefore we still are unable to describe how learners approach grammatical gender in the very early stages of language learning. Many questions remain, for instance, do learners produce separate determiners, do they over-generalise particular forms, does this change over time and how long does it take learners to move through these stages? It is hypothesised that in the early stages of language learning there will be no grammar feature stored and that gender assignment will become more systematic in relation to the frequency of exposure. Learners will initially be reliant on memorised chunks, rather than syntactic processing to determine agreement but rules will eventually begin to develop and emerge. It is also important to consider whether, at the early stages, there is any evidence of patterns related to word phonology or inherent semantics? Another drawback of previous research is that it has focused on an experimental design which may favour the use of explicit, declarative knowledge. We still have little information on whether learners are able to convert declarative knowledge of gender in productive use and how their ability to do this changes over time. Furthermore the role of pedagogy is frequently not discussed and there are often no details of learner variability in performance so we have little insight into who makes the most progress and why.

To gain an insight into how instructed learners develop their knowledge of gender assignment, longitudinal classroom-based research is required tracking progress over time and providing more detailed qualitative information of the words learnt and the relationship with how the vocabulary and gender is presented in the language classroom. In addition, the acquisition of grammatical gender should also be evaluated in relation to individual factors such as L1 literacy scores and motivation. Therefore the current study has several research sub-questions for this area of investigation:

1. *What factors appear to govern the emergence of determiner use?*
2. *Is there evidence of progress in the assignment of grammatical gender (art+noun agreement) develop over the transition period?*
3. *How does the learners' knowledge develop for gender agreement (adjectival agreement)?*
4. *Is there any evidence of a relationship between learners' progress and the individual factors related to L1 literacy and motivation?*

The tasks used to collect the data will be discussed in chapter 6 and the analysis and results presented in chapter 8.

5.3 Acquisition of verb morphology and syntax

This section will discuss how verb morphology and syntax develops over time for L1 and child L2 learners of French and then for adult instructed learners of L2 French. Research investigating adult learners is particularly pertinent to the current study since the learners in the current study began learning in French at age 7 years and are therefore too old to be considered as child L2 learners of French and are more aligned with adolescent and adult learners of L2 French. However, before discussing the studies that have examined the development of verb morphology and syntax, it is important firstly to consider how verb inflection functions in French. The focus here is on the present tense as this is the only tense that the learners would be expected to produce at this stage of their French study and consequently this formed the basis of their L2 instructional input in terms of verb morphology. However, even though the present tense was the focus of instruction the learners may have also been exposed to other tenses. French is seen as morphologically rich by comparison with English, and the inflections of the present tense are shown in table 5.3 below. It is important to note that the phonological realisation of verbal inflection in spoken French is actually relatively poor. While verb inflections are graphically distinct in the majority of cases the different forms are not audibly different. For all regular verbs ending in –er, -ir and –re the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person singular forms are not audibly different in the present and imperfect tenses although the orthography does change for each form (see table 5.3 below). For the –er verbs (the most common verb class) the 3rd person plural is also not audibly distinct. As Prévost (2009:18) states: ‘it is the subject (and usually the subject pronoun) which disambiguates the verb form’.

Table 5.3: French verb inflections for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular forms

	Chanter (sing)	***Finir (finish)***	***Vendre (sell)***
1st person present	chante [t]	finis [i]	vends [vã]
2nd person present	chantes [t]	finis [i]	vends [vã]
3rd person singular present	chante [t]	finit [i]	vend [vã]

However, suppletive (or irregular) verb forms such as aller (go), avoir (have) and être (be) display a wider range of perceptible verbal inflections, see table 5.4 below. These suppletive forms are also frequently used as auxiliary verbs which have a role

in the formation of compound tenses such as the *passé composé* (past perfective) and the *futur proche* (near future).

Table 5.4: Present tense inflection for the verbs être (be), avoir (have) and aller (go)

	Être (be)	***Avoir (have)***	***Aller (go)***
Infinitive form	être	Avoir	aller
1st person singular	suis [sɥi]	ai [e]	vais [vɛ]
2nd person singular	es [ɛ]	as [a]	vas [va]
3rd person singular	est [ɛ]	a [a]	va [va]
1st person plural	sommes [sɔm]	avons [ɔ̃]	allons [ɔ̃]
2nd person plural	êtes [ɛt]	avez [e]	allez [e]
3rd person plural	sont [sɔ̃]	ont [ɔ̃]	vont [vɔ̃]

5.3.1 Finiteness, subject clitics and auxiliairies

The following sections will detail studies that have examined the acquisition of verb morphology in L2 French, particularly focusing on instructed learners. Many of the studies have been undertaken from a UG, or Minimalist, perspective and have sought to provide empirical evidence for the competing claims about acquisition that have been posited from this theoretical perspective. Frequently the studies have evaluated the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 acquisition and there are three areas that form the key focus of many of these studies: knowledge of finiteness, the role of subject clitics and the development of auxiliary use. Each of these aspects will be discussed in turn in the following sections.

According to Prévost (2009) child L1 learners of French use verbal inflection fairly early on (around 20 months). At the same time they also produce non-finite forms of verbs where a finite form was expected and this has been termed the Optional Infinitive (OI) Stage by Wexler (1994,1998) or Root Infinitive phenomenon (Prévost 2009:27). As stated, finite verbs appear relatively early in L1 speech; however it remains unclear at this stage of development whether these actually constitute unanalysed chunks of language. Agreement is expressed from the early stages of verb production and present tense forms emerge before past and future forms. 3rd person forms are frequently used as default forms until the full range of inflectional forms have been acquired. Early L1 verb production is dominated by lexical verbs or the copula ‘be’, whereas the use of modal verbs and auxiliaries emerge later. There

is great variation across children in terms of the use of non-finite forms such as the infinitive and past participles. However, for some L1 French children non-finite forms can constitute up to 70% of their verb production. Verbs denoting an action or event are most frequently found in non-finite form whereas stative verbs like 'be' and 'have' along with auxiliaries and modals appear in tensed form (Prévost 2009). Royle (2007) reports that children aged 2;11 – 4;6 produce far more target-like regular forms (78.1%) than irregular forms (40.6%) and that regular forms tend to be over-generalised to irregular verbs. For Prévost (2009) this provides evidence to support the assertion that children are demonstrating rule-based behaviour.

Therefore, the assumption is (due to the early appearance of finite forms) that young children have knowledge of finiteness from the outset which is also indicated by the use of subject clitics with finite forms. French has two sets of pronouns classified as strong (*moi* – me; *toi* – you; *nous* – us) and weak/clitic (*je/j'* – I; *tu* – you; *il/elle* – he/she). Strong and weak pronouns demonstrate differences in distribution and only strong pronouns can occur in isolation. According to Kayne (1975), French personal subject pronouns such as *il* (he), *je* (I), *elles* (they) are clitics since they are dependent on a verb (which they typically precede), they are strictly ordered, phonologically unstressed and subject to liaison/elision (Prévost & Paradis 2004). Moreover, the clitic status of weak object pronouns mean that they are dependent on the verb and therefore occur to the left of the verb within the verb phrase itself whereas full object DPs follow the verb, for example:

Elle porte la robe rouge – she is wearing the red dress

Elle la porte – she is wearing it

In contrast, English pronouns always receive stress and are placed in the same positions as full DPs. As discussed in section 5.2, French definite articles are also considered to have clitic status in L1 acquisition; they appear to be learnt as part of the noun in the one-word stage and are unanalysed at the early stages. They also are not able to stand alone and require to be repeated for each noun (Granfeldt & Schlyter 2004:337). To sum up, there appears to be general consensus that subject pronouns in early L1 French are clitics (Meisel 1990, Kaiser 1994; Ferdinand 1996). Furthermore, the production of subject clitics with finite verbs is seen to provide evidence for knowledge of functional categories which are considered important in UG theories since it is argued that it is their morphological features that are the prompt for syntactic development (Chomsky 2000).

5.3.2 The development of verb morphology in child L2 French

In contrast to grammatical gender, it appears that child L2 learners of French take little time to master L2 inflectional morphology. Data from various studies show that verb placement is largely correct from the outset but that learners use default forms for a while, such as non-finite verbs. Some studies show that finite forms are used in the initial stages, with present tense forms developing first followed by past and future forms. Moreover, agreement is largely correct in early child L2 French, although 3rd person forms are often over-generalised as in child L1 French (Prévost 2009:77). Grondin & White (1996) researched the spontaneous oral production data of two Anglophone children learning French in an immersion setting (ages 5;4 and 5;8). They had had very little exposure to French at the time of the first interview. Grondin & White observed that the learners appeared to have acquired finiteness since they used a variety of verb forms. In addition, subject clitics were used from the earliest stages and only used with finite verbs; this has also been observed in other studies of child L2 French (Paradis, Le Corre & Genesee 1998; White 1996). Prévost (2009:78) asserts that: 'assuming that clitics are morphological markers, their presence suggests that verbal morphology is acquired rather quickly'.

Paradis et al. (1998) followed 15 Anglophone learners of French (mean age 6;7) in an immersion setting. In the first two years there were significant differences between the learners and grade-matched native speakers in terms of tense-related aspects although they were no significant differences in relation to agreement (based on subject clitic use). Moreover, at least 95% of finite verbs were produced with a subject clitic. There is evidence that child L2 learners of French go through a phase of using non-finite verbs forms at the initial stages of acquisition, as seen in studies of monolinguals (Paradis & Crago 2000; Prévost 1997). The results of Prévost (1997) shows that the two learners produced non-finite forms in the first 18 months of acquisition. However, these mainly occurred with strong pronoun subjects and not with clitic subjects or DPs. Despite the observed use of non-finite forms in finite contexts, there is little evidence to suggest that finite forms are used in non-finite contexts. Prévost (2009) argues that the data from the aforementioned studies suggests that child L2 learners have knowledge of finiteness from the outset as finite verbs are produced initially, subject clitics are accurately used with finite verbs and finite verbs are not used in non-finite contexts. Nevertheless, if learners do have knowledge of finiteness at the early stages of learning, functional categories may not

be fully projected in their utterances which may account for why early child L2 learners produce verbless utterances as observed by Prévost (2008).

5.3.3 The development of verb morphology in adolescent and adult instructed learners of L2 French

Studies of adolescent and adult learners of L2 French indicate that the development of verbal morphology is more difficult than it is for younger learners in immersion settings. Research has shown that they produce non-finite forms for longer (even into intermediate stages) and that these non-finite forms appear to have different properties. Older learners tend to use them as a replacement for finite forms meaning that they act as default forms (Prévost & White 2000). Furthermore, adults produce non-finite forms in finite contexts, such as with subject clitics, and they almost never appear with strong subject pronouns (Prévost 2009). Myles (2005) undertook a longitudinal study of 14 learners of French within UK schools. The aim of the study was to trace the emergence of the verb phrase over time investigating when verb phrases first appear, what they are like, and what role they play in sentence structure. The results of the study indicate that there was a marked change in the learners' interlanguage over the year in terms of number of verb phrases produced. The learners produced a much higher number of verb phrases after one year, in terms of absolute numbers and proportions; at time 1 the verb/proposition ratio was 54.6% compared to 75.7% at time 2. The results also indicate that learners go through a stage of projecting single lexical phrases, usually noun phrases with the occasional prepositional phrase. A verbless phase in L2 has been documented before (Lakshmanan 1998) and according to Myles, verb phrases present processing problems for learners in the early stages due to the complex argument structure of the verb in the sentence. Productions that require linking elements syntactically in a sentence have been shown to make heavy parsing demands on learners (Myles 2005:100).

The results also show that the production of verb morphology remained optional even after two years of study with learners producing a high number of non-finite verb forms:

- Time 1 – non-finite 48.4% vs. finite 51.6%
- Time 2 – non-finite 43.5% vs. finite 56.4%

Non-finite forms are regularly found in finite contexts and therefore these could be acting as default verb markers. However, Myles argues that the use of finiteness is

syntactically constrained as finite forms do not appear in non-finite contexts. The data shows that there is broad variation from subject to subject as some learners make a lot of progress whereas some use very few verbs at all with those who appear to be less advanced producing lexical categories only. Furthermore, the verbs tended to be used in one default form only and there were very few verbs which appear in alternative forms. The use of chunks is also evident and therefore the study can only report on broad developmental trends (chunks or formulae will be discussed in section 5.3.5 and therefore will not be discussed further here).

The only verb that was used regularly and in a variety of forms was '*regarder*' (to watch) and Myles' data shows that there is a gradual trend to produce more tensed examples:

- time 1 – untensed 74% vs. tensed 26%
- time 2 – untensed 66% vs. tensed 34%.

The results of the study also show that lexical noun phrases are initially preferred over pronouns with subject pronouns appearing infrequently (only 34 tokens across all learners). Indeed only 8/14 learners made use of pronouns at all and these were almost entirely used with tensed verbs. However, when subject clitics were produced they were used with finite verb forms in 91% of cases, which is in line with research into L1 French. To conclude, Myles posits three stages for the development of French morpho-syntax:

- verbless stage
- a bare VP stage (in line with Vainikka & Young-Scholten 1996) in which there is a lack of agreement morphology
- an IP stage characterised by verb agreement and the use of subject clitics where: 'free grammatical morphemes seem to be triggering the move from lexical to functional categories' (p.111).

The described verbless stage in early acquisition was also observed by Rule and Marsden (2006) who investigated the development of French verb morphology of 60 L1 English learners in three British secondary schools. The Y9 (age 13-14years) learners had received 195 hours of French tuition, Y10 (age 14-15 years) 283 hours and Y11 (age 15-16) 380 hours. Data from Y7 beginner learners (40 hours of tuition), collected by Mitchell & Dickson (1997), was also analysed. Based on the cross-sectional elicited oral production data, the results show that verbless utterances were a strong feature of the Y7 learners' L2 production. The learners from Mitchell &

Dickson (1997) produced around 81% of verbless utterances. The utterances that did include a verb contained set formulaic phrases such as: *il est grand* (it is big) and *il a les cheveux bruns* (he has brown hair). These verb forms were categorised as formulaic chunks as they were not extended to other contexts. The Y9 learners also produced verbless utterances but to a much lesser extent (around 20% of all utterances). The verbless utterances decreased noticeably in Years 10 and 11 to 8.4% and 6.4% respectively.

The data of six Y11 learners was analysed in greater detail and the results show that there were only a small number of non-finite forms that occurred in finite contexts and these appeared, for the most part, in the story retelling task for which the processing demands are higher. Rule & Marsden argue that these non-finite forms are in fact default finite forms since they occur with subject clitic pronouns. Moreover, the learners also produced finite forms of the same verbs and therefore: 'this suggests that knowledge of finiteness amongst these learners is not random' (p.207). The same six learners also produced over 94% of correct 3rd person inflections demonstrating that they also had knowledge of agreement since any non-target like agreement was due to absent rather than incorrect agreement. There was again a great deal of variability in the performance of the individual learners with some Y9 learners showing signs of rapid progress whereas one Y11 learner still used verbless utterances. The progress made did not correspond with the hours of instruction for these learners and therefore other factors must be at play. These factors, however, were not explored further in this study.

David et al. (2009) also investigated the development of verb morpho-syntax in L1 English learners of French within British schools. This cross-sectional study analysed oral production data from 60 learners across Y8 (age 12/13) who had received around 100-120 hours of tuition, Y10 (age 14/15) with about 240 hours and Y12 (age 16/17) with around 525 hours. The Y8 and Y10 learners produced the highest number of verbless utterances (9.52% and 14.72%) with no statistical difference between the two year groups. The Y12 group, however, produced significantly fewer verbless utterances (0.97%), although it is important to note that there was again a large amount of individual variation in performance, with some Y12 learners performing at Y8 levels. To further investigate the development of syntax, David et al. also counted the proportion of subject clitics that appeared with finite verbs (excluding chunks). The Y8 learners produced clitics with finite verbs 87% of the time, and Y10 learners 84%, a non-significant difference. The proportion of

subject clitics used by the Y12 learners, on the other hand, was significantly greater (95%). The results of this study indicate that there is, on the whole, minimal progress made between years 8 and 10. However, there is significant progress made between years 10 and 12 in terms of the suppliance of verbs and the use of subject clitics with finite verbs.

Rogers (2010) examined the morpho-syntactic development of 75 Anglophone learners of French (see table 5.5 below for details of the participants). The learners' knowledge and use of subject clitics was tested using an oral production task and an acceptability judgement task. Here I will only detail the results of the oral task designed to elicit the 3rd person pronoun *elle* (she), where learners had to answer questions based on a story whilst looking at pictures.

Table 5.5: participant details adapted from Rogers (2010:167)

Group	***Beginner***	***Low-Int***	***High-Int***	***Low-Adv***	***High-Adv***
N	15	15	15	15	15
Age	12-13	15-16	17-18	19-31	21-24
Instruction (hours)	78 – 94.5	275 – 345	521 – 708	2nd year uni	4th year uni
French (years)	1	4	6	8	10

The results show that there is very little progress made between the beginners and the low-intermediate learners despite having received a further 3 years of study. Table 5.6 below details the learners' use of subject clitics with finite and non-finite verbs and auxiliaries. The beginners' use of subject clitics with finite verbs was very low and subject clitics actually appeared more frequently with non-finite verbs. The low-intermediate group displayed little variation from the beginner group. By the high-intermediate stage the production of subject clitics with finite verbs had significantly increased and this coincided with an overall decrease in the production of non-finite verbs. The data indicates that syntactic knowledge is emerging gradually among the beginners and low-intermediate groups. Rogers concludes that learners build up syntactic representations in a gradual fashion and that L1 influence arises at each stage. This study supports the findings of Myles (2005) and demonstrates that while instructed learners in British secondary schools do make some initial steps in developing verb morpho-syntax, progress for many learners is minimal during the compulsory phase of language teaching.

Table 5.6: Use of verb morphology with subject type (numbers out of 225) and proportions in % (adapted from Rogers 2010:225)

	Cl + V [+ fin]	*DP + V [+ fin]*	*Cl + V [- fin]*	*DP + V [- fin]*	*Cl + Aux*	*DP + Aux*
Beginner	12 (5.3%)	13 (5.8%)	45 (20%)	60 (27%)	5 (2%)	36 (16%)
Low-inter	16 (7%)	2 (0.9%)	60 (27%)	33 (14.7%)	51 (22.7%)	22 (9.8%)
High–inter	152 (68%)	17 (7.6%)	37 (16.4%)	2 (0.9%)	8 (3.6%)	1 (0.4%)
Low-adv	183 (81%)	14 (6.2%)	9 (4%)	2 (0.9%)	16 (7%)	1 (0.4%)
High-adv	186 (83%)	17 (7.6%)	4 (1.8%)	2 (0.9%)	10 (4.4%)	2 (0.9%)

Overall, the evidence from the L1, child L2 and adult L2 studies shows that there is a verbless stage at the very early stage of language learning and that for the adult learners this lasts for an extended period of time. The results also suggest that cliticisation is not problematic for young children but that there are key differences between L1 and early L2 children learning French and adult L2 learners which is seen both in the initial state and in how development proceeds over time. The data would also seem to indicate that adult learners do not interpret subject pronouns, object pronouns and determiners as clitics from the outset and this continues over a greater period of time. Moreover, it is reported that adult learners produce non-finite forms with subject clitics which does not arise in child L1/L2 French. There is an observed Optional Infinitive stage both for L1 and L2 learners; however, in the case of adult learners, there seems to be a qualitative difference in the use of non-finite forms. Firstly, for adult learners the OI lasts for a much greater amount of time than for younger learners. Also non-finite forms appear to function as default forms where they are used as a replacement for finite forms.

5.3.4 Dual processing in language learning

Since the 1990s there has been a debate between connectionists (or associationists), on the one hand, and proponents of rule-based models of language on the other. The debate surrounds the nature of the relationship between the storage of linguistic elements and how these are then processed in real-time (Pinker & Ullman 2002). In response to associationist models of language learning, several linguists have argued that learners engage a dual processing system for storing and producing language in which learners make use of rote-learned and rule-governed linguistic items (Pinker 1998; Pinker & Ullman 2002). Rule-governed forms are considered to be an open-ended and can therefore be applied to newly-learned linguistic items. In contrast, rote-learned forms are a closed class, which are learnt

on an individual basis and may well be subject to frequency effects (Herschensohn (2003). To inform the debate, research into the English past tense has been undertaken to shed light on whether there is differential processing for regular and irregular past tense forms. Regular past tense forms are seen to indicate grammatical processing whereas irregular forms point to a lexical memory process where irregular forms are learnt on an item-by-item basis (Pinker & Ullman 2002).

Much research has shown that learners indeed make use of a combination of strategies and led Pinker & Ullman (2002) to the conclusion that: 'human memory is partly superpositional and associative' and that 'irregular past forms behave like words' (p.462). In fact, Herschensohn (2003) in her investigation of the oral production of two advanced Anglophone learners of French over six month period, found that their production of correct and incorrect verb forms demonstrated the use of both rote-learned verbs and the systematic construction of rules: 'L2 learners use a coalition of strategies to create their interlanguage grammar' (p.40). Research has also shown that rote-learned forms may well be used as an entry into rule learning and this will be discussed in the following section.

5.3.5 The role of formulaic language in beginner learner interlanguage

Previous research has shown that formulaic sequences (or chunks), are prevalent in L2 learner interlanguage, particularly in the early stages of acquisition (Hakuta 1974; Myles et al, 1998; Myles et al. 1999; Myles 2012; Wong-Fillmore 1976). Defined by Myles et al. (1998) formulaic sequences (FS) are: 'a multimorphemic unit memorised or recalled as a whole, rather then generated from individual items on the basis of linguistic rules' (p.325) that are used by learners to fulfil their communicative needs in the L2 before they have acquired a sufficient amount of grammatical knowledge:

> 'before learners have generated the grammar necessary for producing target L2 structures, they tend to rely on a databank of set phrases and routines they have rote-learned, and which they have not analysed yet into their constituents' (Myles 2004:215).

Furthermore, the pervasiveness of FS in early learner language has led some researchers to misrepresent the grammatical knowledge of early learners claiming that they are more advanced than they actually are (Myles 2012). Despite the commonality of FS, their function in the development of L2 morpho-syntax still remains unclear: do they just enable communication for learners who have underdeveloped grammar or do they play an integral role in language acquisition? Several studies of L2 French have examined the oral production of British instructed

learners of French in order to gain further insights into the role of FS for instructed learners.

Myles, Hooper and Mitchell (1998) studied data from 16 learners of French in a British school across the first two years of French study (from the age of 11-13). The data was elicited with spontaneous oral production tasks focused on meaning rather than form and was collected at the end of six consecutive school terms. The researchers highlighted three FS that appeared frequently in the learner data and tracked their development over a two year period: *j'aime* (I like); *j'adore* (I love) and *j'habite* (I live). Their analysis focused on four areas: all the occurrences of the aforementioned FS, when the verbs *aimer, adorer* and *habiter* were used outside of the FS, the use of the contracted form of the 1st person pronoun *j'* elsewhere and when the pronoun *je* (I) was used outside the FS. The results show that the FS *j'aime* and *j'adore* were over-extended, particularly in the first two rounds and *j'habite* less so; however this FS was used less overall. School-related differences were also observed with learners from School 1 producing a greater number of verbs which it is suggested is related to differences in the classroom input. As regards the use of the 1st person pronoun, the contracted form j' appeared frequently in *j'ai* (I have) but hardly anywhere else. However, the use of the full form *je* provides insights into how the learners move along the path to segmentation of the FS. The learners who used je creatively outside of the focus FS were the same pupils who used the chunks in a target-like manner and for Myles et al. this suggested evidence of an emerging pronoun system. The same, more advanced, group of learners also produced the 3rd person forms *il* (he) and *elle* (she) frequently with a wider range of verbs.

The data shows that the segmentation of chunks was closely linked to the emergence of the subject pronoun system. When pressed to produce 3rd person forms in one of the tasks the learners demonstrated evidence of self-monitoring and the detailed exchanges show that the learners realise that a clearer reference is required and therefore did not rely solely on the FS but modified them to include a NP or the 3rd person form. They did not abandon the chunks immediately but modified them in some way in order to fulfil the communicative need. For Myles et al. this constitutes strong evidence to support the claim that the breakdown of FS and the need to establish reference for communication are closely linked. The study has two main findings:

1. there was a clear developmental path within the group and also great variation in progress; those who began early and progressed further along the path to segmentation and those who had not started down the path at all.
2. the segmentation of FS is the linked to the emergence of the subject pronoun system.

Myles at al. conclude that: ‘the use of formulaic language therefore has a role beyond that of facilitating entry into communication and speeding up production….[FS are] a database for hypothesis testing’ (p.358). Moreover, this conclusion is supported by the findings of Myles, Mitchell & Hooper (1999) in their study of French interrogatives.

Myles (2012) expanded upon the original studies by comparing the results of the beginners with cross-sectional data of post-beginner learners in Years 9-11 (13-16 years). The same FS were analysed: *j’aime, j’adore, j’habite* and the interrogative *comment t’appelles-tu*. In contrast to the beginners, the post-beginner learners (Y11) did not over-generalise 1st person forms to the same extent and they did begin to make much greater use of *j’* in other contexts (see table 5.7 below). Notably when these verbs were used outside of the FS they were in the finite form despite the fact that most other verbs were mainly untensed at this stage. This suggests that: ‘the productive verbal system slowly catches up with the more advanced grammar contained in the verb sequences’ (p.86).

Table 5.7: use of of j’ with aime/adore/habite and with other verbs (Myles 2012:78)

	Beginners (years 7,8.9)	***Post-beginners (Y11)***
J’+ aime/adore/habite	329 (99.1%)	26 (59.1%)
J’+ other verbs	3 (0.9%)	18 (40.9%)
Total	332 (100%)	44 (100%)

In terms of interrogatives, the beginner learners are heavily reliant on 2nd person forms initially but by Y11 this is reduced to under 25% and learners are more able to produce 3rd person forms; five stages were observed:

1. comment t’appelles-tu
2. comment t’appelles-tu le garçon
3. comment t’appelle la fille
4. comment s’appelle un garçon
5. comment s’appelle-t-il (p.84)

Not all of the learners had progressed to stage 5 by Y11. Nevertheless, the data shows that the interrogative chunks produced continue to be more complex than other interrogative constructions. The results of the studies discussed imply that beginner learners' interlanguage is comprised of two components: a database of complex and accurate formulaic sequences and a much less complex and imperfect productive grammar. The FS begin to be broken down in to their constituent parts and these elements remain more complex than their current system and provide the impetus for language development. According to Myles (2012:88):

> 'L2 learners will therefore resort to memorising formulaic sequences which will not only enable them to communicate before their productive linguistic system is capable of doing so, but also to give the impression that their language is much more advanced than it really is…'.

As learners' grammatical competence develops, they tend to rely less on formulaic chunks of language and will demonstrate greater creative use of the target language. This in turn may lead to a drop in accuracy as learners test new hypotheses and over-generalise recently acquired rules. Overall, the findings support the view of e.g. N.Ellis (1996, 2008) who maintains that formulae play a significant role in language acquisition and that learners draw upon a repertoire of both memorised chunks and creative language.

5.3.6 The relationship between lexical and morpho-syntactic development

There have been a number of studies documenting the development of vocabulary in instructed learners of French and the previous sections highlight studies investigating their morpho-syntactic development. However, there have been very few studies that have examined the development of grammar and lexis within the same study. One such study was conducted by David et al. (2009) (see section 5.3.3) in which they looked at various aspects of morpho-syntactic development: grammatical gender, the developing verb phrase and the use of embedded clauses. They also measured the lexical diversity of each of the learners and looked for relationships between these various elements. There was no significant difference in vocabulary scores between years 8 and 10, although there is between years 10 and 12. When looking at the results for the development of gender assignment there is very little progress made between the three groups (see table 5.8 below). The Year 12 learners did perform slightly better but the differences are not significant. David et al. assert that there is no obvious pattern of development for gender concord and this is

borne out by the lack of significant correlation with lexical diversity scores for the three groups (r=.148, p=.262). The percentages of correct gender concord are relatively high despite lower lexical diversity scores which may be due to the learners using a small number of well-known words. The Year 12 learners use a greater variety of words which may increase their chances of making gender assignment and agreement errors.

Table 5.8: descriptive statistics for gender concord (%) taken from David et al. (2009:158)

Year	*Mean*	*Number of Learners*	*Standard Deviation*	*Minimum*	*Maximum*	*Median*
Year 8	71.64	19	18.30	37.50	100	72.22
Year 10	70.32	20	14.96	42.11	100	70.36
Year 12	78.28	20	13.11	50	100	80.91
Total	73.44	59	15.69	37.50	100	73.33

In terms of the learners' use of verb morphology the Pearson correlation between the percentage of verbless utterances and scores of lexical diversity is small but significant (r=.25, p=0.46). Despite some variation in learner performance within each group, the results indicate that learners with a low vocabulary score tend to demonstrate less developed syntactic knowledge. On the other hand, the use of subject clitics with finite verbs does not correlate significantly with lexical diversity scores. David et al. conclude that the development of L2 vocabulary is related to syntactic development in general terms (in terms of length of utterance); however, different grammatical properties appear to develop at different rates. Marsden & David (2008) also examined the development of inflectional diversity of verbs, nouns, determiners and adjectives. These all significantly increased over time and the results show that there was also a strong correlation between inflectional diversity and lexical diversity (r=.823 p<.001).

5.3.7 Conclusions and research questions in relation to verb morphology

The studies detailed in the previous section have provided invaluable empirical data into L1 and L2 acquisition of French verb morphology. However, many studies, particularly those of adult instructed learners of French have missed the initial stages of learning and therefore we do not have a clear idea of what happens from the outset (Myles 2005; Vainikka & Young-Scholten 1996). The majority of the studies have been cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, which means that we still do not

have a clear picture of how grammatical knowledge develops over time for individuals. One of the aims of the current study is to investigate the emergence of verb morphology at the very earliest stages of language learning; not in an attempt to describe the route of French second language acquisition (this has already been done), rather the rate at which the learners progress through the various stages of acquisition. In addition, the current study also aims to evaluate the effect of individual and contextual variables and how grammatical development relates to other facets of language proficiency, namely lexical development. To fulfil this aim five research sub-questions have been devised:

a. *When do verb phrases first emerge and what form do they take?*
b. *Is there evidence of increasing knowledge of finiteness? Specifically:*
    - *Is the use of finite/non-finite verbs context sensitive?*
    - *When do subject clitics emerge and what are the patterns of usage?*
c. *What is the role of formulaic language in the development of verb morphology?*
d. *What is the role of individual and contextual factors in the grammatical development of instructed learners of French?*
e. *Is there a relationship between grammatical and lexical development and how does this develop over time?*

Chapter 6: Research Design and Methodology

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the design of the research study and the methodology employed in order to answer the three overarching research questions which are:

1. *What are the similarities and differences between the primary and secondary foreign language curricula and pedagogic practices?*

2. *What effect does the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 have on the children's motivation for foreign language study and their confidence in the classroom?*

3. *How does the children's target language proficiency evolve during the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 and is there evidence of linguistic progression?*

The current chapter begins with a discussion about the overall purpose of educational research followed by a justification of the methodological approach taken. After that there is a description of the process of selection of the participating schools and learners and the data collection schedule. Finally, the chapter concludes with a description and rationale for the data collection instruments designed and used.

6.2 The methodological approach taken in the current study

To best reflect the 'middle ground' perspective to language acquisition research that is taken in this study, it was considered necessary to use a mixed-method, multi-disciplinary case study approach in order to generate rich, detailed and context-specific data. The case study approach would provide a holistic view of the myriad factors that come in to play and allow for a greater depth of understanding of the context in which the language teaching and learning takes place. Bell (1999:10) argues that:

> 'the great strength of the case-study method is that it allows the researcher to concentrate on a specific instance or situation and to identify, or attempt to identify, the various interactive processes at work. These processes may remain hidden in a large-scale survey but may be crucial to the success or failure of systems or organizations'.

Elliott and Lukes (2009:83) see educational case study: 'as a form of inquiry into a particular instance of a general class of things that can be given a sufficiently detailed attention to illuminate its educationally significant features'. Mackey & Gass (2005:172) also acknowledge the appropriacy of the case study approach to some types of linguistic research stating that: 'case studies clearly have the potential for rich contextualisation that can shed light on the complexities of the second language learning process'. For me research into language teaching and learning should follow the rationale set out by Oancea and Pring (2009:18) who consider that: 'rather than making merely instrumental contributions to practice, research fulfils a cultural, as well as a technical, role, and so it supports open and democratic debate about the definitions, aims and ends of education'. This implies that, to gain a clear understanding of a particular situation, one should not seek to generalise about all language learners, but aim to gain an in-depth understanding of the factors that influence motivation and attainment within a particular context. The case study approach has also been used for previous studies of young learners such as those undertaken by Low et al. (1993) and Cable et al. (2010) discussed in chapter 3.

To be more specific, the 'explanatory case study' (Yin 1993) approach was adopted for this study. Explanatory case studies do not seek to define questions or hypotheses like 'exploratory' (Yin 1993) or theory seeking case studies, rather they aim to test theory and to ascertain cause and effect relationships for a given phenomenon in a particular context. According to Yin (2003:1): 'in general, case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context'. The 'contemporary phenomenon' in the current study is the introduction of language teaching at primary school, which, due to the nature of the provision in primary school, has led to an increasingly heterogeneous intake of language learners entering secondary school at year 7. Primary to secondary transition has already been identified as a key issue for progression in all subjects and the adoption of primary languages further exacerbates the transition issues that schools, and in particular MFL departments, are faced with. The 'real-life context' in this study is a cluster of schools, encompassing two primary feeder schools and one secondary school, and how this cluster attempts to mediate the issues of the varying approaches to language teaching at primary level and the resultant diversity in pupils' foreign language capability.

The case study approach has, however, come under criticism by some for its lack of generalisability since case studies are often focused on individual or small numbers of learners and are highly context specific. In order to enhance the validity and generalisability of the current study it was designed as a 'collective case study' (Stake 1995:207) where data from several schools, teachers and pupils were gathered, coordinated and triangulated. The strength of this research design lies in the fact that it allows for the collection and analysis of data on multiple levels. For example, one can analyse the data by individual, class, feeder school, teacher, gender, academic level and across the cohort as a whole. For Denscombe (1998:37):

> 'the extent to which findings of the case study can be generalized to other examples in the class depends on how far the case study example is similar to others of its type'.

The inclusion of information such as the schools' location, catchment area, size, and also socio-demographic information pertaining to the school aims to allow the consumers of the research data and findings to locate the case study within the larger picture of education within England. Moreover, acknowledging that the study is context-specific, the study retains its generalisability since it examines issues that have been problematised in the literature over several years and from several viewpoints (see chapters 2 & 3) and issues facing schools across the board. Most schools need to find a way to solve the problems of transition, how to achieve and measure linguistic progression and how to maintain motivation for language learning.

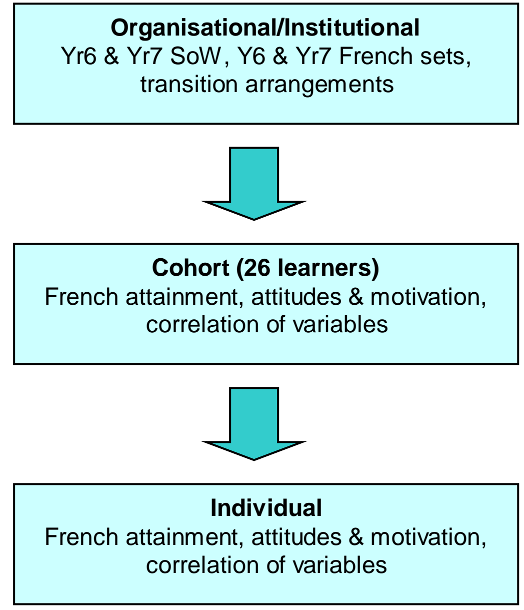
A further criticism of the case study approach is that is vague and 'unbounded' (MacDonald et al.1982) or ill-defined and 'woolly' (Atkinson and Delamont 1985). As a response to these claims the boundary definitions for the case study are described below based upon the areas suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994):

- Temporal characteristics – *data collection schedule*
- Geographical parameters – *location of the schools*
- Inbuilt boundaries – *organisation of the language classes*
- A particular context at a point in time – *national languages policy*
- Group characteristics - *organisation of the language classes*
- Role/function – *research rationale*
- Organisational/institutional arrangements

(items in italics added by author)

The boundaries of the current case study are defined on three levels. Figure 6.1 below displays each level and includes examples of the elements to be evaluated in the study:

Figure 6.1: Boundary definitions for the three levels of analysis



6.3 The participants and participating schools

Several steps were involved in the selection of participating schools. Firstly, in October-November 2009 I contacted Local Authority Language Coordinators and ASTs (Advanced Subject Teachers) as well as the MFL PGCE coordinators of two local universities in order to identify local clusters of schools in which the primary schools had been teaching primary languages for at least three years. From this contact, seven school clusters were identified. Three of the seven secondary schools expressed an interesting in participating in the project and provided me with the details of their feeder primary schools. In January 2010 I arranged meetings with each of the three secondary schools in order to discuss the research project further and to ascertain the suitability of the school cluster for participation in the study. One of the schools' feeder schools mainly taught Spanish so this school was eliminated as a candidate. Following this I contacted the Head Teacher, or where there was one, the languages coordinator, of the feeder primary schools of the two remaining secondary schools (see Appendix A for an example of the letter sent). Following a series of meetings in March 2010 with both the primary and secondary schools, the School C cluster emerged as the best-placed of the two clusters to participate. This

was mainly due to the established primary languages teaching in each of the two primaries, but also due the enthusiasm of the teaching staff in all three schools.

The participants of the current study are 26 children (16 girls and 10 boys) who all received four years of French teaching whilst in their primary school. For the purposes of validity and reliability I emphasised to the primary schools that when selecting the participating children they should be of mixed-ability in terms of French and across the curriculum as a whole. In order to examine the role of L1 literacy the teachers grouped the learners into bands of High, Medium and Low based on their ability in English (L1 literacy level). Furthermore, in the first few weeks of secondary school all Year 7 all learners underwent cognitive abilities tests (CAT) which assess a child's reasoning ability. The school used the third edition of the CAT test (CAT3) which was published in July 2001 (Lohman et al. 2001) and is the most widely used cognitive abilities test in British schools (Strand 2006). The test assesses performance in three separate domains: verbal reasoning (VR), quantitative reasoning (QR) and non-verbal reasoning (NVR) with each domain examined with a separate battery of tests.

The verbal reasoning test is a test of a learner's vocabulary as well as their understanding of ideas, verbal memory and the ability to discover relationships between words as a result this test has an emphasis on reading and familiarity with language. The quantitative reasoning battery tests a learner's problem solving abilities and general abstract reasoning whereas the non-verbal reasoning battery focuses on geometric shapes and can be most useful for assessing learners with a low language ability or limited competence in English. Taken as a whole, 'the general reasoning abilities reflect the overall efficiency of cognitive processes and strategies that enable individuals to learn new tasks and solve problems…' (Lohman 2002:1). It is also important to note that the test is not aimed at assessing innate abilities but those skills that are developed over time during the process of learning. According to Lohman (2005:2) all abilities respond to practice and training and therefore intelligence is both the raw material and the product of education. A series of research studies has shown that CAT test scores have very high reliability (Strand 2004) and are strongly correlated with KS3 test levels and GCSE examination results (Fernandes & Strand 2000; Smith et al. 2001; Strand 2003; Strand 2006; Deary et al. 2007). As mentioned in previous chapters, individual differences were considered an important element of analysis for the current study and since there was not the possibility to undertake working memory tests for each learner I asked School C to

provide CAT scores for each of the participants and it is these scores that will used alongside NC levels in the statistical analyses that will be described in Chapters 7 & 8.

It was also stressed to the primary schools that there should be a mix of boys and girls so that the sample reflects the school population as a whole. It would have been advantageous to have an equal number of boys and girls. However, as participation in the study was voluntary, and also required the permission of the parents since the children are under-16, the schools were not able to obtain an equal number of boys and girls. All of the learners have English as their first language and they reported that their only contact with the French language is through their French lessons and occasional trips and family holidays to France. None of the learners reported any substantial knowledge of additional languages. 14 of the learners (9 girls and 5 boys) attended School A which is an average-sized two-form entry community junior school (ages 7-11) in a small town in the south of England. The pupils come from a range of social backgrounds although the vast majority are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The school was judged as 'good' in a 2008 Ofsted report. The further 12 learners (5 boys and 7 girls) attended School B which is a two-form entry Church of England-aided junior school in the same southern town. Most pupils who attend the school are again from White British backgrounds with few pupils eligible for free school meals. Ofsted rated the school as 'good' in 2007. Both of the primary schools feed into the same secondary school (School C) which is a larger than average 12 form entry mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 11-18. The school was rated as 'Outstanding' in a 2011 Ofsted inspection.

A crucial role of the researcher is to manage attitudes and requirements of the various different stakeholders of the project. Once the schools agreed to participate it was vital to communicate the research objectives to the class teachers and heads of department with whom I would be collaborating, in order to collect the required data. It was essential that everyone involved understood the purpose and proposed outcomes of the study so to create a non-threatening atmosphere that encouraged collaboration. It was also imperative to share relevant information at every step of the process. To this end, I held regular meetings with the Head of Languages and also spent time in the staff room meeting and talking with the French teachers during the data collection period.

6.4 Ethical considerations when working with children under 16 years of age.

The safeguarding of young vulnerable children is paramount for schools and, as a legal requirement for working with young children, every adult has to complete a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check. As well as the CRB check I had to satisfy the stringent University of Southampton ethical protocols that are required for all research projects undertaken. Several documents were generated from this process, for example, the Research Project Ethics Checklist and the Research Protocol (see Appendix B). Due to the age of the children parental consent was required for the learners' participation and thus a participant information sheet and consent forms were created (see Appendix C). Versions of the information sheet and consent form were also created for the adult participants (see also Appendix C). Once the required ethics documentation was approved by the School Ethics Committee and then the University's Research Governance Office (RGO) each participating school was supplied with a folder containing a copy of the CRB check form plus all of the documentation required by the RGO so that the schools could consult this at any time.

6.5 Data Collection Schedule

Focused on the transition period from primary to secondary school, the data collection period covered 12 months from summer term year 6 (aged 10/11) until summer term year 7 (aged 11/12). Figure 6.2 below displays the timeline for data collection. All of the instruments were successfully piloted in March and April 2010 with a small group of learners from a local primary school, which had systematically taught French for four years. Only minor amendments to the wording of the final questionnaire items and the role play card were required and these will be discussed later in this chapter.

Figure 6.2: Visual representation of the data collection schedule

6 week summer holiday

Round

Round

Round

End Year 6
(Primary)
Jun/Jul 2010

2 months in to Year
(Secondary)
Oct-Dec 2010

End Year 7
(Secondary)
Jun/Jul 2011

It was necessary to measure the learners' target language achievement and attitudes to languages at the end of their primary schooling, as well as to document the primary school languages instruction and curriculum through interviews and observations. Round 1 data was therefore collected in the last term of Y6 after the children had taken their SATs. In addition it was during this final term that the children had regular visits to the secondary school and various transition activities were undertaken and as a result the pending move to their new school was forefront in their minds.

The reasons for the collection of the second round of data in the autumn term were three-fold. Firstly, the children would still have fresh memories of their time at primary school and would be able to reflect on changes in their school work and in teaching styles, as well as the transition process itself. Secondly it was the secondary schools practice to place the learners in mixed-ability French classes alongside pupils with little or no experience of French learning and to set them after the first term of Year 7. The key aim of Round 2 was to observe the pupils' reaction to the language teaching and content and measure any progression/regression in their target language capability. Thirdly, previous transition studies featuring different school subjects (Chedzoy & Burden 2005, Galton & Willcocks 1983, Delamont & Galton 1986, Galton et al. 1999) have shown that initial motivation and positive attitudes to the school subjects still remain during the first term of secondary school but have dipped by the end of Year 7. A further aim of this study was to gauge whether the similar fluctuating patterns of attitudes and motivation emerged and the third round of data collection occurred in the final term of Year 7.

6.6 Data Collection Instruments

It was clear that several different types of data were required to answer the three diverse research questions and Table 6.1 below details the data collection instruments designed and administered to the learners at all three rounds.

Table 6.1: Data collection instruments

Research Question 1 – curriculum and pedagogy	Research Question 2 – attitude and motivation	Research Question 3 – linguistic progression
- Lesson observations. - Teacher interviews - Examination of schemes of work and courseware	- Lesson observations. - Questionnaires - Focus group interviews	- Oral role play task - Picture description task - Written task

Several other tasks were also administered to the learners: reading aloud task, reading comprehension task and negation task. Due to time constraints it was not possible to include the analysis of these tasks in the current study and they will be reported elsewhere. The following sections describe each instrument in detail.

6.6.1 Teacher Interviews

In order to gain an insight into the teachers' rationale for primary language teaching and also to ascertain the reasons for organisational arrangements in Year 7, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the French teachers in both primary schools and the designated MFL coordinator in School A. I also interviewed six of the Year 7 French teachers along with the Head of MFL in the secondary school. The semi-structured interview technique was used, broadly guided by a pre-determined list of questions. However the interviewer and interviewee were not restricted to the questions but could digress and explore interesting avenues of discussion. Interview schedules were created for both contexts and were used with all interviewees. The primary school teacher schedule included questions about their language background and training, the staffing model of the school, their teaching approach, the monitoring and reporting of progress and the plans for the transfer to secondary school (see appendix D). The secondary teacher schedule contained questions about their involvement in the transition process, their opinions on the teaching of languages at primary school and the impact this has had on their teaching experience in Year 7 (see appendix E). One possible danger of the interview approach is what researchers have termed as the 'halo effect' (Mackey & Gass 2005:174) where participants say what they think the researcher wants to hear. In order to mitigate the risk of this happening I avoided the use of what could be seen as leading questions. I also emphasised that the responses should be as honest as

possible and that all conversations would be treated as confidential with all transcriptions anonymised.

6.6.2 Lesson Observations

In order to provide evidence to answer the first and second research questions I undertook a series of lesson observations across the 12 month data collection period. Lesson observations were selected as the preferred data collection method for language pedagogy as: 'direct observation may be more reliable than what people say in many instances. It can be particularly useful to discover whether people do what they say they do, or behave in the way they claim to behave.' (Bell 1999:156). The main aim of the observations was to provide 'a window into the classroom' (McDonough & McDonough1997:119) in order to monitor the content and the process of the French lessons as well as the contributions and engagement of the case study participants. The technique used could be described as 'naturalistic observation' (McDonough & McDonough (1997:114) whereby what was observed was ordinary French lessons with the normal teacher, containing regular content and objectives. The desired product of the 'naturalistic observation' was thick qualitative description (Geertz 1973). As a consequence, I planned to video-record the language lessons which meant that detailed coding of particular events could be undertaken at a later date if so required. The researcher placed one video recorder at the back of the classroom so as to distract the class as little as possible and to enable the researcher to film the content of the interactive white board and other teaching resources. The use of video and audio equipment in UK schools is now common place which meant that the use of a video-recorder did not appear to greatly distract the children. The recording of the lesson was not, however, completely unstructured and I also used an observation schedule to systematically document key aspects of each lesson (see appendix F) which was taken from the observation schedule used by Cable et al. (2010). Whilst observing, I made field notes at regular intervals throughout the lessons which were then entered into the schedule after the lesson. In School A only one class was observed as it contained all of the participant children. In School B two lessons were observed in order to capture all participants. In the first term of Year 7, ten of the twelve French groups were observed for a single lesson each, as the participants were spread across these ten groups. The ten classes featured six different teachers. In the final term of Year 7, after the pupils were setted for French, seven lessons were observed, involving four teachers.

6.6.3 Measurement of Target Language Attainment

To measure target language achievement it was essential to develop a combination of data elicitation tasks that incorporated the use of both receptive and productive skills. The tasks were designed to provide the participants with the opportunity to express themselves and to demonstrate all of their language skills. There was a focus on what the learners could produce even with limited target language knowledge rather than on what they were not able to produce. Furthermore, the tasks were designed to elicit data for an analysis not only of the learners' underlying and dynamic linguistic system but also of their ability to 'use' the language communicatively. To reiterate, two key areas of focus had been selected for the evaluation of learners' target language development:

- Vocabulary/lexical growth – productive vocabulary measured across oral and written tasks
- Morpho-syntactic development – grammatical gender and verb morphology

In order for the assessments to be valid the tasks needed to relate to the expectations set out in the schemes of work used by the primary and secondary schools featuring in the study, based on the assumption that they followed the Key Stage 2 guidelines for MFL. Discussions were held with the French teachers within the two primary schools and the schemes of works were reviewed to ensure the content validity of the individual tasks. The learners performed the same tasks at the three different data collection points and since the tasks were relatively open in terms of what the pupils could produce, the learners had a lot of scope to improve performance in the tasks across time. The same tasks were re-used on each occasion, but learners did not receive corrective feedback regarding their task performance and there was a long enough interval between the tasks for the learners to not fully remember the task details.

6.6.4 Considerations when assessing young learners

The participants of the study were age 10/11 in year 6 and age 11/12 in Year 7 which meant that it was essential that 'the cognitive demand should be commensurate with the children's age-related abilities' McKay (2005:8). It was necessary that the tasks contained the means to preserve the children's interest, for example, colourful and interesting pictures, and activities that provided opportunities for realistic interaction

with ‘a requirement for an immediate and compelling one-to-one interaction with another person’ (McKay 2005:186). Young learners on the whole have a shorter attention span than adults and can be easily sidetracked and distracted; therefore the tasks administered needed to be short and fast-paced in order to retain their attention and to prevent them from becoming too tired. It is for these reasons that tasks needed to be familiar, fun, engaging and motivating. It was also important to be aware of the fact that younger children take longer to warm up than older children as Johnstone (2000:130) states: ‘in the case of primary school children an assessment task is unlikely to be valid unless it represents a type of activity with which they have some familiarity; however, in addition, if they are asked to make a cold start in an assessment task, when they are accustomed every day to being warmed up for it cognitively as well as linguistically, then questions must arise about the validity of the process’. Furthermore, when devising content rich tasks (such as listening and reading comprehensions and tasks that use pictures of particular social situations) it was essential to be sure that inaccurate assumptions were not made about the children’s knowledge of the world: ‘care has to be taken to ensure that children are being tested for their language and not primarily for their general cognitive capacity or their knowledge about the world’ (Johnstone 2000:130).

6.6.5 Oral Role-play Task

Due to the oracy-biased approach of the primary school teaching, oral data was considered the primary indicator of target language ability for the learners at this stage. When designing the task it was intended that the task provided the learners with the opportunity to demonstrate their target language communicative ability which was not just focussed on their linguistic knowledge but also on their pragmatic interactive capability. Edelenbos & Johnstone (1996:70) advocate the use of paired-tasks for this purpose stating that:

> ‘paired interviews can be economical in time, they can offer a less stressful context for learners and they have the potential for types of interaction that one-to-one encounters between adult interlocutor and young learner do not have. They can be of considerable use in formative and summative evaluations but also more generally in educational or applied linguistic research, e.g. as a means of investigating the extent to which young learners can play a major role in constructing their own discourse’.

The role-play task utilised was adapted from a task devised and used by Cable et al. (2010) in their study into primary languages provision. The pupils were each given role-play prompt card A or B and these both contained three sections:

1. qui es-tu? – information on their name and age
2. ta famille – details about their family and their pets
3. qu'est-ce que tu aimes/tu n'aimes pas…. – what sports, food, school subject and hobbies they liked/disliked.

The pupils had the choice to answer the questions as themselves or to create a new character with different personal details. Each role-play prompt card included alternative vocabulary, target language prompts and pictures to assist the pupils during the activity. The cards were printed in colour so that they were more appealing and included a selection of images to appeal to boys and girls alike. (see Appendix G for copies of role-play cards A and B that were given to the pupils)

In the initial warm-up section of the task I asked introductory questions such as 'comment t'appelles-tu', 'quel âge as-tu', 'où habites-tu' in order to reactivate target language structures and vocabulary and also to attempt to put the participants at ease. The role-play activity was then performed in pairs with the pupils asking each other the questions and noting the other person's answers and I encouraged the pupils to cover all the sections on the card. The pupils were then asked to recount to me the information that they had obtained from their colleague. The aim of this part of the activity was to elicit data regarding the pupils' knowledge of the 3rd person forms of French and to evaluate the communicative strategies used to compensate for insufficient knowledge of the relevant structures and how this knowledge and learner strategies develop over time.

6.6.6 Photo Description task

This task was also adapted from a task successfully used by Cable et al. (2010) to elicit target language productive vocabulary as well as data for analysis of the production of target language grammatical structures such as article-noun agreement, adjectival placement and gender agreement. The task resources included four A3 sized laminated photographs of different scenes (see Appendix H). The photographs were selected because each scene depicted a situation with which the pupils should have been familiar and which required familiar vocabulary for a

description such as; colours, parts of the body, clothes, numbers, classroom equipment, sports, music and school. The participants were simply asked to describe the photographs, naming and describing as many items and activities in French as they could. The participants each had two photographs that they described and then they swapped photographs so that both participants had the opportunity to describe all four photographs. I did not provide any vocabulary to the participants. I did occasionally used prompt questions if the learner appeared at a loss, for example: 'who is this', 'where are they' and 'what are they doing'.

6.6.7 Literacy-based tasks

In the early primary years children are still learning L1 literacy skills and therefore there may be a greater emphasis on oral communication in L2 learning at this stage. However, by later years of primary (Years 5 & 6), there is an expectation that L1 literacy skills are becoming secure and therefore we may see greater importance placed on L2 literacy skills. Cameron (2001:66-67) describes a 'switch point' between L1 literacy and oracy skills at about age 8-9: 'before the switch point, oral language is more helpful than written language; after the switch point, written language can be functionally more useful' (Cameron 2001:67). Although Cameron (2001:67) goes on to say that: 'the foreign language is likely to have a later switch point; the written form will continue to be a burden rather than a help for a longer time', it is not unreasonable to expect pupils in the later years of primary education, who have been studying French for 3-4 years, to be able to perform simple literacy based tasks and indeed this is an expectation expressed within the Key Stage 2 Framework for MFL objectives. The inclusion of a literacy-based task was fundamental to the research project due to several factors. Firstly, in the primary school it was important to assess the learners' preparedness for the secondary approach which was expected to be much more literacy focused than the French teaching in the primary schools. Secondly, with the expectation of a greater emphasis on literacy-based activities, it was the area of development in which the greatest proficiency gains were anticipated. Thirdly, the KS2 FW clearly sets out literacy-based targets and there is currently an expectation from secondary schools and LA advisors that learners will have basic literacy competence in the foreign language by the end of Year 6.

6.6.7.1 Writing Task

As researchers in the field have observed, there is a paucity of research into FL writing of beginner or near-beginner language learners (Macaro 2007, Way et al. 2000). Due to the lack of empirical data, it is extremely difficult to know what to expect from learners of this level who have had little practice in FL writing and no experience at all of 'free writing' – 'allowing learners to generate sentences through which they can express their own ideas' Macaro (2007:24). What FL writing experience the participant learners did have was limited to copy writing or simple gap-fill tasks (Ofsted 2011). In consideration of these issues, the writing task developed for this study was an open response free writing task. The task was based on communication in a real-life situation as 'writing is a communication skill, and FL writing instruction can and should include real-life, interactive tasks' (Way et al 2000:180). Moreover the task was an example of what Koda (1993) calls a 'descriptive' task, since research suggests that this is the easiest type of writing task to produce and in which learners write the most (Koda 1993, Way et al. 2000).

In the writing task (see Appendix I) the learners were asked to compose an email in reply to Pierre (the penpal). The learners were instructed that they could write about whatever subject(s) they wished and were encouraged to write as much they were able to. The only stipulation was that they wrote at least three sentences. It was emphasised to the learners that they would not lose marks for lack of accuracy i.e. spelling or grammar mistakes, and that they should simply 'have a go' at writing. It was felt that this would alleviate task anxiety and encourage the learners to produce more and with greater variety. Furthermore, the writing task provided the learners with the opportunity to expand on their use of vocabulary since in the role play task the subject matter was relatively controlled, whereas in the written task they were allowed to choose what to write about. The task remained unchanged for each of the three data collection rounds so that developments in the learners' written production were attributable to their developing linguistic ability rather than as a reaction to differing task design/content.

The results of the three tasks were all analysed to provide evidence of both lexical development and grammatical development. The role-play task provided data on both lexical and grammatical development but was expected to provide the best information on the development of verb morphology, especially the production of 3rd person forms. The photo description was also expected to elicit some verbs,

however it was envisaged that this task would provide the greatest amount data as regards vocabulary and grammatical gender. Finally, the writing task was included to provide further evidence of productive ability across the different areas of investigation and it was presumed that learners would produce additional lexical items without the constraint of on-line processing that occurs during oral production.

6.7 Measuring learner attitudes to and motivation for language learning

A key aim of the study was to investigate how the young learners' attitudes to learning French, and language learning in general, evolve over time. The review of motivation theory and previous research in chapter 3 demonstrates the complex nature of L2 motivation. In addition to this, there are other elements of the study that added to its complexity. The study was:

- undertaken at the point of primary to secondary transition;
- diachronic in nature;
- concerned with young adolescent learners.

Previous studies have shown that motivation changes over time, and not just in terms of intensity (or amount), but also qualitatively. In order to fully understand and evaluate learner attitudes, a complex research design was therefore considered necessary incorporating a mixed-method approach. The methodology combined qualitative and quantitative data and used repeated measures to allow for the evaluation of change over time. A mixed-method approach provides a more holistic view of learner attitudes and allows for triangulation of data which adds to the reliability and validity of the research findings. Additionally, in order to study a complex phenomenon, there was the need for macro (group) and micro (individual) analyses which is also permitted by a mixed-method approach. Lastly, the use of a combination of survey and interview data allowed me to not only measure the changes in motivational intensity (scale mean scores) but also to uncover the motivational thinking behind the attitudes which thus enhances the inherently superficial questionnaire data.

The field of L2 motivation study is dominated by quantitative research however qualitative methods can, and should be, used in order to complement the findings. The objectives of the current study mirrors those of Ushioda (2001:94) who states that the study:

> 'does not seek to undermine the wealth of literature on language learning motivation that has evolved in the quantitative research paradigm or to generalize on the basis of what is a very

> small-scale and focused investigation. Rather, it seeks to present an alternative way of conceptualizing and exploring motivation, not as measurable cause or product of particular learning experiences and outcomes, but as an ongoing complex of processes shaping and sustaining learner involvement in learning'.

The benefit of using a structured survey is that it is easier to generalise findings and make comparisons with previous research findings, independent of the researcher as formalised statistical procedures are used. Qualitative data, on the other hand, is context specific and enables a researcher to look under the surface for explanations for the patterns shown by the quantitative data. It was hoped that a combination of both methods could bring out the best in both whilst cancelling out the weakness of each. To this end, two instruments were designed and used. A paper-based questionnaire was administered to all learners, followed-up by focus group interviews with a selection of the learners. The following sections will describe the instruments in detail.

6.7.1 Motivation Questionnaire

The questionnaire was based on an instrument used by Harris & Conway (2002), which itself was adapted for use with children from Gardner et al's (1979) 'Attitude/Motivation Test Battery'. The strength of the AMTB is that it is a widely-used and empirically well-tested instrument. However, due to the age of the participants and time constraints of the school timetable, the questionnaire was limited to 20 items with a four-point Likert scale response format (Likert 1932) and three sentence completion items. Multi-items scales defined as: 'scales that refer to a cluster of several differently worded items that focus on the same target' (Dörnyei 2003:33), were used in the questionnaire because the wording of an item can affect how the learner answers the question. Including multiple items focused on the same target minimises the risk of an unreliable answer so that: 'no individual item carries an excessive load, and an inconsistent response to one item would cause limited damage' (Skehan 1989:11). The items included were selected in accordance with Dornyei's (1994) framework for motivation and enabled a multi-faceted view of the development of learner motivation over time rather than just one score.

The questionnaire items were grouped into five main motivation components (scales), on three levels in line with the proposed framework:

Language Level – incorporating the motivational sub-systems of *Integrativeness* (4 items) and *Instrumentality* (3 items)

Learner Level – comprised of *Linguistic Self-confidence* (4 items) and *Parental Attitudes* (2 items)

Learning Situation - contained one dimension called *Learning Situation* (5 items).

The literature recommends that there should be at least four items to each scale. However, due to the age of the learners and the time constraints, the number of items had to be greatly reduced; as a result, only three scales had four items or more. Table 6.2 displays the items for each of the motivation components listed above (see Appendix J for questionnaire). Two of the questions (Q7 and Q15) were not included in the above framework, and in the subsequent analysis of L2 motivation, as they were questions related to primarily to secondary transition in general. The questions were nevertheless included in the questionnaire to gain an insight in the learners' general feelings about progressing to secondary school and how they felt they had 'settled in' to secondary school life. It was important to include this element so that I could ascertain if any negative views following transition were as a result of a general negative response to transition or were specific to MFL.

Table 6.2: Items used for each scale

Scales	Items included
Integrativeness	Qs: 1, 11, 13, 16
Instrumentality	Qs: 2, 6, 8
Linguistic Self-Confidence	Qs: 3, 10, 14, 19
Parental Attitudes	Qs: 4, 20
Learning Situation	Qs: 5, 9, 12, 17, 18

The *Integrativeness* scale included items related to the learners' attitudes to the target language community and communicating with target language speakers, along with willingness to learn other foreign languages. The items included in the *Instrumentality* scale focussed on usefulness of learning foreign languages. The *Linguistic Self-confidence* scale was made up of items associated with the learners' perception of their L2 progress and speaking aloud in the language classroom. The *Parental Attitudes* scale included items related to parental interest in language learning at school and their communication of the benefits of language learning.

Lastly, the *Learning Situation* scale incorporated items related to the enjoyment of learning French at school, the role of the teacher, and specific classroom activities.

6.7.2 Questionnaire design and layout

The questionnaire was printed in colour, with images on the front page, and was presented as a booklet following Dörnyei's (2003:19) assertion that: 'producing an attractive and professional design is half the battle in eliciting reliable and valid data'. The questionnaire began with a clear introduction of its purpose and also instructions on how to complete it. A practice question was included at the beginning on the subject of summer holidays, in order to check that the learners had understood the format of the questionnaire. I introduced the questionnaire, discussed the answer to the practice question and clarified any misunderstandings before the participants completed it. The four-point Likert scale ranged from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree to Strongly Agree. Likert's original scale contained a five-point response, but to minimise the risk of the learners opting for the middle category of 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'not sure', a four-point scale was selected. The response items were in text format accompanied by smilies (two sad faces for strongly disagree, one happy face for agree et cetera). It was felt that the use of smilies would appeal to the young learners and would assist them in completing the questionnaire. Moreover the use of a pictorial format has worked successfully in previous research with learners of a similar age (Dörnyei 2003:38).

The statements used in the questionnaire were all 'characteristic' meaning that they expressed; 'either a positive/favourable or a negative/unfavourable attitude toward the object of interest' (Dörnyei 2003:37) and included a combination of negatively and positively worded items, for example:

No. 5 – Learning French is boring

No. 9 – The French teacher makes the lesson fun

No. 13 – It is important to learn French as it will help me speak with people who speak French.

The questionnaire data analysis will be discussed in the following chapter.

6.7.3 Focus Group Interviews

As previously mentioned, due to the age of the learners and to time constraints the number of items in the questionnaire was limited. Also, the questionnaire was designed by myself and I was aware that there is always a risk of simply measuring the researchers' pre-conceived notions of what it is expected that the learners believe. It is for this reason that focus group interviews were also included in the study so that learners could express their own opinions in their own words and hopefully provide greater insight into the pattern of results shown by the questionnaires. As Krueger (1998:68) explains:

> 'in these quantitative studies, the instrument was a proxy for what was really measured. By contrast, in focus group research, there are no proxies. The actual words of the participants, not instruments, are used to find out their feelings, thoughts or observations about the topic of discussion'.

Focus group interviews are focussed group discussions that aim to gather opinions on a given topic and to uncover factors that influence opinions and attitudes. It is key to organise groups that are small enough to permit everyone to contribute and share their thoughts, but large enough for diverse responses. As time in school is limited, the focus groups were scheduled to last 30-35 minutes meaning that the size of groups had to be limited. Consequently, the focus group interviews were undertaken with small groups of 4-6 learners, in all three data collection rounds. The focus group interviews allowed for a more flexible and detailed discussion of issues surrounding the learners' language learning experience. The combination of the two instruments was principled in that the oral interview was based upon the same theoretical framework as the questionnaire. This meant that the participants' interview responses could be combined with the questionnaire data in a structured manner in order to provide an overall view of their language attitudes.

The same semi-structured oral interview (see Appendix K) was used with all of the participants and contained eight main questions that aimed to elicit learner attitudes related to the motivational framework discussed in chapter 3. At round 2 a question related to how the learners felt they had settled into secondary school was also included for the reasons previously discussed. Aside from the main eight questions, probes and follow up questions were also used to elicit additional information if the learners provided a vague or cryptic response. Examples of expected probes and follow-up questions are also listed on the interview schedule.

Each focus group interview was audio recorded and at the beginning of each interview the learners were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and that only the researcher would listen to the audio recording. Due to the age of the learners, it was essential to keep the questions short, simple and jargon free and in order to assist the learners keep track during the focus groups, each question was written on a piece of card. The card was placed upright on the table when the question was asked so that the learners could keep the question in mind whilst listening to the responses of the others. Fortunately, it was possible to interview all of the participants at round 1. However at round 2 only a selection of pupils (n=13) was available for interview, due to assessment and timetabling issues in the secondary school. At round 3 all participants were interviewed. Details of the coding and analysis of the focus group interviews are discussed in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7

Results Section Part I – Curriculum, Pedagogy and Learner Motivation

This chapter addresses research questions 1 and 2 pertaining to foreign language pedagogy and learner motivation. It contains details of the foreign language curriculum and pedagogy in all three schools, highlighting the changes that occurred following the transition to secondary school. Following this are the results from the motivation questionnaire and focus group interviews. To enhance readability, the data processing and results for each area of investigation will be presented together.

7.1 Curriculum, pedagogy and transfer activities from the end of Year 6 to the end of Year 7.

This section presents the results of lesson observations in both primary and secondary schools and also the details of transition activities as reported by the primary school teachers and the secondary Head of MFL. One French lesson was observed and video-recorded in each of the primary schools. In addition a total of seventeen Year 7 French lessons were observed and video-recorded involving six different French teachers. Of the ten mixed-ability lessons observed in the Autumn term of Year 7, six were analysed in detail, one for each teacher, to ascertain similarities and differences in teaching style and the kinds of activities undertaken in each class. Four classes from the summer term of Year 7 were also examined, after classes had been reorganised into sets by ability, two from the upper stream and two from the lower stream, in order to investigate any differences there may be in terms of rate of progress, the types of activities undertaken and the classroom environment.

The lesson observation notes for each lesson were written up in the lesson observation schedule (see appendix F) and were then analysed based upon several areas of investigation:

- Warm up/starter activity
- Main lesson objectives
- Oracy-based activities
- Literacy-based activities
- Presentation/discussion of grammatical items
- Presentation/revision of vocabulary
- Assessment and feedback

- Teaching resources used

The analyses therefore contained details about each of these topics and also the proportion of time that was spent on each type of activity. As a result it would be possible to make systematic comparisons firstly between the approaches taken in the two primary schools and secondly between the primary and secondary language classes in terms of lesson structure, class ethos, teaching styles, activities undertaken and the key areas of focus at each educational stage. The first results section details the teaching of French in both primary schools which is followed by a section about the kinds of transfer activities undertaken by the secondary school prior to transition in general and in the case of MFL. It is important to include both of these elements in the study so that we can gain an overall impression of the learners' transition experience and in an attempt to ascertain whether any negative responses were related to the overall transition experience or were MFL specific. The final section details the French curriculum and pedagogy utilised in Year 7.

7.1.1. The delivery of primary languages in Year 6

There are various delivery methods for language teaching within UK primary schools and the two primary schools in this study represent two examples of the teaching models that are commonly employed. French teaching in School A was delivered by individual class teachers in most year groups. The participants in School A were all taught by one Year 6 teacher (CT1) who taught the entire year group. Each class was divided in two for the French lessons (15-16 pupils) and the lessons were timetabled once per week for forty minutes per lesson. CT1 is a non-specialist language teacher with French up to 'O' level. CT1 was supported by the use of the Rigolo (http://www.nelsonthornes.com/rigolo) scheme of work and software, alongside 'Chantez Plus Fort' (http://www.lajolieronde.co.uk) songs. In contrast, the French teacher in School B (CT2) is a primary language specialist with knowledge of French up to degree level. This teacher delivered French classes to all Years 3-6 in the school, once per week, for forty minutes and taught the cohort in this study for three of the four years in junior school. CT2 did not use a specific scheme of work but created their own collating French resources from a variety of sources (see Appendix L). Even though the two teachers used different schemes of work an examination of the different curriculum documents showed that similar content topics were covered from Years 3 to 6 in both schools. This is not surprising since both schemes were designed to cover the KS2 Framework recommendations. The topics included: talking about yourself, animals, my body, my family, my school, days of the

week and months, the weather, my town, holidays, free time activities, food, clothes and festivals including Christmas. Elements such as colours and numbers featured regularly across all of the topics and most of the topics covered were not repeated within the schemes of work. Nevertheless, the lesson observations show that both teachers devised activities to recap on previously covered language and this is discussed in more detail in the following section.

7.1.2. Lesson observations in Year 6

The French lessons observed in both schools displayed the characteristics commonly seen in primary French classrooms (as reported in the review of previous studies in section 2.1.5) and followed a similar format. Firstly, the lessons began with a *'bain français'* which is an oral revision of previously learnt language used as a French warm up. CT1 used a puppet called Bof (from Rigolo scheme) to encourage interaction from the children and this clearly had a positive affect on pupil participation. Familiar questions such as; *'comment t'appelles-tu'* (what are you called) and '*où habites-tu'* (where do you live) were posed, as well as *'as-tu un animal à la maison'* (do you have any pets) or *'tu aimes la musique'* (do you like music). CT1 asked each individual in turn ensuring everyone was included. Songs were also used as a warm up and a way to motivate and engage the learners and the children participated enthusiastically and clearly enjoyed this part of the lesson. In School B the *'bain français'* took the form of a game using beanbags with the aim of revising previously learnt questions and answers. In groups of four the learners had to ask and answer questions such as; '*comment ça va'* (how are you), '*qu'est-ce que tu manges'* (what are you eating), '*qu'est-ce que tu fais à l'école'* (what do you at school) and the team that finished first won the game. All of the pupils were engaged in the game and the majority seemed to find it enjoyable.

In both lessons the main aim was to revise previously learnt vocabulary. In School A they revised clothing vocabulary and this was done initially with the use of flashcards that contained the French words and the English equivalent. The teacher held up the card and the class had to repeat each item in chorus, a strategy frequently seen in primary language classes. The teacher also engaged learners by asking several of them to assume the role of the teacher displaying the flashcards and asking individuals to provide the French word. In School B there was an activity centred round the revision of judgement phrases such as *'c'est cool'* (it's cool), *'c'est super'* (it's super) and *'c'est dégoutant'* (it's disgusting). The phrases were written on the

interactive white board (IWB) in French and the teacher also used hand gestures to accompany the different positive and negative phrases. The class had to repeat the phrase and also produced the accompanying hand gesture and this was repeated several times for each phrase. The teacher created a short rhyme incorporating some of the phrases and asked the learners to practise this in pairs to help them to remember them.

The second half of both lessons was focussed on more literacy-based activities. In School A the activity was based upon the use of French worksheets that contained the phrases:

'Qu'est-ce que tu veux' – what do you want

'je voudrais..' - I would like

Firstly, CT1 asked the question and the children had to provide a response using the vocabulary written on the worksheet. The class then had to do a sentence matching task with the sentence in French and English. To complete the activity the learners were asked to write one or two sentences in French about what they would like to buy using the sentences from the worksheet and inserting the relevant vocabulary. To assist the children CT1 used the puppet Bof, along with a tie and hat, to model a response. The children clearly found this amusing and one learner was also asked to use Bof to question her classmates in French. For the second half of the lesson in School B the children had to work in groups of four to create a Eurovision song which they had begun working on several weeks before. The activity was devised to revise and use all the vocabulary that the learners had covered during the last two years of French learning in primary school. Each group had to create a song in French using vocabulary suggested by the teacher which was displayed on the IWB. The items included the days of the week, likes and dislikes ('*j'aime, j'adore, je déteste*') and related questions e.g. '*qu'est-ce que tu bois'* (what do you drink), questions and answers related to the weather, weekend activities and school subjects most of which had been revised in the *'bain français'.* Following the literacy-based activities, both teachers returned to an oral activity to finish the lesson. In School A, a familiar, amusing song was sung at the end of the lesson by all pupils. In School B, as the French lesson occurred just before lunch, the teacher concluded the lesson with an oral exchange asking what the children would be eating for lunch in French and the children were not allowed to leave until they each produced the phrase, *'je mange….'.*

On the whole, the lessons were interactive, engaging, fun, fast-paced and active. The lesson in School A was clearly enjoyed by all the pupils and this was evidenced by the high levels of participation. In School B all learners actively partook in the game and the activity with hand gestures. Furthermore, the majority of the class were actively involved in the final part of the lesson. Nevertheless, the girls did appear to be more enthusiastic for the Eurovision activity and volunteered to perform their rap in front of the class. In both schools the focus was predominantly on oracy; however the children did have to undertake some literacy-based activities involving both reading and writing at sentence level. CT1 confirmed that literacy-based activities were only introduced in Year 6 in preparation for secondary school and CT2 stated that in general most lessons would have followed the format of the first part of the lesson. There was some discussion of grammatical concepts by CT1 where, on several occasions, the learners' attention was drawn to the different articles for masculine, feminine and plural, concepts that were obviously familiar to the learners. Nevertheless, there was no detailed explanation of particular linguistic features such as grammatical gender or phoneme-grapheme correspondences (PGCs), and there was no discussion of grammar at all in School B. There was no evidence of any assessment during either of the lessons. Although CT2 did walk around the class helping with the songs they did not correct any mistakes the learners made in their writing, and both teachers confirmed that there was no formal assessment for French in either school. The teachers did, however, state that some informal assessment was included in their lessons from time to time and both teachers gave positive feedback using French terms such as; *'très bien'* (very good), *'bravo'* and *'excellent'.*

From the observations of both lessons it is clear that the language taught in the two primary schools was based upon transactional, set chunks of language with little focus on grammatical concepts at this stage. The main focus was on content and there was no evidence of the systematic teaching of grammatical structures or French PGCs. Moreover, the lessons were mainly oracy focussed with some literacy included in Years 5 and 6. From the teacher interviews it is clear to see that the curriculum and pedagogy employed reflected the views expressed by both teachers regarding the purpose and aims of teaching French in primary school. Both teachers stated that their focus for their French was on oral communication, engagement and enjoyment. According to CT1, teaching French in primary school is:

> 'a really good idea because they love it because it's something a little bit different. It's really exciting for them. It prepares them well for the secondary and for most of them it's an

> experience where they can all at least achieve something at some sort of level. So even if they're not great at other subjects they can have a stab at it and think that they've come out the end of the lesson with quite a lot of success'.

CT1 included some writing in Year 6 in order to prepare the learners for secondary school and also to enable the children to; 'see patterns and where the words are coming from'. CT2 is also very positive about primary languages and has well-formed ideas regarding the approach they prefer to take:

> 'I think it's very advantageous to teach children French at a younger age while they're still enthusiastic and they're not conscious of standing up and saying things and I think it's much easier to teach younger children but I think it must be based on actions and singing and taking part actively rather than writing so the only reason these children do writing now a little bit is because they're better at it. But the writing part isn't important. They might get the spelling wrong but it doesn't matter at this stage'.

Both teachers had some concerns about the transition to secondary school. The concerns of CT1 were related to the pace of the secondary French lessons and also the larger class sizes, whereas CT2 was primarily worried about learner motivation once they move into secondary school as they observed that even by Year 6 the learners were; 'more difficult to engage'. Despite their concerns both teachers did acknowledge that the secondary school (School C) had made efforts to communicate with both primary schools to gain an understanding of what is being taught and to ascertain the topics covered, the level of learners' progress and also what changes were required for Year 7. For example, CT1 declared that;

> 'they're getting much better at secondary in seeing where they've come from and being a little bit more lenient with what they expect them to do but at the same time of course they're on a pretty tight ship of what they've got to get done by the end of certain years'.

Full details of the transition activities will be discussed in the following section.

7.1.3. Transition activities with School C

As discussed in chapter 2, primary to secondary school transition is an unsettling and challenging time for children. However, a series of studies have shown that many schools have implemented successful and effective methods to ensure a smoother transition. The transition program devised by the school cluster was called 'Primary Classroom' and this involved Year 6 learners from each feeder school

visiting the secondary school for two full days. Each day the children had sample lessons for all of the subjects they would be taught in Year 7 and were shown around all areas of the school. The second key initiative was a choir concert including all Year 6 children and some pupils from Years 7-9. This involved teachers from School C visiting each primary school and working with the children on a series of songs. The children also had to visit the secondary school several times and work in collaboration with children from other feeder schools. In the summer term, just prior to transition, the concert was performed in a concert hall to friends and family. This activity enabled the new intake to become familiar with members of their new cohort and with some of the senior teachers. The children's response to these activities will be discussed in greater detail in section 7.2.3.

In terms of MFL transition related activities, the primary-secondary cluster held meetings once or twice per year involving the secondary Head of MFL and the MFL coordinators for each of the feeder primary schools. The main aim of the meetings was to firstly to decide upon which language was to be taught in the cluster and to ascertain the topic areas that had been covered and also what resources were used in KS2. The Head of MFL from School C also visited some of the primary schools to observe the primary French teaching. As stated, there was no formal assessment of the learners in either school and therefore no achievement data was passed on to the secondary school. Following the cluster meetings, and as a result of the increasingly heterogeneous intake in year 7, School C took the decision to alter its own scheme of work for year 7 and as a result the lessons in the first term were focussed on the 'Your School' topic. There were two reasons for the selection of this topic: firstly it had not been extensively covered in French in any of the feeder primaries and therefore this would hopefully avoid simple repetition of previously learnt language, although the topic did enable the revision of previously learnt items such as numbers, colours and days of the week. The Year 7 teaching team also thought this would be an interesting topic to cover as the children had themselves just started a new school and would be motivated to talk about their different lessons and their new school day. As a result of the mixed intake in Year 7 School C also made some changes to how the French groups were organised. Initially the year 7 pupils in School C were organised into twelve mixed-ability French groups, irrespective of previous language learning experience. The groups were organised by tutor group which was selected at the beginning of Year 7 using software that ensured a mix of feeder schools, gender and special needs requirements. These teaching groups remained the same for all subjects, except Maths and English, which

were streamed by ability. French assessments in listening, speaking, reading and writing are undertaken by each learner a few weeks prior to the Christmas break and the learners were then grouped into two streams based on their assessment results and remained in these groups until the end of year 7.

7.1.4. Lesson observations in Year 7

The lesson observations showed that the language content across the classes was similar as they were all working on the topic 'Our School' although some of the classes did appear to be further along in the topic than others. There were several content areas that came under this heading and below are examples of the type of language seen within each area:

- time in French e.g. '*à neuf heures'* (at 9 o clock)
- days of the week and months of the year e.g. '*lundi', 'octobre'* (Monday, October)
- schools subjects e.g. '*le dessin', 'l'histoire'* (art, history)
- opinions of different school subjects e.g. '*j'adore le français parce que c'est super', 'je n'aime pas les maths car c'est ennuyeux'* (I love French because it's super, I do not like maths because it's boring)
- structure of the school day e.g. '*j'arrive au collège', 'je parle avec mes amis', 'les cours commencent à neuf heures'* (I arrive at school, I speak with my friends, lessons start at 9 o clock)
- school uniform – e.g. '*un pullover', 'le pantalon, noir'* (a pullover, trousers, black)

On the whole the secondary lessons started on a far more formal note than in primary school. In most classes the exercise books and textbooks were distributed first and the learners had to write the date and title in French in silence before any other activity began. Half of the teachers began the lesson with a written starter activity such as matching the colours to word labels and writing them in the exercise book, finding the odd one out in a group of words and writing the answers or practising spelling French numbers with the look-copy-write method. One teacher (CT3) did not include a starter activity at all, whereas two teachers did start the lesson with a *'bain français'.* CT7 did an oral revision of saying the time in French by way of a little game where they assigned a time to each learner and the learners had to stand up when the teacher said their time. The learners appeared to enjoy this activity, although they were not required to produce any French themselves. CT4

also did an oral revision of likes/dislikes of school subjects. Images for each subject were displayed on the IWB and the teacher asked, for example, *'tu aimes les maths'* and individual pupils had to answer with a full sentence.

There was a noticeable increase in the proportion of time spent on literacy-focussed activities in the secondary lessons as compared to the primary French lessons. In primary school the split of lesson time was around 50% oracy and 50% literacy whereas only one lesson in Year 7 was structured in this way. CT7 revised sentences introduced in the previous lesson with hand gestures, rhymes and choral repetition and then asked the pupils to practise asking and answering these questions. Afterwards the learners played a game where they had to say a sentence and link it with connectives such as *puis* (then). The last 30 minutes of the hour-long lesson were then spent writing out the sentences with connectives. The observations showed that this lesson by CT7 was the exception to the norm for the French lessons in Year 7. Four of the classes contained very little opportunity for the learners to partake in oracy-based activities and the only opportunity to speak any French came in whole class plenary sessions with the teacher asking individuals for particular lexical items or translation of sentences into French which were then written on the white board. The other two classes devoted around a third of the lesson to oracy-based activities which were predominantly comprised of a listening activity in which learners had to listen for short phrases or individual lexical items. Once again, in these two lessons the learners had little opportunity to speak in French. Both primary teachers reported that they often used songs to introduce or reinforce vocabulary and enhance learner engagement. Only two Year 7 teachers made use of songs in their lessons and these were played in the last few minutes of the lesson whilst learners were packing away. While songs were not a key strategy used, most of the learners did join in with songs when they were played.

Explanations of grammatical concepts and forms were seen in half of the secondary French lessons observed. For the most part these explanations were centred round grammatical gender highlighting the use of different articles for masculine, feminine and plural nouns and also the placement and agreement of colour adjectives. CT3 also discussed the formation of negative sentences, the contraction of *ne* and *le/la* before a vowel and third person plural verb endings. Nevertheless, these explanations normally only lasted a few minutes and appeared to feature on an ad hoc basis as the issues arose during the course of the lesson. The only evidence of a planned explanation of a grammatical point was in CT7's class where the

sentences to be learnt and revised were displayed on the board and were colour coded for parts of speech. CT7 draw attention to the different parts of speech by asking questions such as ‘what can we say about the first word in every sentence’ and ‘what’s the second bit of every sentence’. Alongside the somewhat increased focus on grammar there was also a greater emphasis on accuracy. Several teachers reminded the learners to check their spelling and to ensure the accents were in the right place when writing in French. Spelling tests were a strategy often used by the teachers to ensure learners revised vocabulary and focused not only on meaning but also on the form of the words.

There was little evidence of assessment of learning during the secondary French lessons with only two teachers asking for feedback on performance. CT6 was the only teacher to use a traffic light system to gauge how the learners felt about their own progress during that lesson. On the other hand several teachers made reference to the requirements for obtaining NC assessment levels and also to the expectations for the Autumn term assessment. The end of Autumn term assessment used to stream the classes included a speaking and writing task about the school day topic and it was clear that some of the classroom activities were directly related to the assessment. For example, following the question and answer matching activity, CT6 informed the learners they would be asked these questions in their assessment and therefore they needed to know them well. In CT3’s class the learners copied and translated a full paragraph about school and the school day from the textbook. CT3 underlined the words that needed to be changed when talking about themselves and the last part of the lesson was spent adapting the text to refer to their own school and school day. At the end of the lesson CT3 asked the class to learn the paragraph by heart and said they would need to write the entire paragraph from memory for their writing assessment. The learners were also frequently made aware of the requirements for obtaining different levels on the NC scale. For example, CT7 made reference to level descriptors for writing, stating that single sentences would get the learners a level two or three but that they would need to link sentences for a level 4. CT8 read out the entire list of descriptors for obtaining a level four in writing so that the learners knew exactly what they needed to do to obtain this. A final important point to note from the lesson observations in the summer term was the difference in lessons between the higher and lower sets. The lower set classes were characterised by much more disruptive behaviour with the teacher being continually interrupted. In one observed lesson two learners were sent out of the class and only one new item of vocabulary had been introduced 16 minutes into the lesson. On the

other hand, the pace of the lessons in the upper streams was faster with less interruption. As a result the less able learners may well have been further disadvantaged by a less conducive learning environment.

7.1.5 Continuity in content and pedagogy across the primary to secondary transition

As mentioned previously the secondary school undertook a range of general transition activities to help the learners become familiarised with the school and their new peers. For MFL specifically, some liaison activities did take place but there was little evidence of mutual classroom observation or regular contact between the primary and secondary school teachers. Nevertheless, unlike the previous studies of primary to secondary transition reviewed in chapter 2 which reported schools taking a 'fresh start' approach in Year 7, School C made a laudable attempt to adjust their Year 7 scheme of work to take into account an increasingly diverse intake. The topic of 'Our School' provided the learners with the opportunity to revise previously learnt vocabulary items such as colours and numbers, days of the week and clothing alongside new and unfamiliar language. However, as previously discussed in chapter 2, continuity in pedagogy is required along with continuity of content. The findings of the current study corroborate those of Low et al. (1993;1995) and Evans & Fisher (2009)who observed an abrupt shift in pedagogy across transition. These researchers observed primary lessons that consisted mainly of games and songs in which the only literacy element was support for the learning of new vocabulary using both written and visual cues. In contrast, secondary French lessons prioritised reading and writing and were characterised by an emphasis on explicitness in terms of grammatical concepts but also in terms of reference to attainment targets meaning that outcomes were given greater prominence in secondary classrooms. Both the primary and secondary lessons were heavily-teacher led; however in primary school the learners had much more opportunity to interact in the target language whereas L2 use in the secondary school was tightly defined and controlled, with little opportunity for independent work (particularly in speaking). Another key difference between the two phases was that in secondary school there was a reliance on the textbook in most French lessons observed, which did not feature at all in the primary lessons.

In relation to motivation for language learning, the learners in the current study were not required to start from scratch all over again and this should hopefully have helped

to maintain motivation levels across transition. On the other hand, Low et al. (1993;1995) found that learners had a mixed response to the change in pedagogy across transition. The less able learners became anxious due to the increased amount of writing and the focus on accuracy whereas the more able learners liked the increased emphasis on literacy-based activities as they considered this 'real work'. In terms of progression, the review of transition studies in chapter 2 attributes the observed 'hiatus' in progress across the transition period to a lack of systematic planning, repetition of previous work and sudden changes in teaching style. The aim for the rest of the current thesis is to ascertain whether the learners in the current study demonstrate the same mixed response to the shift in teaching style and to what extent the change in pedagogy is mediated by the continuity in content. To this end the following sections in this chapter examine learner motivation from the end of Year 6 to the end of Year 7, and linguistic progression across this period is discussed in detail in chapter 8. Finally chapter 9 contains a detailed discussion of how the primary to secondary transition affected both learner motivation and progression.

7.2 Attitudes and Motivation data processing, analysis and results

This section describes the methods of data processing and analysis of the attitude and motivation data that was undertaken in order to answer the second principal research question which is:

> *What effect does the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 have on the children's motivation for foreign language study and their confidence in the classroom?*

In order to provide a complete answer to this question, and following the review of previous studies detailed in chapter 3, four sub-questions were formulated:

a. *What is the nature of the learners' motivation for language learning at the end of their primary education?*
b. *How does their L2 motivation develop across the transition to secondary school?*
c. *How does learners' linguistic self-confidence progress over the 12 month period?*
d. *Is there are correlation between motivation and attainment?*

Firstly, this section describes the quantitative processing and analysis of the questionnaire data for the three data collection rounds. This is then followed by the processing and analysis of the qualitative focus group data. In both qualitative and quantitative approaches there is a principled analysis based on Dörnyei's (1994) framework of motivation (as described in chapter 3). This is to ensure that the two types of data are complementary, so that the qualitative data is able to elaborate on the patterns observed in the questionnaire responses.

7.2.1. Questionnaire data processing and analysis

After each administration of the motivation questionnaire the item scores were entered into SPSS® and also into Microsoft Excel® for statistical analysis. The item scores were entered as 1-4, corresponding to the four-point Likert scale (1 for *strongly disagree,* 2 – *disagree*, 3- *agree*, 4 - *strongly agree*). The learners' unique reference was entered as well as their gender (coded 1 - male and 2 - female). Further data on their French class for each round, their overall school attainment scores for French as well as their results in the Year 7 CAT tests, were also entered into the SPSS master data file for analysis.

The administration of any questionnaire will inevitably involve some missing data. In this study P23 was unwell and was unable to complete the questionnaire at round 2, while P9 did not provide an answer for one item at round 3. The missing responses were given coded values in SPSS that ensured that they were not included in any subsequent analysis. Furthermore, the data analysis results were closely inspected to ensure that the values were indeed correctly omitted. Using box plot graphs, outliers were identified and removed from the analysis. There were only two cases where this was necessary; P2 provided consistently extreme low scores across the three rounds and these responses were not included in the overall analysis. Nevertheless, this learner's data will be examined to investigate the reasons for the particularly low scores. Also, P18 provided extreme outlying scores for three of the five *learning situation* items in round 1 and therefore the responses were excluded from the analysis as it was considered that the item responses would negatively skew the overall mean scores for the scale. The focus group data will be examined for an explanation for P18's strong negative reactions to the learning situation and these will be discussed in section 4.3.2.

In the process of data entry certain values had to be recoded, for example, the scores for negatively-worded items (5, 8, 19) were reversed:

Item 5: *Learning French is boring*
Participant response: strongly disagree (normal coding for this selection: 1)
SPSS value : 4

As a result of the data coding method employed the higher the score the more positively motivated the learner. Once the data entry was complete the means for each learner were averaged and an overall motivation score for each student was calculated. This thus enabled the calculation of overall group means for each of the three rounds.

As described in Chapter 3, five sub-scales were devised representing five key elements of the construct of motivation that has been developed over the last thirty years: integrativeness, instrumentality, linguistic self-confidence, parental support and learning situation. The construct of motivation and its composite elements are abstract concepts that cannot be easily observed and measured and are thus termed 'latent variables'; 'a variable that cannot be directly measured' (Muijs 2011:57). The aim of a motivation questionnaire, therefore, is to measure the concepts indirectly by way of individual questions that are combined to characterise the underlying concept. For that reason, it is crucial to test the internal consistency and validity of the motivation scales in the questionnaire and to this end Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients were calculated in SPSS. These coefficients indicate how well the individual items fit together within a scale and as a result how well they represent the underlying construct. Table 7.1 displays the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients for each of the five motivation scales, as well as descriptive information, across the three rounds. As a rule, the reliability coefficient measure for short scales of 3-4 items should be over 0.7 (Dörnyei 2003:112). In round 1 the mean reliability coefficient of the scales was *0.68*, in round 2, *0.72* and *0.63* in round 3. Even though the scores are slightly below 0.7 in two cases, the scores are acceptable considering the short length of the scales (Czisér & Kormos 2009:67). The longer the scales the more reliable they will become which is why the *learning situation* scale (which contains five items) consistently produces higher reliability coefficients. On reflection it would have been beneficial to have included more items for each of the scales to increase their reliability; however the questionnaire could not be too long due to time constraints and the young age of the learners. That said, the

study also contains detailed qualitative attitude and motivation data which serves to add to the reliability of the findings.

Table 7.1: Cronbach alpha internal reliability coefficients and descriptive information for each of the motivation scales

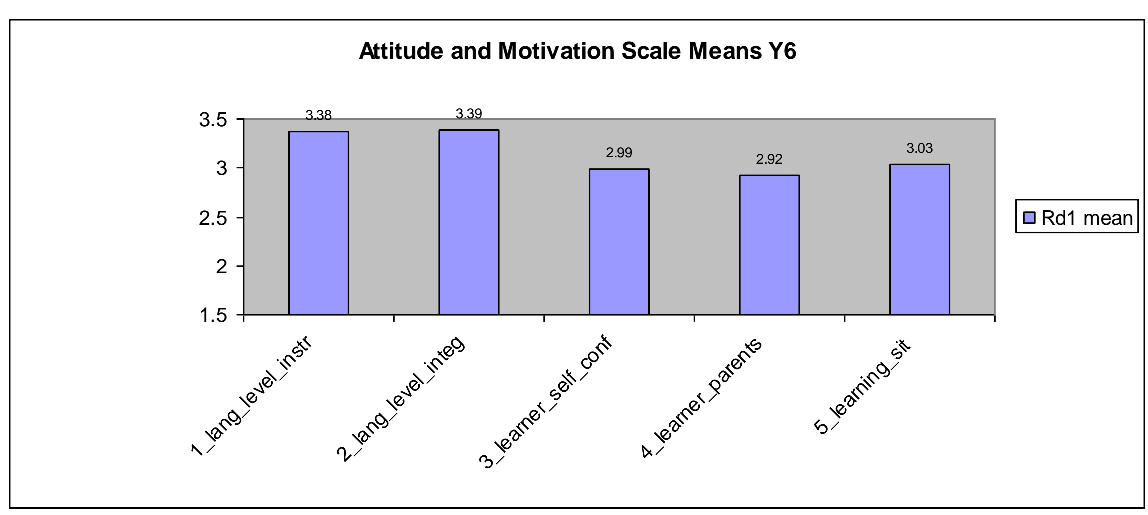
	Round 1			***Round 2***			***Round 3***		
	Cronbach α	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*Cronbach α*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*Cronbach α*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*
Instrumental Motivation	0.542	3.38	0.63	0.634	3.21	0.57	0.602	3.22	0.76
Integrative Motivation	0.553	3.39	0.51	0.831	3.36	0.65	0.796	3.38	0.55
Self-Confidence	0.719	2.99	0.72	0.739	2.98	0.62	0.519	3	0.64
Parental Attitudes	0.690	2.92	0.85	0.614	2.88	0.92	0.536	2.82	0.9
Learning Situation	0.894	2.98	0.76	0.805	2.7	0.81	0.834	2.8	0.8

7.2.2 Questionnaire results

Following the findings of previous studies of young language learner motivation (Low et al. 1993, 1995; Mihaljevic Djigunovic 1993, 1995; Muijs et al. 2005, Cable et al. 2010), there was an expectation that the learners in the study would be positively motivated at the end of Year 6. The results show that this was indeed the case with an overall motivation mean score at the end of Year 6 of 3.12. On a likert scale of 1-4, anything over 2 can be deemed as a positive response. In order to gain a greater understanding of the nature of learner motivation at this stage it was necessary to look at the questionnaire scores across the five motivation scales. Figure 7.1 shows that the learners at this stage had equally high scores for both the *instrumental* and *integrative orientation* scales. The learners had positive attitudes to the target language community and to learning languages in general, also they also believed that learning languages was useful. The high score for the *integrative orientation* scale adds further weight to the claim that learning a language helps to cultivate positive attitudes to language learning in general and the L2 community (Mihaljevic Djigunovic 1993 & 1995; Inbar et al. 2001; Cable et al. 2010, McManus and Myles 2011). The questionnaire responses show that at this stage the learners considered language learning useful for getting a good job and a worthwhile activity, which is contrary to the findings from research with older learners in the UK (Chambers 2000,

Williams et al. 2002). Learners had high levels of linguistic self-confidence; in the main they were confident when using the target language, they felt that they had made progress and the majority of the learners believed they would be able to speak French quite well by the time they leave school. The learners largely had a positive view of the learning situation and parental attitudes at this stage were reported to be positive and supportive.

Figure 7.1: Attitude and Motivation Scale means Year 6



The *instrumental* and *integrative* scales scored significantly higher than the other three scales which scored just below 3 (see table 7.2 below for details of statistical significance). The effect sizes were calculated using the Cohen's d measure (Cohen 1998). To determine the strength of effect size Cohen suggests the following guidelines:

0-0.20 = weak effect
0.21-0.5 = modest effect
0.51-1.00 = moderate effect
>1.00 = strong effect
(Muijs 2011:121)

Using Cohen's guidelines, the effect size was moderate for the variances shown below, apart from Integrative – Instrumental where there was no statistically significant difference.

Table 7.2: Round 1 inter-scale variance statistics

Scales	*Z-value*	*Sig. (two-tailed)*	*Effect Size (d)*
Instrumental – Learning Situation	-3.03	0.002	0.66
Instrumental – Self-confidence	-3.09	0.002	0.77
Instrumental – Parental Attitudes	-2.87	0.004	0.74
Integrative – Learning Situation	-3.1	0.002	0.75
Integrative – Self-confidence	-3.3	0.001	0.90
Integrative – Parental Attitudes	-2.93	0.003	0.81
Integrative – Instrumental	-0.019	0.985	-0.20

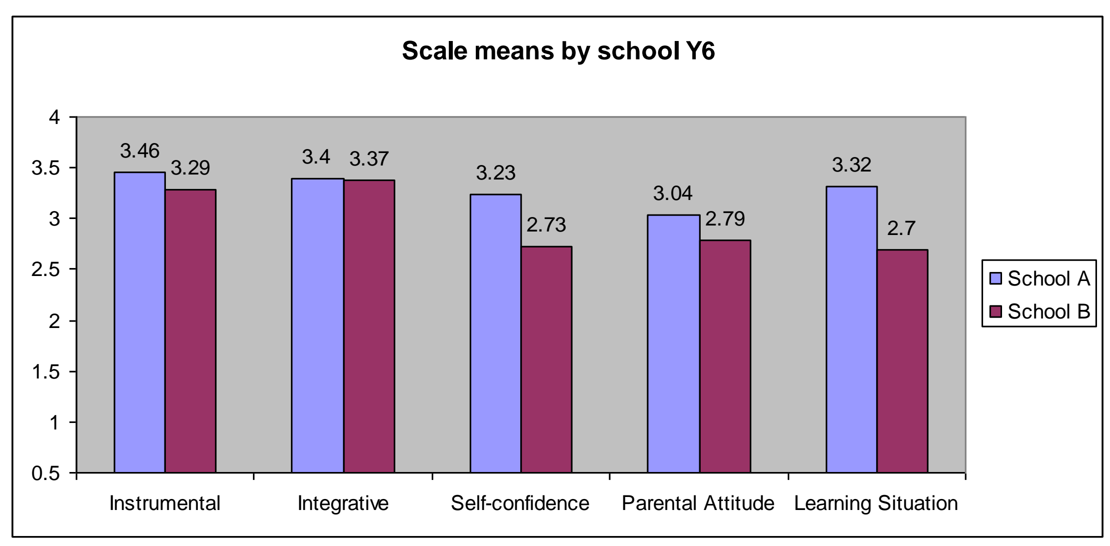
As the two primary schools employed differing teaching models (School A French classes delivered by Class Teacher and School B French classes delivered by external language specialist) it was considered relevant to compare the results across the two schools to see if there were any differences in the responses. To ensure that a cross-school comparison was valid it was imperative to evaluate the homogeneity of the two groups and therefore various analyses were performed for this purpose. Firstly, there was little variation in the number of learners in each group (School A n=14 and School B n=12). Secondly, the overall academic ability of the groups was assessed using the results of the CAT scores from the beginning of Y7. The mean score for School A was 102.54 (SD 11.16) and for School B 102.75 (SD 8.84). Furthermore, analysis of the individual components of the CAT mean (CAT verbal, CAT non-verbal and CAT quantitative) also showed that there were no significant differences between the two groups in any of these areas. The gender split between the two groups varied slightly; in school A girls numbered 9 and the boys 4 and in School B the girls numbered 7 and the boys numbered 5. However, the data shows that although the girls' overall mean scores were marginally higher than the boys in all three rounds, the differences were not significant. On the other hand, in school B the mean score for the boys was actually higher than for the girls. Further analysis also shows that both the boys and girls scored higher in School A then in School B (see Table 7.3 below). In this study there was no obvious gender bias which has been found in studies of older secondary school learners (Clark & Trafford 1995, 1996; Williams et al. 2002).

Table 7.3: Motivation mean scores by gender for School A and School B

School A		School B	
Girls	***Boys***	***Girls***	***Boys***
3.36	3.15	2.9	2.93

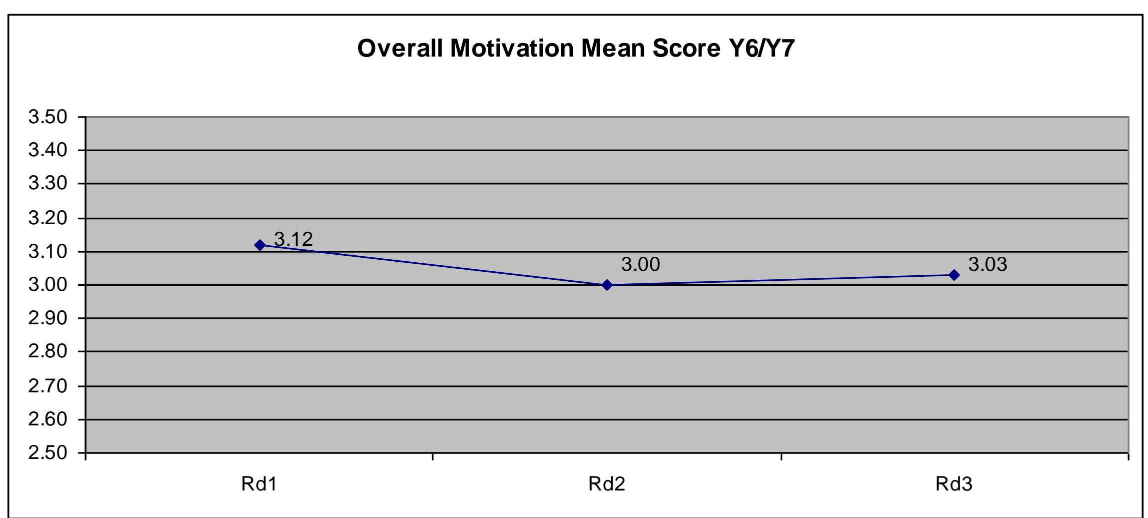
In the cross-school comparison the results show that the motivation scores were higher in School A than School B across all five of the motivation scales (see figure 7.2). A Mann-Whitney test showed that for the *learning situation* scale and the *self-confidence* scale the differences were statistically significant (z=-2.73, p=0.006, d=1.23 and z=-2.37, p=0.019, d=1.037 respectively). As can be seen from the calculated effect sizes there appears to be a strong effect (Cohen 1988) for school on scores for both the *learning situation* and *self-confidence* scales. These results highlight the fact that although the learners were, on the whole, positively motivated, the learners in School B had a more negative response to the learning situation which appears to impact on their perceptions of self-efficacy, also observed by Williams and Burden (1999) and Lamb (2007). This was a significant contextual difference that required further exploration in the qualitative focus group interview data which will be discussed section in 7.2.3. The qualitative focus group data may provide information to enhance understanding of the nature of the relationship between these two variables. Whilst acknowledging the limitations of the study due to the small number of participants, it is interesting to note that *integrative* and *instrumental* orientations appear to develop and be maintained independently of the other motivational antecedents at this stage; and can be maintained at a high level despite dissatisfaction with the learning environment and low perceptions of progress in School B.

Figure 7.2: Round 1 motivation scale mean scores by school



In response to the second research question which sought to evaluate how L2 motivation developed over time, it was necessary to undertake a two-part analysis assessing the fluctuations in learner mean scores over the 12 months and the elements of motivation that displayed the greatest change. Figure 7.3 below displays the mean scores across the three data collection rounds.

Figure 7.3: shows the mean motivation scores for all learners from rounds 1-3.



The learners' mean score at time 1 was 3.12; at time 2 the mean score dropped slightly to 3 and then recovered very slightly at time 3 to 3.03, but nevertheless did not recover to Y6 levels. Table 7.4 displays the results of a Wilcoxon signed ranks test that confirms that the difference in overall mean scores was statistically significant between time 1 and time 2 although there is only a modest effect size.

Table 7.4: results of Wilcoxon signed ranks test for mean scores Rds1-3

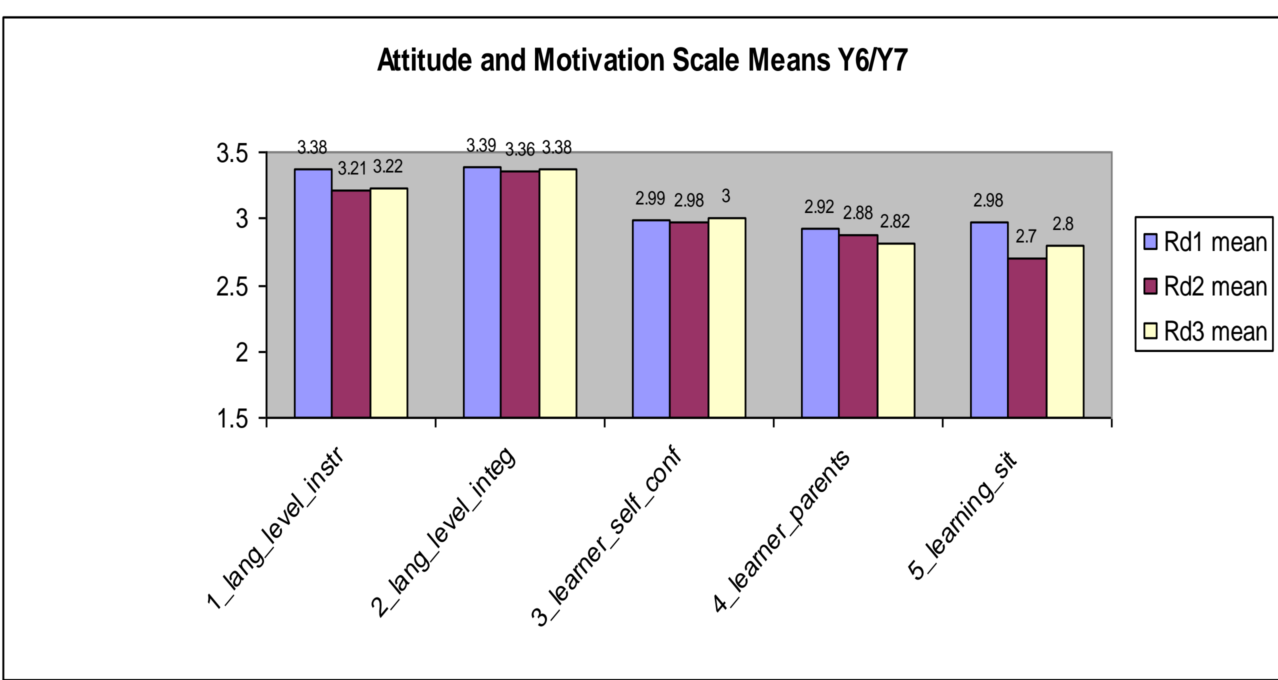
Paired Sample	***z-value***	***Sig. (two-tailed)***	***Effect Size (d)***
Rd1-Rd2	-2.267	0.023	0.35
Rd2-Rd3	-.828	0.408	0.09
Rd1-Rd3	-1.947	0.052	0.29

The overall mean results indicate that the learners were positively motivated to learn French (especially at the end of Year 6), which echoes the findings of other studies into young language learners. However, the pattern of motivation does not replicate that of other transition studies. For example, Galton & Wilcocks (1983), Delamont & Galton (1986) and Galton et al. (2000) found a consistent drop in overall motivation across Year 7. Moreover, studies focussed specifically on transition in MFL reported

similar increase in negative attitudes from primary to secondary school (Burstall 1974; Bolster et al. 2004; McElwee 2009). In order to gain a greater understanding of the factors contributing to the pattern of scores it is necessary to look at the data in greater detail. Figure 7.4 displays the scores for each of the motivation scales across the three rounds.

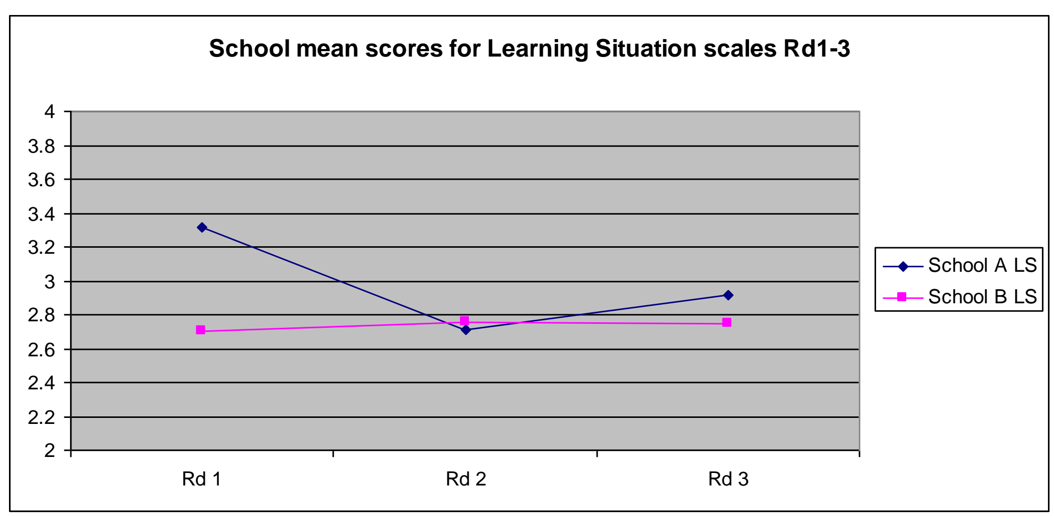
The scores are highest at round 1 for all of the motivation scales which was as expected. Again the results reflect the findings of previous research (Mihaljevic Djigunovic 1993, 1995; Dörnyei & Cziser 2002; Cable et al. 2010) since the highest scoring scale for the young learners was for *integrative* motivation which remained stable across the three rounds. The *learner self-confidence* scale also remained relatively stable, however the *parental attitudes* scale decreased consistently across the three rounds. It is clear that there are two principal elements that accounted for the dip in motivation scores at round 2: *instrumental* motivation and *learning situation*. As in other studies (Nikolov 1999; Chambers 2000; Gardner et al. 2004) it is the *learning situation* component that demonstrated the most variation across time. The results of a Wilcoxon signed ranks test show that it was only the scores for the *learning situation* scale that displayed a statistically significant variation from round 1 to round 2 (z=-2.431, sig. 0.015, d=0.5).

Figure 7.4: Motivation scale mean scores Rds 1-3



On closer examination of the data it is clear that the dramatic drop in the *learning situation* scores was due to the scores of the learners from School A (see figure 7.5 below). In Year 6 school A scores for the learning situation were significantly higher than those for School B. At round 2 the scores for learners formerly at School B remained stable whereas ex-School A scores dropped significantly (results of a Wilcoxon signed ranks test z=-3.071 p=.002) and were slightly less than pupils from School B. At round 3 the ex-School A learners' scores recovered slightly but did not approach their Y6 scores. On the other hand, the *learning situation* scores from ex-School B learners remained stable across the three rounds, as did their scores for *self-confidence*.

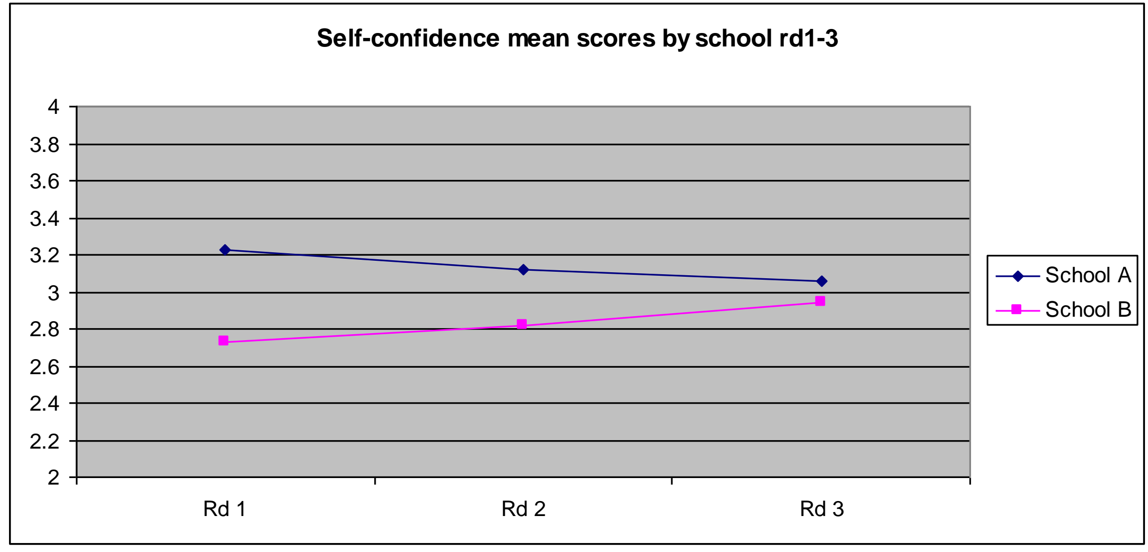
Figure 7.5: learning situation means by primary school



Again the qualitative interview and lesson observation data will help to ascertain the possible reasons why the *learning situation* scores at Year 6 for the School B learners were significantly lower than School A, and why the *learning situation* scores for learners from School A dropped notably following transition. When comparing the learner scores over time, based on their primary school, there remained a significant difference in *self-confidence* levels at round 2. Even though the *learning situation* scores for learners from School A dipped significantly, their high levels of self-confidence generated in junior school were maintained. Nevertheless, the scores for the *self-confidence* scale began to even out by round 3; the learners originally from School B showed signs of recovery whereas the self-confidence levels of learners from School A reduced gradually over the three rounds as shown by figure 7.6 below. The convergent results suggest that their primary school French learning experience may not have been exerting such an influence at round 3 and

that it is secondary experience which now governed feelings of self-confidence which was as expected.

Figure 7.6: self-confidence mean scores Rds 1-3 by school



The final research sub-question sought to determine if the data provided evidence of a relationship between motivation and attainment. The following chapter will contain an analysis of the relationship between motivation and performance in the project tasks and these findings will not be discussed here.

7.2.2.1 Summary of questionnaire findings

The findings reflect those of other studies into the motivation of young language learners; in general positive attitudes were fostered and maintained particularly in terms of the *integrative* and *instrumental orientation* scales. Moreover, there was strong evidence to support Dornyei's (2005) assertion that Integrativeness plays a central role in L2 motivation. The data shows that there was a strong response to the immediate learning environment which was very salient to the learners. It was in this domain that the greatest variance and fluctuations were found, which again reflects previous research into L2 motivation. The findings of the questionnaire data lend further weight to the argument for early language learning, since these young learners are predominantly positively motivated across the board; also the reported lack of instrumentality in other UK studies (Stables and Wikeley 1999; Chambers 2000; Williams et al. 2002; Coleman et al. 2007) does not appear to play a key role at this stage. As pupils' self-perception is considered to be 'linked to the community of practice emergent inside the classroom' (Block 2007:137), it is not surprising to

observe an apparent link between at attitudes to the learning situation and the self-confidence scale. The questionnaire analysis has highlighted areas that require further investigation e.g. the contextual differences between School A and School B and the relationship between motivation and attainment. The aim of evaluating the qualitative interview data, in the following section, is to gain a greater understanding of the learners' experience and how this influenced their attitudes and motivation.

7.2.3 Results of focus group interviews

All of the focus group interviews and teacher interviews were audio-recorded; the recordings were firstly transcribed and subsequently imported into Nvivo™ for qualitative coding. Once in Nvivo™ a coding system employed was designed to reflect the Dörnyei's (1994) motivational framework organised on three levels. Emerging themes were coded and allocated to one of the three levels so the final coding system was as follows:

1. **Language Level** – benefits of PLs, TL contact, learning other languages, integrative motives, instrumental motives
2. **Learner Level** – parental support, identity, speaking aloud, perception of progress, forgetting
3. **Learning Situation** – assessment, difficulty, fun, literacy, aids learning, things liked, things disliked, teacher

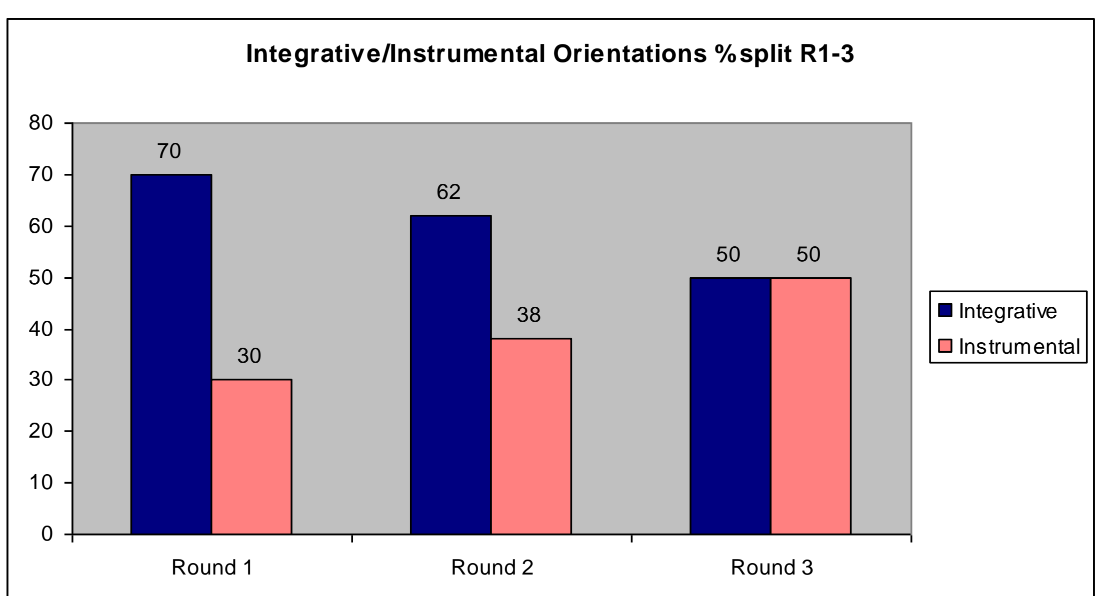
The results across all three rounds will be presented in turn in following sections.

7.2.3.1 The Language Level: motivational orientations

In Year 6, for many learners the primary reasons expressed for learning languages were so that they could speak to other people who do not speak English and to facilitate future travels abroad which mirrors previous studies of young learners. At this stage there were few references to instrumental reasons for language learning; education (n=3) and future employment (n=9). When discussing relevance to future employment, languages were only considered useful for certain professions rather than as a general life skill. These findings reflect those of Stables and Wikeley (1999:29) where pupils made 'naïve connections' between school subjects and possible future vocations. The round 2 data showed little divergence from those of

the first round although learners did provide a greater proportion of references to instrumental motives than in Year 6 (see figure 7.7 below).

Figure 7.7: percentage of integrative and instrumental orientation split in learner responses rounds 1-3

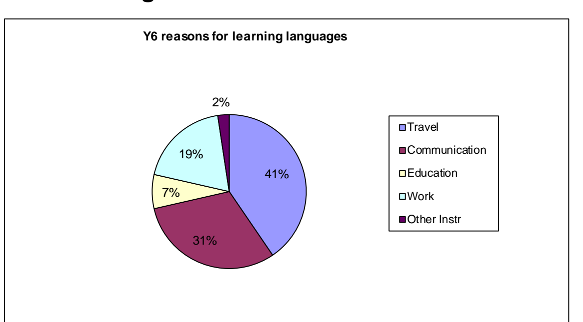


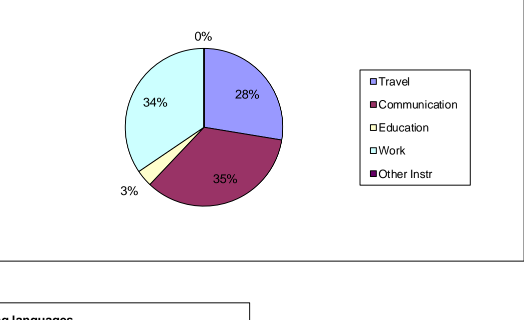
The round 3 data shows that the instrumental reasons for learning languages became increasingly significant to the learners. Figure 7.7 shows that references to instrumental reasons doubled from round 1 – round 3 equalling the reference to integrative motives. Integrative motives continued to refer to travel and communication and instrumental to education and work.

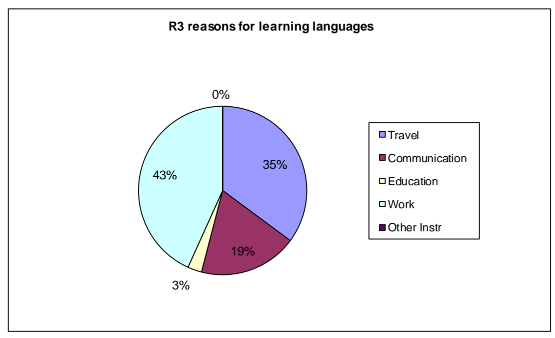
However, the distribution of these four sub-categories altered considerably over time (see figures 7.8-7.10 below). There is a clear developmental trend in the learners' motivational orientations from learning a language for travel and communication purposes, to more consideration of the vocational reasons and possible future requirements. Moreover, the data shows that job-related discourses increased at the expense of other factors, which suggests that language learning may well be decreasingly associated with intercultural communication and sociability, a main theme in the Year 6 responses in round 1. Across the three rounds many learners' responses included a combination of integrative and instrumental reasons which lends weight to the claim that the two orientations are not antithetical. Nevertheless, there were some learners that appeared to have clearly developed ideas that did not alter across the three rounds. Limited associations between the (lack of) utility of languages and particular vocations continued in round 3; there were several learners

who expressly stated that languages were not a requirement for some vocations they are considering.

Figures 7.8-7.10: **the distribution of reasons for language learning rounds 1-3**







7.2.3.2 The Language Level - attitudes to learning different languages

As the results in table 7.6 below show, even though generally positive attitudes to language learning persisted from Year 6 to Year 7 some learners, given the choice, may not have chosen to continue with the French that they began in primary school. Attitudes to learning French became increasingly negative as learners questioned the relevance of it to their future needs; French was only seen as important if you were going to live, work or travel in France itself. Learners expressed a preference for alternative languages based upon their experience and also the perceived opportunity for use outside of the classroom. Nevertheless, many learners were happy to continue with learning French due to the fact that they were also learning a second foreign language; learning French was seen as a vehicle for the learners to access an additional language at secondary school. It is entirely possible that without this 'carrot' to help them along they may have developed less positive attitudes. When asked what other language they would like to learn Spanish was the most popular in all three rounds as Spain is where many learners went on holiday or would like to travel to. Chinese was also a popular choice due to the exotic nature of the language and also for its utility as a possible future world language.

Table 7.6: Percentage of learners happy to continue learning French and another language

	Yes	*No*	*Depends*	*Another language*
Round 1	100% (n=23)	-	-	100% (n=23)
Round 2	80% (n=12)	13% (n=2)	7% (n=1)	93% (n=14)
Round 3	65% (n=13)	15% (n=3)	20% (n=4)	95% (n=19)

A new feature that emerged in the Round 3 data was the identification of French and Spanish as more feminine languages whereas German was considered more masculine:

> 'It just sounds a nicer language than German, sounds more girly..' (P8).
>
> 'I want do French because it's more feminine…when I think of Germany I think of sausages and stuff like that' (P7).

These findings reflect those of Williams et al. (2002:520) in which French is considered by a year 9 boy as 'the language of love and stuff' and German as 'the war Hitler and all that'. What is important to note is that these types of comments do not feature in the data from the earlier two rounds and may provide insights into how the learners' attitudes develop as they mature. Section 3.1.2 describes emotional development in adolescence and highlights that the development of gender appropriate behaviours (sex role identity) is a key task for adolescents. The assignment of languages as either masculine or feminine, therefore, may well be a manifestation of the individuals' growing proclivity to view the outside world through the lens of stereotyped associations of masculinity or femininity.

7.2.3.3 The Learning Situation Level

The results displayed in Table 7.7 below indicate that the vast majority of learners enjoyed learning French in primary school. The lessons were seen as fun and popular activities were songs, videos and games on the interactive white board (IWB). Negative responses were infrequent but when expressed these related to the repetition of words, and dislike of writing in French viewed by some as difficult and time consuming. Some learners in School B also stated that games were a frequent source of frustration as the same ones were frequently repeated. A further criticism

in School B was that some of the lesson topics were considered 'boring' and that the teacher talked too much and moved too quickly through the content. Notwithstanding some of the negative reactions the French lessons in School B were considered as more fun and interactive than other subjects in the curriculum and all the learners were excited about continuing with their French learning in School C.

Table 7.7: Focus group results - % of learners who enjoyed French lessons

	Yes	*No*	*Unsure/ depends*
Round 1	88% (n=22)	12% (n=3)	-
Round 2	43% (n=6)	21% (n=3)	36% (n=5)
Round 3	10% (n=2)	19% (n=4)	71% (n=15)

The questionnaire data showed that the greatest variation in scores from round 1 to round 2 was in the Learning Situation scale and the same pattern is found in the focus group data where the percentage of participants who said they enjoyed French lessons halved. Despite the noticeable dip in enjoyment, there was still a wide range of activities that the learners enjoyed in their Year 7 classes: using IWB, games, songs (although these were infrequent) videos and computer work. There was almost unanimous agreement on what was not to like about the Year 7 lessons and that was writing/copying off the board. Several reasons were cited: boring, not challenging, difficult to understand, does not aid the learning of new words and the spelling. References to the teacher and the teaching style figured prominently in the responses which portrayed a less supportive and more anxiety-inducing environment. Nonetheless, 80% of the learners were happy to continue learning French and the vast majority of the learners considered that primary languages had been of benefit to them which resulted in many learners feeling confident in their Year 7 classes. The data also shows that there was a further negative shift in attitudes to the learning situation in round 3. For a small number (n=4) French was a subject which they clearly did not enjoy, whereas the vast majority of learners (n=15) provided a mixed response which detailed the elements of the lessons that they liked and disliked.

In terms of activities that the learners enjoyed, there was little variation from the first two rounds. When asked to describe what they did not like about French lessons, the

literacy-based activities such as reading, copy writing and textbook-based work still figured heavily. Two new themes emerged in round 3 that did not feature in earlier interviews: assessment and criticism of the topic areas covered. Assessment was seen to dominate the French lessons and it was the pressure and anxiety caused by the assessments which in turn meant that secondary French lessons did not compare favourably to primary school experience. In line with the findings of previous research (Clark and Trafford 1995; Williams et al. 2002; Chambers 2000; Bartram 2010), some learners criticised the choice of curriculum topics that were covered:

> ' we learn stuff that we don't really need to learn like if we go to France we're not going to say like there's something in our room…I'm going to France in August for two weeks but it's not like I'm going to say my bed is in the middle of the room in the supermarket am I?'(P10)

Literacy-based activities were considered difficult due to a lack of vocabulary knowledge, to insufficient explanation in the textbooks and also to the focus on accuracy in terms of spelling and punctuation. Furthermore, learner P20 also implied that lack of phoneme/grapheme knowledge in French was a barrier to learning the language through primarily literacy-based activities:

> 'writing it down doesn't help me learn it because half the time you don't know how to pronounce it'.

It is important to point out that when the learners in this study speak of L2 writing they are in effect referring to copying either from a textbook or from the board or performing gap-fill activities. The learners' accounts of their lessons painted a picture of a curriculum which was much more literacy-focused than in primary school, in which copying from the board and textbooks was a frequent activity (see also Macaro 2007). However, as P18 points out, there were some writing activities that they did enjoy such as writing a paragraph about themselves, although the opportunities for this were cited as rare. Furthermore, a common theme in the learners' reactions to writing was the lack of perceived usefulness. It is clear that some learners failed to see the educational benefits and future relevance of the writing that they did in their French classes. L2 interaction and the opportunity to use the language learnt was considered fundamental to the language learning process and their absence became a source of frustration for some learners who felt that they did not get the opportunity to use their French.

In round 2, the learners were also asked if they thought that learning French in primary school had been of benefit to them in preparation for Year 7. The aim of this question was to tease out the learners' perceptions of curriculum continuity from Year 6 and whether they felt that primary languages had benefited them as individuals. There was an overwhelmingly positive response to this question with 10 out of 13 learners saying yes. Many of the learners felt that their early language learning provided them with the basic building blocks of the language that they could then expand upon. Learner P18 used the analogy that in School C they are putting 'meat on the bones'. Furthermore, this perceived 'firm grounding' resulted in many learners feeling confident in their Year 7 classes:

> 'I think so because I've been putting my hand up a lot more in the old school I'd probably put my hand up once in a lesson but now it's nearly every question because I know a lot more' (P22).

> 'in my old school I didn't put up my hand that much but now I feel really confident because I know what we're doing and I know the answer and everything' (P21).

However, not all the learners considered that primary French had been of benefit to them in Year 7. P10's response, for example, was focused on the topics that had been covered in Y6 and Y7and not on the skills or the strategies that were learnt. For P16, primary French helped 'very little' and this learner stated that they only covered the 'minimum basics'. It would therefore appear that at this early stage in Year 7 some learners were questioning the relevance of the content covered in primary school. However, P18's doubts over the utility of learning French in primary school stemmed from teacher feedback that served to undermine the French learning at junior school:

> 'well we've been told these things in French right you should know this and we're like no, no. I've never been taught that in my life…when she says comment t'appelles-tu and stuff like that I'll understand but when she says this and you're like supposed to know this I will say cheers primary school you've given me nothing at the moment that could help (P18).

A common finding in transition research is that there is frequently a lack of cross-phase understanding as to the level of attainment reached by the primary learners and also the aims and purpose of primary French teaching. This can, as a result, serve to undermine and de-motivate learners. What does not match the findings of previous transition studies in MFL was the lack of complaints regarding the repetition of content or 'starting from scratch'. The majority felt that primary languages had

given them a good start and a springboard from which to work and progress in Year 7. Negative comments about primary language learning came from two learners who admitted that they were finding learning French more difficult in Year 7. These struggling learners seemed to perceive that they had not been well-prepared.

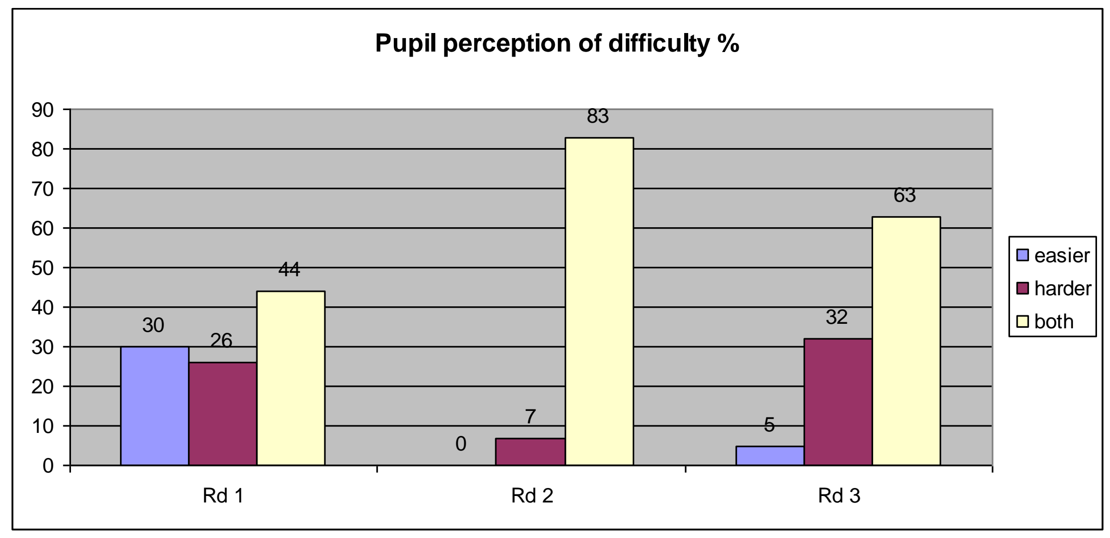
The majority of the learners did not comment directly on their French teacher, nevertheless, for some the relationship with their French teacher deteriorated, so much so that negative references to the teacher dominated their focus group contributions. The common complaints offered were that the teacher talked too much and gave unclear instructions. Several learners expressed irritation with their teacher as when the learners were unable to answer a question or make the required progress it was attributed by the teacher to lack of effort on the part of the learner, which in turn, left them feeling resentful. A picture emerged of a situation in which some learners blamed the teacher and vice versa; as a result the language lessons seemed to become a stage for a 'blame game' rather than for a collaborative effort to achieve a common goal. At the end of term 1 of Year 7, the French groups were reorganised based upon ability which led to some learners having a new French teacher and this could go some way to explain why the questionnaire motivation scores recovered slightly in round 3 (although no statistical correlation was found between motivation scores and the teacher, likely due to the small number of learners within each class).

When commenting on the learning situation the learners made value judgements based on four main criteria; whether the activity was intrinsically interesting, whether it aided language learning, the perceived difficulty of the task and its perceived relevance to future goals (the latter was new for round 3). It appears the learners' developing cognitive maturity permitted them to cast a more critical eye on the language classroom. As the learners grew older they became increasingly critical of the language course and whether it was 'fit-for-purpose'; it would seem that for many their goals seemed to be at odds with those of the teacher and curriculum. Whereas the learners were focused on communication and speaking, the pedagogy and curriculum was aimed at passing assessments, which tended to be more literacy-focused. Primary language experience may well have exacerbated this problem as it consisted of a predominantly oracy-based pedagogy which emphasised language learning for communication purposes. For instance when learners discussed the value of language learning, the verb 'speaking' was always used.

7.2.3.4 The Learner Level

The responses from the focus group interviews from Rounds 1-3 indicate that enjoyment of the lessons and perceptions of difficulty were closely related; if the learners were not engaged in the lessons they found it more difficult to make progress. In Round 1, 26% of the learners believed the French lessons were becoming harder; the majority of these learners were from School B (see figure 7.11 below). By the end of the first term of Year 7, the number decreased to 7% and most learners felt confident and well-prepared for the French lessons despite the fact that the work was considered more difficult. This is reinforced by the learners' comments which stated that primary languages had prepared them well for secondary school. By the end of Year 7, however, the number of learners who considered French more difficult rose again to 32%.

Figure 7.11: perception of difficulty of French from rounds 1-3 (percentage)



There is strong evidence to suggest again that the learners' perception of difficulty was not so much related to increased complexity in the language being taught (although that is of course a factor) but directly to the workings of the language classroom and an apparent consistent decline in pupil-teacher relations. The learners, for whom the relationship with the teacher was more supportive and collaborative, acknowledged that the language taught was more complex and that the fast pace of lessons and the focus on written work was a source of frustration. However, for these pupils, there was a sense that they could overcome their difficulties with assistance and hard work. On the other hand, for the learners with a very negative view of the learning situation, there was evidence of 'learned

helplessness' (Weiner 1992; Dornyei 1994) in which they could not envisage a way to improve their situation and make progress (without changing their French teacher). Despite the perceived increased difficulty, across the three rounds most learners considered they had improved in French and the Round 2 data showed an emergence of references to external validation sources such as teacher marking and National Curriculum levels. 19 out of 20 learners in Round 3 believed they had got better at French since they knew more words, could write longer and more complex sentences and had a growing awareness of grammatical features. External validation by way of teacher assessment using NC levels also added to their perception of progression. For two of the learners the progress made was unsatisfactory: P18 referred to 'baby steps' and for P16 progress was 'slow' which fits in with their overall negative views of the learning situation. P14 was the only learner who thought that they had not made any improvement – in fact this learner said that they got worse due the pace of the language lessons set by the teacher:

> 'I think I've got worse at it because I'm forgetting everything and it's getting a bit irritating. Why I'm forgetting everything because what she's done…forgetting everything afterwards because she doesn't give us enough time for things to sink in or let us try out so we can remember it for next time. Because of that I'm getting worse'.

'Forgetting' previously learnt language emerged as a theme in the round 2 data and increased in prominence in the round 3 responses. Over 50% of the learners cited 'forgetting' vocabulary as a source of frustration and as a reason for slow progress. Learning vocabulary is a clear and tangible sign of progress for the learners and therefore there was frustration and disappointment when the learners believed they had not retained previously presented vocabulary:

> 'because it's quite boring and usually if you do something fun you usually remember what you've done so you remember what you've learnt and then if you've done that you kind of forget it straightaway (P13).

> 'I like the fact that we learn another language not necessarily the way we learn because we learn it off a board and we have to match things up and then we just write it down in our books but we don't back go over it for like another year so we pretty much forget after a while (P23).

The following chapter will present the results of the learners' linguistic development and will shed light on whether the learners' claims are borne out.

On the whole the Year 6 learners were confident about speaking in front of the class; however there were a few learners who exhibited some communication anxiety. By round 2, on the other hand, only 20% of the learners felt confident to speak aloud in class. This can be attributed to several reasons; lack of confidence and engagement in the French lessons due to a negative response to the learning environment, an increase in communication anxiety as a result of having new classmates in Year 7 and finally the learners' developing sense of self, along with increased social awareness. An emerging theme was the learners' perception of a 'not-like-me' persona meaning that a few learners felt that when speaking French; 'it doesn't sound right on me' (P22). Group work was the preferred venue for trying out new language in a more supportive and less intimidating environment, although this was not a frequent feature of the French lessons. Despite the fact that by the end of Year 7 there was an increase in learners who stated that they were confident to speak aloud in lessons, comments related to anxiety about accuracy and feelings of having to employ a 'not-like-me' persona increased.

7.2.4 Discussion of focus group interview results

The focus group interviews presented in the previous section provided a valuable insight into the development of learner attitudes to language learning in general and learning French particular. Several key themes emerged and these areas will be discussed in turn in the following sections.

7.2.4.1 L2 Motivation and emotional development

The questionnaire and focus group interview data appear to reflect the emotional and psychological developmental discussed in chapter 3 and the most evident emerging theme was the increase in instrumental motives. Although many learners had vague notions that languages are a good thing to do, they were often not be able to give concrete examples of what these choices are or what they could mean to them and most simply said that it will look good on a c.v. and referred to the vague notion of helping to obtain a 'good job'. These findings lend support to the idea that as young people develop they become more future-focused and begin to explore vocational identities; they begin to look to adult role models and assimilate more adult-like reasoning about learning languages. For some it was easier to focus on jobs where languages would not necessarily be required, rather than trying to imagine jobs where they are. It may well have been easier for the learners to think of the latter

due to a lack of positive role models and well-formulated discourses around the utility of language learning from within their environment. These findings contrast strongly with learners of English who frequently have clear objectives and well developed ideas about the future applicability of English.

In the results of the pupil questionnaire, the instrumental and integrative motivational scales scored similarly for the learners as a whole group across the three rounds, whereas in the interview data references to instrumental motives increased round on round and integrative references decreased. One reason for the variation is that the questionnaire was more focussed on learning French in particular, whereas the corresponding interview question simply asked 'do you feel it is useful to learn another language and why'. As a result it may not be pertinent to directly compare the questionnaire and focus group results in terms of motivational orientations are as the two tools examine emphasise different aspects of the *integrativeness* construct. The questionnaires contained scales for both integrative and instrumental orientation to which the learners simply had to provide a score. Conversely, the focus group interview questions were open and sought the personal views of the learner regarding the importance of learning languages without a possible influence from the researcher. Notwithstanding the methodological considerations noted above, it is striking that as the learners became increasingly more focused on utilitarian reasons for learning languages (in the focus group data) the perception of the utility of French decreased (in the questionnaire data). In fact, some learners clearly stated that French was not that useful to them and that they would rather learn a different language.

Several previous studies have reported on learners' attitudes to different languages (Barton 1997; Chambers 1999; Stables and Wikeley 1999; Williams et al. 2002) in which male learners had more positive attitudes to learning a 'masculine' language such as German, rather than 'feminine' languages such as French. In round 3 of the current study French and Spanish were considered by two female learners as 'feminine' and 'girly' whereas German was associated with 'sausages'! It is entirely possible that these attitudes are linked to the emerging development of a sex-role identity which involves the exploration of gender-appropriate behaviours. This view of language learning and stereotypes may well be a developmental inevitability, nevertheless, if there is an acknowledgement and understanding that these attitudes may develop, teachers and parents can tackle the issue head-on. They can look at ways to discuss and unravel the attitudes, raising awareness of stereotyped

behaviour and use positive female and male role models to dispel gender stereotypes.

A final theme surfacing in the focus group data relates to the learners' developing sense of self-awareness, especially when speaking aloud in class. In Year 6 most of the learners felt confident about speaking aloud in their French lessons, although a small number of learners reported some communication anxiety due to the fear of making a mistake. At the beginning of Year 7, on the other hand, most of the learners provided a negative response when asked about speaking aloud in French lessons. By round 3, however, the number of learners who were happy to speak aloud in French lessons rose again. This pattern of responses may be as a result of moving to a new school with a new teacher and a class full of unfamiliar pupils. As the learners settled into their classes, by the end of Year 7, they may once again have felt more comfortable in their surroundings and less self-conscious than at the beginning of Year 7. Nevertheless, overall the learners remained less confident to speak aloud in French lessons than they did in Year 6 and references to 'embarrassment' featured more heavily in the Year 7 responses and group work was also considered the preferred venue to practise their spoken French, which matches the findings of Court (2001) and ATLAS project (2003).

Although confined to a small number of learners, comments related to a 'not-like-me persona' whilst speaking French, surfaced in the focus group responses. Several learners felt that they didn't sound 'themselves' when speaking French. Further longitudinal data would be required to make any firm claims; nonetheless, it would appear that for some learners speaking French may be incompatible with their developing sense of self and personal identity. In her (2008) monograph, Julios asserts that an anglo-centric education system, coupled with strong media discourses of Britishness, have served to reaffirm 'Anglo-saxon English speaking British identity' (p21). Furthermore, as reported by Coleman et al. (2007), media discourses have become increasingly anti-European in recent years, which has led to some sections of society holding a view of Europe as 'us' and 'them'. It seems that some factions of the British media do not allow for multiple identities in which one could be British and European. In turn, this could mean that as learners mature, they will become party to media and adult discourses that emphasise an anglo-centric view of Britishness. This, when combined with a growing sense of self-awareness and personal identity, lack of intrinsic interest in language lessons and a perceived

lack of instrumentality, may well be the reason why many have opted out of language learning altogether.

7.2.4.2 Changing attitudes to the learning situation

When commenting on the learning situation the learners made value judgements based on four main criteria; whether the activity was intrinsically interesting, whether it aided language learning, the perceived difficulty of the task and its perceived relevance to future goals (the latter only appeared in round 3). It appears the learners' developing cognitive maturity, and previous language learning experience, permitted them to cast a more critical eye on the language classroom. A large number of learner responses showed that the learners still predominantly held an interpersonal and social view of language learning and did not see French as just another school subject, yet! For them, French continued to be a tool for communication and travel purposes, hence a formal qualification may not be deemed necessary if they are able to reach a level at which they are satisfied. The school outcomes are focussed on reaching a level of competence based upon formal assessments and qualifications, whereas the learners were taking a more functional view of their French learning. This is an important point to note: primary languages may well foster positive integrative attitudes to language learning but the resultant learner attitudes to languages may then run contrary to the formal educational goals of the secondary school. These results show obvious parallels with Lamb (2007) and Ryan (2009:138) who found that:

> 'in many situations, what is presented in the classroom as 'English' is not necessarily compatible with a view of language as a system of communication between people and language learning as based on a desire to engage with other speakers of the language. Learners may indeed make efforts to learn both these forms of 'language' but the nature of these efforts is surely different…'.

The conflict between learners' view of the aims of language learning, and those apparent in the learning environment, mirror Volet's (2001) notion of congruence which is defined as:

> 'when the learning context supports students' engagement and learning, and reciprocally when students are attuned to the affordances of the learning environment…..the notion of congruence at the experiential interface highlights the subjective nature of what students and teachers perceive as appropriate learning' (P62).

For Volet, the mismatch between the aims of the learner and those of formal instructed language learning in schools inhibits motivation and learner engagement. The notion of congruence can become more salient when moving from one educational setting to another. There is evidence of a discontinuity in teaching approach, coupled with an emphasis on 'language as the school subject' and not 'as the means of communication' that was promoted in the primary school. It would be interesting to see if, and how, the learners ever re-establish the congruence apparent in their primary setting.

The teaching approach did not allow the opportunity for informal interaction and participation. Discourses around the failure of British pupils to learn languages often attribute the failure to learners' low motivation and the negative effect of societal attitudes. However, it is clear from these results that alongside these factors, the curriculum and the teaching approach caused learners to not be invested in the practices of the language classroom and as a consequence unable to 'own' the language for themselves. However, research has shown that learners of English who have a clear long-term objective to learn English can overcome their dissatisfaction with the formal learning environment and seek alternative venues for their language learning, through the use of global media (Lamb 2007). This is often not the case for Anglophone learners of languages who have a much lower perceived instrumentality and, due to the global dominance of US and British music and film and who have less willingness and opportunity to engage with foreign language cultural artefacts and social media, due to the global dominance of US and British music and film.

7.2.4.3 The role of the teacher

Research suggests that the teacher-learner relationship is extremely influential in the classroom, particularly for secondary school-aged children and has a direct effect on their enjoyment of the lessons (See Gorard and See 2011, for secondary school in general and Bartram 2010, Williams and Burden 2004, Chambers 2000 for specific MFL research). Several learners from one class described an anxiety-inducing environment in which they became increasingly reluctant to participate. It is apparent that, for them, the language classroom was an environment which, instead of being supportive and collaborative, was viewed as hostile and antagonistic. Not only does the pupil-teacher relationship affect a learner's willingness to participate in the lessons, it also has a pivotal role in the learners' perceptions of success and failure

and their ability to achieve their linguistic objectives (Williams and Burden 2002). Again, those learners who had more negative views of their language teacher reported a drop in self-esteem, a lack of progress and a greater sense of difficulty. On the other hand, the learners who displayed positive attitudes to their French teacher acknowledged that as the level of French became more complex they were able to overcome their difficulties with the help and support of their teacher. The findings of this transition study match that of Gurtner et al. (2001) who found that the decrease in motivation from Year 6 to Year 7 could principally be attributed to the learners' reactions to the immediate learning environment. What the studies' results also show is that a perceived high level of teacher support can go a long way in preventing a drop in motivation at the beginning of secondary school.

The following chapter presents the findings related to linguistic progression across the transition period and will incorporate an evaluation of the effect of contextual and individual variables on learner outcomes.

Chapter 8

Results Part II – Linguistic Progression across transition

8.1 Vocabulary development: analysis and results

The first principal research question of the current study is:

> *How does the children's target language proficiency evolve during the transition from year 6 to year 7 and is there evidence of linguistic progression/attrition?*

To recap, in order to inform the principal research question noted above, the development of the learners' vocabulary knowledge was investigated based upon three more specific research questions:

a. *How does the learners' lexical proficiency progress over time from Year 6 to Year 7 in terms of productivity and diversity and the nature of the language produced?*
b. *Is there a relationship between motivation scores and measures of lexical proficiency?*
c. *How do contextual and individual factors influence lexical development over time?*

The objective is to evaluate whether the lexical productivity and diversity of the young learners of French increases over the 12 months whilst moving from primary to secondary school, and to describe the nature of their developing productive vocabulary during semi-spontaneous oral and written production. The first part will focus on the quantitative measurement of lexical production and diversity. The second part will contain a qualitative analysis of the language produced by the learners and how this changes over the year.

8.1.1 Data processing: lexical development

The analysis of lexical development was performed on data taken from three separate tasks: two oral tasks (paired role-play task and photo description task) and the written email response task. The data from these tasks were firstly transcribed in the CHILDES CHAT format (see Appendix M for examples of the transcription files). CHILDES is a popular system (http://childes.psy.cmu.edu) which has become 'the

backbone of much L1 research of the last 20 years or so' (Mitchell and Myles 2004:82). (See McWhinney 2000a and 2000b for a complete overview of the system). The CHILDES system is made of three components: the first is 'Talkbank' which is a database of language learner corpora. The second component is CHAT (Codes for the Human Analysis of Transcripts) which is a transcription and coding system designed to function with the CHILDES analysis tools. One major advantage of using a uniform coding system such as CHAT is that all corpora in the database are transcribed using the same system which facilitates sharing of data for research purposes. The third component of the CHILDES system is CLAN (Computerized Language Analysis) which contains programs that permit the automatic tagging and searching of the CHAT transcripts. For the three tasks there were 234 transcriptions in total after the three data collection rounds.

8.1.1.1 The lemmatisation of CHILDES transcripts

The most appropriate unit of counting when evaluating lexical knowledge is the lemma (Vermeer 2004) especially for a highly inflected language such as French. Therefore, once all the files were transcribed, they were then copied and modified for lexical analysis so that all inflected forms were converted to their root or canonical form. The method follows that used by Tidball and Daller (2007) and also David (2008a and 2008b) who all emphasised the need for a common method for lemmatisation since if researchers lemmatise in slightly different ways it becomes increasingly difficult to compare the results from different studies. The process of lemmatising transcripts involved a detailed examination of data and this therefore reduces inconsistencies such as spelling errors which in turn avoids an inflation of the number of types (Richards and Malvern 2007). Below is a list of examples of how the data was lemmatised for different word classes:

1. Verbs
    - *Il aime/j'aime/tu aimes = aimer (to like)*
    - *Regarde/regardez = regarder (to watch)*
2. Nouns
    - *Frère/frères = frère (brother)*
    - *Chien/chiens = chien (dog)*
3. Determiners
    - *Le/la/les = le (the)*
    - *Un/une = un (a)*

4. Adjectives
    - *Petit/petite = petit (small)*
    - *Blanc/blanches = blanc (white)*

Compounds were also treated as one type for example;
- *Parce que (because) = parce+que (because)*
- *Au revoir (goodbye) = au+revoir (goodbye)*

Fillers such as *ehm, um, er* were removed along with retracings, imitations (words provided by the researcher or another participant) and proper nouns as they artificially inflate the number of tokens and types counted. To investigate the development of grammatical structures such as adjectival agreement and verb morphology in separate analyses, however, the un-lemmatised version of the data was used so the variable forms were preserved.

8.1.1.2 Data processing for the written task

Due to the nature of the learners' written French the written email response task had to be processed in a slightly different way from the oral tasks. The French programme was predominantly oracy-based in primary school and therefore the learners had little experience in writing in French. As a result, especially in the first round, their French was mainly written phonologically and did not conform to standard French orthographic conventions. Table 8.1 below displays some of the examples of learners' written French from rounds 1, 2 and 3. The learners' accuracy in the written French form on the whole improved greatly over the three rounds. Nevertheless there were some learners who continued to have difficulty in accurately writing French words.

Table 8.1: Examples of written French Rds1-3

Learner	*Round*	*Learner written French*	*Standard written French*
P1	1	cell arge a tu	quel âge as tu
P23	1	Jahabit Town	J'habite à Town
P19	1	Sest super	C'est super
P20	2	Jaime le pizza	J'aime le pizza
P26	2	Jemappel Name	Je m'appelle Name
P28	2	Le lan a tason	Le la natation
P2	3	Le colarge le Name	Le college le Name
P7	3	La matire prefrere l'anglis	La matière préférée l'anglais
P8	3	J'adore la pom friets	J'adore la pommes frites

For the purpose of analysis the written data was entered into the CHILDES transcripts on two separate lines, one for the learner written French and one for the standard French equivalent (see Appendix N). The standard French line was then lemmatised and all the vocabulary analysis was performed on this line only. There is unfortunately no space in the current thesis to incorporate a detailed presentation and discussion of the learners' progression in terms of French literacy. Nonetheless the written data does provide is another window into how the learners' knowledge of French vocabulary develops over time.

8.1.2 Analytic procedures

As the study investigates the development of beginner learners of French the focus is on measures of lexical productivity and diversity only (rather than, for example, also looking at the acquisition of high-frequency vs. low-frequency vocabulary) and various types of statistical measures have been developed to assess these facets of lexical competence. There is growing agreement that a multiple measure approach is the best way forward for measuring lexical proficiency since different quantitative measures tap into different aspects of lexical knowledge (Read 2000). Therefore, in order to answer the first research question, several measures of L2 lexical competence were used. Firstly lexical productivity was measured by counting the number of types and tokens produced at each round. To do this I firstly ran *Freq* commands in CHILDES which provide information on the number of types and tokens produced for each transcription file. It is also possible to use CHILDES syntax to combine all of the files for each learner to create a general measure of productive vocabulary range and frequency across all three tasks.

The type/token ratio (TTR) was traditionally used to measure lexical diversity and this is calculated automatically in CHILDES for each transcription file. However TTR has been proved to by unreliable since it is related to the length of the text and does not account for the fact that the longer someone speaks the less varied their speech becomes (Malvern et al. 2004). In order to overcome the inherent weakness of TTR several alternative measures have been suggested based upon transformations of TTR. Malvern & Richards (2002) developed a mathematical model of lexical diversity called VOCD and this was designed specifically to work with CHILDES using the *Freq* function. VOCD uses random sampling to plot the curve of TTR against increasing token size. Each point on the curve is calculated from the average of the TTRs of 100 trials and the default is for the curve to be fitted for 35-50 tokens. The

procedure then finds the best fit between the empirical and ideal curves (Malvern et al. 2004:56). Giraud's Index (G) (Giraud 1954) is a simple mathematical transformation of TTR which also aims to compensate for sample size effect. It is calculated by dividing the total number of word types by the square root of the total number of word tokens.

There has much been much debate in the literature regarding the reliability and validity of the various lexical diversity measures (see Malvern et al. 2004, van Hout & Vermeer 2007 and Treffers-Daller in press for detailed discussions). Indeed, different indices of lexical diversity have been compared with differing results. Malvern et al. (2004) argue that VOCD (D) is a more accurate representation of lexical diversity whereas Van Hout & Vermeer (2007) state that Giraud's Index (G) is often a better and more reliable transformation. Moreover, Daller et al. (2003) state that Giraud's Index proved to be robust for their data. Tiball & Treffers-Daller (2007) found that scores for both D and G demonstrated differences between proficiency levels; however effect sizes were larger for G. That said, their data shows that there was a large and significant correlation between D and G and between C-Test results and both diversity measures. This pattern of findings was also seen by Daller and Xue (2007).

Both indices (VOCD and Giraud's index) were used in the current study to measure the development of lexical diversity and these were chosen as previous studies of young learners have used either D alone (e.g. David 2008a), or G alone (e.g. David et al. 2009) and some use both (e.g Bulté et al. 2008). Therefore both measures were deemed necessary in order to compare the results with previous studies of young learners. Secondly, I wanted to be able to measure the diversity of individual word classes to evaluate which word classes contributed the most to diversity. However, due to the level of the learners, there were frequently less than 50 tokens within a word class and therefore D could not be calculated. As a result, the diversity of individual lexical classes was calculated using G. Moreover, the diversity of nouns, verbs and adjectives was calculated in two different ways in keeping with other studies of vocabulary development (Bulté et al. 2008; Treffers-Daller 2009). Firstly, the ratio of noun types over square root of noun tokens (N√N tokens) and secondly the ratio of noun types over the square root of all tokens (N√All Tokens). This process was also repeated for verbs and adjectives. Treffers-Daller (2009:84) acknowledged that the results of the two calculations show a slight difference and

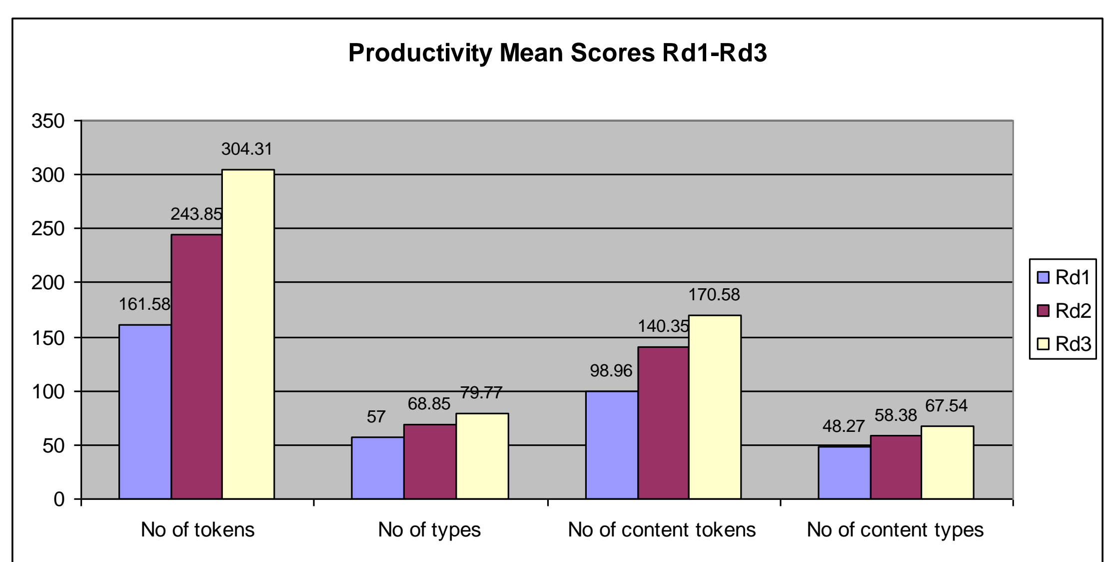
that the second calculation may be preferable 'as the same denominator is used for all calculations'.

The final analysis focussed on the proportions of lexical (content) vs. function words which is termed lexical density (Read 2000). According to Bulté et al. (2008) many studies of vocabulary count both content and function words all together. However, they argue that lexical proficiency is actually related to; 'the use of linguistic form units with a specifiable, self-contained semantic-conceptual meaning or, in other words, with semantic content words rather than grammatical function words' (p.285). In essence, they consider function words as relating to grammatical competence. For the current study it is considered useful to examine whether increases in lexical productivity and diversity were as a result of increased use of content words (e.g. '*chien'* (dog), '*pomme'* (apple), '*maison'* (house), '*chaussures'* (shoes)) or the expansion of function words (e.g. '*le'* (the), '*il'* (he), '*et'* (and), '*à'* (at, to), '*de'* (of)) and therefore the analysis looked at all words produced and then content words only.

8.1.3. Results

The results of the procedures presented above were first entered into an Excel spreadsheet and then imported into SPSS for statistical analysis. Figure 8.1 below displays the mean scores for all of the standard measures of lexical productivity from rounds 1-3 and table 20 presents the inferential statistics for productivity. To recap, the first round of data collection was at the end of Year 6 (June/July), the second round was at the end of the first term of Year 7 (Nov/Dec) and the final round took place at the end of Year 7 (June/July). The results show that over the three rounds the learners produced more types and more tokens; however the increment of these two measures is uneven. The number of tokens nearly doubled whereas the production of new word types increased to a much lesser extent. This is most likely as a result of a great deal of repetition of nouns (which will be discussed in more detail later in this section) and to the learners becoming more confident and more fluent which enabled them to more efficiently retrieve vocabulary items thereby producing more words in the same amount of time. In terms of lexical density, the overall proportion of content words gradually decreased over the year.

Figure 8.1: Standard measures of productivity (mean scores)



As discussed in section 4.3.6 Bulté et al. (2008) undertook a longitudinal study measuring the lexical proficiency of Dutch L1 young learners of French. The pattern of increase in the number of types produced overall in the current study matches that seen by Bulté et al. (2008) though their data was collected at yearly rather than six monthly intervals. Unfortunately the number of tokens produced was not reported in their study. The learners in the current study also out-performed those in Bulté et al. in the area of content word types where the mean scores are nearly double. However, the learners in Bulté et al. only had one story retelling task to do and therefore this may have limited the amount and the variety of words that could be produced.

Non-parametric tests were used to explore productivity development as a normal distribution could not be guaranteed in the data because the number of types was positively skewed in round 2. The results of the Friedman's Test for repeated measures and a series of Wilcoxon signed-rank tests show that there were significant differences for all five measures of productivity across the three rounds, with moderate to large effect sizes indicated (see table 8.2 below). This mirrors the results seen by David (2008a) who observed an increase in the number of types and tokens produced between each year group though in David's study the difference was only significant for the number of different types produced between years 11 and 12. In contrast, Tidball & Treffers-Daller (2007) who investigated the productive vocabulary of older, more advanced learners of French observed that productivity measures did not differentiate between the intermediate, advanced and NS groups

and in Bulté et al. (2008) the production of all types and content types was only significantly different between times 1 and 3.

Table 8.2: Inferential statistics for measures of productivity (Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and Wilcoxon signed-rank test)

Measure	Friedman's Test for RM	Rd1 vs Rd2	Rd2 vs Rd3	Rd1 vs Rd3
No of Tokens – All	0.000** (χ-37.46)	0.000** (z=-4.128) *d* =0.67	0.000** (z=-4.330) d= 0.47	0.000** (z=-4.432) *d* =0.80
No of Tokens – Content	0.000** (χ-34.82)	0.000** (z=-3.924) *d* =0.61	0.000** (z=-3.715) *d* =0.42	0.000** (z=-4.407) *d* =0.76
No of Types – All	0.000** (χ-35.20)	0.000** (z=-3.724) *d* =0.46	0.000** (z=-4.106) *d* =0.4	0.000** (z=-4.408) *d* =0.64
No of Types - Content	0.000** (χ-33.81)	0.000** (z=-3.609) *d* =0.43	0.000** (z=-3.865) *d* =0.35	0.000** (z=-4.359) *d* =0.62
Lexical Density	0.000** (χ-19.78)	0.001** (z=-3.262) *d* =0.41	0.108 (z=-1.608) *d* =0.21	0.000** (z=-3.942) *d* =0.63

* significance is at the 0.05 level 2-tailed

** significance is at the 0.01 level 2-tailed

The results show that over the transition from primary to secondary school, overall the learners continued to make good progress in terms of lexical acquisition with no observed developmental plateau at this stage. Nevertheless, looking at the effect sizes for rounds 2-3 and also the absolute gains in productivity (see table 8.3 below) the data shows that the rate of learning appears to have slowed since the increase in productivity was less between rounds 2 and 3 than between rounds 1 and 2. This is surprising when you look at the time intervals; between rounds 1-2 (5-6 months including the 6 week summer break) and between rounds 2-3 (6-7 months). In addition the learners received more teaching hours between rounds 2-3.

Table 8.3: Absolute gains in productivity rds 1-3, mean scores with standard deviations

Measure	Rd1-Rd2	Rd2-R3
Tokens	82.27 (58.98)	60.46 (48.78)
Types	11.85 (10.41)	10.92 (10.24)
Content Tokens	41.38 (35.48)	30.23 (32.97)
Content Types	10.12 (10.04)	9.15 (9.78)

This pattern of results could be attributed to motivational factors, language attrition or other individual factors. An evaluation of the findings will be discussed in more detail in section 8.1.5 after examining the actual words produced. Nevertheless, if we look across the entire year there was a 94% increase in tokens produced and a 40% increase in types.

8.1.3.1. Lexical Diversity Scores

As discussed previously, lexical diversity (LD) was measured using VOCD (D) and Giraud's Index (G) in order to compare results to previous studies. Moreover, as this section is focussed on lexical rather than grammatical development, it was considered essential to examine the development of the diversity of content words as well as all of the words produced. To this end, D and G were calculated for all words (function and content words) as well as for content words alone, and the results are displayed in table 8.4 below. Both measures of LD saw a decrease in round 2 followed by a slight recovery in round 3. The drop in LD score is likely due to the fact that the learners produced a greater number of words with a less marked increase in word types. Previously known words were repeated and the learners may well have been repeating newly learnt chunks in round 2, whereas the round 1 data may well have consisted of isolated nouns or one-word utterances. These results do not match those seen by David (2008a) or Bulté et al. (2008) as both studies observed a gradual and significant increase in LD scores over time. However, the learners in their studies were more advanced learners and were tested at yearly intervals and therefore small developmental fluctuations may not be apparent over a longer time period.

Table 8.4: Descriptive statistics for measures of lexical diversity, means and standard deviation

Measure	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
D – All	21.10 (4.45)	19.06 (4.96)	20 (6.03)
D – Content	33.61 (10.12)	35.52 (13.20)	35.83 (10.26)
G- All	4.5 (0.48)	4.43 (0.53)	4.57 (0.60)
G – Content	4.86 (0.59)	4.94 (0.62)	5.17 (0.62)

The G scores are slightly higher than the scores for the Y8 learners in David et al. (2009), although they excluded formulaic sequences from their analysis which may explain the variation in scores. The scores are also slightly higher than the lemmatised G scores seen in Bulté et al. (2008) (G all mean score = 3.82 and G content mean score = 3.15) and higher than the D scores for Y9 learners reported in David (2008) (D mean score = 15.62), although the scores were comparable for rounds 2 & 3. The D and G scores are also similar to the scores for the intermediate learners in Tidball & Treffers-Daller (2007; 2008) (G mean score = 4.29 and D mean score = 18.78); however they are much lower than Malvern & Richards (2004) (Y11 D mean score 56.9). Malvern & Richards (2004) used inflected forms which accounts for the discrepancy in scores. It is difficult to compare actual scores from

different studies due to the diversity in methodological approaches taken. Yet it is encouraging to see that the learners in the current study appear to be performing on a par with other learners of a similar age and experience and that the studies that used a common methodological approach show similar outcomes.

Following the discussion in section 8.1.2 regarding the reliability and validity of different measures of LD, the correlation coefficients for D and G scores for all words and for content words were calculated. The results of the Spearmans' correlations in table 8.5 below show that there is a strong and highly significant correlation between D and G (particularly for content words) in all three rounds indicating that both measures are tapping into the same elements of lexical diversity (as observed by Treffers-Daller 2009).

Table 8.5: Spearman's correlations for D and G

Measure	***Round 1***	***Round 2***	***Round 3***
D and G all	.676**	.795**	.868**
D and G content	.904**	.923**	.906**

** correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

There is a different pattern when LD was calculated on the content words only (see table 8.5 above and figures 8.2 and 8.3 below). For both D-Content and G-Content the LD scores are higher and there is a slight but consistent increase over the year. The results imply that it is an increase in the use of function words that led to the drop in overall LD scores for round 2.

Figure 8.2: scores for Giraud's Index Rounds 1-3

Figure 8.3: VOCD scores Rounds 1-3

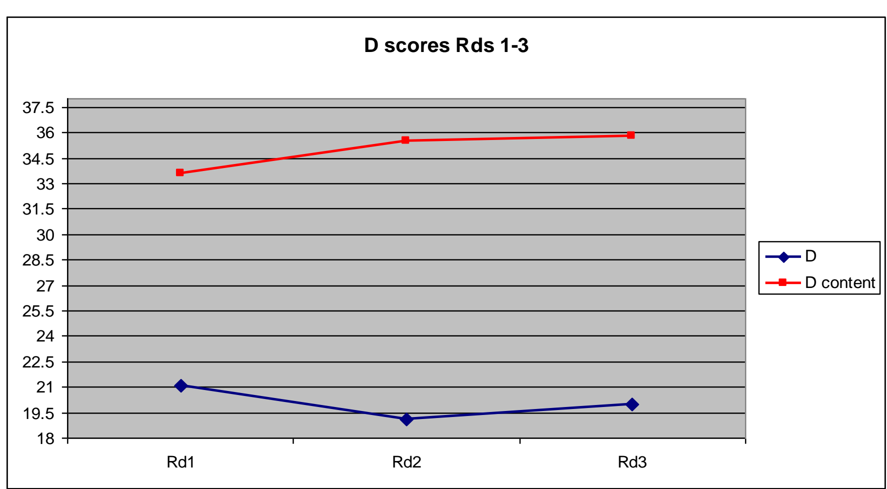


Table 8.6 below displays the results of a Friedman's test for repeated measures and a series of Wilcoxon signed-rank tests which show that there is no significant effect for round in terms of LD scores across the 3 rounds except for G-All for Rds 2-3 and G-Content for Rds 2-3 and Rds 1-3 (nonetheless the effect sizes are small). Therefore, if focused solely on lexical diversity measures for all words and types, the data suggests that the learners made little or no progress over the 12 months.

Table 8.6: Standard measures of lexical diversity – inferential statistics (Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests

Measure	Friedman's Test for RM	Rd1 vs Rd2	Rd2 vs Rd3	Rd1 vs Rd3
D – All	0.096 (χ=4.692)	0.096 (z=--1.664) d =0.21	0.424 (z=-0.8) *d* =0.08	0.304 (t=-1.029) *d* =0.1
D – Content	0.857 (χ=.308)	0.568 (z=-0.571) *d* =0.08	0.939 (z=-0.076) *R* =0.01	0.218 (z=-1.232) *d* =0.11
G- All	0.448 (χ =1.604)	0.431 (z=-0.787) *d* =0.07	0.045* (z=-2.009) *d* =0.12	0.603 (z=-0.521) *d* =0.07
G – Content	0.054 (χ =5.846)	0.603 (z=-0.521) *d* =0.07	0.026* (z=-2.23) *d* =0.18	0.018* (z=-2.375) *d* =0.25

* significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

However, it is clear from the productivity scores and the LD scores for content words that the learners did make progress over the year both in terms of their ability to perform the task and in the variation of content words that they were able to produce. These findings highlight the benefit of using multiple measures of vocabulary proficiency, especially for learners at the very beginning stage of language learning for whom single content words (e.g. nouns without a determiner) may dominate at the initial pre-grammatical stage.

8.1.3.2 Productivity and lexical diversity of individual word classes

Previous studies of L1 and L2 lexical development have shown that nouns dominate in all stages of language learning particularly at the early stages, with verbs and adjectives represented to a much lesser extent David (2008a). Moreover, it has been observed that increases in productivity and diversity may be due to lexical growth in two word classes only (e.g. Broeder et al. 1993). It was therefore considered important to examine which word class contributed most to productivity and diversity scores for these beginner learners. Figure 8.4 below displays the productivity by word class for nouns, verbs and adjectives. In round 1 nouns were most frequently produced and this continued across the three rounds. From rounds 1-2 there was an increase in the number and types of nouns and adjectives produced, and this was also true, though not to the same extent, in rounds 2-3. On the other hand, learners appeared to make much slower progress in learning new verb types.

Figure 8.4: productivity by word class Rds 1-3 (means)

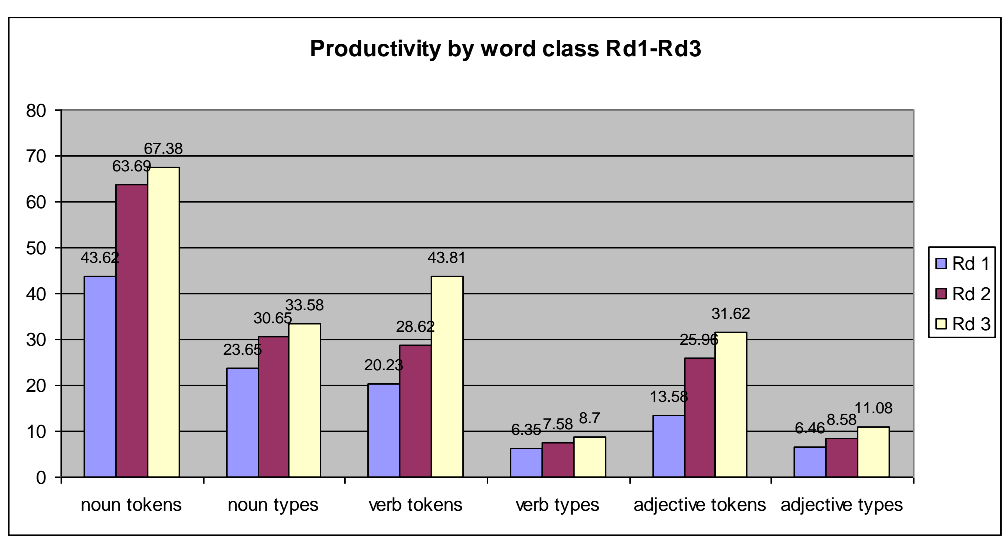


Table 8.7 below shows the results of paired Wilcoxon signed-rank tests for the productivity of different word classes. The results of the Freidman's test for repeated measures show that there was a significant effect for round for all measures of productivity, for all of the word classes. However, between rounds 2 and 3 there was no significant increase in noun tokens or verb types which indicates that lexical items for different word classes develop at an uneven rate. For example, the number of noun tokens and types grew significantly between rounds 1 and 2 and then levelled out between rounds 2 and 3. Moreover, verbs are the only word class that did not see a consistent increase in the number of types. Nevertheless, although the

learners did not necessarily learn more different types of verbs they become more confident and adept as using the verbs they had already learnt.

Table 8.7: Productivity measures for different word classes – inferential statistics (Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and Wilcoxon signed- rank test)

Measure	Friedman Test for RM	Rd 1 vs Rd 2	Rd 2 vs Rd3	Rd 1 vs Rd 3
No of Nouns – tokens	0.000** (χ=30.43)	0.000** (z=-4.282) d=0.63	0.193 (z=-1.301) d=0.12	0.000** (z=-4.230) d=0.65
No of Nouns – types	0.000** (χ=34.62)	0.000** (z=-4.005) d=0.48	0.014* (z=-2.468) d=0.2	0.000** (z=-4.131) d=0.59
No of Verbs – tokens	0.000** (χ=37.23)	0.005** (z=-2.838) d=0.41	0.000** (z=-3.939) d=0.56	0.000** (z=-4.374) d=0.77
No of Verbs – types	0.000** (χ=17.44)	0.003** (z=-3.010) d=0.33	0.014* (z=-2.460) d=0.18	0.000** (z=-3.386) d=0.41
No of Adjectives – tokens	0.000** (χ=31.46)	0.000** (z=-3.661) d=0.53	0.038* (z=-2.072) d=0.23	0.000** (z=-4.333) d=0.7
No of Adjective – types	0.000** (χ=34.02)	0.002** (z=-3.155) d=0.37	0.000** (z=-3.748) d=0.4	0.000** (z=-4.382) d=0.65

* significance is at the 0.05 level 2-tailed

** significance is at the 0.01 level 2-tailed

Adjectives were the class that made the greatest relative gains from rounds1-3 but nouns remained the most frequently produced word class. In general, the results reflect those of David (2008a) which showed the overall proportion of nouns decreased over time. However, unlike the results of David (2008a), this was as a result of the increase in adjectives produced rather than verbs, which only increased very slightly. Bulté et al. (2008) reported that verbs were the most productive word class, followed by nouns and then adjectives but this is undoubtedly due to the nature of the elicitation task. The learners had to retell a cartoon story and as a result there was a strong emphasis on action and very little necessity for the production of adjectives. On the other hand, the tasks in the current study and those used by David (2008a) are similar in nature and this may partly explain the comparability of the results.

Unsurprisingly, the statistics for measures of lexical diversity by word class show that nouns were also by far the most diverse word class. The diversity of nouns increased consistently across the three rounds (see tables 8.8 and 8.9 below). Also lexical diversity measures for adjectives, although small in terms of overall diversity, also increased gradually over the three rounds, particularly between rounds 2 and 3.

Table 8.8: Lexical diversity measures for different word classes – descriptive statistics

Measure	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
G Nouns (N/N)	3.57 (.55)	3.83 (.54)	4.12 (.63)
G Nouns (N/All)	1.85 (.29)	1.95 (.39)	1.91 (.30)
G Verbs (V/V)	1.44 (.34)	1.47 (.32)	1.32 (.27)
G Verbs (V/All)	0.50 (.11)	0.49 (.09)	0.5 (.11)
G Adjectives (A/A)	1.8 (.42)	1.73 (.32)	1.96 (.51)
G Adjectives (A/All)	0.5 (.16)	0.55 (.17)	0.63 (.13)

In contrast, the diversity of verbs actually decreased over time, although their contribution to overall lexical diversity remained relatively stable over the three rounds. Therefore the increase in lexical diversity measures over the year is due to the increase in nouns and adjectives only. Bulté et al. (2008) also observed an increase in only two word classes but in their case it was due to nouns and verbs.

Table 8.9: Lexical diversity measures for different word classes – inferential statistics (Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and Wilcoxon signed-rank)

Measure	Friedman Test for RM	Rd1 vs Rd2	Rd 2 vs Rd 3	Rd 1 vs Rd 3
G Nouns (N/N)	0.000** (χ=20.73)	0.030* (z=-2.166) d=0.47	0.031* (z=-2.159) d=0.49	0.000** (z=-3.888) d=0.93
G Nouns (N/All)	0.129 (χ=4.01)	0.148 (z=-1.448) d=0.16	0.431 (z=-0.788) d=0.06	0.231 (z=-1.198) d=0.1
G Verbs (V/V)	0.304 (χ=2.39)	0.703 (z=-0.381) d=0.06	0.052 (z=-1.943) d=0.69	0.253 (z=-1.143) d=0.73
G Verbs (V/All)	0.889 (χ=0.235)	0.567 (z=-0.559) d=0.05	0.786 (z=-0.272) d=0.25	0.990 (z=-0.013) d=0.19
G Adjectives (A/A)	0.036* (χ=6.67)	0.509 (z=0.660) d=0.19	0.010** (z=-2.566) d=0.54	0.024* (z=-2.261) d=0.34
G Adjectives (A/All)	0.000** (χ=16.23)	0.155 (z=-1.423) d=0.15	0.019* (z=-2.352) d=0.26	0.001** (z=-3.457) d=0.41

* significant at the 0.05 level 2-tailed
** significant at the 0.01 level 2-tailed

8.1.3.3 The role of contextual and individual factors in lexical development

The current section presents the findings related to the final research sub-question aims to investigate the role of contextual and individual factors in lexical development. As with previous studies, the results of the current study show that there was a great amount of individual variation in the learners' lexical development.

However, few previous studies have actually investigated the relationship between lexical development with contextual, as well as individual factors and how these develop over time. This study aims to address this issue by analysing the relationship between the lexical development, learning context and the scores on the motivation questionnaire, along with the learners' CAT scores, L1 literacy levels and their levels in the secondary French assessments.

Firstly, in terms of contextual factors, the results of a Mann-Whitney U test between learners from School A and School B show that although learners originating from School A consistently produced more types and tokens than those from School B, there were no significant differences for any measures of productivity which increased over time in an even manner (see table 8.10 below for findings). In contrast, the scores for diversity show that the difference in diversity scores between the schools approached significance in round 1 but not in the latter rounds. Furthermore, G measures for learners from School A decreased over time, whereas those for learners from School B steadily increased. As with the scores from the motivation questionnaire (see chapter 7), it appears that any differences observed between two groups of learners had levelled out by the end of Year 7.

Table 8.10: Productivity and diversity statistics by school Rds 1-3

Measure	***Round***	***School A***	***School B***	***Mann-Whitney U test Results***
Tokens	Rd 1	164.5 (43.78)	158.17 (41.38)	z=-.617 p=.537
	Rd 2	248.5 (61.86)	238.42 (31.93)	z=-.03 p=.918
	Rd 3	308.64 (73.44)	299.25 (48.68)	z=-.386 p=.699
Types	Rd 1	59.29 (12.28)	54.3 (10.34)	z=-.902 p=.367
	Rd 2	69.79 (13.8)	67.75 (7.548)	z=-.103 p=.918
	Rd 3	80 (18.65)	79.5 (12.65)	z=-.077 p=.938
G	Rd 1	4.64 (.51)	4.34 (.39)	z=-1.389 p=.165
	Rd 2	4.46 (.63)	4.4 (.42)	z=-0.051 p=.959
	Rd 3	4.56 (.71)	4.59 (.44)	z=-.540 p=.589

On moving to secondary school the learners were placed in a range of French classes; however the results of a Kruskall Wallis test showed no significant differences in lexical productivity between classes. This was expected since the numbers of learners in each class was very small. Thus, the results indicate no clear relationship between learning context and measures of lexical development and cannot explain the wide variation seen in the learners' lexical development. Therefore, the focus of the analysis will turn to individual factors in order to ascertain what role they may play in the development of lexical proficiency.

8.1.3.4 Individual factors and lexical development

In order to examine the role of individual factors several quantitative measures were used: motivation scores and general measures of academic ability. The measures of academic ability used in the current study are the school-based cognitive ability (CAT) tests and L1 literacy levels (as discussed in chapter 4). Firstly, the results in table 8.11 below show that in Year 6 there was no significant correlation between the overall scores of general academic ability and vocabulary measures. However, the CAT verbal element and L1 literacy scores did correlate significantly with the number of types produced and CAT verbal also correlated significantly with lexical diversity measured by G. However, after moving to secondary school the correlation of lexical measures with the number of types and CAT mean scores reached a moderate but significant level (round 2). In round 3, however, all of the lexical measures correlated significantly with CAT mean scores. This suggests that as the learners moved into secondary school and through their first year, general academic ability played an increasingly important role in their linguistic development.

Moreover, there was little or no correlation between lexical measures and CAT non-verbal and CAT quantitative scores which demonstrates that it is the CAT verbal element of the overall score that appears to be the most powerful explanatory factor for the correlation results. This mirrors the findings of other studies examining the relationship between CAT scores and overall academic attainment (e.g. Strand 2006) and CAT scores in relation to attainment in French (Deary at al. 2007). The relationship between L1 literacy levels and vocabulary scores also became stronger over time although did not reach the levels of significance attained for verbal reasoning. However, the assignment of L1 literacy levels was less sophisticated and involved the rudimentary grouping of learners into high, middle and low as NC levels were not made available in one of the schools. If actual NC levels for reading and writing were provided the results may have shown a greater role for L1 literacy.

Table 8.11: Spearman's correlation coefficients between lexical measures and individual factors

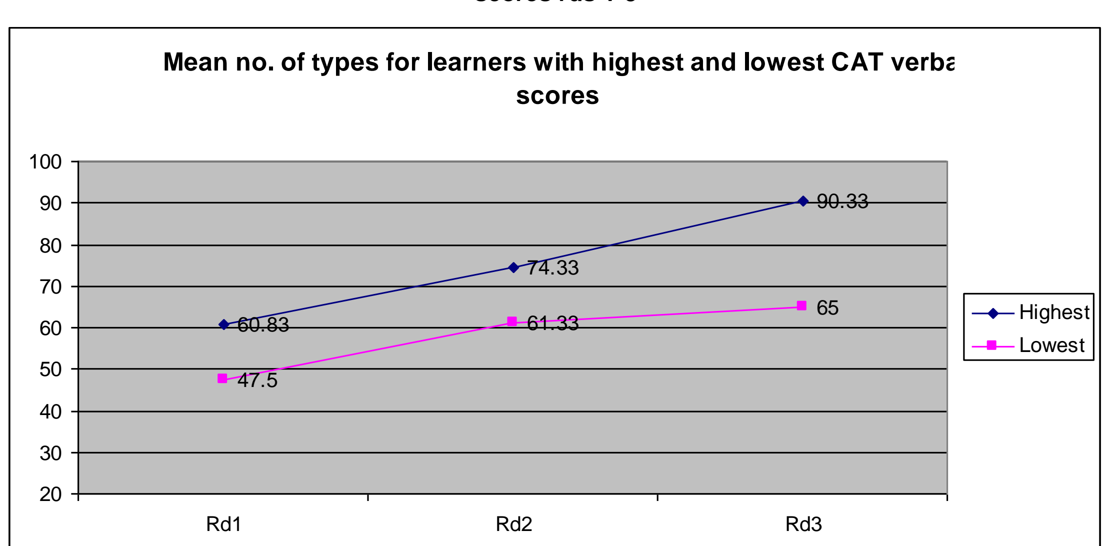
Round	Measure	CAT Mean	CAT Quant	CAT Non-verbal	CAT Verbal	L1 Literacy	Motivation	NC Level French
1	***Tokens***	.227	.202	.081	.370	.375	.599**	*
	Types	.288	.133	.206	.455*	.472*	.615**	*
	G	.274	.109	.193	.438*	.387	.407*	*
	Motivation	.331	.265	.158	.482*	.311	1.00	*
	L1 Literacy	.474*	.357	.155	.708*	1.00	.311	*
2	***Tokens***	.180	.180	.040	.384	.305	.496*	.339
	Types	.386*	.214	.159	.598**	.651**	.702**	.518**
	G	.227	.045	.056	.524**	.518**	.484*	.318
	Motivation	.261	.155	.046	.499*	.370	1.00	.388
	L1 Literacy	.474*	.375	.155	.708*	1.00	.370	.617**
3	***Tokens***	.531**	.475*	.398*	.497**	.235	.416*	.265
	Types	.536**	.455*	.290	.610**	.472*	.516**	.482*
	G	.433*	.298	.219	.524**	.622**	.449*	.636**
	Motivation	.333	.291	.137	.350	.400*	1.00	.211
	L1 Literacy	.474*	.375	.155	.708*	1.00	.400*	.694**

* significant at the 0.05 level 2-tailed
** significant at the 0.01 level 2-tailed

To illustrate how the influence of general reasoning ability on vocabulary learning develops over time, following the transfer to secondary school, I calculated the mean number of types from rounds 1-3 for the six learners with the highest CAT mean scores and six learners with the lowest CAT mean scores. The results displayed in figure 8.5 below show that the learners with higher scores for general reasoning consistently out-performed the lower group. By round 3 the higher learners continued to progress in a linear fashion whereas the learners with lower verbal reasoning scores progressed at a slower pace which led to an increasing gap between the two groups.

The data in the table 8.11 also shows that across the three rounds motivation exerts a significant influence over most areas of learner performance. In the first two rounds motivation does not seem to be a factor in the number of tokens produced. This could be due to the fact that, at the earliest stages, difference in the number of tokens produced between learners was not significant enough to distinguish the more motivated ones. However the production of different word types is highly correlated with motivation scores across the three rounds. Higher learner motivation may manifest itself in several ways; firstly more motivated learners may well have a greater variety of words at their disposal due to their engagement in the language lessons. They also may be more confident, and therefore more willing and able to try out a variety of new words rather than relying on the same well-known phrases. Moreover, they may have a greater willingness to meaningfully engage with the assessment tasks rather than just going through the motions.

Figure 8.5: mean number of types for the learners with the six highest and lowest CAT mean scores rds 1-3



8.1.4 Qualitative Analysis of Productive Vocabulary

This section will present a qualitative analysis of the verbs, nouns and adjectives that were produced over the three rounds. The analysis will examine the kinds of words that were retained and retrieved during the tasks with the aim of gaining insights into how lexical development progresses and what features may affect the words that are learnt and produced. It was not possible to obtain a detailed account of all the input the learners received but through observations, teacher interviews and course documentation it was possible to gain information on the topic areas covered and the different types of words that the learners were exposed to, although of course there is no data on word frequency in instructional input.

8.1.4.1 French noun production

For the most part, the nouns produced by the learners can be categorised into the following different content areas: me and my family, physical descriptions, animals, food, school and school subjects and sports and hobbies (see Appendix O for a full list of the nouns produced in rounds 1-3). These subject areas were as predicted based upon the task requirements (see Appendices G-I for the task materials). In terms of noun production, the data shows that the production of some noun types remained relatively stable over the three rounds (e.g. ‘*chien*’ (dog), ‘*mathématiques*’,

‘*soeur* ‘(sister), whereas the production of other nouns from round 1 gradually increased over time (e.g. ‘*français’, ‘géographie’, ‘yeux’* (eyes), ‘*professeur*’ (teacher). In contrast, the production of some nouns showed a great deal of fluctuation over the three rounds and they were, for the most part, linked to the thematic topic areas that had most recently been covered within secondary school MFL classes. As discussed in section 7.1.5 the first topic area covered in the first term was school, uniform and clothes. Some words introduced in this topic remained relatively stable over rounds 2-3 or even increased in frequency (e.g. ‘an*glais’, ‘collège*’). However, other words, for example ‘*polo’* and ‘*dessin’,* reduced dramatically from between rounds 2 and 3 which suggests that although these words were initially learnt and then produced by the majority of learners, they were not retained and available for use in the longer term. Few new noun types were added to the inventory in round 3 and, aside from ‘*enfant*’, ‘*poster*’, ‘*chaise’* (chair) and ‘*cheveux’* (hair), these were produced only infrequently by a small number of learners. It is also important to note that nearly half of the noun types produced were English cognates, as were a significant number of the high-frequency nouns, for example; ‘*animal’, ‘famille’ , ‘football’ , ‘mathématiques’ , ‘musique’, ‘sport’, ‘professeur*’ and ‘*pizza’*. Moreover, the reliance on cognate words persisted throughout the 12 month period. The role of cognates in the learners’ vocabulary learning will be discussed at greater length later in this section.

8.1.4.2 Verb production

Three of the six most frequently produced verbs were verbs of preference (‘*adorer’ (love), ‘aimer’ (like), ‘détester’ (hate)*) which again reflects the subject matter of the role play task in which the learners were asked to express their likes and dislikes (see Appendix P for a complete list of verbs produced over the three rounds). Despite having the opportunity to provide a variety of verbs within the tasks, particularly during the photo description task, the verbs produced did not vary greatly across the three rounds. Nonetheless a few learners did use other verbs infrequently such as: ‘*danser*’, ‘*se lever*’, ‘*bavarder*’ and ‘*vouloir*’. It is clear that although the learners remained reliant on previously learnt verbs, they became more able and fluent to produce these verbs, particularly in the case of the auxiliary verbs ‘*être’* and ‘*avoir*’. As seen with nouns, three of the top six verbs produced were English cognates. For example, the use of ‘*je déteste’* (I hate) in place of ‘*je n’aime pas’* (I don’t like) to express dislike mirrors the findings of Tidball & Treffers-Daller (2008). In sum, the learners demonstrated that they had increased their depth of knowledge

of known verbs indicating that they made good progress in terms of their ability to use these verbs effectively in a communicative task. Despite having been exposed to more verbs during their French lessons, the learners were only able to retrieve a small number of well-known verbs during the tasks. Section 8.3 will present an analysis of how verb morphology developed over time and therefore this will not be discussed here.

8.1.4.3 Production of adjectives

The majority of the adjectives produced across the three rounds were colour adjectives and these were produced consistently by all the learners. Therefore, the qualitative analysis of adjective production was focused on non-colour adjectives to view how the use of these items expanded and developed over time. The results show that the production of adjectives tended to be related to how recently the new words had been presented (as with nouns) and was clearly a direct reflection of the new language presented in French lessons. Appendix Q contains a table displaying a full list of the adjectives produced over the three rounds. In the first term of Year 7, the topic covered was 'my school' which encompassed the description of the school, the school timetable and the school uniform. Hence, the words such as '*grand*' (big), '*multicolore*', '*préféré*' and '*super*' were introduced. In the third term of Year 7 the content areas covered were expressing opinions on school subjects and physical descriptions which is again reflected in the adjectives produced in round 3 (e.g. '*ennuyeux*' (boring), '*roux*' (red/auburn). In term two, the topics covered were 'where you live' and 'your town' and there were no adjectives related to these topic areas in round 3.

In my opinion, the overall increase in adjectives produced, compared to verbs for instance, can be attributed directly to the secondary language pedagogy. From the lesson observations it was clear that adjectives formed an important part of the learning objectives, especially in term 3. The teachers made frequent references to NC assessment levels and often informed learners that they could obtain a level 4 by expressing an opinion and adding in an adjective. Slot and fill activities such as the one noted below were observed in several Year 7 classes:

j'aime/je n'aime pas: le français/les maths parce que: le prof est: sevère, cool etc.
C'est: difficile, facile, ennuyeux etc.

I like/don't like: French/maths because: the teacher is strict, cool etc.
It is: difficult, easy, boring etc.

In this context of assessment-focussed education, it is not surprising that the learners made the most progress in the area that would yield the most gains in terms of their NC level for French.

8.1.5 Discussion - vocabulary development

As discussed in chapter 4 previous studies of receptive vocabulary learning such as Milton & Meara (2008), David et al. (2009) and David (2008b) observed a plateau in vocabulary development in the early years of secondary school . However, the results of the current study show that despite the disruption of transition the learners continued to make progress and produced more new words and a greater number of words in successive rounds, although this did begin to slow down by the end of Year 7. The results are more encouraging than those reported by Low et al. (1993) who stated that primary to secondary progress was slight or non-existent. They rather correspond to those reported by Orosz (2009) who showed that the primary-aged learners made significant gains in their first 3 years of language learning, with the biggest spurt in grade 5 following an increase in teaching time. However by grade 6 (around 12 years old) the vocabulary learning rate dropped by nearly 50%. The findings also mirror those of Bulté et al. (2008) who also observed significant differences across the school years, however, progress appeared to trail off after the first year which they attributed to diminished task motivation. The pattern of research findings from a variety of studies of productive and receptive vocabulary show that as learners move through secondary school their rate of vocabulary learning slows. What is difficult to ascertain from the previous studies is whether a change in pedagogy, cognitive factors or a reduction in learner motivation account for the patterns observed, or a combination of all these factors.

8.1.5.1 Individual factors and vocabulary learning

Previous research has shown that L1 literacy skills exert a strong influence on L2 development. Ganschow & Sparks (1991; 2001) assert that L1 literacy skills provide the foundation for second language learning and that native language ability has the greatest influence on outcomes. The results of the vocabulary analyses support these assertions since learners with a higher level of general academic ability and higher L1 literacy skills made more progress throughout the year than those with lower levels of ability, and these factors had an increasing influence on outcomes by

the end of Year 7. The results also reflect those from studies investigating the relationship between CAT scores and educational outcomes that demonstrate a clear relationship between reasoning skills and attainment across the curriculum (Strand 2006; Deary et al. 2007). In this study learners with higher reasoning abilities and L1 literacy levels consistently out-performed those learners with a lower level of ability in both primary and secondary school and the gap between the least and most able learners became wider over time. The high correlation of the results with verbal reasoning scores is not surprising since verbal reasoning relates to the ability to listen and recall spoken and written information, to solve language-based problems and to understand relationships between language concepts all of which are highly relevant to school in general and second language study in particular.

8.1.5.2 Development of word knowledge

As stated in chapter 4, word knowledge is multi-faceted, involving more than word recognition, and it may be the case that not all elements of the word (pronunciation, meaning and place in the sentence) are learnt simultaneously. The production of vocabulary items requires greater knowledge of the word and therefore is more difficult for learners. If it had been possible to include a receptive task in the study I am certain that the learners' receptive vocabulary would have proved much greater than their productive vocabulary. Schmitt (2010) used the analogy of a 'spelling continuum' and this is borne out in the current study through the learners' written French which showed that the learners may not have written many new words but that they had gained deeper knowledge of known words since they were more able to spell them correctly. The findings of the current study support the view that vocabulary learning is incremental in nature in terms of size and mastery of individual items and rather than words simply categorised as unknown/known, word knowledge can and should be placed on a continuum. This means that even if a learner does not produce a great number of additional new words, they well may be increasing their depth of knowledge of the words with which they are already familiar in the oral form. Therefore it should be recognised that they have still made progress. It is also important to consider the different modes of production because the shift in pedagogic approach from primarily oracy-based in primary school to literacy-based in secondary school may have resulted in a learner learning a word in the written mode in Year 7 that they were unable to retrieve during the on-line oral task. As the study by Milton and Hopkins (2006) demonstrated there is not a straightforward relationship between spoken and written vocabulary and there may have been a different pattern

of results if the tasks were predominantly written which would have allowed learners greater access to their explicit language knowledge.

8.1.5.3 Lexical attrition

The results of the current study confirm that word learning is not a neat linear affair and learners forget many words that they have been exposed to, especially in terms of productive vocabulary (Cohen 1989). Pimsleur (1967) suggested that the older a piece of learning is the slower the forgetting and this appears to be substantiated in the vocabulary data. If you look at the nouns that were initially learnt in primary school, the majority are produced consistently across the three rounds which suggests that the knowledge of these items is stable. The most recently learned words were more easily retrieved during the production task (recency was also an influential factor in the study by Myles et al. 2011). Nevertheless, what is clear from the fluctuation in production is that these recently learnt words may not be retained and available for use in the longer term.

8.1.5.4 The role of cognates

Learning burden (Nation 2001:23) is the amount of effort required to learn a word and the more familiar a word is the easier it is to learn. As a result cognate words have a light learning burden. This assertion appears to be borne out in the results of the current study since cognates words make up nearly 50% of the nouns produced and a large number of the verb tokens. Moreover, the results corroborate the findings of Tidball & Treffers-Daller (2008) who found that cognates played an important role in vocabulary development of English learners of L2 French and also those of Szpotowicz (2009) whose learners were more able to recall words that had associations with Polish words. There are several possible explanations for the results of the current study: it could be as a direct response to language input since the teaching of cognates was emphasised particularly in primary school. It could be that cognate words are perceptually more salient and therefore require fewer encounters than non-cognates (Willis & Ohashi 2012). Cognate words also have a lighter ‘production burden’ and may therefore be easier to retrieve during on-line production as reported by Laufer & Paribakht (1998). It would appear, therefore, that emphasising the learning of cognate words for languages that share common words is a useful strategy for vocabulary development. However an over-reliance on cognate words could also be detrimental for grammatical development. For example,

a majority of the learners used '*je déteste*' in place of the more commonly used '*je n'aime pas*' for expressing dislike, thus avoiding one of the few negative forms to which the learners were exposed in Year 6 and Year 7. The results of the negation task (which was not included in the current thesis to due time and space and will be reported elsewhere) showed that this feature was particularly slow to develop which may be exacerbated by over-use of *détester*.

8.2 Development of Grammatical Gender – analysis and results

Following the review of studies investigating the development of French grammatical gender discussed in section 5.2.5 five research sub-questions were developed for the current study:

a. *What factors appear to govern the use of determiners?*
b. *Is there evidence of progress in the assignment of grammatical gender (art+noun agreement) over the transition period?*
c. *How does the learners' knowledge develop for gender agreement (adjectival agreement)?*
d. *Is there any evidence of a relationship between learners' progress and the individual factors related to L1 literacy and motivation?*

The aim of the current section is to search for any emerging systematic patterns for grammatical gender in the learners' oral production and compare these to previous studies of L2 French gender development. This section includes both quantitative and qualitative analyses of learner data in order to investigate how the change in learning context and the individual factors of L1 literacy levels and motivation influence learner progress in the acquisition of grammatical gender during the transition period.

8.2.1 Data processing

The analysis of the development of grammatical gender was performed on un-lemmatised CHAT transcriptions of three separate tasks: two oral tasks (paired role-play and photo description) and the written email response task. In order to answer the five research questions noted above, the transcriptions were analysed based upon a series of measures detailed in table 8.12 below. Firstly the use of articles was documented which included both definite articles ('*le', 'la')* and indefinite articles ('*un', 'une*'). As well as '*le'* and '*la'* the definite determiners also include possessives

(‘*mon’, ‘ma’*) and also plural partitives (‘*des’*), when accurately produced. Some studies have only counted types (David et al. 2009) whereas other counted types and tokens (Granfeldt 2005) and therefore to enable comparisons with a range of studies I included both types and tokens. Here, a type is each new example of a det+noun combination. For example, ‘*le collège’* and ‘*un collège’* are two (accurate) types. If a learner produced the same noun with two different gender concords (e.g. ‘*le chien’* and then ‘*la chien’*) these were counted as two types, one accurate and one inaccurate. In these cases the noun was also placed in the ‘inconsistent gender marking’ category (Granfeldt 2005) for analysis.

Table 8.12: measures used to investigate gender assignment and agreement

Measure		***Description***
Determiner obligatory contexts		No. of contexts where a determiner would be obligatory in standard French
Determiners produced		No. of determiners actually produced
Definite articles	Masculine	No. of masculine dets produced
		No. of masculine dets correct
	Feminine	No. of feminine dets produced
		No. of feminine dets correct
Indefinite articles	Masculine	No. of masculine dets produced
		No. of masculine dets correct
	Feminine	No. of feminine dets produced
		No. of feminine dets correct
Types		No. of different combinations of det+noun (M & F)
Types accurate		No. of accurate det+noun combinations
Tokens		No. of det+noun combinations produced
Tokens accurate		No. of accurate det+noun combinations produced
Inconsistent gender marking (IGM)		No. of nouns that are marked as both M & F by the same learner
Adjective types		No. of different adjectives produced
Adjective tokens		No. of different noun+adjective combinations
Adj+noun agreement		No. of correct adj+noun agreements
Art+adj agreement		No. of correct art+adj agreements

Tokens were also counted, for example, when ‘*la musique’* was produced three times by the same learner these were marked as three accurate tokens. Contracted masculine forms ‘*au’* and ‘*du’* were also included for analysis whereas indeterminate forms were excluded from the analysis, as were uses of ‘*l’’* and plural forms ‘*les’* and ‘*mes’* as they mark plurality and not gender. Pre-nominal, post-nominal and predicative adjectives were all included in the analysis; however only adjectives with

phonologically distinct masculine and feminine forms were included which resulted in a low number of tokens for each round. The majority of the adjectives produced were colour adjectives with invariant phonological forms such as '*rouge'* and '*jaune'*. In round 1, 69% of the 39 adjectives produced were invariant. In round 2, 62% of the 287 adjectives produced were invariant and in round 3, 52% of the adjectives produced were invariant. Gender is also marked on the past participle in French; however the learners' knowledge of verbs was limited and they had yet to be systematically introduced to the French past participle system aside from learning the words '*détesté'* (hated) and '*préféré'* (preferred). A few learners produced these in round 3, but there is no phonological contrast between masculine and feminine forms, so they were not included in the analysis. Obligatory contexts were characterised by contexts in which a determiner was required and the analysis did not consider the pragmatics of article choice. This means that the ratio of determiners produced was based upon the production of any article even if the context demanded a definite article and an indefinite one was produced. Accuracy, therefore, is focussed on gender rather than definiteness for the purposes of the current study.

Once the data for the series of measures was collected it was then entered in Excel for processing and the percentage proportions were calculated, for example % of correct types produced. Once this was complete all data was then imported into SPSS for statistical analysis.

8.2.2 Results – grammatical gender

The following two sections present the results of research questions 1, 2 and 4 related to determiner use, the development of gender assignment and the relationship between lexical development and gender assignment. Table 8.13 below displays the mean scores for all measures related to gender assignment across the three rounds. The table displays the number of all determiner contexts and the percentage of determiners produced. However, the data for types and tokens is based upon gender-marked determiners only and therefore the articles '*l", 'les'* and '*des'* are not included. Several observations can be made from table 8.14. Firstly, the learners use determiners productively as observed by Granfeldt (2003) and Gess & Herschensohn (2001) who argue that this is due to the fact that this is likely a result of L1 transfer.

Table 8.13: gender assignment mean scores Rd1-3 with standard deviations

Measure		***Rd1***	***Rd2***	***Rd3***
Determiner use	Mean no. of possible det. contexts	31.04 (8.38)	51.27 (10.8)	59.58 (14.5)
	% det. produced	72.4 (15.07)	83.6 (7.93)	80.7 (11.63)
Types	Mean No. gender-marked Types produced	15 (4.13)	24.2 (5.34)	28.3 (8.55)
	% gender-marked types accurate	65.3 (15.12)	54.5 (14.56)	66.3 (12.26)
Tokens	Mean No. gender-marked Tokens produced	20.19 (5.46)	35.5 (9.56)	40.31 (12.86)
	% gender-marked tokens accurate	64.35 (15.12)	53.32 (14.56)	69.47 (12.26)
Inconsistent Gender Marking (mean number types)		1.15 (1.05)	2.96 (1.51)	3.58 (2.4)

Table 8.14 below displays the number of learners per range of determiner production and the results demonstrate that even though there is a rise in the number of determiners produced between time 1 and time 3 (with a dip between times 2 and 3) it is clear that some of the learners remained at the optionality phase of determiner production by the end of Year 7 (Prévost 2009). The levels of determiner production mirror those seen in the study by Granfeldt (2003) in which Swedish L1 learners of French produced determiners in 82% of obligatory contexts. Gess & Herschensohn (2001) also noted that determiners were produced by L1 English learners of French in 77% of obligatory contexts during a written production task. However, as Prévost (2009:291) points out, even though determiners may be produced early, the learners' knowledge of the properties of determiners is not assured i.e. the clitic status of determiners in French.

Table 8.14: number of learners for each range of determiner production

Range of determiner production %	***Round 1***	***Round 2***	***Round 3***
40%-55%	4	0	1
55%-70%	7	1	4
70%-85%	8	15	9
85%-100%	7	10	12

Gender assignment was less accurate than was observed by David et al. (2009) where the mean score for types for the Year 8 pupils was 71.64%, Year 10 was

70.32% and Year 12 was 78.28% although all these learners had received a greater number of tuition hours than those in the current study. What is encouraging is that the learners in the current study are approaching the levels of the Year 8 pupils seen in David et al. and therefore one would expect them to at least be at a comparable level, if not more accurate, when they reach the end of Year 8. The accuracy of gender assignment was also lower than for pre-advanced learners in Bartning (2000) and much lower than the low-level learners in Ayoun (2007b) who only made 5.1% of assignment errors. However the results of Ayoun (2007b) are based only upon written production data and may be attributed to learners having a smaller task processing load and more time for the application of explicit language knowledge.

It is also important to note that the learners in the current study are generally of a lower proficiency that learners from previous studies and have received fewer hours of tuition but compare favourably and improved over the year. Despite the increase in accuracy from round 2 to round 3, table 8.13 above shows that the mean scores for inconsistent gender marking rose also steadily over time, although absolutely the numbers remained small. Granfeldt (2005) offers three possible explanations for this phenomenon: either it indicates cases where gender assignment has not occurred at all, cases where gender assignment fluctuates across time, or it could simply be due to a lack of control during speech production (p.173). Despite the increase in IGM, the proportion of nouns that are inconsistently marked is low when considering the overall number of articles produced suggesting that, whilst not always accurate, the learners did assign gender systematically.

Once again non-parametric tests were used to calculate statistics as the data was not normally distributed. Table 8.15 below displays the results of a Friedman's test for Repeated Measures and a series of Wilcoxon signed-ranks tests which show that whilst the number of gender-marked types and tokens produced generally increased significantly (especially between rounds 1 and 2), accuracy in gender assignment dropped significantly between rounds 1 and 2, nevertheless it did recover again in round 3. Looking across the entire year, the data shows the typical pattern of U-shaped learning seen in many L2 studies of interlanguage development. The findings demonstrate clear evidence of progress since they indicate that the learners are moving from item-based knowledge of gender assignment through to more rule-based knowledge.

Table 8.15: Number of determiners and gender marked types and tokens Rds 1-3 – Results of a Freidman's test for Repeated Measures and a series of Wilcoxon signed-ranks tests

Measure		***Friedman's Test for RM***	***Rd1 vs Rd2***	***Rd2 vs Rd3***	***Rd1 vs Rd3***
Determiner use	Mean No. of det contexts	0.000** (X-34.62)	0.000** (z=-4.383) d=2.1	0.005** (z=-2.872) d=.65	0.000** (z=-4.435) d=2.41
	% dets produced	0.054 (X-5.85)	0.002** (z=-3.111) d=.93	0.501 (z=-.673) d=.29	0.055 (z=-1.918) d=.62
Types	Mean No. produced	0.000** (X-34.51)	0.000** (z=-4.461) d=1.93	0.024* (z=-2.262) d=.58	0.000** (z=-4.383) d=1.98
	% accurate	0.000** (X-17.15)	0.002** (z=-3.074) d=.73	0.000** (z=-3.492) d=.88	0.677 (z=-.417) d=.07
Tokens	Mean No. produced	0.000** (X-38.12)	0.000** (z=-4.459) d=1.97	0.071 (z=-1.806) d=.42	0.000** (z=-4.374) d=2.04
	% accurate	0.003** (X-11.9)	0.023* (z=-2.273) d=.74	0.000** (z=-3.518) d=1.2	0.183 (z=-1.332) d=.37
Inconsistent Gender Marking (mean no. of types)		0.000** (X -30.73)	0.000** (z=-3.781) d=1.39	0.319 (z=-.997) d=.31	0.000** (z=-4.090) d=1.31

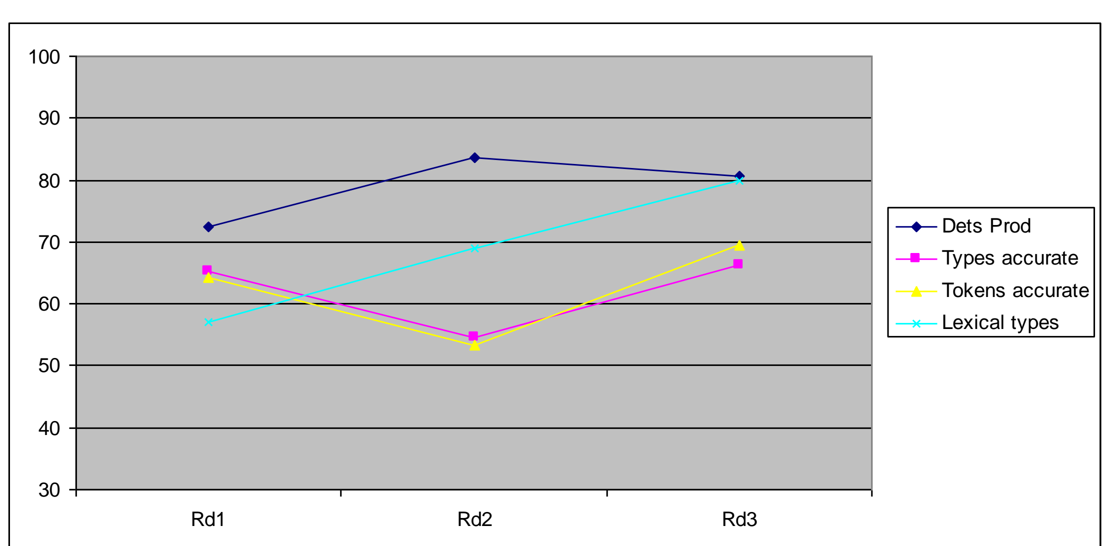
* significance is at the 0.05 level 2-tailed

** significance is the 0.01 level 2-tailed

If we look at how the learners progressed over time, it is clear that following the transition to secondary school the learners produced a greater number of det+noun types and tokens (as seen in the vocabulary analysis in section 8.1) and a higher proportion of determiners. Moreover, the vocabulary data presented in section 8.1 shows that in round 1 the learners produced a smaller set of well-known words which may have been learned as chunks. In round 2, however, the learners produced a greater variety of newly learnt lexical items which resulted in greater opportunities for assignment errors. Indeed, the feminine indefinite article *'une'* was used to a much larger extent in round 2, compared to the other articles and this may well be related to Granfeldt's (2003) assertion that learners tend to produce newly learnt nouns with an indefinite article first then later with the definite article. It is clear from the data that '*une*' was the default indefinite article (particularly in round 2) and therefore this would account for the drop in accuracy in round 2. By round 3, in contrast, there were fewer new lexical items produced which may therefore have enabled the learners to improve on the accuracy of gender assignment. Figure 8.6 below displays the mean scores for number of lexical types produced, percentage of determiners produced in required contexts and the number of accurate gender-marked types and tokens produced. From this graph it is evident that determiner production progressed in a more or less linear fashion (similar to participants' vocabulary development) whereas

there is a clear U-shaped curve in relation to the production of accurate types and tokens.

Figure 8.6: % determiners produced, accurate types and tokens and lexical types produced rounds 1-3

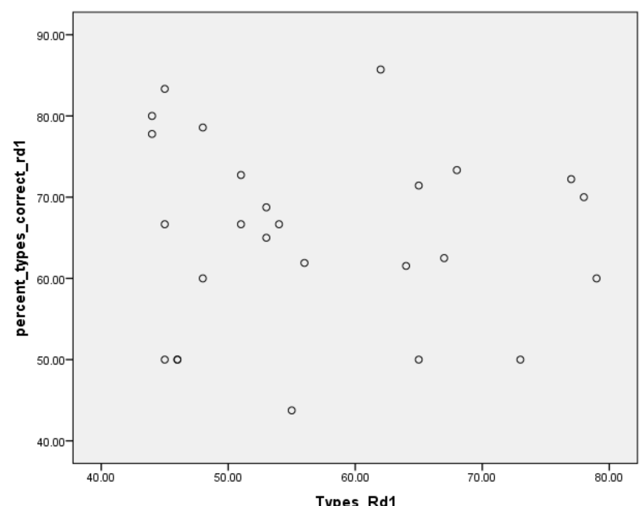


As stated in chapter 4, the lexicon plays a central role in all current models of language competence and in language acquisition theories born out of various research traditions. Construction grammars (Croft 2001; Fillmore 1988; Goldberg 1995; Tomasello (1998a and 1998b) and Processability Theory (Pienemann 1998, 2005b) all assign a key role to the lexicon in grammatical development. Moreover, the lexicon also forms a core element of The Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995; 2000). The study by David et al. (2009) found no link between lexical diversity scores and the development of grammatical gender, however, and it was therefore considered important to re-evaluate this relationship in the current study.

Using the data from the lexical analysis, coupled with the measures listed in table 8.13 above, several correlations were performed in SPSS to ascertain if there is any link between these two facets of linguistic development, with statistically non-significant results. However, these results are not surprising since it was shown in chapter 4 that vocabulary developed linearly whereas, as figure 8.6 shows, knowledge of gender assignment progresses in a U-shaped fashion. Figures 8.7-8.9 below display the scatter plot graphs for number of lexical types produced and the percentage of accurate gender assignments. What they suggest is that whilst there may not be a straightforward linear relationship between lexical and grammatical development there is an interaction between these two facets of performance. As

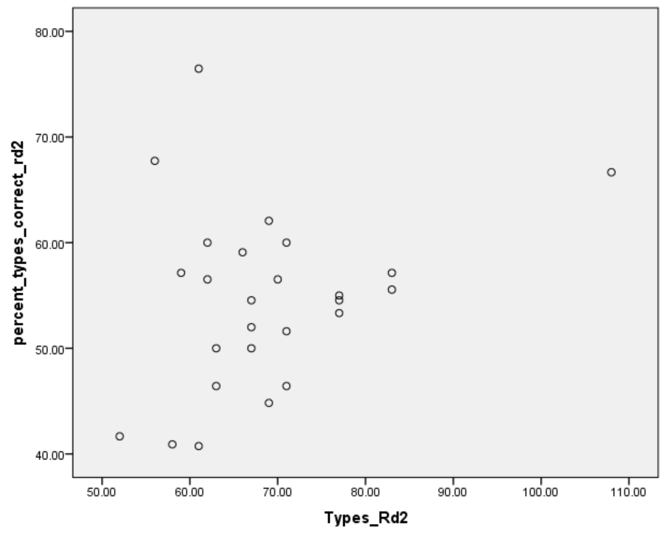
figure 8.7 shows, the learners who produced the least amount of types generally received the highest score for assignment accuracy and there is then a negative linear relationship until you get to around 60 types where accuracy then tends to increase once again.

Figure 8.7: number of lexical types produced by % gender assignment correct - Rd1



In round 2 (figure 8.8 below) the data again shows that the learners who produced the least amount of types scored highest for accuracy. However, in round 2 there was more uniformity in results with a cluster of learners with similar production and accuracy results.

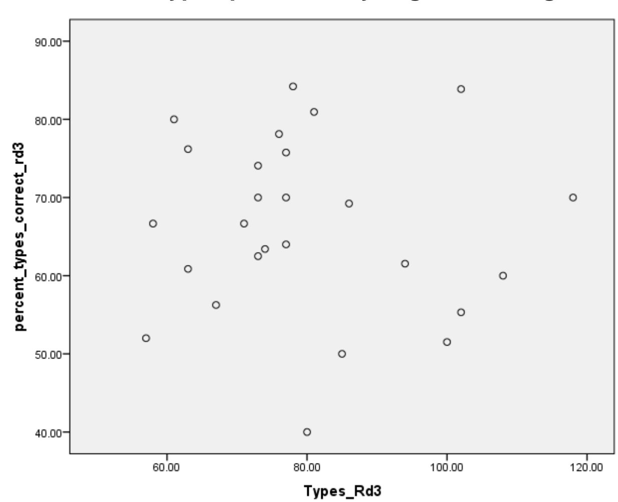
Figure 8.8: number of lexical types produced by % gender assignment correct – Rd2



The picture becomes even more complex in round 3 (displayed in figure 8.9 below) and highlights how different learners are progressing through the developmental

stages at different speeds. The data suggests that the more types a learner produced the higher their levels of assignment accuracy. This general trend continues until around 80 types where accuracy starts to drops off once again to recover at around 100 lexical types. The results therefore suggest that the learners are at different points on the u-shaped learning curve. Nevertheless, the results indicate that the majority of learners are moving towards the top of the curve meaning that accurate gender assignment is beginning to catch up with lexical production.

Figure 8.9: number of lexical types produced by % gender assignment correct – Rd3



The curvilinear relationship between lexical production and accuracy in gender assignment makes it very difficult, especially with a small dataset, to demonstrate clear statistical links between linear lexical development, on the one hand, and dynamic u-shaped grammatical learning on the other. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest a developmental interaction in the production of these two different facets of L2 knowledge.

8.2.2.1 French articles as clitics

As previously discussed in chapter 5, French articles have clitic status unlike English articles which do not which means that articles are obligatory in French and are required for each noun in a sequence of nouns. Moreover, masculine forms contract following prepositions e.g. '*du'* and '*a'u* and definite articles elide with a vowel or an unaspirated h e.g. '*l'histoire'.* The learners in the current study produced articles from the outset, but does this indicate that learners recognise the clitic status of the French determiners? The data suggests that the answer to this question is no for several reasons. Firstly, a good proportion of articles were omitted in obligatory

contexts. Furthermore, the learners did not always repeat clitics in sequences of nouns (as required in French) and like the learners in the study by Carroll (1989) the learners in the current study produced stressed articles with pauses between the article and the noun and did not repeat the article after a pause, which native speakers have a tendency to do (Prévost 2009:295). Further evidence for the lack of clitic status for articles is article doubling (i.e '*la l'anglais'* (P3); '*le l'histoire'* (P5) '*la au tennis'* (P3)), which is also seen in bilingual French acquisition but not L1 French acquisition, and the lack of elision ('*la histoire'* P22, '*le anglais'* (P21), '*la art'* (P8). There are occasions when learners produced contracted forms such as:

> '*J'aime jouer au foot'* – I like playing football (P17)
> *'Je joue au basket'* – I play basketball (P23)
> *'Au collège*' – at school (P24).

However in all examples the contracted form is part of a learnt formulaic chunk rather than a result of syntactic processing. Therefore, although learners are able to regularly produce French articles at this stage, they seem to have little knowledge of their syntactic properties and the related constraints on their use.

8.2.2.2 Adjective-noun agreement

This section presents evidence in response to research the third sub-question; 'how does the learners' knowledge of gender agreement develop over the transition period'? In round 1 only two learners (P13 and P14) produced any adjectives and between them they produced seven tokens. Unfortunately it was difficult to obtain any clear agreement data as they did not produce any determiners before the relevant noun, although often the adjectives agreed with the noun for example:

> *Vert t-shirt* - green t-shirt (P13)
> *Gris Pantalon* – grey trousers (P14)

Even though in the above examples the adjective agrees with the noun there is no evidence to suggest that learners have learnt morphological agreement. Rather, the fact that the adjective agrees with the noun appears to be coincidental. The adjective is placed before the noun (incorrect word order in French) and there are no articles produced; in these examples the learners have simply combined two known lexical items based on L1 syntax. One article was produced; however this was in the plural

form and it therefore did not shed any light on the gender assignment of the noun. Due to the lack of agreement data the round 1 data was not included in the quantitative analysis. In both rounds 2 and 3, 17 out of the 26 learners produced adjectives and table 8.16 below displays the data for adjectival agreement. The first column shows the mean number of tokens produced for each word order combination. The following two columns display the percentage of correct det+noun gender assignments and the percentage of correct adjectival agreements.

The results demonstrate that few adjectival agreement tokens were produced; out of the 675 adjective tokens produced in round 2 only 75 tokens could be included in the adjectival agreement analysis and only 71 out of 822 in round 3. This is due to a combination of a lack of determiners and the predominant production of invariant colour adjectives. As a result it is almost impossible to ascertain any patterns in adjectival agreement other than to say that accuracy in agreement and assignment for Art-Adj-N and Art-N-Adj sequences increased in round 3, although again the number of tokens was low. Previous studies compared the results for article+noun agreement and adjective agreement and found article+noun agreement to be more accurate (Dewaele & Véronique 2001; Granfeldt 2005; Ayoun 2007b). However, due to the small proportion of learners that produced adjectives, and the low number of tokens produced, such a comparison was not considered valid for the current study.

Table 8.16: mean scores for measures of adjectival agreement Rds 2 and 3

Round	***Art-Adj-N (tokens)***			***Art-N-Adj (tokens)***			***Predicative (tokens)***		
	Mean No. per pupil	Ass. % corr	Agr %corr	Mean No.	Ass. % corr	Agr. %corr	Mean No.	Ass. % corr	Agr. % corr
Rd2	3 (total 18)	55.5	47.12	4.31 (total 56)	32.33	44.77	1 (total 1)	100	100
Rd3	1.33 (total 4)	66.67	100	4 (total 48)	74.3	76.11	2.1 (total 19)	68.15	77.78

As previously discussed, the use of adjectives with variant masculine and feminine forms was very limited across both rounds:

round 2 – *blanc, vert, gris, petit, brun, grand*
round 3 – *blanc, vert, gris, ennuyeux, grand, brun, blond, marrant,*

Moreover, most learners produced only the default masculine form of the adjective. In rounds 2 and 3 the learners produced a greater number of feminine articles which

were, for the most part, followed by masculine forms of the adjective, for example; '*une t-shirt blanc*'[4] (P11). In fact, '*t-shirt*' is a masculine noun and therefore the error maybe in the article and not the adjective; the source of errors is often difficult to ascertain as stated by Dewaele & Véronique (2001). Very few learners produced feminine adjectival forms in rounds 2 and 3 and below is a list of all the examples (some of which seem to involve a generalisation of the feminine form):

round 2:
'*Une sweat verte**' (P2)[5] – a green sweatshirt
round 3 :
'*La maison grande'* (P20) – the big house
'*Mon collège est grande**'(P24)[6] – my school is big
'*Le cheveux brunes*'* (P1)[7] – brown hair

It would seem that the learners' knowledge of adjectives, and particularly feminine forms, was very limited at this stage which would explain the lack of clear patterns in the data for adjectival agreement.

Prodeau (2005) claims that accuracy in adjectival agreement may depend upon the position of the adjective in the sentence. Both Prodeau (2005) and Bartning (2000) reported that agreement for post-nominal adjectives was most accurate (in line with Foucart and Franck-Mestre 2011), followed by predicative with pre-nominal most difficult for learners. Round 2 data shows a different pattern in that it was the Art-Adj-Noun combination that tended to be more accurate though this had a much lower number of tokens. However, the accuracy of Art-Adj-Noun combinations points not necessarily to knowledge of agreement but is most likely due to the fact that the majority of nouns produced across the three rounds were masculine and therefore production of invariant (masculine) adjectival form led to apparent accuracy in adjectival agreement. Moreover, a more detailed look at the production of adjectives shows that of the 18 Art+Adj+Noun tokens produced only three demonstrated the correct word order for the adjective used. An example from round 2 is:

'*deux grandes soeurs*' - two big sisters – P1

The majority of adjectives follow the noun in French and where this is required in French, the results show that in round 2 some of the learners continued to employ

---

[4] Correct form should be 'un t-shirt blanc' or to agree the adjective with the article 'une t-shirt blanche''.
[5] This example has correct agreement det and adjective but incorrect gender assignment for 'sweat' which is masculine
[6] Correct form is mon collège est grand
[7] Correct form is les cheveux bruns

English word order. Nevertheless, in round 3, the learners produced a much greater proportion of utterances with correct word order. The number of tokens with predicative adjectives also increased from round 2 to round 3 which reflects the teaching of fixed expressions discussed in section 7.1.4. Several learners produced fixed expressions similar to the example below:

> *'Je déteste les maths parce que c'est très ennuyeux' (P1)*
> I hate maths because it is very boring

Once again the adjectives in these fixed expressions were limited to the masculine form i.e. '*ennuyeux', 'marrant', 'intéressant'* and therefore it is very difficult to make claims on the learners' knowledge of agreement from the limited examples available. A review of the textbooks and lesson observations showed that only the masculine forms were presented in the model sentences for the example above and therefore the learners were very unlikely to have had sufficient input and knowledge of feminine forms to facilitate the learning of adjectival agreement.

8.2.2.3 Contextual and individual factors and the development of grammatical gender

This section will investigate the relationship between learning context, learner motivation and general intelligence using motivation questionnaire data and CAT scores. To evaluate the influence of context at the primary level Mann-Whitney U tests were performed and the results show that, as with lexical development, learners from School A out-performed those from School B in terms of the accuracy, although not significantly so (see Table 8.17 below for statistics). On the other hand, learners from School B produced a significantly higher number of determiners in required contexts. The difference in amount of determiners produced evened out in rounds 2 and 3.

Table 8.17: grammatical gender statistics by school of origin means and standard deviations rounds 1-3

Measure	***Round***	***School A***	***School B***	***Mann Whitney U Test Results***
Mean % dets. produced	Rd 1	66.06 (15.64)	79.89 (10.72)	z=-2.470 p=.014
	Rd 2	82.87 (8.66)	84.41 (7.27)	z=-3.09 p=.758
	Rd 3	82.99 (9.86)	78.02 (13.33)	z=-8.23 p=410
Mean % types accurate	Rd 1	68.38 (10.02)	61.77 (12.33)	z=-1.653 p=.098
	Rd 2	53.5 (7.87)	55.67 (9.3)	z=-.232 p=.817
	Rd 3	65.42 (12.37)	67.27 (10.35)	z=-.386 p=.699
Mean % tokens accurate	Rd 1	68.75 (13.06)	59.22 (16.26)	z=-1.44 p=150
	Rd 2	54.91 (13.33)	51.46 (16.28)	z=-.617 p=537
	Rd 3	68.9 (13.26)	70.12 (11.53)	z=-.154 p=.877

As seen for vocabulary development, the results demonstrate that the original primary learning context cannot explain any variation in performance across the three rounds. The results of Kruskall Wallis test also showed that there were no significant differences between the secondary school French classes. Therefore the next section will evaluate what role individual factors play in the development of grammatical gender.

8.2.2.4 Grammatical gender development and the role of individual factors

In response to the final research sub-question section discusses the results of analyses which explore the role of individual factors in the development of grammatical gender. The quantitative measures of motivation and measures of academic ability were correlated with measures of grammatical gender knowledge. The results in table 8.18 below show that there is no statistical pattern of relationship between measures of grammatical gender and individual variables. This is in stark contrast to the results seen for vocabulary development where L1 literacy and motivation exerted a significant influence on outcomes. It may be the case that the

production of determiners and gender marked adjectives was in fact too low to be able to measure the effects of individual factors. As the learners become more proficient it may then be possible to examine how individual factors come into play. The data shows that vocabulary learning continued at a constant pace across the year with a linear progression. In contrast, the acquisition of grammar seems to be more complex and turbulent.

Table 8.18: correlations of grammatical gender and individual variables Rds 1-3

Round	*Measure*	*CAT Mean*	*CAT Quant*	*CAT Non-verbal*	*CAT Verbal*	*School L1 Literacy*	*Motivation*
1	*% dets. produced*	.178	.084	.165	.100	-.017	.019
	% types accurate	-.441*	-.163	-.556**	-.255	.144	-.155
	% tokens accurate	-.257	.000	-.385	-.108	.066	-.108
2	*% dets. produced*	-.146	-.146	.035	-.263	.096	-.282
	% types accurate	.254	.245	.275	-.043	-.110	.262
	% tokens accurate	.196	.167	.280	-.096	-.066	.132
3	*% dets. produced*	.246	.275	.057	.383	-.267	.093
	% types accurate	-.310	-.313	-.228	-.175	.132	-.072
	% tokens accurate	-.311	-.294	-.295	-.136	.132	-.065

There is only one statistically significant correlation in the data which indicates that there is a negative relationship as those learners with a higher CAT non-verbal score produced the least number of accurate types in round 1. However, this pattern was not repeated in the two subsequent rounds. The vocabulary data shows that learner motivation and CAT mean scores correlated significantly with lexical production which implies there will again be a non-linear relationship between individual factors and L2 performance. As the most motivated and most academically capable, in general, produced the greatest amount of lexical types it then follows that these learners may not necessarily be the most accurate in terms of gender assignment.

8.2.3 Discussion – grammatical gender

The results show that the learners used determiners productively from the earliest stages. There are, however, examples of the production of bare nouns which would suggest that some learners are still in the stage of optionality for the production of determiners. It is likely that the learners in the current study produced a high proportion of determiners (compared to early L1 learners) due to the fact that the determiner feature is instantiated in English. Therefore determiner production can be attributed to L1 transfer as can the production of bare nouns (particularly in round 1) since determiners are not obligatory in English. On the other hand, the production of determiner-less nouns may also support the 'Minimal Trees Hypothesis' proposed by Vainikka & Young-Scholten (1998; 2005) who argue that functional categories may not be available at the very earliest stages of acquisition and thus only lexical categories are available whereas functional categories develop gradually.

Despite the fact that the learners produced a high proportion of determiners in comparison to early L1 learners, the results indicate that the learners' knowledge of the clitic status of the French articles differed greatly from that of L1 French learners and this is exemplified by the lack of contraction, elision, article doubling and repetition of determiners in noun sequences. The data supports the view of Carroll (1989) and Granfeldt (2005) who posit that determiners are learnt as separate phonological units from the noun in adult/adolescent L2 French (unlike L1 French where they are initially learnt as one unit) which in turn may hinder the use of their properties for gender assignment. Psycholinguistic studies of grammatical gender have highlighted the important role of co-occurrence relations, as well as phonological and semantic clues, and it would seem that the learners may well be hampered by their existing L1 knowledge and also by exposure to the written word which highlights the determiner and nouns as separate units. In her study of grammatical gender, Prodeau (2005) concludes that lemmas did not seem to be systematically stored with their gender. L2 acquisition of grammatical gender was therefore much slower and more difficult than L1 acquisition, not only due to vastly reduced input (in comparison to L1 acquisition) but also due to how the L2 learners processed the input that they received.

The results presented here show that at the end of primary education the learners had started to make sense of, and develop, the French article system and that the process of transition did not hinder their learning. The learners did not have to restart

the learning process in Year 7, and they appeared to build upon the knowledge of French determiners they gained in primary school which served as a platform for future development. It is clear that whilst not entirely accurate, the learners' production of determiner+noun combinations was systematic. Furthermore, although there does not appear to be a notable increase in gender assignment accuracy from round 1 to round 3, the results demonstrate that the learners went through a dynamic learning process over the 12 month transition period and the u-shaped development of gender assignment indicates that learners were progressing from item-based to rule-based behaviour.

In terms of adjectival agreement it is clear that the learners had not made any start on this process by the end of primary education which is not surprising since this element of French grammar has been shown to be slow to develop within instructed settings. The limited number of adjective tokens produced in round 1 meant that it was not possible to ascertain any patterns in adjectival agreement at the earliest stages. However, the number of accurate adjective agreements doubled between rounds 2 and 3 which coincided with a general shift to the production of correct adjective word order. The development of correct word order within the noun phrase may have facilitated accurate adjectival agreement in two ways. Firstly, noun movement enables syntactic processing to take place and secondly the post-posing of the adjective could have enhanced the salience of the adjectives, due to the difference with English word order, which in turn led learners to pay greater attention to the adjectives. However, caution should be exercised when interpreting these results. Whilst the learners clearly made progress in terms of the production of correct word order, the majority of nouns that were produced were masculine and adjectives were on the whole only produced in the masculine form. Consequently, the apparent increase in accuracy for adjectival agreement may simply have been due to the decrease in the inaccurate use of '*une*' in round 3. One other point to consider is that production data may not entirely reflect the learners' gender knowledge for several reasons: some learners may favour the production of well-known words therefore inflating the accuracy statistics and learners may also not consistently mark phonetic distinctions, particularly between '*un*' and '*une*' which are problematic for L1 English learners of French (Ayoun 2007b). The communicative nature of the task may also have led learners to omit gender markers due to working memory deficits or simply because marking gender could be considered communicatively empty (Prodeau 2005).

8.3 The Acquisition of Verb Morphology and Syntax – analysis and results

The findings of the previous studies of young and adult instructed learners of French, discussed in section 5.2.3, led to the formation of five research sub-questions applicable to the current study:

a. *When do verb phrases first emerge and what form do they take?*
b. *Is there evidence of increasing knowledge of finiteness? Specifically:*
    - *Is the use of finite/non-finite verbs context sensitive?*
    - *When do subject clitics emerge and what are the patterns of usage?*
c. *What is the role of formulaic language in the development of verb morphology?*
d. *What is the role of the individual and contextual factors in the grammatical development of instructed learners of French?*
e. *Is there a relationship between grammatical and lexical development and how does this develop over time?*

8.3.1 Data Processing and results

As for grammatical gender, the analysis of learner production was performed on un-lemmatised CHAT transcriptions of the paired role-play task, the photo description task and the written email response task. Every verb phrase was examined even if it could be deemed an unanalysed chunk of language for several reasons. Firstly, it was clear that the production of formulaic chunks was a key feature of the learners' verb production. There were very few verbs that were not judged to be chunks and consequently there would have been very little data to discuss and developmental trends would not have been visible. More importantly, I consider the role of chunks to be fundamental to instructed grammatical development in general, and of verb morphology and syntax in particular (in line with Myles 2012), and therefore it was deemed crucial to incorporate an examination of how the learners' production of verb chunks developed over time. Each transcription was analysed based upon a series of measures which will be presented in the following sections in relation to each research question. The results were firstly entered into Excel and then exported to SPSS for statistical analysis.

8.3.1.1 The emergence of the verb phrase

In order to answer the first research question the data was evaluated based on several measures; the first one being the number of verb phrases produced. Myles

(2005) posits that the suppliance of the verb phrase is the first indication of emergent syntactic structure and therefore we would expect to see an increase in the number of verb phrases produced over the 12 months. The results displayed in table 8.19 below show the number of propositions produced, the number of verbs produced and the verb/proposition ratio across the three rounds. For the current study a proposition is defined semantically following Myles (2005) and Saeed (1997); 'with the verb seen as a function, and its subject and any objects as arguments of the function'. In this sense a proposition would normally be expected to contain a verb but in practice may not due to the limitations of the learners' knowledge of verbs. Owing to the nature of the task it was not problematic to ascertain the learner's intended meaning, for example:

'j'adore la football, la musique et la danse' P7

was categorised as one proposition whereas:

'mon copain s'appelle Name, il très marrant' P24

was categorised as two separate propositions, where the second proposition is verbless. As illustrated by the second example above, the proportion of verbless propositions was calculated by counting all of the propositions that contained only noun phrases or prepositional phrases where the inferred meaning clearly required a verb; for example:

'*nom Poppy'* (P7) – name Poppy in lieu of *'elle s'appelle Poppy'*

'*à l'école les maths'* (P16) – at school maths in lieu of '*il fait les maths (à l'école)'*.

Single-word utterances in response to clarification requests or repetitions were not included in the analysis.

The results in table 8.19 show that the number of propositions rose between rounds 1-3 as did the number of verbs produced, which more than doubled from round 1 to round 3, along with the proportion of propositions containing a VP.

Table 8.19: number of propositions, number of vps, verb/proposition ratio and standard deviations

Measure	*Round 1*	*Round 2*	*Round 3*
Overall mean No. of propositions	36.31 (6.34)	39.12 (5.69)	48.62 (8.71)
Overall mean No. of VPs	17.04 (6.08)	25.12 (6.31)	38.81 (8.63)
% verb/prop ratio	46.57 (12.89)	64.12 (13.39)	79.88 (10.36)

Table 8.20 below displays the results of a Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and a series of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests which show that whilst the increase in the number of propositions was not significant between rounds 1 and 2 the differences were significant for all other measures with large effect sizes. The results are comparable to those observed by Myles (2005) where the time 1 ratio was 54.6% which increased to 75.5% after a year's tuition. The learners in the current study also performed to a similar level to the beginner learners in the study by Rule & Marsden (2006) who produced around 81% of verbless utterances and are also comparable to the Y9 learners in the same study who produced around 20% of verbless utterances.

Table 8.20: Inferential statistics for the measures of verb production Rds 1-3. Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests

Measure	*Friedman's Test for RM*	*Rd1 vs Rd2*	*Rd2 vs Rd3*	*Rd1 vs Rd3*
Overall mean No. of props	0.000** (χ-29.15)	0.073 (z=1.792) d=.42	0.000** (z=3.723) d=1.29	0.000** (z=4.141) d=1.62
Overall mean No. of VPs per learner	0.000** (χ-44.99)	0.000** (z=3.81) d=1.3	0.000** (z=4.459) d=1.81	0.000** (z=4.46) d=2.92
% ratio VPs per prop	0.000** (χ-42.54)	0.000** (z=4.102) d=1.34	0.000** (z=4.254) d=1.32	0.000** (z=4.457) d=2.85

** significant at the 0.01 level

A qualitative view of the data shows that many of the learners projected simple noun phrases in round 1 in lieu of a full verb phrase. A full list of verbs produced in rounds 1-3 is in Appendix P; it is important to note that when learners did produce a verb they were generally limited to verbs of preference (*aimer, adorer, détester*) or verbs used to discuss personal details such as '*s'appeler*' and '*habiter*'. The choice and production of the verb types is of course influenced to a large extent by the nature of the task. The most productive of the task was the role play task, which demanded that learners found out personal information about each other and discussed like and dislikes. The photo description task also provided ample opportunity to produce a variety of verbs for example; '*danser*' (to dance), '*porter*' (wear), '*jouer*' (to play), '*chanter*' (to sing); however these were clearly not known to many of the learners, especially in the earlier rounds.

It is clear that these verb utterances constituted formulaic or rote-learned chunks of language and were, for the most part, produced in the first person form, even in the section of the role play that required the learners to talk about their interlocutor using 3rd person verb forms. Formulaic chunks or sequences are defined by Wray (2002, 2008) as:

> 'A sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appear to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar'.

The identification of formulaic chunks is a potentially difficult task and in the current study was based upon principles developed by Mitchell et al. (1998), Myles et al. (1999) and Myles (2012) following Weinert (1995). Firstly, formulaic sequences or chunks tend to be longer and more complex than other productions, they have greater phonological coherence meaning that they tend to be more fluent and produced without hesitation. Chunks are frequently used inappropriately, i.e. they are over-generalised. Moreover, the constituent elements of a chunk are rarely found outside of that phrase and lastly they are, on the whole, grammatically accurate compared to other learner productions.

Using the above criteria, several chunks were identified and produced by every learner:

'*J'aime la pizza'* – I like pizza
'*J'adore les maths'* – I love maths
'J'ai dix ans' – I am ten years old
'Je déteste le français' – I hate French
'*Je m'appelle Tom'* – I am called Tom
'Quel âge as-tu?' – How old are you ?
'Comment t'appelles-tu?' – What are you called?

The final section of the role play task required the learners to recount to the researcher information about their partner that they had gained during the role play. This section was analysed in detail to investigate how the learners fulfilled their communicative needs with limited linguistic resources. The results of the series of studies detailed in section 5.3.5 demonstrate that early learners of French use a variety of strategies to overcome the shortfall in their linguistic knowledge when referencing a third person and that there is a clear developmental path but also great

variation in progress. The results of the investigation into the role of formulaic chunks in interlanguage development will be presented in section 8.3.1.4.

8.3.1.2 The development of verb morphology

The second research sub-question asks whether the learners display evidence of increasing knowledge of finiteness and this is explored in two ways, firstly by looking at the use of finite/non-finite verb forms and their context and the emergence of subject clitic usage. The use of finite/non-finite verb forms was analysed based upon several quantitative measures displayed in table 8.21 below.

Table 8.21: measures used to investigate verb morphology

Measure	***Description***
No. finite verbs(mean)	The mean number of finite verb forms produced
No. finite verbs (total)	The total number of finite verb forms produced
No. non-finite verbs (mean)	The mean number of non-finite verb forms produced
No. non-finite verbs (total)	The total number of non-finite forms produced in each round
Finite verbs in finite contexts	The total number of finite verbs used in finite contexts
Finite verbs in non-finite contexts	The total number of finite verbs used in non-finite contexts
Non-finite verbs in finite contexts	The total number of non-finite verbs used in finite contexts
Non-finite verbs in non-finite contexts	The total number of non-finite verbs used in non-finite contexts
Non-finite verbs in bare VP	The total number of non-finite verbs used in bare VPs

Non-finite verbs are used in French primarily as complements to other verbs and are frequently preceded by a preposition:

> *'Marie refuse de sortir'* – Marie refuses to come out
> *'C'est utile à savoir'* – It is useful to know (Hawkins & Towell 2001:273)

To analyse the extent to which finite forms were used in non-finite contexts the data was examined to see if any tensed forms of verbs occurred within such contexts. The data was then examined to if non-finite verbs forms appeared in finite contexts e.g. following a subject clitic (*je, tu, il/elle*) or after a DP (*le professeur*).

The results in table 8.22 below show that there was only one non-finite verb form produced across the first two rounds; however, this number had increased to 19 verbs in round 3.

Table 8.22: measures of the production of finite and non-finite verbs Rds1-3

Measure		***Round 1***	***Round 2***	***Round 3***
No. finite verbs	***Mean***	17	25.1	38
	Total	442	653	988
No. non-finite verbs	***Mean***	0.39	0	0.5
	Total	1	0	19
Finite verbs in finite contexts (total)		442	653	988
Finite verbs in non-finite contexts (total)		0	0	4
Non-finite verbs in finite context (total)		1	0	1
Non-finite verbs in non-finite context (total)		0	0	6
Non-finite verbs in bare VPs (total)		0	0	12

Table 8.23 below shows that a Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and a series of Wilcoxon signed ranks tests demonstrate that all measures increased significantly across the three rounds except the use of non-finite verbs between rounds 1 and 2 and the overuse of non-finite verbs in finite contexts.

Table 8.23: inferential statistics for the production of finite and non-finite verbs Rds1-3. Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests.

Measure	***Friedman's Test for RM***	***Rd1 vs. Rd2***	***Rd2 vs. Rd3***	***R1 vs. R3***
No. finite verbs	.000** (χ-44.99)	.000** (z-3.81)	.000** (z-4.459)	.000** (z-4.461)
No. non-finite verbs (mean)	.002** (χ=12.67)	.317 (z=1) d=2.81	.010** (z=2.57) d=.82	.018* (z=2.36) d=.18
Non-finite verbs in non-finite contexts (total)	.007** (χ-10)	1 (z=0)	.034* (z=-2.12)	.034* (z=-2.12)
Overuse of non-finite verbs in finite contexts (total)	.607 (χ =1)	.317 (z=1)	.317 (z=1)	1 (z =0)
Overuse of finite verbs in non-finite contexts (total)	.018* (χ=8)	1 (z=0)	1 (z=0)	.046* (z=-2)
Non-finite verbs in bare VPs (total)	.000** (χ=16)	1 (z=0)	.010* (z=-2.59)	.010* (z=-2.59)

** significant at the .001 level

* significant at the .05 level

The numbers of non-finite forms are much lower than those seen by both Myles (2005) and Rogers (2010). However, it must be noted that despite the fact that the learners in the current study had probably received more hours of tuition (210 planned hours by the end of year 7), this was spread out over five school years (Y3-Y7) rather than 141 hours over one school year in the case of the learners in Myles (2005). One would therefore expect a faster rate of development between rounds 2-3 due to a greater number of more frequent tuition hours. The only non-finite verb production in the first two rounds was produced by P13 who produced a non-finite form in a finite context:

*'onze personnes écouter la musique'**[8] - eleven people are listening to music

In this example the verb was preceded by a determiner phrase and was not inflected for tense or person. Interestingly, P13 did not produce any further non-finite forms over the subsequent two rounds. In round 3 several learners produced non-finite forms and 12 of the 13 non-finite verbs were produced as a bare VP with no subject or agreement morphology for example:

'jouer la guitare' – play guitar (P11).

The only non-finite form to appear in a finite context preceded by either a DP or a subject clitic was:

*'le professeur chanter'**[9] - the teacher is singing (P23)

The most frequently produced non-finite verb forms were *regarder* (watch) (also observed in Myles (2005)) and *écouter* (listen). These were produced as a bare VP by two learners P1 and P7. *Regarder* and *écouter* also appeared in non-finite contexts in dual-verb constructions such as:

'j'adore regarder la télé' – I love watching TV (P10)
'j'aime écouter la musique' – I like listening to music (P24).

However, in round 3, there are four examples of dual-verb constructions in which both the first and second verbs are inflected for example:

[8] Should be onze personnes écoutent la musique.
[9] Should be le professeur chante

'J'aime écoute la musique' – I like listen(ing) to music (P4).

It is possible that these types of error occur as a result of L1 transfer since in English one is more likely to say; 'I like listening to music' rather than, 'I like to listen to music'. This indicates that although there is an increase in the erroneous production of dual-verb constructions in round 3, I argue that these learners are demonstrating increasing knowledge of finiteness and inflection by over-generalising L1 rules. *Ecouter* and *regarder* were used frequently in the imperative form (phonologically similar to the non-finite form) by the teachers in Year 6 and Year 7. These verbs were also taught in set phrases in the 'free time activities' topic in Year 7 and these two factors may explain why these verbs form a large part of non-finite verb production.

8.3.1.3 The use of subject clitics

The second area of investigation into the learners' knowledge of verb syntax and morphology relates to the emergence of subject clitic usage with finite verb forms. In order to measure how this developed over time the percentage of finite verbs that appeared with subject clitics (*je, tu, il/elle*) was calculated for each round and the results are displayed in table 8.24 below. In round 1, the vast majority of the finite verbs produced appeared with subject clitics. Across rounds 1-3 there was an increase in the use of DPs such as *'le professeur'* and *'les yeux'* (eyes), plus other pronouns such as the relative pronoun *qui* as in *qui s'appelle* (who is called). Across all three rounds, much the most frequently used subject was '*je'* followed by '*tu'* then '*il/elle'.* However the proportion of 3rd person forms increased consistently over the 12 months and this will be discussed in more detail when examining the segmentation of formulaic chunks in the following section.

Table 8.24: the percentage of finite verbs with subject type

Round	***Je***	***Tu***	***Il/elle***	***No subject***	***DP***	***Other***
1	83% (n=387)	11% (n=51)	1 (n=5)	3% (n=13)	0% (n=0)	2% (n=7)
2	82% (n=531)	10% (n=66)	2% (n=11)	3% (n=20)	1% (n=9)	2% (n=11)
3	76% (n=749)	7% (n=72)	7% (n=66)	3% (n=40)	3% (n=31)	4% (n=51)

The production of finite verbs with subject clitics was even higher than observed by both Myles (2005) (91%) and David et al. (2009) (87%) and seems due to the fact that the learners produced formulaic chunks in the majority of cases. As stated by Myles (2012), the high level of accuracy should not be seen as a direct indicator of interlanguage development nor considered as evidence that all learners have knowledge of finiteness at this stage. Moreover, the decrease over time in the proportion of finite verbs with subject clitics should be viewed as a mark of progression since there is evidence that some learners began to become less reliant on rote-learned chunks and started the process of chunk segmentation which is discussed further in the following section.

8.3.1.4 The role of formulaic chunks in interlanguage development

The majority of the formulaic chunks produced were in the role play task in which the learners had to ask and answer questions about personal details, family, pets, likes and dislikes (see Appendix G). The learners were asked to note down the responses and at the end of the role play they had to recount all of the information they had acquired about their partner. This part of the task was aimed at eliciting 3rd person forms and to investigate how the learners use of 1st person formulaic chunks developed in order to communicate the information related to their partner. Some examples of the formulaic chunks commonly used in the role play task were:

'*Je m'appelle John'* – I'm called John
'*J'habite à Town'* – I live in Town
'*J'aime le football'* – I like football
'*J'adore le français'* – I love French
'*Je déteste les mathématiques'* – I hate maths

A series of measures were used in the current study to explore the role of formulaic language in interlanguage development based upon the findings of the previous studies and these are displayed in table 8.25 below. In the final part of the role play some of the learners produced a verb without any subject at all such as *'adore la pizza'* whereas others produced the 3rd person pronoun without a verb for example; *'il le français'* (he French) and therefore both subject-less verb and *il/elle* only were also included to measure progression and the results of all measures are shown in table 8.25 below.

The results show that there are clear developmental patterns as found in previous studies. In round 1 the learners produced combinations of simple noun phrases such as; *'un chien'* (a dog) or *'la musique'* (music) and the use of this strategy decreased over the 12 months as the learners became able to include a verb. In later rounds the strategy used by the majority of the learners was to add a complete 1st person chunk in place of the 3rd person form. By round 3 the use of bare noun phrases had reduced by half whereas the number of 1st person chunks doubled.

Table 8.25: Mean and total scores for measures in the expression of 3rd person reference Rds 1-3

Measure		***Round 1***	***Round 2***	***Round 3***
Bare Noun Phrase	***Mean***	6 (3.39)	5.12 (3.23)	2.73 (2.54)
	Total	156	133	71
Chunk (1st person)	***Mean***	3.04 (2.14)	5 (3.19)	6.58 (3.25)
	Total	79	130	171
Subject doubling	***Mean***	0	0	1.42 (1.86)
	Total	0	0	37
Subject-less verb	***Mean***	0.115 (0.326)	0.5 (1.48)	.346 (0.977)
	Total	3	13	9
Il/elle only	***Mean***	0	0.154 (0.78)	1.27 (1.67)
	Total	0	4	33
Correct 3rd person + finite verb	***Mean***	0	0.192 (0.98)	1.88 (3.08)
	Total	0	5	49

In round 2, a small number of learners had begun to separate the pronoun from the verb demonstrating that they had become aware that *je* was not the correct pronoun for 3rd person reference. These learners seemed not to have had knowledge of third person forms at that time. By round three, some of the learners who had begun the process of segmentation had progressed to producing target-like forms with the 3rd person pronoun plus a finite verb. It is for this reason that the number of subject-less verbs decreased exemplifying the u-shaped behaviour proposed by Kellerman (1985).

Table 8.26 below displays the results of a Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and a series of Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Tests. The reduction in the number of bare

noun phrases was significant across the three rounds and the production of 1st person chunks, subject doubling, subject-less verbs, il/elle only and correct 3rd person forms increased significantly from rounds 1-3. Only the change in the production of subject-less verbs was not statistically significant which is likely due to the small numbers produced and the u-shaped development observed.

Table 8.26: Results of Friedman's Test for Repeated Measures and a series of Wiloxon Signed-ranks Tests for the measures of chunk production.

Measure	*Friedman's Test for RM*	*Rd1 vs. Rd2*	*Rd 2 vs. Rd3*	*Rd 1 vs Rd3.*
Bare Noun Phrase	.001** (χ-13.47)	.353 (z-.929) d=.27	.001** (z-3.354) d=.82	.000** (z-3.616) d=1.1
Chunk (1st person)	.002* (χ -12.56)	.034* (z-2.116) d=.72	.039* (z-2.068) d=.49	.001** (z-3.334) d=1.29
Subject doubling	.000** (χ-26)	1 (z-0) d=n/a	.001** (z-3.219) d=1.08	.001** (z-3.219) d=1.08
Subject-less verb	.446 (χ-1.61)	.161 (z-1.403) d=.36	.470 (z-.722) d=.12	.234 (z--1.19) d=.32
Il/elle only	.000** (χ-20.46)	.317 (z-1) d=.28	.015* (z-2.441) d=.86	.002* (z-3.104) d=1.08
Correct 3rd person + finite verb	.000** (χ-23.41)	.317 (z-1) d=.27	.002* (z-3.086) d=.74	.002* (z-3.086) d=.86

* significant at .05 level

** significant at 0.01 level

A qualitative view of the data shows that many of the learners employed a variety of strategies at one time for 3rd person reference, particularly in rounds 2 and 3, and that the strategy used appeared to be verb dependent. For example, table 8.27 below details the verbs produced by learner P11 from round 1 to round 3 which are indicative of the progress made over the year including the variability in strategies used from verb to verb, and also those produced by learner P4 who made the most progress out of all the learners. The data shows that learner P11 is moving through the developmental stages as described in previous studies but it is clear that this is a gradual process and that learners display evidence of progression whilst showing

variability in the production of different verbs. P4, on the other hand, seemed to move through the different stages at a much quicker pace. P4 used mostly 1st person chunks in round 1 but progressed rapidly to 3rd person forms in round 2 for the verbs *aimer* and *detester,* although they did continue to have difficulty in producing the 3rd person form of *avoir.* By round 3, however, any gaps in knowledge had been resolved and all verbs were produced correctly including *avoir*. As observed in previous studies there were some learners who did make progress but at a much slower rate. For example, by round 3, learners P2, P9, P10 and P12 were still reliant on the use of bare NPs and 1st person chunks to express 3rd person reference, with no evidence of them having begun the process of segmentation. To look at the possible factors related to this variation in performance the next section will contain a detailed exploration of the role of contextual and individual factors.

Table 8.27: verbs produced in final section of role play by learners P4 and P11- Rds 1-3

Round	*Learner P11*	*Learner P4*
1	*Robert, âge quinze, une frère onze, deux chiens, le vélo, téchnologie, tv*	*je m'appelle Sophie, cinq ans, trois frères, j'aime la roller et la vélo, j'aime le chocolat gâteau, j'aime le maths, j'aime la musique*
2	*Je m'appelle Name, j'ai onze ans, deux sœurs, j'ai une chien, j'adore la danse, j'adore banane, je n'aime pas le pomme, j'adore le dessin, j'adore la musique*	*s'appelle Name, dix ans, une frère huit ans, une chat, elle aime le foot, elle déteste une gâteau, elle aime une pizza, elle aime le science, elle aime la musique*
3	*Il s'appelle Name, il est une frère, il est un lézard, il j'adore la football, il déteste le vélo, il j'adore les bonbons, déteste le pizza, histoire super, déteste le english, il j'adore le ordinateur déteste vélo*	*il s'appelle Name, il a douze ans, il a un frère, il a une chien, il adore le tennis, il aime les sciences, il déteste le français, il aime la musique et télévision, il n'aime pas la pêche.*

8.3.1.5. The role of contextual and individual factors in learner performance.

The findings of the current study mirror those of Mitchell, Myles and Hooper (1998) and Myles (2012) which demonstrate that whilst there is a clear developmental path in the segmentation of formulaic chunks, learners proceed through these stages at variable rates. As with the sections related to lexical development and the development of grammatical gender, this section will explore the role of contextual and individual factors such as L1 literacy (based upon primary school L1 literacy levels and CAT mean scores in secondary school) and motivation and will also

investigate whether the production of verb morphology bore any relation to the levels achieved in secondary school French assessments.

Table 8.28 below displays the mean scores by primary school across the three rounds. As seen previously with grammatical gender, there is no statistically significant difference between the scores for learners from School A or School B over the year apart from the use of bare NPs in round 3. Therefore the approach to French teaching in the individual primary school did not lead to any distinctive effects in terms of the development of verb morphology overall. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the four learners highlighted as having the made the least progress in terms of chunk segmentation were all from School A. In the section on motivation it was clear that there was a significant drop on motivation scores for learners from School A following transition to secondary school. It seems the interaction of learner context and individual factors might explain the variation in outcomes.

Table 8.28: Results of a series of Mann Whitney U-Tests to measure the difference between learners from School A and School B Rds 1-3.

Measure	*Round*	*School A*	*School B*	*Mann Whitney U-Test results*
Bare NP	1	5.71 (3.47)	6.33 (3.42)	z-.725 p-.468
	2	5.21 (3.72)	5 (2.66)	z-.445 p-.656
	3	3.64 (2.5)	1.67 (2.23)	z-2.10 p-.036*
1st person chunks	1	2.93 (2.4)	3.17 (1.9)	z--.418 p-.676
	2	4.5 (2.79)	5.58 (3.63)	z--.622 p-.534
	3	6.57 (3.88)	6.58 (2.5)	z--.104 p-.917
Correct 3rd person	1	*	*	*
	2	.357 (1.34)	*	z-.926 p-.355
	3	1.79 (3.42)	2 (2.76)	z-.422 p-.673

* significant at the 0.05 level

Table 8.29 below displays the results of a series of Spearman's correlations that examine the relationship between individual factors and several measures of progression in terms of the segmentation of formulaic chunks.

Table 8.29: The results of Spearman correlations between measures of verb morphology and individual factors Rds 1-3

Round	*Measure*	*CAT mean*	*L1 Literacy*	*Motivation*	*NC Level French*
1	Bare NP	-.234	-.505**	-.217	*
	Chunks 1st person	.385	.380	.241	*
	Correct 3rd person	*	*	*	*
2	Bare NP	-.127	-.059	-.120	.097
	Chunks 1st person	.140	-.194	.116	-.061
	Correct 3rd person	.307	.220	.027	.193
3	Bare NP	-.352	-.546**	-.397*	-.508**
	Chunks 1st person	-.480*	-.625**	-.380	-.597**
	Correct 3rd person	.367	.314	.264	.382

* significant at the 0.05 level

* significant at the 0.01 level

In round 1 there is a negative correlation between all individual factors and the production of bare NPs, which is significant for the L1 literacy levels assigned to the learners in primary school. This means that those learners with a higher score for CAT mean, L1 literacy and motivation produced fewer bare NPs even in round1. There is also a positive, if non-significant correlation of these measures with the use of 1st person chunks. In round 2 there are no significant correlations for any of the measures. Nonetheless, bare NPs had a much smaller negative correlation with all measures, whereas the use of 1st person chunks had a non-significant but now negative correlation with L1 literacy levels. This could mean that learners with a higher literacy score were already beginning to move away from unmodified chunk production. The results show that by round 3 the correlations between individual factors and most measures of progression had reached significant levels. For both bare NPs and the use of unmodified chunks there was a significant negative correlation with all measures (except motivation) and also with the level achieved in secondary school French assessments. The only measure not to display any significant correlations was the production of correct 3rd person forms. This is undoubtedly due to the low numbers produced and one would expect correlations to become significant as the incidence of these forms increases.

As discussed in section 8.1.3.4 in relation to the production of lexical types, the gap between the learners with the six highest and six lowest CAT mean scores grew wider across the three rounds. Therefore it was important to ascertain whether this pattern can be seen in the development of verb morphology. In relation to the suppliance of verbs, development progressed in a linear fashion for both sets of learners and whilst the top six learners always out-performed the lower group, the difference remained consistent across the three rounds. For the overuse of 1st person chunks, the two groups demonstrated quite different developmental trajectories during the year. The production of the top six learners increased at a small consistent rate. On the other hand, the lower learners' overuse of 1st person forms was less in round 1, similar to the top six in round 2 but rose sharply in round 3 leading to a significant difference in round 3. It was the area of accurate production of 3rd person forms that illustrated the greatest difference between the two groups of learners. No learner produced 3rd person forms in round 1 and only one in round 2. However, in round 3 the mean number of 3rd person forms produced was 3.83 for the top six learners and only 0.167 for the lower group. It is clear from the results that there is a strong relationship between L1 literacy levels, the development of verb morphology and the outcomes in school-based assessments and that the gap between the least and most able learners appears to widen across the 12 months. Moreover, it is important to note that motivation has a positive but not significant effect at this point.

8.3.1.6 The relationship between the development of vocabulary and verb morphology

The final area of investigation is the relationship between lexical development and verb morphology. Unlike the case of grammatical gender where there were no clear links between lexical and grammatical development, the results in table 8.30 below show that by round 3 the learners with the most diverse vocabularies (as presented in section 8.2) produced significantly fewer unmodified chunks and significantly more correct 3rd person forms. These findings match those of David et al. (2009) who also observed that learners with a more diverse vocabulary made the most progress in terms of verb morphology and syntax. It is also important to remember that those learners with a less diverse vocabulary also tend to be those with a lower CAT mean score and lower motivation.

Table 8.30: the results of a series of Spearman correlations between lexical diversity and measures of verb morphology

	Bare NP	*1st person chunks*	*Correct 3rd person*
G Rd1	-.227	.187	*
G Rd2	.159	-.314	.147
G Rd3	-.350	-.610**	.499**

* significant at the 0.01 level

8.3.2. Discussion – the development of verb morphology

The most important point to note is that once again all learners made progress over the year despite the disruptive transition to secondary school. Whilst there was variability in progression with some learners progressing at a faster rate than others, all learners built upon the knowledge they had gained in primary school and none showed any evidence of having to restart again from scratch in terms of the development of verb morphology. The learners in the current study also performed at a comparable level to the beginner learners in the studies by Myles (2005) and Rule & Marsden (2006).The results of the current study confirm once again that a verbless stage in oral production is a characteristic of the early stages of L2 learning as documented by Lakshmanan (1998); Myles (2005) and Rule & Marsden (2006). It is clear that by the end of primary education the learners were at the very beginner stages of verb production and were just starting out on the developmental path. However by the end of Year 7 there was a noticeable change in the learners' interlanguage where many had moved out of the verbless phase and were now relying predominantly on the production of formulaic chunks. While some learners progressed rapidly over the year, producing correct 3rd person forms in round 3, the majority of the learners' progress was more gradual and variable. As observed in previous studies, some learners still produced verbless utterances in round 3.

The evidence suggests that for the majority of the learners their knowledge of finiteness and verb morphology remained limited at the end of Year 7. That is not to say, however, that the learners did not make any progress. Indeed, there was a marked increase in the production of non-finite forms in round 3 which may suggest that the learners were just moving into the Optional Infinitive stage of verb production, which has been well-documented in early L1 and L2 production, and is demonstrated by increased use of non-finite verbs and in variant contexts. Notably,

all bar one of the non-finite verbs produced was a bare VP without a preceding DP or subject clitic which may indicate a limitation in the learners' pronoun system or may be as a direct result of the teaching of these verbs in secondary school, or maybe a combination of both. All of the non-finite verbs produced were presented in secondary school French lessons and textbooks in their infinitive form as part of a dual-verb construction. Therefore, it is likely that the only exposure to these verbs was in their infinitive form which would undoubtedly influence their production. That said, some learners did demonstrate increasing knowledge of finiteness since they inflected both verbs in dual-verb constructions. The use of subject clitics provides few clues as to the learners' knowledge of finiteness since the majority of clitics produced were within 1st person formulaic chunks. However at the end of Year 7 there was a significant increase in the production of 3rd person pronouns with a tensed verb indicating that a small number of learners had made progress in the development of the French pronoun system and had an increased knowledge of finiteness.

The data from the final section of the role play shows that at the end of Year 6 the learners had a bank of rote-learned chunks they could call upon to fulfil their communicative needs and the learners relied heavily on these chunks especially in the last two rounds. Previous studies have documented developmental patterns in the use and segmentation of formulaic chunks and the learners in the current study progressed along the same path, although at varying rates of development. Once the learners recognised the need to refer to a third person they did not cease to use the chunks first learnt in primary school but employed a coalition of strategies to modify the chunks in some way to mark 3rd person reference. One strategy was to use double subjects, another to include the 3rd person pronoun without the verb and others employed the verbs without any pronoun. The accurate production of 3rd person forms was clearly linked to the development of the pronoun system as noted in previous studies. As observed by Mitchell, Myles and Hooper (1999) it is clear that the chunks learnt served as an impetus for development since the verbs learnt in clitic+verb chunks never appeared in non-finite form and for those learners who made significant progress, the correct production of 3rd person forms mainly encompassed verb chunks, with non-chunk verbs featuring to a much lesser extent. The data also shows that chunks involving familiar, regular verbs were first to be segmented, for example, '*aimer*', '*adorer*' and '*détester*', whereas the irregular verb '*avoir*' featured in 3rd person form very infrequently.

To summarise, across the transition period from the end of Year 6 to Year 7 progress was made in the segmentation of rote-learned verb chunks. However, progress was gradual demonstrating a slow-motion version of L2 verb acquisition. Only a small number of learners made significant progress in chunk segmentation. For verb production, as seen with lexical development, the outcomes for learners from both primary schools were comparable, with both sets of learners performing at similar levels. Therefore, individual primary school context could not explain the variance in individual performance. Once again it was differences in L1 literacy that best explained the variability in progression amongst the learners, particularly at the end of Year 7. Motivation was also an important factor but it was evident that the gap in performance in the French tasks between the more able and less able learners became wider as they moved through Year 7 and one would expect to see this gap widen over time. As discussed in section 7.1.4, the pedagogy in secondary school became much more literacy-focussed which appeared to favour those learners with a higher level of literacy ability. The more able learners also had a more diverse vocabulary and the ability to produce a greater variety of words may have assisted them to extrapolate grammatical rules.

Chapter 9
Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction and evaluation of the study

The current study provides original information regarding learner outcomes at the end of primary school in terms of linguistic progression and learner motivation for learning French. It is my ambition that evidence from the study should be used to inform debates regarding a range of issues related to the teaching of foreign languages in Key Stages 2 and 3. With this in mind, this final section brings together the key findings from each area of investigation and highlights important areas for discussion pertinent to policy makers, curriculum planners and language teachers alike. Firstly I will evaluate the study and discuss how the findings based upon a case study approach are applicable and useful to a range of language professionals.

I believe the main strength of the current study lies in its longitudinal and mixed method approach. This methodology made possible the examination of individual learner development over time across the transition period which adds great weight to the findings. Furthermore the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods allowed for a thorough analysis of both affective and linguistic development and provided rich and detailed data on individual learners. Nevertheless, were I able to repeat the study I would like to include a greater number of learners from a wider variety of schools which was not possible in the current study due to time and resource constraints. Also there are several additional tasks I would add; for instance a working memory test may enhance the findings related to individual differences. In terms of vocabulary development, I would include a receptive test of vocabulary alongside the productive tasks to provide a more complete picture of the learners' word knowledge. At the time of the current study all standardised receptive tests were based on paper/pencil tasks which were not suitable for very beginner learners. Lastly, to supplement the findings of the productive tasks I would also include simple grammaticality judgement tasks in relation to gender assignment and agreement, and verb morphology. Using a combination of tasks would help us to distinguish whether learners had difficulties with L2 production during online tasks or gaps in their underlying grammatical system.

Simons (1996) describes the case study approach to research as paradoxical:

> 'One of the advantages cited for case study research is its uniqueness, its capacity for understanding complexity in particular contexts. A corresponding disadvantage often cited is the difficulty of generalising from a single case. Such an observation assumes a polarity and stems from a particular view of research. Looked at differently, from within a holistic perspective and direct perception, there is no disjunction. What we have is a paradox, which if acknowledged and explored in depth, yields both unique and universal understanding' (Simons 1996:225).

I believe the approach and outcomes of this study encapsulate the paradox discussed above since taking a case study approach enabled me to probe deeply and analyse a diverse range of factors that may have impacted upon the outcomes observed, particularly taking into account the role of the individual and contextual factors. Furthermore, the analysis of the results is grounded in a wide-range of theoretical perspectives that have been developed from a range of studies of learners from a variety of backgrounds and contexts. For example, the motivational issues related to the classroom situation can be considered universal and certainly not just applicable to British secondary classrooms. On the other hand, the effect of the global status of English on learner motivation can be considered unique to Anglophone settings. Additionally, the results reported in the study across the various areas of analysis frequently mirror those of other studies undertaken in UK and other countries. Thus, I feel confident that many practitioners will be able to relate to the findings and will hopefully enable them to have a more in-depth understanding of their own situation and assist them in devising methods for overcoming particular issues that may arise across both transition and in language teaching in general. Policy makers should have confidence that the findings are highly relevant to future decision making processes as the empirical findings were both rigorously investigated and theoretically grounded.

9.2 Curriculum, pedagogic continuity and motivation across primary to secondary transition

It is clear that the schools involved in the current study were well aware of the issues facing schools in terms of transition in relation to MFL and had already made a start on tackling the issue of an increasingly heterogeneous intake in Year 7. The schools took part in cluster meetings several times per year where they agreed on key aspects including the language to be taught and discussed the topic areas to be covered and the types of resources to be used. In light of these meetings, School C made a creditable attempt to adjust the Year 7 scheme of work to take into account

the language previously encountered whilst trying to ensure progression. The results show that with planned curriculum continuity learners can and did continue to make good progress and build upon previous knowledge across the transition phase. There were positive reactions to the ‘Our School’ topic area covered in the first term of Year 7 as it provided learners with the opportunity to revise previously learnt vocabulary alongside learning new items. Furthermore, unlike other transition studies (Bolster et al. 2004; Evans & Fisher 2009) there was a notable lack of complaints regarding the repetition of content which led to many learners to consider that primary languages had given them a good start in their French learning and a springboard from which to progress in Year 7.

In contrast, the observed abrupt shift in language pedagogy had a marked negative effect on learner motivation in relation to the learning situation. Whilst the learners generally held positive attitudes about their primary French lessons, their attitudes to the learning situation became increasingly negative during the course of Year 7. Responses related to the marked increase in literacy-based activities which featured heavily in the learner responses: copy writing and sentence matching, for example, were considered boring, difficult and irrelevant to their future needs. It is well-documented that the teacher-learner relationship is extremely influential in the classroom (e.g. Williams et al. 2004; Bartram 2010) and has a direct effect on the enjoyment of the lessons and the responses of a small number of learners showed that the relationship with their teacher deteriorated during the course of Year 7 and as a result the learners stated that they did not enjoy their French lessons and perceived as more difficult due to their lack of engagement.

The results from this and previous studies have shown that language learning in primary school cultivates positive attitudes to language learning in general (e.g. Mihaljevic Djigunovic 1993, 1995; Cable at el. 2010). The learners in the current study cited interpersonal communication and travel as the main reasons for learning a language and the *Integrativeness* scale scored highly across the three rounds. Data from the focus group interviews also show that language teaching in the primary school was more in-line with the pupils’ perceptions of usefulness and purpose, whereas the more assessment and literacy focussed secondary approach appeared to be more distant from the learners’ own aims. The topics covered in secondary school were considered irrelevant and the learners complained about the lack of spoken interaction, and lack of opportunity to say what they want to say. In both primary and secondary French classes there was not much evidence of activities

related to intercultural understanding and little, if any opportunity for interaction with the target language community.

It is clear from this study that teaching a language without any intercultural activities and interaction with the TL community can and does lead to less favourable attitudes to language lessons and therefore schools need to find a way of incorporating greater target language contact. The learners themselves suggested using video links, virtual games, online communities and visits to other schools which would be especially valuable for those that do not otherwise have the opportunity to travel. This is even more imperative for native English speakers for whom having an 'international posture' involving a desire to travel and communicate may not be sufficiently motivating in the long term due to the status of English as a global language. For such learners, the target language community needs to be more salient within their language lessons. Over the course of study the instrumental reasons for learning languages became increasingly significant to the learners and job-related discourses increased at the expense of other factors. Notably, as the learners became more focused on utilitarian reasons the perception of the utility of French in particular decreased. This echoes the findings of other studies which have shown that as instrumentality becomes increasingly prominent in the education system, languages fall down the pecking order for many children (Clark & Trafford 1995; Williams et al. 2002, Chambers 2000, Bartram 2010). Even though, for the most part, the learners are still inherently interested in learning languages at the end of Year 7, the question is raised as to how effective are these favourable attitudes are in fostering and maintaining positive motivation for language learning over the long term when faced with a language pedagogy that appears to be incongruous with their overall objectives alongside limited choice in the language studied. However, it is important to also consider that even if languages were taught in an enjoyable manner, aligned with learners' expectations and priorities, learners may still reject the learning of languages due to the lack of perceived utility for future needs.

For any primary languages initiative to be successful, secondary schools not only have to build upon previous knowledge but also upon the generally positive attitudes that are cultivated. If the reasoning behind the introduction of primary languages is to encourage more children to adhere to the idea of global citizenship and to continue with their language studies then the current study shows that any discontinuity in approach following the transition to secondary school may in fact work contrary to these aspirations. The stated rationale for teaching languages and the objectives of

the learners have to be matched with a sustained consistent pedagogy. Forcing learners to learn something they do not see as inherently valuable and interesting may actually serve to impede them in future life when they may see the need to learn a language. The findings show that when considering the government's rationale of introducing primary languages in order to encourage greater uptake in Key Stage 4, early language learning may not prevent the decrease in motivation seen at Key Stage 3 if there is not a greater choice of languages available and more detailed and nuanced discourses around the benefits of language learning for both vocational and interpersonal reasons.

9.3 Linguistic progression across transition

From the detailed findings of the current study, and other research into primary languages (e.g. Cable et al. 2010 and the ELLiE project), we are now able to start building a realistic picture of the levels of attainment that can be reached within the current systems we have in place and a better understanding of instructed language learning in its very earliest stages. Despite receiving a rather limited diet of French input the learners did make a good start on their language learning not just in terms of vocabulary, but also in the development of grammatical structures, without having received much in the way of explicit grammar teaching. Another important finding of the study is that language outcomes were comparable across both primary contexts which should encourage non-specialist primary language teachers who may only have a little knowledge of the target language (which was the case for CT1). The study demonstrates that with enthusiasm, good resources, organisational support and a little confidence, reasonable outcomes can be achieved. The results also indicate that the learners proceeded through the same developmental stages as documented in previous studies of L2 French, at a rate comparable with other L2 instructed learners receiving similar amounts of contact time. A further significant finding of the study is that the learners continued to make progress across the transition period in all areas investigated despite the shift in language pedagogy and the fluctuations in learner motivation. The following sections discuss the individual areas in more detail and present recommendations for future language teaching.

9.3.1 Vocabulary development

The results in relation to vocabulary development demonstrate that despite the disruption during transition learners continued to make progress, producing more

new words and a greater overall number of words across the three rounds, although the rate did begin to slow by the end of Year 7. Notwithstanding the progress made in the learning of new words, there was evidence of language attrition which was reflected in the opinions expressed in the focus group interviews. More than half the learners attributed a lack of progress in learning French to forgetting vocabulary and expressed frustration at not being able to remember words during the tasks. It is thus evident that forgetting words affects the learners' perceptions of progress. Of course vocabulary learning is an incremental and very gradual process and it is not realistic to expect learners to remember all of the words that they encounter. Nevertheless the task results indicate that newly learnt words may not have been retained or remain available for use in the longer term.

The data from the lesson observations and focus group interviews suggest that the learning activities in both phases may not provide sufficient support to enable to the long term retention of newly learnt words. There were several examples of learners simply being asked to write the new words in their exercise books; some teachers did some choral repetition but only briefly. The teachers' main strategy used for the teaching and learning of new words in the secondary classes involved the use of spelling tests. A series of studies into vocabulary learning have shown that productive tasks are more effective than receptive tasks for long-term retention of new words and that complex repetition involving expansion and reformulation is most beneficial (Ellis & He 1999; Hulstijn & Laufer 2001; Laufer 2003). No vocabulary learning activities of this type were seen in the lessons observed. Furthermore, Hulstijn (2005) claims that frequent exposure and rehearsal is required for learners to retain words in the long-term. However, the learners in the current study reported that once they had finished a topic they moved on to the next without any revision of prior work. According to Nation (2001) this means that if there is too long a gap between repetitions then it may not be considered a repetition but as another first encounter (and see also Laufer 2005). Therefore, more progress could be made in the area of vocabulary acquisition if teachers focussed on planned activities that require the learners to repeatedly engage with the newly learnt words and if vocabulary teaching was viewed in the long-term, to do so across both Key Stages 2 and 3, meaning that items are targeted and recycled in a methodical way as suggested by Schmitt (2008).

Nation (2001) asserts that motivation and interest are key conditions for encouraging learners to notice new lexical items and learners need to be aroused and engaged in

the process: the results clearly show that the most motivated learners produced the greatest amount of different words. Unfortunately, the opinions expressed in the focus group interviews suggest that many of the learners found the topics covered in the secondary classes irrelevant and boring, for example learning prepositions in order to describe their bedroom was reported to be of little interest to the learners. On the other hand, the most frequently produced newly learned adjective was *ennuyeux* (boring) and *détester* (to hate) was the verb that made the most gains over the three rounds. This may provide evidence that learners may learn what is most relevant to them and curriculum planners should take note of these factors.

9.3.2 Grammatical Gender

The evidence from the current study shows that whereas the production of gender-marked determiner+noun combinations was systematic, and increasingly accurate, there was evidence that adjectival agreement emerged and developed at a much slower pace. It is clear that whilst the teaching approach in both the primary and secondary phases may facilitate the development of lexical knowledge, it may not be conducive to the development of the systematic grammatical knowledge required to develop creative rule-based language. For example, the observation data demonstrates that there was a lack of positive input underpinning the acquisition of adjectival agreement. On the whole the learners only displayed knowledge of colour adjectives; the majority of colour adjectives do not have phonologically variant feminine forms and therefore do not provide positive evidence of French gender agreement. In addition, a review of the textbook used in secondary school together with the lesson observations show that many of the adjectives introduced in Year 7 were only presented in their masculine form and any feminine forms appeared only in formulaic chunks. It seemed therefore that the input lacked sufficient feminine forms to support the noticing and processing of adjectival agreement. More specifically, the lack of input of feminine forms meant that even if learners did have the gender feature available to them they would not have had a sufficiently developed morpho-lexicon to map the surface morphological forms during language production.

In light of these findings I would like to put forward several recommendations a propos the teaching of grammatical gender. I have frequently encountered young learners (in the current study as well as in other research projects) who have an overly simplistic concept of grammatical gender which may well hinder their progress. There needs to be explicit presentation of the concept from the outset of language

teaching in relation to its history and function within the target language. To provide a sufficient amount of linguistic input I consider the production of nouns with the article essential from the outset of learning and that there should be a mixture of definite and indefinite forms used. Moreover, the presentation and production of a wider range of adjectives (not just colours) from the outset of language teaching is necessary to provide sufficient positive phonological and syntactic evidence for gender agreement. Without these conditions, knowledge of grammatical gender may remain at the exemplar level for some learners and will develop very slowly in other learners if they are left to rely upon implicit learning mechanisms and sparse positive input.

9.3.3 Verb Morphology

Again the findings demonstrate that all learners made progress over the year despite the disruption of transition. However, verb morphology was slow to develop for most of the learners and there was a great deal of variation between learners (which is discussed in greater detail in the following section). As seen in previous studies, the data shows that the beginner learners in the current study did use a dual system in which they drew upon a bank of rote-learned chunks to fulfil their communicative needs alongside creative constructions with verbs not originating from chunks. There is also evidence to suggest that the teaching of chunks is not at all detrimental to progress and that the production of formulaic chunks actually serves as an impetus for verb development. Once learners begin to segment chunks the elements are then available for use in creative constructions.

Research has shown that in instructed settings knowledge of verbs develops very gradually and that learners require sufficient time and input in order to make significant progress in this area (Myles et al. 1998, 1999; Myles 2005; Myles 2012). The data from the current study indicates that the learners were exposed to a relatively small number of verbs in primary school and largely in the first person form which would account for their somewhat limited production of verbs at the end of Year 6. However, once in secondary school, as seen in the lesson observations and review of the textbooks, the learners were exposed to a wider range of verbs in a variety of forms which in turn helped to speed up progression for some learners. I propose that from the outset of language teaching learners should be exposed to a variety of verb chunks (both regular and irregular) used with a range of subject pronouns (rather than focussing only on first person forms) since the results of this

and other studies (e.g. Myles 2005) suggest that the earlier learners get to grips with the pronoun system the earlier they will begin to segment the formulaic sequences. As a result the learners would have a wider range of rote-learned resources to aid communication in the target language but also a greater amount and range of linguistic input to enable the development of the underlying grammatical system for creative production.

9.4 Individual differences and second language development

The results also demonstrate the significant role that individual differences play in learner outcomes. L2 motivation, general academic ability and L1 literacy levels all had a significant influence on learner outcomes by the end of Year 7. Whilst there were no statistically significant correlations with the development of grammatical gender over the 12 months, which is attributed to the observed U-shaped development and great fluctuations in learner production, the results show that motivation and L1 literacy levels correlated with my measures of lexical development and verb morphology, mirroring the findings of the series of studies undertaken by Sparks, Ganschow et al. (1998; 2011). Importantly, L1 literacy levels became increasingly influential by the end of Year 7. The growing influence of reasoning skills and L1 literacy abilities interacts with the change in pedagogy observed between primary and secondary school. As reported in section 7.1.2, the primary language lessons were primarily oracy-based whereas the secondary classes were much faster-paced and emphasised a literacy-based approach which meant that the secondary approach undoubtedly favoured those learners with stronger reading and writing abilities.

The disadvantage for learners with lower L1 abilities was further compounded by the fact that no explicit teaching of French phoneme-grapheme correspondences was reported or observed either in primary or secondary school. All learners, including those who may have had difficulties with word recognition and decoding in the L1 did not receive any support in deciphering the sound/symbol links for French and therefore word learning focussed on the written form became a much more difficult and time-consuming task. One can argue that learners with lower L1 literacy levels were further disadvantaged due to the difficulties in accessing the main source of linguistic input (written French). As a result, some learners found French lessons increasingly difficult and they begun to fall behind in class which in turn led them to become more anxious and de-motivated as time went on. Furthermore, the learners

were streamed by attainment at the end of the first term of Year 7 with the lower attaining children placed in the lower sets. This reinforced their lack of self-efficacy and led to them receiving reduced L2 input as a result of the slower pace of the classes and the behavioural issues observed in the lower sets.

It is clear that there is a complex interplay between learning environment, L1 literacy levels and attitudes and motivation and these areas require more research especially within instructed settings. However, even the findings of the current study suggest possible courses of action to help to mediate some of the observed issues. Firstly, it is important to state that I do not wish for the results to be seen as deterministic, or to be used to justify the removal of less able learners from foreign language study. On the contrary, I am a proponent of 'languages for all' and therefore I feel it is extremely important that teachers and policy makers are made aware of the issues facing learners with lower L1 literacy levels so that interventions and teaching practices are devised and adopted to ensure all learners are capable of some level of success. The introduction of systematic phonics teaching at the primary level and its continuation into secondary school could be helpful for all learners, and this group in particular, for example. Furthermore, it may be the case that teachers and examiners need to make accommodations in order to meet the needs of learners who have difficulties with FL study by rebalancing the curriculum and pedagogy with a greater focus on listening and speaking and by introducing greater differentiation in language lessons. Ganschow et al. (1998) also offer further practical examples such as allowing more time for test taking and making allowances for spelling mistakes.

9.5 Final conclusions and recommendations

Whilst the cluster of schools in the current study made a praiseworthy attempt at mediating the issues of an increasingly mixed in-take and the learners continued to make progress in all areas of investigation, it is clear that ensuring continuity in content is not sufficient on its own and that the abrupt shift in language pedagogy had a negative effect on learner attitudes and also progress for some learners in combination with changing attitudes due to maturation and increasing concern with instrumentality. The teachers expressed the need for greater information exchange between the two phases and it is evident that all involved would benefit from having more mutual lesson observations to try and avoid such a marked change in language pedagogy. It is also clear that curriculum objectives need to be more realistic in terms of how far we can expect learners to progress in a limited-input environment

with a small amount of curriculum time dedicated to language teaching. No primary languages initiative will be a silver bullet for the issues encountered in secondary school without sufficient teaching time and the drip feed approach is not enough if the aim is for a level of competence by the end of primary school. Not only is more time required but also systematic language teaching from the outset. This will require well-trained and confident teachers who are aware of the theoretical background of language teaching and who have good quality resources at their disposal so that they are able to teach vocabulary and grammatical concepts in a principled, fun, engaging and age-appropriate way. This is crucial for ensuring progression in the early stages of language and would enable learners to see the progress they are making which in turn would help to maintain motivation for language learning over time.

The unfamiliarity with the primary curriculum and differences in the approaches across the primary and secondary phases are partly due to lack of cross-phase collaboration but these can be overcome with time, money and training. Nevertheless, until there is a wholesale shift away from an outcomes-based approach to education where language learning is undertaken under controlled conditions and is constrained by the focus on accurate production of the target language, the differing approaches in the two phases will persist. A final point to consider is the lack of time devoted to languages within the curriculum. Language learning is long-term undertaking which requires sufficient designated curriculum time. Macaro (2008) recommends five hours per week in Year 7 in order to for the pupils to make tangible progress. In reality, the allocation of time for language learning in schools is being cut to make way for other curriculum subjects. In the participating secondary school, for example, following a decision by the senior management team, French teaching for Years 7-9 was reduced from three hours per week to two. Despite the reduction in time, the same scheme of work has to be followed and the expectation of outcomes in terms of GCSE passes remained the same.

While the current study provides useful insights into the development of learner attitudes and linguistic progression over the transition period it has also highlighted other areas that present useful areas of focus for future research. For example, with a mixed in-take, how do those learners with no primary language experience, or learners who learnt a different primary language, progress in Year 7? It is also clear that further research incorporating the examination of individual differences is essential, as are longitudinal studies with a larger number of learners. Finally, in light

of the findings related to individual differences it would be very beneficial to investigate whether some languages are easier to learn than others or seem to maintain a higher level of motivation, e.g. a comparative study of L2 Spanish.

In conclusion I feel it is important to mention the fact that without the cooperation of a number of teachers in both the primary and secondary schools this research would not have been possible and for their assistance, and that of the participant learners, I am truly grateful. It is always a great privilege to be able to research real language classrooms and to be able to experience life ‘at the chalkface’. Finally, I would like to emphasise that any negative statements made about the teaching and learning should not be seen as a criticism of the teachers themselves but as a commentary on the constraints of the system within which they work. It is a very difficult job in challenging circumstances and I have nothing but respect for those that manage this undertaking on a daily basis.

Appendix A: School contact letter

Date:
Address:

Dear ……….,

I am a student at the University of Southampton and I am undertaking a PhD research project focussing on the issue of transition from year 6 to year 7 in primary languages (French in particular). My reason for writing to you is that I need to locate a cluster of schools (secondary + feeder primaries) who would be willing to participate in this research. I have attached a project outline which details the research to be undertaken. ….. of ….. School is very interested in the project, it is however necessary to find at least two feeder primary schools who are willing to take part. As described in the attached brief, the majority of the data collection will take place in the secondary school and therefore I would only need to visit the participating primary schools for one data collection visit which may span 1-2 days depending on class organisation and availability. The research instruments I plan to use include a lesson observation of the French classes followed by a brief interview with the French teacher. In addition I would like to follow six pupils from each class (whether you are a two or three form intake school) so that I can monitor their linguistic progression and attitudes and motivation to language learning across the 12 month period from year 6 to year 7. The research methods I would employ to do this involve fun, communication based French assessment activities to evaluate their linguistic competence and a questionnaire to gauge their attitudes as well as an observation of their classroom behaviour.

I hope I have provided enough information to give you a feel for the project and I would be most grateful if I could meet with you to discuss the details of the research in greater depth. My aim is to begin the primary data collection in June/July this year, once the SATs are out of the way. I am myself a resident and would very much welcome the opportunity to work with local schools.

Yours faithfully,

Louise Courtney

Appendix B: Ethics checklist and research protocol

Student Research Project Ethics Checklist Oct 2009 (v2)

This checklist should be completed by the student (with the advice of their thesis/ dissertation supervisor) for all research projects.

Student name: Louise Courtney

Programme of study: PhD

Project title: Moving from primary to secondary education: a study of the effects of transition on attainment and motivation for language learning.

(Please answer only Yes or No, alternatives are not acceptable and will be returned)

		YES	NO
1	Will your study involve human participants?	X	
2	Does the study involve children under 16?	X	
3	Does the study involve adults who are specially vulnerable and/or unable to give informed consent?(e.g. people with learning difficulties, adults with dementia)		X
4	Will the study require the cooperation of a third party/ an advocate for access to possible participants? (e.g. students at school, residents of nursing home)	X	
5	Does your research require collection and/ or storage of sensitive and/or personal data on any individual? (e.g. date of birth, criminal offences)		X
6	Could you research induce psychological stress or anxiety, or have negative consequences for participants, beyond the risks of everyday life?		X
7	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (e.g. covert observation of people)		X
8	Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics? (e.g. sexual activity, drug use)		X
9	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses or compensation of time) be offered to participants?		X
10	Are there any problems with participants' rights to remain anonymous, and/or ensuring that the information they provide is non-identifiable?		X
11	Will you have any difficulty communicating and assuring the right of participants to freely withdraw from the project at any time?		X
12	If you are working in a cross cultural setting, will you need to gain additional knowledge about the setting to work effectively? (e.g. gender roles, language use)		X
13	Are there potential risks to your own health and safety in conducting the study? (e.g. lone interviewing in other than public spaces)		X
14	Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS?		X
15	Does the research project involve working with human tissue, organs, bones etc that are less than 100 years old?		X

Please refer to the Research Project Ethics Guidance Notes for help in completing this checklist.

If you have answered NO to all of the above questions, discussed the form with your supervisor and had it signed and dated by both parties (see over), you may proceed with your research.

If you have answered YES to any of the questions, you will need to provide further information for consideration by the School Ethics Committee (see Guidance Notes for details).

Signature of student: ………………………………………………..
Date: ……………………………..

Signature of supervisor: ……………………………………………
Date: ……………………………..

(The completed form should be submitted to the Research & Finance Office, School of Humanities, Room 2129, Avenue Campus.)

Received and approved by Research & Finance Office/ School of Humanities Ethics Committee (and submitted to Research Governance office):

Signed: ………………………………………………………………….
Date: ……………………………..

Student name: Louise Courtney

Programme of study: PhD

Project title: Moving from primary to secondary education: a study of the effects of transition on attainment and motivation for language learning.

Background

As a result of the National Languages Strategy for England launched in December 2002[10] a large number of primary schools are now offering foreign language teaching. In turn this has obvious implications for FL teaching in secondary schools; for example, how to deal with an increasingly heterogeneous year 7 intake. A critical factor for the successful implementation of early years foreign language teaching lies in the effective transition of pupils from primary to secondary education. Historically, it is well documented that poor transition and liaison arrangements contributed to the failure of the 1970s French pilot Scheme, the last major primary languages initiative in England. International research also suggests that the lack of long-term benefits of primary language teaching can be somewhat attributed to the lack of continuity and teaching across educational phases. The project is a longitudinal study of a cohort of primary school children learning French, tracking them through in to their first year of secondary school and focussing specifically on the problematic transition period. Combining the analysis of detailed linguistic data and qualitative questionnaire and observation data, the study evaluates the children's evolving French language proficiency and examines the similarities and differences in pedagogic practice and the effect these changes have on linguistic performance and motivation for foreign language learning. The aim of the study is to provide insights into how cognitive, attitudinal and pedagogic factors interact and can influence language learning in UK classroom settings, in particular during the troublesome transition from primary to secondary education.

My research questions are:

- How does the children's target language proficiency evolve during the transition from year 6 to year 7 and is there evidence of linguistic progression/attrition?
- What are the similarities and differences between the primary and secondary foreign language curricula and pedagogic practices and how do they affect the children's language learning?
- What effect does the transition from year 6 to year 7 have on the children's motivation for foreign language study and their confidence in the classroom?

Method

For the assessment element of the study I will assess the pupils towards the end of Year 6 in June/July 2010. I plan to assess the children again in the early stages of year 7 (November/December 2010) and towards the end of year 7 (May/June 2011). Oral and written assessments will be undertaken to evaluate the children's morphosyntactic development in order to monitor the emergence of the creative use of the target language, focusing on elements such as; the use of formulaic chunks, the development of the verb phrase and negation, along with other indicators of linguistic progression such as MLU (mean length of utterance) and type token ratio. I will use the CHILDES program for transcription of oral interviews and the corresponding CLAN programs for the linguistic analyses. Furthermore, I would like to take a multi-dimensional approach to the analysis by rating the output of the oral and written assessments with reference to the oracy and literacy strands of the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages (2005).

---

[10] DfES 2002: *Languages For All: Languages for Life - A Strategy for England.* DfES Publications.

Qualitative data will also form a large part of the empirical evidence of the case study as this is required to answer my final two research questions. This qualitative data will include classroom observations, pupil questionnaires, teacher and language coordinator interviews.

Participants

The participants of the study will comprise of approximately 30 children aged 10/11, from two primary schools, along with their class teachers, the primary school language coordinators and the Head of MFL at the secondary school. The primary school class teachers have been asked to identify 6 possible children from each class to take part in the project. These children are then asked if they wish to take part in the project. I will provide an information sheet to the teachers who will share this information with the pupils. As the children are all under the age of 16 it is necessary to obtain parental consent. I have therefore created an information sheet for parents along with a consent form (see attached). It is clearly stated on the consent form and information sheet that the parents have the right to withdraw their consent at any time and the children are free to withdraw from the project at any time if they so wish.

Procedure

The pupils will be observed and video-recorded during one French lesson at each data collection point. They will also undertake a combination of both the written and oral assessments which are age appropriate and of a sensible duration. There are five separate tasks, an oral role-play, a photo description task, a negation task, a reading comprehension, a written task and an elicited imitation task. All assessment tasks will be audio-recorded and transcribed. The assessment tasks will be done in pairs rather than individually (apart from the reading comprehension and written tasks) to help alleviate some of the anxiety that may occur during the tasks. The pupils will also be asked to complete a brief questionnaire based on their attitudes to moving to secondary school and to language learning. The class teachers will be interviewed after each observed lesson. The languages coordinator in the primary schools will be interviewed once. The Head of MFL at the secondary school will be interviewed in December 2010, at the end of the first term after transition and in June/July 2011 at the end of Year 7. All interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed. See attached a copy of all the assessment tasks, the pupil questionnaire and the class teacher and language coordinator interview schedules.

Data protection and anonymity

The names of the schools, the teachers and the pupils will be anonymised, for example the primary schools will be known as PS1 and PS2 and teachers will CT1, CT2 etc. The children will each be assigned a participant number and this will be told to them, as well as the school number, so that they can write this on any assessment or questionnaire documentation rather than writing their own name. The transcriptions of the audio-recordings will also be anonymised by using the participant number and by removing any reference to people and places. The data will be stored on my PC and also on a portable hard drive for back up purposes. The data will exist in a password protected folder and the hard drive will be password protected and stored in a lockable drawer. Following the school visits the audio and video files will be copied from the devices on to the PC immediately on my return. Once successfully copied they will then be deleted from the devices.

Ethical issues

To meditate the risk of the assessments inducing anxiety in the children the tasks will be undertaken in pairs rather than individually. The tasks are brief, are based around fun activities and have been designed so that they are age-appropriate. One difficulty arises around video recording the French lessons. This is not an issue in one primary school as all the focal children that have signed consent forms will be the only participants in the class. In the second primary and the secondary school the language classes will contain non-project children. Both of the primary schools and the secondary school have blanket agreements stating that the children can be photographed and videorecorded for educational purposes. However, as a further measure I plan to place the video camera at the back of the class so that no faces can be seen on the video recording. The video recordings will not be seen by any person other than me.

Appendix C: Information sheet and consent forms

Project Information Sheet
Year 6/7 learners

Study Title: Moving from primary to secondary education: a study of the effects of transition on attainment and motivation for language learning.

Researchers: Louise Courtney

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy for your child to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?
I am a researcher from the University of Southampton and I am investigating the learning of French by English-speaking school pupils. I am especially interested in learners' ability to speak and write French and their attitudes to learning French and how these develop during the transition from year 6 to year 7. The learners will participate at three different stages; the end of Year 6, around three months into Year 7 and at the end of Year 7. I will be audiorecording the learners who take part in the research, as they complete a small number of speaking tasks along with a reading comprehension and simple writing task. I will transcribe the audiorecordings and anonymise them, before studying different aspects of learner development. **The audiorecordings will also be made available to other researchers??** I will also video record several of the learners' French lessons in order to analyse the style of language teaching and the pupils' engagement in the lessons. **The videos will not be made freely available??**

Why have I been chosen?
I am asking your child to participate as it is necessary for the project to include primary school learners that have had several years' exposure to French teaching at primary school and who are going to transfer to the same secondary school that teaches French in Year 7.

What will happen to my child if s/he takes part?
Everyone who takes part will complete five brief oral tasks while being audiorecorded. The learners will also complete reading comprehension and simple written task. In addition the children will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire regarding their attitudes to language learning and move to secondary school. Completion of all tasks should take less than one hour. If for some reason learners cannot complete all five tasks at one time, we will arrange to come back at a convenient time to finish the remaining tasks. Several of the learners' French lessons in primary and secondary school will be video recorded.

What will you do with the data?
I will transcribe, anonymise, **and make all project data freely available on our website for other researchers' use (not videos of the lessons??).** We will also

conduct various analyses on the data and present results at national and international conferences, as well as submit articles for publication.

Are there any benefits in my child taking part?
Learners will benefit by the additional practice in French. They may learn some new vocabulary and improve their oral fluency and knowledge of the language.

Are there any risks involved?
There are no major risks involved, besides those that occur in everyday life (e.g., fatigue, anxiety, etc.). The activities are similar to those which children undertake in their regular French class. If for some reason they get tired or need a break, they can take one at any time.

Will my child's participation be confidential?
Yes, participation will be completely confidential. Participants will be assigned a number and will be referred to by that number on all audiorecordings. All data will be anonymised so that any reference to people and places will be taken out. Individuals will not be identified in future presentations or publications. **What about videos??**

What happens if I/ my child change our mind?
You/your child can change your mind at any time without your legal rights being affected. During the research, your child can stop completing the activities at any time. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, we will discard your child's data.

What happens if something goes wrong?
In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Dr Martina Prude, University of Southampton Research Governance Manager, Tel: 023 8059 8848, email: M.A.Prude@soton.ac.uk
She is an independent party and is not involved in the research.

Where can I get more information?
If you would like more information, please contact Louise Courtney
Tel: 023 8059 9407, email: lmc1v07@soton.ac.uk

CONSENT FORM – Year 6/7

Research Project: Moving from primary to secondary education: a study of the effects of transition on attainment and motivation for language learning.

Researchers: Louise Courtney

Contact Telephone Number: 023 8059 9407

E-mail: lmc1v07@soton.ac.uk

Research Institution: University of Southampton

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study. ☐

I agree for my child to take part in this research project and agree for his/her data to be used for the purpose of this study. ☐

I understand my child's participation is voluntary and I may withdraw him/her at any time without our legal rights being affected. ☐

Name of participant (print name)……………………………………………………

Signature of parent…………………………………………………………………..

Date…………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix D: primary teacher interview schedule

1. **Background and Experience - Teacher's languages background, training etc.**

2. **What are your feelings about teaching primary?**

3. **How long has the school been teaching languages? – LC**
    a. Why was primary languages introduced?
    b. How many years French teaching have the current year 6 received?

4. **Can you explain the staffing model that you use? – LC**

5. **How is the curriculum for primary languages organised in your class/es? – Poss LC question**
    a. Do you use a scheme of work?
    b. How do you prepare and plan?
    c. How do primary languages link with the rest of the curriculum?
    d. Is primary languages linked to a cross-curricular topic or theme?
    e. Is another subject taught/partly taught in French?

6. **What do you find is the best way of teaching a language? Why?**

7. **Have we just seen a typical lesson with year 6?**
    a. Was the amount of French spoken typical?
    b. How do you use French in your teaching?

8. **What were you aiming to achieve in this lesson?**
    a. Framework areas covered?
    b. How much was review/reinforcement?
    c. How much was new learning/new material?

9. **Can you tell me about the children's response to the lesson? Was this typical?**
    a. Is the children's response similar in other subjects? Why/why not?
    b. Do you think that children approach learning differently in French compared to other subjects? If so, how?
    c. Has this changed over the last year?
    d. Do you teach similarly/differently in other subjects? In what ways?
    e. Do the children seem to be having fun?
    f. What is it about language learning that makes it fun?

10. **Is the learning experience for year 6 different from other year groups? Do you experience any particular difficulties in teaching languages to Year 6?**

11. **How do you monitor and report on progress?**
    a. How do you assess and record children's progress in French?

b. How do you inform parents?
c. How do you transfer records of achievement between classes?

12. How you plan for/ensure progression to secondary school? – LC

a. Can you describe the nature of the links you have with the secondary school?
b. Do you have any concerns around the progression to secondary school?
c. What do you feel would help?
d. Do you pass any information to the secondary schools?

13. What has been the impact this year in terms of children's learning in French? Can you give specific examples of children's learning?

a. Knowledge
b. Skills
c. Attitudes
d. Confidence

14. Have you seen any impact so far on children's social and personal development? Can you give me any specific examples? – Poss LC question

Thank him/her for his/her time and co-operation and remind him/her that all the information they have given is confidential.

Appendix E: Secondary teacher interview schedule

Class Teacher/Language Coordinator Schedule

1. **Background and Experience - Teacher's languages background, training etc.**

2. **What are your opinions of the primary languages initiative?**

    a. Good idea?
    b. What do you consider the advantages and disadvantages of PLS?
    c. Children's attitude to language learning?
    d. Any consultation with the secondary sector?

3. **What impact has PLS had on your intake over recent years and how has the school reacted to this?**
    e. Scheme of work
    f. Setting of classes
    g. What are the main issues facing the school and staff as a result of PLs?
    h. Have you modified the resources used and pedagogy you employ as a result of changing intake?

4. **How much information is received from the primary schools? How much do you know about the children when they arrive?**

    i. How is this being tackled?

5. **Where you involved in the transition process? How?**

6. **If you had to choose between compulsory at KS2 or at KS4 what would you choose?**

Thank him/her for his/her time and co-operation and remind him/her that all the information they have given is confidential.

Appendix F: Lesson observation schedule

Languages Observation Schedule

School

Teacher ID

Date and time

Researcher

Year Group(s) in class

Number of girls

Number of boys

Number of EAL pupils

Other Adults Present (TAs etc):

Lesson plan   Yes/No

Description of lesson observed

Qualitative description of classroom tasks and interaction

Teacher explanation of classroom tasks, methods and approaches

Teaching methods

What the pupils were doing in the lesson

Opportunities for pupils to interact directly with the teacher

Opportunities for pupils to interact with each other

Pupil participation in the lesson

Pupils motivation and engagement

Nature of teacher responses or feedback on pupil contributions in the course of the lesson

Teacher use of target language

Use of the target language by pupils

Lesson Structure

Teacher reference to learning objectives in the lesson

Pace of lesson - sequencing of content

Progression within the lesson

Evidence of learning

Progress monitoring and assessment within the lesson

Additional Information

Appendix G: Role Play Cards A and B

1. Qui es-tu?

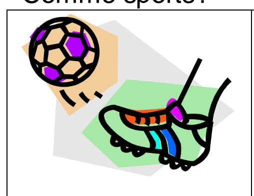
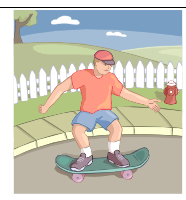
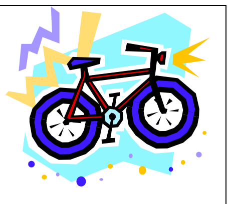
Nom: Robert / Philippe / Omar / Jonathan — Sophie / Rakshah / Betty / Joanne	Age: 10 ans / 11 ans / 15 ans	A toi de décider ?

2. Ta famille ?

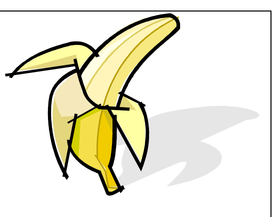
Famille: un frère, 7 ans une sœur, 13 ans deux sœurs, 5 et 8 ans maman, 37 ans papa, 40 ans	Animaux: un lapin deux chats un chien trois poissons	A toi de décider ?

3. Qu'est-ce que tu aimes / tu n'aimes pas ………….

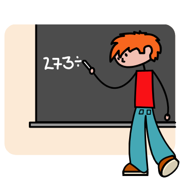
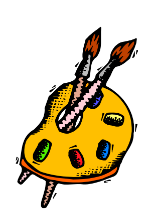
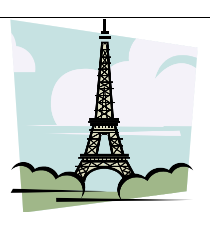
Comme sports?

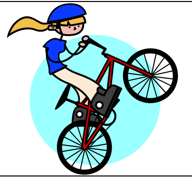
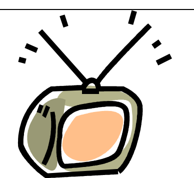
A manger ?

A l'école ?

Comme loisirs ?

1. Qui es-tu?

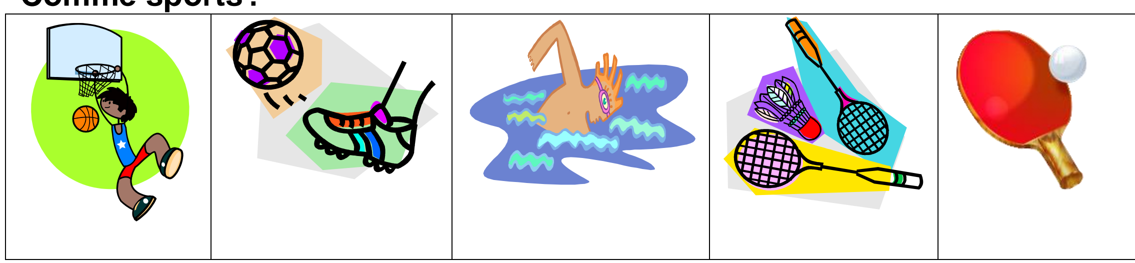
Nom: Richard / Pierre / Simon / Abdul — Nathalie / Aisha / Edith / Karine	Age: 10 ans / 11 ans / 13 ans	A toi de décider ?

2. Ta famille ?

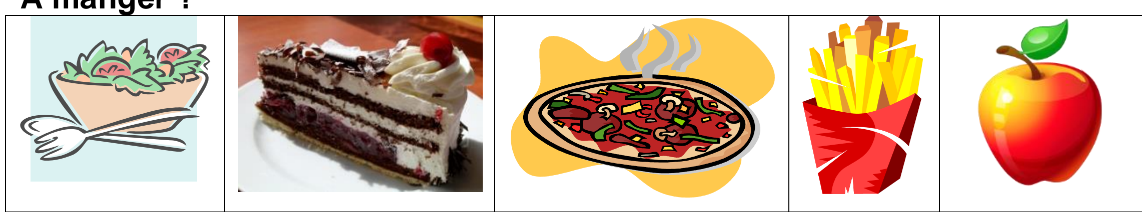
Famille: un frère, 12 ans / une sœur, 10 ans / deux sœurs, 4 et 7 ans / maman, 38 ans / papa, 41 ans	Animaux: une tortue / un chat / deux chiens / un hamster	A toi de décider ?

3. Qu'est-ce que tu aimes / tu n'aimes pas …………

Comme sports?

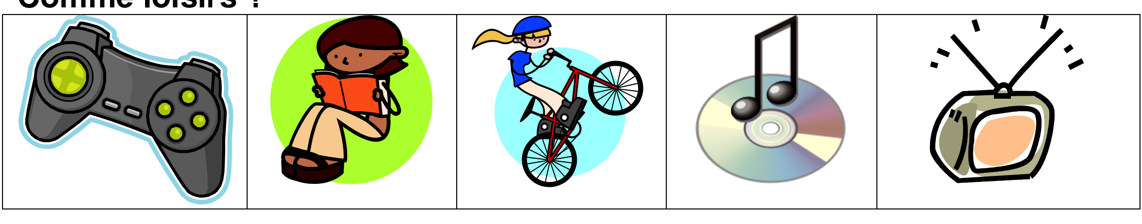


A manger ?



A l'école ?

Comme loisirs ?



Appendix H : Images for photo description task

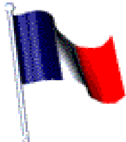
Appendix I: Writing Task

B. Writing Task

Now write an e-mail reply to Pierre in French. Write at least three sentences. You can include information such as where you live, the weather, your school and the subjects and your hobbies and anything else you would like to write to Pierre! I have started the e-mail for you.

French Mail
To: Pierre@france.fr
Cher Pierre,

Appendix J: motivation questionnaire



Year 6 Questionnaire

Pupil number ____________
I am a ______________ (boy/girl)
My school is ______________________________
My class is _______________________________

Bonjour! This questionnaire is about how **you** feel about learning French and also your feelings about moving to your new school in September. I have written some opinions about learning French and moving school. I would like you to tell me how you feel about each opinion by ticking one of the four boxes; **'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree'** and **'strongly agree'.**

Please remember there are no right or wrong answers. Don't spend too much time thinking about the answer. **Just be sure to tick what you really feel**. I am the only person who will see the answers you have chosen.

Here is one for you to practice:

Summer holidays from school are too long.

☹☹ Strongly disagree	☹ Disagree	☺ Agree	☺☺ Strongly agree

Ok now for the real ones….

1. I would like to visit France.

☹☹ Strongly disagree	☹ Disagree	☺ Agree	☺☺ Strongly agree

2. French is useful for getting a good job.

☹☹ Strongly disagree	☹ Disagree	☺ Agree	☺☺ Strongly agree

3. I am getting better at speaking French.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4. My parents are usually interested in my French schoolwork.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5. Learning French is boring.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

6. Learning French will help me learn other languages.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

7. The work will be harder at my new school.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

8. Learning languages is a waste of time.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

9. The French teacher makes the lessons fun.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

10. I feel sure of myself when speaking aloud during French lessons.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

11. I am looking forward to learning more about France and French people.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

12. I enjoy learning French.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

13. It is important to learn French as it will help me speak with people who speak French.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

14. By the time I finish school I will be able to speak French quite well.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

15. I am looking forward to going to my new school.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

16. I would like to learn another language as well as French.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

17. I enjoy reading and writing in French.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

18. I am looking forward to learning more French.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

19. It embarrasses me to put my hand up in French lessons.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

20. My parents often tell me how important languages will be for me when I leave school.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

Three final questions that you can answer in your own words:

The things I like about learning French are …………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

The things I don't like about learning French are ……………………………………………...............
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

If I could change anything about learning French it would be ……………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

MERCI BEAUCOUP!

Appendix K: focus group interview schedule

1. **Do you enjoy the way you learn French?**
   a. Why?
   b. Why not? How would children like this to be different?

2. **What helps you to learn French?**

3. **Over time has learning French become easier or harder?**
   a. What ways?
   b. How do they feel about that?
   c. Has the way they learn it changed?

4. **Is learning French different from learning other subjects?**
   a. How?

5. **Do you think you are getting better at French? How do you know?**

6. **How do you feel about speaking aloud in French during the lessons?**

7. **Do you feel it is useful to learn another language?**
   a. Why?
   b. Why not?
   c. Would you like to learn another language other than French?

8. **How do you feel about learning French next year?**
   a. Why?
   b. Why not?
   c. Ask about thoughts on moving to secondary school in general.

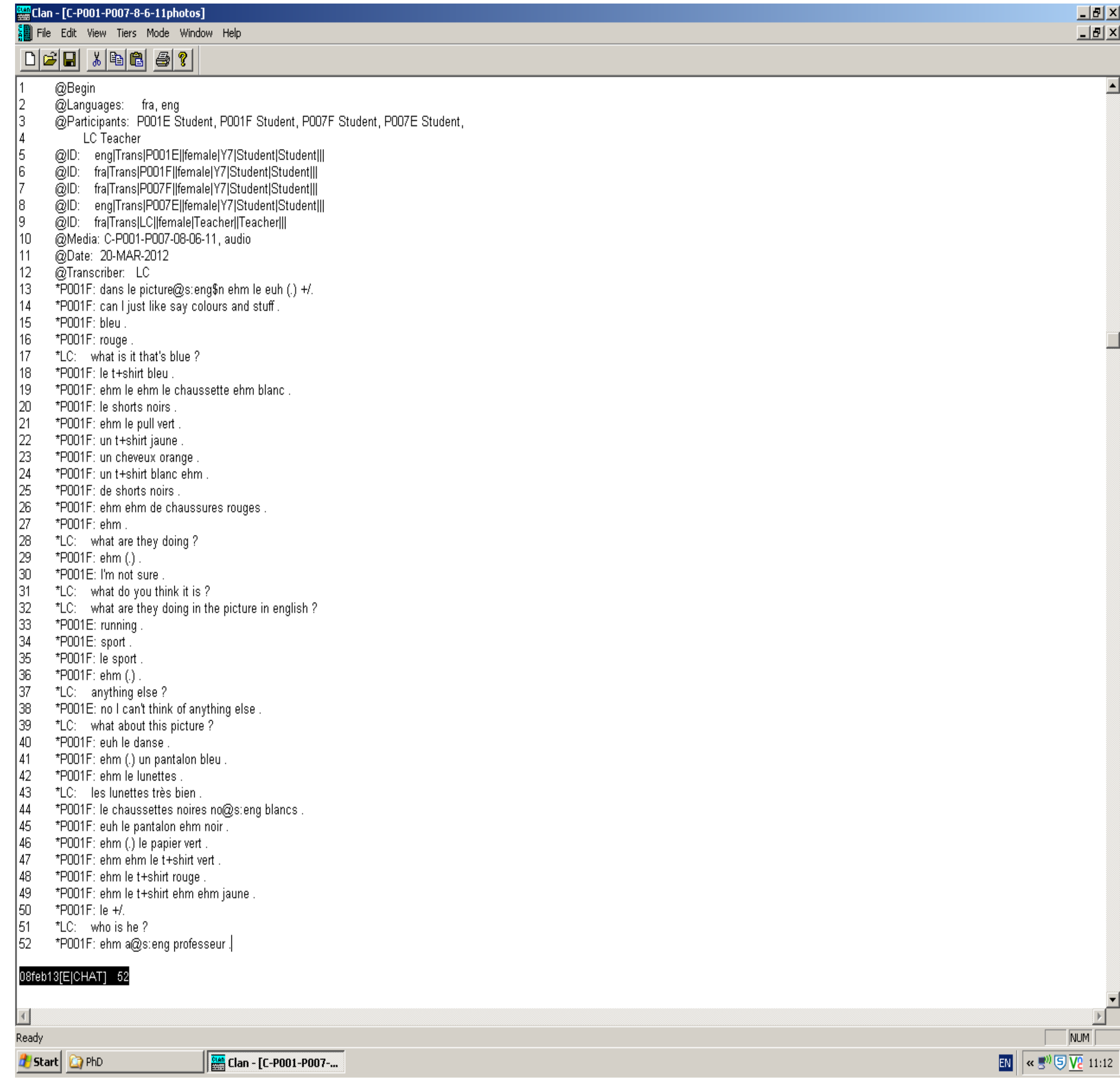
9. **Do you have any other comments?**

Appendix L – School B Scheme of work

Year 3 – 1st Year French	Unit 1 – Moi Greetings/Introduce Yourself Unit 2 – Games and songs Fermier dans son pre, sur le pont Le noel – traditions and christmas words for the nativity story – mon beau sapin carol	1st half term – bonhomme de neige – introducing items of clothing, introduce nos 11-30 2nd half term – ma famille, les couleurs, Easter – les animaux, j'ai	Unit 3 – On fait la fete saying what you can do well – les sports La chasse a l'ours Les mois de l'année, les jours de la semaine Unit 4 – Portraits parts of the body (see Year 4)
Year 4 – 2nd Year French	1st half term – Ou habites-tu? Toutes directions Early start – qu'est-ce que tu aimes? Bon appetit 2nd half term – Unit 4 portraits – describing a person using il est, elle est (linked to English – describe an alien). Les nombres – 13-31 Le noel – traditions of Christmas	Bonhomme de neige – revision of clothing incl colour adjectives, grand/petit Unit 5 – les 4 amis using verbs Unit 6 – ca pousse ! Responding to a story, buying things, ordering in a restaurant	Unit 7 – On y va – travel weather, je vais en train, Il fait beau Unit 8 – l'argent de poche – expressing opinions about likes/dislikes. Nos multiples to 100. Jacques et les haricots magiques story Au café (west susses SoW) Je voudrais – ordering items in a café

Year 5 – 3rd Year French	1st half term Unit 10 Vive le sport – Healthy eating poster linked to Science 2nd Half Unit 9 - term raconte-moi une histoire – par une sombre nuit de tempete (pastel picture of Halloween) Noel – les cadeaux pour mon père	Unit 11 – carnivaux des animaux – Peter and the wolf including les matières and quelle heure est-il ? Unit 12 – quel temps fait-il ?	1st half term – la chasse a l'ours – linked to English Unit 13 – bon appetit
Year 6 – 4th Year of French	Commence year with lesson on why learn a language and language learning strategies 1st half term – unit 9 – raconte moi une histoire – petit chaperon rouge. Unit 10 carnival des animaux 2nd half term – quel temps fait-il – plan and deliver own weather forecast	1st half term – Unit 13 – bon appetit – enjoy your meal – items of food, likes/dislikes, present and past tense je mange/j'ai mangé 2nd half term – quelle heure est-il? Qu'est ce que tu fais a l'école days of the week	1st half term – early start unit en route pour l'ecole, en ville toutes directions 2nd half term – la chanson Eurovision

Appendix M: Example transcriptions for oral task



Clan - [C-P001-P007-8-6-11photos]
File Edit View Tiers Mode Window Help

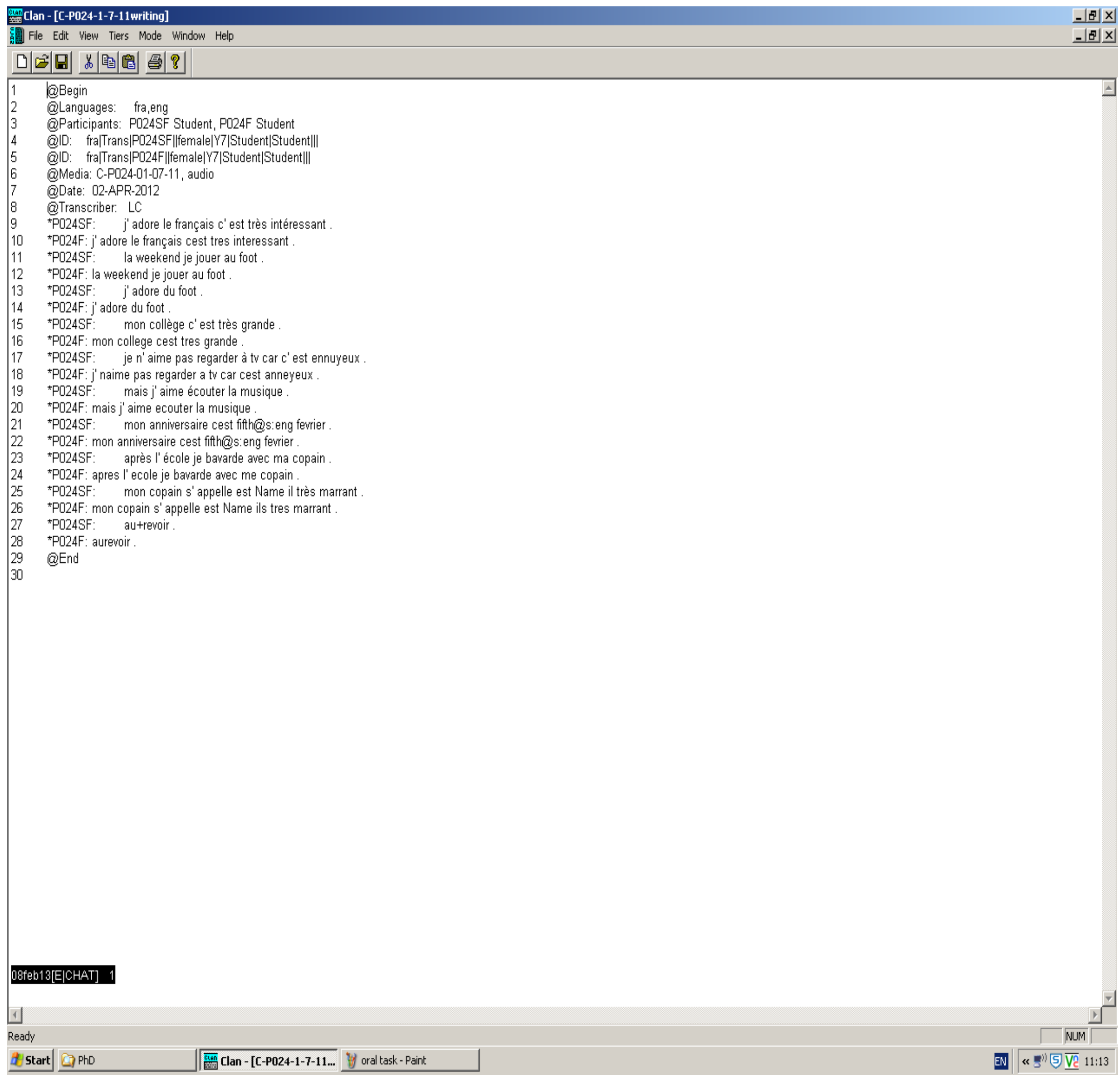
```
1   @Begin
2   @Languages:   fra, eng
3   @Participants:  P001E Student, P001F Student, P007F Student, P007E Student,
4       LC Teacher
5   @ID:   eng|Trans|P001E||female|Y7|Student|Student|||
6   @ID:   fra|Trans|P001F||female|Y7|Student|Student|||
7   @ID:   fra|Trans|P007F||female|Y7|Student|Student|||
8   @ID:   eng|Trans|P007E||female|Y7|Student|Student|||
9   @ID:   fra|Trans|LC||female|Teacher||Teacher|||
10  @Media: C-P001-P007-08-06-11, audio
11  @Date:  20-MAR-2012
12  @Transcriber:  LC
13  *P001F: dans le picture@s:eng$n ehm le euh (.) +/.
14  *P001F: can I just like say colours and stuff .
15  *P001F: bleu .
16  *P001F: rouge .
17  *LC:   what is it that's blue ?
18  *P001F: le t+shirt bleu .
19  *P001F: ehm le ehm le chaussette ehm blanc .
20  *P001F: le shorts noirs .
21  *P001F: ehm le pull vert .
22  *P001F: un t+shirt jaune .
23  *P001F: un cheveux orange .
24  *P001F: un t+shirt blanc ehm .
25  *P001F: de shorts noirs .
26  *P001F: ehm ehm de chaussures rouges .
27  *P001F: ehm .
28  *LC:   what are they doing ?
29  *P001F: ehm (.) .
30  *P001E: I'm not sure .
31  *LC:   what do you think it is ?
32  *LC:   what are they doing in the picture in english ?
33  *P001E: running .
34  *P001E: sport .
35  *P001F: le sport .
36  *P001F: ehm (.) .
37  *LC:   anything else ?
38  *P001E: no I can't think of anything else .
39  *LC:   what about this picture ?
40  *P001F: euh le danse .
41  *P001F: ehm (.) un pantalon bleu .
42  *P001F: ehm le lunettes .
43  *LC:   les lunettes très bien .
44  *P001F: le chaussettes noires no@s:eng blancs .
45  *P001F: euh le pantalon ehm noir .
46  *P001F: ehm (.) le papier vert .
47  *P001F: ehm ehm le t+shirt vert .
48  *P001F: ehm le t+shirt rouge .
49  *P001F: ehm le t+shirt ehm ehm jaune .
50  *P001F: le +/.
51  *LC:   who is he ?
52  *P001F: ehm a@s:eng professeur .
```

08feb13[E|CHAT] 52

Ready NUM

Start PhD Clan - [C-P001-P007-... EN 11:12

Appendix N : example transcription for written task



```
1	@Begin
2	@Languages:	fra,eng
3	@Participants:	P024SF Student, P024F Student
4	@ID:	fra|Trans|P024SF||female|Y7|Student|Student|||
5	@ID:	fra|Trans|P024F||female|Y7|Student|Student|||
6	@Media:	C-P024-01-07-11, audio
7	@Date:	02-APR-2012
8	@Transcriber:	LC
9	*P024SF:	j' adore le français c' est très intéressant .
10	*P024F:	j' adore le français cest tres interessant .
11	*P024SF:	la weekend je jouer au foot .
12	*P024F:	la weekend je jouer au foot .
13	*P024SF:	j' adore du foot .
14	*P024F:	j' adore du foot .
15	*P024SF:	mon collège c' est très grande .
16	*P024F:	mon college cest tres grande .
17	*P024SF:	je n' aime pas regarder à tv car c' est ennuyeux .
18	*P024F:	j' naime pas regarder a tv car cest anneyeux .
19	*P024SF:	mais j' aime écouter la musique .
20	*P024F:	mais j' aime ecouter la musique .
21	*P024SF:	mon anniversaire cest fifth@s:eng fevrier .
22	*P024F:	mon anniversaire cest fifth@s:eng fevrier .
23	*P024SF:	après l' école je bavarde avec ma copain .
24	*P024F:	apres l' ecole je bavarde avec me copain .
25	*P024SF:	mon copain s' appelle est Name il très marrant .
26	*P024F:	mon copain s' appelle est Name ils tres marrant .
27	*P024SF:	au+revoir .
28	*P024F:	aurevoir .
29	@End
30
```

Appendix O: list of nouns produced rounds 1-3

Noun	***Rd1 (tokens)***	***Rd2 (tokens)***	***Rd3 (tokens)***	***Sp***	***Wr***
Adulte	5	0	0	Y	N
Âge	31	39	32	Y	Y
Amie (friend)	0	1	0	N	Y
An (year)	104	107	114	Y	Y
Anglais (English)	6	19	17	Y	Y
Animal	35	39	33	Y	Y
Anniversaire	6	3	6	Y	Y
Araignée (spider)	0	0	2	Y	N
Art	4	0	3	Y	Y
Art dramatique (Drama)	0	2	1	Y	Y
Banana	4	5	8	Y	N
Banjo	0	0	2	Y	N
Basket (basketball)	1	22	20	Y	Y
Baskets (trainers)	0	7	0	Y	N
Batterie (drums)	0	0	8	Y	Y
Blouson (Jacket)	0	1	0	Y	N
Bonbons	5	3	4	Y	Y
Bouche (mouth)	7	5	11	Y	N
Bras (arm)	0	2	0	Y	N
Bureau(office)	0	0	2	Y	N
Campagne (Countryside)	0	0	1	N	Y
Cantine (Canteen)	0	1	0	N	Y
Carotte	1	0	0	N	Y
Chaise (chair)	0	0	18	Y	N
Chanter (Sing)	0	0	8	Y	N
Chat (cat)	22	31	24	Y	Y
Château	1	0	0	Y	N
Chaton (kitten)	2	0	0	Y	N
Chausette (sock)	0	25	15	Y	N
Chaussure (shoe)	4	19	17	Y	N
Chemise (shirt)	1	0	0	Y	N
Cheveux (hair)	0	0	47	Y	N
Chien (dog)	36	36	43	Y	Y
Chocolat	6	8	4	Y	Y
Clarinette	0	1	0	N	Y
Classe	0	3	4	Y	Y
Collège (school)	0	27	51	Y	Y
Copain (friend)	0	0	2	N	Y
Couleur	1	0	0	N	Y
Cous (lesson)	0	1	0	N	Y
Crayon (pencil)	1	4	5	Y	N
Danse	18	31	25	Y	Y
Date	2	1	1	Y	N
Dent (tooth)	1	2	1	Y	N
Dessin (drawing)	2	30	5	Y	Y

Eau (water)	2	1	4	Y	N
Eau minérale	6	9	7	Y	N
Ecole (school)	44	60	48	Y	Y
Elève (pupil)	0	0	1	N	Y
Enfant (child)	0	0	10	Y	N
Ensemble	0	0	2	Y	N
Entrée (entrance)	0	0	1	Y	N
EPS (PE)	1	3	4	Y	Y
Equitation (horseriding)	2	0	0	Y	N
Famille	32	32	2	Y	Y
Femme (woman)	4	4	0	Y	N
Fille (girl)	4	4	0	Y	N
Fleur (flower)	0	0	1	Y	N
Flute	1	1	0	N	Y
Football	50	45	54	Y	Y
Français (french)	10	21	25	Y	Y
Frère (brother)	81	65	76	Y	Y
Fromage (cheese)	0	6	3	Y	Y
Garçon (boy)	11	8	2	Y	N
Gâteau	20	9	11	Y	Y
Géographie	2	13	14	Y	Y
Gerbille	0	0	1	Y	N
Glâce (ice cream)	17	20	9	Y	Y
Groupe	0	0	1	N	Y
Guitare	17	13	22	Y	Y
Gym	0	2	0	Y	N
Hamburger	5	0	0	Y	Y
Hamster	12	2	10	Y	N
Haricots verts (green beans)	0	0	1	N	Y
Heure (hour/time)	1	2	0	Y	Y
Histoire	0	9	8	Y	Y
Informatique (ICT)	0	2	4	Y	Y
Instrument	0	0	3	Y	N
Jambe (leg)	1	0	0	Y	N
Judo	9	5	5	Y	Y
Jupe (skirt)	2	5	2	Y	N
Lait (milk)	2	0	0	Y	N
Langue de boeuf (ox tongue)	3	0	0	Y	Y
Lapin (rabbit)	18	0	10	Y	Y
Lecture (reading)	0	0	1	Y	N
Limonade	1	0	0	N	Y
Livre (book)	0	3	6	Y	N
Lunette (glasses)	0	1	2	Y	N
Madame	1	3	3	Y	Y
Mademoiselle	3	0	0	Y	N
Maison (house)	3	1	7	Y	Y

Maman (mum)	9	16	8	Y	Y
Mathématiques	36	33	33	Y	Y
Matière (subject)	0	7	6	Y	Y
Mère (mother)	1	0	0	Y	N
Monsieur	3	0	0	Y	Y
Musique	50	76	73	Y	Y
Natation (swimming)	14	5	13	Y	Y
Nez (nose)	0	1	2	Y	N
Nom (name)	2	3	5	Y	Y
Ordinateur (computer)	0	0	5	Y	N
Pantalon (trousers)	14	61	39	Y	N
Papa (dad)	5	14	11	Y	Y
Papier (paper)	0	6	5	Y	N
Personne	4	0	0	Y	N
Photo	0	1	0	Y	N
Piano	2	1	4	Y	Y
Pied (foot)	2	0	0	Y	N
Pingpong (table tennis)	1	1	5	Y	Y
Pizza	34	40	35	Y	Y
Poisson (fish)	24	21	11	Y	Y
Polo (polo shirt)	0	64	34	Y	N
Pomme (apple)	4	21	7	Y	Y
Pomme de terre (potato)	0	2	2	Y	Y
Pommes frites (chips)	18	5	9	Y	Y
Poster	0	0	12	Y	N
Poulet (chicken)	0	0	2	Y	N
Professeur (teacher)	1	49	77	Y	Y
Pullover(jumper)	0	6	5	Y	N
Religion	0	1	0	Y	N
Roller (roller skating)	2	0	0	Y	N
Salade	3	3	16	Y	Y
Science	2	14	32	Y	Y
Shopping	0	0	1	Y	N
Short (shorts)	0	19	31	Y	N
Soeur (sister)	60	55	67	Y	Y
Sport	56	57	59	Y	Y
Stylo (pen)	0	1	1	Y	N
Sweat (sweatshirt)	0	20	15	Y	N
Table	5	8	11	Y	N
Taille (size)	0	0	1	Y	N
Tambour	0	1	1	Y	N
Téchnologie	22	9	11	Y	Y
Télévision	16	9	22	Y	Y
Tennis	17	50	33	Y	Y
Tête (head)	8	16	14	Y	N
Théâtre	0	4	14	Y	Y
Tigre (tiger)	1	1	1	Y	N

Tortue (tortoise)	2	0	0	Y	N
Travail (work)	0	0	1	Y	N
Trompette (trumpet)	1	0	1	N	Y
T-shirt	26	103	102	Y	N
Uniforme	0	0	1	Y	N
Vanille	2	0	0	Y	N
Vélo (bike)	21	8	15	Y	Y
Vendredi (Friday)	1	0	0	N	Y
Veste (jacket)	1	8	5	Y	N
Vêtement (clothing)	1	3	0	Y	N
Violon (Violin)	1	1	0	Y	Y
Weekend	1	2	2	Y	Y
Yaourt (yoghurt)	0	0	1	Y	N
Yeux (eyes)	8	5	27	Y	Y

Appendix P: List of verbs produced rounds 1-3

Verb	*Rd1 (tokens)*	*Rd2 (tokens)*	*Rd3 (tokens)*	*Sp*	*Wr*	*Example*
Adorer (love)	74	95	224	Y	Y	J'adore la glâce (P13) I love icecream
Aimer (like)	156	192	176	Y	Y	J'aime le football (P17) I like football
Aller (go)	6	5	3	Y	Y	Ça va? (P13) How are you?
Appeler (be called)	120	132	157	Y	Y	Comment t'appelles-tu (all) What's your name?
Avoir (have)	66	159	247	Y	Y	J'ai une sœur (P23) I have a sister
Bavarder (chat)	0	0	1	N	Y	Je bavarde avec mon copain (P24) I chat with my friend
Boire (drink)	2	0	3	Y	Y	Je bois de lucozade (P23) I drink lucozade
Commencer (start)	0	1	1	N	Y	L'école commence at neuf* (P19)[11] School starts at nine
Danser (dance)	0	0	4	Y	N	Je danse (P6) I dance
Détester (hate)	13	39	152	Y	Y	Je déteste l'histoire (P22) I hate history
Ècouter (listen)	1	6	9	Y	Y	J'aime écouter la musique (P7) I like listening to music
Etre (be)	8	23	53	Y	Y	Il est quinze ans*[12] (P23) He is 15 years old
Faire (do)	12	5	7	Y	Y	Je fais un sport*[13] (P17) I do sport
Habiter (live)	37	40	38	Y	Y	J'habite à Town (all) I live in Town
Jouer (play)	14	8	21	Y	Y	Je joue la piano (P22) I play the piano
Lever (get up)	0	0	1	Y	N	Levez-vous (p18) Stand up
Manger (eat)	9	23	12	Y	Y	Tu aimes la manger *[14] (P2) What do you like to eat ?
Préférer (prefer)	6	6	2	Y	Y	Elle préfère français*[15] (P7) She prefers French
Regarder (watch)	1	4	26	Y	Y	J'aime regarder la télé (P 18) I like to watch tv
Répéter (repeat)	0	2	3	Y	N	Répétez (P16) Repeat
Vouloir (want)	0	0	1	Y	N	Je voudrais (P8) I would like

[11] Correct form is L'école commence à neuf heures
[12] Correct form is il a quinze ans
[13] Correct form je fais du sport
[14] Correct form qu'est-ce que tu aimes à manger?
[15] Correct form elle préfère le français

Appendix Q: list of adjectives produced rounds 1-3

Non-colour adjectives produced Rd1-3

Adjective	*Rd 1 (tokens)*	*Rd 2 (tokens)*	*Rd 3 (tokens)*	*Sp*	*Wr*
Beau	2	1	2	Y	Y
Blond	1	0	12	Y	N
Chaud	4	1	1	Y	Y
Cool	0	3	0	Y	N
Court	0	0	5	Y	N
Difficile	0	1	0	Y	N
Ennuyeux	0	0	28	Y	Y
Facile	1	1	0	Y	Y
Fantastique	0	0	4	Y	Y
Froid	0	1	3	Y	N
Grand	0	5	11	Y	Y
Intéressant	0	1	13	Y	Y
Long	0	0	3	Y	N
Marrant	0	0	3	Y	Y
Midi-long	0	0	2	Y	N
Moderne	0	2	2	Y	N
Moyenne	0	0	1	N	Y
Multicolor	0	4	0	Y	N
Noisette	0	0	2	Y	N
Nulle	0	0	1	Y	N
Préféré	0	6	4	Y	Y
Roux	0	0	1	Y	N
Sevère	0	0	2	Y	N
Sportif	0	0	1	Y	N
Super	1	5	1	Y	N

Bibliography

Alabau, I. (2002). *Evaluación de la Enseñanza y el Aprendizaje de la Lengua Inglesa: Educación Primaria 1999.* Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, Instituto Nacional de Calidad y Evaluación (INCE).

Alexiou, T. (2009). Young Learners' Cognitive Skills and Their Role in Foreign Language Vocabulary Learning. In: M. Nikolov (ed.) *Early Learning of Modern Foreign Languages: Processes and Outcomes.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters pp. 46-61.

Alloway, T.P. & Alloway, R. G. (2010). Investigating the predictive roles of working memory and IQ in academic attainment. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology,* 106, 20-29

Alloway, T.P., & Archibald, L.M. (2008). Working Memory and Learning in Children with Developmental Coordination Disorder and Specific Language Impairment. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 41, 251-262.

Ames, C. (1986). Effective motivation: The contribution of the learning environment. In R. Feldman (Ed.), *The social psychology of education: Current research and theory* (pp.235-256). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Rev. ed.) New York: Verso.

Ando, J., Fukunaga, N., Kurahashi, J., Suto, T., Nakano, T., & Kage, M. (1992). A comparative study on two EFL teaching methods: The communicative and the grammatical approach. *Japanese Journal of Educational Psychology, 40*, 247-256.

Arnon, I. and Ramscar, M. (2009). Granularity and the acquisition of grammatical gender: How order-of-acquisition affects what gets learned. In Taatgen, N.A. and van Rijn, H. (Eds.) *Proceedings of the 31st Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society.* Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society, 2112-2117. Available online at: http://csjarchive.cogsci.rpi.edu/Proceedings/2009/index.html (December 2012).

Atkins, P.W.B. and Baddeley, A.D. (1998) Working memory and distributed vocabulary learning. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 19, 537-552.

Atkinson, P. and Delamont, S. (1986). Bread and dreams or bread and circuses? A critique of 'case study' research in education. In M. Hammersley (ed.) *Controversies in classroom research* (pp.238-255). Milton Keynes and Philadelphia: Open University Press.

ATLAS Project (2003). *Selected results from a survey of school students' attitudes towards learning languages, Nov-Dec 2002*. Available online at http://www.ucl.ac.uk/calt/atlas/atlas-questionnaire-report.doc

Ayoun, D. (2007a). *French Applied Linguistics.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Ayoun, D. (2007b). The second language acquisition of grammatical gender and agreement. In D. Ayoun (Ed.) *French Applied Linguistics* (pp.130-170). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Bachman, L. and Palmer, A. (1996). *Language Testing in Practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Baddeley, A.D. (1990). *Human Memory: Theory and Practice*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Baddeley, A.D. (2000) Short-term and working memory. In E Tulving & F.I.M. Craik (Eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Memory* (pp. 77-92). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: the exercise of control.* New York: W.H. Freeman.

Bartning, Inge. (2000). Gender agreement in L2 French: Pre-advanced vs. advanced learners. *Studia Linguistica*, 54, 225- 237.

Barton, A. (1997). Boys' under-achievement in GCSE modern languages: reviewing the reasons. *Language Learning Journal,* 16, 11-16.

Bartram, B. (2010). *Attitudes to Modern Foreign Language Learning: Insights from Comparative Education*. London: Continuum.

Bassano, D. (2000). Early development of nouns and verbs in French: exploring the interface between lexicon and grammar. *Journal of Child Language* 27:521–59.

Batstone, R. (Ed.) (2010). *Sociocogntive perspectives on language use and language learning.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Bell, J. (1999) *Doing Your Research Project: A guide for first-time researchers in education and social science.* 3rd Edition. Maidenhead: Open University Press

Bell, J. (2001). Patterns of subject uptake and examination entry 1984-1997. *Educational Studies* 27(2), 201-219.

Bennett, S.N. (1975). Weighing the evidence: A review of 'Primary French in the Balance. *British Journal of Educational Psychology* 45, 337-340.

Bernstein, J. (1993). The syntactic role of word markers in null nominal constructions. *Probus*, 5, 5-38.

Bialystok. E. and Sharwood-Smith, M. (1985). Interlanguage is not a state of mind, an evaluation of the construct for second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 6, 101-117.

Block, D. (2003). *The Social Turn in Second Language Acquisition.* Georgetown University Press.

Block, D. (2007). *Second Language Identities.* London: Continuum.

Blondin , C., Calendier, M., Edelenbos, P., Johnstone, R., Kubanek-German, A. and Taeschner, T. (1998). *Foreign Languages in Primary and Pre-School Education: A review of recent research within the European Union.* CILT.

Bolster, A., Balandier-Brown, C. and Rea-Dickens, P. (2004) Young Learners of modern foreign languages and their transition to the secondary phase: a lost opportunity? *Language Learning Journal* 30, 35-41.

Boyd, B. (2005). *Primary-secondary transition: An introduction to the issues*. TES Scotland, Paisley: Hodder & Gibson.

Boyd, B. and Simpson, S. (2000). *A framework for learning and teaching in the first two years of secondary school in Angus Council.* Angus Council Education Department.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction. In: Karabel, J., & Halsey, A. H. (Eds.) *Power and Ideology in Education,* (pp. 487-511). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bresnan, J. (1978). A realistic transformational grammar. In M. Halle, J. Bresnan and G.A. Miller, *Linguistic Theory and Psychological Reality*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Bresnan. J. (2001). *Lexical-Functional Syntax*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Broeder, P., Extra, G. and Hout, R. van (1993). Richness and variety in the developing lexicon. In C. Perdue (Ed.), *Adult Language Acquisition: Cross-linguistic Perspectives. Volume 1: Field Methods* (pp 145-163). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Buckby, M. (1976). Is Primary French Really in the Balance? *The Modern Language Journal* (60:7) pp340-346.

Bulté, B., Housen, A, Pierrard, M. and Van Daele, S. (2008). Investigating lexical proficiency development overtime: the case of Dutch-speaking learners of French in Brussels. *French Language Studies,* 18, 1-22.

Burstall, C., Jamieson, M., Cohen, S. and Hargreaves, M. (1974). *Primary French in the Balance.* Windsor: NFER Publishing Company.

Cable, C., Driscoll, P. and Mitchell, R. (2010). *Languages Learning at Key Stage 2: A Longitudinal Study.* London: DCSF. Available at https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-RR198.pdf (accessed 4/2/10).

Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching Languages to Young Learners.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Caselli, M.C., Bates E., Casadio, P., Fenson, J., Fenson, L., Sanderl, L., & Weir, J. (1995). A cross-linguistic study of early lexical development. *Cognitive Development*, 10, 159-199.

Carroll, S. (1989). Second-language acquisition and the computational paradigm. *Language Learning.* 39: 335-394.

Carroll, S. (1999). Input and SLA: Adults' Sensitivity to Different Sorts of Cues to French Gender. *Language Learning.* 49(1), 37-92.

Carstens, V. (2000). Concord in minimalist theory. *Linguistic Inquiry.* 31: 319-355.

CfBT (2013). *Language Trends 2012: Language learning in primary and secondary schools in England* available at www.cfbt.com/en-GB/Research/Research-library/2013/r-language-learning-in-primary-and-secondary-schools-in-england-2013 (accessed 13/7/13).

Chambers, G. (2000). Motivation and the Learners of Modern Languages. In S. Green (Ed.) *New Perspectives on Teaching and Learning Modern Languages* (pp. 46-76). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Chambers, G. (2001). *Reflections on motivation.* London: CILT Publications.

Chedzoy, S.M. & Burden, R.L. (2005). Assessing student attitudes to primary-secondary school transfer. *Research in Education*. 74, 22-35.

Chierchia, G., Guasti, T. and Gualmini, A. (2001). *Nouns and articles in child grammar and then syntax/semantics map.* Ms, University of Milan/University of Siena/University of Maryland, College Park.

Childers, J. B. & Tomasello, M. (2006). Are Nouns Easier to Learn than Verbs? Three Experimental Studies. In Hirsh-Pasek, K. & Golinkoff, R. (Eds.), *Action meets word: How children learn verbs.* Oxford University Press.

CHILDES, *Child Language Data Exchange System.* Pittsburgh: Carnegie Mellon University. On-line access http://childes.psy.cmu.edu (Accessed March 2008).

Chomsky, N. (1995). *The Minimalist Program*, Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1995.

Chomsky, N. (2000). Minimalist Enquiries: The framework. In R. Martin, D. Michaels and J. Uriagereka (Eds.) *Step by Step – Essays in Minimalist Syntax in Honor of Howard Lasnik* (pp.89-156).

Chomksy, N. (2005). *Rules and Representations*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

Clark, A. and Trafford, J. (1995). Boys into Modern Languages: an investigation of the discrepancy in attitudes and performance between boys and girls in modern languages. *Gender and Education*, 7(**3**), 315-325.

Clark, A. and Trafford, J. (1996). Return to gender: boys' and girls' attitudes and achievements. *Language Learning Journal*, 14, 40-49.

Clément, R. (1980). Ethnicity, contact and communicative competence in a second language. In H. Giles, W.P. Robinson and P.M. Smith (Eds.) *Language: Social Psychological Perspectives* (pp.147-154). Oxford: Pergamon.

Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z. and Noels, K. (1994). Motivation, self-confidence and group cohesion in the foreign language classroom. *Language Learning,* 44, 417-448.

Clément, R., Gardner, R.C. and Smythe, P.C. (1977). Motivation variables in second language acquisition: A study of francophones learning English. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 9, 123-133.

Cohen, J. (1998). *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd ed. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 1988.

Cohen, A. (1989). Attrition in the productive lexicon of two Portuguese third language speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 11(2), 135-149.

Coleman, J. (1996). *Studying Languages: a survey of British and European students. The proficiency, background, attitudes and motivations of students of foreign languages in the United Kingdom and in Europe.* (London, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research).

Coleman, J., Galaczi, A., and Astruc, L. (2007). Motivation of UK school pupils towards foreign languages: a large-scale survey at Key Stage 3. *Language Learning Journal* 35(2), 245-280.

Conway, A. R. A., Kane, M. J., & Engle, R. W. (2003). Working memory capacity and its relation to general intelligence. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 7, 547–552.

Court, K. (2001). *Why are boys opting out? A study of situated masculinities and foreign language learning*. Available at www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/groups/crile/docs/crile57court.pdf

Cowan, N., & Alloway, T. (2009). Development of Working Memory In Childhood. In M.L. Courage & N. Cowan (Eds.), *The development of memory in infancy and childhood*. Hove, East Sussex, UK: Psychology Press, 303-342.

Croft, William (2001). *Radical construction grammar: syntactic theory in typological perspective.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Crookes, G., & Schmidt R. W. (1991). Motivation: Reopening the research agenda. *Language Learning*, 41(4), 469-512.

Cziser, K. and Kormos, J. (2009). Learning experiences, selves and motivated learning behaviour : a comparative analysis of structural models for Hungarian secondary and university learners of English. In M. Nikolov (ed.). *Early learning of modern foreign languages : processes and outcomes.* Bristol: Multilingual Mattters, p. 62-74 13 p.

Daller, H., Milton, J. and Treffers-Daller, J. (2007). *Modelling and Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

David, A. (2008a). Vocabulary Breadth in French L2 learners. *Language Learning Journal* 36(2), 167-180.

David, A. (2008b). A developmental perspective on lexical knowledge in L2 oral interlanguage. *Journal of French Language Studies,* 18 (3), 315-331.

David, A., Myles, F., Rogers, V. and Rule, S. (2009). Lexical development in Instructed L2 Learners of French: is there a relationship with morpho-syntactic development? In B. Richards, M. Daller, D. Malvern, P. Meara, J. Milton and J. Treffers-Daller (Eds.) *Vocabulary Studies in First and Second Language Acquisition: The interface between theory and application* (pp. 147-163). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Deary, I., Strand, S., Smith, P, & Femandes, C. (2007). Intelligence and educational achievement. *Intelligence*, 35, 13-21.

De Jong, N.H.; Steinel, M.P.; Florijn, A.; Schoonen, R. and Hulstijn, J.H. (2012). Facets of speaking proficiency. *Studies in second language acquisition*, 34, 5-34.

DeKeyser, R. M. (1997). Beyond explicit rule learning: Automatizing second language morphosyntax. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19, 195-222.

DeKeyser, R. M. (2003). Implicit and explicit learning. In C. J. Doughty & M. H. Long (Eds). *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 313-348). Oxford: Blackwell.

DeKeyser, R. (2007). Skills Acquisition Theory in B. VanPatten and J. Williams (Eds.) *Theories in Second Language Acquisition* p97-113. London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

De la Fuente, M. J. (2006). Classroom L2 vocabulary acquisition: Investigating the role of pedagogical tasks and form-focused instruction. *Language Teaching Research*,10(3), 263-295.

Delamont, S. & Galton, M. (1986). *Inside the Secondary classroom*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Denscombe, M. (1998). *The Good Research Guide.* Buckingham: Open University Press

Department for Children School and Families (2007a) *Languages Review* available at
https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFES-00212-2007 (accessed 14/10/09).

Department for Education (2012). *Twice as many students now taking key academic subjects thanks to the Ebacc* available at
http:www.gov.uk/governmentnews/twice_as_many_students_now_taking_key_academic_subjects_thanks_to_the_ebacc.pdf (accessed 13/7/13).

Department for Education (2013). *National Curriculum Framework Document* available at
http:www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210969/NC_framework_document_-_FINAL.pdf (accessed 13/7/13).

Department of Education and Science (1977). *Curriculum 11-16.* London: HMSO Publications

Department of Education and Science (1978). *Curriculum 11-16.* London: HMSO Publications

Department of Education and Science (1981). *Curriculum 11-16: A review of progress.* London: HMSO Publications

Department of Education and Science (1983a). *Curriculum 11-16: Towards a statement of entitlement.* London: HMSO Publications

Department of Education and Science (1983b). *Teaching Quality.* London: HMSO Publications.

Department of Education and Skills (1997). *Education in schools: A consultative document*. Cnmd. 6869. London: HMSO

Department for Education and Skills (2002a). *Languages for all, languages for life: A strategy for England*. Nottingham: DfES Publications.

Department for Education and Skills (2002b). *Transition from Year 6 to Year 7 Mathematics*. DCSF 0118/2002
http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/175662 accessed 10/11/09

Department for Education and Skills (2003). *Framework for Teaching Modern Foreign Languages: Years 7, 8 and 9.* Nottingham: DfES Publications.
Department for Education and Skills (2004a). Languages for All: from strategy to delivery. Nottingham: DfES Publications.

Department for Education and Skills (2004b). *Curriculum Continuity – effective transfer between primary and secondary school.* DfES 0116/2004.
http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/97969 accessed 10/11/09

Department for Education and Skills (2005). *Key Stage 2 framework for languages.* Nottingham: DfES Publications.

Dewaele, J-M. (Ed.). (2005). *Focus on French as a Foreign Language: Multidisciplinary Approaches.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Dewaele, J-M. and Véronique, D. (2000). Relating gender errors to morphosyntactic and lexical systems in advanced French interlanguage. *Studia Linguistica.* 54(2), 212-224.

Dewaele, J-M. and Véronique, D. (2001). Gender assignment and gender agreement in advanced French interlanguage : A cross-sectional study. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition.* 4: 275-297.

Dermitzaki, I. and Efklides, A. (2001). Age and gender effects on students' evaluation regarding self and task-related experiences in mathematics. In S. Vole and S. Jarvela (eds.) *Motivation in learning contexts: Conceptual Advances and Methodological Implications* (pp.277-293). Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Derricot, R. (1985). *Primary to Secondary Currriculum Continuity*. Windsor: NFER-Nelson.

Donato, R. & Tucker, G. R. (2010). *A Tale of Two Schools: Developing Sustainable Early Foreign Language Programs*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z. (1994). Motivation and Motivating in the Foreign Language Classroom. *The Modern Language Journal,* 78 (**3**), 273-284.

Dörnyei, Z. (2001a). *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2001b). *Teaching and researching motivation.* Harlow: Longman.

Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Doughty, C. J. (2003). Instructed SLA: Constraints, Compensation, and Enhancement. In C. J. Doughty & M. H. Long (Eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 256-310). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Driscoll, P, Jones, J and Macrory, G. (2004) *The Provision of Foreign Language Learning for Pupils at Key Stage 2.* http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR572.pdf (Accessed 15th March 2008).

Duff, P. (2002). The discursive co-construction of knowledge, identity, and difference: An ethnography of communication in the high school mainstream. *Applied Linguistics*, 23, 289-322.

Edelenbos, P. and Johnstone, R. (eds.) (1995). *Researching languages at primary school. Some European Perspectives.* London: Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research.

Edelenbos, P. and Koster, C.J. (eds) 1993: *English in Primary Education.* Muiderberg: Couthino.

Elgort, I and Nation, P. (2010). Vocabulary Learning in a Second Language: Familiar Answers to New Questions. In P. Seedhouse, S. Walsh and C. Jenks (Eds.).

Conceptualising 'Learning' in Applied Linguistics (pp.89-104). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Elliott, J. and Lukeš, D. (2009). Epistemology as Ethics in Research and Policy: The Use of Case Studies. In D. Bridges; P. Smeyers and R. Smith (eds.), *Evidence-based Education Policy: What evidence? What Basis? Whose Policy?* (pp.82-114) Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Ellis, N. (1996). Sequencing in SLA: Phonological memory, chunking and points of order. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 91-126.

Ellis, N.C. (2008). Usage-based and Form-focused Language Acquisition: The Associative Learning of Constructions, Learned-attention, and the Limited L2 Endstate. In P. Robinson and N. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition.* London: Routledge.

Ellis, N. and Schmidt, R. (1997). Morphology and longer distance dependencies: Laboratory research illuminating the A in SLA. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition,* 19, 145-171.

Ellis, R., Tanaka, Y. and Yamazaki, A. (1994) Classroom interaction, comprehension, and L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning,* 44, 449-91.

Ellis, R. (2005). Measuring Implicit and Explicit Knowledge of a Second Language: A Psychometric Study. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 27(2), 141-172.

Ellis, R. (2010). Theoretical pluralism in SLA: Is there a way forward? In P. Seedhouse, S. Walsh and C. Jenks (Eds.). *Conceptualising 'Learning' in Applied Linguistics* (pp.23-51). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Ellis, R., & He, X. (1999). The roles of modified input and output in the incidental acquisition of word meanings. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21, 285-310.

Enever, J. (ed.) (2011). *ELLiE Early Language Learning in Europe*. British Council.

Engle, R. W. (2002). Working memory capacity as executive attention. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 19-23

Evans, M. and Fisher, L. (2009) *Language Learning at Key Stage 3: The impact of the Key Stage 3 Modern Foreign Language Framework and Changes to the Curriculum on Provision and Practice.* DCSF RR091. http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR091.pdf accessed 14/12/09.

Ferdinand, A. (1996). *The Development of Functional Categories: The acquisition of the Subject in French.* The Hague:HAG.

Fernandes, C. and Strand, S. (2000). *Cognitive Abilities Test and KS3/GCSE Indicators: Technical Report.* Windsor: nferNelson.

Fillmore, C. (1998). *Inversion and Constructioal Inheritance. Lexical and Constructional Aspects of Linguistic Explanation,* ed. by Gert Webelhuth, Jean-Pierre Koenig and Andreas Kathol. Stanford: CSLI Publication.

Foucart, A. and Frenck-Mestre, C. (2011). Grammatical gender processing in L2: Electrophysiological evidence of the effect of L1-L2 syntactic similarity. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition.* 14: 379-399.

Francheschina, F. (2005). *Fossilized Language Grammars: The acquisition of grammatical gender.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Galton, M. & Morrison, I. (2000). Concluding Comments. Transfer and Transition: The next steps. *International Journal of Educational Research* 33(4), 443-449.

Galton, M. and Willcocks, J. (1983). (Eds.), *Moving from the primary school.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Galton, M., Gray, J. & Ruddock, J. (1999). *The impact of school transitions and transfers on pupil progress and attainment.* DfEE Research Report No. 131. Norwich: HMSO.

Galton, M., Gray, J. & Ruddock, J. (2003). *Transfer and transition in the middle years of schooling (7-14): Continuities and discontinuities in learning.* Department for Education and Skills, Research Report RR443, Nottingham: DfES Publications.

Galton, M., Hargreaves, L., Comber, C. & Wall, D. (1999). *Inside the Primary classroom: 20 years on.* London: Routledge.

Galton , M., Morrison, I. & Pell, T. (2000). Transfer and transition in English schools: reviewing the evidence. *International Journal of Educational Research* 33(4), 341-363.

Ganschow, L and Sparks, R. (1991). A screening instrument for the identification of foreign language learning problems. *Foreign Language Annals*, 24, 383-397.

Ganschow, L., Sparks, R. and Javorsky, R. (1998). Foreign language learning difficulties: An historical perspective. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 31(3), 248-258.

Ganschow, L and Sparks, R. (2001). Aptitude for learning a foreign language. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 90-111.

Garcia, T. (1999). Maintaining the motivation to learn: An introduction to the special issue of 'Learning and Individual Differences'. *Learning and Individual Differences,* 11 (**3**), 231-232.

Gardner, R. C. (1979). Social-psychological aspects of second language acquisition. In Giles, H. & St. Clair, R. (Eds.). *Language and social psychology* (pp.193-220). Oxford: Blackwell.

Gardner, R. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation.* London: Edward Arnold.

Gardner, R.C., Clément, R., Smythe, P.C. and Smythe, C.L. (1979). *The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery – revised manual.* Research bulletin No. 15. London, Canada: Language Research Group, University of Western Ontario.

Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.

Gardner, R.C. and Lambert, W.E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning.* Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Gardner, R.C., Masgoret, A., Tennant, J. and Mihic, L. (2004). Integrative motivation: Changes during a year-long intermediate-level language course. *Language Learning,* 54, 1-34.

Gass, S. (1997) – *Input, interaction and the Second Language Learner.* Mahwah: NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Gass S. and Varonis, E. (1989). Incorporated repairs in NNS discourse. In M. Eisenstein (Ed.), *The Dynamic Interlanguage* (pp.71-86). New York: Plenum Press.

Gass, S. and Varonis, E. (1994). Input, interaction and second language production. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition Research*, 16, 283-302.

Gathercole, S.E., Lamont, E. and Alloway, T.P. (2006). Working memory in the classroom. In S.Pickering (Ed.), *Working memory and education.* London: Academic Press.

Genelot, S. (1996). *L'enseignement des langues à l'école primaire : quels acquis pour quels effets au collège ? Eléments d'évaluation : le cas de l'anglais.* (Les Notes de l'Iredu*).* Dijon: Institut de Recherche sur l'économie et l'éducation.

Geertz. C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures.* New York: Basic Books.

Gess, R. and Herschensohn, J. (2001). Shifting the DP parameter: A study of anglophone French L2ers. In C. Wiltshire & J. Camps (eds). *Romance Syntax, Semantics and their L2 Acquisition*, Philadelphia: Benjamins, 105-119.

Geva, E. and Ryan, E.B. (1993). Linguistic and cognitive correlates of academic skills in first and second languages. *Language Learning,* 43, 5-42.

Giraud, P. (1954). *Les caractères statistiques du vocabulaire.* Paris : Presses Universitaires de France.

Goldberg, Adele. (1995) *Constructions: A Construction Grammar Approach to Argument Structure*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gonzalez Garcia, M.M. (2004). *Evaluación de la Enseñanza y el Aprendizaje de la Lengua Inglesa: Educación Secundaria 2001.* Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, Instituto Nacional de Calidad del Sistema Educativo (INECSE).

Gorard, S. and See, B.H. (2011) How can we enhance enjoyment of secondary school? The student view, *British Educational Research Journal,* Vol. 37, No. 4, pp. 671-690.

Graham, S. J., Richards, B. J. and Malvern, D. D. (2008). Progress in learning French vocabulary in a one-year advanced course at school. *Journal of French Language Studies*, 18 (3). pp. 349-364.

Graham, C. & Hill, M. (2003). Negotiating the transition to secondary school. *Spotlight 39*. The SCRE Centre, University of Glasgow.

Granfeldt, J. (2003). *L'Acquisition des categories fonctionnelles. Étude comparative du développement du DP français chez des enfants et des adultes.* Unpublished PhD thesis.

Granfeldt, J. (2005). The Development of Gender Attribution and Gender Agreement in French: A comparison of bilingual and first and second language learners. In J-M. Dewaele (Ed.) *Focus on French as a Foreign Language* (pp.164-190). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Granfeldt, J. and Schlyter, S. (2004). Cliticization in the acquisition of French as L1 and L2. In P. Prévost and J. Paradis (Eds.). *The acquisition of French in different contexts*. (pp. 333-370). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Grondin, N. and White. J. (1996). Functional categories in child L2 acquisition of French. *Language Acquisition*, 5, 1-34.

Grüter, T.; Lew-Williams C and Fernald, A. (2012). Grammatical Gender in L2: A production or a real-time processing problem? *Second Language Research.* 28 (2): 191-215.

Gurtner, J.-L., Monnard, I., & Genoud, P. A. (2001). Towards a multilayer model of context and its impact on motivation. In S. Volet, & S. Järvelä (Eds.), *Motivation in*

learning contexts: Theorical advances andmethodological implications (pp.189–208). Oxford: Pergamon.

Hakuta, K. (1974). Prefabricated patterns and the emergence of structure in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 24, 287-297.

Hargreaves, L. & Galton, M. (2000). (Eds.), *Moving from the primary classroom: 20 years on*. London: Routledge.

Harley, B. (1998). Issues in designing form-focused L2 tasks for children. In C. Doughty and J. Williams (Eds.) *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 156-174). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harrington, M.W., & Sawyer, M. (1992). L2 working memory capacity and L2 reading skills. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition,* 14, 1, 25-38.

Harris, J. and Conway, M. (2002). *Modern Languages in Irish Primary Schools: An evaluation of the National Pilot Project.* Dublin: Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Eireann.

Havighurst, R. (1972). *Developmental Tasks and Education*, 3rd ed. New York: David McKay.

Hawkins, E. (2002). Drop out from language study at age 16+: A historical perspective in Ann Swarbrick's (ed.) *Teaching Modern Foreign Languages in Secondary Schools: A reader.* London: The Open University.

Hawkins, E. (2005). 'Out of this nettle, drop-out, we pluck this flower, opportunity: re-thinking the school foreign language apprenticeship.*' Language Learning Journal,* 32: 4–17.

Hawkins, R. (2001). *Second Language Syntax: A Generative Introduction*. Oxford:Blackwell.

Hawkins, R. and F. Franceschina. (2004). Explaining the acquisition of and non-acquisition of determiner-noun gender concord in French and Spanish. In P. Prévost and J. Paradis (eds.) *The acquisition of French in different contexts: focus on functional categories.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins. pp. 175-205.

Hawkins, R. and Towell, R. (2001). *French grammar and Usage.* London: Hodder Education.

Haznedar, B. (2003). The status of functional categories in child L2 acquisition: Evidence from the acquisition of CP. *Second Language Research*, 19 (1), 1-41.

Haznedar, B. & Schwartz, B.D. (1997). Are there Optional Infinitives in child L2 acquisition? In E. Hughes, M. Hughes & A. Greenhill (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 21st Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development,* 21, 257-68. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.

Heaven, P.C.L. (2001). *The Social Psychology of Adolescence*. Basingstoke: Palgrave

Heinen, S. and Kadow, H. (1990). The acquisition of French by monolingual children. In J. Meisel (Ed.) *Two First Languages: Early Grammatical Development in Bilingual Children* pp. 47-72. Dordrecht: Foris.

Henriksen, B (1999). Three dimensions of vocabulary development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21, 303-317.

Herschensohn, J. (2007). L2 functional categories: Syntactic development and morphological mapping. In D. Ayoun (Ed.) *French Applied Linguistics* (pp.103-129). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Hill,K., Davies, A., Oldfield, J. & Watson, N. (1998): Questioning An Early Start: the transition from primary to secondary foreign language learning. *Melbourne Papers in Language Testing*, 6 (2), 21-36.

Hill, K. and Ward, S. (2003). Passing the baton: the transition from primary to secondary language programs. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics,* 9 (**2**), 19-36.

HMI (1977). *Matters for Discussion 3. Modern Languages in Comprehensive Schools.* London:HMSO.

Horst, M. and Collins, L. (2006). From Faible to strong: how does their vocabulary grow? *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(1): 83–106.

Housen, A. and Pierrard, M. (2005). *Investigations in Instructed Second Language Acquisition.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Housen, A.; Kuiken, F. and Vedder, I. (Eds.). (2012). *Dimensions of L2 Performance and Proficiency: Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency in SLA.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Hoy, P. (1977). *The Early Teaching of Modern Languages.* London: The Nuffield Foundation.

Hu, M., & Nation, I. S. P. (2000). Vocabulary density and reading comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 13(1), 403-430.

Hulstijn, J.H. (2005). Theoretical and empirical issues in the study of implicit and explicit second-language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *27*, 129-140.

Hulstijn, J. H., Hollander, M., & Greidanus, T. (1996). Incidental vocabulary learning by advanced foreign language students: The influence of marginal glosses, dictionary use, and reoccurrence of unknown words. *The Modern Language Journal, 80* (3), 327-339.

Hulstijn,J.H.,& Laufer,B.(2001). Some empirical evidence for the involvement load hypothesis in vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning,* 51,539-558.

Inbar, O., Donitsa-Schmidt, S. And Shohamy, E. (2001). Students' Motivation as a Function of Language Learning: The teaching of Arabic in Israel. In Z. Dörnyei and R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition* (pp297-312). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Johnstone, R. (2000). Context-sensitive assessment of modern languages in primary (elementary) and early secondary education: Scotland and the European Experience. *Language Testing*, 17(2), 123-143.

Julios, C. (2008). *Contemporary British Identity: English Language, Migrants and Public Discourse.* Aldershot: Ashgate

Kane, M. J., Hambrick, D. Z., Tuholski, S. W., Wilhelm, O., Payne, T. W., & Engle, R. W. (2004). The generality of working memory capacity: A latent-variable approach to verbal and visuospatial memory span and reasoning. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General,* 133, 189 – 217.

Kanno,Y. and Norton, B. (2003).Imagined communities and educational possibilities: Introduction. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education, 2* (4), 241-249.

Kaplan, R. and Bresnan, J. (1982). Lexical functional grammar: A formal system for grammatical representation. In J. Bresnan (Ed.) *The Mental Representation of Grammatical Relations* (pp.173-281). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Karmiloff-Smith, A. (1979). *A functional approach to child language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kayne, R. (1975). *French Syntax.* Cambridge MA: The MIT Press.

Keating, G.D. (2008). Task effectiveness and word learning in a second language: the Involvement Load Hypothesis on trial. *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 365-386.

Kaiser, G. (1994). More about INFLection and agreement: The acquisition of clitic pronouns in French. In: J.M. Meisel (ed.), *Bilingual First Language Acquisition. French and German Grammatical Development* (pp.131-159). Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins,.

Kellerman, E. (1985). If at first you do succeed…. In S. Gass and C. Madden (Eds.). Input in second language acquisition (pp.345-353). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Kim, Y. (2008). The role of task-induced involvement and learner proficiency in L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning,* 58(2), 285-325.

Koda, K. (1993). Task induced variability in FL composition: language specific perspective, *Foreign Language Annals* 26, 332-346

Koda, K. (1997). Problems with orthographic processing

Krueger, R.A. (1998). Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results: Focus Group Kit 6. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Lado, R. (1956). A comparison of the sounds systems of English and Spanish. *Hispania*, 39(1), 26-29.

Lakshmanan, U. (1998). Functional Categories and related mechanisms in child second language acquisition. In S. Flynn, G. Martohardjono and W. O'Neil (Eds.) *The Generative Study of Second Language Acquisition* (pp.3-16). New Jersy: Erlbaum.

Lamb, M. (2007). The impact of School on EFL Learning Motivation: An Indonesian Cast Study. *TESOL Quarterly* 41(4), 757-780.

Lantolf, J. P. (Ed.) (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lantolf, J. P., & Genung, P. (2003). 'I'd rather switch than fight:' An activity theoretic study of power, success, and failure in a foreign language classroom. In C. Kramsch (Ed.)*, Language acquisition and language socialization* (pp. 175-196). London: Continuum.

Lardiere, D. (2000). Mapping features to forms in second language acquisition. In J. Archibald (Ed.), *Second Language Acquisition and Linguistic Theory,* 103-129. Oxford: Blackwell.

Lasagabaster, D. (2003). Attitudes towards English in the Basque Autonomous Community. *World Englishes.* 22(**4**), 585-597.

Laufer, B. (1988). The concept of 'synforms' (similar lexical forms) in L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Language and Education* 2: 113-132.

Laufer, B. (2003).Vocabulary acquisition in a second language: do learners really acquire most vocabulary by reading? *Canadian Modern Language Review* 59, 4: 565-585

Laufer, B. (2005). Instructed second language vocabulary learning: the fault in the 'default hypothesis'. In *Investigations in Instructed Second Language Acquisition*, eds. A. Housen & M. Pierrard. Mouton de Gruyter. pp. 286-303.

Laufer, B. (2006). Comparing focus on Form and Focus on FormS in second language vocabulary learning. *Canadian Modern Language Review* 63: 149-166.

Laufer, B. and J. Hulstijn. (2001). Incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language: the construct of task-induced involvement. *Applied Linguistics* 22: 1-26

Laufer, B. and T.S. Paribakht. (1998). Relationship between passive and active vocabularies: effects of language learning context. *Language Learning* 48: 365-391

Laufer, B. and B. Roitblat-Rozovski. (2011). Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition: the effectsof Task Type, Word Occurrence and Their Combination. *Language Teaching Research*, 15 (4): 391-411.

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lawton, D. (1992). *Education and Politics in the 1990s: Conflict or consensus?* London: The Falmer Press.

Lenneberg, E.H. (1967). *Biological foundations of language.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 140.

Lohman, D. F. (2001). Issues in the definition and measurement of abilities. In J. M. Collis & S. Messick (Eds.), *Intelligence and personality: Bridging the gap in theory and measurement* (pp. 79-98). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Lohman, D. F. (2005). The role of nonverbal ability tests in identifying academically gifted students: An aptitude perspective. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 49*, 111-138. (2010 NAGC Research Paper of the Decade.)

Long, M. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In K. de Bot, R. Ginsberg, & C. Kramsch (Eds.), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 39-52). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Long, M. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. Ritchie and T. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition.* San Diego: Academic Press, 413-468.

Long, M.H., and J.C. Richards. (2007). Series Editors' Preface. In *Modelling and Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge,* H. Daller, J. Milton, and J. Treffers-Daller (Eds.), xii- xiii. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Lorenzo-Dus, N. (2007) 'Best of both worlds? Combined methodological approaches to the assessment of vocabulary in oral proficiency interviews', H. Daller et al. (eds.) *Modelling and Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge*, 220-233, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Low, L., Duffield, J., Brown, S. and Johnstone, R. (1993): *Evaluating foreign languages in Scottish primary schools. Report to Scottish Office.* Stirling: Scottish CILT.

Low, L., Brown, S., Johnstone, R. and Pirrie, A. (1995). *Foreign Languages in Primary Schools: Evaluation of the Scottish Pilot Projects 1993-1995 Final Report*. Scottish CILT Publication.

Lucey, H. and Reay, D. (2000). Identities in transition: anxiety and excitement in the move to secondary school, *Oxford Review of Education*, 26, pp. 191–205.

Lyster, R. (2004). Differential effects of prompts and recasts in form-focused instruction. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 26, 399-432.

Macaro, E. (2003). *Teaching and Learning a Second Language: A guide to recent research and its applications.* London: Continuum.

Macaro, E. (2007). Do beginner learners of French have any writing strategies? *Language Learning Journal* 35/1, 23-36.

Macaro, E. (2008). The decline in language learning in England: getting the facts right and getting real. *Language Learning Journal* 36(1), 101-108.

Mackey, A. and Gass, S.M. (2005) *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design.* Mahwah, NJ. and London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Mackey, A., Philp, J., Egi, T, Fujii, A., & Tatsumi, T. (2002). Individual differences in working memory, noticing of interactional feedback and L2 development. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Individual Differences and Instructed Language Learning*, (pp. 181-209). Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Malvern, D. and Richards, B. (2002). Investigating accommodation in language proficiency interviews using new measures of lexical diversity. *Language Testing*, 19, 85-104.

Malvern, D., Richards, B., Chipere, N. and Duran, P. (2004). *Lexical diversity and language development.* Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Malvern, D., Richards, B., Meara, P., & Milton, J. (2008). Introduction: special issue on knowledge and use of the lexicon in French as a second language. French Language Studies 18, 269-276.

Marinova-Todd, S.H., Bradford Marshall, D., Snow, C.E. (2000) Three misconceptions about Age and L2 learning, *TESOL Quarterly* 34(1).

Marsden, E. and David, A. (2008) Vocabulary use during conversation: a cross-sectional study of development from year 9 to year 13 among learners of Spanish and French. *Language Learning Journal*, 36, 2, 181–198.

MacDonald, B. Walker, R., Kushner, S. and Adelman, C. (1982) – *Bread and dreams: A case study of bilingual schooling in the USA*. CARE Occasional Papers No. 12.

McDonough, J. and McDonough, S. (1997) *Research Methods for English Language Teachers.* London: Hodder Arnold

McElwee, J. (2009) *CILT 7-14 project 2008/9 Final Report – Learning Networks.* www.cilt.org.uk/secondary/transition/redcar_cleveland.aspx accessed 12/10/09.

McKay, P. (2005). *Assessing Young Language Learners.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

McKay, S. and Wong, S. (1996). Multiple discourses, multiple identities: Investment and agency in second-language learning among Chinese adolescent immigrant students. *Harvard Educational Review* . 66 (3), 577-608.

McLachlan, A. (2009). Modern languages in the primary curriculum: are we creating conditions for success? *Language Learning Journal* (37:2) pp 183-203.

McLaughlin, B. (1987). *Theories of second language learning*. London: Edward Arnold.

McManus, K. and Myles, F. (2011). *'The role of age in classroom learning: attitudes and motivation'. Paper presented at Centre for Linguistics and Language Sciences'*. Research Away Day. Newcastle University, 11th July 2011.

MacWhinney, B. (2000a). *The CHILDES Project: Tools for Analyzing Talk. 3rd Edition. Vol 1: The Format and Programs.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

MacWhinney, B. (2000b). *The CHILDES Project: Tools for Analyzing Talk. 3rd Edition. Vol 2: The Database.* Mahwah, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Meara, P.M. and Milton, J. (2003). *X_Lex: the Swansea Vocabulary Levels Test.* Newbury: Express Publishing.

Meisel, J. (1990). INFL-ection and subject-verb agreement. In J. Meisel (Ed.). *Two First Languages: Early Development in Bilingual Children* (pp.237-297). Dordrecht: Foris.

Mihaljević Djigunović, J. (1993). Investigation of attitudes and motivation in early foreign language learning. In M. Vilke and Y. Vrhovac (eds.) *Children and Foreign Languages* (pp.45-71). Zagreb: Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb.

Mihaljević Djigunović, J. (1995). Attitudes of young foreign language learners: A follow-up study. In M. Vilke and Y. Vrhovac (eds.) *Children and Foreign Languages* (pp.16-33). Zagreb: Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb.

Mihaljević Djigunović, J. (2009) Individual differences in early language programmes. In: M. Nikolov (ed.), *The age factor and early language learning*, 199-225. Berlin-New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (2nd Edition)

Milton, J. (2006). Language Lite? Learning French vocabulary in school. *Journal of French Language Studies* 16(2), 187-205.

Milton, J. (2008). French vocabulary breadth among learners in the British school and university system: comparing knowledge over time. *French Language Studies* 18, 333-348.

Milton, J. and Hopkins, N. (2006). Comparing phonological and orthographic vocabulary size: do vocabulary tests underestimate the knowledge of some learners? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(1), 127-147.

Milton, J. and Meara, P. (1998). Are the British really bad at learning languages? *Language Learning Journal* 18, 68-76.

Mitchell, R. (2003). Rethinking the concept of progression in the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages: a research perspective. *Language Learning Journal* 27, 15-23.

Mitchell, R. (2010). Policy and practice in foreign language education: case studies in three European settings. *European Journal of Language Policy* 2(2), 151-180.

Mitchell, R. and Dickson, P. (1997). Progression in foreign language learning. Centre for language in education occasional paper. No. 45, University of Southampton.

Mitchell, R. and Myles, F. (2004). *Second Language Learning Theories.* London: Hodder Arnold.

Miyake, A., Friedman, N. P., & Osaka, M. (1998). Cue acquisition and syntactic comprehension in second language learning: The role of working memory. Unpublished manuscript, the findings of which are reported on by Miyake, A., & Friedman, N. P. in A. F. Healy & L. E. Bourne, Jr. (Eds.), *Foreign language learning: Psycholinguistic studies on training and retention* (pp. 339–364). Mahwah; NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Muijs, D., Barnes, A., Hunt, M., Powell, B., Martin, C., Arweck, E. Lindsay, G. (2005). *Evaluation of the Key Stage 2 language learning pathfinders*. London, DfES. Retrieved from www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR692.pdf

Muijs, D. R. (2011) School effectiveness research. In, Chapman, Christopher, Armstrong, Paul,Harris, Alma, Muijs, Daniel, Reynolds, David and Sammons, Pam (eds.) *School Effectiveness and Improvement Research, Policy and Practice: Challenging the Orthodoxy?* Abingdon, GB, Routledge.

Myles, Florence (2003) The early development of L2 narratives: a longitudinal study. *Marges Linguistiques*, 5, 40-55.

Myles, F. (2005). The Emergence of Morpho-syntactic Structure in French L2. In J-M. Dewaele (Ed.) *Focus on French as a Foreign Language* (pp.88-113). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Myles, F. (2010). Building a Comprehensive Second Language Acquisition Theory. In P. Seedhouse, S. Walsh and C. Jenks (eds.) *Conceptualising 'Learning' in Applied Linguistics.* Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Myles, F. (2012). Complexity, accuracy and fluency: The role played by formulaic sequences in early interlanguage development. In A. Housen; F. Kuiken and I. Vedder (Eds.) *Dimensions of L2 Performance and Proficiency: Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency in SLA* (pp. 71-94). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Myles, F., Hooper, J. and Mitchell, R. (1998). Rote or rule? Exploring the role of formulaic language in classroom foreign language learning. *Language Learning*, 48(3), 323-363.

Myles, F., Mitchell, R., and Hooper, J. (1999). Interrogative chunks in French L2: A basis for creative construction? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21, 49-80.

Myles et al. (2011). *Impact of starting age on learning outcomes : a comparison of language learning by children aged 5, 7 and 11.* Presentation at the World congress of applied linguistics (AILA2011) August 2011.

Myles, F. (2012): Complexity, accuracy and fluency: the role played by formulaic sequences in early interlanguage development (pp.71-94). In Housen, A., Kuiken, F. & Vedder, I. (Eds.) *Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency.* John Benjamins

Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nation, I.S.P. (2005). Teaching and Learning Vocabulary in E. Hinkel (Ed.) *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning, (*pp581-595). London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Nation, I.S.P. (2006). How Large a Vocabulary Is Needed
For Reading and Listening? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(1), 59-82.

Nation, I.S.P. (2007). Fundamental issues in modelling and assessing vocabulary knowledge. In H. Daller, J. Milton and J. Treffers-Daller (Eds.) *Modelling and Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge (*pp.35-43). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Newman, B. and Newman, P. (1987). *Development Through Life: A psychological approach.* 4th ed. Chicago: The Dorsey Press.

Nikolov, M. (1999). 'Why do you learn English?' 'Because my teacher is short'. A study of Hungarian children's foreign language learning motivation. *Language Teaching Research* 3 (**1**), 33-56.

Nikolov, M. (2001). A study of unsuccessful language learners. In Z. Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and second language acquisition* (pp. 149-170). Honolulu, HI: The University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.

Norris, J. and Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning,* 50(3), 417-528.

Norton Pierce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29 (1), 9-31.

Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and Language: Gender, ethnicity and educational change.* Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.

Norton, B. (2001). Non-participation, imagined communities, and the language classroom. In M. Breen (ed.). *Learner Contributions to Language Learning: New Directions in Research* (pp. 159-171). London: Longman.

Norton, B. and Gao, Y. (2008). Identity, investment, and Chinese learners of English. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 18(1), 109-120.

Norton, B. and McKinney, C. (2011). An identity approach to second language acquisition. In D. Atkinson (ed.). *Alternative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 73-94. Abingdon: Routledge.

The Nuffield Foundation. (2000). *Languages: The Next Generation. The Final Report and Recommendations of the Nuffield Languages Enquiry*. London: The Nuffield Foundation.

Oancea, A. and Pring, R. (2009). The Importance of Being Thorough: On Systematic Accumulations of 'What Works' in Education Research. In D. Bridges; P. Smeyers and R. Smith (eds.), *Evidence-based Education Policy: What evidence? What Basis? Whose Policy? (pp.11-35)* Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Oberauer K, Schulze R, Wilhelm O, Su¨ß H-M. (2005). Working memory and intelligence-Their correlation and their relation: comment on Ackerman, Beier, and Boyle. *Psychological Bulletin*. 131,61-65.

Ofsted (2005) *Implementing languages entitlement in primary schools* available at: https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Education/Curriculum/Modern-foreign-languages/Primary/Implementing-languages-entitlement-in-primary-schools accessed 20/10/09

Ofsted (2008). *The changing landscape of languages: An evaluation of language learning 2004/2007* available at: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Education/Curriculum/Modern-foreign-languages accessed 10/3/11

Ofsted (2011). *Modern Languages: Achievement and challenge 2007-2010 available at*: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Modern-languages-achievement-and-challenge-2007-2010 accessed 13/1/2011

Orosz, A. (2009). The Growth of Young Learners' English Vocabulary Size. In: M. Nikolov (ed.) *Early Learning of Modern Foreign Languages: Processes and Outcomes.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters pp. 181-194.

Ortega, L. (2009). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition.* London: Hodder.

Ortega, L. (2011). SLA after the Social Turn: Where cognitivism and its alternatives stand. In D. Atkinson (Ed.), *Alternative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition*, (pp.167-180). London: Routledge.

Ortega, L. (2012). Epistemological diversity and moral ends of research in instructed SLA. *Language Teaching Research*, 16(3).

Papagno, C., Valentine, T. and Baddeley, A.D. (1991). Phonological short-term memory and foreign language vocabulary. *Journal of memory and language*, 30, 331-347.

Paradis, J. and Crago, M. (2000). Tense and temporality: A comparison between children learning a second language and children with SLI. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, 43, 834-847.

Paradis, J., LeCorre, M. and Genesee, F. (1998). The emergence of tense and agreement in child L2 French. *Second Language Research,* 14, 227-257.

Pavlenko, A. (2002). Poststructuralist Approaches to the Study of Social Factors in Second Language Learning and Use. In V. Cook's (ed.) *Portraits of the L2 User* (pp. 275-302). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Pavlenko, A. and Norton, B. (2007). Imagined Communities, identity, and English language teaching. In J. Cummins & C. Davidson (Eds.), *International Handbook of English language teaching* (pp.669-680). New York: Springer.

Pérez-Pereira, M. (1991). The acquisition of gender: What Spanish children tell us. *Journal of Child Language.* 18: 571-590.

Pienemann, M. (1998). *Language Processing and Second-Language Development: Processability Theory.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Pienemann, M. (Ed.). (2005a). *Cross-linguistic aspects of processability theory*. Amsterdam/New York: John Benjamins.

Pienemann, M. (2005b). An introduction to processability theory. In M. Pienemann (Ed.) *Cross-linguistic Aspects of Processability Theory* (pp.1-60). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Pimsleur, P. (1967). A memory schedule. *Modern Language Journal,* 51 (2), 73-75.

Pinker, S. (1998). Words and Rules. *Lingua,* 106, 219-242.

Pinker, S. and Ullman, M. (2002). The Past-Tense Debate: The past and future of the past tense. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 6(11), 456-463.

Pinter, A. (2011). *Children Learning Second Languages.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pratt, S. & George, R. (2005). Transferring friendships: Girls' and boys' friendships in the transition from primary to secondary school. *Children and society.* 19, 16-26.

Prévost, P. (1997). *Truncation in Second Language Acquisition.* Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, McGill University.

Prévost, P. (2008). Truncation in child L2 acquisition: evidence from verbless utterances. In B. Haznedar and E. Gavruseva (Eds.) *Current trends in child second language acquisition: A generative perspective* (pp.177-207). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Prévost, P. (2009). *The Acquisition of French: The development of inflectional morphology and syntax in L1 acquisition, bilingualism, and L2 acquisition.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Prévost, P. and White, J. (2000). Missing surface inflection or impairment in second language acquisition? Evidence from tense and agreement. Second Language Research, 16(2), 103-133.

Prodeau, M. (2005). Gender and Number in French L2: can we find out more about the constraints on production in L2? In J-M. Dewaele (Ed.) *Focus on French as a Foreign Language* (pp.135-163). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2007). *Programme of Study for Modern Foreign Languages* http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/uploads/QCA-07-3340-p_MFL_KS3_tcm8-405.pdf accessed online 25th March 2011.

Ramage, K. (1990). Motivational factors and persistence in foreign language study. *Language Learning, 40* (2), 189-219.

Ranta, L. and Lyster, R. (2003). *A cognitive approach to improving immersion students' oral language abilities: The Awareness-Practice-Feedback sequence.* Unpublished manuscript submitted for publication.

Read, J. (2000). *Assessing vocabulary.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, B. and Malvern, D. (2007). Validity and threats to the validity of vocabulary measurement. In H. Daller, J. Milton and J. Treffers-Daller (Eds.) *Modelling and Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, B.J., Malvern, D.D. and Graham, S. (2008) Word frequency and trends in the development of French vocabulary in lower intermediate students during Year 12 in English schools. *Language Learning Journal,* 36, 2, 199-214.

Ritter, E. (1993). Where's gender? *Linguistic Inquiry*. 24: 795-803.

Robinson, P. (2003). Attention and memory during SLA. (2003). In Catherine J. Doughty & Michael H. Long (Eds.), *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition,* (pp. 630-678). Oxford: Blackwell.

Rogers, V. (2010). *Syntactic development in the L2 acquisition of French: The case of instructed English learners.* Saarbrucken: Verlag Dr.Müller

Royle, P. (2007). Variable effects of morphology and frequency on inflection patterns in French preschoolers. *The Mental Lexicon* 2, 103-127.

Rule, S. & Marsden, E. (2006) The acquisition of functional categories in early French L2 grammars: the use of finite and non-finite verbs in negative contexts. *Second Language Research,* 22, 2, 188-218.

Ryan, S. (2009). Self and identity in L2 motivation in Japan: The ideal L2 self and Japanese learners of English. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.). *Motivation, language identities and the L2 self* (pp.120-143). Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters.

Rydland, V., & Aukrust, V. G. (2005). Lexical repetition in second language learners' peer play interaction. *Language Learning,* 55, 229-274.

Sabourin L. and Stowe, A. (2008). Second Language Processing: When are first and second languages processed similarly? *Second Language Research.* 24(3), 397-430.

Saeed, J. (1997). *Semantics.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Saffran, J.R.; Newport, E.L. and Aslin, R.N. (1996). Word segmentation: The role of distributional cues. *Journal of Memory and Language.* 35: 606-621.
Schagen, S. and Kerr, D. (1999). *Bridging the gap: the national curriculum and progression from primary to secondary school.* NFER Publication.

Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.) *Cognition and Second Language Instruction* (pp.3-32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmitt, N. (2008). Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 329–363.

Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching Vocabulary: A Vocabulary Research Manual*. Palgrave Press.

Schwartz, B. D. & Sprouse, R. (1994). Word order and nominative case in nonnative language acquisition: a longitudinal study of (L1 Turkish) German interlanguage. In T. Hoekstra and B. D. Schwartz (eds.), *Language acquisition studies in generative grammar* (pp. 317-368). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Schwartz, B. D. & Sprouse, R. (1996). L2 cognitive states and the full transfer/full access model. *Second Language Research*, 12, 40-72.

Seedhouse, P. (2010). A Framework for Conceptualising Learning in Applied Linguistics. In P. Seedhouse, S. Walsh and C. Jenks (Eds.) *Conceptualising Learning in Applied Linguistics* (pp.240-256). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Segalowitz, N. (2003) Automaticity and second language acquisition. In C. Doughty & M. Long (Eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*. (pp. 382-408) Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Seguin, H. (1969). *Les marques du genre dans le lexique de français écrit contemporain: compilation des cas et essai de classement.* Unpublished Masters Thesis. Montreal, QC:Université de Montreal.

Service, E. (1992). Phonology, working memory, and foreign-language learning. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 45A, 21-50.

Service, E., & Kohonen, V. (1995). Is the relation between phonological memory and foreign language learning accounted for by vocabulary acquisition. *Applied Psycholinguistics,* 16, 155-172.

Sharpe, K. (2001). *Modern Foreign Languages in the primary school: the what, why & how of early MFL teaching.* London: Taylor & Francis.

Simons, H. (1996). The Paradox of Case Study. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 26 (2), 225-240.

Skehan, P. (1989). *Individual differences in second language learning.* London: Edward Arnold.

Skehan (1998). *A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith, P., Fernandes, C., & Strand, S. (2001).*Cognitive Abilities Test Third Edition:* Technical manual. London: nferNelson.

Sourdot, M. (1977). Identification et différenciation des unités: Les modalités nominales. In F. François, D. François, E. Sabeau-Jouannet, & M. Sourdot (Eds.), *La syntaxe de l'enfant avant de 5 ans* (pp. 90-119). Paris, France : Larousse Université.

Sparks, R. Ganschow, L., Javorsky, J., Pohlman, J. and Patton, J. (1992a). Identifying native language deficits in high- and low-risk foreign language learners in high school. *Foreign Language Annals*, 25, 403-418.

Sparks, R., Ganschow, L., Pohlman, J., Skinner, S. and Artzer, M. (1992b). The effects of multisensory language instruction on native language and foreign language aptitude skills of at-risk high school foreign language learners. *Annals of Dyslexia,* 42, 25-53.

Sparks, R. Ganschow, L., Patton, J., Artzer, M., Siebenhar, D. and Plageman, M. (1997). Prediction of foreign language proficiency. *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 89, 549-561.

Sparks, R. Ganschow, L., Artzer, M., Siebenhar, D. and Plageman, M. (1998). Differences in native language skills, foreign language aptitude, and foreign language grades among high-, average-, and low-proficiency learners: Two studies. *Language Testing*, 15, 181-216.

Sparks, R., Patton, J., Ganschow, L., Humbach, N. and Javorksy, J. (2006). Native language predictors of foreign language proficiency and foreign language aptitude. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 56, 129-160.

Sparks, R., Humbach, N., Patton, J. and Ganschow, L. (2011). Subcomponents of second-language aptitude and second-language proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95(2), 253-273.

Stables, A., Davies, S., Handley, D., Parkinson, J., Stables, S. and Tanner, H. (1995). Attitudes to English at Key Stage 3. *English in Education*, 29 (3), 29-36.

Stables, A, and Wikeley, F. (1999). From bad to worse? Pupils' attitudes to modern foreign languages at ages 14 and 15. *Language Learning Journal*, 20, 27-31.

Stake, R. (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research.* Thousand Oaks,CA: Sage

Stern, H.H., Burstall, C. and Harley, B. (1975). *French From Age Eight or Eleven? A Study of the Effectiveness of the Teaching of French at the Primary Level in the Schools of England and Wales.* Ontario: The Ministry of Education.

Stipek, D. and MacIver, D. (1989). Developmental change in children's assessment of intellectual competence. *Child Development,* 60, 521-538.

Strand, S. (2003). *Getting the Best from CAT: A Practical Guide for Secondary Schools.* London: nferNelson.

Strand, S. (2004). Consistency in reasoning test scores over time. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 74, (4), 617-631.*

Strand, S. (2006). Comparing the predictive validity of reasoning tests and national Key Stage 2 tests: which tests are the ‘best’? *British Educational Research Journal,* 32(2) 209-225.

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1982). *Evaluating bilingual education: A Canadian case study*. Clevedon, Eng.: Multilingual Matters.

Swanson H. L., Saez, L., Gerber, M. and Leafstedt, J. (2004). Literacy and cognitive functioning in bilingual and nonbilingual children at or not at risk for reading disabilities. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 96, 3-18.

Swenson, E. and West, M.P. (1934) On the counting of new words in textbooks for teaching foreign languages. *Bulletin of the Department of Educational Research, University of Toronto.*

Szpotowicz, M. (2009). Factors Influencing Young Learners’ Vocabulary Acquistion. In: M. Nikolov (ed.) *Early Learning of Modern Foreign Languages: Processes and Outcomes.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters pp. 195-211.

Tidball, F. and Treffers-Daller, J. (2007). Exploring measures of vocabulary richness insemi-spontaneous French speech: A quest for the Holy Grail? In: H. Daller, J. Milton and J. Treffers-Daller (eds.) (2007). *Modelling and Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge*.Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 133–149.

Tidball, F. and Treffers-Daller, J. (2008). Analysing lexical richness in French learner language: what frequency lists and teacher judgements can tell us about basic and advanced words. *French Language Studies* 18, 299-313.

Tomasello, M. (1998a). Introduction: a cognitive-functional perspective on language structure. In M. Tomasello (Ed.) *The New Psychology of Language*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Tomasello, M. (1998b). Social cognition and the evolution of culture. In J. Langer & M. Killen (Eds.), *Piaget, Evolution, and Development.* Erlbaum.

Tragant, E. (2006). Language learning, motivation and age. In C. Muñoz's (ed.) *Age and the Rate of Foreign Language Learning* (pp.238-268). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Treffers-Daller, J. (2009). Language Dominance and Lexical Diversity: How bilinguals and L2 learners differ in their knowledge and use of French lexical and functional items. In B. Richards, M. Daller, D. Malvern, P. Meara, J. Milton and J. Treffers-Daller (Eds.) *Vocabulary Studies in First and Second Language Acquisition: The interface between theory and application* (pp. 74-90). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Treffers-Daller, J. (2013) Measuring lexical diversity among L2 learners of French: an exploration of the validity of D, MTLD and HD-D as measures of language ability. In: Jarvis, S.and Daller, M. (eds.) *Vocabulary knowledge: human ratings and automated measures.* Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 79-104.

Truscott, J. (1998). Noticing in SLA: A critical review. Second Language Research, 14 (2), 103-135.

Tucker, G. R., Lambert, W. E., & Rigault A. (1969). Students' acquisition of French gender distinctions: A pilot investigation. *IRAL*, 3, 51–55.

Tucker, G. R., Lambert, W. E., & Rigault A. A. (1977). *The French speaker's skill with grammatical gender: An example of rule-governed behavior.* The Hague: Mouton.

Ushioda, E. (2001). Language Learning at University: Exploring the role of motivational thinking. In Z. Dörnyei and R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition* (pp93-125). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Vainaikka, A. and Young-Scholten, M. (1996). Gradual development of L2 phrase structure. *Second Language Research*, 12, 7-39.

Vainikka A & Young-Scholten M (1998) 'Functional categories and related mechanisms in child second language acquisition.' In Flynn S,Martohardojono G & O'Neil W (eds) *The Generative Study of Second Language Acquisition.*

Van Hout, R. and Vermeer, A. (2007). Comparing measures of lexical richness. In Daller, Milton, Treffers-Daller (Eds.). *Modelling and Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge*. Cambridge: CUP, 93 -115.

Verhallen, M. and Schoonen, R. (1998). Lexical knowledge in L1 and L2 third and fifth graders. *Applied Linguistics*, 19, 452-570.

Vermeer, A. (2004), 'The relation between lexical richness and vocabulary size in Dutch L1 and L2 children', in Bogaards P., Laufer B. (eds), *Vocabulary in a second language: selection, acquisition, and testing,* Philadelphia, Benjamins, pp. 173-189.

Volet, S. (2001) *Understanding learning and motivation in context: A Multi-dimensional and Multi-level Cognitive-Situative perspective.* In: Volet, S. and Järvelä, S., (eds.) *Learning and motivation in context: Theoretical advances and methodological implications.* Pergamon: An Imprint of Elsevier Science, Oxford, UK, pp. 57-82.

Wade, P., H. Marshall and S. O'Donnell. (2009). *Primary modern foreign languages: Survey of national implementation of full entitlement to language learning at key stage 2:* NFER, commissioned by the DCSF, July 2006 - April 2009.

Warden. M. (1997). The efect of form-focrised instruction on conrrol mer grammatical gender by French immersion saidenrs in grude II. Ed. D. thesis. OISE: University of Toronto.

Waring, R. (1997). A comparison of receptive and productive vocabulary sizes of some second language learners. *In Immaculata: The Occasional Papers at Notre Dame Seishin University,* 94-114.

Way, D., Joiner, E. G. & Seaman, M. A. (2000). Writing in the secondary foreign language classroom: the effects of prompts and tasks on novice learners of French. *Modern Language Journal,* 84(2), 171–184.

Webb, S. (2005). Receptive and productive vocabulary learning: the effects of reading and writing on word knowledge. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 27, 33-52.

Weiner, B. (1992). *Human Motivation: Metaphors, Theories and Research.* London: Sage.

Weinert, R. (1995). The role of formulaic language in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics,* 16, 180-205.

West, P., Sweeting, H. & Young, R. (2008). Transition matters: pupils' experiences of the primary-secondary school transition in the West of Scotland and consequences for well-being and attainment. *Research Papers in Education*, 1-29.

Wexler, K. (1994). Optional infinitives, head-movement and the economy of derivations. In D. Lightfoot and N. Horstein (Eds.) *Verb Movement* (pp.305-350). Cambridge: CUP.

Wexler, K. (1998). Very early parameter setting and the unique checking constraint: A new explanation of the optional infinitive stage. *Lingua*, 106, 23-80.

White, L. (1996). Clitics in child L2 French. In H. Clahsen (Ed.) *Generative Approaches to First and Second Language Acquisition* (pp.335-368).

White, L. (2003). *Second Language Acquisition and Universal Grammar.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

White, L., Valenzuela, E., Kozlowska-Macgregor, M. and Leung, Y-K. I. (2004). Gender and number agreement in nonnative Spanish. *Applied Psycholinguistics,* 25, 105-133.

Wilkins, David A. (1972). *Linguistics and Language Teaching.* London: Edward Arnold.

Williams, M. (1994). Motivation in foreign and second language learning: An interactive perspective. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 11, 77-84.

Williams, M. and Burden, R. (1997). *Psychology for Language Teachers.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Williams, M. & Burden, R. L. (1999). Student's developing conceptions of themselves as language learners. *Modern Language Journal,* 83, 193–201.

Williams, J. N. (1999) Memory, attention and inductive learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21(1), 1-48.

Williams, M., Burden, R. and Lanvers, U. (2002). 'French is the language of love and stuff': Student perceptions of issues related to motivation in learning a foreign language. *British Educational Research Journal* 28 (**4**), 504-528.

Willis, M. and Ohashi, Y. (2012). A model of L2 vocabulary learning and retention. *Language Learning Journal*, 40 (1), 99-112.

Wong-Fillmore, L. (1976). *The second time around: cognitive and social strategies in second language acquisition.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Standford University, CA.

Wray, A. (2002). *Formulaic language and the lexicon.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wray, A. (2008). *Formulaic language: pushing the boundaries*. Oxford University Press.

Yashima, T. (2002). Willingness to communicate in a second language: The Japanese EFL context. *Modern Language Journal,* 86, 54-66.

Yin (1993). *Applications of Case Study Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Yin, R. (2003) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods.* 3rd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA. and London: Sage.

Zeedyk, S., Gallacher, J., Henderson, M., Hope, G., Husband, B., and Lindsay, K. (2003). Negotiating the transition from primary to secondary school: Perceptions of pupils, parents and teachers. *School Psychology International* 24(1), 67-79.