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"Pronounced Empowerment?": An analysis of the impact of an explicit multisensory phonics teaching intervention on the pronunciation skills and motivation levels of KS4 pupils of French

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Abstract

Numerous recent studies have found that UK secondary school pupils of French typically have poor ability in "decoding" this language. That is, they struggle to correctly pronounce the language when seen in its written form. It has been contended that pupil lack of confidence in this area may be contributing to low levels of motivation for the subject. A common support strategy for pupils experiencing difficulties with spelling-sound links in their first language is the use of multisensory teaching activities. This study outlines and analyses an intervention trialling multisensory teaching of French phonics with a class of KS4 pupils. The findings suggest that multisensory teaching could well be effective in improving pupils' foreign language decoding ability. There is some evidence that explicit spelling-sound link teaching can empower pupils to feel more in control of decoding processes generally. However, this appears to have little impact on wider levels of subject motivation.

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Introduction

"So many kids can't manage proper pronunciation." This throwaway comment was made by a modern foreign languages (MFL) teaching colleague of mine in reference to the French speaking skills of countless pupils she had taught in her years of practice. Anecdotally, it testifies to a problem I have found to be widely prevalent in my early teaching practice. As an MFL trainee teacher, I have observed in two professional placements that pupils tend to have consistently inaccurate and patchy knowledge of French pronunciation. UK classroom-based research literature confirms this perception; it has been widely shown that pupils have poor knowledge of how written French is produced in its spoken form (Erler, 2004; Erler, 2007; Woore, 2010; Erler & Macaro, 2011). Perhaps more disconcertingly, research also suggests that little progress in made in the area of spelling-sound links as pupils progress towards their GCSE years (Woore, 2009; Erler & Macaro, 2011). I have thus identified the teaching of decoding - that is, skills in "converting the written symbols (or graphemes) of an alphabetical writing system into the sounds (or phonemes) they represent" (Woore, 2010, p.3) - as an area worthy of research and concentrated professional development in my early practice.

The validity of this undertaking is further justified within the context of what it might contribute to the wider MFL teaching profession. Whilst "perfect pronunciation" is arguably an unattainable and unnecessary goal (Nott, 1994), substantially inaccurate pronunciation can impede effective communication. The issue may therefore be undermining the purposes of communicative language teaching, a teaching style widely adopted by practitioners across the UK. The aim to improve pronunciation and speaking skills also supports fulfilment of the current national curriculum focus on pupil spontaneous use of language (DfE, 2013), as well as new GCSE specifications which state,

as per the example of the new AQA French GCSE, the requirement to "allow students to use accurate pronunciation and intonation so as to be understood by a native speaker" (AQA, 2015, p.72).

The present study therefore emerges as an action research project to improve practice and provoke reflection on teaching and learning pronunciation, not only in myself as the teacher-researcher, but also in the wider professional community. It will be undertaken with a class of 23 year 10 pupils in a rural comprehensive school in south east England.

In first language (L1) teaching, a common way of supporting pupils who have difficulties with sound-spelling links is to adopt a "multisensory" teaching approach, which engages at least two of the five senses (Birsh, 1999). Siddons (2001) has made the connection between the apparent difficulty of picking up sound-spelling patterns in learning a second language (L2) and how similar problems are combated in L1. He therefore proposes use of a "multisensory" approach in the MFL classroom. This is the method I propose to trial, using an intervention of seven 15-minunte activities built into normal lessons. I thus hope to initially and tentatively explore one possible way of solving the problem of poor decoding skills, on which there is little consensus thus far (Woore, 2009, p.15).

Additionally, I hope to see what impact explicit and targeted teaching of grapheme-phoneme links can have on motivation. Erler and Macaro (2011) identify lack of pupil understanding in this area as a potentially de-motivating factor for learners. Working within an attribution theory framework of motivation, I hope to test whether my intervention can improve positive attributions and, if so, evaluate whether this has any tangible impact on general levels of motivation for French.

This study will begin with a literature review on the area. I will then proceed to outline my research methodology. Subsequently, I will analyse my findings, before presenting an in-depth discussion of what the data has suggested, and any issues arising. Finally, I will provide a conclusion; drawing together my findings, resetting them within the context of wider research and presenting recommendations for my own and wider professional practice.

Literature Review

Grapheme-phoneme correspondence skills in reading and speaking

Grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) refers to "the spelling-sound relationships in a language" (Erler, 2004, p.9). That is, individual GPCs allow individual sounds used in the spoken language to be represented in its written form. Much international research has shown that knowledge of GPC is key for the development of L1 reading skills in young learners (ibid.). This is also the case for those learning to read a foreign language (FL). In any language, the same process of making accurate links between individual graphemes and phonemes reinforces, and indeed underpins, the ability to move between written and spoken forms of the language. This is evidenced through research on learners with dyslexia, who typically have trouble with GPC. They tend to struggle with learning to read in both L1 *and* L2, because it is the same cognitive process underlying the two activities (Nijakowska, 2010, p.vii-viii).

Knowledge of GPC is also inherently linked to speaking skills, and particularly those of pronunciation. Intuitively, this seems evident considering that spelling-sound correspondences move backwards and forwards between print *and* speech. Research on the importance of the "phonological loop" corroborates this. This mechanism, by which readers sub-vocalize the sounds they (think) they are reading, is always active in processing "written language into sounds as part of working (or short-term) memory" (Erler, 2004, p.9). Learners internalize the sounds they associate with graphemes as they read, affecting how they will come to pronounce them when speaking.

GPC knowledge is therefore clearly essential for pronunciation. In the context of L2 learners in the MFL classroom, this is arguably even truer. Learners of a foreign language, to which exposure is often limited, need to be able to accurately decode words in their written form in order to *pronounce* them in their spoken form in the fewer chances they typically have to do this.

GPC skills in UK pupils of French

In a project attempting to gauge the level of GPC knowledge amongst UK KS3 learners of French, Erler looked at how well 359 year 7 first-year learners of French were able to identify unknown French words that rhymed with an example word. On average, pupils answered only 20% of

questions correctly. Erler (2004, p.14), thus concludes that "pupils had not yet learned the GPC rules after one year of French."

Taking Erler's study as tentatively representative of pupils' GPC skills in French nationally suggests a bleak picture for their associated skills of pronunciation. This view is corroborated by research focusing particularly on pronunciation competencies. In 2007, Erler reported findings from a study piloting a rhyming activity to remedy problems identified in her earlier work. In trialling this, she found that two year 9 girls of middling achievement in languages and in their third year of learning French "clearly did not have a secure knowledge of GPC which they could apply to common spellings in French to arrive at their corresponding sounds" (Erler, 2007, p.28). In a similar scale study, Woore (2010) conducted research into the decoding strategies used by 12 year 7 learners of mixed ability. Woore likewise found that "participants lacked specific knowledge about what the French pronunciations of words should be" (ibid., p.15).

Both these studies are very focused and small in scale. It is therefore difficult to see them as conclusive, despite the strength of their findings. However, other medium and larger scale studies appear to confirm and strengthen their conclusions (Woore, 2009; Erler & Macaro, 2011).

In 2006, Woore completed a study involving 94 randomly selected, mixed-ability year 7 pupils from a large comprehensive school (Woore, 2009, p.8). Woore asked pupils to complete a Reading Aloud Test (RAT) to see how well they could pronounce words unknown to them. Across all tests, the mean score of correct pronunciations was slightly below half (ibid., p.10). Woore concludes that this "probably represents a performance at or close to floor level for literate native speakers of English who, in the absence of specific French decoding competence, fall back on their established English decoding processes" (ibid., p.11).

Even more robust are the findings of Erler and Macaro. These researchers strove to find as wide and representative a sample of UK school pupils as possible, taking into account the attainment levels, socio-economic intake and geographical location of schools (Erler & Macaro, 2011, p.501). The GPC skills of 1735 pupils in KS3, drawn from 25 different schools, were tested via means of a rhyme test as well as a word segmentation exercise (ibid., p.501-2). As in Woore's study, in both activities pupils scored an average of circa 50%. This leads to the researchers' conclusion that "students… were quite some way from the required mastery of even these limited tasks, let alone complete mastery of the French GPC system." (ibid., p.504).

What is interesting about the studies of both Woore and Erler and Macaro is that they also suggest that GPC *remains* poor as pupils progress through KS3. Woore repeated his RAT 12 months later with the same group of pupils. Robustly taking account of all the ways in which the data could have been skewed, his findings show that pupils made "no discernable progress" in GPC (Woore, 2009, p.14). Additionally, Erler and Macaro (2011, p.504) find that there is only a "very slight" difference in how well year 7 pupils pronounce as compared with those in year 9.

Thus all of the research literature reviewed appears to be in agreement with Woore, who concludes that "a clear picture seems to be emerging of poor L2 French decoding proficiency and of poor progress in this area of L2 learning among KS3 learners in England" (Woore, 2009, p.14). The question arises: why do UK pupils have such poorly developed GPC knowledge in French?

The neglect of GPC

Firstly, research suggests that many teachers simply assume that spelling-sound links will be implicitly learnt and internalized in learners over time (Erler, 2004; Woore, 2007). It appears that some pupils share this belief that pronunciation skills will "probably come in time more than anything'"(Woore, 2007, p.175). However, considering the evidence on the current national state of pupil GPC knowledge, this seems a misguided presumption.

Secondly, it has been suggested that the presence of many cognates between French and English may play a role (Nott 2005; Woore 2009). If pupils can understand a substantial amount of words in their written form, the fact that they are ignorant of how to correctly pronounce them might slip under the radar, as reading comprehension is achieved nonetheless. In classroom contexts in which reading skills are prioritized, such a process might be occurring more than teachers realise. In such a situation, with young learners typically reverting back to L1 strategies to decode (Woore, 2010), these false 'anglicised' pronunciations would only be further internalized through the phonological loop.

Finally, it has been suggested that the recent focus on communicative language teaching neglects the need for explicit phonics teaching (Nott, 2005). The National Curriculum of 2007 did stipulate that pupils should be taught about "the interplay between sounds and writing in the target language", but this appears to have had little impact in practice (Woore, 2009, pp.14-15). Although

there is talk of spontaneity and fluency in the National Curriculum of 2013, there is no explicit reference to accurate pronunciation (DfE, 2013).

Effects of poor GPC

The neglect of GPC, for whatever reason, has left pupils' skills of pronunciation in a poor state. But it has also been contended that lack of GPC knowledge can have adverse effects on other areas of FL learning.

Erler (2004) has shown that poor GPC has negative consequences for reading skills. Woore adds to this by highlighting that, where there is lack of knowledge of the spelling-sound link "there may be at least some words which beginner readers do know orally, but do not recognize in written form: for example, words featuring classroom instructions such as *levez la main*"(Woore, 2009, p.4). Equally, Woore notes that poor GPC can adversely affect vocabulary learning as the ability "to generate phonological forms for unfamiliar written words… provides a key to acquiring new vocabulary" (ibid., p.5). This is substantiated by Siddons (2001, pp.10-11), who makes the case for giving pupil vocabulary lists grouped by sounds, not topics, as is common practice in L1.

But perhaps the most detrimental effect poor GPC knowledge can have on L2 learning is its bearing on motivation, long-seen to be a significant issue in UK MFL classrooms (Erler & Macaro, 2011, p.498).

GPC knowledge and motivation

Erler's and Macaro's large-scale project of 2011 surveying UK pupils' GPC knowledge, referred to above, also attempted to assess the impact of this area on pupil motivation to learn French.

Erler and Macaro (2011, p.501) assume an attributive theory of motivation. It must be noted that, in relying on this framework within which to assess motivation, the researchers limit the scope of their work within the extremely wide and multifarious field of research and theory into motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p.3). Yet the assumption of a single and specific conceptualisation of motivation is a limitation common to many such studies which hope to offer clear results (ibid., p.198).

The attribution theory of motivation broadly holds that "causal attributions one makes of past success or failures (i.e. inferences about why certain outcomes occurred) have consequences on future achievement strivings" (ibid., p.15). If a pupil ascribes the success or failure of learning to a factor which is under his/ her control, for example the amount of time or concentrated effort he/she has put into the task, this is a positive or "adaptive" attribution. On the other hand, if the learner ascribes the learning outcome to something beyond their control, which *diminishes* their own agency and sense of self-efficacy, this is a negative or 'maladaptive' attribution (Erler & Macaro, 2011, p.499).

As Erler and Macaro envision in their introduction, if learners have not been explicitly taught the system of French pronunciation, they may develop the habit of attributing their failures in reading and pronunciation to "factors beyond their control such as the 'unreasonable' difficulty of the French language" (ibid., p.500). This would be a clear example of a maladaptive attribution which, reinforced over time, could contribute to a negative perception of the subject, and thus lower general motivation to learn French.

Analysing pupil perception questionnaire data, Erler and Macaro did indeed find that there were significant levels of maladaptive attributions regarding decoding the L2:

> …nearly half of respondents attributed the loci of control over success with French, perceived as foreign and weird, to external causes such as luck or chance. The very nature of the language was seen to place control over learning it beyond the student's power.
>
> (Erler & Macaro, 2011, p.508)

Within the attribution motivational framework, these results suggest that, for some students, motivation to learn French may be undermined because they are not aware that GPC knowledge can be acquired and practiced, as an element of learning *within their control*.

It is true that French can seem "opaque" in its "orthographic depth" (ibid., p.497). That is, a large range of different graphemes can denote one single phoneme (think of "eau", "aud", "aut" and "ôt" for example). However, it is also widely acknowledged that, from print to sound, French graphemes produce quite standard pronunciation (Erler, 2007; Erler & Macaro 2011; Sturm, 2013). Erler's and Macaro's study seems to suggest that UK pupils are often not aware of this. They therefore propose that increasing learners' awareness of this fact might boost motivation:

> …a dialogue may need to be established between teachers and learners that shows that some elements of control over their foreign language learning can be achieved through being instructed to master basic literary skills (such as decoding and word segmentation). This link between pedagogical intervention and self-efficacy has previously been shown to be highly promising.
>
> (Erler & Macaro, 2011, p.512)

This recommendation for practice appears even more logical considering another of the study's findings, namely that pupils' "sense of self-efficacy with decoding in classroom tasks was also linked with their desire to continue with French" (ibid., p.511).

Explicit GPC teaching: an opportunity?

Alongside from its potential benefits for motivation, the research literature suggests that explicit and targeted L2 GPC instruction can yield results in improving pronunciation competencies.

A small-scale research project conducted in the USA has suggested the explicit teaching of French phonics and pronunciation could be "effective in advanced learners" (Sturm, 2013, p.660). This study compared the different levels of progress in pronunciation accuracy made in two small groups of undergraduate students, one enrolled on a semester-long phonetics and pronunciation course, the other on an alternative course. Findings showed that students in the former group performed notably better (Sturm, 2013). A small-scale study conducted by Woore (2007) strengthens these conclusions in a context more pertinent to UK MFL classrooms of younger learners. Comparing the results of a reading aloud test of unknown L2 words between two groups, one of which had received "drip-fed" explicit German phonics instruction within a series of 18 lessons, Woore found "a small but significant improvement in pronunciation accuracy for the experimental group but not the comparison group" (ibid., p.186).

Whilst these small-scale studies can only offer tentative results, they do both suggest there could be good value in explicit phonics teaching. Indeed, either implicitly or explicitly, many other articles reviewed for this piece make the case for more targeted French GPC teaching (Siddons, 2001; Erler, 2007; Woore, 2009; Woore, 2010; Erler & Macaro, 2011).

If the research is pointing so clearly in this direction, why do more UK MFL teachers not incorporate it into their practice? One reason may be the limited time in the pressured MFL curriculum (Woore, 2009, p.15). However, on this point there is encouragement to be taken from Woore's research, in which "skills tests completed by both groups suggested that the experimental

group's gains in pronunciation accuracy had not come at the expense of other aspects of their L2 acquisition" (Woore, 2007, p.186.) One might therefore contend that teachers *can* explicitly teach GPC without it hindering wider learning.

Perhaps a more significant factor in the lack of explicit pronunciation teaching is that, as Woore (2009) states plainly "we still lack evidence concerning the best approach to teaching L2 decoding" (p.15). One suggestion on how it could best be practiced comes from Siddons. He proposes a "multisensory approach" to learning to decode L2, as is used for children with dyslexia who struggle with the same process in L1 (Siddons, 2001, p.12). Assuming the validity of Erler's (2004) conclusion that "what most of the pupils were experiencing as they tried to decode written French was comparable to descriptions of phonological dyslexia" (p.14), it might appear appropriate to take heed of Siddons's proposal.

Emerging research questions

From the literature discussed above, and particularly focusing on the proposals for future research drawn from Siddons (2001) and Erler and Macaro (2011), the following questions appear appropriate to research in the context of this project:

1. To what extent can explicit GPC teaching and learning activities using a "multisensory approach" be effective for pupil learning?

2. To what extent can explicit GPC teaching and learning activities using a "multisensory approach" increase pupil propensity for positive attributions? Can this consequently have an impact on levels of motivation for French?

Methodology

Background to class and research context

This research was conducted with a class of 23 year 10 pupils in a rural comprehensive school in south-east England. The class was timetabled as being of middle to high academic attainment. However, in terms of French competencies, the class might be described as middle to low

attainment. For the past four terms, the main class teacher (who had left the school by the time I arrived as a trainee) had been frequently and intermittently absent on grounds of ill health. Thus pupils had not progressed in their learning as would have been expected. Whilst target grades in the class ranged from C to B, pupil scores in mock GCSE reading tests completed just prior to my teaching intervention fell between grades E and D.

This study can aptly be described as action research. It is typical of this in that it is a "hands-on, small scale research project" (Denscombe, 2007, p.122). I have identified a practical issue in the teaching and learning of MFL and devised, implemented and reflected upon an intervention as a response. The small-scale and localised findings aim to offer points of learning for my own professional development, and to make suggestions for that of others.

Before setting out on my intervention, I was mindful to ensure my research would be ethical. I discussed my research plan with my faculty supervisor and school mentor, who both approved of it, as well as checking it independently against the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education's ethics check-list. In accordance with the guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (2011), I attempted to do no harm and to show respect to all involved in my project. All those taking part in the project did so under the conditions of voluntary, informed consent, and all data collected from them has been totally anonymised. Furthermore, my study attempted to in no way hinder the learning of pupils involved. This project was conducted in the run up to speaking exams, thus attempts to improve pupil pronunciation had direct relevance to learning requirements. Furthermore, there is reason to believe that "drip-fed" phonics teaching does not impact progress in other areas of learning (Woore, 2007, p.186).

Selecting target phonemes

To teach all of the spelling-sound links in French would be too large an aim for this small-scale intervention. Therefore, an initial task of this project was to select the target graphemes and phonemes to be focused upon. In order to select these, I met with the class teacher to discuss up-coming teaching requirements. As part of preparation for pupils' first speaking controlled assessment, we decided firstly upon the sound /e/- focusing on the graphemes "ai" "ais" "ait" "é" "er" and "ez"- and secondly /k/ - represented by the single grapheme "qu".

The rationale for the first phoneme was its role in tense production (consider the past perfect *j'**ai** joué* and imperfect *je jou**ais***). Knowledge of the second phoneme was also considered crucial for the correct enunciation of comparative phrases (plus … **que**), as well as being useful in revision of question words (qui, quel, que, etc.).

Research on "multisensory" teaching

Siddons' (2001) proposal that multisensory teaching might be beneficial in developing pronunciation skills is one of the underpinning rationales of this intervention. As a key concept in my research and practice, it is crucial that this be defined unambiguously at the outset.

Literature from L1 teaching explains: "the term *multisensory* has been used to refer to any learning activity that includes the use of two or more sensory modalities simultaneously to take in or express information" (Birsh, 1999, p.1).

Equally, literature on teaching L2 to students with dyslexia, which frequently advocates multisensory methods, provides a very similar definition: "multisensory methods utilize simultaneous engagement of several sensory channels and the synthesis of stimuli coming from these channels. Thus, teaching reading and spelling is realised by the integration of visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile stimuli" (Nijakowska, 2010, p.viii). It is based on these definitions of multisensory teaching that my intervention was planned and conducted.

Pre-intervention baseline data collection

Before commencing my teaching intervention, it was important to collect baseline data on pupils' ability to correctly pronounce the target graphemes. To gauge this, I took a data from a sample of six students the class teacher and I decided represented the spread of abilities across the class. I judged this to be the best way to strike the balance between having a sample which was both large enough to be representative and meaningful, and small enough to manage, considering restraints of time and resources (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005, p.93). I invited these students to read out two sentences of French which contained many of the target graphemes (see Appendix 1). To analyse this data, I listened meticulously to each of the recordings of pupils and noted whether the target graphemes had been accurately or inaccurately pronounced. This form of data analysis clearly has limitations; it depends on my subjective judgment on French pronunciation as a

researcher, and I am neither a native speaker of French nor an experienced phonetician. Despite this, with the analysis conducted in good faith and considering the time and resource constraints, it appeared to me the most appropriate method of analysis.

Secondly, to collect baseline data on pupil perspectives and attitudes on the areas I intended to teach and research, I distributed anonymous questionnaires to all 23 pupils in the class (see Appendix 2). To ensure this questionnaire was accessible and clear, I included an example question which I explained and modelled to the class (Denscombe, 2007, p.160). At the same time, I included a space for 'additional comments' to give pupils a chance to express deeper views useful for my research evaluation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005, pp.254-255). In an effort to ensure high levels of pupil engagement with the questionnaire, before they completed it I reminded pupils that I was very interested in studying their anonymised views and therefore they should complete the questionnaire as seriously and fully as they could. On analysis, this reminder appears to have been effective: all pre-intervention questionnaires were fully completed and numerous respondents had taken the opportunity to offer additional comments.

Intervention

As with Woore (2007), I decided to "drip-feed" my intervention of explicit phonics teaching into the wider scheme of work. Partially, there were practical pedagogical reasons beyond my research necessitating this: lesson-by-lesson, the class had important language content to learn for an approaching speaking controlled assessment. But equally, I considered that learning would be best consolidated and my findings would be more robust if part of a longer teaching sequence.

In all, my intervention consisted of 7 teaching and learning activities, each lasting circa 15 minutes, taken at the start of each 50 minute lesson. The activities were used as starters both to develop a sense of routine in this sequence of teaching, and for ease of setting-up and distributing resources.

My two initial activities introduced songs, which I devised myself, to acquaint pupils with the two target phonemes. The sound /k/, which I presented to pupils as "kuh" so as not to confuse them with the jargon of the phonetic alphabet, was embedded within a song to the melody of Queen's *Another one Bites the Dust*. Similarly, /e/ which I presented to pupils as "ehy", was set in a song to the tune of Rihanna's *Umbrella*. These songs, which were briefly revisited at several junctures in later lessons, were followed up in five subsequent sessions with a variety of multisensory activities, for

example snap, card sorts and match up activities. All of these resources used printed-out physical resources to engage pupils' sense of touch. Similarly, at every opportunity I was mindful to ensure activities involved active production of phonemes, thus leading to engagement of pupils' auditory and oral senses. For a full and detailed description of my teaching sequence, see Appendix 3.

It was also key to ensure that this sequence of phonics teaching was *explicit*, that is, that pupils knew that they were learning and practising some set conventions of pronunciation. Thus, in each session, in pre- and post-activity class plenary, I used brief Assessment for Learning (AfL) style questioning to bring pupil attention back to the target spelling-sound links. Additionally, I attached to all slides and resources used a specific logo I had designed so pupils might, in their own way, easily recognise each activity as part of the sequence of explicit phonics teaching.

Post-intervention data collection

To measure whether pupils had made discernible progress in learning how to correctly pronounce the target graphemes, after my teaching sequence I invited 6 pupils to once again read out two short sentences containing all of the target graphemes, which I recorded. I analysed these recordings as I had done the baseline data recordings.

It is important to note that, for this round of recordings, I took data from a *different set* of six pupils. This was based on the rationale that, rather than tracking the learning of only a small section of the class, it would be more valid to use data from two different yet similarly representative groups of pupils to see whether I could infer if the pupils across the class *generally* had made progress. As it happened, because one pupil of the second group of 6 pupils whom I invited to take recordings from declined to take part, I invited one pupil from the pre-intervention sample to participate once again as part of the post-intervention recordings group. Therefore, I also obtained data to analyse one example of individual progress in learning.

Additionally, the two sentences I invited pupils to read aloud for the post-intervention were different to those I used in the pre-intervention recordings (see again Appendix 1). This change was made in order to make data analysis easier: I concentrated the /k/ phonemes into the first sentences and the /e/ phonemes into the second. Whilst this did make reviewing the data easier, it brought with it the later disadvantage of not providing me with exactly the same control test data from which to compare how well the post-intervention representative group performed compared to the

pre-intervention group. Despite this oversight, I was still able to make valid use of the data by analysing the *percentages* of the graphemes correctly pronounced by pupils. In both sets of sentences used for pupil recordings, the level and complexity of language was of a similarly accessible level, making comparison between the two data sets reasonable.

Secondly, I also distributed post-intervention anonymous questionnaires to the whole class (see Appendix 4). Compared to the pre-intervention questionnaire, this questionnaire was shorter and more succinct. As Denscombe notes, junior researchers often want to take in as much data as possible and correspondingly produce a long questionnaire, which can have the unintended effect of making it less user-friendly for respondents (Denscombe, 2007, p.161). On re-reading Densombe retrospectively, I realised I had fallen into this trap with my initial questionnaire, so adapted the post-intervention survey accordingly. Likewise, in another adaptation, I judged that it could be of benefit to slightly vary the style and presentation of certain questions. As Denscombe notes, respondents can find repetitive presentation of questions boring, or may fall into the pattern of unthinkingly answering similarly presented questions with the same response every time (ibid., p.165). Once again, I offered space below certain questions for "additional comments" to obtain useful qualitative data. Despite my efforts to ensure the contrary, engagement levels with my post-intervention questionnaire were not quite as high as they had been pre-intervention questionnaire. As will be seen from Figures 5, 6, 7 and 8 later, not all respondents answered every question. However, the vast majority of the class still did answer the vast majority of the Likert scale questions, thus giving me useful data to analyse after the intervention.

To review the above, Table 1 summarises my methods of data collection for each research question.

Research Question	Methods of Data Collection
To what extent can explicit GPC teaching and learning activities using a "multisensory approach" be effective for pupil learning?	-Pre- and post-intervention recordings of pupils pronouncing target graphemes -Class teacher lesson observation notes -My own lesson evaluation notes -Pre- and post-intervention pupil questionnaires
To what extent can explicit GPC teaching and learning activities using a "multisensory approach" increase pupil propensity for positive attributions? Can this consequently have an impact on levels of motivation for French?	-Pre- and post-intervention pupil questionnaires

Table 1: A summary of the project research questions and methods of data collection

Findings

RQ 1: To what extent can explicit GPC teaching and learning activities using a "multisensory approach" be effective for pupil learning?

As outlined in the methodology section, to answer this first research question, we will examine data from three key sources. Firstly, pupil recordings pre- and post-intervention; secondly, data collected by myself in lesson evaluation notes, and the observing teacher in lesson observation notes; and finally both quantitative and qualitative data from pupil questionnaires.

As it offers a comparison of baseline to final levels of performance, arguably the most definitive data on pupil progress occurring from my teaching comes from analysis of pupil recordings taken pre- and post-intervention. As can be seen in Figure 1, in these tests to correctly pronounce graphemes representing /k/ and /e/, there was a notable improvement in performance. Collectively, the pre-intervention sample group correctly pronounced /k/ graphemes 52% of the time. After teaching sequence, the post-intervention sample group correctly pronounced these graphemes in 71% of cases. This is an increase of 19%. Similarly, the pre-intervention sample group had an average successful pronunciation rate of 65% for the 6 target /e/ graphemes. Within the post-intervention sample group, this figure rose to 88%, equating to an even larger performance increase of 23%. Assuming the performance of these two sample groups is truly representative, this would suggest a notable increase in the ability to pronounce the graphemes in pupils across the class.

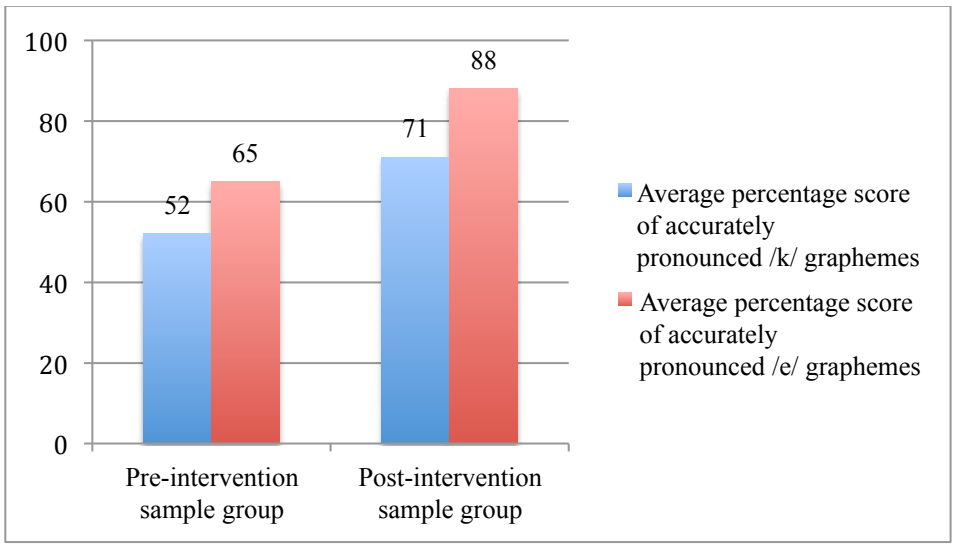

Figure 1: A chart to show average pupil progress in pronunciation of the target graphemes

Such a conclusion is strengthened on examination of the performance of pupil 6. Pupil 6 was the only pupil to have been a member of both the pre- and post-intervention sample groups. Looking at Figure 2, it can be read that he made improvements of 20% and 21% in his rate of successful pronunciation of the /k/ and /e/ graphemes respectively. These positive percentage increases are very similar to those made between the averages of the pre- and post-intervention sample groups. Thus, as data from both single individual and representative group sampling evaluations concur, one might extrapolate to tentatively suggest that levels of pronunciation performance across the class rose by about 20%.

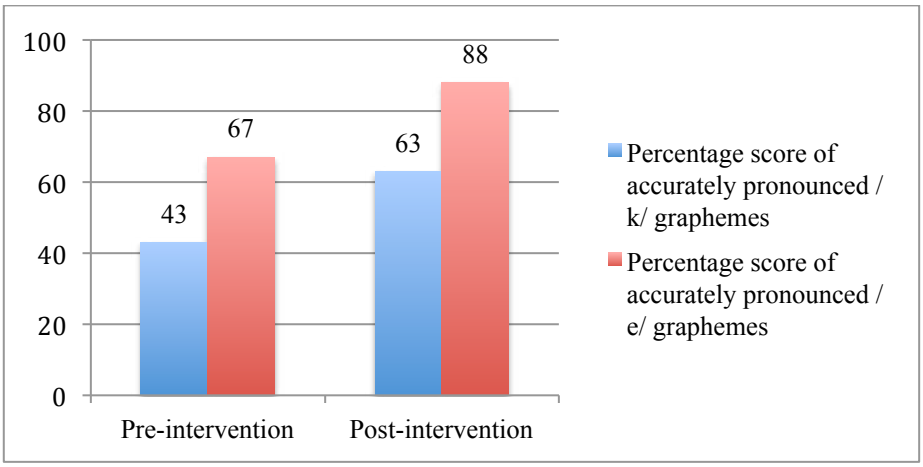

Figure 2: A chart to show the progress of pupil 6 in pronunciation of the target graphemes

A final notable finding from these data comes from examination of the exact breakdown on accurate pronunciation by each pupil (see Appendix 5). Within the post-intervention sample group, certain pupils were able to reach a successful grapheme pronunciation rate of 100%. Pupil 7 achieved this for both the /k/ and /e/ graphemes, as did pupils 9 and 10 for /e/ graphemes. In the pre-intervention sample group, no pupil reached this level of consistently accurate pronunciation; indeed the highest average accurate pronunciation score of any pupil for either grapheme in the pre-intervention group was below 80%. These findings suggest that, as a result of the intervention, *some* pupils were able to learn and master the skill of consistent, accurate pronunciation of the target graphemes, at least in the short-term.

A second form of data that can be used to answer this first research question comes from comments on progressing pupil performance that I made in lesson evaluation notes. In particular, notes from lesson 5 of intervention are useful in this regard. Here I commented that, for the tongue twister/ poem jigsaw activity, as I circulated to eavesdrop on pupil pronunciation "all but 1 (out of about

7/8) pronounced target graphemes correctly". Similarly, I noted that one pupil had the confidence to read out her and her partner's tongue twister in front of the whole class, doing so with accurate pronunciation. Finally, when presenting a gist summary of their poem (there were 3 different tongue twisters/ poems in circulation between pairs, for differentiation), another pair "referenced the words 'parler' and 'exister' confidently and with good pronunciation". These notes, as a sample of the lesson-by-lesson results of teaching and learning activities, demonstrate evidence of pupil learning on a piecemeal basis throughout the sequence.

Finally, a third angle from which to approach this research question is pupil perception on their learning. As Figures 3 and 4 show, *all* pupils declared that they felt more confident in pronouncing the two target graphemes in the post-intervention questionnaire.

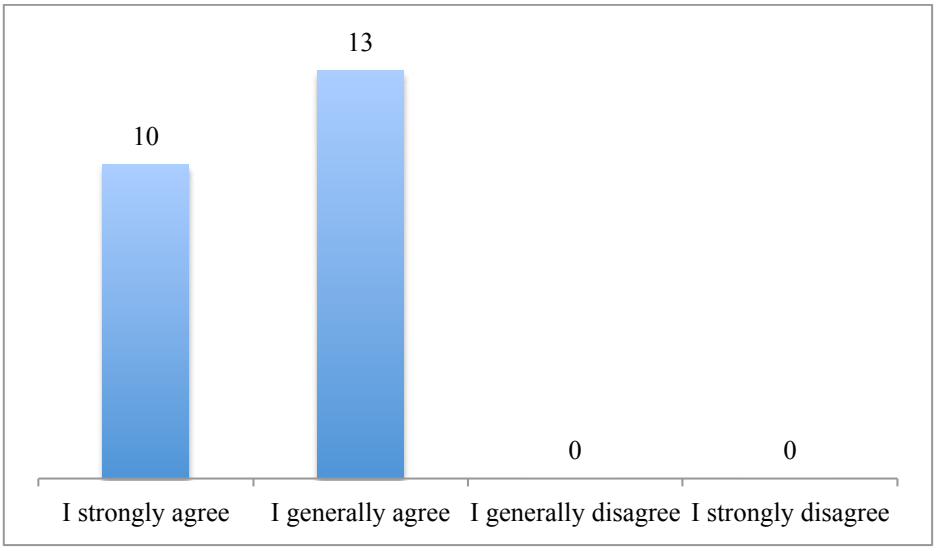

Figure 3: Post-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to the statement:
'Compared to before recent lessons on pronunciation,
I now feel more confident pronouncing "qu" when I see it written in French.'

In addition to this, as can be read in Appendix 6, results from post-intervention questionnaires show that all pupils found the series of activities either "quite" or "very" enjoyable, and 90% found them either "quite" or "very" useful for their learning. In particular, pupils appeared to find the songs very helpful for their learning. This is demonstrated in Figure 5.

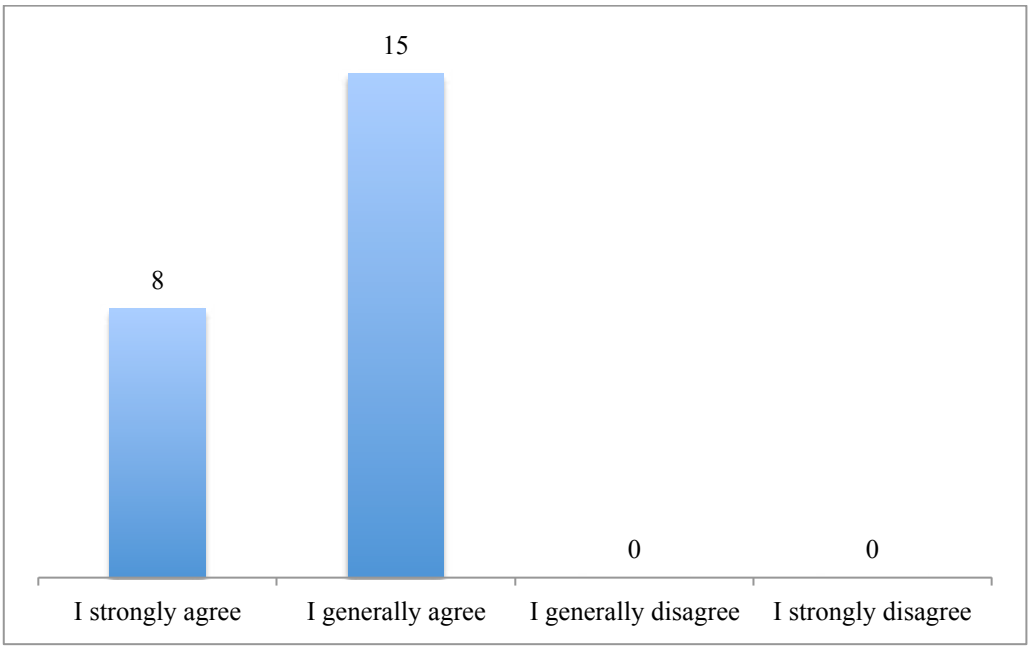

Figure 4: Post-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to the statement: 'Compared to before recent lessons on pronunciation, I now feel more confident pronouncing "ai" "ais" "ait" "é" "er" and "ez" when I see these groups of letters written in French.

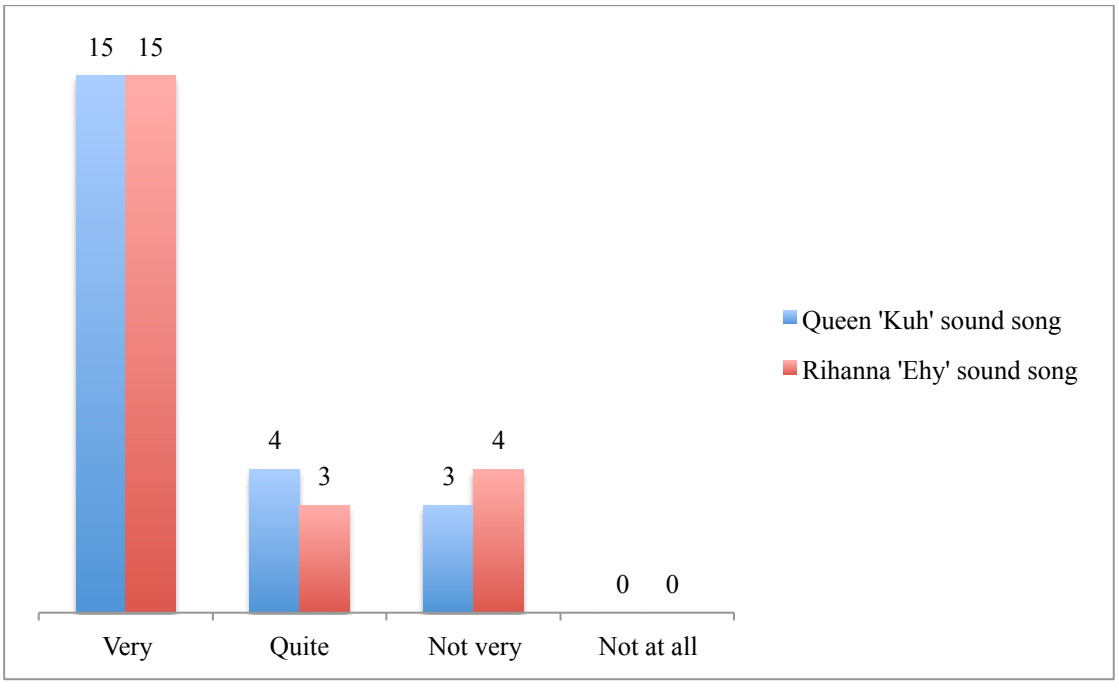

Figure 5: Post-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to statements on how useful they found the songs used in the intervention for learning and practising pronunciation

This sense of pupil enjoyment of the activities is also attested to in lesson observation notes. In notes from activity 6 of the intervention, the class teacher quoted ad verbatim a comment from one pupil who declared in front of the whole class, in TL, that the snap activity was "très amusant".

RQ 2: To what extent can explicit GPC teaching and learning activities using a "multisensory approach" increase pupil propensity for positive attributions? Can this consequently have an impact on levels of motivation for French?

As stated above, researching motivation is a complex undertaking (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). To reiterate, within the constraints of this small-scale study, I assumed an attribution theory model, and thus limit my focus to indicators within this framework. Particularly, based on the suggestion of Erler and Macaro (2011), I intended to focus on whether explicit teaching of GPC can increase positive attributions towards learning French pronunciation. That is, could my intervention foster in the pupils the conviction that it is within their control to learn, practice and improve upon their French pronunciation? This leads on to the wider question of the extent to which this can impact on general levels of motivation for French. Findings for this research question come from analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data from pupil questionnaires completed both pre- and post-intervention.

Post-intervention questionnaire data suggests that the propensity for adaptive attributions within the class increased as a result of this intervention. Looking at Figure 6, we note that 21 out of 22 pupils felt more confident that French pronunciation could be learned and improved with practice after the sequence.

However, this increased propensity for adaptive attributions with regards pronunciation did not translate into immediately apparent higher level of motivation for French generally. With Erler and Macaro (2011) taking pupils' self-perceptions on the likelihood of them continuing with French as an indicator of motivation for the subject, on examination of Figure 7, it appears that this GPC teaching sequence did not drastically improve general levels of motivation for French.

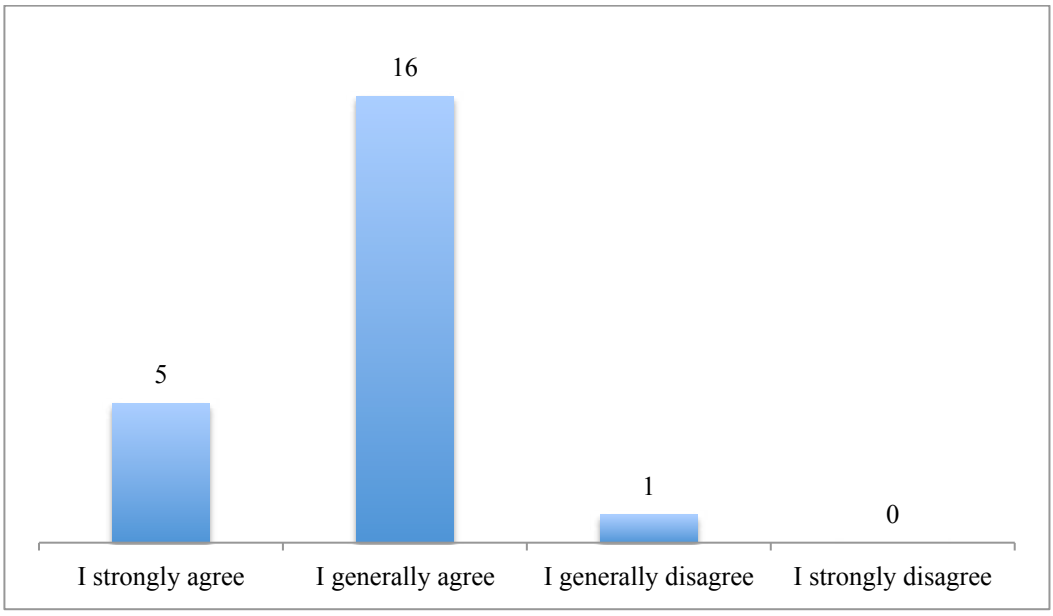

Figure 6: Post-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to the statement: 'Compared to before recent lessons on pronunciation, I now feel more sure that you can learn and improve your French pronunciation if you try.'

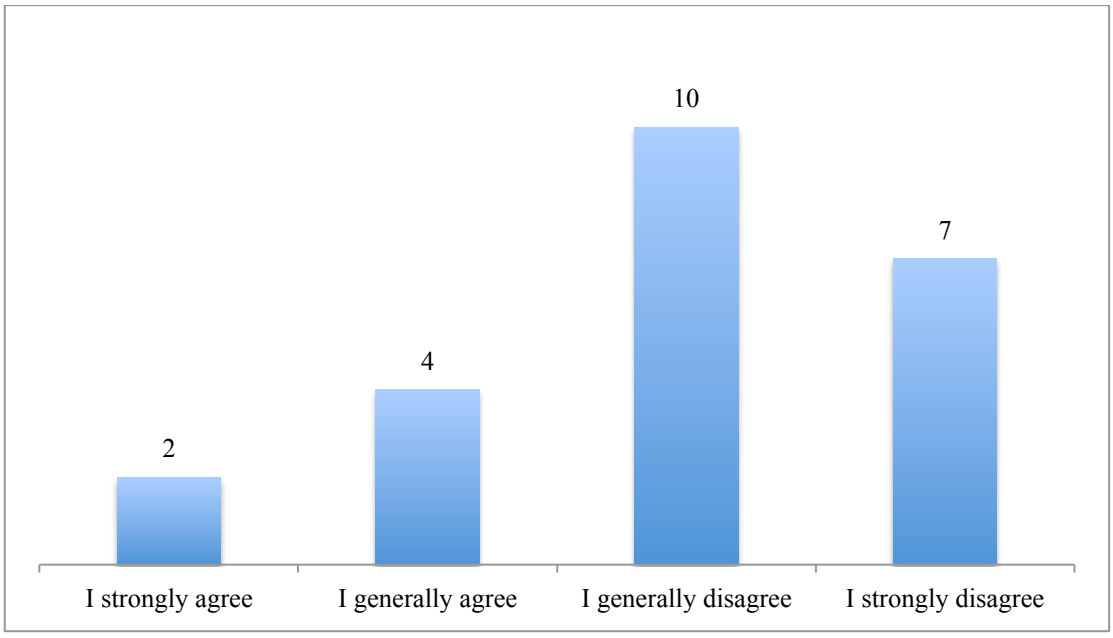

Figure 7: Post-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to the statement: 'Compared to before recent lessons on pronunciation, I now think it is more likely that I will keep studying French beyond GCSE, or outside of school.'

This may be related to the finding that pupils do not overwhelmingly link the ability to correctly pronounce the language with their motivation to learn French. Looking at the spread of responses in Figure 8, it appears there is no great consensus that pronunciation skills are linked to motivation.

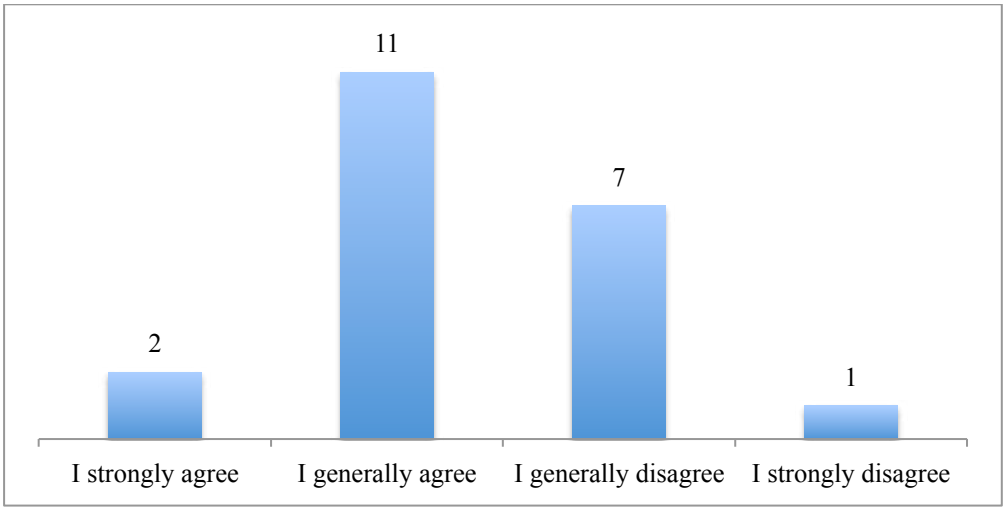

Figure 8: Post-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to the statement: 'My motivation to learn French is linked to how well I can pronounce the language when I see it written down.'

Even for those respondents who do suggest that their desire to learn French is linked to how well they can pronounce the language, we cannot immediately postulate that this is a *significant* motivational factor: there may be many others which play a larger role. Figure 9 confirms this.

Responses suggesting a general lack of motivation

"No"
"Nope"
"No"
"No, I won't need the French skill"

Responses naming factors beyond explicit GPC knowledge

"Travelling"
"I love learning a new language"
"Only so it looks good on my CV"
"Being able to write in French e.g. writing in the future tense"

Figure 9: Post-intervention pupil questionnaire comments in response to the question: 'Are there other factors in your motivation to learn French?'

Looking at all of the responses given by pupils on other factors affecting their motivation to learn French, we note that there are clearly other factors at play. Equally, some pupils give the impression of having low levels of motivation beyond any issues of GPC.

Post-intervention data therefore suggests GPC teaching can be effective in promoting adaptive attributions. However, the overall effect on general levels of motivation appears to be very marginal.

The premise supporting the hypothesis that explicit GPC teaching might improve positive attributions was based on reading Erler and Macaro (2011). In their study, a significant proportion of pupils found French "foreign and weird". This, they suggested, increased likelihood for maladaptive attributions. Contrary to this, data from my pre-intervention questionnaire strongly suggests that pupils in this study *already had* a positive sense both that French pronunciation is learnable, and that it is within their power to make this happen.

Firstly, looking at Figure 10, we see that before the intervention pupils in the class already generally believed that French has a clear and trustable system of pronunciation.

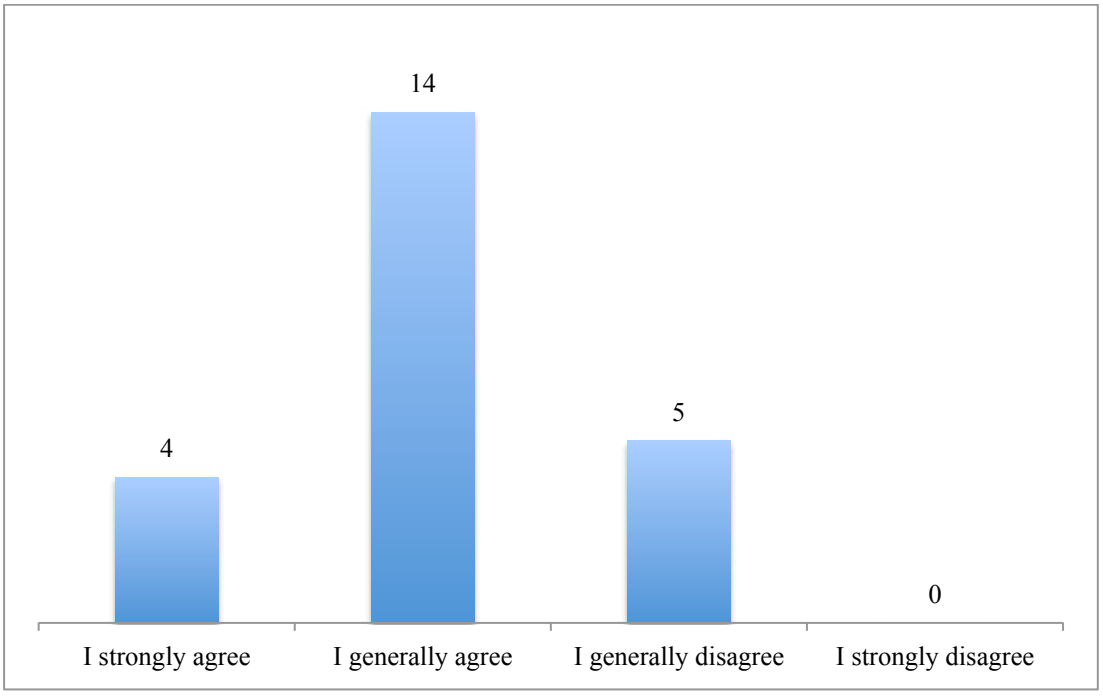

Figure 10: Pre-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to the statement:
'French has a clear system of pronunciation.
If you see certain letters, you pronounce them in a certain way.'

Secondly, Figure 11 suggests pupils also began the study with a strong belief that French pronunciation could be learnt successfully, despite living in a non-French speaking country. The additional comments five pupils contributed to this question, listed in Figure 12, reaffirm the sense of self-efficacy towards learning French pronunciation typical of many pupils within this class.

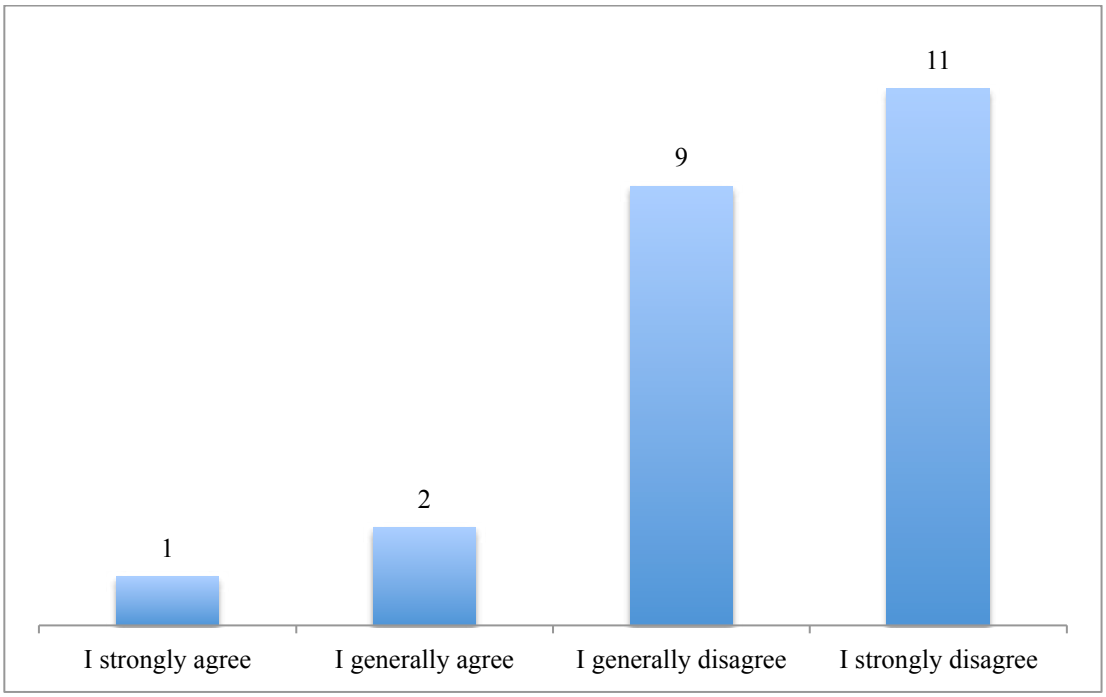

Figure 11: Pre-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to the statement: 'To know how to pronounce French you have to be French, or to have lived in a French-speaking country for a long time.'

"Anyone can learn… they just have to put their mind to it"

"To have a French accent but not pronunciation"

"You can learn it and become good at it"

"People can learn it"

"We can teach ourselves"

Figure 12: Pre-intervention pupil questionnaire additional comments in response to the statement: 'To know how to pronounce French you have to be French, or to have lived in a French-speaking country for a long time.'

Finally, Figure 13 most evidently confirms pupils' pre-intervention sense of self-efficacy and propensity for positive attributions with regards French pronunciations. Only one pupil out of the class of 23 gave a negative response to the suggestion that one could learn and practice French pronunciation to make improvements.

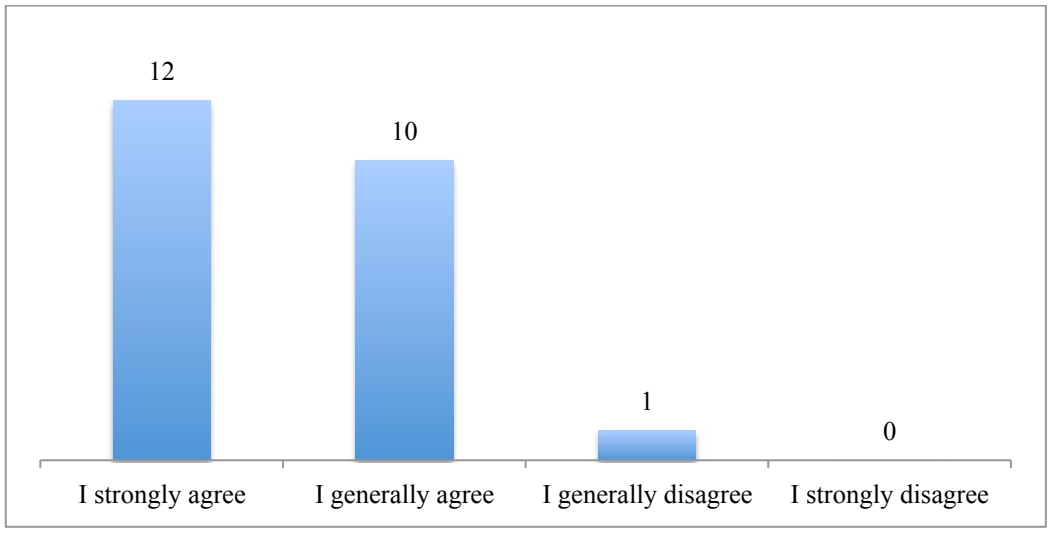

Figure 13: Pre-intervention pupil questionnaire responses to the statement:
'I think if I learnt and practiced French pronunciation more, I could get better at it.'

These findings suggest that the premise which laid the foundation for the theoretical argument this RQ set out to test might not have applied to this class. How that affected the research will require further discussion below.

Discussion

The findings outlined above appear to suggest that multisensory teaching methods can improve pupil decoding abilities. Most significantly, pupil recordings offer evidence of marked improvement in accurate grapheme production abilities, and pupils declared themselves more confident in pronouncing the graphemes post-intervention.

There are of course significant limitations to the data which lead to this conclusion. Most notably, the sample groups for the recordings were very small. Incidental circumstances, such as one pupil underperforming due to a simple lack of concentration, could have impacted the findings significantly. What is more, the findings rely on the two small representative sample groups used

being truly representative both times, and, as discussed in the methodology, there may have been issues arising from the fact that the two groups had different sentences to read out. As for pupils' increased confidence in their decoding abilities, it may be that some considered the post-intervention questionnaire a test of their learning and thus felt pressured into giving positive answers.

Also, one can question whether it was specifically the multisensory nature of activities which led to progress being made. Woore (2007) and Sturm (2013) both found that explicit GPC teaching could improve learner performance in L2 pronunciation. One might therefore contend that it was simply GPC teaching, irrespective of the method used, that was the real driving force behind pupil progress.

Yet such limitations are common in a small-scale research projects. Perhaps the fairest conclusion to be drawn is that this study offers some initial and provisional real-world data to strengthen Siddons' (2001) suggestion that multisensory teaching might well be an effective pedagogical tool in improving pupil FL decoding skills. It is clear that further, larger-scale research must be conducted to confirm this. To be more conclusive, this research would need to be carried out over a longer time period and compared against a control group, possibly receiving non-multisensory GPC teaching. It should also include the teaching and testing of additional graphemes and phonemes beyond the two trialled here, as well as investigating whether positive results are retained over the long-term.

An important finding as regards this first RQ was that pupils generally enjoyed and found useful the multisensory phonics teaching activities. This echoes Woore's (2007) findings from a small-scale action research project aiming to improve pupil decoding skills, in which "poems forming the cornerstone of the GPC training were extremely popular with learners" (p.186). The present study therefore adds weight to the idea that the introduction of GPC training, using multisensory or other pioneering methods, might be effective in adding a sense of fun, enjoyment and engagement into MFL classrooms. Of course this sense of fun attested to in this study might have come from elsewhere. For example, perhaps it was the large degree of group and pair-work in learning activities that pupils appreciated. However, if it can be more conclusively proven that specifically GPC training activities can be fun for pupils, as well as effective for their learning, why not exploit this method further?

Findings also suggested that the GPC songs were by the far the activities most highly valued by pupils when asked to assess what helped their learning. This poses the question: are oral and auditory the most important and effective senses to engage in multisensory teaching of decoding skills? If further research can lead to a more precise response, the effectiveness of this form of teaching could be increased further.

As regards the second RQ, findings suggest that such an explicit GPC teaching sequence can positively impact on propensity for positive attributions. Post-intervention, all pupils stated that they were more confident pronouncing the target graphemes. For almost all pupils this translated into a stronger conviction that pronunciation is learnable in a wider sense.

However, there are important limitations to these findings. It is reasonable to suggest that pupils were biased towards answering these questions positively. Firstly, the phrasing of both these key questions in the post-intervention survey suggested a positive response. Secondly, pupils may have felt that to give a negative response would be an admission of little or no progress. Certainly, if we consider that I, as the teacher, had been explicit in telling the class that pronunciation could be learnt and that we were going to prove this with two example sounds, pupils might have felt obliged to answer in accordance with this learning point.

Even despite these limitations, the suggested positive impact on pupil attributions did *not* subsequently have large impact on general motivation for French. What is more, those pupils stating that their motivation for French had grown could have been affected by other factors. Some might have enjoyed the interactive nature of the activities, the novelty of being taught by a new teacher, or many other reasons, rather than because of a build-up of adaptive attributions. In essence, we must remember that motivation is large and complex area (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). It is most probable therefore that explicit GPC teaching alone is not the silver bullet to solving problems of secondary school pupil motivation for MFL, acute in many UK classrooms (Erler & Macaro, 2011).

However, this does not mean it has no role to play. Further research might be done on the extent to which GPC knowledge is a motivational factor for learning French. That is, do UK pupils find it particularly de-motivating that they face problems in L2 decoding comparable to having dyslexia (Erler, 2004), or does this pale in significance compared to other factors affecting motivation for this subject? Pupil questionnaire data collected for this study could not begin to properly suggest an

answer to this question. Use of in-depth pupil interviews might have helped to provide more information. However, even with additional data, such a complex issue would arguably have been beyond the scope of such a small study in any case.

As has been noted, the premise for assuming an attribution theory of motivation was based on Erler's and Macaro's (2011) suggestion that pupil lack of trust in the French decoding process might be contributing to maladaptive attributions. As such, a key component of this intervention was to explicitly demonstrate to pupils the clear process behind French decoding. That is, that a specific grapheme is always pronounced as a specific phoneme in French. However, already in analysis of the baseline data, the premise upon which this research question was founded began to be called into question. Findings from pre-intervention questionnaires suggested that the majority of pupils involved in this study did not believe French GPC was by nature unclear or unreasonable. Nor did they have low levels of self-efficacy or a high propensity to maladaptive attributions as regards learning French pronunciation. Given these background beliefs and attitudes of the class, the extent to which my second RQ could be effectively tested and answered might have been limited from the outset. It may therefore prove fruitful to repeat such a study with a class which is known to have lower initial levels of self-efficacy and propensity to adaptive attributions. Erler's and Macaro's (2011) research, finding low levels of trust in the consistency of the French GPC system was conducted with KS3 pupils. Perhaps it would be useful to focus attention on this age group of learners in devising a new study.

Conclusion and Recommendations

As Woore (2009) has summarized, there is "clear picture [of] poor L2 French decoding proficiency and of poor progress in this area" (p.14). In my early teaching practice, I have found this view from research to be widely agreed with by teaching professionals and my own emerging professional judgment. This study set out to test Siddon's (2001) proposal that multisensory teaching of GPC might be part of the answer to this problem. From early reading, this suggestion seemed judicious considering that the experience of KS3 UK pupils decoding French is often "comparable to descriptions of phonological dyslexia" (Erler, 2004, p.13) and that multisensory teaching methods are known to be an effective remedy for this condition in L1 (Birsh, 1999).

Despite its limitations as a small-scale project conducted by an early career researcher, this study now provides an initial piece of real-world evidence for the effectiveness of multisensory teaching methods in advancing L2 GPC skills.

Of course, further research needs to be conducted to confirm this. Such research might also tackle the question of which specific elements of multisensory teaching can be most effective. For example, are interactive songs truly as useful for learning GPC as pupils in this study suggested they were?

It may take time for research to build up a wider evidence-base on the effectiveness of multisensory GPC teaching. In the meantime, considering the success I have observed trialling this in my own practice, I will continue to use this method to improve pupil decoding skills. I would urge other practitioners to do so also.

Equally, I would encourage colleagues to pioneer other novel forms of GPC teaching. Considering the generally poor and stagnant condition of pupil GPC knowledge (Erler, 2004; Woore, 2010), it is imperative teachers research and develop practice to find solutions to this. This will prove even more important in coming years considering the emphasis on spontaneous speaking skills in the current national curriculum (DfE, 2013). If we expect pupils to speak spontaneously, they must feel they are equipped with the basic tools of pronunciation to do so.

But specific national curriculum requirements come and go. If, as Erler and Macaro (2011) surmised, pupil lack of confidence in the ability to learn proper pronunciation has a negative impact on motivation, then this is a deeper problem. This study has shown that GPC training might well have positive effect on adaptive attributions, and thus that it *could* play a role in improving general motivation levels. Even if it is small, the gains made could be significant considering the low levels of motivation for MFL in UK school pupils (Erler & Macaro, 2011). Not only this study but also Woore (2007) suggest that introducing GPC teaching activities might also offer an added source of fun and enjoyment to the MFL classroom. Surely this too can do no harm to motivation levels.

Perhaps most importantly, teaching practitioners need to remain confident that pupils decoding skills *can* be improved by targeted measures. That this is possible is a clear learning point to be taken from this action research study. If we are going to teach pupils that it is within their control to learn pronunciation, we must remember that it is within ours to teach them such skills and positive

attitudes. Thus, moving forward with the increasingly important issue of FL GPC skills, the attitude must be, given the opportunity, "so many kids **can** manage proper pronunciation."

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APPENDIX 1

Sentences read out by pupils for pre- and post-intervention recordings

Pre-intervention sentences

1. Quand j'aurai quinze ans je quitterai l'école pour passer du temps quelque part en Québec.

2. Est-ce qu'il le saurait si j'avais piqué son nez?

Post-intervention sentences

1. Quand quelqu'un te quitte, tu te questionnes pourquoi et pour quelle raison.

2. Lorsqu'il était en train de parler avec Monsieur Duppelais, je lui ai échappé sous son nez.

APPENDIX 2

Pre-intervention pupil questionnaire

On the following pages, you will read a number of statements to do with learning French.

For each statement, circle the number on the scale below it to indicate to what extent you agree with the statement

1= I strongly agree
2 = I generally agree
3 = I generally disagree
4 = I strongly disagree

Offer any additional comments on your answer in the box below each statement (for example, why did you circled the number you did? Were there bits of the question where you weren't sure what it meant?)

Here is an example question do to together before we start:

Example question: **"I would describe pizza as my favourite food".**

I strongly agree	*I generally agree*	*I generally disagree*	*I strongly disagree*
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

Additional comments on your answer?

PART A

Question 1: **"If I see a French word written down, I would normally feel confident saying it aloud to myself"**

I strongly agree	*I generally agree*	*I generally disagree*	*I strongly disagree*
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

Additional comments on your answer?

Question 2: **"I feel confident reading French aloud in front of the class"**

I strongly agree	*I generally agree*	*I generally disagree*	*I strongly disagree*
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

Additional comments on your answer?

PART B

Question 3: **"I have been taught a lot about how to pronounce French before"**

I strongly agree	*I generally agree*	*I generally disagree*	*I strongly disagree*
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

Additional comments on your answer?

PART C

Question 4: **"French has a clear system of pronunciation. If you see certain letters, you pronounce them in a certain way"**

I strongly agree	*I generally agree*	*I generally disagree*	*I strongly disagree*
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

Additional comments on your answer?

Question 5: **"To know how to pronounce French you have be French, or to have lived in a French-speaking country for a long time"**

I strongly agree	*I generally agree*	*I generally disagree*	*I strongly disagree*
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

Additional comments on your answer?

PART D

Question 6: **"I think if I learnt and practiced French pronunciation more, I could get a lot better at it."**

I strongly	*I generally agree*	*I generally disagree*	*I strongly disagree*
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

Additional comments on your answer?

PART E

Question 8: **"I like learning when tasks involve more than one sense. (For example, reading cards and matching them up using your hands, or listening to sounds and seeing them written down)."**

I strongly agree *I generally agree* *I generally disagree* *I strongly disagree*

1 **2** **3** **4**

Additional comments on your answer?

Question 9: **"I can remember learning French pronunciation doing tasks which involve more than one sense."**

I strongly agree *I generally agree* *I generally disagree* *I strongly disagree*

1 **2** **3** **4**

Additional comments on your answer?

Question 10: **"I think it would be a good idea to do activities which involve more than one sense to practice French pronunciation"**

I strongly agree *I generally agree* *I generally disagree* *I strongly disagree*

1 **2** **3** **4**

Additional comments on your answer?

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY

APPENDIX 3

Overview of intervention teaching and learning activities

Lesson	1	2	3	4
Activity	Introduction of "Kuh" sound song to melody of Queen's *Another one Bites the Dust*. Lyrics: "Qui, quel, que, quoi, quand qu'est-ce que c'est?" Pupils practice associating graphemes with phonemes by pointing at A3 print-outs of graphemes stuck on classroom walls while singing song.	Introduction of "Ehy" sound song to melody of Rihanna's *Umbrella.* Lyrics: "Under my umbrella, ella, ella –ai, -ais, -ait, under my umbrella ella ella ella –er –é, -ez, under my umbrella, ella, ella, -ai –ais –ais, under my umbrella, ella, ella –ai, -ais, -ait, er –é, -ez" Pupils practice associating graphemes with phonemes by pointing at A3 print-outs of graphemes stuck on classroom walls while singing song.	Dingbats style pair-work activity to match sequences of pictures which, when said in English, produce phonetically a French word. E.g. picture of a cat followed by a picture of rowing oars = "quatorze" a Extension: Pupils produce their own sequences of images which, when said in English, produce phonetically a French word. E.g. picture of a car followed by a picture of water = "quota"	"Tarsia" jigsaw activity in which pupils, in groups, match together TL words containing key graphemes with symbols of phonemes produced on saying them ("kuh" or "ehy")

Lesson	5	6	7
Activity	Tongue twister/ poem jigsaw pair-work activity. Pupils put together pieces of jigsaw to reproduce the text of a French tongue twister/ poem. They then highlight the key graphemes class has been working on and practice saying the tongue twister/ poem with their partner.	Pronunciation snap, played in pairs. Pupils have to say TL words on cards as they place them on the table. They additionally shout out the target phoneme ("kuh" or "ehy") if they have spotted a matching grapheme pair in subsequent words.	"Darts and dominoes" game. Scoring from a darts board with key graphemes written onto each segment, pupils try to collect as many points as they can by saying to their partner a TL word using the grapheme identified on the segment aimed for.

APPENDIX 4

Post-intervention pupil questionnaire

Please answer the following questions relating to the French pronunciation work you have been doing in recent lessons

1. How ***enjoyable*** did you find the following activities done in lessons? Tick the box that best suits your view

	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all	I was absent
Activity 1: Queen 'Kuh" sound song					
Activity 2: Rihanna 'Eh" sound song					
Activity 3: Picture/ sound match up					
Activity 4 : Triangle card sort					
Activity 5: Jigsaws of French poems					
Activity 6: Sound snap					
Activity 7: Sound darts					
All of the above activities together as a whole series					

2. How ***useful for learning and practising French pronunciation*** did you find the following activities done in lessons? Tick the box that best suits your view

	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all	I was absent
Activity 1: Queen 'Kuh" sound song					
Activity 2: Rihanna 'Eh" sound song					
Activity 3: Picture/ sound match up					
Activity 4 : Triangle card sort					
Activity 5: Jigsaws of French poems					
Activity 6: Sound snap					
Activity 7: Sound darts					
All of the above activities together as a whole series					

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Circle the number which best suits your view

Statement 1: *"Compared to before recent lessons on pronunciation, I now feel more confident pronouncing "au" when I see it written in French."*

I strongly agree	I generally agree	I generally disagree	I strongly disagree
1	2	3	4

Additional comments

Statement 2: *"Compared to before recent lessons on pronunciation, I now feel more confident pronouncing "ai" "ais" "ait" "é" "er" and "ez" when I see these groups of letters written in French."*

I strongly agree	I generally agree	I generally disagree	I strongly disagree
1	2	3	4

Additional comments

Statement 3: *"Compared to before recent lessons on pronunciation, I now feel more sure that you can learn and improve your French pronunciation if you try."*

I strongly agree	I generally agree	I generally disagree	I strongly disagree
1	2	3	4

Additional comments

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Circle the number which best suits your view

Statement 4: *"Compared to before recent lessons on pronunciation, I now think it is more likely that I will keep studying French beyond GCSE, or outside of school."*

I strongly agree	I generally agree	I generally disagree	I strongly disagree
1	2	3	4

Additional comments

Statement 5: *"My motivation to learn French is linked to how well I can pronounce the language when I see it written down."*

I strongly agree	I generally agree	I generally disagree	I strongly disagree
1	2	3	4

Additional comments

Are there other factors in your motivation to learn French?

Would you like to make any other comments on this series of activities on French pronunciation? Or on French pronunciation and learning French more widely?

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY

APPENDIX 5

Tables summarizing results of pre- and post-intervention pupil recordings

Pre-intervention

Pupil	Percentage of /k/ graphemes pronounced correctly (total= 7)	Percentage of /e/ graphemes pronounced correctly (total= 9)
Pupil 1	*43*	*78*
Pupil 2	*43*	*67*
Pupil 3	*71*	*78*
Pupil 4	*57*	*44*
Pupil 5	*57*	*56*
Pupil 6	*43*	*67*
Average of 6 pupils	*52*	*65*

Post-intervention

Pupil	Percentage of /k/ graphemes pronounced correctly (total= 8)	Percentage of /e/ graphemes pronounced correctly (total= 8)
Pupil 6	*63*	*88*
Pupil 7	*100*	*100*
Pupil 8	*50*	*50*
Pupil 9	*88*	*100*
Pupil 10	*63*	*100*
Pupil 11	*63*	*88*
Average of 6 pupils	*71*	*88*

APPENDIX 6

Tables summarizing pupil post-intervention questionnaire responses

How ***enjoyable*** did you find the following activities done in lessons? Tick the box that best suits your view

	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all	I was absent
Activity 1: Queen "Kuh" sound song	43%	43%	5%	9%	0%
Activity 2: Rihanna "Ehy" sound song	35%	55%	0%	10%	0%
Activity 3: Picture/ sound match up	14%	64%	9%	0%	13%
Activity 4 : Triangle card sort	38%	33%	24%	0%	5%
Activity 5: Jigsaws of French poems	24%	47%	24%	0%	5%
Activity 6: Sound snap	9%	48%	26%	4%	13%
Activity 7: Sound darts	26%	53%	13%	4%	4%
All of the above activities together as a whole series	19%	81%	0%	0%	0%

How ***useful for learning and practising French pronunciation*** did you find the following activities done in lessons? Tick the box that best suits your view

	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all	I was absent
Activity 1: Queen "Kuh" sound song	68%	18%	14%	0%	0%
Activity 2: Rihanna "Ehy" sound song	68%	14%	18%	0%	0%
Activity 3: Picture/ sound match up	23%	46%	18%	0%	13%
Activity 4 : Triangle card sort	14%	57%	24%	0%	5%
Activity 5: Jigsaws of French poems	20%	35%	40%	0%	5%
Activity 6: Sound snap	23%	46%	18%	0%	13%
Activity 7: Sound darts	24%	43%	19%	10%	4%
All of the above activities together as a whole series	15%	75%	5%	5%	0%