

Engaging with others to identify areas of learning.

Nicholas Mark Page¹

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates how a **community of practice** of twelve collaborating Modern Foreign Languages teachers can improve students' literacy levels in the target language and develop learner autonomy. The group of practitioners identified reading as a neglected skill as students and teachers alike consider it to be easier than listening, speaking and writing. The community of practice agreed that taking a phonics approach in reading promotes fluency, which enabled me to create a multipurpose **intervention** which combined **reading aloud** with **reading comprehension** over a series of lessons. The twelve practitioners agreed that the impact of this intervention would be measured by analysing the results of a **student questionnaire** and by collecting samples of learners' work. By reading aloud relatable, authentic texts, students enjoyed reading, confidently interpreted longer texts and improved their pronunciation.

¹ Nicholas Mark Page, Head of French, Dixons Academies Trust, email: nicholasmarkpage@gmail.com

1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to evaluate how a community of practice of twelve collaborating Modern Foreign Languages teachers can improve students' literacy levels in the target language and develop learner autonomy. A community of practice can be defined as a 'group of teachers who are engaged in achieving a common goal, share to a certain degree a set of values, norms, and orientations towards learning, and operate collaboratively with structures that foster students' independence' (Van Maanen & Barley, 1984, p. 287). As well as promoting learners' autonomy, such collaborative cultures create 'engaging classroom environments, where students ask questions, share ideas and understanding, and construct meaningful knowledge' (Jolliffe, 2015, p. 1). These conditions result in higher levels of achievement for students (Goddard, 2010) and offer the potential for 'transformative' professional development for teachers (Pounder, 1999).

This professional community of teachers collaborated to design their own literacy interventions appropriate to their school contexts, making decisions about them from their collaboration calls. The group of practitioners identified reading as 'a neglected skill, as teachers consider it to be easier than the other skills and pupils believe they are stronger in it than they are' (Wilson, 2014, p. 10) and according to Ofsted, the teaching of reading is a 'weakness in many schools', with 'schools often limiting reading materials to short texts found in textbooks or past examination papers' (Ofsted, 2011, p. 44). However, the professional community agreed that using authentic texts full of 'serious language' in the second language (L2), which is a language that is easily relatable to the learners' daily lives, 'making it full of force and meaning, giving them the drive to use it' (Hawkins, 1987, p. 220), would enable learners to enjoy reading, and confidently interpret longer texts within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1997). Ensuring that authentic texts are personally relevant to the learners in this 'socially structured setting' (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 172) would increase students' engagement in lessons (Bower, 2019), and there would be an improved comprehension and attitude to reading (Macaro, 2008), but the importance of phonics could not be ignored.

The community of practitioners also agreed that a phonics approach is more likely to promote fluency in L2, so I decided to focus my intervention on reading aloud. Being able to read aloud is an early achievement in first language (L1) acquisition for most learners, and 'it could be regarded as somewhat odd if a person, literate in that language, could not read aloud in a comprehensible way' (Gibson, 2008, p. 33). My experience in the classroom and relevant literature shows that learners enjoy reading aloud in L2 because 'they feel like the objective is not to perform, but rather to practise pronunciation and achieve comprehension' (Stevick, 1989, p. 108), even if their attitudes differ towards the target language (Macaro, 2008). Some pupils at my school are reluctant to practise pronunciation in speaking activities or orally contribute to whole class discussions about comprehension, but reading aloud is 'a way of reducing communication anxiety' (Foss, 1988, p. 409), and such a controlled, imitative activity can make students feel 'secure enough to make their first utterances' (Gibson, 2008, p. 32). However, the community of practice agreed that 'comprehension can sometimes be compromised by reading aloud' (Gibson, 2008, p. 33), and so it

should not be its sole purpose. This powerful collaborative conversation, in which colleagues were engaged in sharing ‘goals, strategies, materials, questions, concerns, and results’ (Dufour, 2004, p. 4), enabled me to create my own intervention appropriate to my school context.

The academy will be referred to as ‘School X’ so that the establishment and its pupils remain anonymous. Most of the student cohort live in a ward which is in the most deprived quintile nationally (Southwark Council, 2017). 40% of pupils have a reading age which is below their actual age (school data for School X, 2021) and keeping students engaged in lessons is the school’s main challenge (Appendix 6). This challenging school context and the discussions from the collaboration calls enabled me to create a highly engaging intervention which focused on reading aloud to improve learners’ pronunciation and their general comprehension of authentic texts in the target language. The twelve practitioners agreed that the impact of this intervention would be measured by analysing the results of a student questionnaire and by collecting samples of learners’ work.

In the first part of this study, I will conduct a literature review of the collaboration and learning theories relevant to my approach in the classroom. I will then analyse the community of practice which has made positive contributions to this intervention. I will then evaluate the impact of this intervention before I consider the implications for future practice.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The fundamental theories for my sequence of lessons are Hawkins’s concept of serious language (Hawkins, 1987), Bower’s motivation model (Bower, 2019) and Gibson’s (2008) and Stevick’s (1989) analyses of reading aloud.

As well as second language acquisition theories, Harris’s analysis of a ‘culture of trust enhances performance’ (2013, p. 1) in communities of practice has also influenced my teaching and vision. Harris states that ‘leaders create the organisational conditions necessary for teachers to engage in collaborative relationships’ (2013, p. 25), and this seems particularly relevant to this study as Teach First (TF) and the Institute of Education (IOE) at University College London created these organisational conditions, by arranging collaboration calls for the community of practice and distributing formal guidance to its members. This structured setting has enabled members to engage in ‘open and honest conversations to reflect on their practices and identify ways in which they can improve’ (Harris, 2013, p. 27). Yet, this culture of trust is lacking at School X due to the organisational conditions of the Continuing Professional Development programme (CPD), which have created weak ‘social capital’ (Harris, 2013, p. 12) as relationships among teachers are not characterised by ‘high trust and frequent interaction’ (Harris, 2013, p. 25). Harris’s analysis is highly relevant in this study as the weak social capital at School X has not enabled me to confidently engage in conversations with other colleagues about this intervention, which has made me question the purpose of a professional learning community.

Literature produced by Dufour (2014) was highly relevant to this collaborative study, as he explains the purpose and goals of an ideal community of practice. Dufour (2014, p. 1) states that, ‘to create a

professional learning community, focus on learning rather than teaching’ and discuss ‘goals, strategies, materials, pacing, questions, concerns, and results’. This explicit guidance regarding the expectations of the members of a community of practice enabled me to comfortably approach the professional community arranged by TF and the IOE, knowing that there would always be a ‘colleague to turn to’ (Dufour, 2014, p. 6) because of the community’s common objective. Dufour (2014, p. 4) also describes how collaboration calls are ‘explicitly structured to improve the classroom practice of teachers—individually and collectively’ and this enabled me to truly believe that the feedback and comments from my peers would empower me with the knowledge to create a worthwhile intervention.

My intervention is influenced by Hawkins’s theory (1987) about serious language. The serious language in these authentic texts ‘serves as an intention to mean’ and is personally relevant to the learners, which will play a key role in securing the desired outcomes of this project, as an ‘absence of ‘intention to mean’ in language transacted in the foreign language classroom’ (Hawkins, 1987, p. 237) is why students quickly become disengaged in reading activities. Serious language in authentic texts, which serves as a function to the learner, is effortlessly retained, whereas non-serious language in a reading activity, which the learner cannot relate to, is not effortlessly retained (1987). This theory is beneficial to the students at School X as they enjoy reading the target language (TL) in contexts which relate to their own experiences, and as their confidence grows in reading in French, they have taken an interest in the beliefs and routines of native speakers of francophone countries, reflecting an increased ‘capacity for empathy’ (1987, p. 216).

Bower’s process motivation model (2019) is based on Coyle’s three key aspects of motivation (Coyle, 2011, p. 10) which are ‘learning environment, learner engagement, and learner identity’. If one of these aspects is missing from a classroom culture of student-centred learning (Piaget, 2003), students will become disengaged in reading aloud, and language acquisition will not occur.

Employing Bower’s process motivation model has played an important role in this project as its focus is ‘not on creating interest, but on sustaining the learner’s interest over a long period of time’ (Bower, 2019, p. 565). Reading aloud sustains the learners’ interest over a long period of time because students can get more actively involved with the text, taking on roles with their partners in a secure, socially structured setting (Vygotsky, 1987) and decoding messages together if they are unsure. Bower highlights ‘learner engagement’ (2019, p. 564) as a source of motivation in her framework; reading aloud increases learner engagement as it is a shared experience in which students enjoy reading a text together in various ways, in lieu of sitting in silence and answering a few comprehension questions. Reading aloud can also improve ‘group cohesiveness’ and ‘self-worth’ in Bower’s model (2019, p. 564) as students are aware that teamwork is essential to find elements of the task’s solution (Vygotsky, 1987), and this awareness makes them accountable for their learning and gives learners a ‘feeling of competence’ within the group (Bower, 2019, p. 564).

Research about reading aloud carried out by Gibson (2008) and Stevick (1989) has strongly influenced my intervention at School X as they believe that all learners of a second language should be able to read aloud in a ‘comprehensible way’ (Gibson, 2008) (Stevick, 1989) in order to achieve fluency. Not only are learners regarded as ‘fluent’ when they can read aloud in a ‘controlled,

imitative' manner (Gibson, 2008, p. 32), but they are practising several skills at the same time (Stevick, 1989). Both researchers state that whilst learners are reading aloud, they have the ability to navigate the sounds, the pragmatic meaning and the grammatical features of the text which enables them to 'extend and strengthen their network of associations among all these aspects of the language' (Stevick, 1989, p. 108). I believe that providing regular opportunities to extend and strengthen this network by reading aloud would greatly benefit the 40% of pupils at School X who have a reading age which is below their actual age (school data for School X, 2021).

Although reading aloud can help learners review all aspects of the language, Stevick (1989) and Gibson (2008) focus their research on using this tool to practise pronunciation and achieve general comprehension. Stevick (1989, p. 76) argues that 'a learner can read the same text aloud over and over for pronunciation practice, concentrating on one feature at a time and giving special emphasis to certain sounds'. In addition, Stevick (1989) claims that students become aware of different sounds as they repeatedly read the same text aloud. Gibson (2008, p. 33) argues that reading aloud enables learners to 'chunk the text into sense groups, even if they do not understand all the words—and to memorise new words'. However, Gibson recommends that achieving general comprehension 'should not be the main purpose of reading aloud' (2008, p.33), and this activity should have multiple purposes, which is why I have decided to focus on improving pronunciation and general comprehension in this intervention.

Gibson (2008) and Stevick (1989) also argue that all students feel at ease when they are reading aloud because the objective is not to perform an unscripted conversation in front of the whole class but to focus on 'how you sound with your partner' (Stevick, 1989, p. 84). This lessens anxiety levels in the room, and preparation activities such as 'having the teacher read it out first' and providing 'indirect correction' (Gibson, 2008, p. 34) to the whole class create a supportive classroom atmosphere, which is crucial in School X considering its daily challenge of keeping students engaged in lessons (Appendix 6).

3 METHODOLOGY

The ideas shared in the community of practice enabled me to form the methodology for this intervention. TF and the IOE created the organisational conditions which foster collaborative dialogue amongst teachers (Harris, 2013) by arranging collaboration calls and distributing formal guidance to colleagues. The formal guidance, which included a step-by-step guide, lectures, seminars and a wealth of literature, made it clear to members of the community of practice that each meeting would be explicitly structured to improve classroom practice (Dufour, 2014). Topics formed part of this explicit structure in each collaboration call which were 'goal, design, implementation, assess and reflect'. In addition, maintaining such a rigid structure meant that roles were assigned to different members of the community in each collaboration call such as 'chair, note takers, monitoring hands up, timekeeper and rabbit hole monitor'. I believe that creating topics and roles in each collaboration call enabled colleagues to comfortably 'develop norms or protocols to clarify expectations regarding responsibilities and relationships' (Dufour, 2004, p. 4) as members of the professional community requested clarification when there had been a misunderstanding and provided constructive criticism when they disagreed with an aspect of the call. However, it can be

argued that ‘serious problems could arise in situations where teachers have different goals, incompatible approaches or widely divergent teaching styles’ (Bailey, 1992, p. 162). This is not the case within this community of practice, as the formal guidance, agreed topics, and rotating roles all contributed to creating a culture of trust where ‘genuine listening’, ‘respect’ and ‘integrity’ (Eddy, 2016) were the norms. Furthermore, having the same shared goal enabled the community of practice to constantly ‘focus its efforts on overcoming the challenges’ (Dufour, 2004, p. 4) related to literacy in Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) and creating interventions appropriate to the differing school contexts. Initially, producing a meaningful intervention was a concern for the majority of the professional community’s members. Yet, all the teachers benefited from being part of this community of practice as ‘those who are not very good at starting from scratch can benefit from using the ideas discussed in pre-teaching collaboration and make it into something of their own’ (Bailey, 1992, p.162).

I have always been interested in reading in the MFL classroom simply because colleagues have little to say about it, or it is conceived by many practitioners ‘as a tool for exposing learners to written vocabulary and short phrases already presented orally’ (Macaro, 2008, p.99). I have also observed many successful readers who ‘make use of combinations of top-down and bottom-up processes, rarely sticking to one strategy within those processes for very long’ (Macaro, 2008, p.101), which enabled me to critically reflect on the variety of strategies being taught and employed in my classroom. These reflections were raised with the community of practice, and members concluded that a strategy which could provide ‘social interaction and mediated, scaffolded activities between teachers and learners’ within the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1997, p. 9) whilst offering learners an ‘inspiring diet of challenge and interest’ (Bower, 2019, p. 565) would be beneficial to all students. This socially-structured approach (Vygotsky, 1997) which would challenge all learners (Bower, 2019), led me to question the impact of reading aloud in MFL, creating the need for this intervention.

The focus of this intervention would have been on a one-year group, but I decided to carry out this intervention across all the year groups that I teach (Year seven to Year 10) as reading aloud is a skill, and ‘government policy makers expect all teaching to include a large component of learning skills’ (Harris, 2014, p. 23). This skill was taught over a series of lesson plans (Appendix 12), and the impact was measured by collecting students’ work (Appendices eight to 11) and distributing a questionnaire (Appendix one).

4 RESULTS

This evaluation will follow the structure of the questionnaire in order to critically evaluate the impact of every aspect of this intervention. Question one reads, ‘by having the text read to me by the teacher, I can identify words that I do not know how to pronounce’ (Appendix one) and 98% of students from all year groups responded ‘true’ (Appendices two to five). As the overwhelming majority of the student cohort responded positively to this question, it can be argued that ‘listeners should be given something to listen for’ (Gibson, 2008, p. 32), such as words that they cannot pronounce, before they have to read the text aloud themselves. I also believe that ‘the proper production by the teacher of punctuation signals, stress, and intonation’ (Amer, 1997, p. 46) enabled

the students to locate words which they could not pronounce and this short preparation activity provided a supportive classroom environment for the most unconfident students (Gibson, 2008). Furthermore, as ‘reading aloud by the teacher helps readers discover units of sound that should be read as phrases rather than word by word’ (Amer, 1997, p. 46), students could listen to the pronunciation being modelled by the teacher as well it being read out loud in comprehensible chunks (Gibson, 2008) and as a result, they felt secure enough to make their first utterances in the following exercise (Stevick, 1989). However, I doubted that ‘listening for words that you cannot pronounce’ was a rather vague instruction, as Amer states that ‘learners should be consciously aware of the objective of reading aloud’ (1997, p. 46). Yet, 98% of students responded positively to question one, which demonstrates that learners understood the objective of the task and found it beneficial.

Question two reads, ‘by reading the text aloud, I improve my pronunciation’ (Appendix one), and 83% of students across all participating year groups responded ‘true’ (Appendices two to five). The overwhelming majority responded positively to this question, as by reading the text aloud in pairs, they were more actively involved with the text, taking on shared roles with their partners in a secure, socially structured setting (Vygotsky, 1987) to achieve perfect pronunciation. This shared responsibility, which sustained the learners’ interest over a long period of time (Bower, 2019), improved group cohesiveness and self-worth (Bower, 2019) in this student-centred learning environment (Piaget, 2003) as the students were thrilled to read the text aloud with their peers instead of reading it in silence. Reading the text aloud with their peers also provided them with an opportunity for social interaction within the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1997), which enabled them to rely on each other’s skills to complete the task autonomously in pairs (Harris, 2014). In addition, the teacher contributed to this student autonomy by modelling the task in the previous activity (Harris, 2014) to ensure that they had the tools and knowledge to read the text aloud in pairs. Imitating the teacher, or the French native teaching assistant (TA) in many cases, enabled the students to become aware of different sounds as they repeatedly read the same text aloud (Stevick, 1989), and many of them replicated the TA’s accent and intonation suggesting an increased capacity for empathy (Hawkins, 1987). As well as replicating the TA’s accent and intonation, even the most unconfident students successfully reproduced correct pronunciation whilst reading aloud (Gibson, 2008) and it was highly noticeable that the students took this task very seriously. Learners were asked about their attitude towards this task, and all of them replied, ‘it’s a serious task because we want to sound good at French, and the text includes language that we use every day’ (Appendix seven), demonstrating that these authentic texts ‘served as an intention to mean’ and were ‘personally relevant to the learners’ (Hawkins, 1987, p. 237). Voicing an awareness of their level in the L2 (Bower, 2019) and demonstrating a serious attitude towards this task confirms that the first two stages of this intervention, having the text read aloud to them by the teacher and then reading it in pairs to achieve perfect pronunciation, are aligned with the professional community’s goal to improve learners’ literacy levels.

Question three reads, ‘by reading the text aloud with my partner, I understand what the text is about’ (Appendix one). In years seven, eight and nine, 70% of students responded ‘true’ (Appendices two to four) and in year 10, 55% of learners responded ‘true’ (Appendix five). It can be argued that comprehension can be compromised by reading aloud (Gibson, 2008) as the students

become too focused on trying to perfect their pronunciation. However, as learners have an unusual degree of ability to switch their attention rapidly among the sounds and the meanings and the grammatical features of the text (Stevick, 1989), reading aloud has provided the students with the opportunity to chunk the text into sense groups (Gibson, 2008), which enabled them to grasp the general idea of the text. In addition, if the learners had not read the text aloud to gain general comprehension, they would have read the text in silence, and more often than not, learners reading in silence ‘tend to read word by word due to their limited linguistic competence’ and ‘guided by their anxiety to understand each word, sentences lose their integrity and consequently become meaningless’ (Amer, 1997, p. 46). Moreover, sentences did not become meaningless in this socially structured setting (Vygotsky, 1987) because learners had a shared responsibility to discuss their general understanding of the text with their peers after reading it aloud before sharing their summary with the rest of the class (Appendix 12). Summarising the general idea was facilitated by the use of serious language in these authentic texts (Hawkins, 1989), as a personally relevant text increases learner engagement (Bower, 2019). I also believe that students confidently embraced this part of the intervention because they have become accustomed to exploring different reading strategies in their English lessons (Appendix six), such as ‘finding the main idea of a paragraph, recognising topic sentences, distinguishing main idea from supporting details’ (Macaro, 2008, p. 109), to mention a few. When students make links to other subjects because they have already acquired that knowledge in a different context, they see this as stimulating and relevant (Bower, 2019), which produces cognitive growth (Piaget, 2003). However, only 55% of the year 10 students reacted positively to this part of the intervention, which cannot be ignored.

Just under half of the students in year 10 stated that reading aloud did not help them understand the general idea of the text. Amer states that ‘if reading aloud is made a regular and integral part of the teaching and learning process, it can have a positive effect, but unplanned, occasional reading aloud may not have a positive effect’ (1997, p. 46). This research supports year ten’s reaction to the questionnaire (Appendix five), as the students in this GCSE Higher French class only did occasional reading-aloud activities due to the length of the texts at that level and the amount of time it takes to read them. Yet, the students in years seven, eight and nine had four more opportunities to read aloud, which made it become, in their eyes, a regular and integral part of the teaching and learning process.

Question four reads, ‘I prefer reading the text aloud with my partner to understand what it is about before I have to answer comprehension questions’ (Appendix one). 60% of learners in year seven responded positively to this question (Appendix two), 50% of students in years eight and nine responded positively to this concept (Appendices three and four) and 60% of year ten students responded positively to this aspect of the intervention. By analysing the results of this questionnaire, it is clear that, overall, fewer students were in favour of this final aspect of the intervention compared to previous aspects. I believe that these results were strongly influenced by learners being consciously aware of the previous objectives of reading aloud (Amer, 1997) because the teacher placed too much emphasis on improving pronunciation and understanding the general idea of the text (Appendix 12), which the learners rather enjoyed (Appendix seven). However, when the students had to read the text again to look for detail, the atmosphere completely changed in the classroom, as ‘exercises such as “find the French for X” push learners into a different ‘gear’, quite

apart from the one we would want them to be in if they were reading for pleasure' (Woore, 2014, p. 107). It can also be argued that 'students do not depend on reading aloud but use it as a resource which benefits their use of other resources' (Stevick, 1989, p. 85), and the most successful readers use a variety of strategies to understand and interpret the text in lieu of placing all their energy on one strategy (Macaro, 2008), which justifies the cohort's answer to question four. Yet, I believe that if the teacher had explicitly explained the process of reading aloud from beginning to end, from practising pronunciation to gaining a general understanding of the text to answering questions about detail, the students would have reacted more favourably to this final aspect of the intervention. Moreover, with 'appropriate practice, readers gradually realise that they can achieve a higher level of comprehension by reading aloud' (Gibson, 2008, p. 33), but only if the objectives of each task are made clear to them. Explaining to students why we do things increases learner engagement (Bower, 2019) as long as personally relevant, authentic material is used (Hawkins, 1987).

5 CONCLUSIONS

Overall, I believe that this reading-aloud intervention was a success across all year groups as it improved students' literacy levels in the target language and developed learner autonomy. The questionnaires, student feedback and output demonstrate that reading aloud enabled the learners to perfect their pronunciation in the TL and achieve a general understanding of the text before answering comprehension questions about detail. All students actively engaged in this socially structured intervention which enabled them to share their joy for reading with their peers, and this was due to the collaborative discussions which occurred within the community of practice. The community of practice provided a collaborative platform to develop an intervention appropriate to School X's context, which enabled students to switch their attention rapidly among the sounds and the meanings and grammatical features of the text whilst summarising their general understanding of the text with their partners. This multipurpose intervention provided the learners with further strategies to increase their literacy levels in the TL, which is crucial at a school where 40% of students have a reading age which is below their actual age. However, some aspects of the intervention need to be improved for future practice.

In the future, the objectives of each step of the intervention must be clearly defined so that students recognise the importance of every stage of the lesson, from beginning to end. Emphasising the goal of each component will enable learners to benefit from the variety of reading strategies which this intervention offers and will continue to contribute to their cognitive development. In addition, consistency is the key to this intervention's success in the future as students will continue to recognise reading aloud as an integral part of the teaching and learning process, which will increase literacy levels in the target language and develop their autonomy.

Finally, it was a privilege to be part of this community of practice as I benefited from using the ideas discussed in the collaboration calls and made them into something of my own. This community of practice, which did not follow a scripted meeting agenda and reserved genuine listening, respect, and integrity as its norms, offered transformative professional development for its members and led to the creation of numerous successful interventions to improve literacy levels in the target language.

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7 APPENDICES

Appendix I: student questionnaire

This is an anonymous questionnaire. Do not write your name anywhere on this sheet and answer the questions in English.

1) By having the text read to me by the teacher, I can identify words that I do not know how to pronounce.

TRUE / FALSE

2) By reading the text aloud with my partner, I improve my pronunciation.

TRUE / FALSE

3) By reading the text aloud with my partner, I understand what the text is about.

TRUE / FALSE

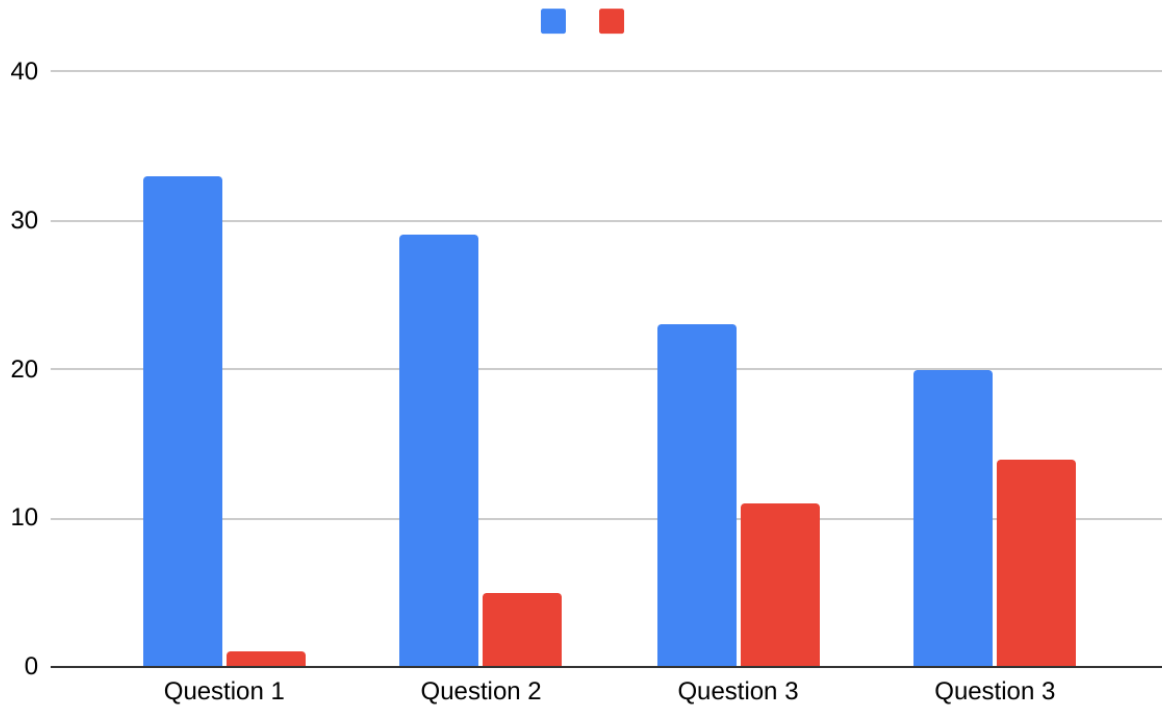
4) I prefer reading the text aloud with my partner to understand what it is about before I have to answer comprehension questions.

TRUE / FALSE

Appendix II: year seven responses to student questionnaire

Blue = true

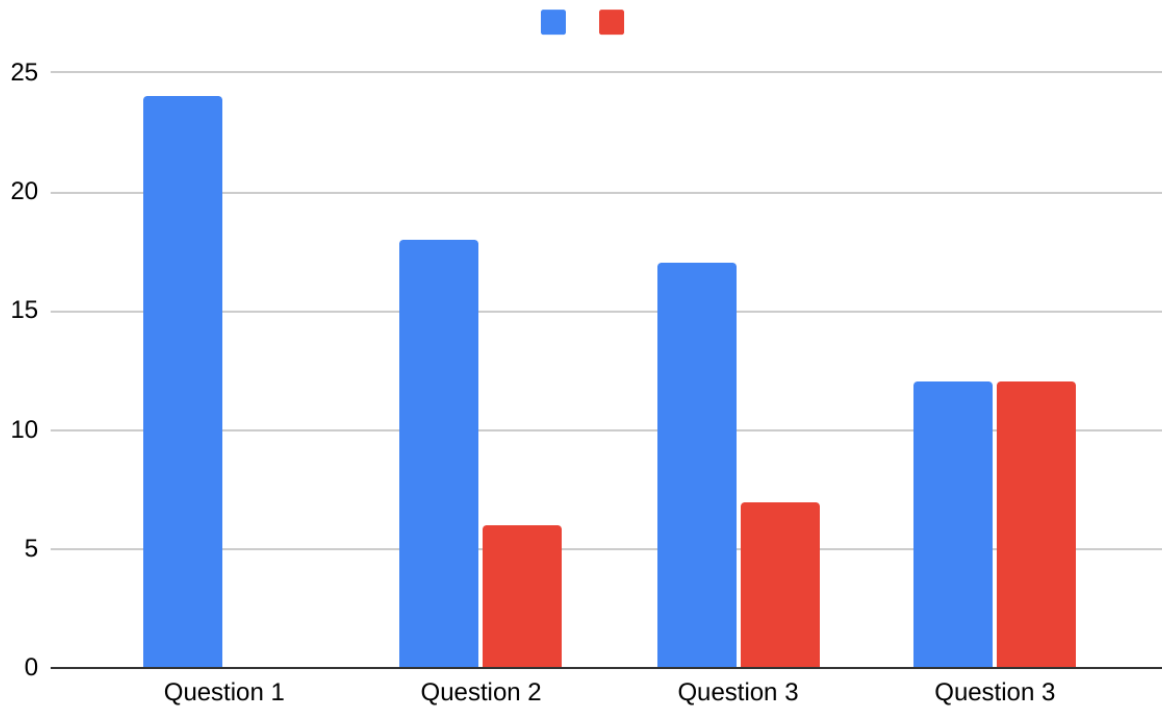
Red = false



Appendix III : year eight responses to student questionnaire

Blue = true

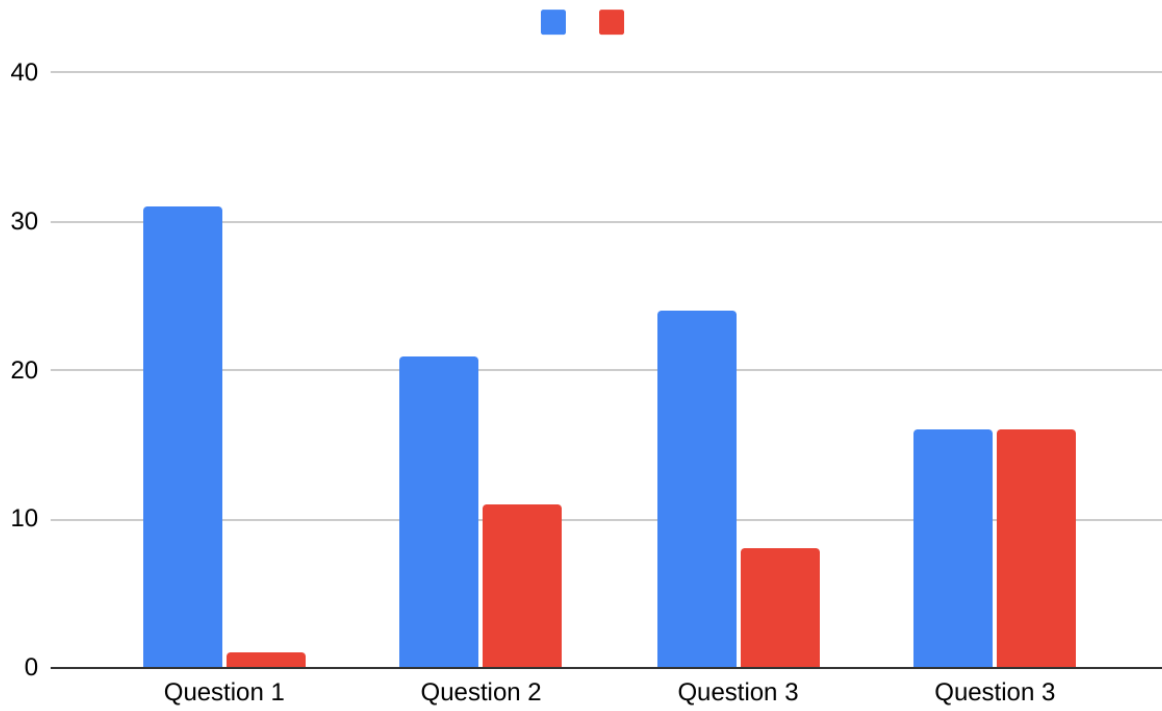
Red = false



Appendix IV: year nine responses to student questionnaire

Blue = true

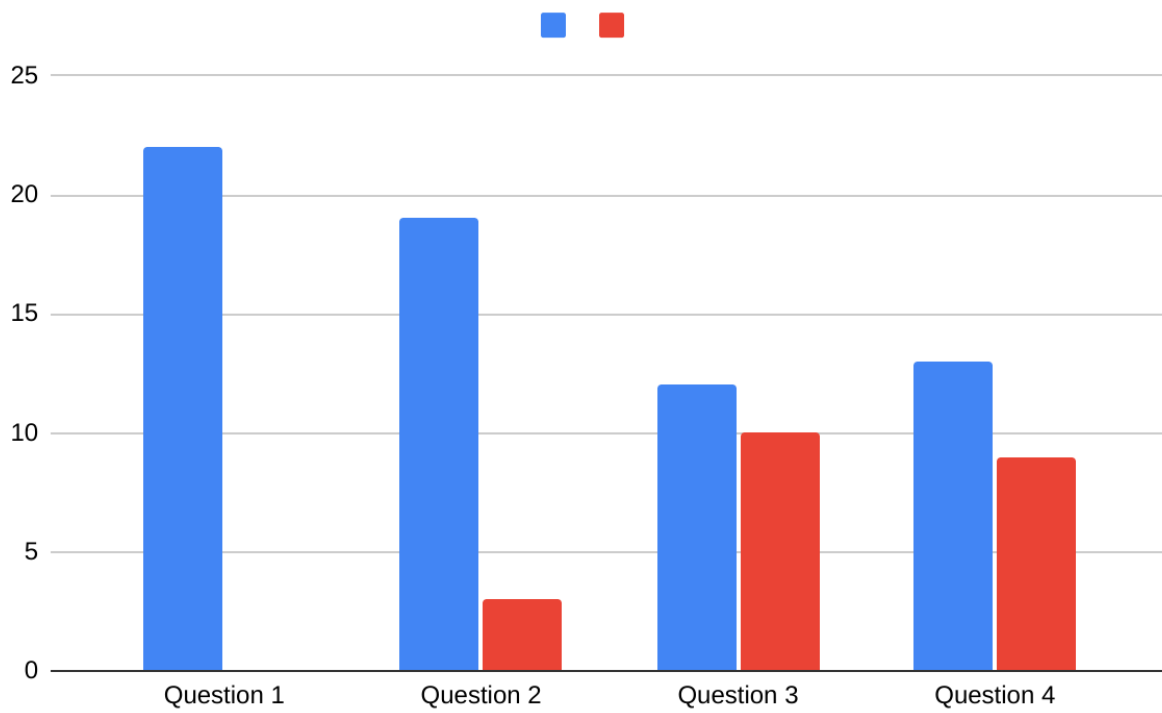
Red = false



Appendix V: year 10 responses to student questionnaire

Blue = true

Red = false



Appendix VI: meeting minutes with Assistant Principal at School X

Me: What would you say is our main challenge here at School X?

Assistant Principal: Keeping the students engaged in lessons.

Me: Thank you for that. What reading strategies do you explore with the students in your subject?

Assistant Principal: I teach English. We explore all possible reading strategies in English; no stone is left unturned. Every reader is different and if the strategy works for them, then it works for us. Regular examples include finding the main idea of a paragraph, recognising topic sentences, distinguishing main idea from supporting details etc.

Me: OK, thank you. Do you and the students read texts aloud in English lessons?

Assistant Principal: Of course. Reading aloud is a really good strategy for practicing intonation and gaining an understanding of the general idea of the text.

Appendix VII: conversations with students about reading aloud

Me: Why do you think about reading aloud?

Students: It's a serious task because we want to sound good at French and the text includes language that we use every day. It's fun as well because we can work with our partners.

Appendix VIII: work completed by year seven student

Lisez le texte modèle écrit par Isabella

Bonjour !

Je m'appelle Isabelle. Je suis très sympa et assez intelligente. Aussi, je suis très sympathique.

J'ai les yeux noirs et les cheveux mi-longs. Je suis assez petite et mince. Je ne suis pas moche et grosse. Je suis un peu belle.

Dans ma famille, il y a quatre personnes, mon beau-père, ma mère, mon frère et moi. Mon beau-père a une barbe et il porte des lunettes. Il a les cheveux courts et lisses. Aussi, mon beau-père est très sympa et drôle.

Ma mère a trois tatouages et elle porte des lunettes. Elle a les cheveux longs et bruns. Ma mère est vraiment intelligente mais un peu petite.

Trouvez le français

- 1) quite intelligent
- 2) Also
- 3) I am quite small
- 4) I am not ugly
- 5) In my family, there are four people
- 6) He has straight and short hair
- 7) My mother has three tattoos
- 8) My mother is really intelligent
- 9) a bit small

Répondez aux questions en anglais

- 1) How does she describe her personality?
- 2) What does she look like?
- 3) What does her stepdad look like and what is he like?
- 4) What does her mother look like and what is she like?

Le défi : write down all the intensifiers used and translate them

1. intelligent, sympathetic
2. medium length hair, quite small, thin, not ugly, large, quite pretty.
3. he has a beard, glasses. He has short and straight hair. he is also very nice and funny.
4. 3 tattoos.

Appendix IX: work completed by year eight student

ACTIVITÉ 2: Lisez les textes et répondez aux questions

Visiter Paris en huit heures, c'est possible? Oui!

Je m'appelle Lucas et en septembre je vais visiter Paris. Voici mon itinéraire:

10.00: D'abord, je vais aller au musée du Louvre, où je vais admirer la Joconde.


12.00: Ensuite, s'il fait chaud, je vais faire un pique-nique. Mais s'il fait froid, je vais manger un sandwich dans un petit café.

13.00: Puis je vais visiter la cathédrale Notre-Dame où je vais prendre beaucoup de photos sur mon portable.

14.00: Après, s'il fait beau, je vais faire une balade en bateau-mouche sur la Seine.

15.00: Bien sûr, je vais visiter la tour Eiffel! S'il ne pleut pas, je vais avoir une très belle vue de la capitale!

16.00: Finalement, je vais faire les magasins sur le boulevard Haussmann où je vais acheter des souvenirs pour ma famille et mes amis.



La Joconde

Les magasins sur le boulevard Haussmann

- 1 What is Lucas going to admire at the Louvre?
- 2 What will he do at lunchtime, if the weather is hot?
- 3 What will he do if it is cold?
- 4 How will his phone be useful when he visits Notre-Dame?
- 5 Why is he hoping it doesn't rain when he visits the Eiffel Tower?
- 6 Why is he planning to go shopping before leaving Paris?

Prediction can be a useful skill in reading too! In exercise 5, try reading the questions first. Can you predict the answers? Then read the text to check whether you guessed correctly.

1) The Mona Lisa ✓

2) have a picnic ✓

3) he will eat a sandwich in a small café ✓

4) so he can take pictures. ✓

5) Because he wants a beautiful view of the capital. ✓

6) ~~he~~ Because he wants to buy souvenirs for his family and friends. ✓

Appendix X: work completed by year nine student

Texte modèle écrit par Darine

Normalement, je vais au centre-commercial avec mes amis et ma famille le samedi après-midi à 16h. C'est assez amusant car mon ami est trop marrant. En général, nous allons au restaurant le vendredi soir parce que c'est calme à 20h30.

Cependant, le mois dernier, nous sommes allés au théâtre avec mes amis à 13h20 le dimanche après-midi. C'était très nul car le spectacle n'était pas marrant et il n'était pas intéressant. Après le théâtre, nous sommes allés au café et nous avons bu un jus d'orange. C'était délicieux et amusant. Nous sommes partis à 23h et j'ai pris le bus à 23h10.

Le week-end prochain, je vais manger au restaurant avec ma meilleure amie et nous allons manger du poulet rôti car ça va être génial. De plus, nous allons voir un match de foot avec mon copain à 18h. Ça va être trop amusant. J'ai hâte !

Trouvez le français

- 1) Normally
- 2) It's quite fun
- 3) Friday evening
- 4) However
- 5) Last month
- 6) The show wasn't funny
- 7) It was delicious
- 8) I took the bus at 11:10pm
- 9) We are going to eat roast chicken
- 10) It is going to be so fun
- 11) I can't wait

Répondez aux questions en anglais :

- 1) Where does she go on a Friday?
- 2) What did she think of the show?
- 3) Where did they go after the show?
- 4) What time did they leave?
- 5) What time did they take the bus?
- 6) What are they going to eat?
- 7) What are they going to see?

Le défi : Which three sentences would you steal for your redraft? Why?

- 1) Shopping center with family and friends
- 2) It wasn't funny it was very bad.
- 3) To a café
- 4) at 11pm
- 5) 11:10pm
- 6) Roast chicken
- 7) a football match.

Appendix XI: work completed by Year 10 student

Lis le dialogue et réponds aux questions.

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Qu'est-ce qu'il y a dans la ville de tes rêves ?- Dans la ville de mes rêves il y a quelques musées, un cinéma, des magasins et un centre sportif.- Tu habites où en ce moment ?- En ce moment, j'habite dans un quartier du sud est de Londres.- Et tu aimes où tu habites ?- Pas vraiment, je trouve que ce n'est pas très intéressant. En plus il y a trop de circulation et c'est très bruyant à cause des voitures et des gens dans la rue.- Alors tu aimerais habiter ailleurs ?- Oui, je préférerais habiter dans un endroit plus calme et plus joli.- Où est-ce que tu voudrais vivre ?- Je voudrais vivre au bord de la mer dans les ^{cornwall} Cornouailles car j'adore l'air de la mer. En plus j'aimerais apprendre à surfer. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is there in their dream town?2. Where do they live?3. What do they think about where they live?4. Why?5. What is their ideal place to live in like?6. Where would they like to live?7. What would they like to do there? |
|---|--|

Challenge: surligne et traduis les expressions d'opinions.

1. museums, a cinema, leisure centre, shops
2. in a neighbourhood South east London
3. finds it not very interesting, very noisy ~~cars~~ ~~people~~ ^{traffic}
4. because of the cars and people on the street
5. ~~more calm + pretty~~ calm + pretty
6. ~~more calm + pretty~~ by the sea ~~in the~~ ~~the~~ Cornwall.
7. learn ~~to~~ surfing

Appendix XII: general lesson plan for all year groups

- **This lesson plan was adapted to each year group and class context**

| <u>Time</u> | <u>Teacher (T)</u> | <u>Students (Ss)</u> |
|--------------------|---|---|
| 10' | Ss complete a translation activity containing language from previous lessons which will enable them to complete the tasks in this lesson. | Ss demonstrate that they can retrieve language from previous lessons, specifically grammatical concepts and topic-related vocabulary, to prepare them for this lesson. |
| 2' | T asks Ss to translate the title and objectives into English and give the date in the TL. | Ss show that they understand what the lesson is about and what they will achieve by the end of the lesson. |
| 5' | Ss complete a mix and match activity containing new language which will appear in the following reading activity. | Ss demonstrate that they can identify the meaning of these new language items by matching them up with the corresponding English words |
| 10' | Ss complete a dictation, using language from the previous activity and do now activity. Ss show that they understand the language and write it correctly in a sentence. | Ss complete a dictation enabling them to hear the new language and record it in the written form with language that they have already learnt. This activity will enable them to 'notice' the construction of the new language in syntax |
| 3' | Ss listen to a text being read out by the teacher. Ss read along and focus on locating words that they cannot pronounce. | Ss show that they can follow the speed, intonation and pronunciation of a text being read out to them without getting lost. Ss show that they can mentally practice pronunciation by specifically |

| | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 5' | Ss take it in turns to read the text aloud with their partners. T monitors correcting pronunciation errors if necessary. | focusing on words that they cannot pronounce. Ss demonstrate that they have internalised the T's pronunciation, intonation and speed by reading the text aloud with their partners. |
| 5' | Ss discuss the general idea of the text in English with their partners, before being questioned about it by the T | Ss show that they have understood the general idea of the text after having it read aloud to them and after having read it aloud themselves. Ss show that they are able to summarise the general idea of the text in English |
| 10' | Ss respond to comprehension questions which focus on the details of the text. Ss quickly locate the answers, so T asks follow-up questions to develop Ss linguistic knowledge. | After being exposed to this text twice in the reading aloud activities, Ss demonstrate they can quickly locate the details of the text by answering a set of comprehension questions. Ss also show that they can go beyond the language in the text by answering T's follow-up questions. |
| 10' | Ss complete an English to French translation activity to show that they have understood and acquired the language from the lesson | Ss translate sentences from English to French to show that they can retrieve the language from the lesson, understand its meaning and write it correctly in the written form. |

