

UNIVERSITY OF CUMBRIA

A research on the use of self-assessment sheets and portfolios.

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I. Introduction

Being a PGCE student in English schools, particularly in London, I have noticed that the major problem in teaching and learning a foreign language is the lack of pupils' motivation. Many of them think that learning a language is useless because they already speak English or that it is too complicated for them. In order to create motivation and to control pupils' behaviour, many schools have created a reward system. It consists in giving points or ticks to pupils which leads to stickers, sweets or diplomas, and sometimes money (for example, in Cheam High School (London, Sutton) a sticker equals a certain amount of money that pupils can spend in the 'sticker shop') or gift from the school (for example, the pupil who has the biggest amount of stickers can earn a mp3 player).

Through my teaching experience and my observations I have also noticed that pupils are not aware of their learning strategies or their actual level. That is the reason why, inspired by the Council of Europe who created *The Common European Framework of Reference*¹, I wanted to implement the use of self-assessment sheets and portfolios in order to help pupils to think about their learning strategies and exchange tips between each other, enable them to have clear short term targets adjusted to their own performance and ability as well as give the opportunity to the teachers to personalize their teaching and learning. Hoping that those tools would help pupils to become more confident in languages so that, be internally motivated.

¹ Council of Europe, (2001) *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Council of Europe: < http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf>

II. Aim of the study

There are two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic:

'Intrinsic motivation stem[s] from the individual's personal interest in the subject being learnt, extrinsic from external factors such as rewards, qualifications or job prospects.' (Jeff Lee, 2001)

As Graham (2002) says, some pupils think that their success is due to their ability which is an internal factor so their motivation is high because, in another words, they know that their success depends on them. Some others think that their success or failure is due to luck, difficulty of task. They think it is due to an uncontrollable factor. So this types of pupils need to be rewarded or motivated by an external factor (sweets, ticks, being allowed to do or have something they like, etc.). It is external motivation.

Although as Graham says a lot of pupils don't relate their lack of success to their learning strategies but:

'One of the principal goals of strategy training is to alter students' beliefs about themselves by teaching them that their failures can be attributed to the lack of effective strategies rather than to lack of ability or laziness.' (Jones et al. (1987: 56) in Harris (2002:9))

So, teachers have to train pupils to *'attribute their achievement in modern foreign languages to the learning strategies they employ.'* (Graham, 2002) because *'[...] pupils [could] be motivated more effectively [if they] attribut[e] outcomes to strategies rather than to either ability or effort.'* Pupils need to see the link between their learning strategies and their success or failure. Learners who perceived themselves as not doing well could, above all, benefit from the advice of their teachers and class mates about learning strategies and learning how to learn (Williams, Burden, Poulet, Maun (2004: 28)). The only problem for Uhl Chamot (2001: 39) is that even if teachers agree to say that strategy instruction helps their students, they don't know how to integrate that into their lesson.

That's why I think it is possible to do so through teacher/pupil or pupil/pupil feedback as well as the use of self-assessment sheet and portfolios. Chambers explains that:

'Pupils value regular feedback on their performance which should take the form of meaningful interaction between learners and teachers. Motivation may break down when pupils are unsure that their perceptions of the teacher are not the same. When perceptions are shared and agreed upon, there is much less risk of self-fulfilling prophecy of the negative kind.' (Chambers (1994: 18))

I think that *'The aim[of teaching] is to make 'pupils [responsible] for their own learning'.* (CHAMBERS 1994: 68) because, as Andrea Wilczynski (1998-99) says, pupils need to be aware of the reasons why they are learning languages to determine the goals they want to achieve. Even if it is difficult for pupils to narrow down their goals and define them precisely, it is important for them to feel that they are making progresses:

'Evaluative feedback can have the desired effect of focusing the student's attention on perceptions of developing competence only if the focus of

learning itself is on skill mastery and task performance.' (Ema Ushioda, 1996, p. 22)

Short-term targets, learning goals are a way to generate a kind of extrinsic motivation which could become intrinsic because pupils engage themselves in successful learning (Ema Ushioda, 1996, p. 25).

I believe that self-assessment sheets and portfolios can help the teachers to reach those different objectives whom Dörnyer (CILT, winter 2008) talks about:

- *promoting learners autonomy*
- *personalizing the learning process*
- *increasing the learners' goal-orientedness*

A portfolio as defined by the European National Framework relies on self-assessment and reflective practice. The reflection is based on a metacognitive process of questioning and objectification of the learning process. This realization will enable learners to improve, to make progress. It would permit them to be aware of the gaps between their competences and the competences they would like to reach through their learning process, to improve (De La Breteque). The aim of the use of a portfolio is to develop learners' autonomy to prepare them to lifetime learning (CRDP of Basse Normandie, France:2006).

This material would permit teachers to:

'Discuss with learners whether the new strategies have helped them or not. Try to provide them with concrete evidence of their progress such as improved test results, for example' because 'it may be that learners are not using the strategies appropriately and they need guidance in indentifying what is going wrong. Where there is improvement, they need to set themselves new goals.' (Harris (2002:8))

I think that self-assessment and portfolios are a good way for pupils to be in control of their learning because they will have to think about it, about what they are able to do or not. They will also have to think about the strategies they use to learn the language. Self-assessment sheets can show them their progress in a concrete way and give them small objectives lessons after lessons. The learners will be able to know what their strong and weak points are to enable them to deal with their learning.

Although, 'autonomous and flexible approaches '[...] give pupils the opportunity to set short-term, achievable goals, to work at the pace which test suits them and to work independently, as part as a pair or group work.' (Chambers: 67)

Personalized the teaching and learning is very important for pupils to be motivated because:

'[...] since each learner can learn in ways that are meaningful to him or herself and since each learns in a slightly different manner, it follows that the same approach cannot be fully effective for all students. To help learners become more effective and efficient, teachers need to actively help students help themselves learn how to learn.' (Rubin (1990: 279) in Harris(2002:6))

Portfolios or self-assessment sheets would permit pupils to measure their progress which is a source of motivation (De La Breteque). All this items proposed in the portfolio must be positive like 'I can', 'not yet', 'I'm capable of' for learners to have a positive perception of themselves which is also a source of motivation. And, in developing the reflection practice, it teaches learners to learn how to learn which will reinforce their capacity to learn a language.

III. Context

The context of the survey is a 27 year 8 class studying French in Cheam High School (London, Sutton). Cheam High is a secondary school specialised in languages which welcomes a lot a PGCE students in modern foreign languages who are also native speakers of the language they teach. Two foreign languages are part of the curriculum of year 7 and 8. Then, in year 9, pupils can choose to drop one and keep one they will have to study for the GCSE exam in year 11.

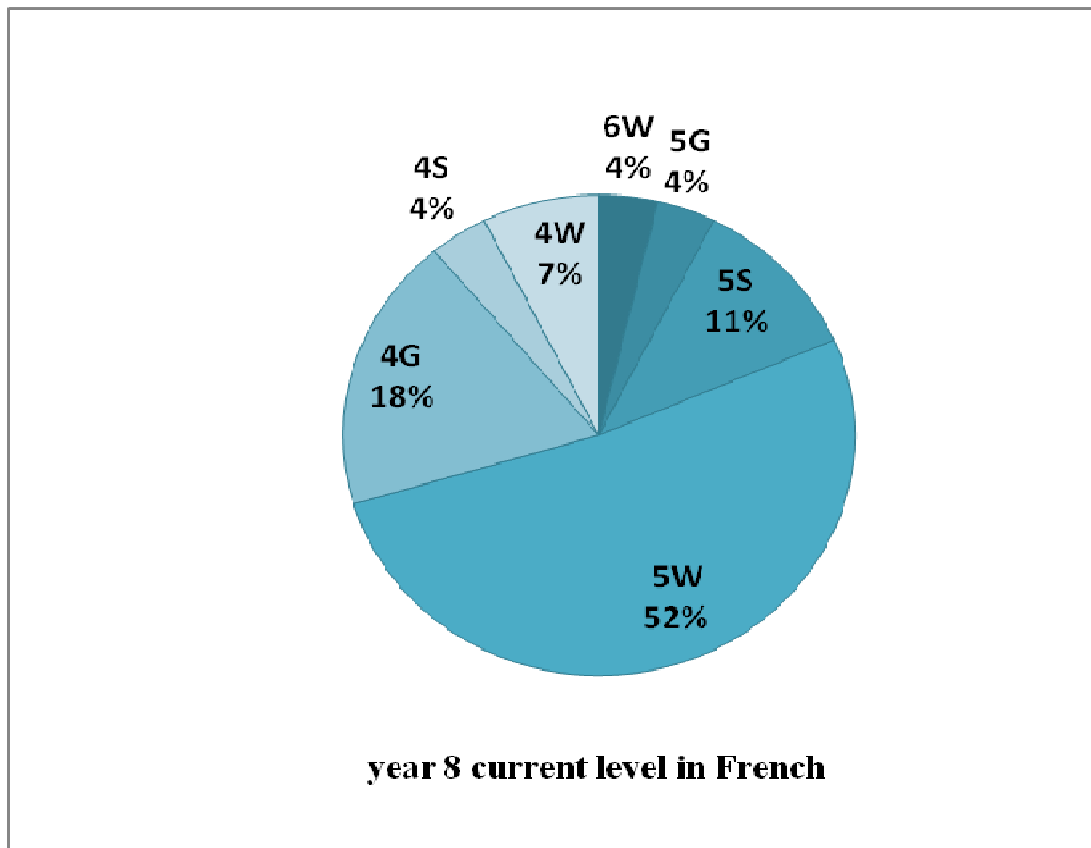
Cheam High Language Department also uses James Burch²'s teaching methodology. This methodology is characterized by the use of the Target Language (TL) as the only language allowed in languages lessons; but also by a range of activities whose aim is to include every learner styles in the teaching and learning. One of the main points as well is to give pupils the ownership of their learning by making them work in pairs or team. This teaching style leads to a reward system made of different kinds of praise and rewards for pupils who have been participating, working and behaving well.

The specific class with who I was working was a mixed-ability 27 year 8 pupils that is to say they were 13-14 years old. They were 13 girls and 14 boys. 4 of them were Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils.

Most of them have been studying French from year 7. Pupils in this class had different levels in French between a weak 6 grade and a weak 4 grade: 1 has currently a weak 6 grade (3,7%), 1 has a good 5 grade (3,7%), 3 a solid 5 grade (11,1%), 14 a weak 5 grade (51,8%), 5 a good 4 grade (18,2%), one a solid 4 grade (3,7%) and 2 a weak 4 grade (7,4%).

27 pupils graded	current level
1	6 weak
1	5 good
3	5 solid
14	5 weak
5	4 good
1	4 solid
2	4 weak

² Vee Harris, James Burch, Barry Jones, Jane Darcy, (2001) *Something to say?* London: CILT.



Moreover, most of the pupils participate well except 8 of them who are quite shy. 6 of them have some compartmental problems and can disturb others by chatting, not being focused, playing with others rather than working.

IV. Ethical issues, research methodology and teaching intervention

Two questionnaires have been given to this particular year 8. The first one was about their thought about foreign language learning and has been completed on the 5th of March 2009. The second was more focused on the self-assessment sheets themselves and has been completed on the 15th of May 2009.

Meanwhile, I gave the pupils three self-assessment sheets written in French that they had to complete as a piece of homework. The first one was on the 27th of March 2009, the second on the 5th of April and the last one on the 15th of May. Before handing those out I explained to them that it was not an exam and that I only wanted them to think about what they think they can or cannot do or what they know or do not know. The day after I collected the sheets, read them and wrote advice and set them targets for next lessons in English.

Finally, I asked five pupils' parents for their children to have an interview with me about the self-assessment sheets they've been using for two months and a half. Then I informed pupils of their right to withdraw and the fact that what they will say will stay confidential.

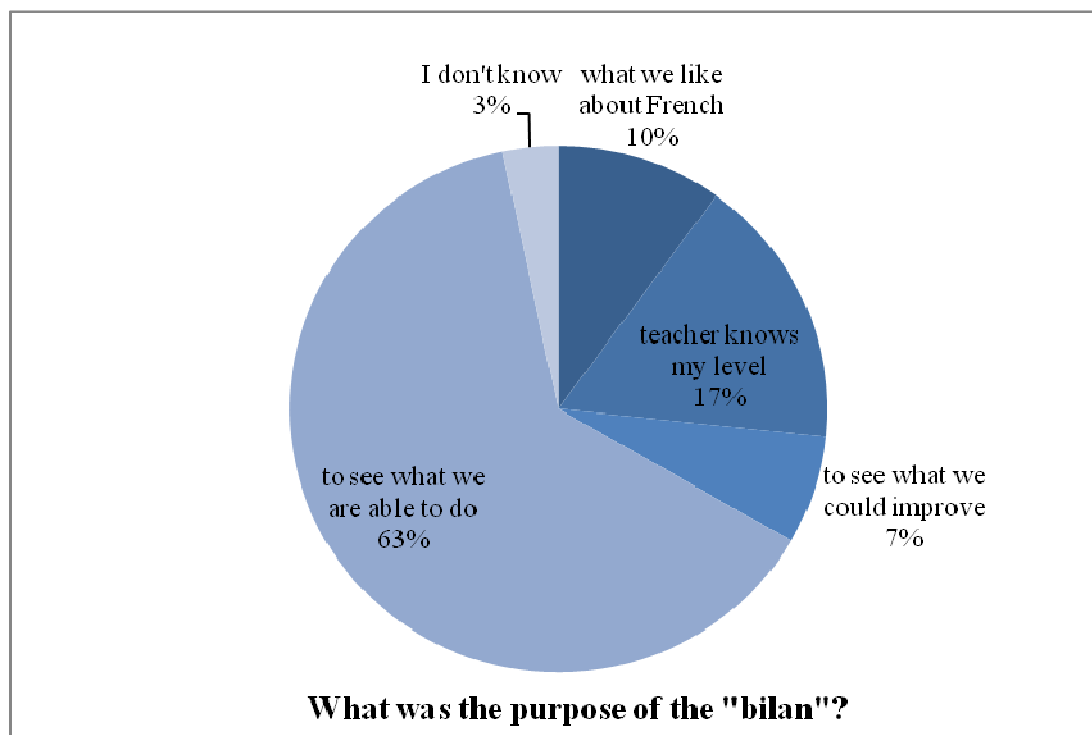
V. Pupils' attainment

As my research is on self-assessment and the period of experiment was quite short, I am not able to say if pupils made progresses thanks to this implementation.

VI. Results

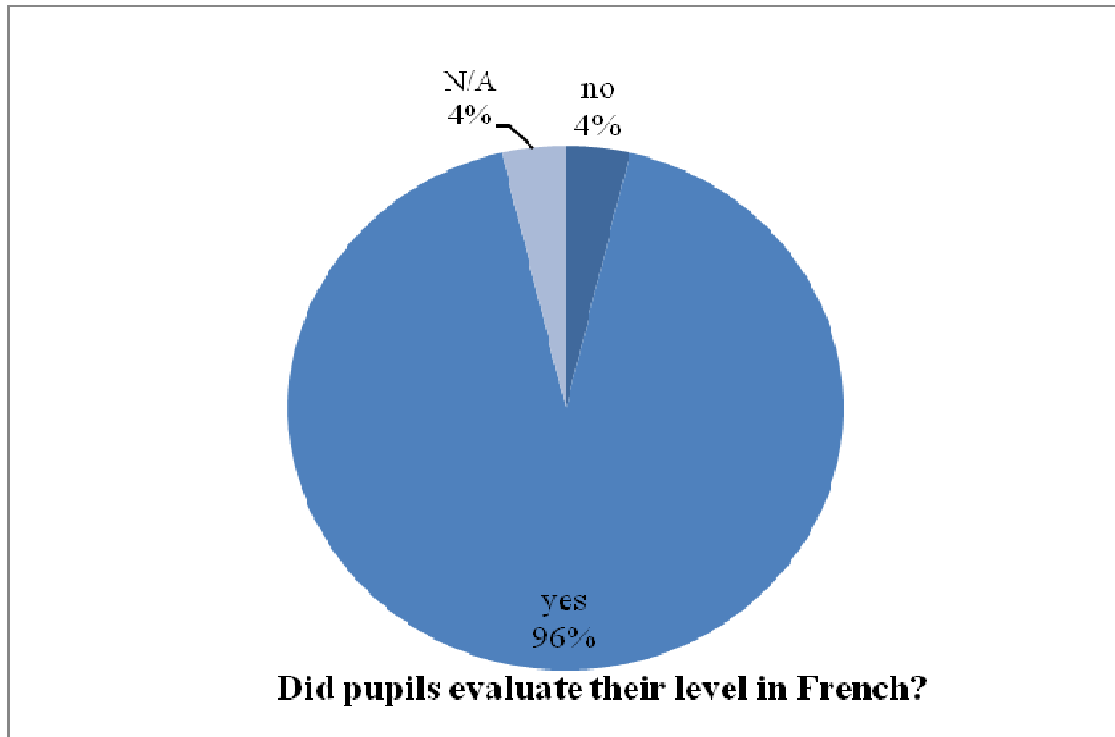
However, interesting facts were underlined through the questionnaire n°2 and the interview.

➤ Questionnaire results:



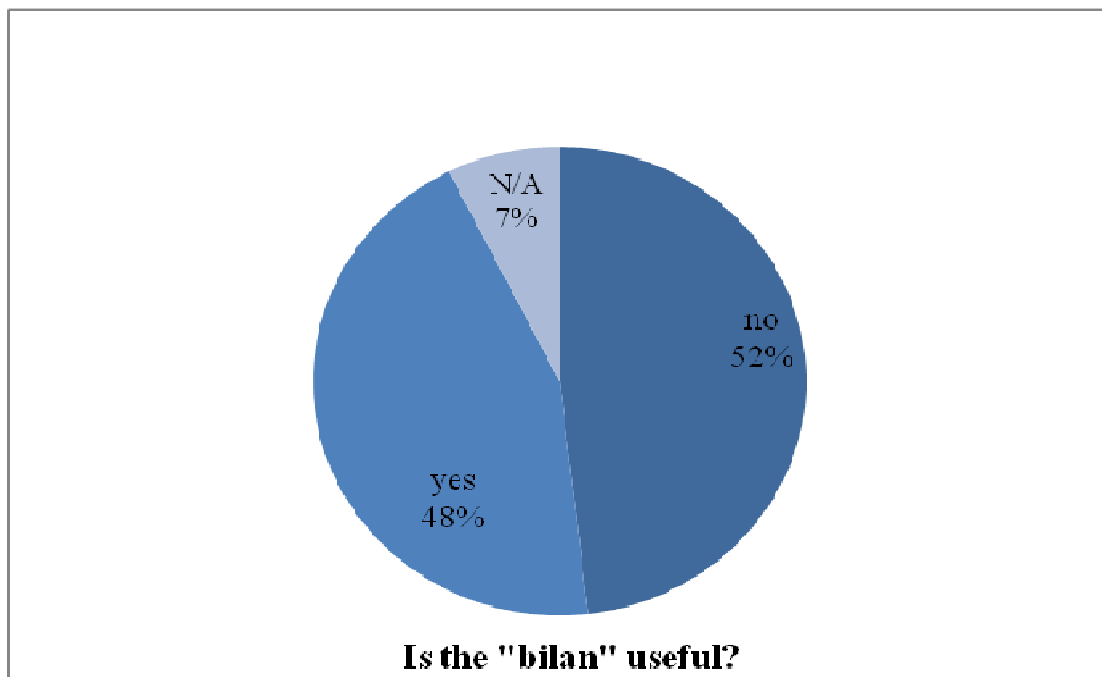
To the question 'In your opinion, what was the purpose of completing the 'bilan'', 1 pupil did not know (3%), 2 said it was to see in which area they could improve (7%), 3 pupils said it was to know what they like about French (10%), 5 said it was for the teacher to know their level (17%) and 19 to see what they are able to do (63%).

As we can see the majority of pupils understood the purpose of the self-assessment sheet that is to say to know what they were able to do or what they should improve. 17% of them thought that sheet wasn't about them but about the teacher. They thought they had to fill it for the teacher to know their level. Those pupils have a tendency to say that the self-assessment sheet was useless for them but not for the teacher.



To the question: ‘How did you complete [the ‘bilan’]? Did you try to evaluate your level or did you randomly tick the boxes?’, 1 pupil answered he did not evaluate his level (4%), 1 did not answer (4%) and 25 evaluated their abilities (96%).

A large majority of pupils evaluated their level in French and completed the sheet seriously. I found it quite surprising because they could have just tick every box without taking the time to think about it.



To the question : ‘When you completed the sheet, how did you feel about it ? Did you find it useful/useless and why?’, 2 did not answer (7%), 13 said it was useful (48%) and 14 said it was useless (52%).

Pupils are almost equally divided on the usefulness of self-assessment sheet even if they understood it was to be aware of their level. The explanations given are:
It is useless because...

- *'what is the point?'*
- *'I don't really see the point of that cause it don't really give you marks.'*
- *'it just is'*
- *'it could change because we could change what we like or dislike.'*
- *'it doesn't really do anything'*
- *'it's a waste of time because we no what we can do.'*
- *'I'm rubbish.'*
- *'a bit useless because I've done it three times.'*
- *'it's useful for the teacher but not us. It doesn't do anything but the teachers can assess us.'*
- *'useful for you [the teacher] but not for me.'*
- *'I don't see what it has to do with are exam.'*
- *'I don't want to take French.'*³

Pupils who found the self-assessment sheet useless did not understand the purpose of it or could not see concrete results. Some of them thought that is was a kind of assessment without marks for the teacher to monitor their progress. Others were feeling so unconfident is French, so bad or so demotivated that they could not see why this document could help them to change that.

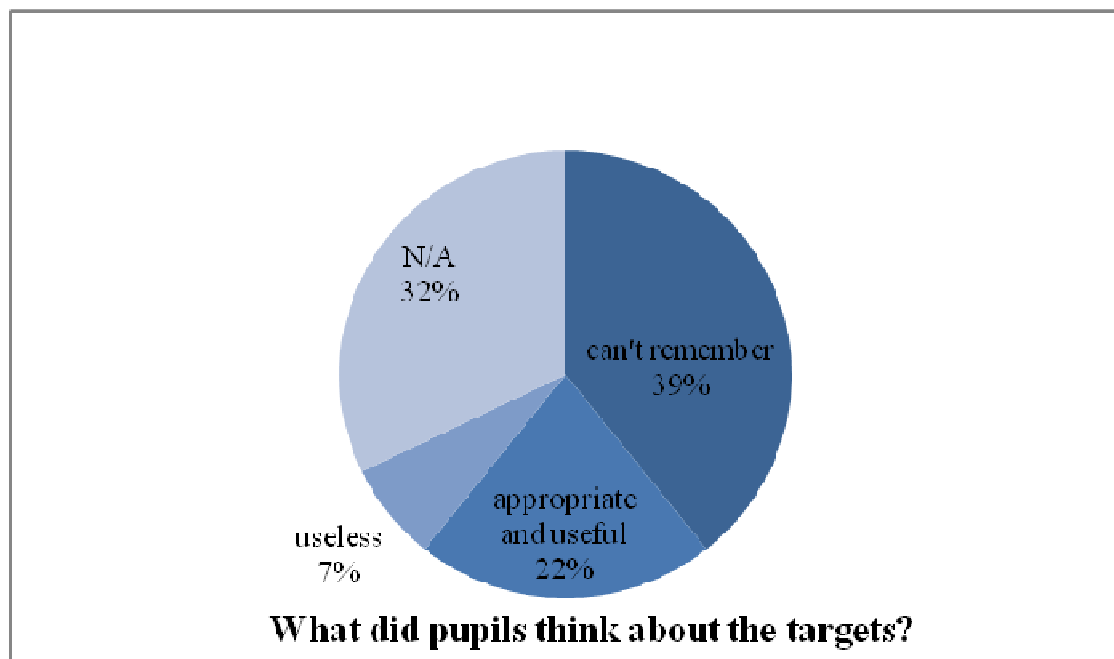
It is useful because...

- *'so you know you are bad at, to look through the topics you need revising.'*
- *'I know what I understand.'*
- *'it's easy.'*
- *'to show what we think of the topic.'*
- *'it can help me later on when I come to do the targets.'*
- *'now I know I need to practice on something that I'm not sure about.'*
- *'it helps you to figure out what topics you are good at or not.'*
- *'it tells me how I can improve in French.'*

³ I copied what the pupils answered and left the orthographic mistakes.

- *'it shows what I am capable to do in the lesson.'*
- *'I think it was an alright idea because you can see were are strengthes and weaknesses are.'*
- *'a bit useful because people can see what we can do and how to improve.'*
- *'it reassures you that the teachers ckecking your progress.'*
- *'I know what to work on. Also the teacher knows what I am capable of doing.'*
- *'so people can see what we are capable of doing.'*⁴

Most of the pupils who found it usefull understood the purpose of the sheet and were glad to be able to know their abilities or the areas which needed improvement. They felt in charge of their learning. Some of them thought it was useful because they were happy to know that their teacher were in charge for their learning. They were happy to prove their teachers or classmates what they were capable of doing. They needed recognition. It is as if they were not working for themselves but for other people.



To the question : 'What do you think about the targets set by your teacher ? Were they appropriate/inappropriate, useful/useless? Explain why.' 2 pupils said they were useless (10%), 6 said they were useful and appropriate (22%), 9 did not answer (32%), 11 could not remember them (39%).

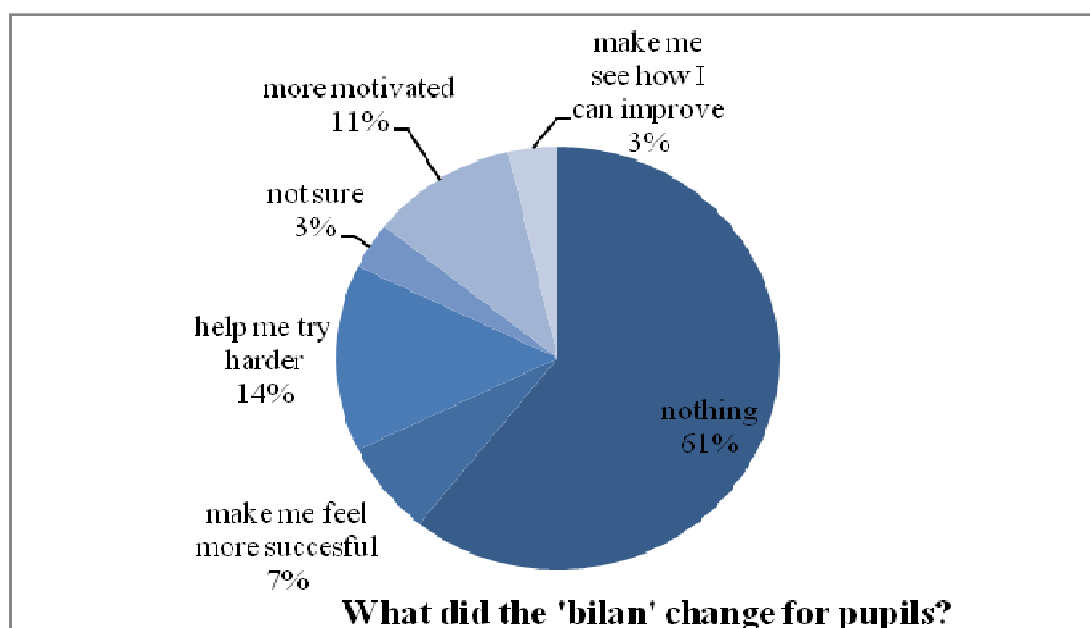
Unfortunately, most of pupils could not remember their targets but the majority who could, said it was useful because:

- *'it made me understand what I had to try harder at.'*

⁴ I copied what the pupils answered and left the orthographic mistakes.

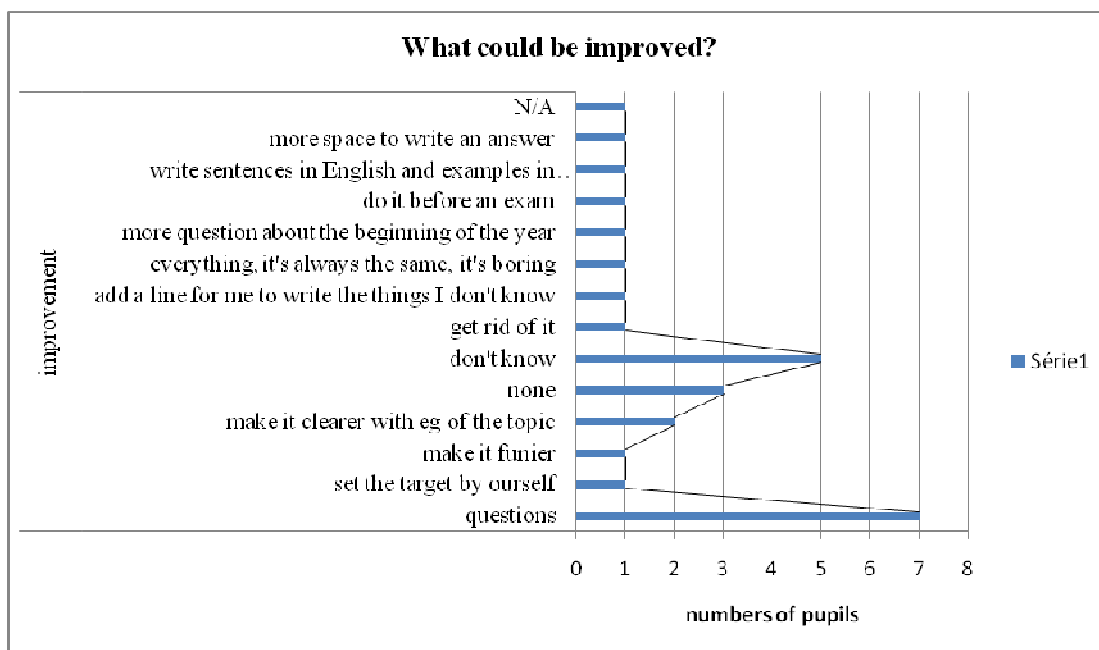
- *'because I think it is a good level to work towards.'*
- *'they made me see what how I can improve.'*
- *'appropriate to stop chatting and calling out.'*

One of them found them useless because s/he thought I was pushing him/her to do what I wanted him/her to do : 'useless because I can only be at my level not someone elses.' S/he did not seem to be aware of the fact that s/he can make progress for her/himself and not for someone else. Another pupil did not care about French anymore because s/he did not choose to keep French as an option in year 9: 'because I am not taking French.'



To the question : 'To complete the 'bilan' and read your teacher's remarks about it, did it make you feel more motivated to succeed, or it didn't change anything ?', 1 pupil answered that s/he was not sure (3%), 1 said it make her/him see how s/he can improve (3%), 2 answered it make them feel more succesful (7%), 3 said it make them feel more motivated (11%), 4 said it help them try harder (14%) and 17 said it did not change anything (61%).

The majority thought that the use of self-assessments sheet did not change anything for them even if they understood the purpose of it as we have seen earlier. One of the reason could be that they did not use this type of documents long enough or because I did not make them think about their level, their learning strategies, the reasons why it is a good thing to learn another language. Pupils who felt some kind of changes (35% of them) felt more motivated to work and try harder or were happy to have some advice for them to improve or, the fact they can monitore their progress made them feel more successful.



To the question : ‘What do you think we can change to improve the ‘bilan’ and make it more useful for you ?’ 1 pupil said it would be useful for him/her to set the target by him/herself (3,7%), 1 said we could make it funier (3,7%), 1 said we should get rid of it (3,7%), 1 think we should add a line for her/him to write the things s/he does not know (3,7%), 1 said we should change everything because it was always the same questions so it was boring (3,7%), 1 would like more questions about the beginning of the year (3,7%), 1 think it could be given out before an exam (3,7%), 1 said it should be written in English with examples in French (3,7%), 1 need more space to answer the questions (3,7%), 1 did not answer (3,7%), 2 would like it to be clearer with more examples of the topics (7,4%), 3 did not want any improvement to be made (11%), 5 did not know what to improve (18,51%) and 7 wanted a change on the questions: more questions, deeper questions (25,9%).

26 pupils out of 27 answered that question and 16 pupils gave ideas to improve the sheet which shows that they are interested in doing it.

The majority wanted to be allowed to express themselves more, give more details about their learning, what they can or can’t do. They also wanted the sentences to be clearer, in English or with more examples.

➤ Interviews results:

I interviewed 4 pupils because one of them did not come to the meeting. The 4 of them are quite good in French and also motivated. They found the self-assessment sheet useful and thought it was quite motivated and helpful to be able to know their level. They would have liked to be able to express themselves more. They also thought that it would be helpful and easier for them to learn French if they could use their native language as a mean to understand better what they are taught. They find it good to hear and speak French a lot in language lessons but would like to be able to rely on English sometimes because they cannot understand everything and find that hard.

VII. Effectiveness of research tools

I had to face different kinds of objections to implement the use of self-assessment sheets and portfolio. My intervention has not been the way I wanted it to be. I wanted to use a portfolio with pupils to make them think of the interests of learning a foreign language. I also wanted them to be aware of their level in different areas and in the other languages they can use for them to feel more self-confident. I would have liked them to tell me what were their difficulties and their strengths in details. I wanted them to set their own targets, tell me what they think they could do to improve. I wanted them to share learning strategies with others before an exam, for example. Basically, I wanted to use the portfolio of the European Framework because I really believe that to be motivated, pupils need to be in charge of their learning and to know why they are learning languages.

Unfortunately, I was only able to make pupils check what they could or could not do on a specific topic. The problem was that, besides my explanations, and the fact that I only used the vocabulary pupils were 'supposed' to know in French, some of them could not understand the sentences in the boxes and ticked them in function of 'do I understand this sentence or not?' but this wasn't the main point of the self-assessment sheet.

The cause of those problems was that the teacher I was working with told me that the school policy did not allow the use of English in language lessons. So if I wanted to create or use a portfolio I could do it in French but in that case I would have to teach before all the language pupils would use, which was not possible because we did not have time for it and had to go through the curriculum first. Because of this lack of time, I also had to give self-assessment sheets as homework. As a result some pupils did not give me the sheet back because they did not do it or forgot it somewhere.

So, even if I agree and understand why it is a good thing to use the TL as much as possible during lessons, teachers have to face the fact that a lot of pupils are not motivated in learning languages and cannot see the point of doing it. So, it could be helpful for us to know why they think that and, then, try to make pupils change their mind and show them that it is not so hard and pointless. I think it is possible to make pupils fill a portfolio/self-assessment sheet in the target language when they have the level to do it. When they are beginners, we cannot ask them to think in the TL and analyse their level, write their problems, their strengths, ask them to set targets, explain them the interest of the language, etc., everything in the TL. So we are condemned not to understand pupils and to leave the situation the way it is. We are really much limited so is the usefulness of self-assessment sheets and the changes on pupils... The pupils who said that the self-assessment sheets were helpful for them are only the ones who were already motivated to learn French, had a positive attitude towards language learning and had a good level. On the contrary the less motivated and able pupils did not experience any change.

VIII. Conclusion

To conclude, I think pupils should have been able to use a portfolio and self-assessment sheets in English to make a change in their way of considering the language learning and feel more confident and more motivated. Using English in that specific case is a way to include every pupil and show them they can improve and that teachers care about them.

To make the implementation of those documents more useful pupils also need more time to get used to them and understand their purpose.

This research also showed that a majority of pupils were happy to use 'le bilan' and would like to be able to express themselves more, which is a very positive breakthrough.

IX. Appendices

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Motivation

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- SoW

			WAYSTAGE ACTIVITY 4 Thurs 24 April (week 3) pelmanism game
		WAYSTAGE ACTIVITY 3 Thurs 2 April (week 3) match sentences written activity	Description Pupils have to match cards in front of them they have to write the country's flag and sentences.
	WAYSTAGE ACTIVITY 4: Friday 27 March (week 2) test your partner	Description I give pupils a sheet of paper with beginning and ends of sentences. They have to match them and write them down.	
WAYSTAGE ACTIVITY 3: Thurs 5 March (week 1) Read the text Introductory talk	Description There are sentences on the board. One pupil has to turn back to the board, the other read the beginning of the sentence and P1 has to finish it. Vice versa.	Sample dialogue : P1: Au Maghreb on mange... P2:... du couscous P1: c'est correct !	Sample dialogue P1: Tu commence P2: je commence P1 : (turns the card) Au Maghreb.... c'est du couscous. P2: c'est correct !
Description I introduce myself. I ask pupils their rules. I give them the questionnaire.			
sample dialogue	Sample dialogue P1: Au Maghreb on mange... P2:... du couscous P1: c'est correct !		
NC Level	NC Levels 8L6-8C1-8T2-8S3-8S6	NC Levels 8T2-8C1-8S8-8S3-8S6	NC Levels 8T2-8L5-8S3-8S6

- **Reflective diary**

Monday 2nd of March

I ask the teacher who I am working with if I could use a portfolio in English with pupils but she didn't want me to use English at all.

So, I don't really know what I will do, I won't be able to use a portfolio at all...

Thursday 7th of March

I gave pupils a self-assessment sheet in French. They will only have to tick the smiley boxes.

I am disappointed because I can't ask them any questions because they won't understand them or be able to answer in French.

Friday 27th of March

Last week I read pupils' assessment sheets; I was surprised that they did it seriously.

They don't seem to have filled the sheet randomly.

On Thursday I gave them back the self-assessment sheets with their next target written in English. It is the only thing I was able to do to make them understand in what areas they can make progress.

I hope they will read them and find it useful.

Thursday 2nd of April

As I give the sheets as homework, some pupils don't give it back to me...

I am not sure they understand the purpose of it...

Friday 8th of May

Last time I gave pupils the self-assessment sheets and a questionnaire about it.

I've just read their answer and it is quite interesting.

I also did the interview of 4 pupils (one did not come). They are good pupils so they all said that what I did was good and useful... I am not sure if they really thought what they said or if they wanted to please me...

- **Research tools**

- interview transcriptions:

(I start the interview with one pupil waiting for the others to arrive.

What did you think about the ‘bilan’?

J: I thought it was quite, I don’t know, I didn’t know what I thought I could do. Some of it is quite easy I think but I enjoy French, euh...

Do you think it’s useful for you to feel this kind of paper?

J: yes.

Why?

J: Then at least you know what you can do and what you can’t do.

And what did you think after, did you, like euh... think that you could... Did you think about what you could do to improve or...?

J: yes because I know what I can do on the sheet and I thought what if I focus and I try to be able to do that then... yeah...

And so, did you work on that at home or... (laugh)?

J: I haven’t worked on it at home but I gonna thought to try.

(3 more pupils arrive)

Do you remember this (I show them the ‘bilan’)?

pupils: yes

Yeah? What did you think about it? Tell me the truth! You don’t have to say ‘oh! it’s great if you don’t think it is. I’m not going to judge you or anything (laugh), what did you think about it?

...

Ok, maybe you can start again just to warm up...

J: I thought it was quite useful cause we don’t what we are good at and what we are bad at.

And you? Do you think it was useful/useless? Did it help you?

H: yeah

Yeah? why?

H: cause it could help to see in what subjects we are not good at.
Subjects or... and so, when you did it you really thought about it, you didn't just tick randomly the...

H: I thought about the answers.

Ok. And you?

C: I thought it was useful cause we can figure out the stuff that we don't know and we can do it again so we can know how to do it properly.

And you H.?

H: yeah, it was useful.

And euh... Do you usually use this kind of stuff during other lessons or..

pupils: no

Never, never?

pupils: no

So how do you do to know your level, then? To be aware of it? If you have an exam like euh... Once every term but before that how do you do to know your level?

J: to be aware of it?

Yeah, to know what you have to improve or... How do you do that? How do you know?

J: I don't know

You don't know?

pupils: no

So when you have to revise for an exam, how do you revise?

J: I just read it and then close it and then like ask my mum to read out and I translate or so.

Ok. Do you try to analyze the sentence or do you try to learn it by heart?

J: I sort of revise it and try to find out what it means.

And you? How do you do when you have to learn French for an exam, for example?

H: I try to understand it first.

Yeah, you try to understand first how it works and you?

H: I just learn from the book.

Yeah, so do you read it, do you... How do you do?

H: I read through it.

And euh... and then you repeat it in your head...?

H: yeah.

So you try to learn it by heart?

H: yeah

And you?

C: I like to get my mum or dad to read it and then I say it and then I write it down.

Ok, so you need to hear it and then write it?

C: yeah.

Yeah, and...did you read the targets I wrote on the paper? Like for Je. I that that her participation was good and she could improve this and this... Did you read that or...

pupils: yeah.

And what did you think about it?

J: I thought it was quite good. It was, I mean, I had like 'your participation is good', actually I don't remember it that well but I remember it was like 'your participation is good is class' and to keep up or something...

Yeah and you, what did you.. Did you think it was helpful or were you like 'oh, yeah, I know that'

H: it was helpful.

Yeah? you don't have to say 'it was great and stuff', if you think it was bad, you say, it was bad. So.. It was good? Interesting or..?

H: yeah

And did you try to do what I wrote or did you just say: 'ok I know it, will see later'...

H: yeah...

Yeah what? (laugh)

H: yeah

J: we do what you wrote

H: yeah

Do you think you have enough feedback... Do you know what feedback is?

pupils: yeah

Yeah. And do you think that have enough feedback or advice from your teacher usually?

pupils: yeah

Yeah. and euh... What kind of advice... I mean... When does your teacher give you advice or feedback usually? is during the lesson, if yes, when exactly? Is it during homework?

J: during the lesson really. Like, if we are stuck or we don't really understand she will just sort of say it in English , sort of make it a bit easier for us.

But euh... Does she tell you something about your level?

C: not really

J: euh.. only in a test I think.

In a test, same for you?

pupils: yes

Not even in homework?

J: she will write like 'well done' and stuff.

But it's not really precise or you don't really... I mean... When you do your homework for example and then your teacher say 'well done' does it help you to know what you can do or not do yet?

J: yeah, it helps me cause then I know if I've got it right or not, I'll have to keep practicing it.

And you?

pupils: the same

So, do you think Miss D; gives you enough advice or feedback on your work for you to be able to know what you can do or can't do?

pupils: yeah

It's enough?

pupils: yeah

How do you think we could improve this (*I show them the 'bilan'*), to make it more useful?

J: maybe have a little thing at the bottom so people can write in why they can't understand it, what bit they don't understand and why they don't understand it.

Ok, and what do you think also about doing the whole lesson in French or in Spanish or Being forbidden to speak in English?

J: I think it's ok cause it is a difficult language and it helps you learn more I don't think... but when you are learning different things you should be able to talk just a little bit in English to work out what it means.

Ok, and you?

H: I think it's good cause it like, helps you to listen to it a bit more.

Why does it help you?

H: to talk a bit more in French but then it's quite hard not to talk in English and I think you could have a bit, like, talk in English as well. If you don't understand then you can ask.

yeah.

C: I think it's quite good to speak a bit in English and then you said it back in French so that you know what it is in English.

And you?

Ch:....

The same?

Ch: yeah

Yeah? (*laugh*) ok. And so you think it would be easier for you to be able like, for example, to compare French and English? Or, something like that or...? Here if we only do the lessons in the foreign language it's because we think that it's better for you to hear this language during the lesson but you think sometimes we should speak English because it's easier for you or because sometimes you don't really understand what you are saying?

pupils: yeah

H: we can't really understand it.

Ok. thank you very much

- **Reports**

Je., H., J., Ch. and C. have a good level in French. They are all very motivated and participate well during work class or pair work.

They all enjoy French and think it is useful when you want to travel abroad.

Je.'s level is 5 good. She has worked consistently well all year and this is reflected in her attainment. In order to exceed her target level (6G), she should regularly revise all work covered in class.

C.'s level is 5 weak. She completes her individual work to a very high standard but does not participate fully in whole class activities as I know she is capable of. She must volunteer more readily and take part fully in whole class games.

H.'s level is 6 weak. She has worked consistently well all year and this is reflected in her attainment. In order to exceed her target level (7W), she should regularly revise all work covered in class.

J.'s level is 5 weak. J.'s participation in whole class activities is excellent and he volunteers enthusiastically in lessons. He must take care not to be over enthusiastic though and not call out. J. should check his written work carefully for accuracy.

Ch.'s level is 5 solid. Ch. has worked consistently well all year and this is reflected in his attainment. In order to exceed his target level (6G), he should regularly revised work covered in class.

- **Teaching materials**