Case Study Project Work

National Consortium for Languages Education

Curriculum models

An exploration of curriculum models and their financial, logistical and motivational implications:

A case study of three schools and their contrasting provision

Funded by: Department for Education

Delivered by: UCL Institute of Education

In partnership with: BRITISH COUNCIL

In partnership with: GOETHE INSTITUT

Meet the Team

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Session content

- Project aims and research questions

- Case study profiles

- Methodology

- Regional comparisons and trends

- Key learnings and future considerations

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Project aims

This project is an exploration into different curriculum models through case study work that intends to:

- summarise key features of each case study school's curriculum model and identify commonalities and differences from a logistical and financial standpoint.

- explore potential correlations between logistical and financial implications on feelings and perceptions of student motivation.

- frame and contextualise these findings against the regional data from the Language Trends survey in England 2025 conducted by the British Council.

This study is comparative and exploratory. It is designed to highlight emerging patterns and tensions, not to claim causal evidence.

Research questions

Key lines of enquiry

- Features of the curriculum model: how have these changed and why?

- What logistical and financial implications do the choices have?

- How do the models affect student motivation?

- What are staff perceptions of student motivation?

- To what extent do these models mirror the regional trends?

Case study profiles

School A

- Co-ed
- Pupils on roll: 1246
- FSM: 37.5%
- French from KS3
- Pathway model
- 2-year GCSE
- HHCL GCSE option (self-study w/ some teacher support)
- French at KS5

School B

- Co-ed
- Pupils on roll: 1047
- FSM: 23.4%
- 3 languages from KS3 (Sp, Fr, GM)
- Year 7 – 1 MFL
- Year 8 – 2nd language
- Non-pathway, fully optional model
- 2-year GCSE model
- HHCL GCSE option (self-study w/ some teacher support)

School C

- Single-sex – all girls
- Pupils on roll: 1920
- 2 languages from KS3 (Fr, Sp)
- FSM: 42.8%
- Pathway model
- 3-year GCSE (Fr, Sp, Gm phased out)
- HHCL GCSE option (timetabled instructional approach)

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Reflect and post in the chat:

What characterises your curriculum model?

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Data collection waves

Wave 1

Targeted questions to HoD with an SLT input on the financial and logistical aspects of the curriculum model.

Wave 2

Targeted questions regarding finer details of the financial and logistical implications of their curriculum model.

Wave 3

Targeted questions to a student sample and teacher perceptions of student motivation (Self-Determination theory: competence, autonomy and relatedness.)

Limitations:

A small sample size of schools   Limited control measures
Online only   Discrepancies between teacher and student perceptions

Contextualisation: Regional trends

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A minority of schools …	Some schools...	A larger proportion of schools...
• Teach Spanish and German (1) • Teach French and German (9) • Teach French only from KS3 (11) • Teach German only from KS3 (2) • Teach Spanish only from KS3 (4) • Teach 3 languages from KS3 (5)	• Teach Spanish and French from KS3 (16) • Only teach 1 MFL at KS3 (17) • Teach German as part of KS3 curriculum (17)	• Teach 2 languages at KS3 (26) • Teach Spanish as part of KS3 curriculum (26) • Teach French as part of KS3 curriculum (41)

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Summary of regional trends

- A curriculum model that teaches 2 language from KS3 is the most common curriculum model (54% of schools within the survey)
- Teaching French and Spanish is the most common dual-language curriculum model combination from KS3 (62% of schools within the survey offering 2 MFL at KS3)
- A curriculum model that teaches 1 or 3 languages from KS3 are the least common curriculum models (35% and 10% respectively of schools within the survey)
- French is the most common language taught from KS3 (85% of schools within the survey)
- German is the least common language taught from KS3 (35% of schools within the survey)

Contextualisation: Regional trends

School A

- Teaches 1 language: French from KS3 and is representative of a third of schools regionally
- Teaches French like vast majority of all schools (85%) and most common MFL in schools teaching only 1 language. (65%)

School B

- Teaches 3 languages: French, German and Spanish from KS3 and is representative of 10% of regional schools
- Maintaining German within the KS3 curriculum is representative of the 35% of schools teaching German

School C

- School C teaches 2 languages: French and Spanish from KS3 and is representative of 54% of schools regionally
- Teaches French and Spanish is the most common language combination regionally (62%)
- Timetabled provision for some HHCL languages is representative of a minority of schools **nationally**.

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Reflect and post in the chat:

How does your school fit into the regional trends?

Contextualisation: National trends

Type of support	2024	2025
The school pays examination entry fees for pupils	79%	78%
The school is aware of complimentary schools (e.g. Supplementary / Saturday schools) but does not collaborate with them	13%	15%
The school actively collaborates with and promotes Saturday schools	2%	5%
The school facilitates teaching of 'community' languages during the school day	4%	6%
No support provided	11%	12%
Other (please specify)	18%	15%

Collen, I. & Duff, J. (2025) *Language Trends England 2025: Language teaching in primary, secondary and independent schools in England*. British Council. Available at: language_trends_england_2025.pdf

Contextualisation: National trends

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Quintile	FSME Range	Percentage participation in Language Trends
1 – most affluent	0–14.2%	31.4%
2	14.3–20.6%	18.5%
3	20.7–27.6%	16.5%
4	27.7–37.8%	19.5%
5 – most deprived	37.9% and above	14.2%

Quintile	Average percentage of pupils in Year 11 studying a language by teacher estimate
Quintile 1 – most affluent	69%
Quintile 2	47%
Quintile 3	46%
Quintile 4	46%
Quintile 5 – most deprived	47%

Collen, I. & Duff, J. (2025) *Language Trends England 2025: Language teaching in primary, secondary and independent schools in England*. British Council. Available at: language_trends_england_2025.pdf

Financial implications

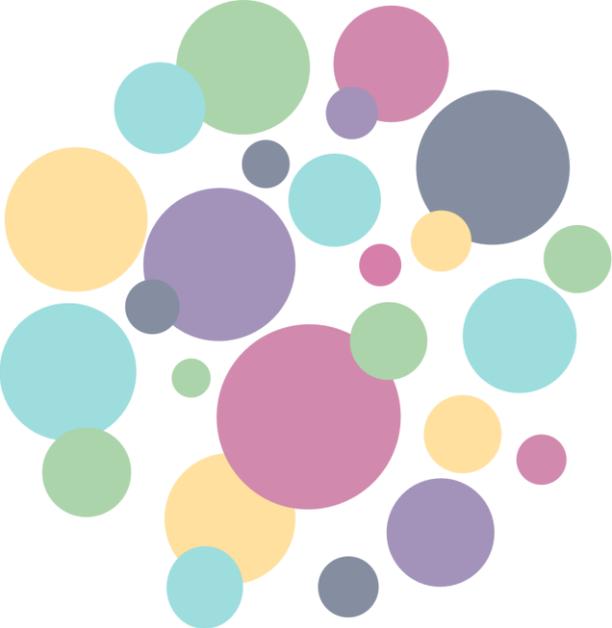- Budget assignment and limitations
- Discretionary budget

Logistical implications

- Curriculum offer: number and breadth of languages
- Options processes and uptake
- HHCL offer

Motivational implications

- HHCL
- Relatedness

Future lines of enquiry

- KS5 models – securing the pipeline

- Impact of EBacc removal

- Where 'free choice' at KS4 works (>50% uptake) – why is this?

- Dual-linguists –ab-initio at KS3/4?

- Link between EAL % and positive attitudes towards language learning

Feedback

Opportunity for feedback and sign up to our newsletter

Grand Union Language Network
Webinar Feedback Form

Sign up for our newsletter

Language Educators Online

National Consortium for Languages Education

Accessing the report on LEO

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Gracias
谢谢
Danke
ευχαριστώ
Diolch
Fa'afetai
Bedankt
Dziękuję
Merci
Kiitos
Paldies
Tak skal du have
Ласкаво просимо
شكرًا لك
Teşekkürler
תודה