Every graduate a linguist – Building strategic language capability through IWLP – Research Report on a case study carried out at the LSE Language Centre

The case study described in this report has been carried out for the Born Global language policy research project. The overall aim of Born Global is to understand in more detail the deficit and the demand in language capability in the UK, both with regard to the wider economy and more narrowly in relation to academic research. A more comprehensive understanding, it is hoped, can "inform government language policy development" as well as "future developments in Higher Education language curricula and assessment" (British Academy 2014). Our research has to be seen in this wider context and focuses on the supply side of language skills in HE language courses which are part of so-called Institution Wide Language Provision or Programmes (IWLP). In the first section some overview numerical data is presented to give a very brief outline of IWLP in the UK higher education sector, before describing and analysing the results of a case study conducted at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).[1] The case study focused on student motivation for language learning, their plurilingual competencies, sense of attainment and progress and their overall evaluation and understanding of language learning processes.

1. Introduction

The declining number of students studying specialist language degrees at UK universities has been identified as one of the symptoms and in turn an underlying cause of the lack of language capability in the UK. The numerous reasons behind this decline, which include the dominant role of English as an international language and the government's decision to end compulsory language learning after the age of 14, and the consequences have been described in detail by a number of reports (e.g. Worton 2009, Tinsley 2013). It seems likely that one of the effects of the reduced number of students who learn languages at secondary school or study language degree programmes has been the steady increase in the number of learners enrolled in Institution Wide Language Programmes (IWLP). This increase has been documented over the past three years in a series of surveys jointly published by the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML) and the Association of University Language Centres in the UK and Ireland (AULC) (Canning 2011; UCML-AULC 2013, 2014, 2015). IWLP or "Languages for All" programmes consist of elective, non-compulsory language courses offered to students who are not enrolled in specialist language degree programmes. These courses are taken by students

[1] The research was carried out by Inés Alonso-García, Onna Schneller and Peter Skrandies (author of this report). The author would like to thank John Heyworth for data provision and Nick Byrne for overall support, as well as all language teachers at the LSE Language Centre and all students who participated.

who take them as credit-bearing elective course options that are part of their non-language degree programmes or as non-credit-bearing courses taken in addition to graduate or postgraduate degree programmes.

For the academic year 2014/15 the annual UCML/AULC survey into IWLP gained figures from 61 higher education institutions and reported a total of 54,975 students enrolled in IWLP courses, a slight annual increase of 2%, compared with the previous year which had seen a 9% increase (ibid). The total number of nearly 55,000 students can be compared to the number of approximately 39,000 students (full-time UGs all years + full-time PGs) enrolled in specialist language degree programmes as reported by HESA for the academic year 2013/14 (HESA 2015a).[2]

While every effort should be made to motivate more students to take up specialist language degrees, it seems clear that such programmes on their own will not be able to overcome the shortage of foreign language skills for employment as well as research amongst students in the UK. It is here where IWLPs, which allow students to study languages alongside their degree programmes or as extra-curricular options, have an important role to play. Given that the majority of students now engaged in language learning at tertiary level in the UK do this voluntarily in IWLP courses, answers to the question of why they do this, or conversely why they do not, should be of interest to institutional providers and policy makers, as well as anyone who believes that language capabilities should be an important element of the skills, knowledge and attributes of students graduating from UK universities.

Previous research into students' motivations for language learning at university has identified and emphasized a diversity of motivational factors, stressing the pre-eminence of intrinsic as well as extrinsic factors such as enjoyment, interest, a desire for proficiency as well as career considerations and perceived usefulness (cf. Busse & Walter 2013; Oakes 2013). Much of the existing research has looked into the motivations of students studying specialist language degrees and the present case study was carried out with a view to understanding the motivations and expectations of students participating in IWLP more comprehensively, and identifying their views of what constitutes both success and frustration in language learning.

To complement the Born Global Policy Research Initiative, the current study, carried out at the LSE Language Centre with students attending IWLP courses in the academic year 2014/15, was set up for the following main objectives:

[2] This includes degree programmes in classical studies, ancient and modern foreign languages as well as literary and cultural studies involving languages other than English. The figure for all programmes related to Modern Foreign Languages more narrowly is closer to 30,000.

- to better understand the motivations and expectations of students joining IWLP courses;
- to identify success factors in IWLP provision, including a review of student attainment and completion rates with a view to increasing take-up;
- to study patterns of behaviours and attitudes within IWLP in order to define and profile the needs of students;
- to compare student learners, both UK and international undergraduate and postgraduate students, in credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing courses with a view to identifying factors that affect motivation, attitudes towards language learning and progression; and
- to develop a model for attitudinal research into student language learning in IWLP that can be of value to other HEIs.

To achieve these goals the research team at the LSE Language Centre followed a group of IWLP students in the academic year 2014 – 2015 to document and analyse their motivations, attitudes and progress. The specific research design, which allowed the research team at the LSE Language Centre to achieve this, will be outlined in more detail in the next section.

2. Quantitative survey and interviews

To produce quantitative data on student background, language capability and motivation, a questionnaire was developed and made available online to all students registered in the IWLP at LSE. To increase the response rate printed copies of the online survey were handed out by course teachers. The closed-ended questions focused on student background, course type, languages known and studied at LSE, proficiency in these languages, reasons for wanting to learn or improve the language(s) currently studied, and questions concerning career plans and mobility. A sample response to the questionnaire is reproduced in appendix 1 to this report. In total 226 questionnaires were completed and returned, which corresponds to a response rate of 16% from the overall population of all students registered in IWLP courses.

To complement the quantitative data and to give a group of students the chance to talk in depth about their language learning motivation and experiences, a series of semi-structured one-to-one interviews, lasting between 10 and 30 minutes, were carried out with students chosen from amongst the respondents to the survey. The interviews were carried out between November 2014 and February 2015. Further details and the set of guiding questions used in the interviews are reproduced in appendix 2. The views of interviewees have been used to enrich and complement the analysis of the data presented below.

2.1 IWLP at LSE – Institutional context and headline figures

The IWLP offered by the LSE Language Centre is well established and enjoys the support of senior management and departments across the School. All students have the opportunity to study a language as an extra-curricular option, and many postgraduate students receive some funding for this from their departments, while the vast majority of UG students are able to study a language as part of their degree. The language policy in operation at LSE gives further institutional support to language learning. It recognizes multilingualism amongst students and staff as a positive good and highlights the "importance of language skills not only for employability but also for intellectual value." At a practical level, the LSE Language Centre offers free language courses to UK/EU undergraduate students who do not have a GCSE Grade C or equivalent in a foreign language which is not their mother tongue.

In 2014/15 more than 1400 UG and PG students, out of a total of 10,800 UG and PGs students registered at the School, attended language courses; a participation rate of approximately 13%. The majority of these students (1189) attended assessed non-credit-bearing courses, so-called certificate courses, while a smaller number of UG students (213) took credit-bearing language courses ("degree courses") available as

elective options within their social science degree programmes. The following table gives an overview of students taking part in the IWLP in the academic year 2014/15.

Table 1: Student population taking part in the LSE IWLP 2014/15

	Non-credit bearing language courses	Credit-bearing language courses
Undergraduate students	518 (44%)	213
Postgraduate & research students	671 (56%)	-
Total	1189 (85%)	213 (15%)

The ratio of UG students to (post)graduate and research students in non-credit courses is (roughly) in line with the overall LSE student population of 60% postgraduate and research students and 40% UG students. The table also shows that the vast majority of students learning a language in the IWLP at LSE do so in non-credit courses (85%). However, as evidence from the interviews shows, more students would be interested in learning a language in a credit-bearing course if the regulations (and timetables) of their UG degree programmes would allow them to do so. Despite the overall favourable attitude towards language learning at LSE, some restrictions on taking a language as a degree option remain in place in some UG degree programmes. Postgraduate and research students can only join UG degree courses as an extra course which is not part of their degree and for which they have to pay. In the academic year 2014/15 no PG students attended UG degree courses.

2.1.1 Geographical origin

The geographical origin of students (data only available for non-credit courses) reflects the high degree of internationalisation of LSE's overall student population.

Table 2: Geographical origin of IWLP students

	Non-EU students	UK	Other EU
LSE total	49%	33%	18%
IWLP (non-credit)	49%	31%	20%

The slight under-representation of UK students (-2%) corresponds to the over-representation of other EU students. This data is interesting in so far, as it differs quite radically from the nation-wide picture which suggests that UK students are significantly less likely to take part in IWLPs than their international counterparts. According to recent surveys conducted by AULC and UCML around 40% of language learners in UK IWLPs are international students (UCML-AULC 2015, UCML-AULC 2014). A comparison of this figure with the 2013-14 percentage of the overall number of international

students in the UK, reported as 19% by HESA (HESA 2015a), would suggest that on average international students are about twice as likely to take part in IWLPs than UK students.

The fact that the situation at LSE is rather different might be explained by a number of factors. Given LSE's highly selective student intake, it is likely that LSE's UK students bring with them on average a higher level of language skills than the average UK student, while social science students seem to be more prone to taking up languages. Moreover, the fact that the School is such an international university, with two thirds of students having a non-UK background, seems to act as a strong motivational incentive for UK students wishing to increase their linguistic capabilities. A number of UK students interviewed for this study explicitly mentioned the multicultural and multilingual environment of the LSE as a factor which motivated and encouraged them to start or continue learning a language.

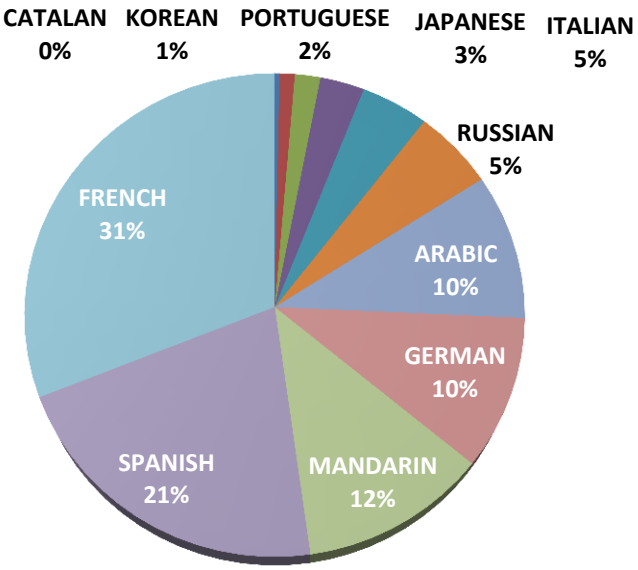
> At LSE I have made a lot Chinese-speaking friends, and it was easy to learn [the language] in that sense, because they would talk in Chinese, and I would just practise my listening and understanding. (A. H.)

> I'd say that half of my fellow students spoke another language […] And after I started at LSE, I kind of identified with the whole notion that to be a rounded, scholarly individual, that it was important to actually have other languages. (D. L.)

2.1.2 Language offer and up-take

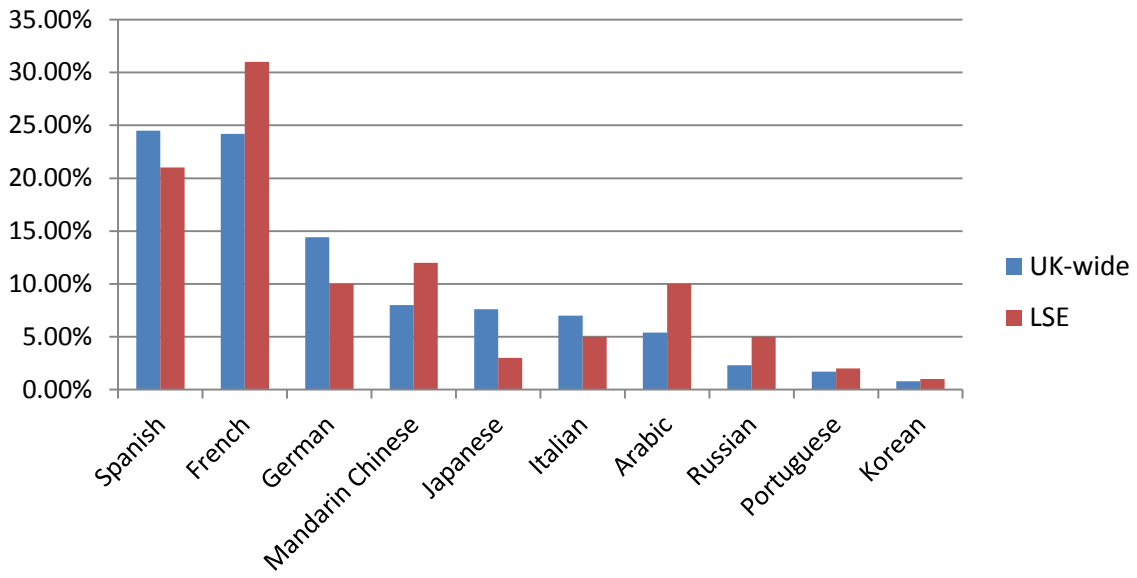
An obviously important issue for providers and students alike is the question of which languages should be on offer in an IWLP. At the national level and with regard to compulsory schooling, this is, of course, an important strategic decision influenced by economic considerations, political relations, traditions of learning and scholarship as well as geographical proximity (Tinsley & Board 2013). The dynamics influencing language curricula and choice in compulsory education are complex and cannot be discussed in any detail here. It should suffice to point out that the languages on offer in primary and secondary schools will have a decisive influence on what languages will be available for study at the tertiary level (ibid.; Pauwels 2013). While universities are free from direct political interference when it comes to deciding which languages to include in their provision, the offer will to a large extent be determined by student demand and the available institutional resources. In total 11 languages are offered in the IWLP at LSE.

Chart 1: Languages offered and share of students in the LSE IWLP (2014/15)



The offer and uptake of languages in LSE's IWLP is broadly comparable to the UK figures published in the 2014-15 UCML-AULC survey of Institution-Wide Language Provision in universities in the UK (UCML-AULC 2015). The IWLP at LSE offers students the 10 most widely-taught languages (with the exception of British Sign Language), although there are differences with regard to share of students. While French, Mandarin, Arabic and Russian are comparatively strong at LSE, German, Spanish and Japanese attract fewer students. LSE's language offer also includes 9 out of the 10 languages identified as "the languages most vital to the UK over the next 20 years" (British Council 2013). The missing language is Turkish.

Chart 2: Comparison of LSE offer with IWLP offer reported in sector-wide survey



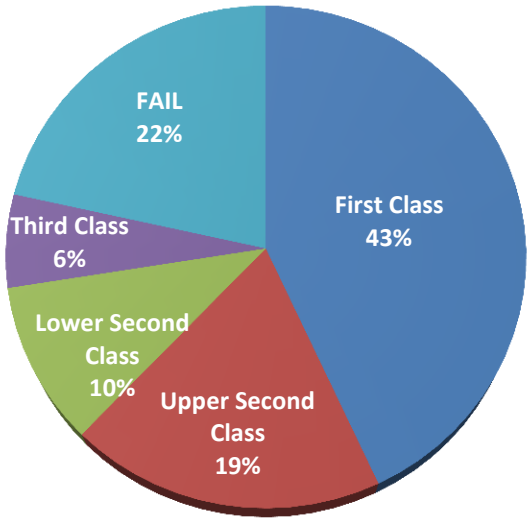
One of the issues frequently discussed with regard to IWLP in UK Higher Education concerns student performance and attainment as well as certification and the involvement of external

examiners. At LSE both credit and non-credit languages courses are comprehensively assessed and are subject to external examination, while assessment patterns are different.

Accredited degree courses are integrated into the overall assessment and examination regulations for UG degree programmes at the School, and summative assessment is dominant in terms of assessing and grading student performance. When looking at the performance data, the most striking characteristic is the overall high level of attainment reached by students, with 87% of students achieving a 2.1 or 1st class degree mark and only 1.3% of students failing. The average mean score of 65.5%[3] for language degree courses is higher than in non-language courses across the School.

Marked assessment in non-credit courses is 50% formative and 50% summative. Student hand in regular coursework and sit a summative oral (30%) and summative written exam (20%) at the end of the course. Only students with an aggregate score of 40% or more will be given a certificate stating the percentage they reached as well as the CEFR level. Students scoring 80% or more will obtain a certificate with the next higher CEFR level. For the academic year 2014/15 the completion rate, i.e. the percentage of course participants (out of all students registered at the beginning) obtaining a certificate, was 70.1%, a figure in line with the withdrawal rates reported from other HE institutions (ibid.). Looking at those students who were not de-registered before the end of the courses 43% achieved a first class degree mark, while 21.5% failed, almost exclusively because they did not sit examinations or failed to submit coursework. Nearly all students submitting all pieces of coursework and sitting all examinations passed their courses.

Chart 3: Percentage of degree classification grades in non-credit courses



The relatively high number of students who drop out during the course of their language studies or who fail their courses because they do not complete summative assessment items should be

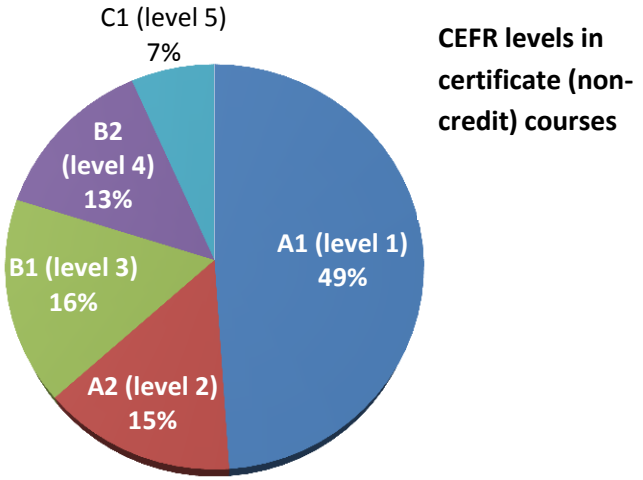
[3] The median for language degree courses is 67%.

a cause for concern for all providers of IWLP. The reasons for the relatively high drop-out and failure rate are varied, but the most important reason is that many students under-estimate their overall workload and, especially towards the end of the year during exam vision periods, and then prioritise work they have to do for their accredited courses. At the same time, it would be wrong to assume that all students who do not complete the course or fail to sit the final examination have gained nothing from their participation. Evidence from the interviews with language learners carried out for this case study suggests that some students never intended to engage in summative assessment, while others confirmed that they were still satisfied with the progress they have made despite not submitting all items of assessment.

The level at which a language is studied is of obvious importance when discussing language capabilities in the wider context of employability and research. Although ability to use the language independently might vary from student to student and also in relation to their skills in speaking, writing, reading and listening, an overall level of B2 on the Common European Framework of Reference (intermediate 2, post AS and A-level) is commonly seen as the benchmark which would allow students to use the language independently for study and research purposes and employ it in more complex communicative tasks in professional contexts (cf. Council of Europe 2009; QAA 2015).

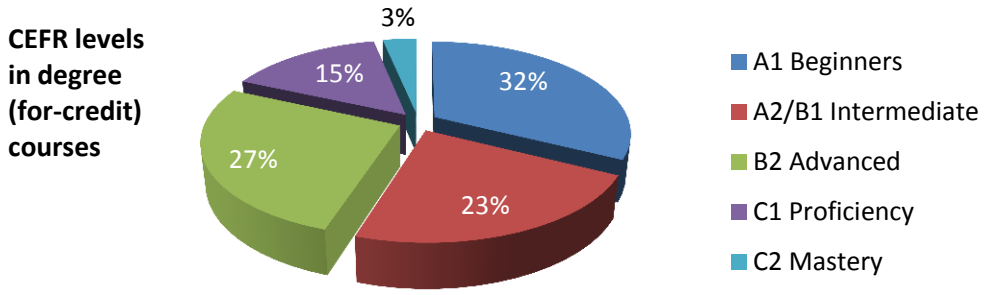
Nearly half of all students in non-credit courses (49%) studied a language at beginners' level (A1). The following chart shows the breakdown of IWLP credit and non-credit courses in terms of proficiency level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Chart 4: Breakdown of levels in non-credit-bearing courses



Looking at students who took a language for credit as part of their degree, we can see that the percentage of students studying a language at a level which would enable independent study through the language (B2 level and above) is much higher (45%) than in non-credit-bearing courses (20%).

Chart 5: Breakdown of levels in accredited degree courses



These figures are roughly in line with a larger survey carried out across 8 universities in 2014 (AULC/UCML 2014), according to which 38% of learners studied a language in beginner courses (A1 level), 15% in elementary courses (level A2), 16% in lower intermediate (B1) courses and 31% in course at B2 level and above. The fact that a majority of students in IWLPs learn a language at beginner and elementary level can be explained by a number of reasons. To some extent it might be due to the decline in language learning at secondary level already mentioned above, while it can also be explained by students starting a second or third foreign language (rather than continuing with their first foreign language). The figures might also be affected by the offer that is available, since not all languages are available at all levels. Students with high linguistic ability in lesser-taught languages will often not be able to find a course suitable for their level.

2.2 Survey data – student background

Students were asked whether they are from the UK, another EU-country or from a non-EU country.

Table 3: Geographical origin of survey respondents

	UK	Other EU	Non-EU
Respondents	47%	24%	29%
IWLP (non-credit only)	31%	20%	49%
LSE total	33%	18%	49%

In terms of geographical origin, the data show that UK students as well as other EU students are over-represented amongst survey respondents, while non-EU students are under-represented. The over-representation of UK students amongst respondents can be explained by the inclusion of degree courses only available to UG students (where UK students are a majority) and by the deliberate decision to encourage UK students to take part in the survey, since an understanding of the motivations of UK students was one of the particular research aims for carrying out the survey. Students were also asked whether they were willing to state their name and contact details. For this group of respondents further background data on course type and student status were established. 23% of respondents were taking degree (i.e. for-credit) courses, while 77% of respondents took certificate (i.e. non-credit) courses. This ratio can be compared with

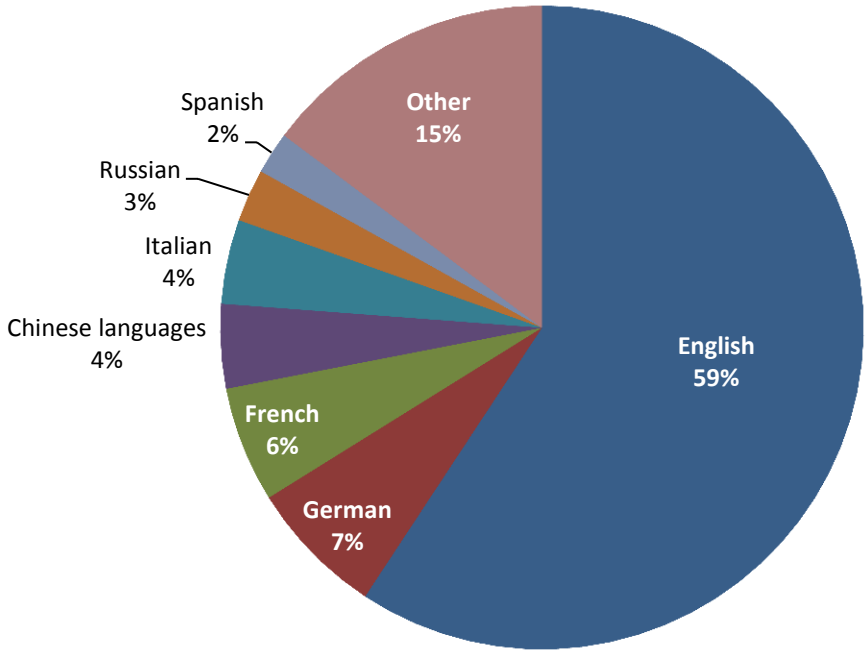
the data for all IWLP participants (15% and 85% respectively), confirming that the respondent population is roughly representative of the overall IWLP population at LSE.

Looking at the ratio of UG to PG students in non-credit courses, the data from the survey (44% - 56%) is exactly in line with the ratio for all IWLP participants and very close to the overall proportion of graduate to postgraduate students at LSE (40% - 60%).

2.2.1 Linguistic background & plurilingualism of respondents

The survey asked students to identify their "other languages" (i.e. languages known, but not currently studied in the IWLP, including their mother-tongue/first language(s)) and to self-assess their proficiency in these languages using the Common European Framework for Languages. The data show that English is the first language/ mother-tongue of a majority of all respondents (59%).

Chart 6: First languages of respondents

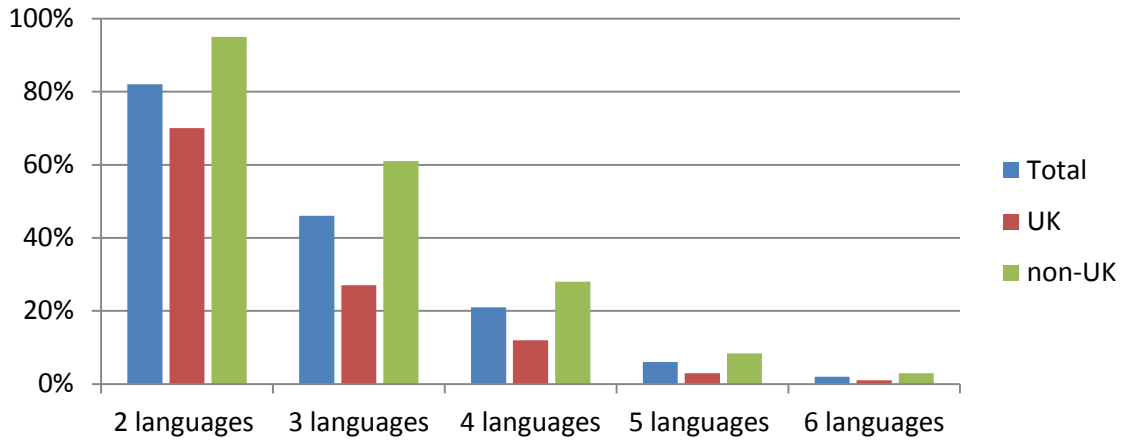


The figure for non-UK students with English as a first language is 33%, while 90% of UK respondents reported that English is their mother tongue. The figure of 59% for speakers of English as first language is remarkably close to the 57% figure reported for the 2014 IWLP Student Survey data (AULC/UCML 2014), which also produced roughly comparable numbers for the other first languages of student learners in IWLP courses. As discussed earlier these figures confirm that, looking at the UK as a whole, speakers of English as a first language are under-represented in IWLP courses, while the situation at LSE, where UK students only constitute 33% of the overall student population, is different. The fairly high degree of linguistic diversity of students in the IWLP corresponds to the level of plurilingualism reported by learners in IWLPs.

The data on self-assessed linguistic proficiency confirm that many respondents consider themselves highly plurilingual. More than 80% of all respondents reported to have knowledge of

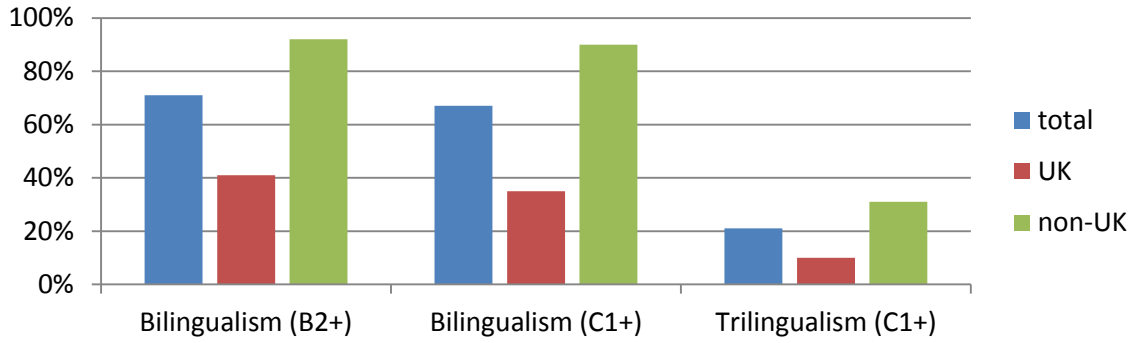
two languages, and more than 20% knowledge of 4 languages in addition to the language(s) they currently study in LSE's IWLP. The interviews carried out with students, gave us a chance to explore the plurilingualism of some students further. While it can be the result of growing up in a multilingual household, some students acquired their languages during the course of their studies. The example of one international postgraduate student, originally from Poland and now studying for an MA in Political Economy at the LSE, shows that mobility and hard work can have impressive results. Before coming to LSE, the student completed a degree programme in Chinese Studies through the medium of English and German in Berlin, and in addition to her native Polish, she now speaks English, German and Mandarin at proficiency level, and has reached B2 level in Spanish.

Chart 7: Knowledge of languages other than language(s) currently studied (including first language)



Many respondents also considered themselves high-level independent or proficient users of two or more languages, as the following chart shows.

Chart 8: High-level plurilingualism reported by respondents



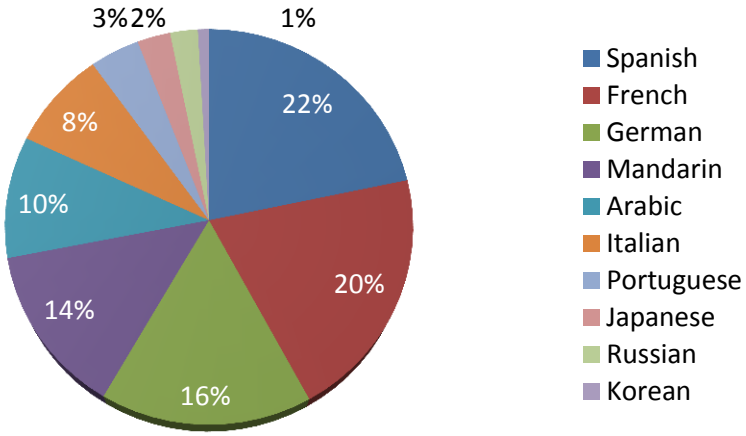
The gap in high-level plurilingual proficiency between UK respondents and non-UK respondents is striking: while only 40% of UK students reported a level of B2 or higher for a second language, more than 90% of non-UK students did so. Moreover, nearly a third of non-UK respondents claimed to be proficient users of three or more languages, compared to just 10% of UK

respondents. Given that all international students at UK universities from non-English-speaking countries will – at least – be high-level bilinguals in a first language plus English, while many UK students now arrive at university with limited skills in one foreign language, this linguistic skills gap is unlikely to disappear. However, taking as a gauge the commitment of LSE's UK students to language learning, the exposure to multilingualism at UK universities, where international students make up an increasingly large percentage of the student body, could work as a strong motivational factor and inspire UK students to increase their language learning efforts.

2.2.2 Languages studied and levels

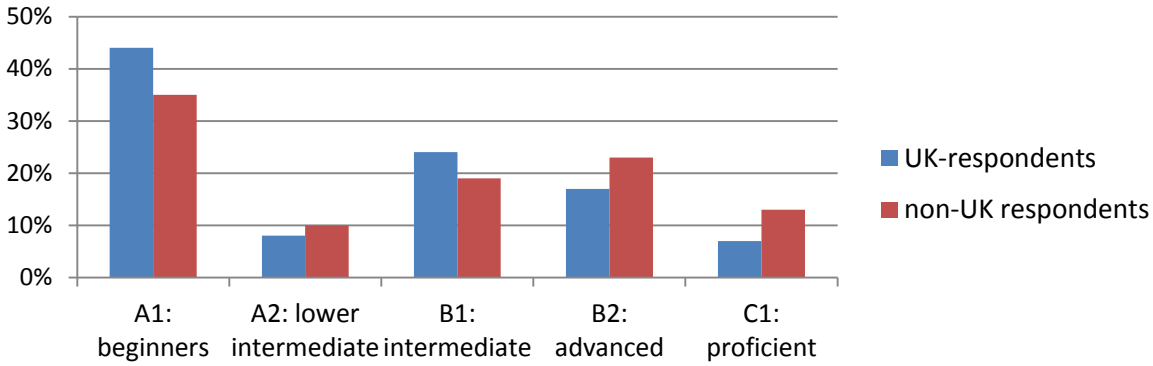
The distribution of languages studied by respondents is broadly in line with the overall offer in the LSE IWLP, with German being overrepresented in the survey, while French and Russian are slightly under-represented.

Chart 9: Languages studied by respondents



The levels students reported for the languages they studied within the IWLP are also broadly consistent with the overall IWLP data. Unsurprisingly, the linguistic skills gap between UK and non-UK students mentioned above is also reflected by this data: whereas 36% of non-UK respondents took courses at level B2 and above, the corresponding figure for UK respondents is 24%. At C1 level the difference is even more pronounced with 13% of non-UK respondents compared to 7% of UK respondents learning a language at proficient user level.

Chart 10: Percentage of survey respondents studying a language at A1, A2, B1, B2 and C1 level.



2.2.3 Motivation

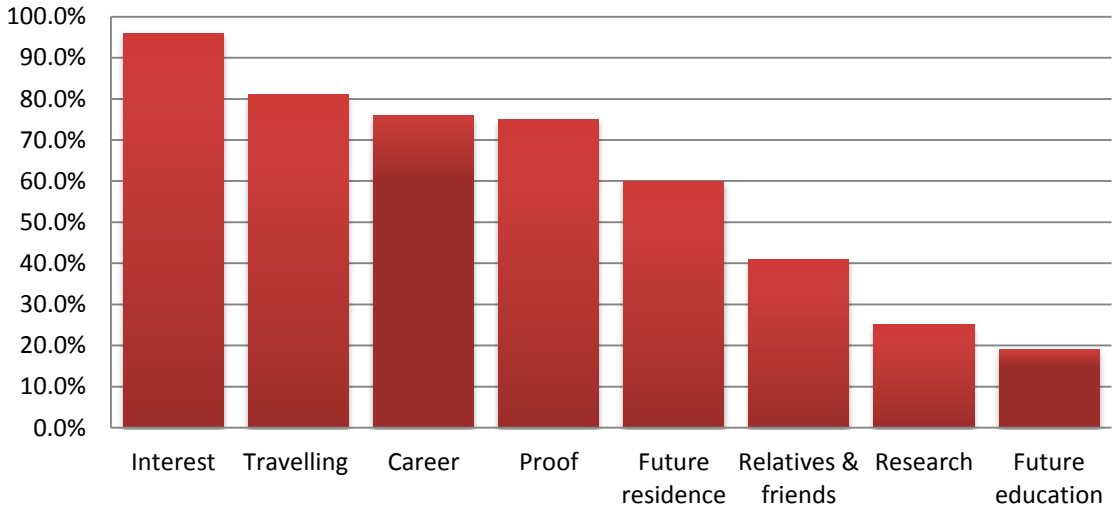
To assess the importance of different motivations for learning a language, students were offered 8 statements whose importance they were asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale (1 not important, 2 slightly important, 3 fairly important, 4 quite important and 5 very important). The selection of factors was based on previous studies and research into motivation (cf. Holmes 2014, UCML/AULC 2014) and the survey participants were asked to assess the relative importance of each of the following statements in their decision to learn or improve the language they study in the IWLP.

Table 4: Motivational statements: reasons for wanting to learn/improve the language studied

The language is useful for my future professional career. (career)
I am interested in the country (culture/society) where this language is spoken. (interest)
I plan to live/work in a country where this language is spoken. (future work/residence)
The language is useful for travelling. (travelling)
I have close relatives/friends speaking this language. (relatives & friends)
I plan to carry out academic research in this language. (research)
I want to continue my university education in a country where this language is spoken. (future education)
I want to/have to demonstrate that I can use this language to an employer or institution (proof)

The next chart shows the aggregate percentage scores of respondents who selected the categories *fairly*, *quite* and *very important* in response to each of the statements ("aggregate importance score"). It thus gives an overview of the overall significance of each motivational factor in broad terms.

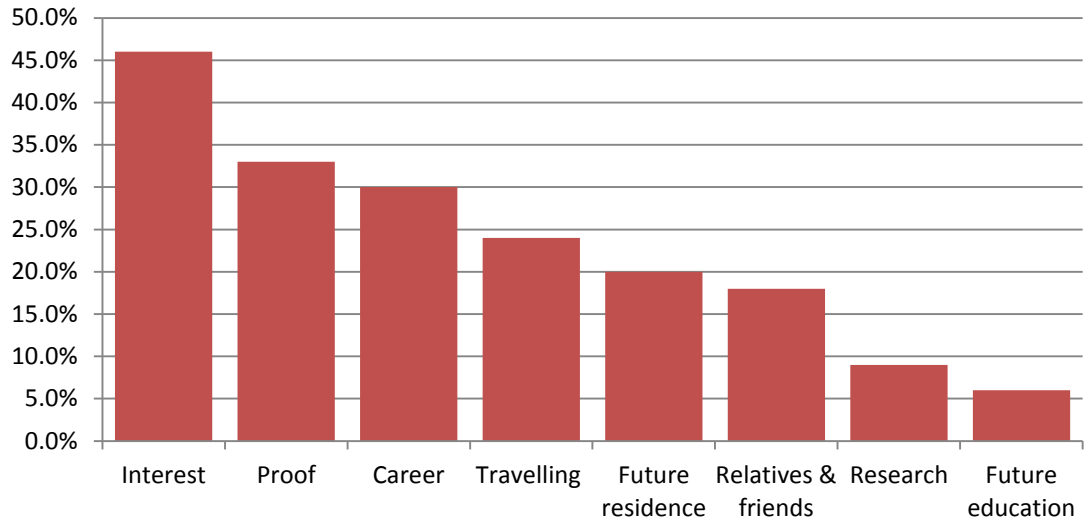
Chart 11: Ranking of motivations: percentage of respondents who selected *fairly, quite or very important*.



The data confirm that respondents rated their interest in the country, society and culture in which the language is spoken and embedded as the single most important motivational factor for wanting to learn or improve the language they were studying. The next three reasons (travelling, career and proof) were all ranked as fairly, quite or very important by three quarters or more of all respondents. Future work or residence plans were fairly, quite or very important for 60% of respondents, while 40% of respondents seemed to be considerably motivated by relatives and friends. The last two motivational factors (research and future education) were only important for roughly a fifth of respondents.

While these aggregate scores give an overview of the overall significance and ranking of motivational factors, the relative strength of each motivation becomes more visible when looking at the scores for "very important" only.

Chart 12: Ranking of motivations: percentage of respondents who selected *very important*



A comparison of these numbers with the wider IWLP student survey reporting data from 8 British universities (UCML/AULC 2014) confirms that student learners across the sector seem to be motivated by similar considerations, attitudes and beliefs. Although the wider survey offered respondents a slightly different and larger set of motivational factors, the results are largely comparable. Intrinsic motivational factors such as "enjoyment" and "broadening one's mind" are rated as *important*, *very important* or *clearly important* by 95% and 94% of all respondents, while the students who took part in the survey also attributed a high level of motivational significance to employability and career considerations, categories which attracted an aggregate importance score of 88% and 83% respectively. Factors which relate to the individual circumstances of respondents (partner, family background) were rated as less important by respondents in both surveys, while research – perhaps surprisingly – was chosen as important (aggregate importance score) by a smaller number of students in the LSE survey (25%) than by respondents in the wider survey (40%). However, the importance of research increases for LSE postgraduate students in higher level courses (B2+), where 46% of LSE respondents considered research as one important factor.

To gain a more detailed understanding of possible differences in the motivations and outlook of students in credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing courses, it is useful to investigate the link between course-type and motivation.

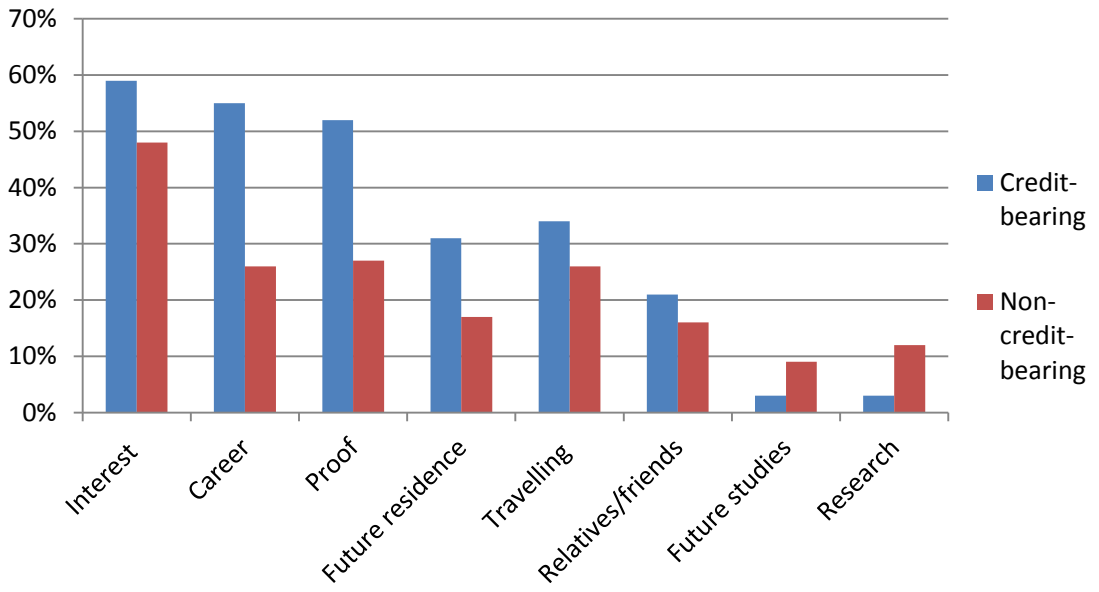
Statements from our interviewees confirm that students in credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing courses are very aware of what they want and expect from the classes.

> I had researched the language opportunities. I knew that there was a course you could do as part of your degree. I did talk to [the language co-ordinator]. I wanted the recognition for doing it as part of my degree; it also complements well [with politics]. I did not want to confine myself to British politics, European issues are very important The issues I am studying now in International Relations in English are very similar to the ones I am studying in French. I think that more contact hours are beneficial. [N.P.; UK undergraduate; French degree course B2 level]

> Having done the[non-credit] certificate course, I really enjoy being able to do four law courses and then having it [the language course] as an extra and then not taking it so seriously and not being under so much pressure to do really well in it. [G.V.; UK undergraduate; Spanish & Arabic certificate courses]

The next table compares the scores of motivational factors in credit and non-credit-bearing courses. The figures show that respondents from credit-bearing courses attributed more significance to nearly all motivational factors, and in particular to career considerations.

Chart 13: Ranking of motivations: percentage of respondents from credit and non-credit courses who selected *very important*

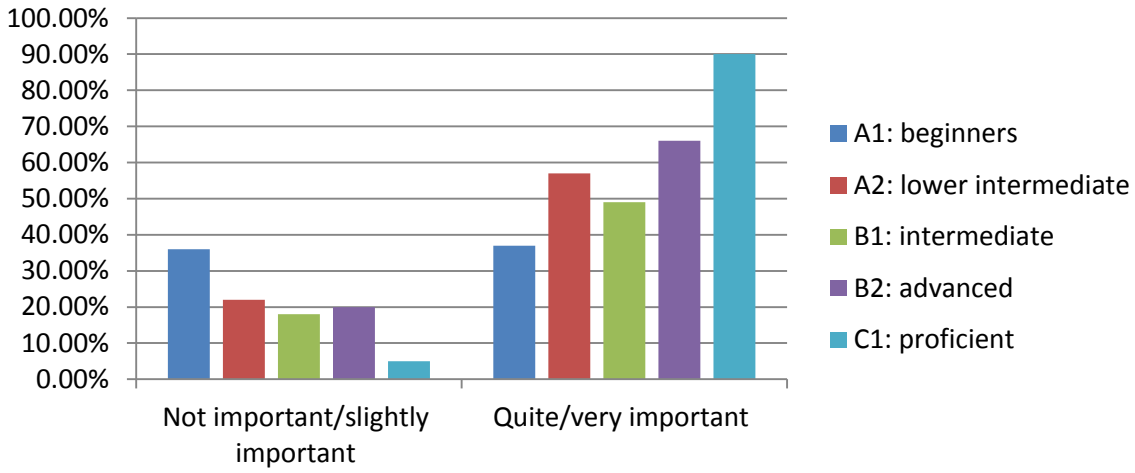


This should not come as a surprise, since students in credit-bearing courses have to invest more time and effort in their learning than students in non-credit-bearing courses. The only

exceptions to this pattern are future study plans and research purposes which both play a lesser role for students in credit courses. The difference in the relative importance of research as a motivation for language learning in credit and non-credit courses can be explained by the absence of postgraduate students, who are more likely to be interested in research, in credit-bearing courses. In general, undergraduate students are less likely to undertake independent research.

Unsurprisingly the data also confirms a relative strong link between the level a language is studied at and the motivational significance of a number of motivational factors, and in particular in relation to future career plans. While 36% of respondents in beginners' courses thought that career plans were of no or only slight importance in their decision to study the language, just 5% of respondents from C1 courses felt that they were not or only slightly motivated by career considerations. Conversely, 90% of respondents from C1 courses thought that career considerations had been quite or very important in their decision to study the language and just 5% considered it not or only slightly important.

Chart 14: Rating of motivational significance of career at different levels

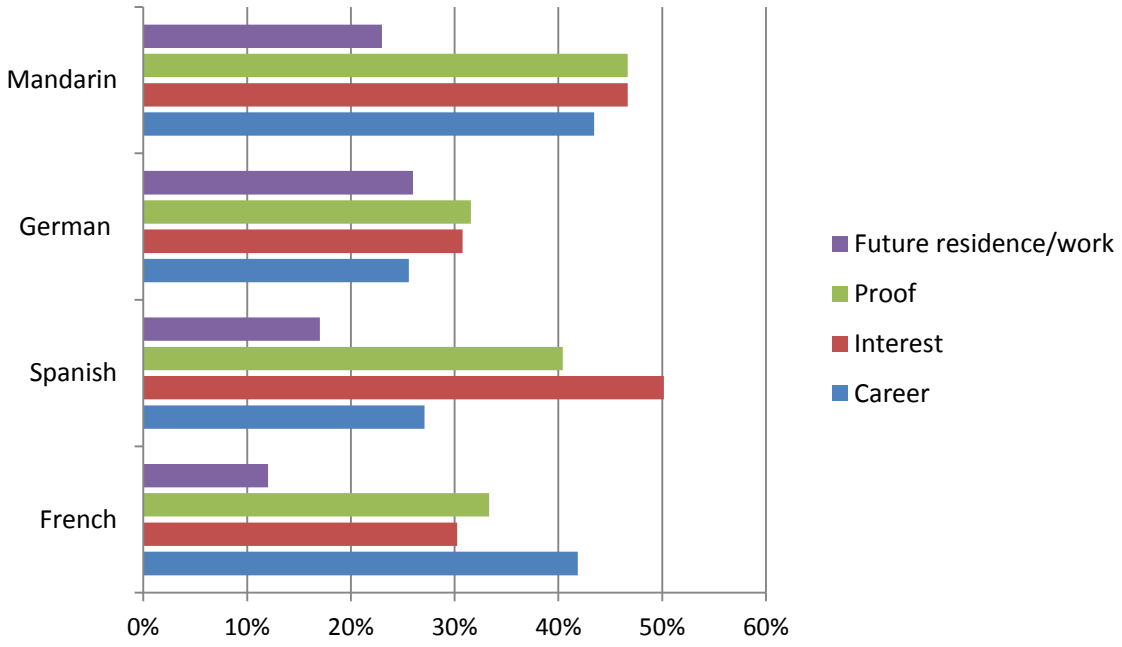


Undoubtedly, the realistic assumption that greater linguistic proficiency equals increased usefulness of a language for career purposes informed this assessment. This view was also expressed by many of the student interviewees who took part in this case study, while some also stressed the additional, professionally useful benefits and skills they acquire while studying a language at any level. In this context it should be noted that teachers and language advisers should communicate to students that all linguistic skills, including those achieved at lower levels, can be of professional advantage, since employers do not only appreciate the instrumental value of linguistic skills, but also the additional knowledge, cultural awareness and sensitivities that are brought about by language capability at all levels. At the same time, respondents in beginners' classers who are motivated by career considerations (nearly 40%) are aware of this, as well as of the fact that for most students learning a language is a long-term process with a slow skills build-up.

Other motivational factors whose significance increases when looking at respondents from higher-level courses are "proof" ("I want to/have to demonstrate that I can use this language to an employer or institution") and "future university education" ("I want to continue my university education in a country where this language is spoken"). Again, this should not come as a surprise taking into account that certification of high-level proficiency is more useful to students and considering that studying an academic subject in a foreign language demands higher levels of proficiency.

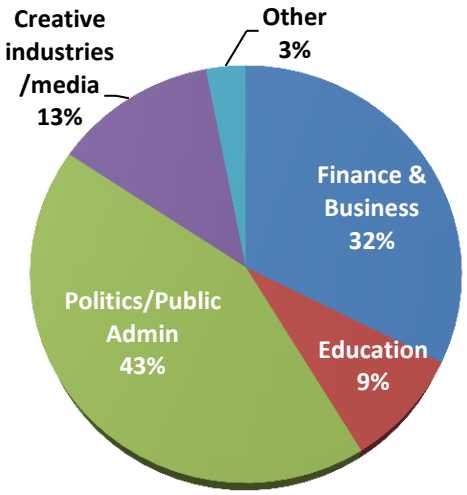
The survey data on motivations also suggests that learners of different languages might be motivated by different considerations as seen in chart 15 below. Although the overall numbers are too small to draw definitive conclusions, some tentative but useful observations can be made. For example, the relative importance of future work and residence plans as a motivation for learning German corresponds to Germany's current status as the number one destination for immigrants in Europe, while the relative importance of career considerations for French, especially prominent amongst UK students, could be explained by an interest in an EU-related career and the fact that French is still the most important language in UK secondary schools and colleges, and can therefore already be used at a higher, professionally more useful skills level by students. However, more detailed language-specific studies and surveys would be necessary to confirm these links.

Chart 15: Percentage of students ranking factors as very important for French, Spanish, German and Mandarin



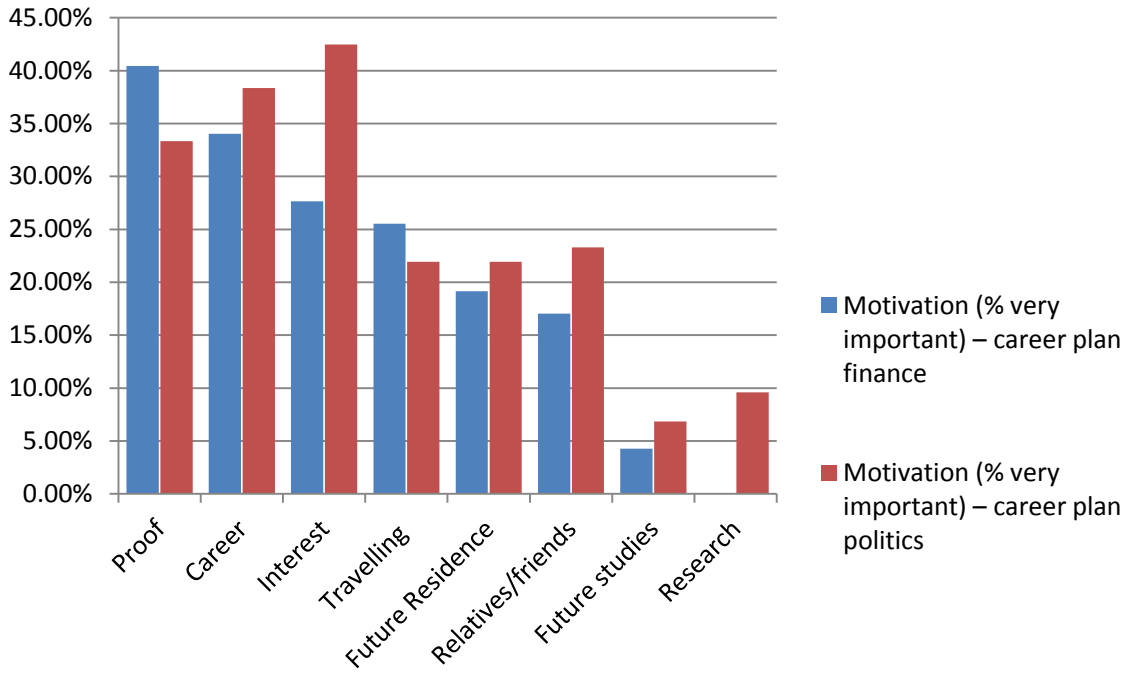
The survey also asked students about their future career plans. In keeping with LSE's academic focus and offer of degree programmes three quarters of respondents foresaw either a career related to politics (43%) or business (32%).

Chart 16: Career plans of respondents



A link between career plans and motivation becomes visible when respondents thinking of a career related to politics are compared with survey participants planning to work in business or finance.

Chart 17: Motivations ("very important") for students with different career plans



Although the differences are not very large and based on a relatively small number of respondents, they do suggest that some groups of students might attribute greater significance to extrinsic motivations while others seem to be more intrinsically motivated. Since motivation can be linked to student expectation of course content, it seems worth exploring these links further in the interest of designing curricula and syllabi which are relevant to all students.

The final questions in the quantitative survey asked participants about their likelihood of "working outside the UK at some time in the future" and the overwhelming majority of all UK respondents (80%) thought that this was "likely" or "definitely likely". This rather high figure seems to contradict the relatively low motivational importance attributed by survey participants to future residence or study plans. If 80% of respondents think it likely that they will be working outside the UK at some time in the future, it seems reasonable to expect that more than the 30% who did so, would consider future residence or study plans as very important motivational factors for their language learning. It is, of course, possible that many of the respondents actually learn a language without knowing whether they will ever live or work in the country where it is spoken.

The high degree of anticipated mobility also contrasts with data published by HESA for the academic year 2013/14 which shows that according to the annual survey of higher education leavers only a small minority of UK graduates and postgraduates (13% of doctorate students, 9% of other PG students and only 3% of UG students) actually find employment abroad after having completed their studies (HESA 2015).[4] The disparity between the figures might to some extent be explained by the difference between student expectation during their studies and their actual behaviour after leaving university. However, another plausible explanation must be that students who intend to work overseas are much more likely to participate in IWLPs than students who do not.

4

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Worton, M. (2009). *Review of Modern Foreign Languages Provision in Higher Education in England*. Bristol, UK: HEFCE. Available at http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100202100434/http://hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2009/200941/ [6/8/2015]

Appendix 1 - example of completed survey

Q1. **About you: Please tick the appropriate box**

- (•) I am a student from the UK
- ( ) I am a student from another EU country
- ( ) I am a non-EU student

Q14. UG or PG

- (•) UG
- ( ) PG

Q2. **I am willing to be interviewed as part of this project. Please state your name and email address below.**

Name	
Email	

Q3. **Which language(s) are you studying at LSE?**

Language 1	German
Language 2	
Language 3	

Q16. What type of course are you taking?

- (•) Degree course
- ( ) Certificate course

Q4. **At what level do you currently study the language(s) listed under question 3?**

	A1: beginners	A2: lower intermediate	B1: intermediate	B2: advanced	C1: proficient	C2: near native speaker
Language 1	( )	( )	(•)	( )	( )	( )
Language 2	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Language 3	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Q5. **Which languages do you already know (include heritage languages if applicable). Please don't repeat languages you listed under question 4 above. Get in touch if you know more than 6! We do want to know.**

Language 1	English
Language 2	Mandarin
Language 3	
Language 4	
Language 5	
Language 6	

Q6. **At what level can you use the languages listed under question 5 above?**

	A1: beginners	A2: lower intermediate	B1: intermediate	B2: advanced	C1: proficient	C2: near native speaker	native speaker / first language
Language 1	○	○	○	○	○	○	◉
Language 2	○	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Language 3	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Language 4	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Language 5	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Language 6	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q7. **Thinking about the first language you named under 3 above: Why did you decide to learn/improve this language? Please state the importance of <u>each</u> reason from 0 (not important) to 4 (very important).**

	Not important / not applicable (0)	Slightly important (1)	Fairly Important (2)	Quite important (3)	Very important (4)
The language is useful for my future professional career	○	○	◉	○	○
I am interested in the country (culture/society) where this language is spoken	○	○	○	◉	○
I plan to live/work in a country where this language is spoken	○	○	○	○	◉
The language is useful for travelling	○	○	○	○	◉
I have close relatives/friends speaking this language	◉	○	○	○	○
I plan to carry out academic research in this language	◉	○	○	○	○
I want to continue my university education in a country where this language is spoken	○	○	◉	○	○
I want to/have to demonstrate that I can use this language to an employer or institution	◉	○	○	○	○

Q8. **Thinking about the second language named under question 3 above: Why did you decide to learn/improve this language? Please state the importance of each reason from 0 (not important) to 4 (very important).**

	Not important / not applicable (0)	Slightly important (1)	Fairly Important (2)	Quite important (3)	Very important (4)
The language is useful for my future professional career	○	○	○	○	○
I am interested in the country (culture/society) where this language is spoken	○	○	○	○	○
I plan to live/work in a country where this language is spoken	○	○	○	○	○
The language is useful for travelling	○	○	○	○	○
I have close relatives/friends speaking this language	○	○	○	○	○
I plan to carry out academic research in this language	○	○	○	○	○
I want to continue my university education in a country where this language is spoken	○	○	○	○	○
I want to/have to demonstrate that I can use this language to an employer or institution	○	○	○	○	○

Q9. **What are your career plans in broad terms? Please select an option from the drop-down list.**

- ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Banking, finance and accountancy
- ☐ Business management
- ☐ Computing/IT
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Marketing/Market research
- ☐ Media
- ☐ Civil Service and government related
- ☐ Political organisation (think tank, NGO etc.)
- ☐ Publishing
- ☐ Retail
- ☐ Telecommunications
- ☑ Travel and tourism
- ☐ Arts & creative industries

Q10. **Do you expect to be working outside the UK at some time in the future?**

- ◉ Yes, definitely
- ○ Likely
- ○ Not very likely

- Unlikely
- Definitely not

. Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. Please contact Peter Skrandies (p.j.skrandies@lse.ac.uk) if you have any questions about this survey or are interested in its results. Please click on the next symbol below to save your answers and complete the survey.

Location Data

Location: (51.518005371094, -0.11199951171875)

Source: GeoIP Estimation

Appendix 2

Interviews carried out

Student and background	Subject studied	Languages	Course studied in IWLP
1. D. K.; UK/Poland; PG	Political Economy of Europe; PG	Polish German English Mandarin Spanish Russian	Non-credit (Spanish)
2. B.B; Netherlands; research student	History	Dutch English French German	Non-credit (German)
3. V.B.; Ukraine; UG	International Relation	Russian Ukrainian English German	Degree (German)
4. D. L.; UK; alumnus	Geography	English German Spanish Russian	Non-credit (Russian)
5. D.K., Singapore, UG	Economics	English Mandarin Hokkien French German	Non-credit German & French
6. A.H.; Germany; UG	International Relations	German Japanese English French Chinese Spanish	Non-credit (German) Degree (Spanish)
7. N.P.; UK	International Relations	English Punjabi French	Degree (French)
8. S. M. , India, South Africa, Malaysia, UG	Economics	Tamil Kannada English Hindi French Arabic	-

9. C.O. ; UK; UG	History	English French	Degree (French)
10. U.P.; UK; PG	History of International Relations	English Serbian Spanish French	Non-credit (French)
11. G.B.; UK; UG	Geography	English French Arabic	Non-credit (Arabic)
12. X.Y.; Singapore; UG	Statistics	English Mandarin	-
13. Singapore; UG	Law	English Mandarin	-
14. S.G.; UK; UG	Sociology	English French	-
15. I. M.; UK/Malaysia; UG	Accounting & Finance	English Bahasa Malaysia Japanese	-
16. R.B.; UK; UG	Government	English Hebrew Arabic French	Degree (French) Certificate (Arabic)
17. R.S.	International Relations	English Arabic	Non-credit (Arabic)

18. G.V.; UK; UG	Law	English Spanish French Arabic	Non-credit (Spanish and Arabic)
19. S.R.; UK; UG	Mathematics	English Hindi Mandarin	
20. C.C.	Accounting	English Hokkien Malay Mandarin French	Non-credit (Mandarin) Non-credit (French)