

Smart students, poor grades

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Factors
contributing to
lower grades in
the transition
from first to
second year
bilingual
secondary
school

ABSTRACT

This research looked into the factors that cause a drop in performance in second year bilingual students . The combined factors of higher expectations of teachers, student motivation, underestimation of the second year and a lack of study skills play a role.

Recommendations were formulated that might be useful for other schools that deal with gifted students as well: increase the difficulty of the first year to make the transition to the second year more gradual, give the students the opportunity to compensate poor grades before the first report card, and train students' study skills during the first year to better prepare them for the second year.

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Introduction

At RSG Brokdele (Breukelen, the Netherlands), the teachers and coordinators encountered a problem with the performance of the second year TVWO students (TVWO is the bilingual pre-university stream in secondary school). The students in the second year of TVWO performed much worse at the start of the second year, than they had at the end of their first year. In order to improve the grades of the students, the school wanted to know which factors contributed to this drop in performance. This led to the following main research question:

Which factors contribute to the drop in performance in bilingual second form students at RSG Brokdele?

Relevance

Based on the research, a number of unexpected and interesting conclusions have been drawn which have led to several recommendations. Even though no evidence was found in the literature of this specific problem occurring in other schools as well, the researchers are convinced that the recommendations can be relevant for all teachers and schools working with gifted students, such as TVWO-schools. The Dutch government aims to optimize programmes for gifted students for example through the "Actieplan Beter Presteren" (2011). This research provides some insights in the development of motivation in gifted students and how this influences their achievements.

With regard to personal relevance, this research has provided the researchers with valuable insights in the problems TVWO students face in their first two years of secondary school, which will help them improve their own teaching practice.

Hypothesis

A number of factors that possibly played a role in the drop in performance of second year bilingual students were identified. In this research, focus was put on three different factors: the use of English as a language of instruction, the motivation of the students for learning in general and learning in English in particular, and a possible change in attitude and expectations on the part of the teachers. It was also clear that something was happening during the transition from year one to year two that caused the drop in performance, so the research focused on exposing any changes between the first and second year. The hypothesis was that these three factors combined caused the drop in performance at the start of the second year. Each of the factors is discussed in more detail below including the sub-research questions they lead to.

English as a language of instruction

Since the drop in performance is less visible in the school's regular, non-bilingual stream, it is logical to focus on the role of the English language, this being the biggest difference between the two types of classes. A sudden increase in the difficulty of the level of English used in class by teachers would explain the students' drop in performance.

There could be a problem with the level of English of the input provided. When teaching subject content through a second language, both the language level and the level of the content have to be just right for the students (Dale et al, 2010). This means that the drop in performance could be caused by the language level of the materials provided. Krashen & Terrell (1983, cited in Dale et al 2010) explain that comprehensible input is "used to describe language input which is slightly higher

than the learners' present level" (p. 48). This brings the language input within the students' zone of proximal development (ZPD). This zone contains all of content and language that the learner is able to master at a certain stage with the appropriate help and support (Woolfolk et al, 2013, p. 55-56). So it could be that the language input provided by the teachers in year two is outside the ZPD for these learners at this stage, making it impossible to attain the demanded level. This would explain their poor performance at the start of the second year.

A specific problem with input could be a sudden change from BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) to CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency). Cummins used these abbreviations to distinguish between informal, conversational language and more complex, academic language (Cummins, 2000, p. 58-59). Going from BICS to CALP is a difficult transition to make for learners. This could be a reason why the students at Broklede are struggling at the start of their second year.

To explain the sudden drop in performance there would have to be a sudden change in the way teachers deal with the English language in these classes. This leads to the following sub-question:

Sub-question: Is there a sudden change in the level of English used in class, which affects the students' performance?

Teacher expectations

Besides increasing the difficulty of classroom language, teachers could also be increasing the difficulty level of the content in the second year. The sheer fact that the students are no longer first years, who need to be eased into this new school and ways of teaching and learning, might be a reason for teachers to raise the bar abruptly at the start of the second year. Even though no research has been found on this phenomenon, common sense indicates this might be the case. Elias et al (1985) have shown that higher expectations from teachers, more and more difficult homework and teachers becoming more strict can contribute to a child's stress in the transition to middle school. These factors could also lead to problems for Dutch children in middle school. This could very well influence the students' test results, which leads to another sub-question:

Sub-question: Do the teachers change their expectations of the students in terms of the content during the transition from the first to the second year and does this influence their teaching practice?

Student motivation

Another factor influencing second language acquisition and learning in general is motivation. The drop in grades during the first semester of the second grade could be caused by a drop in motivation. Saville-Troike (2006) notes that "another factor which is frequently cited to explain why some L2 [*second language*] learners are more successful than others is individual motivation. Motivation largely determines the level of effort which learners expend at various stages in their L2 development, often a key to ultimate level of proficiency" (p. 85-86). Seeing that the students show a drop in performance not only in English, but also in other subjects taught through their second language, motivation for learning this second language could be a factor that influences their grades.

Gardner and Smythe (1975, cited in MacIntyre et al, 2002) studied the same phenomenon in Canadian learners who studied in a second language (French). They found that "grade 7 students had highly positive attitudes toward learning French and grade 8, 9, and 10 students had far less

favorable attitudes, but in grade 11, the students' initial eagerness had returned." This suggests that the novelty of the programme and learning in a second language motivated the students, but once the novelty had worn off, the students were not as motivated anymore. So lower motivation could definitely play a role as well, as the students studied are in the same phase as the Canadian learners Gardner and Smythe studied.

Also, the onset of puberty could cause the students to be less motivated for school in general. MacIntyre et al (2002) studied a group of students similar to the group researched; junior high school students in an immersion-programme in Canada. They paraphrase another study into motivation and learning in adolescents: "According to Sigelman (1999), school achievement motivation generally tends to decline during adolescence because of a number of factors, among which are the increasing amounts of negative feedback children receive as they progress through school, the onset of puberty, and cognitive growth that allows them to assess their abilities more realistically." (p. 559) In other words: there are a number of factors that cause a decline in motivation in adolescents in general, not only for learning in a second language. Two of the three factors named are related to the students growing older and more mature, so there is a strong link to puberty. Naturally the huge changes adolescents experience during puberty demand their attention. Doing well in school might not be top-priority any more.

This leads to the following sub-question:

Sub-question: Are students less motivated to learn through the English language or are they less motivated for school in general in the second year as compared to the first year?

Variables

To test the hypothesis, the students' test results need to be analysed to determine whether a problem truly exists. To get a better grasp of the problem, not only the current second year TVWO students' grades should be taken into account, but also the current third year TVWO students' grades and the current second year VWO (regular pre-university track) students' grades to put the problem into context.

Furthermore, to determine the factors influencing the drop in performance, both the students' and the teachers' explanations for this drop will be analysed focusing on the role of the English language, teachers' expectations and student motivation.

Method

Statistical analysis of the grades

To determine the existence of the problem all report card grades for the current second grade TVWO, the current second grade VWO and the current third grade TVWO were analysed. The grades per subject from report card 4 of year one were checked for normality with a QQ-plot and compared to grades from report 1 year two using a paired t-test (IBM SPSS statistics 20). The grades for the third grade were also averaged per student, giving an average grade for all subjects per report card. These too were tested using a paired t-test to find differences between subsequent report cards. They were averaged for the whole student population to show grade development over two full years. Grades from the current 2VWO class were tested for declining grades to compare the drop in TVWO with one in VWO.

Interviews

As the problem being researched is complex and probably involves a number of factors, it was decided to conduct interviews with those involved. Interviews allow one to investigate complex problems that ask for the study of feelings and opinions (Denscombe, 2007, p. 174-175). Twelve students and six teachers were interviewed about their views on language level, content level, student motivation and possible causes for the drop in grades.

The interviews were semi-structured to allow interviewees to develop their own thoughts and ideas. (Descombe, 2007, p. 175-176). Following practice as formulated by Patton (2002) standardised, mostly open-ended interview questions were formulated, sequenced in a logical order addressing a number of themes (see interview questions in appendix 2 and 3), starting off with factual questions to ease the interviewees into the conversation and ending with questions specifically asking for their opinion on the problem being researched (p. 352). The interview questions were piloted by testing the student questions on two students from the peer group of the interviewees and the teacher questions on one student teacher in training at Utrecht University. In both cases this led to adjustments to clarify some questions.

Students and teachers were interviewed one-to-one, in most cases (13 out of 20) with a silent observer present. This was done both to simplify the analysis of the data and to make interviewees, especially the students, feel free to express their opinion without pressure or influence from peers (Denscombe, 2007, p. 177). The interviewers were aware of the importance of neutrality, both for making the interviewees open up, and for preventing the interviewers from influencing the results. During the pilot interviews extra attention was therefore given to feedback aimed to reduce the use of guiding questions, i.e. questions that lead the interviewee to give a certain desired answer.

To record basic information such as gender, age and native language in a time-efficient way, all interviewees were given a questionnaire with factual questions (Denscombe, 2007, p. 154-155).

Selection of respondents

Teachers were selected to represent most subjects taught in English (English, history, geography, science and math). They had at least seven years of experience in education and a minimum of four years of experience teaching TVWO, most of them were native Dutch speakers, one teacher had English as their mother tongue. Twenty-seven per cent of the total 2TVWO student population was

interviewed, not counting the pilot students. Students were selected through purposeful sampling by the school's TVWO-coordinator based on their grades (eleven students experiencing a drop in grades, one student without) and their ability to express themselves verbally. The students interviewed were therefore representative for the population affected by the problem being researched. As the last interviews did not give much new information anymore, saturation of information was reached, confirming the number of interviews conducted was sufficient (Seidman, 1991, p.42-45).

Coding the data

As suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994), the data were divided into categories, thus making it easier to compare the answers different interviewees gave and making it possible to draw general conclusions. For each question a number of possible answers (codes) were made. While coding the transcribed interviews, the code scheme was revised continuously to reflect the actual answers the interviewees gave (p. 55-69) (see appendix 2 and 3 for coding schemes).

After coding, the results were checked for inter coder reliability to ensure consistency amongst all coders. A number of interviews were coded twice by two researchers and the percentage of corresponding codes was calculated. For this fairly simple method of calculating inter coder reliability, one has to take into account that there will always be some correspondence due to mere coincidence, leading to overestimation of the reliability. This is especially the case since in this research very few coding categories were used, often just a choice between "yes" and "no". Even without accounting for this overestimation, the percentages scored were too low to base results on. Therefore, it was decided to go through all of the interviews again with all three researchers present. Differences were discussed until a mutual understanding of the codes was reached and the code scheme was adapted accordingly. The coded answers were used to generate quantitative data and show proportions in given answers.

Results

A drop in grades at the start of year two

Teachers of Broklede bilingual department instinctively felt students were performing worse once they started their second year at school. The analysis of grades shows this as well. Table 1 shows a significant (p value ≤ 0.05) drop in the grades for English, history, geography and math from students who are now in their second year.

Table 1: Average drop in grades between last report year 1 and first report year 2 in students currently in year 2 of TVWO (n= 45)

Subject	Average 2R1 – 1R4	P value
English	-1,477272727	0,000000000520248
History	-0,809318182	0,0000085321
Geography	-0,909090909	0,00001494
Math	-0,864	9,43175E-07
Science	-0,205	0,297445985
Art	-0,205	0,151682315

That this is not just an incident is shown by the analysis of the grades of students now in their third year. Here too the subjects English, history, geography and math show a significant drop from the last report in the first year and the first report in the second year (table 2).

Table 2: Average drop in grades between last report year 1 and first report year 2 in students currently in year 3 of TVWO (n=49)

Subject	Average 2R1 – 1R4	P value
English	-0,347	0,001542858
History	-1,122	1,60504E-10
Geography	-0,796	2,55355E-09
Math	-0,694	6,8036E-06
Science	-0,041	0,674319847
Art	0,102	0,440554318

The drop is exclusive to the transition from year one (Y1) to year two (Y2) since only a slight significant drop in grades of one subject can be seen between the last report of the second year and the first report of the third year (table 3).

Table 3: Average drop in grades between last report year 2 and first report year 3 in students currently in year 3 of TVWO (n=49)

Subject	Average 3R1 – 2R4	P value
English	-0,184	0,059787961
History	0,315	0,079944597
Geography	-0,286	0,003248899
Math	-0,041	0,749257024
Science	0,204	0,076835274
Art	0,122	0,20258633

Overall, the grade development during the first two years shows three significant changes (indicated with stars). Figure 1 shows the development of the average report grade. A decline is visible after the first report in year one and after the last report in year one. After the first report card of the second year the grades climb back up.

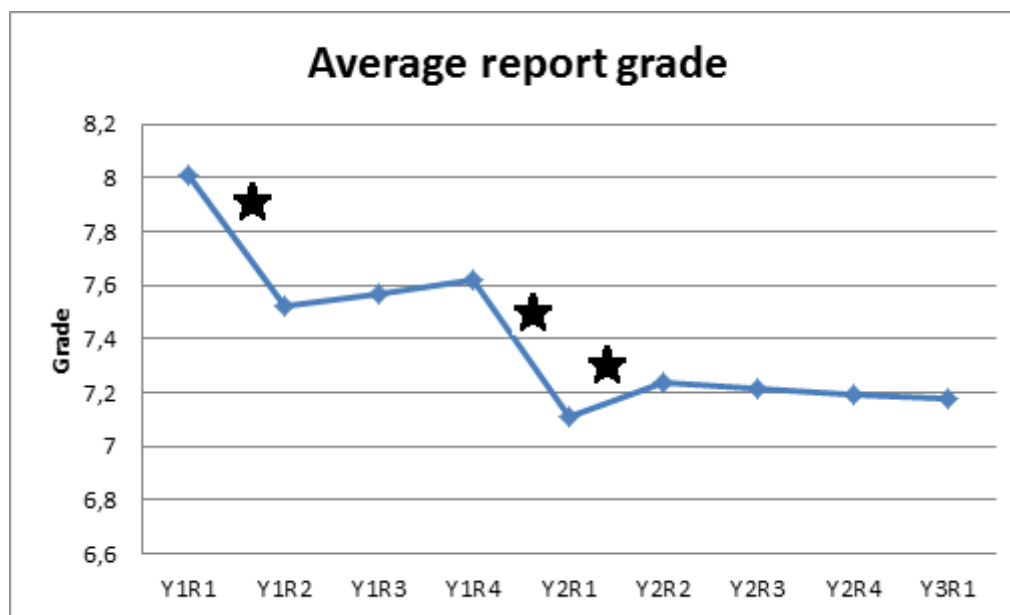


Figure 1: Average report grades from students currently in their third year of TVWO (n=49)

Though the drop in grades after the first year is not a phenomenon exclusive to the TVWO stream, it is much bigger than in the regular VWO track. Table 4 shows that there are smaller significant drops in history and math. Biology grades have even risen in the next year. English and geography show no significant drop.

Table 4: Average drop in grades between last report year 1 and first report year 2 in students currently in year two of the regular pre-university track (VWO) (n=56)

Subject	Average 2R1 – 1R4	P value
<i>English</i>	-0,154	0,271387216
History	-0,269	0,021621298
<i>Geography</i>	-0,140	0,163664701
Math	-0,596	7,23524E-05
Biology	0,269	0,01484619

The role of English as the language of instruction

All students showing a drop in grades were asked in which subjects they were scoring low grades. They came up with both English taught subjects (science, math, geography, history and English) and Dutch spoken subjects (German and French) (figure 2). When asked if it was due to the content or the language, most of the students (6 out of 9) indicated it was because of the content (figure 3). Seven out of eleven students did not think they would receive higher grades if they took their subjects in Dutch (figure 4).

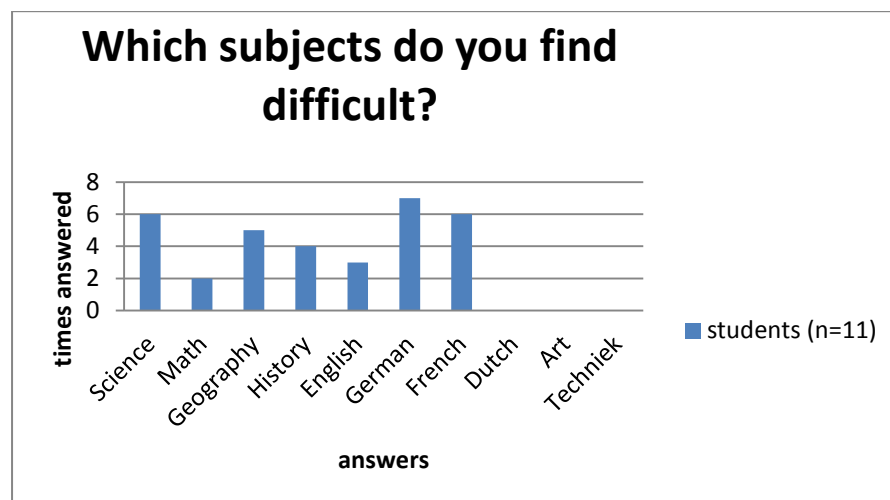


Figure 2: Difficult subjects

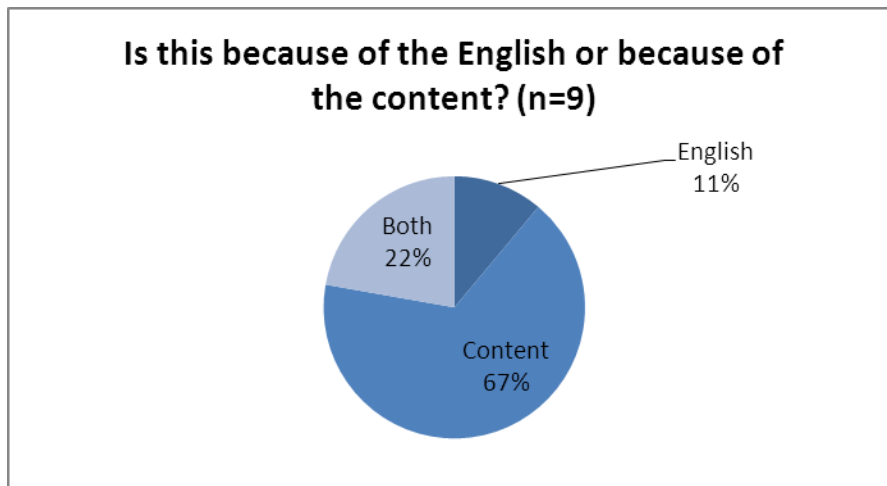


Figure 3: Why do you think this subject is difficult?

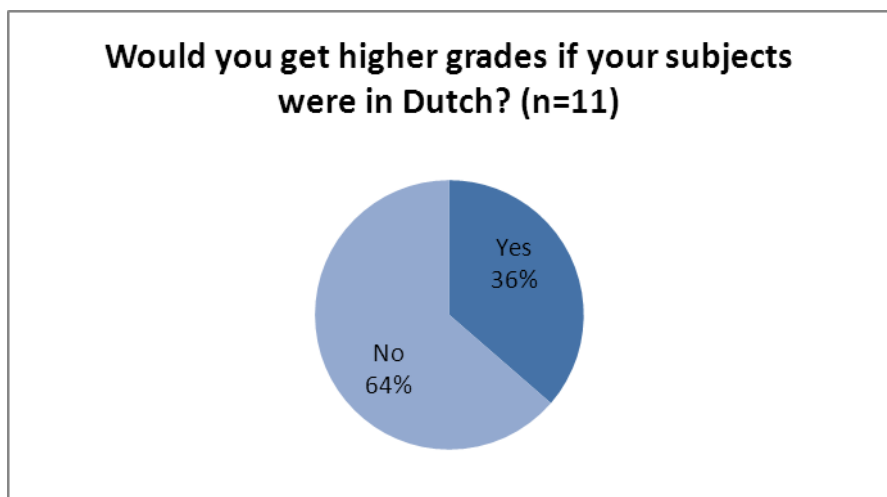


Figure 4: Would you get higher grades if your subjects were in Dutch?

Figure 5 shows that students have a number of strategies when they are not able to formulate the answer they want. The strategies they used were formulating the answer differently, asking the teacher, using a dictionary and answering the question in Dutch.

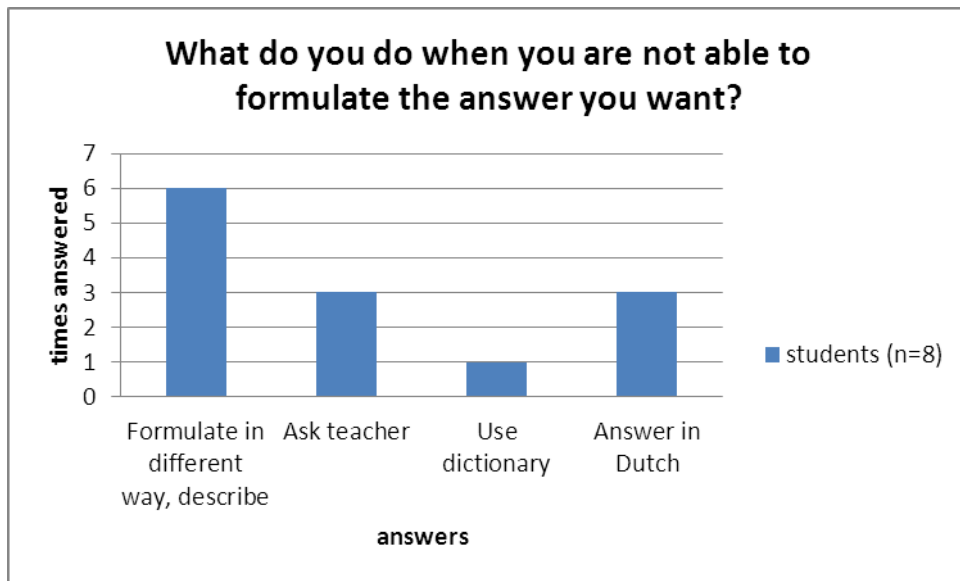


Figure 5: Coping skills when formulating an answer

Lastly, only 4 out of 11 students found learning in English more difficult in the second year, whereas 6 out of 11 thought learning in English was more difficult in the first year. One student indicated there was no difference between the first year and the second year (see figure 6).

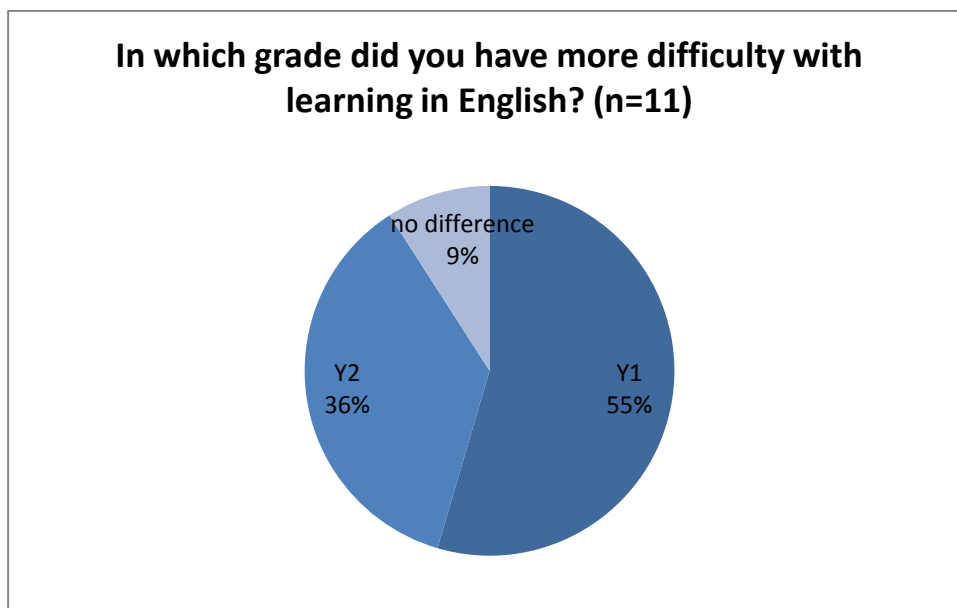


Figure 6: In which grade did you have more difficulty learning in English?

Teacher expectations from the students' point of view

According to the majority of the students (8 out of 11), the pace in the second year is neither too fast nor too slow (see figure 7). When the students were asked if there was a difference in pace between the first year and the second year, 5 out of 8 students indicated that the pace was faster than in the first year (see figure 8).

How is the pace in Y2? (n=11)

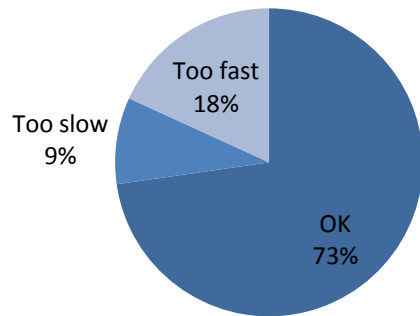


Figure 7: The pace in year two

Is there a difference in pace between Y1 and Y2? (n=8)

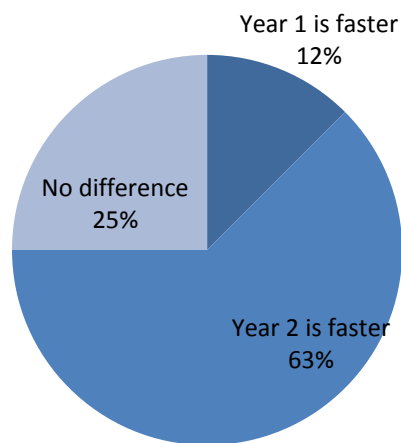


Figure 8: The difference in pace between year 1 and year 2

Students indicated that they did not find the first year difficult. Figure 9 shows that 7 out of 10 students said this and 2 said that only the first few months of the first year were difficult.

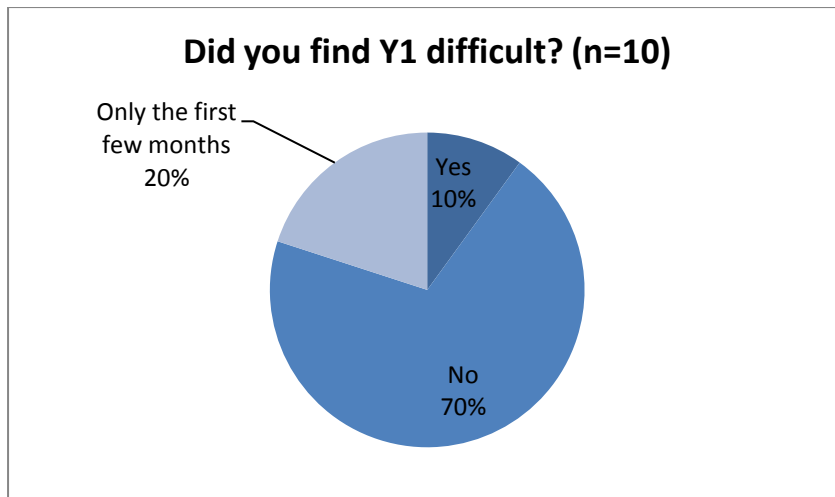


Figure 9: Year one difficult?

The students were also asked in which year their lessons were more demanding in terms of content. Figure 10 shows that 8 out of 11 students thought that the content of the lessons in the second year was more demanding than in the first year.

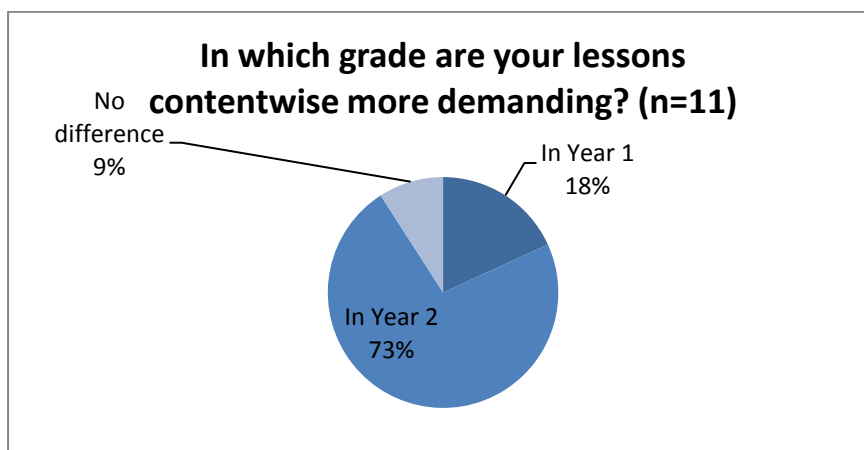


Figure 10: Content

Besides more difficult content in the second year, the students also spent more time on their schoolwork in their second year. Figure 11 shows that 9 out of 11 students spent more time on schoolwork in year two than in year one.

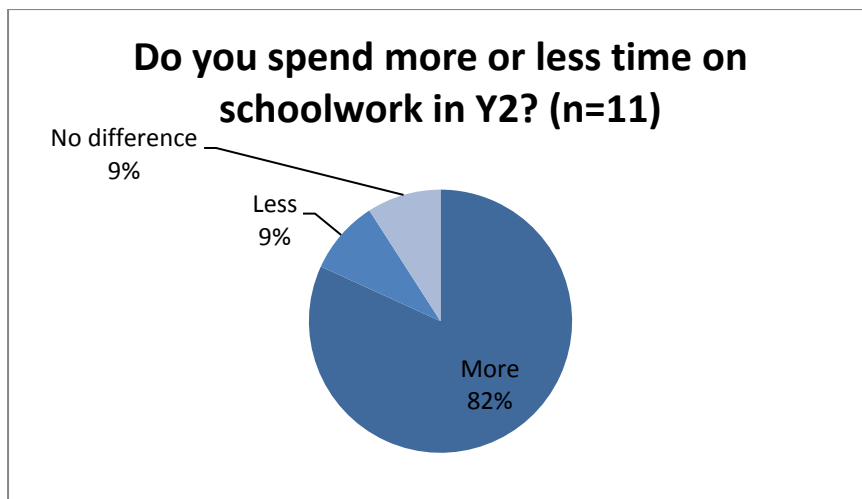


Figure 11: Time spent on schoolwork

Teacher expectations from the teachers' point of view

According to 4 out of the 6 teachers interviewed, the content was more difficult in the second year than in the first year and 3 teachers said that the pace had also increased. Two teachers indicated that there was hardly any difference in the difficulty of the content between year one and year two (see figure 12).

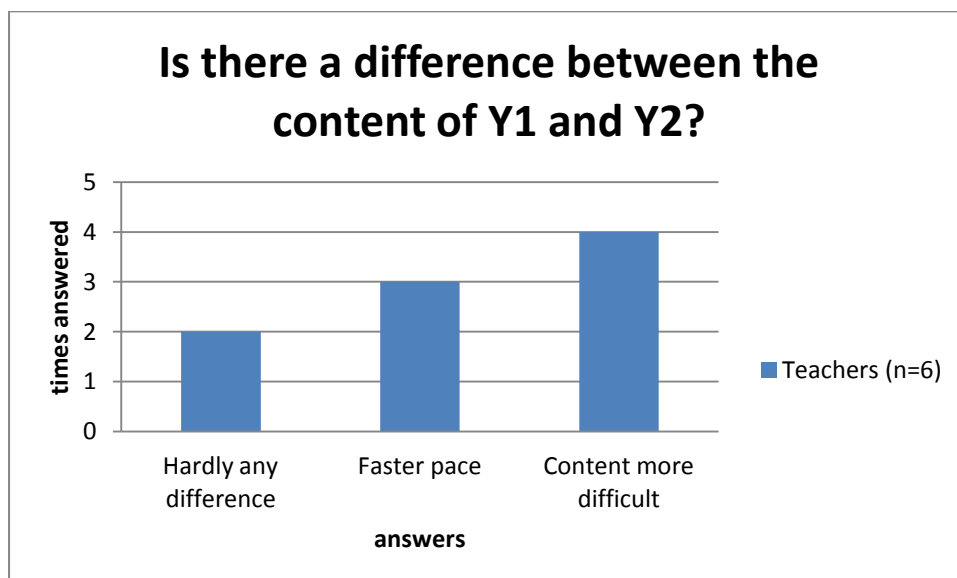


Figure 12: Content difference between year 1 and year 2

Motivation

In general the students are motivated to go to school. Only two students were not motivated to attend school. The others indicated various factors positively influencing their motivation (see figure 13).

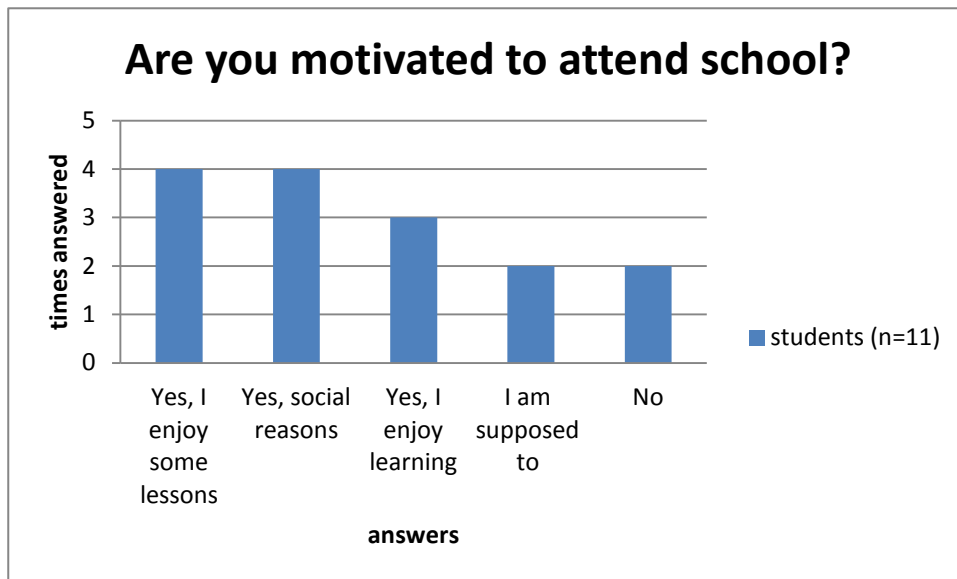


Figure 13: Are you motivated to go to school?

Figure 14 shows that 9 out of 10 students indicated their motivation to work hard in school was higher in their second year than in their first year.

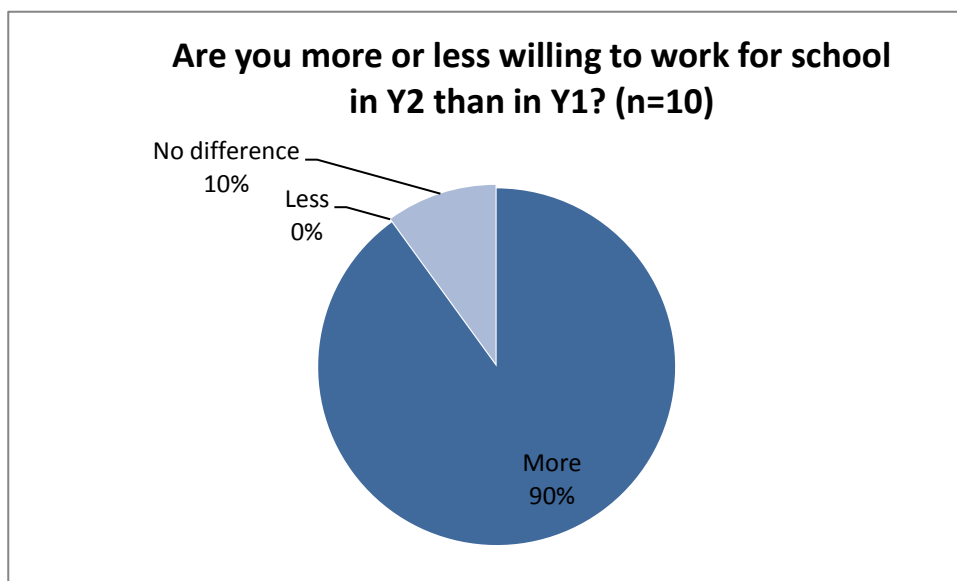


Figure 14: Willingness to work for school

The reason they gave for their motivation increasing in the second year was that they needed to fix poor grades. Six out of 7 students indicated that their poor grades had startled them and motivated them to work harder (see figure 15).

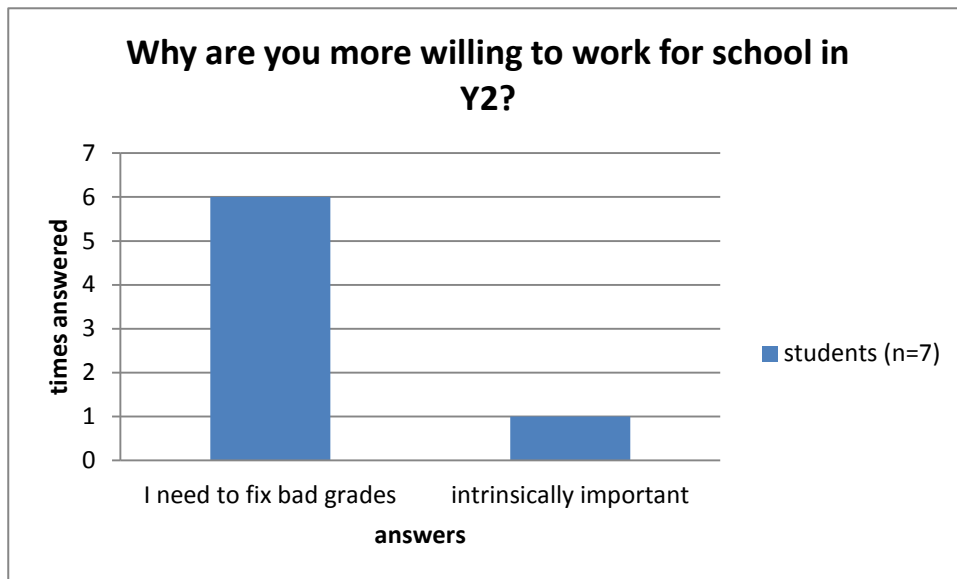


Figure 15: Reasons for working for school

Most teachers (5 out of 6) saw a difference in motivation in year two compared to year one. They felt students were less motivated for school in their second year compared to their first year. Some teachers (3 out of 6) feel the decline in grades in the second year could, in part, be caused by declining motivation.

Discussion

From these results, a number of interesting analyses can be made. First, the role of English as the language of instruction is discussed. Followed by the perceived differences between year one and year two according to the teachers and the students. Next, the role of motivation is discussed. Finally, a few other interesting insights are presented.

The language of instruction

The hypothesis was that using English as the language of instruction could be one of the reasons why TVWO students scored lower grades at the start of the second year. When looking at the statistical analysis of the grades, a significant drop in grades of both the TVWO stream and in the VWO stream is visible. However, the drop in VWO is not nearly as large as the drop shown in TVWO. This suggests that using a second language as the language of instruction could be a factor contributing to this drop, because the language of instruction is the biggest difference between these two groups.

When looking at the subjects the students find difficult, the students mention a number of subjects that are taught in English (see figure 2). However, when the students were asked why they found these subjects difficult, the majority answered that it was due to the content, not the language of instruction (see figure 3). This suggests that the language does not play a big role in the difficulty of a subject. That is also supported by figure 4, which shows that only 4 out of 11 students indicated that they thought that they would score higher grades if their subjects were taught in Dutch instead of English.

Moreover, when the students were asked how they dealt with language issues they encountered during tests in their first and second year, 8 out of 11 students indicated that they sometimes had trouble understanding a question due to language use. However, none of the students showed an incapability to deal with language issues when reading a test question: they all felt they had strategies to divert the problem. This is also the case when formulating answers. Most students (8 out of 11) experience trouble formulating their answers in English. But here too, as shown in figure 5, students have a variety of strategies to deal with situations in which they cannot answer. These strategies include formulating the answer differently, asking the teacher for help, using a dictionary and answering the question in Dutch. So the failure to understand questions or provide answers is not a factor in getting lower grades for English spoken subjects. This again suggests that using a second language as the language of instruction is not the reason why the students perform worse in their second year.

This is also supported by figure 6 which shows that only 4 out of 11 students experience learning through English as being more difficult in the second year. Six out of 11 students said that they experience the first year as more difficult in terms of learning through a second language. This could be explained by the fact that in the first year students are working towards a certain language level which allows them to communicate effectively in class. In their second year, the students have most likely acquired this language level and they encounter few problems while communicating in class as well as understanding and answering questions during their tests. So all in all, it can be concluded that the language of instruction does not contribute to the drop in grades at the start of the second year.

Perceived differences between year 1 and year 2

Another factor that possibly played a role could be the sudden change in teachers' expectations of students in terms of content during the transition from the first to the second year. While analysing the interviews with the teachers, an interesting paradox in their answers emerged. On the one hand, the teachers say that the transition from the first year to the second year is quite a gradual process. However, at the same time they do indicate that they have higher expectations. For example in the quote below, teacher D005 expresses higher expectations such as a more active attitude and more independence, but at the same time says it is a gradual process.

Interviewer: How do you generally deal with the period right after the summer holidays? Especially when the students go from year 1 to year 2?

D005: Well, well, I say that uhm, I expect more from them. I expect more independence and uhm a more active attitude because they uhm well, they are a year older and the first year is behind them now and so you do have different expectations of them.

[...]

Interviewer: So you do have the feeling that it is a gradual process?

D005: Yes, absolutely. I would like to stress that. If I gave the impression that it isn't then I have to correct that because that is not what I meant. It really is a continuous process, which does not have a break so to say.

The fact that teachers have higher expectation is also supported by figure 12. This shows that according to 4 out of 6 teachers, the content level increases in the second year and 3 of the teachers also indicated that the pace was faster. Apparently the teachers are not quite aware of the impact of their higher expectations. They say that it becomes increasingly harder for the students throughout the year and that it is a gradual process from the end of the first year to the start of the second year. At the same time teachers do express a number of expectations, for instance they talk about increased pace, more difficult content and longer texts, which suggests the transition from the first year to the second year might entail more than they think.

In contrast, when the students were asked to compare the first year to the second year, they indicated a clear difference in terms of pace, content, and the amount of time spent on schoolwork. This suggests the difference between year 1 and year 2 might be not as gradual as the teachers think it is. Basically, the students perceived the first year as rather easy. They did not have to work hard to achieve high grades and the pace at which they moved through the content was perceived to be at a comfortable level for the majority of the students. None of the students indicated that the pace was too fast in the first year. The student that did not show a drop in grades at the start of year 2 even said the pace was too slow in year 1. However, 2 out of 11 students indicate the pace was too quick for them in the second year (see figure 7). When the students were asked to compare the pace in year 1 to the pace in year 2, the majority of the students, five out of eight, indicated that the pace had increased in year 2 (see figure 8). This could be because the teachers are mainly focused on language acquisition and making the students feel at ease with learning a subject through a second language during the first year as is illustrated by the following quote.

D006: Geography is very different in the first year, it's all about getting used to the English language.

This teacher clearly indicates that during the first year much time is spent on helping the students getting used to learning through a second language. Apart from the pace and letting students get used to the use of a different language, there is also a difference in terms of the content of the subject. When the students were asked whether they found year 1 difficult, the majority, 9 out of 10, of the students answered that year 1 was easy (see figure 9). This is in contrast with the second year. Eight out of 11 students indicated that the content was more demanding in their second year (see figure 10). Furthermore, 9 out of 11 students also said that they spent more time on their schoolwork in their second year (see figure 11).

All in all, the students perceived the first year as easy and the second year as much more demanding. Six out of 11 students explicitly indicated having underestimated the second year because they thought the first year was so easy. For example student L011, who describes an unchanged work attitude leading to poorer grades in the second year. Though not all explicitly mentioning this, other students seem to share the same problem.

Interviewer: Okay, and why was this year different, especially the start of this year?
L011: Yes, true. At the start of the year, I thought: "I am going to do the same as in my first year," that is not too much studying. But then I had nine deficiencies. So then you really notice that it is very different. That you really have to learn a lot more. That the content is much harder.

This shows that the students had the idea that they could put in a limited amount of effort and, just as in their first year, they would still achieve high grades. This work ethic turned out to be insufficient in the second year. Once they started scoring bad grades they realised that the second year was much harder in terms of content and the amount of effort they had to put in, also because they now had to compensate the bad grades they scored at the start of year 2.

Motivation

A decline in student motivation could also contribute to the drop in performance at the beginning of the second year. Again a discrepancy can be seen between the students' perception and the teachers' perception. While students indicate being motivated to attend school and having an increased willingness to work hard for school in the second year (see figure 13 and 14), teachers feel the students are less motivated to work hard in school in the second year and they think this might be a factor contributing to the declining grades. This discrepancy has to do with the period the teachers and the students had in mind when being asked this question. The teachers probably refer to a more general motivational trend they witness in their students. They feel motivation is declining, perhaps due the novelty of a new school wearing off and attending a bilingual school becoming normal, as teacher D004 explains in the following quote:

D004: So students start in their first year and they have often made quite a conscious decision to opt for bilingual education, they are motivated to do well and so on, and they often judge it to be rather special to be in TVWO. Then they go through the motions. It turns out that you have to do quite some work and at a certain moment, you reach that point where they can speak English in class, all goes well [...] They know how to communicate with the teachers. So in that sense, the tension is gone, the curiosity ...

The students, on the other hand, were genuinely motivated and willing to work hard at the moment of being interviewed because they had deficiencies to compensate (see figure 15). This is of course partly due to the selection of the sample: 11 out of the 12 students were selected by the TTO-coordinator to partake in this research because of their poor grades.

While students indicate being very motivated, they do speak of similar motivational changes during their school career. They start their new school really excited and motivated. Then as they find out they can get by with less work they start to work less. This is not a problem in the first year; grades remain high. But in the second year, as the level and pace increase, the students fall behind. When the first insufficient grades start coming in, the students realise they need to work harder to pass to the next grade. This clearly shows how motivation, underestimation and declining grades are closely interconnected and gives clues as to where to start intervening in this negative cycle. The whole process is illustrated by the following quote from the interview with student L004:

Interviewer: Do think it is important to score good grades now?

L004: Yes.

Interviewer: Yes, why?

L004: Because at the start of the year, I had a number of subject in which I scored below the passing grade and now I've managed to improve my grades and I would like for it to stay that way.

Interviewer: What caused that drop in grades in the beginning of the year?

L004: We had gotten a number of grades, and I thought 'oh just little bit of studying and then I know everything', and well, I started working less hard and that I scored a number of insufficient grades.

Interviewer: Okay, and when did you find out that you should work a little harder?

[...]

L004: In between the start of the year and the first report card, they give you a preliminary report card which shows what you can still do before they give you the first official report card and that's when I realised then I wasn't doing that well.

Interviewer: Oh dear, and what did you do then?

L004: Then I started working harder, and at school I received extra tuition, that's after school when teachers can help you with certain subjects and uhm, well, working harder, and more studying that helped me to get on the right track again.

Interviewer: That's nice. What did you think about the first year? When you were still in your first year, did you think it was important to score good grades?

L004: Yes, actually. Especially to make a good impression, but half way through the year I did think 'oh now I can start doing a little less.'

Interviewer: Okay, so you started working less hard?

L004: Yes, a little.

Interviewer: Can you explain why?

L004: Because I thought: 'I am doing well, I am scoring good grades'.

Interviewer: But did you think you would still score good grades?

L004: Yes.

Interviewer: Are you more or less willing to work for this year of school?

L004: More.

Interviewer: Yes, more. What has changed?

L004: I do think it is the bad grades, I do not want to let that happen again.

Other interesting findings

In the course of this research many interesting things that were not directly related to the research questions were discovered. Two of these are briefly mentioned here because they have led to recommendations for the school. During the interviews, a number of students mentioned having difficulty deciding what, when and how to study. Furthermore, they came up with a number of interesting recommendations for ways in which the school could have helped them during their difficult period at the start of the second year (see appendix 1 for more information).

Conclusion

The hypothesis focused on three possible factors: the role of the English language as the language of instruction, the teachers' expectations towards students and student motivation. Interestingly, no indication that the English language caused a problem for these students was found. Hardly any of the students had a problem with learning in English and they did not feel their grades would improve if they would be taught in their mother tongue instead. Students do indicate that they sometimes have trouble with the language during tests, but the students do not report this influencing their ability to pass tests.

So if the English language does not cause the poor grades at the start of the second year, then how can the difference between the bilingual stream and the regular VWO students be explained? There must be other differences between the two groups that affect their test results.

The answer lies in the difficulty of the content of the different subjects. Most of the students report a similar story when it comes to the difficulty level of the content. They start their new school really excited and motivated. Then as they find out they can get by with less work they start to work less. This is not a problem in the first year when teachers purposefully keep the content level low to allow for language acquisition. But in the second year, as the level and pace increase, the students fall behind. When the first insufficient grades start coming in, the students realise they need to work harder to pass to the next grade. It turns out the students have completely underestimated the second year. A problem is that the teachers do not experience it this way. They do not feel they raise the bar abruptly at the start of year two, while the students do experience school as having become more difficult suddenly.

Motivation for school and the intelligence of the students seem to play a role here as well. The novelty of the new school has worn off and puberty is setting in. This makes the students less motivated to work hard for school at the beginning of their second year. What makes it extra difficult for these particular students is that they are often highly intelligent and have been very successful in their earlier school careers without putting in much effort. They might simply lack the skills to study because they have never needed to develop these skills before.

So the difference between TVWO and VWO classes could at least partly be explained by the fact that TVWO students are selected based on their high CITO-scores. They are more gifted than their VWO counterparts and often lack the study skills they need in their second year.

The hypothesis is therefore partly confirmed; there is a combination of different factors responsible for the drop in performance of bilingual students at the start of year two. It was just a different combination than initially expected. Student motivation and teachers' expectations combine and work against each other. Where the students are less motivated to work hard at the start of their second year because they underestimate school, the teachers instead expect more of them, with poor grades as a result. The good news is that the poor grades work highly motivating on the students. After initially not recognising the problem, they really start to work when they realise this is needed.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis, a number of recommendations for the school can be given in order to avoid similar problems in future classes.

Students themselves provided interesting insights. Although five out of eleven students indicated that the school could not have done anything to prevent their grades from dropping, the students also indicate the increased difficulty of the second year came as a surprise. So therefore, it might be a good idea for the school, and especially the teachers, to express their expectations more clearly at the start of the second year. Students should also be asked for their expectations. This gives teachers a chance to address the discrepancy between student and teacher expectations.

Secondly, the school could make the first year slightly more difficult. Seeing that pupils indicate that they did not feel that the first year was difficult and that none of the students had problems with the pace in year 1, a possibility would be to increase the level of difficulty and the demands that the first year makes on the students. After the initial trimester, in which language acquisition is central, the difficulty level of the content covered should be increased to challenge the students and keep them on their toes. Because all of these children have been selected on the basis of a good CITO score, more academically gifted pupils can be found in the TVWO stream. However, according to Eijl et al (2005) bilingual education should not be seen as enough of a challenge since the subject content stays the same, only the language of instruction changes (p. 10). Therefore, the school should increase the difficulty of the first year, especially once the students have a basic grasp of the language. By increasing the level throughout the first year, the step towards the second year will be smaller for the students.

Furthermore, the school could offer study skills training. A number of pupils indicated that they do not know how to study, what to study or how to plan their homework. The lessons in study skills should be given in the first year, preferably after the students have had some time to get used to school and the new language of instruction. Once they feel comfortable, students should be guided in terms of how to plan and should be taught a number of study techniques. In addition, the school should continue the extra tuition ('vakhulp') they already provide for students that struggle with a certain subject. Several students indicated in the interviews that they find the extra tuition useful.

Lastly, the school gives the student a preliminary report card before the official report card for the first semester is determined. This is a good way of showing both the students and their parents how each student has been progressing so far. This is something the school should continue. For the majority of pupils this preliminary report card had a positive effect on their work ethic. However, a few students complained that after receiving the preliminary report card they did not have any tests or too few tests to actually improve their grades before the official report card. It is advisable to provide the students with ample opportunity to improve their grades.

Finally, a word of advice for researchers in the field of education. This research has shown the importance of comparing student perceptions and teacher perceptions when researching classroom situations cannot be underestimated. Interviewing teachers or students alone is not good enough, since this research has shown their perceptions can differ markedly. In this case the difference in perception is even part of the key to the solution of the problem.

Limitations to the research and recommendations for further research

Although some valuable conclusions have been drawn and recommendations have been given, there are some drawbacks with regard to reliability, validity and generalizability of the research.

Reliability

During the interviews the researchers have tried not to ask leading questions. However, all three researchers are inexperienced interviewers and this might have led to some unnecessary leading. Especially in the interviews with students, there was a need to make the respondents feel at ease and in doing so, the fine line between empathy and steering to an answer was possibly crossed on a few occasions.

Every effort has been made to increase inter coder reliability. When, after the first round of testing for inter coder reliability, the percentage of matching codes turned out too low, all interviews were coded again by another researcher. The codes that were different were then discussed again by all three researchers together until an agreement was reached, thus increasing the reliability of the conclusions drawn from the coded data.

Validity

Two students were selected to partake in the research that did not suffer a drop in grades at the start of their second year. Unfortunately, one of them happened to be part of the pilot group, which means that the sample only contained one student that did not suffer a drop in grades. This is too small of a sample to ensure significant results when comparing the two groups.

The interview questions have been designed to provide the necessary data, but students are notorious for giving vague and socially acceptable answers. The interviewers have tried to come closer to their true sentiments by asking students follow up questions. However, the answers to these questions might easily have been fed to the students by teachers and parents and may therefore not be a representation of the true feelings of the students.

The language aspect has been measured through the perception of both students and teachers. This does not mean there is no actual level difference between year 1 and year 2. In further research the books and lesson materials could be analysed to establish the actual difference in language use between the two years.

The biggest limitation to the validity of this research is the fact that the main conclusion, that the simplicity of year one leads to underestimation of year two, has not been properly tested. This was not one of the starting hypotheses and therefore no interview questions were asked testing this hypothesis. Since most of the students indicated they had underestimated their second year, the conclusion still feels appropriate to draw.

Generalizability

The extent to which this research is generalizable to other schools should be further investigated. While, as mentioned before, there is little existing literature to be found on a drop in performance after the first year of secondary school, teachers in other schools might recognise the phenomenon.

This research was done in one school only, with only one cohort of students. When further research in other schools indicates and quantifies the problem, the recommendations proposed in this report might indeed be applicable to other schools as well.

Gifted students

One of the more unexpected conclusions of this research was that the giftedness of the students plays a role in their drop in performance at the start of their second year. Since this factor was not anticipated beforehand and giftedness is difficult to quantify, no specific questions were asked about this. To check the accurateness of the conclusion, more research should be conducted with specific attention to the influence of giftedness on motivation and underestimation.

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Appendix 1 - Results on study skills and students' views on possible solutions

1.1 Study skills

An interesting recurring theme during the interviews with students was an apparent lack of study skills. Six out of 12 students talked about not knowing what or how to study, an additional two indicated having profited from receiving training in study skills, even without being specifically asked about this.

One student described being frustrated about misunderstanding what they were supposed to be studying. Apparently students have difficulty deciding what and how to study for tests.

Student L005 describes having to adjust and having to work much harder at the beginning of the second year. What made this even more difficult is that this student lacked sufficient planning skills. The students describes working very hard with hardly any results.

Interviewer: And the start of the second year, did you find that difficult?

L005: Yes, very difficult, because you really need to make a switch and you need to work much harder all of a sudden and that was very annoying, because I needed to gain some sort of planning strategy, experience. And it's also... One frequently messes up. Studying all afternoon and hardly finishing anything. So that was really tough.

Also, asking questions does not seem to come natural to these students. Student L010 spoke about not being used to asking questions when in doubt. While not afraid to ask questions, it doesn't occur to the student to ask for help.

Interviewer: And why is that, do you think? That you find those subjects difficult?

L010: Because I hardly ever... I don't ask questions when I don't understand.

Interviewer: Why not?

L010: I don't know... I always try to figure it out by myself first.

Interviewer: Does that happen in all subjects or specifically in those subjects?

L010: Hm. Well, I don't know... Because in the other subjects I'm doing well.

Interviewer: So maybe there is no need to ask questions...

L010: No.

Interviewer: But you are not afraid of asking questions?

L010: No, not really.

Interviewer: But why don't you ask questions then, when you don't understand?

L010: I don't know. It just doesn't occur to me to ask questions.

Interviewer: Do you think you would benefit from asking more questions?

L010: Hmm... I think so.

These instances indicate that these students are maybe just not used to learning in general. TVWO students are not only selected for their motivation for learning in English; they also have top results in the CITO test, an exam testing skills and knowledge at the end of primary school. On average these children have previously been more successful in their education than students now in regular VWO. Good grades generally came easy. Therefore they may have never had a need to develop learning strategies or study skills.

One of the teachers also gave indications in this direction. D001 talks about these students lacking study skills. They have never had to work hard before in their lives and have never had a need to acquire study skills. They overestimate themselves and it takes them a couple of poor grades to realise this:

D001: Well specifically for this school and these classes I'm teaching, ever since primary school these pupils in our bilingual classes are used to not doing a lot and still getting excellent results. In the first year of secondary school their results are not as good, but still relatively good and they still don't have to do much more than pay attention in class, maybe read something at home and then they know it. In the second year this changes completely.

[...]

D001: Students don't know how to do things. They overestimate themselves or they have underestimated it. They have underestimated the content and walk into a wall. Fine, they do that two or three times and then they know: "Alright, I need to turn this around."

1.2 Students' view on possible solutions

During the interviews the students were asked what they thought the school could have done for them to help them avoid this performance drop in their second year. Figure A1 shows that five students indicated that it was their own fault and there was nothing the school could have done for them, but the other students provided several ideas of how the school could have helped them, including providing extra tuition, notifying students earlier about the drop in grades, increasing the difficulty level of the first year, making the increase in difficulty more gradual and providing study skills training.

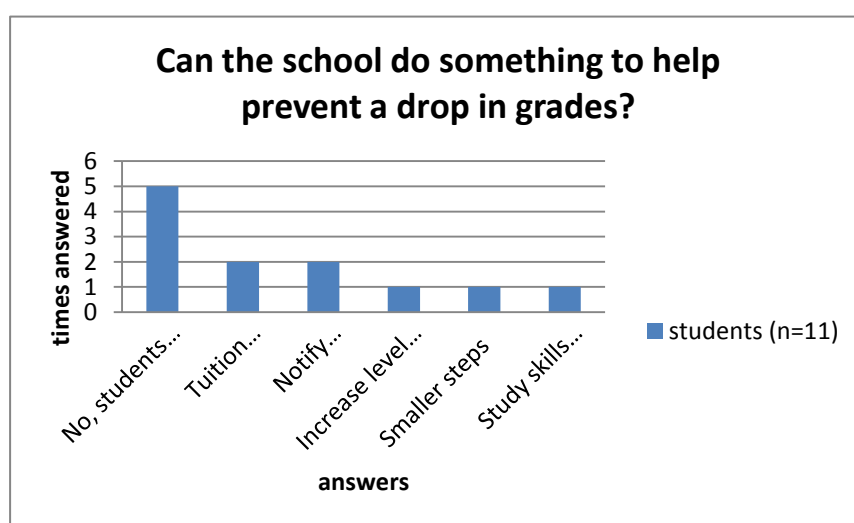


Figure A1: Possible solutions named by students to prevent grades from falling.

It could also be argued that the increased effort of the student solves the problem to a large extent. Of the eleven students with poor grades interviewed, only one student had given up hope. All other students showed the work attitude needed to pass to the next grade. The fact that such an attitude pays off can be seen in figure A2, showing the average grades from what is now the third grade. In this graph stars indicate significant changes between two report cards. We can see a sharp decline from the last report in year 1 to the first report in year 2. The grades climb again for the second report card and remain stable throughout the second year. Showing the fruits of the students' labour.

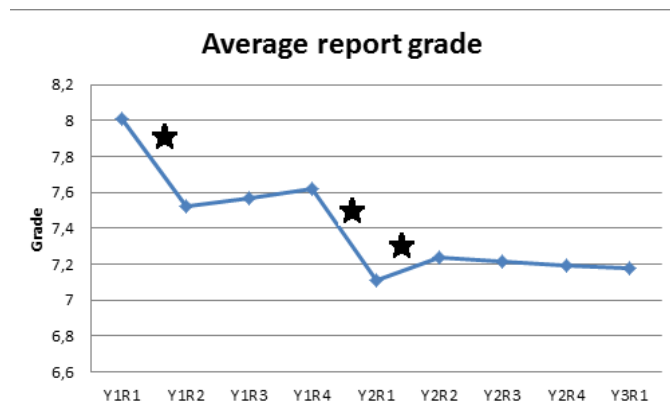


Figure A2: Average report grade of students now in year three.

Appendix 2 – Teacher interviews

1.3 Interview questions teachers

Interviewvragen docenten

2 centrale vragen:

- Veranderen zij iets in hun manier van lesgeven in jaar 2 ten opzichte van jaar 1.
- Waarom denken zij dat de cijfers slechter zijn aan het begin van de tweede?

Introductie:

Welkom, bedankt dat u ons wilt helpen met ons onderzoek. Wij zijn drie studenten van de Universiteit Utrecht. We zijn zelf leraar in opleiding. Onze opleiding heeft speciale aandacht voor TTO-onderwijs. We doen hier op school onderzoek naar de overgang van het eerste naar het tweede leerjaar van TTO.

We interviewen daarom zowel docenten als leerlingen. We willen dit interview graag opnemen om de resultaten beter te kunnen verwerken. Is dat ok?

Alles wat u zegt is vertrouwelijk. We zullen u nooit met naam en toenaam noemen in ons onderzoeksrapport. Alle opmerkingen worden geanonimiseerd.

We willen graag beginnen met een aantal vragen over de manier waarop u lesgeeft. Verder willen wij weten of u uw manier van lesgeven aanpast voor TTO en hoe het tweede leerjaar zich verhoudt tot het eerste leerjaar.

Feiten:

1. Kunt u even kort aangeven waarom u ervoor gekozen heeft om op het TTO les te geven?
2. In hoeverre past u uw lessen aan op het TTO?
3. Is de inhoud van lessen, los van de taal, moeilijker, even moeilijk of makkelijker op het TTO dan in het VWO? Is er wat dit betreft verschil tussen de eerste en de tweede in het TTO?
4. Hoe ga u in uw lessen om met Engelse taal in het eerste jaar?
5. Hoe vaak en in welke situaties spreekt u Nederlands in de lessen in het eerste jaar? Is dat anders in de tweede?
6. Mogen leerlingen Nederlands spreken in uw lessen in het eerste jaar? En in het tweede jaar?
7. Hoe gaat u om met taalfouten van leerlingen in het eerste jaar? En in het tweede jaar? Negeren? Aangeven? Corrigeren? Puntaf trek op toetsen?

Nu willen we een aantal vragen stellen over de overgang tussen jaar 1 en 2. Dus zowel qua taalvaardigheid als de lesstof in het algemeen.

8. Hoe gaat u in het algemeen om met de periode direct na de zomervakantie? Ziet u bijvoorbeeld dat leerlingen er "even in moeten komen" en anticipeert u daarop?
9. Hoe gaat u om met de overgang tussen de eerste en de tweede?

10. Is er een significant inhoudelijk niveauverschil?

Meningen

We willen nu een aantal vragen stellen waarbij we uw mening willen weten over de overgang bij TTO van jaar 1 naar jaar 2. We willen vooral uw mening weten over leerlingen en hun gedrag.

11. Merkt u een verschil in motivatie bij de leerlingen tussen de eerste en de tweede?
Is dat alleen voor uw vak? Juist andere vakken? Waar komt dat door? Minder motivatie voor het gebruik van de Engelse taal? Pubertijd?
12. Is het Engels lastiger voor de leerlingen in de tweede?
13. Is de lesstof lastiger voor de leerlingen in de tweede?
14. Ziet u dat leerlingen slechter presteren aan het begin van de tweede dan aan het eind van de eerste klas?

Wij hebben de cijfers van de huidige tweede en derde klas bekeken en zien dat de leerlingen voor het eerste rapport van de tweede klas over het algemeen slechtere cijfers halen dan voor het laatste rapport van de eerste klas.

15. Welke factoren spelen volgens u een rol in de slechtere cijfers van leerlingen aan het begin van de tweede?
Wat denkt u dat de belangrijkste factor is?

1.4 Coding scheme teachers

Question	Question code	Answer	Answer code
Reason for choosing TTO	1.1	Better students	BS
		Asked by school	S
		Was able to: native speaker / worked / taught abroad	A
		Likes international aspect	I
		Like the challenge / doing something new	C
		Acquire an additional skill / wants to work abroad	AS
Do you adapt your lessons to TTO?	2.1	Higher level / more in depth	H
		Slower pace	S
		No adaptation	N
		CLIL techniques	C
		Book	B
Is the content of the lesson more difficult at TTO?	3.1	More difficult	D
		No difference	N
		More differentiation	Dif
Difference Y1 and Y2	3.2	Gradual	G
		Clear break	B
How do you treat the English language in Y1	4.1	Slower pace	S
		Play games	P
		Make them feel at ease	E
		Activating	A
		Checking comprehension	C
		Translating	T
		CLIL techniques	CT
In which situations do	5.1	At the start of Y1	Y1

you speak Dutch in Y1?			
		Only when explaining key concepts	C
		Vocabulary (translating)	V
		Announcements (at end of lesson)	A
Difference in Y2?	5.2	No	N
		Less in Y2	L
In which situations do pupils speak Dutch?	6.1	In groups	G
		When teachers do not watch	NT
Difference Y1 and Y2?	6.2	More in Y1	Y1
		More in Y2	Y2
		No difference	N
How do you treat language mistakes?	7.1	Repeating mistakes / Underlining	R
		Correcting mistakes	C
		No consequence (during tests)_	NC
Difference Y1 and Y2?	7.2	Yes	Y
		No	N
Transition period Y1 / Y2 after summer holiday	8.1	Ease them into it	E
		Nothing	N
		Explain expectation	X
Transition Y1 / Y2	9.1	Nothing	N
		Higher expectations	X
Content difference between Y1 and Y2?	10.1	Hardly any difference	D
		Faster pace	F
		More difficult content wise	C
Do you notice a difference in motivation between Y1 and Y2?	11.1	Yes	Y
		No	N

Why?	11.2	Puberty	P
		Novelty worn off	N
		Wrong expectations from pupils	X
		Getting used to school again after holidays	H
Less motivation for the English language?	11.3	Yes	Y
		No	N
Is the English language more difficult for the pupils in Y2?	12.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Is the content more difficult for the pupils in Y2?	13.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Do you notice that pupils perform worse at start Y2?	14.1	No	N
		Yes	Y
		Only this year	O
Which reason contribute to drop in grades?	15.1	Puberty	P
		Method difference Y1/Y2	M
		Language skills diminished	L
		Higher expectations from teachers / Content more difficult	X
		Less motivation students	LM
		underestimated	U

Appendix 3 – Student interviews

1.5 Interview questions students

Wij zijn drie studenten van de universiteit Utrecht en wij willen je tijdens dit interview een aantal vragen stellen over je ervaringen op school. We gaan je eerst een aantal vragen stellen over wat je vind van school in het algemeen.

Zowel de schoolleiding als de docenten krijgen niet te horen wat jij tijdens dit interview aan ons hebt verteld. Het interview blijft namelijk anoniem en ook in ons uiteindelijk onderzoeksrapport wordt je naam niet vermeld.

Nu gaan we vragen stellen over een aantal specifieke zaken die te maken hebben met het lesgeven van docenten. We zijn niet bezig met het beoordelen van individuele docenten, wat je zegt heeft geen gevolgen voor de docenten. We willen graag weten hoe de docenten op deze school in het algemeen lesgeven en hoe dat voor jou werkt.

Taal

- 1 Is het Engels lastig voor je? Wat vind je het lastigste? Vocabulaire, lezen, schrijven, luisteren, spreken, grammatica. (Als je 1 ding moet kiezen?)
- 2 Besteden de docenten voldoende aandacht aan het uitleggen van moeilijke begrippen bij Engelstalige vakken? (zijn er ook verschillen tussen docenten) Op wat voor manier? Hoe beïnvloed dat jouw leren?
- 3 Op welke manier helpen de docenten je met het begrijpen van Engelse teksten bij vakken die in het Engels worden gegeven? Kun je nog meer voorbeelden geven?
- 4 Kun je tijdens toetsen bij Engelstalige vakken soms vragen niet beantwoorden omdat je de vraag qua taalgebruik niet begrijpt? Wat doe je als de vraag niet begrijpt? Heb je ook wel eens dat je je antwoord niet kan verwoorden in het Engels?
- 5 Heb je meer moeite met het Engels in de 2^e dan in de 1^{ste} klas?

Content

- 6 Welke vakken vind je moeilijk? Waarom? Komt dit door het Engels of door de inhoud?
- 7 Denk je dat je hogere cijfers zou halen als het vak in het Nederlands zou zijn?
- 8 Voor welke vakken haal je goede cijfers? Hoe komt dit? Vind je het leuk en ben je er gemotiveerd voor? Werk je harder voor deze vakken?
- 9 Kun je tijdens toetsen soms vragen niet beantwoorden omdat je de lesstof niet voldoende kent? Hoe komt dat? Te weinig geleerd of te moeilijk?
- 10 Is de lesstof los van het Engels in het 2^e jaar moeilijker dan in het eerste jaar?
- 11 Wat vind je van het tempo in het eerste jaar? En van het tempo in het tweede jaar?
- 12 Gebruikt de docent in het eerste jaar de lesmethode of ook andere materialen? Gaat de docent dieper op de stof in? Wat vind je daarvan? En in de tweede?

Motivatie

- 13 Waarom heb je gekozen voor TTO en? Hoe wist je dat TTO bestond?
- 14 Is het wat je ervan verwacht had? Gebruik je altijd Engels in de klas? Doe je daar nu evenveel je best voor als in het eerste jaar?
- 15 Vind je school leuk? En de lessen? Vind je het leuk om dingen te leren?
- 16 Vind je school belangrijk?
- 17 Vond je het eerste jaar moeilijk? Waarom?

- 18 Hoeveel tijd besteed je na school aan huiswerk? Vind je dat je veel of weinig? Wat is normaal?
- 19 Moet je meer tijd besteden aan de vakken die in het Engels worden gegeven? Komt dit door het Engels?
- 20 Vind je het erg om hard te werken voor school? Waarom?
- 21 Vind je het nu belangrijk om goede cijfers te halen? Waarom?
- 22 Vond je het in het eerste jaar belangrijk om goede cijfers te halen? Waarom?
- 23 Ben je dit jaar meer of minder bereid te werken voor school dan in het eerste jaar? Wat is er gebeurt/veranderd?

Prestaties

- 24 Als je ergens veel tijd aan besteed krijg je dan het resultaat dat je wil?
- 25 Besteed je meer tijd aan school dan in het eerste jaar? Hoe denk je dat dit komt?
- 26 Vond je het begin van het tweede jaar moeilijk? Wat vind je moeilijk? Inhoud vs. Engelse taal? Is dat veranderd in de loop van het jaar?
- 27 Vind je de cijfers die je krijgt terecht? Vind je dat je cijfers goed weergeven wat je weet en wat je kan?
- 28 Kun je het naar school gaan in het eerste jaar vergelijken met het tweede jaar?

Final

- 29 Veel leerlingen hebben lagere cijfers in de tweede dan in de eerste klas. Hoe denk jij dat dat komt? (Meerdere voorbeelden?) Geldt dat ook voor jou? Wanneer begonnen je cijfers met dalen?
- 30 Had de school of de docenten iets kunnen doen om je te helpen?

1.6 Coding scheme students

Question	Question code	Answer	Answer code
Do you find learning in english difficult?	1.1	Yes	Y
		Yes, in the beginning	YB
		No	N
What part of learning in English do you find most difficult	1.2	Grammar	G
		Vocabulary	V
		Reading	R
		Speaking	S
		Listening	L
		Writing	W
Do teachers pay enough attention to vocabulary during lessons?	2.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
		Some	S
Do you have to ask for explanation yourself?	2.3	Yes	Y
		No	N
How does the teacher address vocab?	2.4	Explain (English)	E
		Translate (Dutch)	T
		Glossary	G
How do teachers help with understanding English texts?	3.1	Not	N
		Answer question	A
		Read plenary	P
		Summarise (English)	S
		Explain parts in Dutch	D
		TEXT COMPREHENSION	T
Do teachers use CLIL techniques?	3.2	Yes	Y

		No	N
Do you have difficulty understanding test questions due to language use?	4.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Which subjects?	4.2	English	E
		Math	M
		Science	S
		Geography	G
		History	H
What do you do when you do not understand question?	4.3	Ask teacher	A
		Use Dictionary	D
		Derive from context	C
Do you ever have difficulty answering a question because you cannot formulate an answer in English?	4.4	Yes	Y
		No	N
What do you do when you are not able to formulate the answer you want	4.5	Ask teacher	A
		Dictionary	D
		Formulate answer in a different way, describe	F
		Answer in dutch	T
In which grade did you have more difficulty with learning in English	5.1	1 st	1
		2 nd	2
		No difference	N
Why	5.2	(more difficult because..) Demanded level of English higher	D
		(easier because...) Own level of English higher	O
Which subjects did you find	6.1	English	E

difficult			
		Dutch	D
		German	G
		French	F
		Science	S
		Math	M
		History	H
		Geography	AK
		Art	A
		Techniek	T
Why	6.2	Memorizing (vocab bijv.)	M
		Lack of motivation	LM
		Understanding	U
		Texts	T
		Study skills	S
Fixed or growth	6.3	Fixed	F
		Growth	G
Is this because of the English or because of the content	6.4	English	E
		Content	C
Would you get higher grades if the subject were in Dutch?	7.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Which subjects do you get good grades in?	8.1	English	E
		Dutch	D
		German	G
		French	F
		Science	S
		Math	M
		History	H

		Geography	AK
		Art	A
		Music	Mu
		Techniek	T
Why	8.2	Memorizing (vocab bijv.)	M
		Motivation/putting in more effort	Mo
		Understanding / Easy	U
Fixed or growth	8.3	Fixed	F
		Growth	G
Do you put in more or less effort in these subjects	8.4	More	M
		Less	L
		No difference	ND
Do you like these subjects more?	8.5	Yes	Y
		No	N
Do you ever fail to provide an answer in a test, because you do not know the answer	9.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Why?	9.2	Did not study	S
		Did not understand	U
		Did not attend lesson	A
Does it happen a lot?	9.3	Yes	Y
		No	N
Why did you not study?	9.4	No more time/other tests	T
		Did not feel like it	M
		Did not know that that had to be learnt	K
Are your lessons contentwise more demanding in year 1 or in year 2	10.1	1	1
		2	2

		No difference	ND
Subjects?	10.2	English	E
		Dutch	D
		German	G
		French	F
		Science	S
		Math	M
		History	H
		Geography	AK
		Art	A
		Techniek	T
Why	10.3	Longer texts	T
		Vocab	V
		Abstractness	A
		More homework	HW
		Study techniques	S
How is the pace in Y1?	11.1	Too fast	F
		OK	Ok
		Too slow	S
How is the pace in Y2	11.2	Too fast	F
		Ok	Ok
		Too slow	S
Is there a difference in pace in Y1 and Y2?	11.3	No	N
		Yes, year 1 faster	Y1F
		Yes, year 2 faster	Y2F
Use of other materials in Y1?	12.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Use of other materials in Y2?	12.2	Yes	Y
		No	N
Difference between Y1 and Y2?	12.3	More in Y1	Y1

		More in Y2	Y2
		No difference	N
Why did you choose TTO?	13.1	Siblings	S
		Parents	P
		Enjoy English	E
		Future	F
		Status	St
		Primary School	PS
Did it live up to your expectations?	14.1	Easier	E
		More difficult	D
		Yes	Y
Do you always use English in class	14.2	Yes	Y
		Easier not to	NE
		Group/peer doesn't	NG
		Lack of motivation	NM
Difference between Y1 and Y2	14.3	No	N
		Less in Y2	Y2
		Less in Y1	Y1
Are you motivated to attend school?	15.1	Enjoy some lessons	L
		Friends/social	S
		You are supposed to/expected to	E
		Enjoy learning	EL
		No	N
Is school important to you?	16.1	Yes, Future	YF
		Yes, intrinsic motivation; wants to learn/grow	YM
		You are supposed to/expected to	E
Y1 difficult?	17.1	Yes	Y
		Yes, at the start	YS

		No	N
Why?	17.2	Didn't have to work hard	W
		Big difference PS and SS	D
		Motivated to do well	M
		english	E
		Received good guidance	G
How much time dedicated to homework (zonder toetsen)	18.1	30 mins or less	M1
		31-45 mins	M2
		46-60 mins	M3
		More than an hour	M4
Too much or too little?	18.2	Too much	TM
		Too little	TL
		Fine	F
English subjects more time consuming?	19.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Why?	19.2	More homework	H
		English more difficult	E
Do you mind working hard for school? Motivation	20.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Good grades important Y2	21.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Why?	21.2	Pass to next grade	P
		Future job/studies	F
		Status	S
		Intrinsically important	I
Good grades important Y1	22.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Why?	22.2	Pass to next grade	P

		Future job/studies	F
		Status	S
		Intrinsically important	I
		Not an issue	N
Difference Y1/Y2?	23.1	More Y2	M
		Less Y2	L
		No difference	ND
Why?	23.2	Need to fix bad grades	G
		More homework, so have to do more	HW
		Intrinsically important	I
Is your effort rewarded?	24.1	Yes	Y
		No/sometimes	N
School more time consuming Y1/Y2	25.1	More in Y2	M
		Less in Y2	L
		No difference	ND
Why?	25.2	Less motivated	M
		Need to fix bad grades	G
		More homework, so have to do more	HW
Start of Y2 difficult?	26.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Why?	26.2	More demanding	D
		Not motivated	M
		New teachers	N
		No easing in	NE
Grades reflect abilities?	27.1	Yes	Y
		No	N
Differences Y1 and Y2	28.1	No difference	ND
		Y2 harder/more difficult/more work/Y1 easy	Y2

		Did not feel comfortable/at home in Y1	Y1
Reason for drops in general	29.1	Student Motivation	M
		Underestimated	U
		Y2 more difficult	D
		Forget what you have learned in Y1 during summer holiday	S
Help from teachers/school?	30.1	No, students fault	N
		Vakhulp	VH
		Notify students of problem earlier	P
		Increase level Y1	I
		Smaller steps	S
		counselor	C