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**Role-playing activities based on storytelling lessons as a means to improve primary level learners' confidence when speaking English as a foreign language.**

Catarina Abelha Ferreira

**M**

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Relatório realizado no âmbito do Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês no 1.º ciclo do Ensino Básico, orientada pela Professora Doutora Maria Ellison  
Orientador de Estágio, Dr. João Cunha Silva  
Supervisora de Estágio, Professora Doutora Maria Ellison

Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto

janeiro de 2022

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## **Declaração de honra**

Declaro que o presente relatório é de minha autoria e não foi utilizado previamente noutro curso ou unidade curricular, desta ou de outra instituição. As referências a outros autores (afirmações, ideias, pensamentos) respeitam escrupulosamente as regras da atribuição, e encontram-se devidamente indicadas no texto e nas referências bibliográficas, de acordo com as normas de referência. Tenho consciência de que a prática de plágio e auto-plágio constitui um ilícito académico.

[Porto, janeiro de 2022]

[Catarina Abelha Ferreira]



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## Resumo

Encorajar alunos do 1.º ciclo do Ensino Básico a falar inglês como língua estrangeira pode ser uma tarefa difícil, principalmente quando os discentes não se sentem suficientemente confiantes para usarem o inglês como meio de comunicação. O presente projeto de investigação-ação tem como objetivo analisar como o uso de atividades de dramatização podem ajudar estes alunos a melhorar a sua autoconfiança, e, por conseguinte, a sua participação e empenho em aula, assim como a sua proficiência na língua. Foram escolhidas várias histórias como meio de concretização deste estudo, uma vez que representar um papel ajuda a colmatar o receio de exposição aos outros. Retratar uma personagem permite-lhes manter distância entre eles e o seu público, tornando, assim, a exposição frente à turma mais fácil. Adicionalmente, o recurso à linguagem corporal inerente à dramatização apoia os alunos na interpretação e transmissão de mensagens, uma vez que a encenação lhes permite uma interação oral mais realista e o uso da L2 com um objetivo concreto. Deste modo, foram selecionados alunos integrantes de turmas do 3.º e 4.º ano de escolaridade, com idades compreendidas entre os 8 e 10 anos, que, devido ao seu perfil, evidenciado anteriormente em aula, baixa participação voluntária nas atividades propostas e pouco uso da L2, poderiam beneficiar deste projeto. De forma a verificar a eficácia desta estratégia, foram observadas aulas e organizados os dados recolhidos em grelhas de progresso. Foi ainda distribuído um questionário de satisfação. Os resultados revelaram que os alunos escolhidos melhoraram a sua participação voluntária, tendo manifestado maior confiança nas suas capacidades e maior segurança nas suas intervenções em aula, o que beneficiou a prática da expressão oral. Os resultados apresentam, também, que o aumento da frequência de atividades da mesma tipologia teria um impacto positivo no processo de aquisição da língua estrangeira por parte dos discentes, uma vez que todos os alunos mostraram entusiasmo face ao desafio.

**Palavras-chave:** dramatização, expressão oral, confiança, linguagem corporal, ensino do inglês no 1.º ciclo do ensino básico, histórias.

## Abstract

Encouraging primary-aged children to speak in English as a foreign language can be challenging, especially when they do not feel confident enough in communicating in English. The goal of this Action Research Project is to analyse how the use of role-playing activities can help these students to improve their self-confidence and, consequently, their participation and engagement in class as well as their speaking skills in English. Several stories have been chosen as a means to accomplish this goal since playing roles helps students to tackle their fear of speaking in front of the class. In addition, the reinforcement of body language supports students in interpreting and conveying meaning, as the performance allows them more realistic spoken interactions in L2 with a specific purpose. This project focused on a group of learners aged between 8 and 10 years old from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year, that due to their profile shown previously in class, have had low voluntary participation in the activities and low use of L2 could benefit from this project. To determine how effective this strategy may be, lessons were observed and the data collected organised according to progress grids and graphs. The groups also answered to a questionnaire to better understand their difficulties. The results showed that the students selected improved their voluntary participation, meaning they showed more confidence in their own ability to participate more voluntarily in class, which helped develop their speaking skills. The results also revealed that an increase in the frequency of this type of activities would have a positive impact in the learners' foreign language acquisition process, considering students' enthusiasm when engaged in these activities.

**Keywords:** role-playing, speaking skills, confidence, body language, teaching English to young learners, storytelling

## List of Abbreviations

IPP1.....	Introduction to Professional Practice 1
IPP2.....	Introduction to Professional Practice 2
CNSB.....	Colégio de Nossa Senhora da Bonança
CONFHIC.....	Congregação das Irmãs Franciscanas Hospitaleiras da Imaculada Conceição
EFL.....	English as a Foreign Language
FLA.....	Foreign Language Acquisition
L1.....	First Language
L2.....	Foreign Language
ARP.....	Action Research Project
DLE.....	Departamento de Línguas Estrangeiras
TPR.....	Total Physical Response

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## Introduction

Knowing a language is not the equivalent of knowing how to speak it, even though these have been treated as synonyms (Thornbury, 2005). However, people's mind-set has changed, suggesting that speaking is more than just using correct grammar and sentence structure. It requires the speaker to interact with a second party "in real time, with little time for detailed planning" (Thornbury, 2005, p. iv). It is not a skill one learns in a short amount of time. It needs time to be developed and practised. If learners do not have opportunities to practise speaking and convey meaning, they will not feel comfortable trying. They will learn a lot about the language in written form, but cannot use it in spoken interactions. Even for someone with a good degree of proficiency, speaking a foreign language on cue can be difficult, so asking young learners to do the same can be extremely complicated. Besides lack of practice, other factors could hinder their performance such as confidence, body language or pronunciation. All forms of spoken interaction are highly important during the foreign language acquisition (FLA) process, particularly with younger learners.

The school where this Teaching Practice took place has a partnership with Cambridge Assessment English, meaning the coursebooks and extra materials are provided by a Portuguese representative team of the former. Cambridge, the school administration and the school community place a great deal of emphasis on spoken interaction among students. These skills are also well documented in the national documents for education such as *Perfil do Aluno à saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória* (Martins, G., et. al., 2017) in which it is stated that students are supposed to "utilizar de modo proficiente diferentes linguagens e símbolos associados às línguas (língua materna e línguas estrangeiras)" (p. 21), and *Aprendizagens Essenciais 3.º Ano/4.º Ano Inglês* (2018a; 2018b), that highlights the promotion of different activities which enhance spoken interaction among learners.

Nowadays, children in Portugal are exposed to English from a very early age through music, video games and cartoons. These, specifically, have proven to be an effective

form of learning since they captivate learners' attention from the beginning due to the visual aids, colours, sounds and voices (Alghonaim, 2019). It is not uncommon to find young children capable of saying words in a foreign language (L2) and knowing their meaning before they have started school. However, this does not mean young students are ready to be confronted with difficulties or the challenges of speaking.

The main issue I have identified as a newly qualified teacher is that students have difficulty and feel discomfort expressing themselves in English in controlled spoken interaction activities. There are a variety of factors that may contribute to their discomfort, such as lack of confidence and/or stage fright. If learners are asked to speak in front of their classmates when they are not confident in their skills, this may lead to frustration and refusal to speak, which could, later on, lead to a distressing journey in FLA (Riofrio-Pellegrin, 2019). Besides that, some young learners do not yet possess the vocabulary range and experience needed to express their thoughts in a foreign language. However, by encouraging them to speak in role-playing activities, learners will be able to work on their pronunciation, body language and confidence, as well as reinforce and revise newly acquired structures or vocabulary.

Speaking is why someone learns a foreign language and considering the importance of English in our society, which is “used in different fields of knowledge and human development” (Riofrio-Pellegrin, 2019, p. 3), students want to become proficient speakers as soon as possible. Academically and professionally, being fluent in a L2 proves to be an advantage in future endeavours, but it is paramount to consider different learning rhythms and personalities. Not all students feel comfortable speaking in front of others, especially if they do not dominate the language. Consequently, to make them feel more at ease with the process, it is important to give them plenty of opportunities to speak, to practise not only vocabulary or sentence structures, but also their reactions and body language as these are important features in spoken interaction situations.



Learning a language does not mean just learning about structure and vocabulary but the important thing is learning how we use language for communication to one or the other person, how we speak and make people understand when we talk. (Purnamawati, Sofian & Suhartono, n.d. p, 2)

So that learners understand the importance of developing and practising their speaking, teachers must create opportunities to do so frequently. Additionally, these moments should be fun and light-hearted, as well as achievable so that young learners feel a sense of accomplishment at the end. Using stories, as is the case in this Action Research Project (ARP), allows children to use their imagination, as they play roles of characters of different genders or age groups. At the same time, however, the language is being used for a purpose, to convey a message and role-play the story. It is important to set goals with young learners, give them a sense of purpose to keep them motivated and enthusiastic about the task.

The teacher needs to set the learning goal which is realistic (...) The speaking activities can be started 'from those which provide tightly controlled practice to those which provide freer communicative language use' (Girard et al., 2003: 106). As a consequence, the teacher needs to develop a repertoire of activities providing a balance between control and creativity, repetition and real use and provide models of spoken English. (Inawati, 2014, p. 97)

The activities used in this project were initially similar to the ones proposed in the coursebook. Later, I decided to use e-books and videos, not only to expose learners to different mediums but also because I wanted to design the resources and not use the coursebook. They almost feel like that lesson is going to be different if the book is not involved and providing them with that surprise factor plays a big role in their motivation and interest. I wanted them to feel that, even though they were still working on improving their L2.

This report is organised as follows: Chapter I consists of contextualisation of the school where the Teaching Practice took place as well as the research questions that arose from preliminary observation, taking into consideration the profiles of the students that took part in this study. The observation notes and data collected during the zero cycle of the ARP are also analysed as these were essential when identifying the issues to be addressed.

Chapter II is about the theoretical background and different perspectives associated with the main theme of this project. The core points are students' confidence associated with voluntary participation as well as role-playing activities as a means to encourage spoken interaction, storytelling, pronunciation and body language.

Chapter III explores the project design, data collection tools and the different cycles in the plan of action. Chapter IV and V focus on the summary of the activities developed in class in cycles 1 and 2, and the respective results and conclusions.

Finally, the conclusion consists of sharing my reflection on my Teaching Practice, as well as the importance and efficiency of the strategy used, considering the future of the project, improvements and limitations.

## **I. Context of the study**

This chapter aims to share the reflections on the school where the Teaching Practice and this project took place, to provide a brief description of the groups of students who took part in this study and the issues identified which led to the research questions.

This study took place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the school year of 2020/2021 and the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the school year of 2021/2022, as part of Introduction to Professional Practice 1 and 2 (IPP1/2), in a private Catholic school in Vila Nova de Gaia. The Teaching Practice encompassed 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year groups and both years are included in the project.

### **1.1 School context**

‘Colégio de Nossa Senhora da Bonança’ (CNSB) is located in the centre of Vila Nova de Gaia. The school has got approximately 820 students from nursery to secondary education. This Catholic school began as part of ‘Colégio de Nossa Senhora do Rosário’ in 1894 in the now extinct Corpus Christi convent with the ‘Congregação das Irmãs Franciscanas Hospitaleiras da Imaculada Conceição’ (CONFHIC). Only in 1923 did it become independent as CNSB operating as a nursery school.

In 1927, after buying the Bandeira Palace from the Barros family, one of the school’s greatest supporters, CNSB changed facilities, and a few years later, in 1949, the teaching of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycles were allowed. In addition to functioning as a day-school for girls and boys, it also functions as boarding school for girls mainly from Portuguese-speaking African countries, such as Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé e Príncipe, as well as Brazil and East European countries.

CNSB’s *ethos* is to promote learning and encourage success based on social and curricular skills – ‘Educar para humanizar e criar futuros felizes’. The school’s philosophy is to promote and encourage learning to achieve success. As a Catholic and

Franciscan school, the development of personal, interpersonal, artistic, sensitive and environmental skills is viewed as paramount to future success. Therefore, the school places a lot of attention on fostering a secure learning environment and equity regarding the different school subjects. The institution highlights the importance of curricular flexibility and collaborative work among teachers, students and staff.

Inspired by the idea that today school should “preparar para o imprevisto, o novo, a complexidade e, sobretudo, desenvolver em cada indivíduo a vontade, a capacidade e o conhecimento que lhe permitirá aprender ao longo da vida” (Martins, G., et. al., 2017), CNSB has divided its long-term goals into five different sections (CNSB, n.d):

1. Quality of teaching: implement educational offers that respond to the needs of students, valuing their cultural knowledge, promoting inclusion, and creating conditions for learning based on their abilities and culture; ensure the development of measures to support learning and educational success; respond to students that show a high potential; provide a Christian value to science and culture; involve students in meaningful school projects; diversify and innovate teaching and learning methodologies, using diversified and updated strategies and resources.
2. Citizenship and intercultural school: promote a healthy learning environment; strengthen ties with the surrounding community and society in the exercise of responsible citizenship to build the common good; participate in local and international projects that enhance knowledge, intercultural education, volunteering and human right and develop partnerships with different entities.
3. Health: promote the well-being of the school community; develop healthy interpersonal relationships; foster activities that include the whole school community; build a positive reputation.
4. Future: promote an action plan to build a sustainable school that meets the objectives published by the United Nations; emphasize ecological awareness,

promoting appreciation and the preservation of natural and cultural heritage; develop actions and projects that raise awareness of the need to care for and preserve human life and the rest of nature.

5. Evangelic and Franciscan values: encourage the desire to know more and more about the beauty, goodness and truth of God; Create an environment that allows you to experience the values inherent to the fraternity; develop the ability to contemplate Life and Creation from the perspective of Christian and Franciscan values; know and face problems with faith and keeping the hope alive in their resolutions; educate the mind and heart to recognize others as children of God.

### **1.1.1 Facilities**

At the present time, the school consists of one building divided into four floors: the canteen and various extra-curricular classrooms are on the lower floor; nursery, pre-school and 1<sup>st</sup> cycle, offices and sports hall are on the ground floor; nursery, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and secondary cycle, libraries, main hall, boarding school bedrooms are on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

However, CNSB is expanding to nearby buildings that have been recently bought by the school and CONFHIC, as a way to provide the community with better facilities. Due to this, the school is in the process of remodelling, which means many rooms and facilities have changed or are closed this school year. These future changes also encompass an improvement in the technology and resources used by students and teachers.

### 1.1.2 Projects

The school has invested in several distinct projects, which are not related to a specific area but are of interest to the whole community, while promoting an interdisciplinary exercise and collaboration among subjects. I will now reference two that are important to the age-group and level this project focuses on.

#### *Escola Azul e Eco-Escolas and Domínios de Autonomia Curricular (DACs)*

CNSB takes part in the ‘Escola Azul e Eco-Escolas’ project. These projects were conducted individually until this school year when the school administration decided to join both as they share many of the same goals and resources.

The project aims to educate students and teachers on the importance of the ocean, its resources and its role in our day-to-day lives. Additionally, schools are rewarded and recognized by showing commitment and including the project in the school’s curriculum.

With the addition of ‘Eco-Escolas’, which is about sustainability and recycling, learners are asked to participate in different initiatives that happen during the school year, some of which are endorsed by entities such as the City Hall. It also encourages an interdisciplinary dialogue among subjects and collaborative work amongst teachers.

This project is also present in the yearly project entitled ‘Domínios de Autonomia Curricular’ (DACs). The goal of DACs is to work on current topics of interest, such as personal and interpersonal relationships, the elderly, cultural heritage, sustainability and environment, which are key essential to the growth of our students as members of society. DACs also counts on the participation of teachers from different areas of study and place great importance on technology and technological resources. The topic of the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle DACs English project is different for each year. These are Animals (1<sup>st</sup> year),

environmental protection (2<sup>nd</sup> year), climate change (3<sup>rd</sup> year) and cultural heritage (4<sup>th</sup> year).

### **1.1.3 Language Teaching Context**

#### ***English Language Teaching***

In terms of curriculum, students start learning English in pre-school with a teacher that comes specifically for those classes. The ‘Departamento de Línguas Estrangeiras’ (DLE) does not have any established contact with this teacher.

At the primary level, English in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year is ‘oferta curricular’ and students have two 45-minute lessons a week. Regarding the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students, these have two 60-minute lessons a week which is more consistent with the rest of their subjects, in terms of schedule. The coursebooks used are *Kid’s Box 1 to 4*. This is beneficial because there is continuity of contents as well as a lot of opportunities for students to recycle vocabulary and structures before learning new ones. Even though the coursebooks are published by Cambridge, the school follows the national curriculum and *Aprendizagens Essenciais*.

Most of the teachers in DLE have taught primary level, but at the moment my mentor and I are the only ones who are teaching this cycle. I am the English teacher of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year classes, and my mentor is responsible for the 4<sup>th</sup> year. Still, throughout my Teaching Practice, my mentor helped and supported me by observing my lessons, debating ideas and lesson plans as well as reviewing materials I used such as worksheets, games, PowerPoint presentations and tests.

The school does not have an official language policy, but teachers are committed to using the L2 as often as possible in class. Some exceptions may occur, such as classroom management and problematic behaviour, yet the use of the students’ first language (L1) is seen as a last resort (Harmer, 2012). Outside of the classroom, we also

communicate in English when greeting learners.

In addition, 9<sup>th</sup> year students can attend preparation classes for the PET Cambridge exam. Lessons are once a week, and exams take place at the school at the end of the school year.

### ***Cambridge Educational Partner***

In April 2021, CNSB received a commemorative plate officialising its partnership with Cambridge Assessment English. English is considered a rather important subject by the school administration as well as parents/tutors. Therefore, the institution invested in a partnership that provided DLE with a vast number of different resources, in online and physical format. The goal of this project is to challenge the students and prepare them with all the skills needed for language proficiency in the future. Moreover, Cambridge coursebooks and resources place a great deal of emphasis on intercultural education and use of authentic material.

## **1.2 Class profile**

I knew I would be working with two groups of students that I have taught before, so I was aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Both groups in the 4<sup>th</sup> year were assigned to my mentor, Professor João Cunha, whom they had met before in pre-school.

Regarding both groups in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, these were assigned to me. I have been teaching these students since they were in 1<sup>st</sup> year.

I started observing my mentor teaching in February 2021 – the former 4<sup>th</sup> year groups, now attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of studies – and the current classes since September 2021. Both 3<sup>rd</sup> groups and the 4<sup>th</sup> B class participated in this study. However, this project focused on specific students of each group rather than the whole class.



### **1.2.1 3<sup>rd</sup> Year**

3<sup>rd</sup> A and 3<sup>rd</sup> B are classes of 25 students each (a total of 33 boys and 17 girls). Most students have been enrolled since pre-school, which means they are comfortable with the space, staff and teachers. They started learning English when they were between the age of 3 and 4 years old.

Both groups are extremely motivated and enthusiastic about learning, not only English but any school subject. With regards to their interpersonal relations, 3<sup>rd</sup> A has a harder time accepting and obeying classroom rules, given that some learners started 1<sup>st</sup> year when they were 5 years old. Therefore, in terms of maturity, this group still presents some issues with posture, behaviour, respecting each other's turn and concentration. On the other hand, even though 3<sup>rd</sup> B does not experience the same problems, they are a group that sometimes cannot control their enthusiasm, affecting the normal flow of the lesson. Still, when asked, they are capable of adjusting their posture and behaviour.

These classes like being involved in different projects, such as the ones mention in section 1.1.2, and being given responsibilities - running errands for the teacher or collecting or handing out work.

### **1.2.2 4<sup>th</sup> Year**

4<sup>th</sup> B is a class of 25 students (a total of 10 boys and 15 girls). The majority of students have been enrolled since pre-school. They are very familiar with the space, teachers and staff, and most will continue their studies next year in middle school. They have also been learning English since pre-school as part of the school's curriculum.

This is a very interested and participative group, although there are some behavioural issues that disrupt the lessons. In addition, some students are being treated by therapists because of dyslexia, difficulties adapting to social norms and depression.

### **1.3 Defining the research question**

I took observation notes throughout the first term of school (September-December). Most of the information collected was regarding behaviour, classroom management and teacher roles. This helped me learn new techniques to call the group's attention as well as stirrers and settlers because changing the rhythm of the lesson was one of the things I wanted to improve during my Teaching Practice.

There were some common issues among 3<sup>rd</sup> A, 3<sup>rd</sup> B and 4<sup>th</sup> B, such as spoken interaction, voluntary participation and lack of use of the L2. In addition, I noticed that many of these difficulties were evident with students that usually achieve high results in moments of formal assessment, which led me to believe that confidence could be part of the reason why they were not able to participate actively in class. These are learners that had, by this point, been exposed to the language for several years. Ideally, at this stage, they should have been trying to speak more rather than feeling uncertain about their knowledge and abilities.

According to *Aprendizagens Essenciais* (2018a e 2018b), a document drawn up by the Ministry of Education, both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students should be able to “expressar-se com vocabulário limitado, em situações organizadas previamente” (pp. 6-7).

It is also worth pointing out that most of these learners already feel pressured about failing and achieving good scores. Whether that pressure comes from the home or not, I cannot tell. Still, it could be hindering their performance in class. I was also not sure if this behaviour was visible in all forms of interaction, that being whole-class activities, group or pair work. Thus, different activities were tried out to ensure the problem persisted. Based on observation notes, these learners did not appear to feel uncomfortable with speaking during pair or small group work. However, they looked uncomfortable, unable to make eye contact and not capable of speaking clearly and with intonation when in front of the entire class.

One reason that could justify their discomfort is their expectations towards L2 acquisition. During 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years, spoken interactions were reasonably simpler and easier to accomplish, contrary to what learners are supposed to achieve in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year. According to Brewster, et al., (2004):

Most children equate learning L2 with learning to speak it, and, because most come to the foreign language classroom with a good mastery of their L1 and learning it seemed to be relatively easy and effortless they expect it to be the same with the foreign language. (p. 101)

When their expectations are not met, their motivation and enthusiasm change, which could compromise students' learning process. They will presumably focus on other skills (Reading, Writing and Listening), which, in this case, have proven easier to achieve. To overcome these difficulties, learners must have plenty of opportunities to practise to feel comfortable expressing themselves in L2 (Brewster, et al., 2004).

Furthermore, quite often the attitude towards something could be the reason for its success or failure. As Krashen (1981) argues, a student can have a high aptitude towards learning – achieve good results in assessment – and a low attitude at the same time, depending on emotional and affective variables. A learner who feels less inhibited will

most likely feel more comfortable making mistakes in FLA, than someone who is not outgoing and has low self-esteem (Krashen, 1981).

Considering the length of the Teaching Practice, I decided to only choose three students per group to focus on. To better organise the observations notes, I adapted an observation grid, created in DLE, to register students' participation in class, as well as other factors, thus creating their profiles and how they changed throughout. I decided to check learners' progress in 4 different areas: 'Voluntary Participation', 'Comprehension', 'Pronunciation and Fluency', 'Body Language and Eye Contact'. There are three levels of progress for each area, later explained in section 3.2.2. That way, one could clearly see the children's profile and where needed to improve. Students were assessed in one of three levels and this grid was used at the beginning and end of this study as a means of comparison.

		Voluntary Participation			Comprehension			Pronunciation and Fluency			Body Language and Eye Contact		
Class	Students	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
	1												
	2												
	3												

Table 1- Observation grid

I decided against audio/video recordings as it disrupted the flow of the lesson and the compliance of classroom rules. After discussing it with my mentor, I decided on only using my observation notes and observation grid, giving emphasis to learners' reactions and behaviour in both moments of individual/pair work and whole-class activities. Their reaction towards speaking changed depending on the size of the audience.

Based on the individual profile registered, the students in question excelled in many of the areas, with exception of speaking clearly and confidently and being exposed, that

is they were unable to make eye contact, their hands shook and they could not speak clearly. The meaning of the message they wanted to convey was lost because of intonation, hesitation or interference of L1. Their pronunciation was mostly good and after some lessons, I also noticed that they did not appear to feel the same level of discomfort and low participation level when reading. This possibly has to do with being sitting down, thus less exposed, and having the support of the written word, meaning the probability of error was extremely low.

Therefore, I looked into methods that could enhance these learners' knowledge and abilities and do so with light-hearted activities since the strategy had to be age-appropriate. With younger learners, it is essential to keep activities simple and fun. Therefore, I decided to use role-playing, which they were used to because of the type of activities present in their coursebooks, and stories as a means to improve students' self-confidence when speaking. Consequently, the research question is: *Can role-playing activities based on storytelling lessons help learners improve their confidence when speaking in L2?*

The aims of the ARP are:

1. To improve students' confidence and comfort in L2 lessons;
2. To promote communication;
3. To provide learners with opportunities to develop their speaking skills;
4. To encourage voluntary participation and engagement in classroom activities.

## **II. Theoretical Background**

This chapter aims to explore the theoretical background related to this study. It is divided into three main sections: ‘Role-playing activities’, ‘Stories in EFL classes’ and ‘Confidence’. To achieve this, the ideas of researchers on these topics are presented and discussed, which offer a positive view on the effectiveness of role-playing activities based on storytelling lessons to help learners improve their confidence when speaking in L2.

### **2.1 Role-playing activities**

Role-play is a type of speaking activity in which students adopt characters and utilise drama to perform a story or a short dialogue. These moments also give learners opportunities to be creative and imaginative, besides developing their speaking skills. Cook (2008) states that a teacher speaks for most of the class time, which hinders students’ progress and reduces their chances to speak and develop their skills. In that sense, role-play is a way to tackle this issue and provide learners’ with more speaking moments in class. Additionally, Rashtchi and Moradzadeh (2018) argue there are two types of learning, active and passive. Active learning, through role-playing for instance, encompasses a degree of interaction and it “triggers cognitive functioning” (p. 66). Role-playing technique “is in the category of active learning as it involves the participation of learners in tasks or draws their attention to the flow of events in the classroom” (p. 66).

Furthermore, according to Thornbury (2005) “speaking activities involving a drama element, in which learners take an imaginative leap out of the confines of the classroom provide a useful springboard for real-life language use” (p. 96) as well as a purpose for the use of L2, which can be done in pairs or groups, in both spontaneous or previously planned task moments during the lesson (Raz, 1985).

Thus, role-playing may introduce idiomatic expressions, provide learners with chances to practise dialogue procedures such as respecting each other's turn and actively listening to their classmate, which are necessary to convey meaning, and use expressions in context. According to Zyoud (as cited in Velasco, 2017, p. 7):

Drama is a powerful language teaching tool that involves all of students interactively (...) connecting student's emotions and cognitions as it enables students to take risk with language (...) it engages feelings, attention and enriches the learners' experience of the language.

These activities, based on previously acquired language, work as a means to revise, recycle and reinforce vocabulary, sentence structures or expressions. Besides that, learners are invited to use language for a purpose and do so in a non-threatening environment (Tompkins as cited in Rashtchi & Moradzadeh, 2018, p. 67).

Furthermore, role-playing also helps improve pronunciation, intonation and pitch, as students are encouraged to speak clearly and pronounce the words carefully using the teacher as a language role model. Pronunciation is not often the focus of a lesson and teachers "only give attention to it in passing" (Harmer, 2007, p. 248), and, consequently, intonation is also difficult to approach. Some learners find hearing tunes or rising and falling tones complex to perceive which is why they should be exposed to L2 as much as possible. According to Harmer (2007), intonation and pronunciation should be approached by getting students to notice through audio, video or following the teacher's role model how the language is spoken. Maximum exposure means there is a great "chance[s] that their intelligibility levels will rise" (Harmer, 2007, p. 250).

So that this can happen, there is also the need to develop learners' listening skills. Children do not just listen and remember without a purpose (Brewster, et al., 2004). Knowing what they are going to do with the information received "helps to build up learners' confidence and reduce anxiety" (ibid, p. 99). Moreover, developing listening skills serves as support to improve pronunciation and intonation.

Furthermore, drama techniques such as role-playing give the students a chance to use different tones of voice and body language or gestures. By playing distinct roles and characters, learners feel less inhibited and scared of making mistakes mid-performance. Using the Total Physical Response (TPR) method embedded in role-playing activities helps to “teach children to follow directions and listen attentively” (Linse, 2005, p. 30), two important characteristics when role-playing a story with dialogue. While in TPR activities, learners will increasingly dominate the task by giving commands to others, in role-playing activities in which body language is appreciated, students immediately take over the story or dialogue with their classmates, using reactions and gestures to convey meaning and give expression to the story (Cameron, 2001).

It is important to allow students to repeat the short story or dialogue they will role-play as much as needed. Brewer (as cited in Inawati, 2014) stated that this will help children remember the language, reinforce words they might struggle with until it is safe to perform. Nonetheless, to be successful it is also essential that the activity chosen is according to the learners’ level, age group and ability (Vernon as cited in Inawati, 2014).

## **2.2 Stories in EFL classes**

Stories in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes have proven to have several different benefits for the students, such as motivational. According to Ellis and Brewster (2002), stories are motivating, “challenging and fun and can help develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language” (p. 1). These encourage students’ input, imagination and creativity, while exposing learners to a “variety of related language and learning activities” (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p.1)

In linguistic terms, stories are recommended in FLA as they can serve as models for language while exposing children to different styles of interaction (Pathan, 2013). Stories can help improve young learners’ overall language skills, by allowing time to work on their oral competence, interpretive and reading skills, as well as guide the



learners' attention and play a role in enhancing their motivation towards learning a foreign language. They can be used "as engines, and a powerful and motivating source for assisting learners to consolidate and practice language (Zahra & Farrah, 2016, p. 12). Murdoch (2002) also states that short stories in the EFL class can assist teachers in working with all the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Moreover, stories also support social-cultural behaviour. Kirschenbaum (as cited in Pathan 2013) suggests that storytelling is "one of the effective tools for inculcating morality, especially for the youth, as stories contain powerful images and symbols and operate on both conscious and unconscious levels, conveying intellectual and emotional meaning" (p.24).

Considering the many changes the young goes through daily, stories can be a portal to a healthier environment, portraying characters with good values and morals, whom learners might look up to, as well as representing distinct cultural traditions. By the same token, stories can also provide students with an insight into the country and the people who speak the language they are learning, allowing a cross-cultural comparison exercise to happen, in which learners reflect upon their background and culture and relate them to the new information.

Regarding cognitive benefits, stories give children the opportunity to associate new meanings with pictures and predict what happens next, whilst reinforcing language previously acquired (Zahra & Farrah, 2016). Predictable patterns, such as "familiar sequences, repeated phrases, and rhymes" (Domiczek, 2021) are fundamental to increasing students' input and participation. As Ellis and Brewster (2002) argue that through repetition "[their] students' confidence grows as they realize that they can remember more and more" (p. 14). This allows time for learners to get familiar with the content, practise pronunciation and physical reactions, if necessary before they are asked to interact with each other.

Regarding new concepts, stories can present children with more vocabulary than what they already possess through illustrations and/or audio. As Huang (2006) affirms, "children expand their vocabulary in regular story listening experience because of a

broad range of words they encounter through stories and the ways the vocabulary is presented” (p. 57).

On the other hand, as Rahman and Arju (2013) claim, one of the issues teachers have to deal with almost constantly, is the non-participative students and how to involve them in-class activities. If the issue is related to self-esteem with being exposed and speaking in L2, stories may be a means in which learners’ work towards “speak[ing] up in front of the class, which builds their confidence as well as improve fluency” (Rahman & Arju, 2013, p. 127).

### **2.3 Confidence and Support**

Young learners are vastly different from older students as they learn differently from the latter. Some of their known characteristics are their positive response towards meaning in general regardless of whether they understand all the individual words, and how their understanding transcends formal explanations, but comes from practice, practical examples and visual aids, enjoying every opportunity to interact with the teacher or peers (Harmer, 2007). Moreover, the teachers’ approach towards material and use of different methods “can affect students’ motivation, self-confidence, and enjoyment of learning English” (Soltveit, 2019, p. 21).

Different interaction patterns, such as pair or group work, are essential in an EFL lesson as learners find new concepts and language easier to grasp when shared with others. Vygotsky (as cited in Harmer, 2007) emphasised this by considering the “place of social interaction in development and the role of a ‘knower’ providing ‘scaffolding’ to help a child who has entered the Zone of Proximal Development” (p. 82). The Zone of Proximal Development is “the contrast between aided and unaided performance” (Moll, 1990, p. 158), meaning the distinction between the individual progress and subject’s performance with support. Role-playing the stories in pairs provides learners with scaffolding and support, while also giving them the opportunity to succeed on their own. Pairing students together in role-playing activities also foster an easier

environment “where peers are at ease with one another” (Ernst & Byra, 1998, p. 25). This support and development are the basis of children’s confidence, self-esteem and motivation, which are the key to success.

Students’ motivation could be either extrinsic, meaning there is an outside drive such as exams or rewards, or intrinsic, that is a drive that comes from within. This is often what young learners experience, being motivated for the pure enjoyment of the learning process (Harmer, 2007). Yet, if they do not feel motivated towards learning, then their progress will not be evident, or much slower than regular. On the other hand, sometimes a student might appear unmotivated, when in fact they are experiencing confidence or attitude issues. Harmer (2007) claims that the relationship between teachers and students goes beyond politeness and that “students are unlikely to follow them willingly (and do what is asked of them) unless they have confidence in their professional abilities. Students need to believe that we know what we are doing” (p. 101).

A positive attitude concerning learning may result in encouraging the learner to be open towards input and how to use it (Krashen, 1981). If this is not achieved, the children’s language development and acquisition might be at risk. According to Krashen (1981):

(...) if the direct relationship between acquisition and attitudinal factors does exist, and if our major goal in language teaching is the development of communicative abilities, we must conclude that attitudinal factors and motivational factors are more important than aptitude. This is because conscious learning makes only a small contribution to communicative ability (p. 5).

Although if there is evidence of high aptitude, formally assessed in class through tests, and low attitude, this might translate into reluctant participation and difficulty expressing oneself.

Boosting learners' confidence can be attained by carrying out activities in pairs or small groups, providing them with a safety net with strong outspoken students "without fear of being wrong" (Willis as cited in Feiteiro, 2018, p. 12). These tasks can give children a sense of achievement "through individual and collective efforts" (Feiteiro, 2018, p. 7). Succeeding in these activities works as a means to lift students' spirits and self-confidence in class.

Additionally, and considering this ARP theme, role-playing activities do not only help develop speaking skills, but also empathy and compassion (Hartman, 1997). Rogers and Evans (2008) stated the importance of these activities by highlighting that they help improve social skills and better communication among peers, besides reinforcing language and creativity.

Finally, by using role-playing tasks, the lesson is instinctively more student-centred, thus helping the students in "overcome[ing] some obstacles mainly the students' lack of confidence in their speaking ability" (Benabadji, 2006, p. 4).

### **III. Action Research Project**

In this chapter, a detailed plan of action and the data collection tools used are discussed, as well as the various cycles of this project and the respective results.

The exercise of an ARP is “related to the ideas of reflective practice and the teacher as researcher” (Burns, 2010, p. 2). It consists of being self-reflective and critical of one’s teaching and skills to improve as an educator. To achieve this, the researcher/teacher must identify a problematic area, conduct research and collect data so they can intervene with a possible solution for the issue, later on, while maintaining a critical view throughout the whole process. Being critical does not necessarily mean one should go out of their way to find negative aspects or problems, but rather be conscious of what can be done and what should change to accomplish the set goals.

During my Teaching Practice, I identified an issue that I found relevant to learners’ FLA taking into account their age group, degree of proficiency and official documents in force. I also consulted the literature on the topic (see Chapter II) and designed a plan of action to understand the effectiveness of my solution. This type of practice is interesting not just for newly inquisitive teachers at the beginning of their careers, but also for those who already have some work experience. Taking a step back and critically assessing our practice as an educator “can reinvigorate our teaching, lead to positive change, raise our awareness of the complexities of our work, and show us what drives our approaches to teaching” (Burns, 2010, p. 7).

This APR is divided into three cycles: the zero cycle, in which an issue is identified and data is collected to prove the need to employ strategies of improvement; the first cycle, in which the strategy is implemented and data is collected and analysed according to specific criteria on its strengths and weaknesses; and the second cycle, in which changes are made to the approach to compare results and understand the study’s strengths and limitations.

### 3.1 Methodology

The data collected for this project was mostly based on qualitative methodology. Qualitative research encompasses a wide range of data such as interviews, field notes or reflective journal entries. Moreover, even though the data is mostly in the written format, “subsequent analysis can define categories through which certain aspects of qualitative data can be quantified” (Dörnyei, p. 38). In addition, qualitative research methodology takes into account the experiences and feelings of the participants. One of the advantages of this method is being able to understand the causes of certain behaviours. Contrary to quantitative research, qualitative methodologies allow for interpretive analysis based on different variables. This allows researchers/teachers to broaden their conclusions on the issue (Dörnyei, 2007). Furthermore, it could be an easily adaptable approach in case something goes wrong or not according to plan. Dörnyei (2007) argues that:

If research is recognised to be a journey into the unknown (i.e. QUAL) rather than a task which can be fully specified and planned in advance (i.e. QUAN), then such breakdowns look less surprising and can be handled within the research framework (p. 40).

This ARP is about education but also children. Human beings can be unpredictable and force changes in a study due to their behaviour. The whole study could be ruled null, depending on the students’ reaction to the proposed strategy, if not for the framework employed during the observation and data collection process, which could be, as already mentioned, adapted. Thus, qualitative research allows the practitioner-researcher time to control the variables used throughout the observation stage so that the data collected can still be used and interpreted.

However, after I had completed the first cycle of this project, I found my observation grids hard to perceive. Although I had worked on the meaning of each level, later

explained in section 3.2.2, I found that the results were not perceptible to the reader. Owing to this, I decided to find a way to make my notes more visible through the use of graphs. Miles and Huberman (as cited in Dörnyei, 2007) argue that mixed methods research “can support and inform each other” (p. 42). One of the advantages of this method is that it highlights a study’s strength, helping qualitative research to become more objective without losing its interpretive nature. Thus, the data of the project can gain a new light by “converging numeric trends from quantitative data and specific details for qualitative data” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 45).

### **3.2 Data collection tools**

A variety of different data collection tools was used such as unstructured observations compiled in field notes, and structured observation grids based on specific criteria. Later on, questionnaires were also used with all three groups, as well as graphs based on the observation grids.

#### **3.2.1 Field Notes**

According to Wallace (1998), written notes on direct observations, contrary to audio recordings, have the advantage of being easily accessible and scanned. As part of IPP I and II, we were required to keep a Reflective Journal on our assessed lessons, a practice that proved to be useful throughout this study. As Borg (2001) argues it is a “forum for reflection where ideas were generated and explored and discoveries made in and through writing” (p. 160).

These notes are usually short and straightforward. If the practitioner-researcher is teaching, then this method is probably not the best, given that one has to focus on the lesson and students. When I was observing my mentor, I took a lot of notes, mainly about changing the rhythm of the lesson and classroom management techniques. After a

while, when I started noticing the issue in question, the nature of my notes focused on students' participation, behaviour such as reactions, eye contact and body language, as well as the use of L2.

Once the research was defined, the observation notes were analysed and an observation grid designed in which my thoughts were made clear. My findings were also discussed with my mentor as it helped to prepare my lesson plans and establish aims for this project.

### **3.2.2 Observation grids**

As mentioned in 1.3, an observation grid (see Appendix 1) produced in DLE was adapted to create the students' profiles. Based on initial observations, and relying on the fact that I have been teaching these learners for some time, my initial notes were organised in the grid taking into account the learners' 'Voluntary Participation', 'Comprehension', 'Fluency and Pronunciation' and 'Body Language and Eye Contact'. For each category, there are three levels:

#### **a) Voluntary Participation**

Level 1 – Student never participates in activities voluntarily or when requested.

Level 2 – Student never participates in activities voluntarily, only when requested.

Level 3 – Student participates in an orderly manner, regularly, voluntarily and when requested.

#### **b) Comprehension**

Level 1 – Student barely understands the message of the story/interaction.

Level 2 – Student partially understands the message of the story/interaction.



Level 3 – Student fully understands the message of the story/interaction.

c) Fluency and Pronunciation

Level 1 – Very hesitant speech flow with some pauses. Frequent interference from the mother tongue. Intonation mostly unclear and often difficult to understand.

Level 2 – Speech is reasonably fluent, some hesitations and pauses. Some interference from the mother tongue. Intonation is sometimes unclear, but understandable.

Level 3 – Fluent speech with adequate pace and minimal pauses. Little interference from the mother tongue. Mostly clear and understandable intonation.

d) Body Language and Eye Contact

Level 1 – No signs of confidence (shaking hands, hesitation, bad posture, head down, pacing). No direct eye contact.

Level 2 – Some signs of confidence (hesitation, pacing). Occasional eye contact.

Level 3 – Evident signs of confidence (good posture, head up, no pacing). Direct eye contact with the pair/group/class/teacher.

These were used throughout this study as a means of comparison throughout the different cycles. It made it simpler to register students' improvement and what still needed to be worked on. There were other criteria that could have been included; however, after having decided on a research question and goals, adding more it would make it difficult to focus. As Burns (2010) states the researcher/teacher “scan[s] the data carefully, usually several times over, to see what categories suggest themselves, or ‘emerge’, from the data” (p. 107). The notes did not indicate the need to add other categories that would benefit this project.

The observation grids were very helpful during the whole process because it kept a focus on the goals previously established. It is easy to lose ourselves when trying to go through a lot of information. In this case, the categories were already defined, which made organising my notes easier and faster.

The goal of these grids was to compare learners' progress from one cycle to the next. On the other hand, these informal observations aimed to assess their reaction towards the activity, body language and eye contact, as well as posture, fluency and pronunciation. It seems a paradox observing students who do not feel comfortable facing an audience, however, Labov (1972) discusses this contradiction in linguistics research, by stating that only by observing can one gather data that confirms a premise.

As mentioned in section 3.1, after the first cycle was completed, a value range was attributed to each level in the observation grids, so that graphs could be creative as a representation:

Level 1: 1-2 – not very perceptible

Level 2: 3 – slightly perceptible

Level 3: 4-5 – highly perceptible

This provided a wider view of the learners' improvement while being able to maintain the descriptive levels of the observation grids. It also made the results more perceptible and easier to interpret.

### **3.2.3 Questionnaires**

Questionnaires were used in the second cycle. As not to make the group of students to be aware they were the main focus of this ARP, all the learners in the class answered the questionnaire. These were not anonymous as it important to know the answers of

these children in specific to be able to include them in the research.

Questionnaires “allow researchers to gather the information that learners are able to report about themselves, such as their beliefs and motivations about learning or their reactions to learning and classroom instructions and activities” (Brown, 2001, p. 6). These aimed to gather information on the children’s feelings towards the activity and how it helped them during class (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). Because of their age group and level of proficiency, these were written in L1. The children did not have difficulty understanding the questions or what was asked of them. Before handing out each one a copy, students were told the purpose of the assignment and how important it was for them to be truthful.

While designing the questionnaires I kept in mind that the length of the questions, the use of emoticons and language took into account the age and maturity of the classes in question. As Wallace (1998) states:

If they are beginner learners, or very young, questions should be kept short and simple and may have to be framed in the mother tongue [L1] to make sure that you are getting valid data. Alternatively, you may decide to use graphics such as ‘happy/unhappy faces’. (p. 138)

Moreover, questionnaires do not take up a lot of time and, in this case, all the learners in the class answered it, so it made sense to find a quick way to gather the information that would be easily analysed and organised.

### **3.3 Zero Cycle**

Although this study is focused on 9 students, the three classes went through the same observation process. To collect data during the zero cycle, I decided to use a simple role-playing activity, in pairs, on personal information, to observe students’

reactions as they performed the dialogue. This was after I had already noticed that some learners were experiencing difficulties.

As preparation, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year classes were invited to think of five questions one asks when one meets someone for the first time. This also worked as revision of vocabulary taught in the previous school year. Both classes suggested the following four:

1. How are you?
2. What's your name?
3. How old are you?
4. Have you got brothers or sisters?

Regarding the fifth question, students were given its beginning and asked to complete it with their ideas. The suggestions were *What's your favourite colour?* and *What's your favourite toy?*. These questions were written on the board, but learners copied them into their notebooks as well. After having five minutes to practise it with a classmate, the pairs were invited to perform the dialogue as if they were meeting for the first time, whilst the rest of the group observed them. The rest of the class was told to watch the classmates' performance, specifically intonation, hesitation, body language/reactions. In the end, I was not the one that offered feedback, rather the group was asked to share their thoughts. The feedback given was organised in the following observation grid:

**Students' Profile – Zero Cycle**

	Students	Voluntary Participation			Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
3 <sup>rd</sup> A	1 (MV)	X					X	X			X		
	2 (MS)	X					X	X		X			
	3 (MM)	X					X	X				X	

	Students	Voluntary Participation			Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
3 <sup>rd</sup> B	1 (AA)	X					X		X			X	
	2 (AB)	X					X		X		X		
	3 (MJ)	X				X		X			X		

**Table 2** – Students' Profiles (3<sup>rd</sup> A/B Zero Cycle)

The students' feedback indicated that the children in question, as seen in Table 2, were difficult to hear and understand due to their hesitation. In addition, the gestures were small or non-existent. Their pronunciation was clear and understandable; however, I agree with the learners' opinion on their hesitation and how it affected the activity.

In 3<sup>rd</sup> A, the students in question did not participate voluntarily in the activity, only after they were asked to. Although they understood the instructions as well as what each question asked, they did not keep eye contact with their classmate, rather focused on the teacher, and their speech was difficult to perceived due to the several hesitations and interference from L1.

With regards to 3<sup>rd</sup> B, class, the same results are evident, with the exception of Student 3 who experienced difficulties understanding what each question asks, and consequently, answering them.

With respect to 4<sup>th</sup> B, the same activity was performed, but with different questions:

1. What's your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where do you live?
4. What's your favourite colour?
5. What's your favourite food?

6. What's your favourite hobby?

Contrary to 3<sup>rd</sup> A/B, this class did not provide their classmates with feedback given I was not the one teaching and had not discussed it with my mentor before the beginning of the lesson. I organised the notes on the learners chosen in the following observation grid:

	Students	Voluntary Participation			Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
4 <sup>th</sup> B	1 (EN)	X					X	X			X		
	2 (FG)	X					X		X			X	
	3 (FS)	X					X	X			X		

**Table 3** – Students' Profiles (4<sup>th</sup> B Zero Cycle)

The results showed that the students in question felt nervous about being exposed and had difficulties raising their voice when asked to repeat what they had said. The three children only made eye contact with the teacher when speaking and on their way back to their seat their head was down. Their understanding of the questions was appropriate.

### 3.4 First Cycle

After having completed the zero cycle with all three groups, I initiated the first cycle of this project. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, both groups worked with the same story *Dad, can you do this?* written by Liz Miles and illustrated by Aleksei Bitskoff, whilst 4<sup>th</sup> year B read and role-played the story entitled *Big Feet* written by Roderick Hunt and Alex Brychta.

The goal of these stories, and the role-playing activities that followed, was to help the shyer students and motivate them to participate actively in class. Besides working on their oral interaction with their classmates and feeling more comfortable speaking in

L2. To find a suitable story, I looked into the selection available in Oxford Owl, a platform with free resources for students and teachers. The stories are divided according to level or age-group. Although there were other options available, I looked for stories that met the themes the classes were working on or revising at the time.

Since I was teaching these lessons, I counted on my mentor's observation notes to help me organise my observation grids and post-lesson reflections. His help was extremely important for this study. When teaching, one must concentrate on all students and give them equal opportunities to be part of the lesson. It is hard to focus on three children in particular when there are twenty-five in front of us.

Additionally, one of these lessons was assessed by my supervisor, so the post-observation feedback was very useful and gave me plenty to think about.

All the activities described below in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years were planned according to the language the classes were developing and/or revising at the time.

### **3.4.1 Contextualisation of the activities – 3<sup>rd</sup> A/B**

This role-playing activity based on a story with 3<sup>rd</sup> year A and B took place on 9<sup>th</sup> November. It was about the use of *can* and *can't* for ability and it was right after their assessment test. These lessons aimed to encourage the students I was focusing on to participate voluntarily in class and feel comfortable role-playing the story with gestures.

The lesson began with a short revision of *can* and *can't*, as well as free-time activities such as *play the guitar*, *play football*, *play video games*, etc. After having established a theme for the lesson, the class was invited to read the story *Dad, can you do this?*. So that students would pay attention throughout, I asked them to answer one question that I wrote on the board: *What can dad do?*.

I decided to start reading the story on my own, but as a means of including the students from the very start, and not having predicted any issues with language, I called their names and asked them to read the lines. However, both classes were very excited

with this activity, so they started repeating the lines together, emphasising the words. I was extremely surprised by their reaction, so I took the liberty to focus on the gestures and they repeated them on cue without having to be told. The gestures were a representation of what was illustrated in the e-book as well as the message each page conveyed.

After the reading activity, both classes answered the question on board, proving they were paying attention and had no difficulty understanding the story. They also did two simple post-reading activities: ordering pictures and yes/no questions with *can* and *can't*.

I then proceeded to explain the concept of theatre by showing them a photo of a stage. They also were asked to reflect on what they usually see at a theatre before I told them they were role-playing the story. This left them beaming and it was rewarding witnessing so much joy in class.

They were paired up purposely, as I wanted to pair the students I was focusing on for the ARP with more outspoken learners. The reason behind this was to help these learners to try their best by pairing them with a classmate that could influence them in a positive way. By pairing shy and quiet students with others that share the same personality traits, the chances are no evident changes would be visible, or it would take them more time to modify their behaviour. As Harmer (2007) argues:

[in] such groups the more able students can help their less fluent or knowledgeable colleagues. The process of helping will result in the strong students themselves being able to understand more about the languages; the weaker students will benefit from the help they get (p. 169)

Each pair had 5 minutes to practise the dialogue. Yet, without having suggested it, I noticed, as did my supervisor with 3<sup>rd</sup> B, that some students switched roles and went through the story more than once. Seeing them this excited about the activity made me



think I should have tried something like this before. Finally, the pairs role-played the story.

### 3.4.2 Results and discussion

After employing the role-playing activities based on a story, I organised my notes in the following observation grids to compare the results with the zero cycle tables.



**Students' Profile – 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle**

	Students	Voluntary Participation			Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
3 <sup>rd</sup> A	1 (MV)		X				X		X			X	
	2 (MS)		X				X		X			X	
	3 (MM)		X				X		X			X	

	Students	Voluntary Participation			Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
3 <sup>rd</sup> B	1 (AA)		X				X			X		X	
	2 (AB)		X				X		X			X	
	3 (MJ)		X				X		X			X	

**Table 4 – Student's Profiles Results (3<sup>rd</sup> A/B First Cycle)**

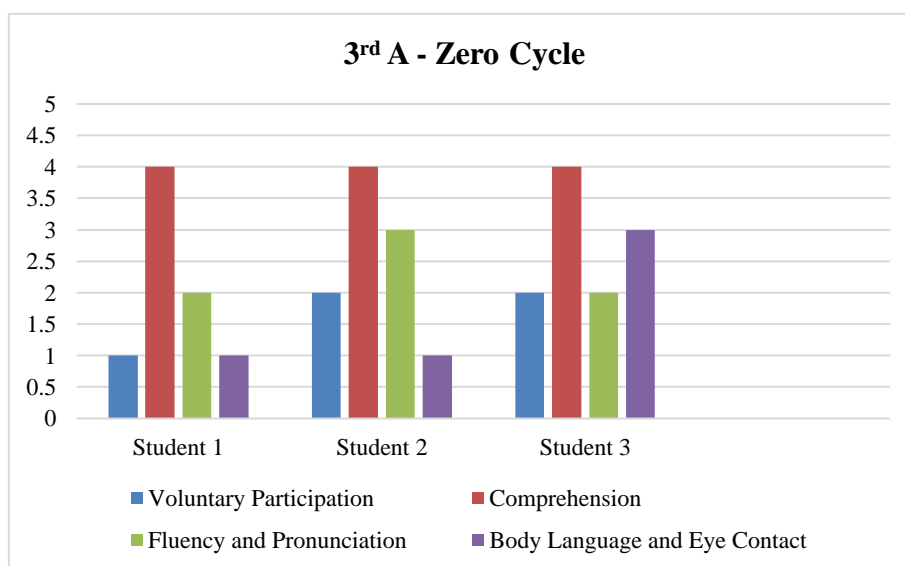
After a quick scan, there were improvements from one stage to the other. In 3<sup>rd</sup> A, the students in question all improved their 'Voluntary Participation' moving up from Level 1 to Level 2. With regards to 'Fluency and Pronunciation', and 'Body Language and Eye Contact', two learners showed improvement, while the third maintained the same level.

Concerning the 3<sup>rd</sup> B, the three children presented development in three out of the four categories. Student 1 maintained the same level regarding 'Body Language and Eye Contact'.

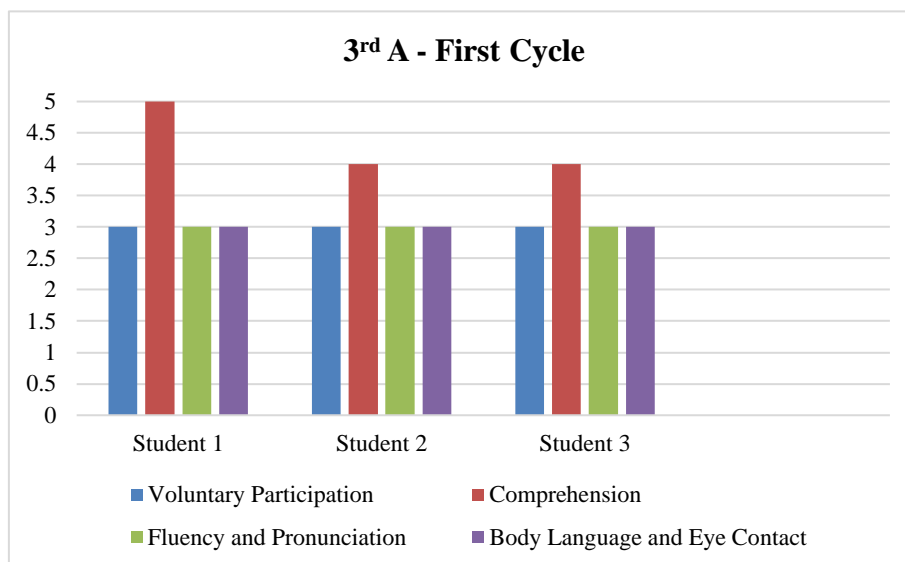
Overall, the results were positive and the medium used to help these learners proved to be of interest. In addition, their excitement and motivation as a whole may have influenced their attitude towards the lesson as well. I also took some notes on these learners' behaviour and attitudes so as to be more specific regarding their changes:

However, as mentioned in section 3.2.2, at this point the way data is presented changed, having found the results and progress difficult to perceive when only using observation grids. Therefore, graphs were created based on the observations from the zero and first cycles to better document developments. This made the improvements identified on the grids more visible, thus confirming the children's progress.

Below are the graphs representative of the results in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year classes, in both zero and first cycles. The vertical axis represents the value range assigned to each level (see section 3.2.2). The categories being observed are the ones mentioned below. After creating the graphs and having a clearer vision of the project's results, some conclusions were drawn on the students' progress in both 3<sup>rd</sup> A and 3<sup>rd</sup> B.



**Graph 1** – 3<sup>rd</sup> A Results (Zero Cycle)



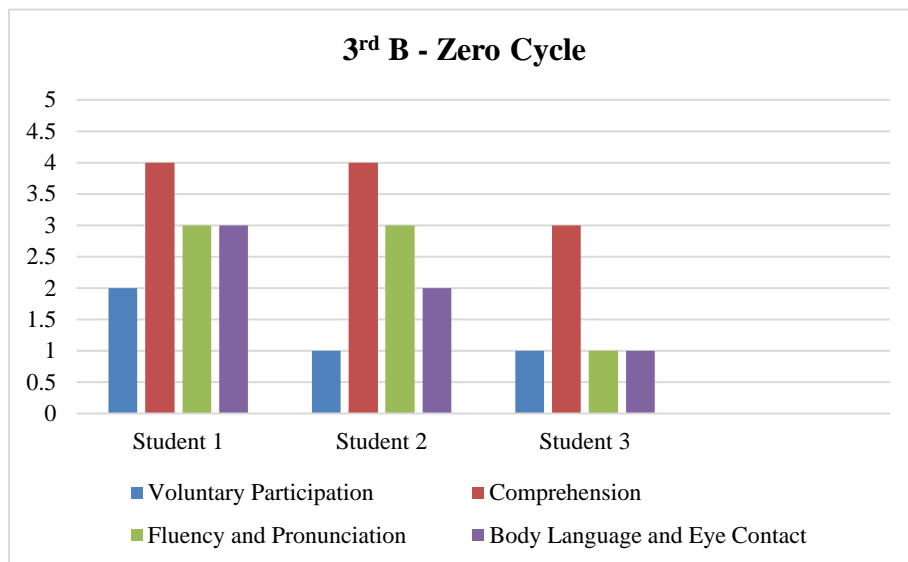
**Graph 2** – 3<sup>rd</sup> A Results (First Cycle)

In 3<sup>rd</sup> A, Student 1 showed interest in participating in class. They also asked to read lines from the story. Their posture was relaxed, interacting and laughing with their classmates. Their gestures and reactions during the role-playing activity were not prominent but they made an effort to make all the gestures they could. The ones that required students to be louder were not visible.

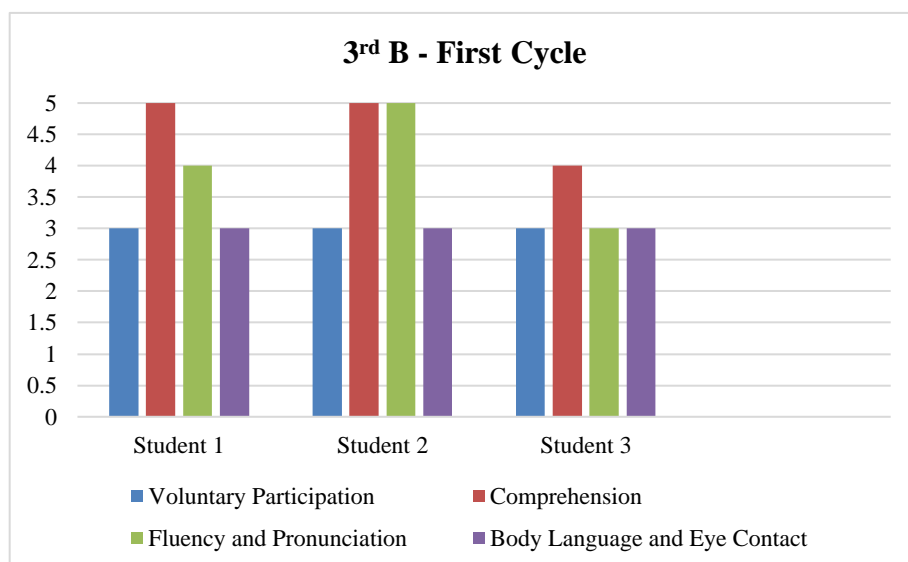
On the other hand, Student 2 showed improvement in ‘Voluntary Participation’ and ‘Body Language and Eye Contact’. When speaking their tone of voice was low and it lacked intonation, but it was clear. The gestures and reactions were present but only the ones that did not require emotion.

Finally, Student 3 presented changes in ‘Voluntary Participation’ and ‘Fluency and Pronunciation’. When speaking their speech was clear, but low due to nervousness.

All three students appeared comfortable, having relaxed their body allowing themselves to laugh with the group. The bigger and louder reactions were visible when performed in a group, however, in pairs, only a few of the gestures were perceived. They showed little difficulty with keeping eye contact with their classmate.



Graph 3 - 3<sup>rd</sup> B Results (Zero Cycle)



Graph 4 – 3<sup>rd</sup> B Results (First Cycle)

In relation to 3<sup>rd</sup> B, Student 1 showed improvement in ‘Voluntary Participation’ and ‘Fluency and Pronunciation’. They asked to read lines during the first read of the story and corrected their pronunciation whenever it was asked. When performing the story, their gestures were not prominent but their speech was clear and audible.

By contrast, Student 2 presented similar changes to Student 1. This is a student who shows difficulties with repeating gestures and reactions, as seen in other situations. However, they made an effort to during their performance.

Lastly, Student 3 showed improvement in several categories such as ‘Comprehension’, ‘Fluency and Pronunciation’ and ‘Body Language and Eye Contact’. This student is often asked to read the instructions as they have a lot of difficulties with speaking in front of others. This behaviour results in some issues with regards to the correct use of L2 – vocabulary/grammar. Their speech was clear, but difficult to understand at times, whenever they were not so certain on the correct pronunciation. Their gestures were small but evident in specific moments.

Only Student 3 showed difficulties with keeping eye contact with their classmate, often looking down or at their hands. Students 1 and 2 interacted well.

### **3.4.3 Contextualisation of the activities – 4<sup>th</sup> B**

This activity took place on 19<sup>th</sup> October. It was a follow-up to describing people and playing guessing games in class. The aims were the same as for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year classes – getting the three students who are part of the focus of this project to interact voluntarily and feel confident participating in the activity.

The lesson started by establishing contact with the previous one. Learners did not appear to have difficulties explaining what they had been working on in class with my mentor. In addition, they had revised the vocabulary needed for the activity.

This class had been playing guessing games with my mentor, describing a classmate for the others to find out who it was. Thus, my mentor used a detective angle to inspired learners to be original with their clues and challenge their classmates. The story in question, *Big Feet*, is about finding out whose footprints are on the snow, which matched well with the detective theme.

As an introduction, the class described a picture of a monster by mentioning the number of limbs, colour and size. I chose a monster because the footprints featured in the story appeared to have been made by one. Afterwards, the class started reading the book but, contrary to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year groups, not all students participated in repeating lines.

They followed the instructions and allowed the child I called out to read. However, I invited them to repeat the line afterwards as a whole class. This drilling activity was important as the zero cycle had proven the students in question had some difficulties with hesitation and pronunciation of some words.

After some post-reading activities, which focused on ordering pictures and answering comprehension questions, students were divided into groups of five to practise the dialogue. The groups were chosen with the purpose of mixing outspoken students with the ones I wanted to observe. The three students in question were not in the same group. Finally, the class role-played the story

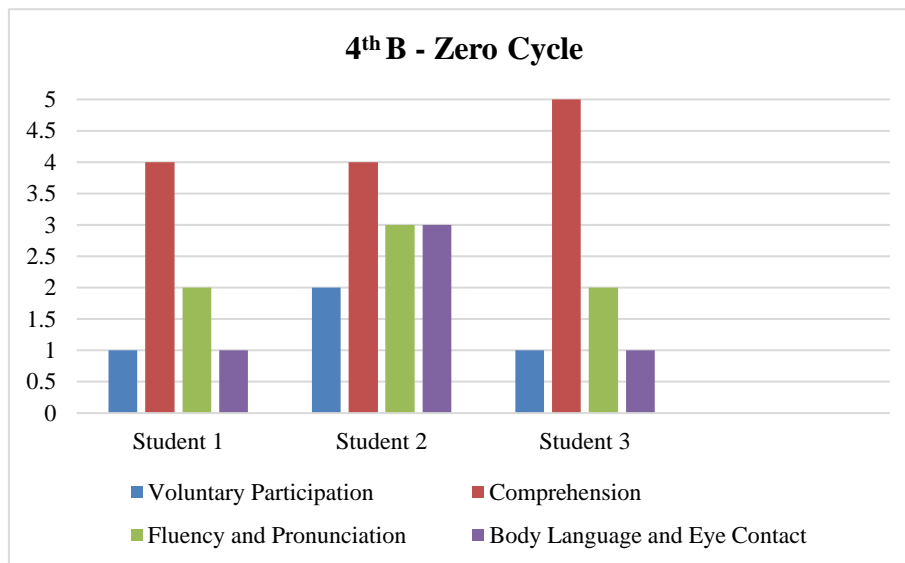
#### **3.4.4 Results and Discussion**

With regards to 4<sup>th</sup> B, there seemed to be an improvement with regards to ‘Voluntary Participation’, ‘Fluency and Pronunciation’ and ‘Body Language and Eye Contact’. In general, the results were promising. However, Student 1 still appeared to show more difficulty than Student 2 and 3. As mentioned before, the following graphs are representative of the observation tables. The vertical axis represents the value range assigned to each level (see section 3.2.2). The categories being observed are the ones mentioned below.

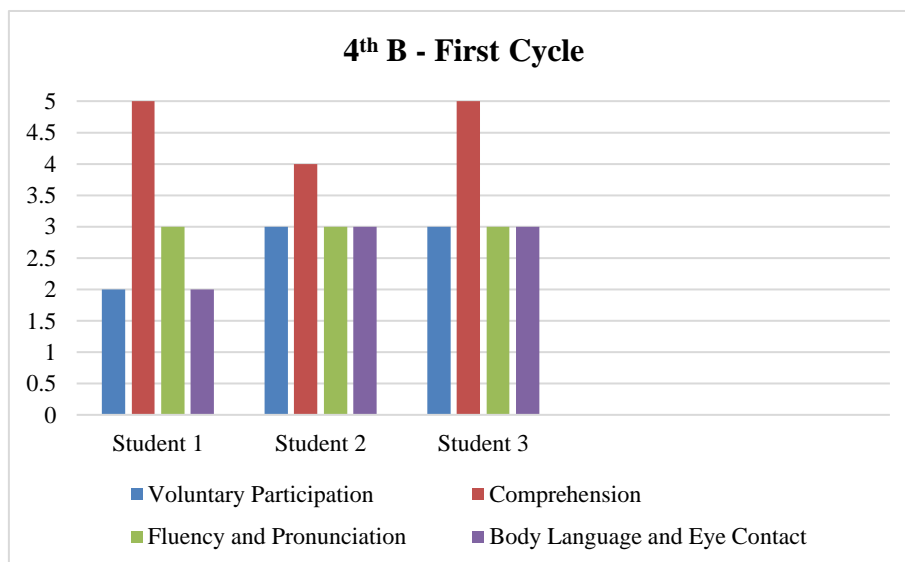
**Students' Profile – 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle (4<sup>th</sup> year)**

4 <sup>th</sup> B	Students	Voluntary Participation			Story Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
	1 (EN)	X					X		X		X		
	2 (FG)		X				X		X			X	
	3 (FS)		X				X		X			X	

**Table 4 – Students' Profiles Results (4<sup>th</sup> B First Cycle)**



**Graph 5 – 4<sup>th</sup> B Results (Zero Cycle)**



**Graph 6 – 4<sup>th</sup> B Results (First Cycle)**

Based on the results Student 1 showed slow progress in comparison to the zero cycle. They are clearly making an effort to participate, but only when they are confident they will not make any mistakes. Their gestures are still not very prominent, but haven't left out any during the role-play. The speech is clear and the tone is louder so there is no need to ask them to repeat the line. Lack a bit of emotion as they are too concentrated on not missing their turn.

By contrast, Student 2's voice was insecure but they did not hesitate. The gestures and reactions were more prominent, and they felt comfortable laughing afterwards with their classmates.

At last, Student 3 showed great improvement on 'Voluntary Participation' wanting to be one of the first to role-play the story. Their quiet nature did not impair his speech or gestures. They made contact with the classmate, teacher and rest of the group to share a laugh during the activity. They looked happy and comfortable.

### **3.5 Second Cycle**

At the end of the first cycle and based on the results presented in 3.4.2, I decided to make some changes to the strategy employed. Taking into account the students' level, age group and evident enthusiasm, as well as the documents in force, I wanted to guarantee that they showed the same level of engagement, as well as confidence taking part in role-playing activities in which the dialogue was not available to them. Whereas in the first cycle, the learners had a worksheet with the dialogue, or it was projected onto the whiteboard, this time they had to perform the story without having it in written or in a physical format to consult when necessary. This could have led to one of two scenarios: either they would feel too intimidated to participate or they would feel confident enough to role-play a story in front of the whole class. It was important to collect data on this as it would help me to reflect on what needed to be improved as well as the project's limitations.



### 3.5.1 Contextualisation of the activity – 3<sup>rd</sup> A/B

The classes repeated the story *Dad, can you do this?* using the dialogues they had on their worksheets from the first lesson. After some students role-played the story, I started removing the worksheet from one of the participants. When the pairs with the students in question were doing the activity, I removed their worksheet first, because if necessary the more outspoken learners would be able to help them.

I focused on their reaction when I removed their worksheet and their performance from then on. Initially they seemed nervous and I thought they would not be able to finish the story. However, they were able to continue even though some lines were not entirely completed. Below is a transcription of the original lines and what they said in 3<sup>rd</sup> A:

*Original line: I am a bit big.*

*Student 2: I am a big.*

*Original line: No, my legs are a bit long.*

*Student 1: No, my legs are long.*

*Original line: Got it! Yes, Zac. I can catch!*

*Student 3: Got it! I can catch!*

Although the lines were not exactly the same as in the original story, the meaning and message they wanted to convey was not lost. The rest of the group was able to follow the story. Moreover, the children this study focuses on continued using the gestures and emphasising their reactions. Knowing the sequence of the gestures and

reactions was an advantage in this situation, as it helped learners remember which line came after.

By the end of the class, most students had performed without a copy of the dialogue. They seemed to enjoy the challenge and it also helped strengthen their friendship, by encouraging them to support each other as often as possible.

### 3.5.2 Results and Discussion

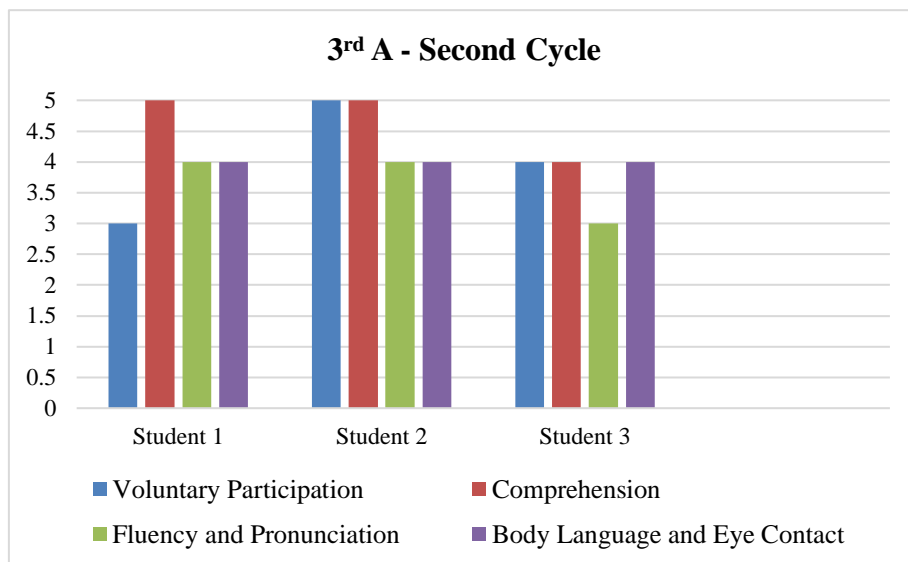
After organising my notes on an observation grid and making a graph, I concluded that all three students manifested progress in most categories.



**Students' Profile – 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle (3<sup>rd</sup> year)**

	Students	Voluntary Participation			Story Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
3 <sup>rd</sup> A	1 (MV)		X				X			X			X
	2 (MS)			X			X			X			X
	3 (MM)			X			X	X					X
	Students	Voluntary Participation			Story Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
3 <sup>rd</sup> B	1 (AA)			X			X			X			X
	2 (AB)			X			X			X			X
	3 (MJ)			X			X	X				X	

**Table 5 – Students' Profile Results (3<sup>rd</sup> A/B Second Cycle)**



Graph 7 – 3<sup>rd</sup> A Results (Second Cycle)

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> A class, Student 1 presented slower progress, yet they increased in terms of ‘Fluency and Pronunciation’ and ‘Body Language and Eye Contact’. Despite being nervous, they tried intensifying the gestures and focused on their partner, thus following the guidelines given at the beginning of the lesson.

Students 3 showed steady progress, however with regards to ‘Fluency and Pronunciation’ they did not improve from Level 2 to Level, because they did not follow the suggestions when corrected, requiring more time to correct their pronunciation. Additionally, the speech was not always comprehensible due to the volume.

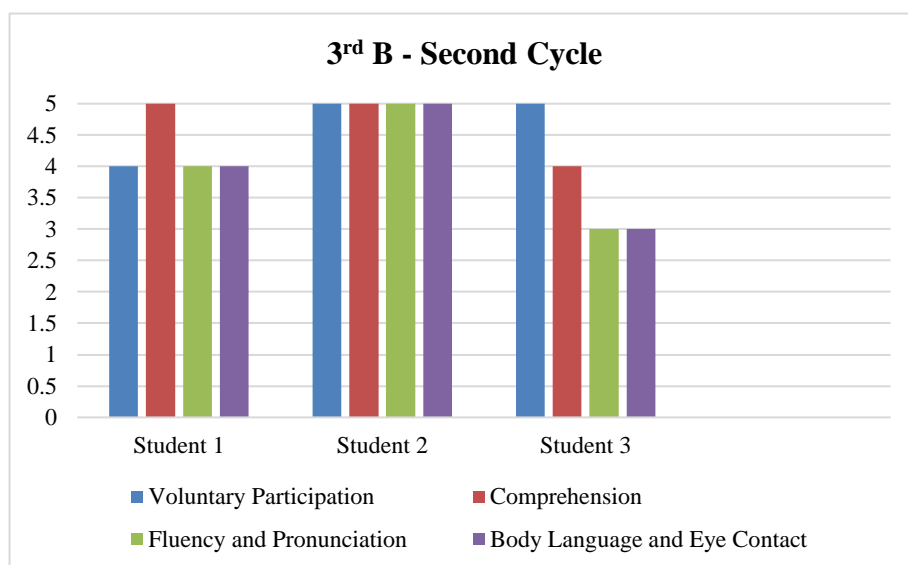
Finally, Student 2 revealed motivation and enthusiasm when confronted with this challenge. They took this opportunity to improve their gestures and reactions despite the initial anxiety. Their speech was clear and emotive. Their body language was confident, facing the class and partner and laughing with the group.

In relation to the questionnaire responses (see Appendix 1) I focused on these students’ answers to the question *Sentiste-te bem em participar na aula? Porquê?*

- Student 1 said yes because they felt comfortable;
- Student 2 said yes because they learnt new things;

- Student 3 said yes because they it was fun and they would not have participated if they did not like it.

Their answers all showed these learners were excited about the opportunity to speak and participate regardless of their usual shy behaviour.



**Graph 8** – 3<sup>rd</sup> B Results (Second Cycle)

In 3<sup>rd</sup> B class, Student 2 was the one that showed great progress in all categories, having improved whenever an opportunity was given.

Although Student 1 showed improvement in ‘Voluntary Participation’ and ‘Body Language and Eye Contact’, their speech was at times difficult to perceive. Their pitch was also not always clear.

Lastly, Student 3 still presented some difficulties in ‘Fluency and Pronunciation’ and ‘Body Language and Eye Contact’. They have always had difficulties being exposed and found the activities extremely hard to accomplished. However, they follow instructions and suggestions, trying to improve at every step of the away. In addition, their ‘Voluntary Participation’ has since increased a lot in comparison.

Regarding the questionnaires in this class, their answers to the same question mentioned above were also analysed:

- Student 1 and Student 2 said the lesson was a lot of fun;
- Student 3 said they always enjoy the English lessons

### **3.5.3 Contextualisation of the activity – 4<sup>th</sup> B**

The group was involved in a role-playing activity based on a *Pink Panther* episode entitled *Pink Sherlock*. Before this lesson, the class had watched the video, which only had music in the background available, and matched lines with pictures from the video, thus creating a dialogue to be performed between two people. In addition, the gestures and reactions featured in the story were extremely prominent hence it required learners to embody the character in question so that they could role-play the story as similar to the video as possible.

In this lesson, students had already performed and watched others role-play the story so they were familiar with the dialogue. Moreover, they had the lines organised in coloured balloon speeches – pink for the *Pink Panther* and blue for the robber – on the blackboard. That way, whenever the learners did not remember their line they could look up and quickly find their spot.

The lesson started with a few pairs role-playing the dialogue to allow the students who are the focus on this ARP to listen and time to prepare for when it was their turn. At this time, I started removing the shorter lines from the board from both characters. By the time the learners in question raised their hands to participate, there were only a few lines left.

During my observation, I mostly focused on their eye contact, gestures and quick thinking in case they forgot what they had to say. I also took some notes on the rest of

the class' reaction to their performance, that is if they were engaged with the activity and paying attention.

This activity took up the entire lesson, because, as it was mentioned, I wanted to make sure the children had plenty of time to prepare, but also to see if they would voluntarily participate and ask to go next, which eventually they did.

### 3.5.4 Results and Discussion

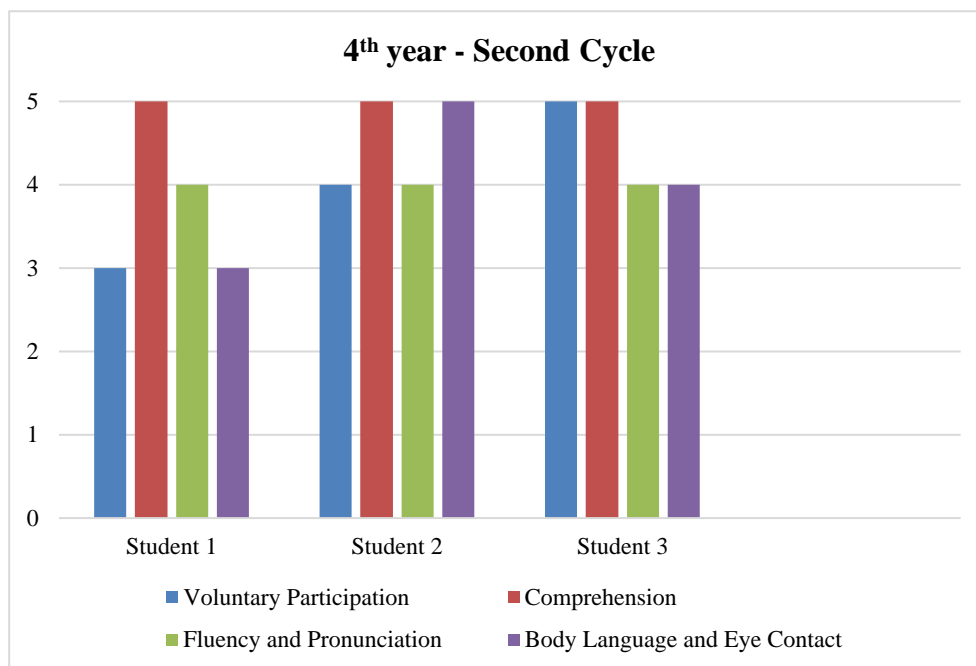
Once again, after the activity described I organised my notes in the observation grid and created a graph to compare with the results from the zero and first cycles.



**Students' Profile – 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle (4<sup>th</sup> year)**

4 <sup>th</sup> B	Students	Voluntary Participation			Comprehension			Fluency and Pronunciation			Body Language and Eye Contact		
		L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3	L1	L2	L3
	1 (EN)		X				X			X		X	
	2 (FG)			X			X			X			X
	3 (FS)			X			X			X			X

**Table 6** – Students' Profile Results (4<sup>th</sup> B Second Cycle)



**Graph 9** – 4<sup>th</sup> B Results (Second Cycle)

At first glance, Student 2 and Student 3 showed steady progress since the beginning of this study. I believe that the time given to prepare as well as not being forced to participate before they were ready, but rather waiting for them to tell me when they were ready to perform, could explain these changes in behaviour which also translated into a more confident attitude towards facing the class.

On the other hand, even though Student 1 also showed great improvement, this was at a slower pace than the other two children. However, any progress is relevant regardless of the pace. It also could mean that more time invested in this strategy would translate into more obvious results and more opportunities for learners who share the same personality traits as Student 1.

Additionally, after collecting their questionnaires (see Appendix 2), I analysed these three students answers to the question *Como é que te sentiste durante a dramatização da história?*

- Student 1 said they felt embarrassed;
- Student 2 mentioned they were nervous but ended up enjoying the experience as it was fun to do;
- Student 3 stated they felt lucky to be part of the activity.

Based on these answers, Student 1 did not feel very confident, but performance-wise, they have improved since the zero cycle. If given more opportunities to role-play short stories/dialogues, as well as time, they could eventually feel less awkward and their performance would match their spirit. Finally, Students 2 and 3 showed the experience changed their attitudes, even if they felt a little bit nervous, which is normal for this age group.

As Altun (as cited in Alabsi, 2016) stated role-playing activities can provide “a stress-free learning environment” (p. 229) for learners who express some difficulty in FLA. These students’ improvements with regards to the ‘Voluntary Participation’, ‘Comprehension’, ‘Fluency and Pronunciation’ and ‘Body Language and Eye Contact’ may translate into their enjoyment of the activities, and feeling more comfortable being exposed to the rest of the group. In addition, the results have shown the effectiveness of the strategy in question.

Regarding the research aims defined in section 1.3, this project answered positively to *To improve students’ confidence and comfort in L2 lessons* and *To encourage voluntary participation and engagement in classroom activities*. Concerning the aims *To promote communication* and *To provide learners with opportunities to develop their speaking skills*, this study could have explored the development of speaking skills, in particular, pronunciation and fluency improvement.



## **Conclusion**

Although it was extremely difficult, this research allowed me to grow as a professional and to reflect on my teaching. As a relatively new teacher, who has only started working with young learners recently, this Teaching Practice and ARP were amazing learning opportunities.

It was also very challenging having to balance my full-time job and a research project. Nevertheless, it made me think of what I can do to help young learners in class. It also confirmed that one is never finished with learning. I took this chance to focus on factors that I believed were not blocking the students' FLA and improve on those, such as classroom management and stirrers and settlers. The latter helped acknowledge the issue with the rhythm which was evident during my first assessed lessons.

Regarding the ARP, the students' positive reaction and attitude towards the role-playing activities and having stories featured in class, reinforced the need to step out of one's comfort zone to motivate learners to engage more in class. These mediums proved to be effective with regards to learners' confidence when speaking, as it was clear that there was a gradual improvement. It showed the students they have more knowledge and ability they give themselves credit for.

On the other hand, it also verified that throughout FLA learners need plenty of opportunities to verify their skills, develop their speaking and find a purpose to participate in class and use L2. The use of different communicative situations showed how L2 can be used to convey different messages and work with others. To accomplish this, different interaction patterns were used which taught students to work with different classmates. In the future, these children will have to work with different people and they must be used to this instead of always working individually.

Understandably, it is not easy to inspire and convince learners who have difficulties interacting with others to participate in a role-playing activity. However, the literature consulted helped plan different approaches to this as a way to ease them into the task. Gradually, I noticed a change in their attitude and how accepting children are when

guided towards a goal. They taught me there is more I can do for them as well as provide them with a safe environment to experience language. Teachers truly are eternal students.

## **Limitations**

Throughout this study, I found several limitations that had an impact on the project.

First, there was an issue with time as this part of the Teaching Practice lasted only from September till mid-December. Even though I taught all the lessons that I could, it was difficult to navigate a project in three and a half months whilst taking part in different school activities and field trips, as well as complying with the subject's yearly plan. In addition, these classes had to be in isolation due to positive cases of Covid-19, which forced some sudden changes to the study. 3<sup>rd</sup> A was in isolation once, while 3<sup>rd</sup> B and 4<sup>th</sup> B were in isolation twice last term.

On the other hand, other students could have benefited from this project. Unfortunately, so that any type of conclusions could be reached, I could only focus on 3 children per class. Although it allowed me to draw some assumptions regarding the strategy implemented as well as its benefits, these results could have been different if I had focused on 25 students in one specific class. Even if I had attempted to do it, the criteria would be too much to analyse in such a short amount of time.

There were also some difficulties finding stories that were age and level appropriate. The vocabulary and sentence structure could not vary a lot from what the class had learnt and practised. The idea was not to present new content through the stories but to allow the class to speak.

It was mentioned in section 1.3 that one of the reasons that could explain students' lack of confidence and discomfort was their own expectations towards language learning. However, after having finished this project, it is clear that pronunciation could also be hindering their performance and engagement with class. Based on the results in

each class during both cycles, the selected learners showed progress regarding 'Pronunciation and Fluency', as well as their 'Voluntary Participation'. These two categories could be related, as their pronunciation improved, so did their engagement in class. Transcriptions of their speech would have provided a more accurate account of the students' progress.

With regards to gathering data, it would be helpful to find a way to video record without students knowing. Audio recordings proved to be a distraction during practice time, as learners saw where my phone was placed and felt constrained. Owing to this they would not speak or would do it quietly which translated into not effective data to be analysed.

Even though these limitations were a challenge and difficult to manage at some stages, they also helped me to be critical towards the materials I wanted to use, assessing if they would be useful or not to achieve the goals I had purposed. I also learnt to be flexible and adaptable to overcome these difficulties.

### **Suggestions for improvement**

This project allowed me to understand how this strategy could help less confident students to participate more in speaking activities. Yet, it was a challenge not only because of the length of this Teaching Practice but also because it required a lot of planning and different types of resources that I do not usually work with. In addition, the tools used throughout the observation process were hard to analyse as well as organise. Owing to this, I transferred all the information into graphs, which took a long time. In the future, it would be better to find a simpler way to collect information to make the discussion of the results easier.

The following is a list of suggestions to improve this study in the future:

1. Gradually challenge the students more by increasing the level of difficulty – for instance, longer stories which would require more practice in pairs or groups
2. Implement self-assessment techniques to help learners be critical of their performance and what they need to improve, rather than just offering feedback without asking them to think on how they can do better;
3. Encourage creativity by allowing the class to write short stories or complement the ones they read by adding lines;
4. Develop larger projects, such as performances in front of other classes;
5. Focus on pronunciation and fluency, as these could be reasons for students' lack of confidence and engagement;
6. Use different mediums to present stories such as audios and pictures;
7. Conduct a more thorough comparative study between two groups of students in the same level to assess the results in two classes that share common characteristics;
8. Be mindful of the different data collection tools available as well as use more quantitative methods of assessment, such as formal assessment. That way the results would not be so subjective and easier to interpret. Additionally, it could help other researchers/teachers to quickly adapt this study to their own classes.

All of these ideas are to guide the project towards a better understanding of how this strategy can be used or what it can help develop besides self-confidence and speaking skills. In addition, these guidelines are also useful if one wishes to implement this project with other levels such as the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of primary.

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# Appendices




## Appendix 1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> year Questionnaire

	Colégio de Nossa Senhora da Bonança 3 <sup>rd</sup> / Class A/B		
	Name: _____	No: _____	
Date: _____			

### About you!

Coloca um X na opção que preferes.



1. Gostaste da aula de inglês de hoje?

Sim 	Mais ou menos 	Não 
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>




1.1. Porquê?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Achas que a aula de hoje te ajudou a aprender palavras novas?

Sim 	Mais ou menos 	Não 
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>




3. Sentiste-te bem em participar na aula?

Sim 	Mais ou menos 	Não 
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.1. Porquê?

\_\_\_\_\_



4. Gostavas de ter mais aulas de inglês como a de hoje?

Sim 	Mais ou menos 	Não 
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.1. Porquê?

\_\_\_\_\_




## Appendix 2 – 4<sup>th</sup> year Questionnaire

	<b>Colégio de Nossa Senhora da Bonança</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> / Class A/B	
	Name: _____	No: _____
Date: _____		

### It's about you!

Coloca um X na opção que preferes.




1. Gostaste da aula de inglês de hoje?

Sim 	Mais ou menos 	Não 
X		

1.1. Porquê?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Achas que a aula de hoje te ajudou a aprender palavras novas?

Sim 	Mais ou menos 	Não 
X		

2.1. Quais?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Como é que te sentiste durante a dramatização da história?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_