



Oral Communication in the YL Classroom: Understanding the use of L1 and maximising the use of L2.

Carla Sofia Beito da Cunha

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Dedicated
to my mother who always encouraged me to never give up and who I miss so deeply.

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**ORAL COMMUNICATION IN THE YL CLASSROOM:
UNDERSTANDING THE USE OF L1
AND MAXIMISING THE USE OF L2.**

CARLA CUNHA

ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS: oral communication, peer interaction, L2 use, learners' awareness, self-confidence, difficulties in learning.

The present research project investigates oral communication in the young learner classroom, seeking to understand in which contexts and for what reasons L1 is used and simultaneously to maximise the use of L2 as the main language in class.

The research project was developed in a state primary school during the first school term and involved a group of 25 learners attending the third grade. Oral tasks in pairs and groups became part of regular work in the classroom and a number of classroom strategies were implemented to maximise L2. The data was collected from a pre-study questionnaire, a mid-study questionnaire, audio recordings and a teacher's journal. The audio recordings were analysed quantitatively to check the use of the mother tongue and three excerpts were transcribed and analysed qualitatively to verify progress in speaking the target language.

Results concluded that young learners used L1 as a strategy to solve communication problems and overcome difficulties in learning when engaged in peer interaction. Analysis of interactions showed that young learners used L2 in order to help their partners by providing language or reformulating peer's discourse. Further analysis of these interactions suggested that self-confidence issues in using the target language may be the result of learning gaps. The main conclusion of this study is that it is possible to reduce the use of L1 in the young learners' classroom, although it is essential to raise learners' awareness to the use of English in order to maximise L2.

**COMUNICAÇÃO ORAL NO ENSINO PRECOCE:
COMPREENDER O USO DA LÍNGUA PORTUGUESA
E MAXIMIZAR O USO DA LÍNGUA INGLESA.**

CARLA CUNHA

RESUMO

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: comunicação oral, interação entre pares, uso de L2, consciência dos aprendentes, autoestima, dificuldades de aprendizagem.

O presente estudo é uma investigação no âmbito da comunicação oral no Ensino precoce para compreender em que contextos e por que razões o Português é utilizado e simultaneamente para maximizar o uso do Inglês como língua predominante na sala de aula.

O projeto de investigação desenvolveu-se numa escola primária pública durante o primeiro período do ano letivo e envolveu um grupo de 25 alunos que frequentavam o 3º ano de escolaridade. O trabalho oral em pares e grupos tornou-se habitual na sala de aula e implementou-se um conjunto de estratégias para maximizar o Inglês. A informação recolheu-se através de questionários pré-estudo, questionários a meio do estudo, registos áudio e um jornal do professor. Os registos áudio foram analisados quantitativamente para verificar o uso da língua materna e três excertos foram transcritos e analisados qualitativamente para verificar um progresso na oralidade da língua-alvo.

Os resultados concluíram que os aprendentes usam o Português como estratégia para resolver problemas de comunicação e superar dificuldades de aprendizagem na interação oral. A análise de interações revelou que os aprendentes utilizam o Inglês para ajudar o colega a providenciar-lhe conteúdo ou reformular o seu discurso. Uma análise complementar destas interações sugeriu que problemas de autoestima ao utilizar a língua-alvo podem derivar de falhas na aprendizagem. A principal conclusão deste estudo é que é possível reduzir o uso do Português no Ensino precoce, contudo é essencial desenvolver a consciência dos aprendentes quanto ao uso do Inglês de forma a maximizar a língua inglesa.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- L1 First language
- L2 Second or foreign language
- YL Young learner

Introduction

Oral communication is the primary medium of connecting to the world and establishing relationships between people. It is through the power of language that humans can express and understand each other and without this ability one becomes non-communicative. Likewise, it is through oral communication that children are able to express themselves, to acquire new concepts, to exchange ideas and to experience the pleasure of using language to build their own knowledge.

In the young learner classroom, oral communication is an essential key in learning a second language. As far as language learning skills are concerned, from my teaching experience, speaking is one of the most important skills but often remains unexplored in the Portuguese classroom. The responsibility of improving learners' speaking skill is on the teacher and if learners do not have opportunities to speak in classroom they may rely on the mother tongue and it will take longer for them to learn how to speak English.

In some Portuguese primary schools, teachers tend to give priority to course books or teaching vocabulary while the class listens passively rather than concentrating on speaking activities. One possible reason is that teachers may find it difficult to set up speaking activities in the classroom due to behaviour management. However, in such teacher-centred contexts, learners do not have a chance to gain knowledge and explore ideas about the new language. By developing learners' communication skills learners can express and understand each other in order to solve communication problems and by establishing effective communication they are more likely to learn how to speak a new language. It is through developing the speaking skill that learners are able to learn the language and learn how to communicate in the classroom (Lawtie, 2004).

I have been teaching English in the primary school for seven years. In my teaching experience with young learners, I have always tried to create a learning environment in which learners would feel comfortable in speaking the target language (L2) while engaged in oral communication with the support of the mother tongue (L1), if necessary. However, I have been questioning whether it is possible to reduce L1. It is important to encourage learners to speak English in the classroom as it gives them the possibility to share knowledge and practice what they are learning about the language using communication.

The main purpose of this research project was to identify in which contexts learners tended to use L1 when engaged in open class oral work and during pair and group work speaking activities. A second goal was to maximise the use of L2 as the main language in the classroom in order to reduce the use of the mother tongue. The two research questions which I therefore formulated were the following:

- When do learners use L1 during oral communication and interaction in the classroom?
- Is it possible to reduce the use of the mother tongue and maximise L2 as the main language?

In order to answer these research questions, the literature related to the topic was reviewed and action research was developed to collect data. Chapter 1 describes the literature review that lays the foundation for this research project. The first topic is related to the use of L1 in the young learner classroom and whether it is beneficial in learning a second language or not. Secondly, it explores language learning development through peer interaction and oral communication in L2 and, finally, how to encourage L2 speaking in the classroom. Chapter 2 introduces the action research project, methods and results and it is divided in four sections. Section 1 refers to the context of the study, section 2 describes the research methodology applied, section 3 analyses all the data collected and interprets results and section 4 presents the conclusions and considers the implications of these findings.

Chapter I. Literature Review

The literature review of this research project aims to discuss the use of the mother tongue (L1) during oral communication and interaction in the young learner classroom and how it can be reduced by maximising the target language (L2) as the main language. The first section considers the use of L1 and whether it is beneficial in learning a second language or not. The second section focuses on fostering language learning development through peer interaction and oral communication in L2. Lastly, the third section explores how to encourage L2 use in the classroom.

I.1. The use of L1

One controversial point in teaching English as a second language is the use of L1 and whether it interferes or not with L2 learning process. According to Schweers (1999), when teachers express a preference for using L1 themselves, they do so generally as a response to classroom demands such as to address comprehension problems, to give grammar instructions, to manage classroom activities, whereas if teachers used L2 it would be difficult to convey the meaning. Overall, teachers consider the use of the mother tongue as beneficial to perform functions that are difficult in L2.

As far as learners' L1 use is concerned, the mother tongue plays an important role in helping learners establish communication to manage tasks while addressing problems associated with their limited L2 knowledge. (Nation, 2003). Some research suggests that L1 may reduce learners' anxiety as it helps learners build rapport within class. Children use L1 as a tool to discuss activity management in the classroom, therefore the mother tongue plays a social function by creating a sense of group cohesion (Nation, 2003). Rather than avoiding the use of the mother tongue, Cook (2001) affirms that L1 should be deliberately seen as part of the language learning process in which two languages are permanently present and, by operating with both of them, it may foster learners' natural collaborative efforts in the classroom. However, if teachers accept learners switching to the mother tongue frequently may it not deprive learners of the opportunity of experiencing communicating in L2? Additionally, could learners' anxiety in using the target language be directly related to difficulties in

learning, hereafter also known as learning gaps? If so, the more comfortable with speaking L2, the lesser use of L1 in the classroom?

I.2. The use of L2

Some research suggests that teaching a second language solely in L2 increases language acquisition. Philp, Adams and Iwashita (2014) argue that the teaching style has a major impact on maximising L2 use and on developing learners' L2 communicative competence. The main objective is to make learners familiar with L2 by creating a collaborative and cooperative learning environment through pair and group work speaking activities. When engaged in peer interaction, learners are able to experiment and test the language in many different ways as they negotiate solutions to communication problems (Philp, Adams and Iwashita, 2014). Additionally, peer interaction gives learners the possibility of correcting or modifying their language which therefore provides language practice opportunities and increases fluency.

Oliver and Philp (2014) assert that if assistance in overcoming difficulties is greatly scaffolded by peers, instead of seeking help from teachers, it will impact positively on learners' use of English as well. When working in pairs or groups, by being able to practice the language, make mistakes and try different solutions, learners are also improving their language learning. Progress will be more evident over time and, as a result, less scaffolding in L1 will be required.

Sparks, Ganschow and Javorsky (as cited in Ellis & Shintani, 2014, 244) affirm that success in foreign language learning is primarily dependent on language aptitude. Although learners may also have shyness or self-confidence issues when communicating in L2, their anxiety mainly arises due to limited linguistic resources. Learners' anxiety about using L2 is a consequence of their difficulties in learning and, if not encouraged by the teacher to use the target language, learners might switch frequently to L1. Nevertheless, Ellis and Shintani (2014) claim that the more encouraged learners are in thinking in L2, the more accurate will be L2 use. By using pair and group work regularly in the classroom, learners become accustomed and comfortable with peer interaction and they increasingly limit their L1 use over time. (Philp et al., 2014).

I.3. Encouraging L2 speaking in the classroom

Speaking is one of the most important language learning skills that should be practiced in the young learner classroom. According to Pinter (2006), in order to develop learners' speaking skill, a great deal of time is spent practicing and repeating drilling exercises. However, learners need to be engaged in activities that involve communication to build up knowledge and develop speaking in order to participate in lessons (Cameron, 2001). Rather than leading students to produce repetitions, the goal of teaching speaking to young learners should be to improve their communicative skills so they are able to express themselves.

It is essential that teachers create a communicative environment where learners are engaged in meaningful activities to develop speaking. One way to promote communication in the classroom is to set up tasks. A task is an activity designed to maximise L2 in order to make learners become focused on meaning rather than on form (Cameron, 2001). The main goal is to give emphasis to meaning and promote communication not only by assigning learners an objective but also by giving them the opportunity to learn through interaction. Research carried out on pair and small group interactions have shown that learners do indeed assist each other when engaged in oral tasks by being encouraged to produce more deliberations about the language (Lasito and Storch, 2013).

Brown (1994) argues teachers should implement many strategies to capture learners' attention in order to motivate and make them interested in the lesson thus encouraging them to speak L2 in the classroom. Strategies that appeal to learners' interests may have a positive impact on the progress of learners' speaking skill and enhance their language learning. When introducing new vocabulary, teachers can use images as background knowledge as they aid learners to decode meaning thus avoiding the use of L1. Encourage learners to use self or peer correction and make them understand that errors are frequent while learning a new language but mostly they are indicators of progress. This allows learners to become more aware and draws their attention to learning gaps in order to help or correct their partner. Teachers can also provide constant encouragement and exhibit enthusiasm for learners' learning progress as praise instils confidence in learners and makes them feel proud of their improvement (Moeller and Roberts, 2013). A vocabulary box can be a useful tool in the classroom to

revise contents but also to develop diverse activities that can be linked to contexts or subjects outside the classroom (Cunningham, 2003). By connecting learners' knowledge to authentic contexts of their daily lives, the gap between the cognitive and linguistic ability can be reduced (Moeller and Roberts, 2013). Puppets can also be a good strategy to engage learners in speaking activities and make them feel more relaxed when working with their partners (Linse, 2005). A child who is shy or insecure of speaking English in class may feel comfortable recreating a dialogue speaking through the puppet. As Toledo and Hoit (2016) affirm, children feel more relaxed and motivated speaking through puppets as the "affective filter" is reduced and they are not aware of mistakes. Additionally, rewarding learners' participation in class is also an effective technique to maximise the use of the target language. According to Moeller and Roberts (2013), by introducing strategies that reward learners for their effort in using L2 they are encouraged to try to speak more English as they experience a sense of accomplishment. By creating strategies to maximise L2 as the main language learners feel motivated to use L2 in class and become comfortable in speaking English over time.

Chapter II. The Action Research

II.1. Context

This research project took place in a Portuguese state primary school - EB1/JI Vale Grande in Odivelas. This school is located in a small neighbourhood and it is composed of four classes only, however it has a Class Parent Representative Association which takes a very active and cooperative role in developing activities in partnership with the school board. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that the relationship between the school board and the parents is close and both parties contribute to maintaining a happy learning environment which is beneficial to the children.

The participants involved in this research project studied in a 3rd grade class of 25 learners, 16 girls and 9 boys with no Special Educational Needs learners. The class had been learning English since 1st grade through *Atividades de Enriquecimento Curricular*, the school group's after-school timetable of free activities, having had a total of two one-hour lessons a week. Therefore, the great majority of learners were familiar with some basic English. In addition, the class was already familiar with me as I was their teacher in the 2nd grade.

By the time learners reached 3rd grade the English language had become compulsory in the Portuguese curriculum. However, the number of lessons remained the same. At this point, learners started learning English in a more formal context in which the teacher planned lessons according to the course book *Let's rock!* (Abreu & Esteves, 2016) and the *Metas* [State Curriculum] objectives: at A1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (Bravo, Cravo & Duarte, 2015). Additionally, learners were assessed 65% on written tests, 20% on attendance, behaviour and responsibility, 8% on listening tests and only 7% on spoken production in the classroom.

As far as teaching young learners is concerned, the objectives and aims related to developing speaking seemed to be very simplistic and limited with few opportunities of improvement. The curriculum emphasises lexis and grammar whereas spoken interaction and production is explained very briefly through the use of sounds, rhythms and interaction with the teacher using simple structures. Furthermore, the teaching

approach adopted in the class involved in this study focuses on developing learners' writing skill, giving little importance to the spoken production. The importance given to speaking seemed to be diminished and it might well be the reality in other Portuguese state primary schools. Nevertheless, the fact that speaking was considered an unexplored skill in this class turned out to be an appropriate example to develop this study.

II.2. Methodology

According to Anne Burns (2010), it is important for researchers to have a more realistic view of and feel for the context where the study has taken place. Therefore, action research was the adopted form of research chosen for this project as it provides a holistic view of the topic under investigation, takes into account the context where the research takes place and also emphasizes the value of the teacher. Using action research helps you become a better teacher in that it makes you reflect not only on your teaching skills but also on yourself as a teacher and, by having a greater understanding of the research context, it helps you improve learners' language learning (Burns, 2010).

In order to monitor all steps throughout our research, it is important to define and systematize an action research plan. The following table presents the four steps in the design of this research project, so as to determine in which contexts learners tended to use L1 in the classroom and, secondly, to apply strategies to maximise the use of L2 as the main language. The next section considers the type of tools used to obtain data from the present research project in more detail.

Table 1

Action Research Plan. Adapted from Anne Burns (2010).

Stages	Description
<p style="text-align: center;">Planning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Identifying a problem</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">When do learners use L1 during oral communication and interaction in the classroom?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Is it possible to reduce the mother tongue and maximise L2 as the main language?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Action</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Develop a plan</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">To identify when learners use L1 during oral communication and interaction.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To define and apply strategies to maximise L2.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Implement data collection tools: pre-study questionnaire</p>

Observation Collect data	Implement data collection tools: mid-study questionnaire, audio recordings and a teacher's journal.
Reflection Provide results	Reflect and conclude on the data collected and on the implications of the research study and possibly start on a new cycle of research.

II.2.1. Data Collection Tools

In order to maximise the use of L2 as the main language, classroom strategies were implemented. The data collection tools chosen to obtain quantitative data were a pre-study questionnaire, a mid-study questionnaire and audio recordings. Whereas quantitative research provides numbers, qualitative research is also essential to get more detailed information. Therefore, a teacher's journal and three audio recordings excerpts were used as qualitative research tools.

During September, permission was sought from parents, from the school board and also from children. According to Pinter (2011), besides obtaining consent, it is important that teachers also explain to the children throughout the research project why their contribution is valuable and make sure learners understand all the objectives. The letters of consent for parents and students are presented in Appendices A and B. In students' letters of consent, learners were able to choose pseudonyms which are used in this research project work.

II.2.1.1. Classroom Strategies

Brown (1994) argues teachers should implement many strategies to capture learners' attention in order to motivate and make them interested in the lesson. Strategies that appeal to learners' interests may have a positive impact on the progress of learners' speaking skill and enhance their language learning. Therefore, a card with flags of Portugal and the United Kingdom to switch at the beginning of every lesson was introduced so learners remembered they had to use L2 and acknowledged the expression "Speak English" (Appendix J). A behaviour race was set up to encourage learners not only to behave well but also to motivate them in speaking more English. At the end of every lesson, learners were asked not only to reflect on their behaviour but also if they spoke L2. The board markers moved forward or back according to their performance in class (Appendix G).

According to Read (2005), in order to manage children positively, teachers should be able to maintain a happy working environment in which learners are engaged in meaningful activities and feel motivated to learn. In November, learners who said they were more insecure in using L2 on the pre-study questionnaire were assigned leader roles and were responsible for behaviour management and checking L2 use in pair and group work speaking activities. Even though the questionnaire remained anonymous, the fact that I was familiar with the class meant it was possible to identify who these learners were. By choosing them as leaders I would verify why they felt insecure in speaking English in class and if there was a progress in their L2 use.

Additionally, two puppets were introduced to enhance learners' speaking skill and to encourage learners to speak L2 (Appendix I). The puppets were used by the teacher to model the oral tasks and also used by learners in turns while they were engaged in pair and group work. Lastly, an "English word box" was used with the purpose of asking learners to think about new words and expressions related to subjects taught in lessons they would like to learn and put them in the box (Appendix H). Afterwards, different learners were chosen to find out the meaning of those words and expressions in English at home and share them in the next lessons so the vocabulary could be used in speaking activities.

II.2.1.2. Oral Tasks

From November onwards, three pair and two group oral tasks were introduced in order to develop learners' speaking skill. Tasks help children develop their interactional skills as they require that learners exchange messages to achieve some goal (Moon, 2002). According to Moon (2002), children need to understand not only the goal of a task but also the language used. Therefore, the vocabulary was related to subjects taught in lessons and learners had to use simple and clear structures. In addition, tasks were set up in order to be fun and motivating for learners. Role-plays, recreation of dialogues and speaking games were used. Each task was modelled on the board by the teacher using puppets before learners were engaged in pair and group work.

In oral task 1, learners were engaged in groups of four and played a game related to feelings vocabulary using dices. In oral task 2, the class was set up in pairs and learners played a guessing game using classroom object mini flashcards. In oral task 3, learners did a dialogue building speaking activity in pairs. In oral task 4, learners were

engaged in pairs and did a role-play game using classroom object mini flashcards. In oral task 5, the class was set up in groups of four and did a speaking activity using fortune tellers. The oral tasks are presented in Appendix E.

II.2.1.3. Pre-study Questionnaire

Before the research started, learners were given a pre-study questionnaire at the beginning of October to find out what they thought about using L1 in classroom and whether they felt it was important to use it and, if so, why.

The pre-study questionnaire had seven closed questions in which learners were asked to colour smiley faces according to their answers: a happy face for “yes”, a not so happy face for “sometimes” and a sad face for “no”. Additionally, two “Why?” and “When?” open questions were introduced to analyse learners’ personal opinions and how they could differ. Kellet (2005) argues it is important to engage children in their own research and notes that, if questioned in a manner they can understand, they can provide reliable answers. Therefore, the questionnaire had clear and child friendly language as it was simple and quick for learners to complete and it was also easy to analyse all the data collected. Numbers were calculated for the closed questions and learners’ open answers were read and analysed repeatedly. Afterwards, they were allocated into six categories. The pre-study questionnaire is presented in Appendix C and results in table 2.

II.2.1.4. Mid-study Questionnaire

The mid-study questionnaire was used in the middle of November and it sought to verify if learners had changed their attitudes towards the use of L1. Unlike the pre-study questionnaire, the mid-study questionnaire was distributed during the second phase of maximising L2, thus the aim was to look for less use of L1 in the classroom. The information gathered had the purpose of determining if the classroom strategies as well as the work done in class were encouraging learners to use the target language. A second goal was to check if there was a development in learners’ speaking skill.

Although both questionnaires were identical to be easier for learners to complete, questions 1 and 8 were slightly changed to make learners think if they were trying to use more English in the classroom. Numbers were calculated for the closed

questions and learners' open answers were read and analysed repeatedly. Afterwards, they were allocated in seven categories. The mid-study questionnaire is presented in Appendix D and results in table 2.

II.2.1.5. Audio Recordings

My cell phone was used to record 9 pairs and 4 groups of four learners each during oral tasks and all recordings had an average of half a minute duration. In total, eighteen learners were recorded in pairs and sixteen in groups. The focus was to record as many different learners as possible in order to gather a greater number of utterances and natural reactions. Additionally, the aim was to understand how frequently L1 was used and to conclude if it was used for the same purposes throughout the lessons. A second goal was to confirm whether the target language was used without the supervision of the teacher and if learners were able to solve communication problems.

The audio recordings were firstly analysed quantitatively using a grid to check five L1 categories that were chosen according to the most frequent uses in the young learner classroom from my teaching experience: L1 to code-switch, L1 to help the partner, L1 when feeling upset or frustrated, L1 when off task and other use of L1. Additionally, three L2 uses were included: L2 as classroom language, L2 to give instructions and other uses of L2. Afterwards, three audio recording excerpts were analysed qualitatively to check the progress of English use over time.

II.2.1.6. Teacher's Journal

According to Tice (2011), the purpose of a teacher's journal is to develop our reflective teaching as it fosters self-assessment of our own practices and helps us, as teachers, to change and improve our teaching skills. Therefore, the teacher's journal presented in Appendix F was used to make notes after every lesson and to describe learners' responses during lessons which, in my opinion, were relevant to this research project aim. Additionally, it helped me organize my thoughts into a coherent structure to reflect and conclude on my lesson plans' strengths and weaknesses. The results are presented by transcribing and analysing notes from my teacher's journal.

II.3. Results

The following section analyses the results of the data collected that aimed to gather information about the two questions on which this study is based. The results therefore presented are related to the first question of this research project:

1. When do learners use L1 during oral communication and interaction in the classroom?

II.3.1. Pre-study questionnaire and Mid-study questionnaire

Table 2

Results (expressed as numbers of students of pre-study questionnaire and mid-study questionnaire.)

Questions	Pre-study Questionnaire (23 participants)			Mid-study Questionnaire (22 participants)		
	Yes	Sometimes	No	Yes	Sometimes	No
1- Do you like speaking English?	13	5	5	-	-	-
1 - Are you having more fun in speaking English?	-	-	-	11	8	3
2 - Do you understand what the teacher says during the lessons?	9	13	1	6	13	3
3 - Do you think the teacher needs to speak Portuguese in class?	2	15	6	3	14	5
4 - Why?	Yes: 1 does not understand and 1 unclear. Sometimes: 14 do not understand and 1 unclear; No: 6 no need to use L1.			Yes: 2 do not understand and 1 unclear. Sometimes: 10 do not understand, 2 self-confidence issues and 2 L2 progress; No: 4 no need to use L1 and 1 L2 progress.		
5 - Do you speak Portuguese in English lessons?	2	16	5	3	16	3
6 - Do you feel more comfortable if you speak Portuguese in class?	8	10	5	7	9	6
7 - Why? Or when?	Yes: 1 learning gap, 1 does not like to speak English and 6 self-confidence issues; Sometimes: 8 learning gaps, 1 self-confidence issue and 1 unclear; No: 5 no need to use L1.			Yes: 4 learning gaps, 2 self-confidence issues and 1 does not like to speak English; Sometimes: 7 learning gaps, 1 self-confidence issue and 1 unclear; No: 6 no need to use L1.		
8 - Do you think you can speak more English in class?	12	6	5	-	-	-
8 - Are you trying to speak more English in the classroom?	-	-	-	15	3	4

9 - Do you speak English outside the classroom with?	15	-	8	11	-	11
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As table 2 shows, the results for both questionnaires are very similar. In the mid-study questionnaire, my attention was focused on the second research project phase which sought to maximise L2 as the main language in order to make learners more comfortable and confident in using English in class. Therefore, one possible reason to explain why fewer learners understood what the teacher said during lessons in question 2 might have been related to an increasing amount of English use of the teacher.

The fact that results in question 3 show little difference in both questionnaires may have to do with learners' previous experiences in the classroom. As the speaking skill seemed to be an unexplored skill in the class involved in this study, possibly learners were not used to hearing the teacher using English. As a result, the majority of learners justified their answers in question 4 in both questionnaires saying that sometimes they did not understand the teacher. However, it may be possible the work in class was gradually changing learners' opinions towards the use of L1. In the mid-study questionnaire, three learners wrote "now I don't need the teacher to use it" or "now I understand", meaning they were probably becoming aware of their progress in learning L2. Additionally, as the use of L2 was being maximised in the classroom and learners were encouraged and asked to use more English, they may have focused on their inability to do so.

Results in questions 5 and 6 are also very similar. Although learners were familiar with some basic English from previous years, they were not used to being asked to speak L2 in class by the teacher. It may be possible learners were weak orally and so they used L1 because they were not capable of using L2 or they were insecure at trying to speak English. In question 7 of the pre-study questionnaire, seven learners wrote "I'm afraid of speaking English", "I'm embarrassed of partners making fun of my mistakes" or "I'm shy", which may suggest learners had self-confidence issues in using L2 mostly because they were not used to speaking English in class. Conversely, in the mid-study questionnaire, the number of self-confidence issues in using L2 decreased to three which may indicate learners were becoming comfortable with speaking English and feeling encouraged to do so.

In question 8, twelve learners thought they could speak more English in the pre-study questionnaire, whereas in the mid-study questionnaire fifteen were making an effort to do it. This similarity between results may indicate the class was still in the

process of becoming comfortable with the second phase of maximising L2 in the classroom. Even though from my observation learners seemed motivated to use more L2 in class, it may be possible that they were not completely aware they were in fact doing so. As can be seen in my teacher’s journal, “Results on the mid-study questionnaire showed that, although learners are more motivated in speaking English in lessons, they are not entirely aware of their learning progress.” (Teacher’s journal, 05/12/2016). This small difference between results may be due to the lack of self-assessment tools to raise learners’ awareness in using L2. In addition, the time between both questionnaires may have also been too short to make learners aware of their progress in L2 use.

II.3.2. Audio Recordings

Table 3

Analysis of Audio Recordings (expressed as numbers of frequency of L1 and L2 uses of 9 pairs and 4 groups of learners recorded during the oral tasks).

Oral Tasks	Use of L1 to code-switch	Use of L1 to help partner	Use of L1 when feeling upset or frustrated	Use of L1 when off task	Other use of L1	Use of L2 as classroom language	Use of L2 to give instructions	Other use of L2
9 Recordings in pair work (18 learners)	3	5	2	3	8 (5 to give instructions and 3 when using interjections)	1	1	6 (to help partner)
4 Recordings in group work (16 learners – groups of 4)	1	1	2	5	6 (4 to give instructions, 1 to translate and 1 when using interjections)	2	1	7 (to help partner)

In pair work, L1 was essentially used to help the partner and to give instructions as, for instance, “Red é vermelho.” [Red is red]. Additionally, learners also used code-switching as a strategy to solve communication problems. “Floor é chão, table é mesa.” [Floor is floor, table is table]. Therefore, it may be possible to affirm learners sometimes switched to L1 intentionally to convey the message rather than due to learning gaps or

self-confidence issues. As can be seen in my teacher's journal, "Learners used L1 strategically to translate, to help the partner and to give instructions." (Teacher's journal, 28/11/2016). When learners had difficulties in learning they tended to use L1. "*Não sei o que é isto.*" [I don't know what's this]. This may be due to the fact that as learners felt upset or frustrated for not being able to convey the meaning in English they relied on L1 to do so. "*Víborá teve alguma tendência para usar L1 quando se sentiu frustrado por não se lembrar de objetos em Inglês.*" [Víbora had a tendency to use L1 when he did not remember classroom objects in English.] Additionally, learners used L1 in pairs when they became aware of a mistake or when they were distracted and switched back to L2 to self-correct themselves. "Where is your... *ai não!*" [Where is your... oops, no!]. These interjections in L1 were used as a strategy so learners had more time to reflect about the correct use of English thus helping them with production of L2.

In groups, learners also used L1 to give instructions during tasks as, for instance, "*Tens de dizer.*" [You have to say.] or to translate in order to help their partners convey the meaning. "*Estás zangado?*" [Are you angry?]. One of the most noticeable differences between the two forms of peer interaction was that learners frequently used L1 when off task in group work. Engaging learners in communicative activities may have created a healthy competitive environment in the classroom. However, when working in groups, it was difficult to manage learners' behaviour and keep them focused in using L2. "Groups: + competition, + interaction, - focus and - behaviour control". (Teacher's journal, 28/11/2016). As the groups were big, sometimes leaders lost focus on tasks and they started speaking in Portuguese about a variety of subjects as, for instance, "*Estás a passar-te ou quê?*" [What is wrong with you?].

Nevertheless, it was interesting to notice that learners used L2 in groups just as frequently as L1 to help the partner by repeating words or sentences correctly and by prompting missing information. In addition, learners were also becoming aware of pronunciation mistakes as they started correcting mispronunciation more often. Even though there were less interaction opportunities between pairs, from my observation it was possible to check learners were trying to speak more English. "In pairs, the use of L2 is as great as in groups, however there are less interaction opportunities." (Teacher's journal, 05/12/2016). Given these results, it may be possible to affirm learners were becoming comfortable with using L2 as they were making an effort to try to speak more English in class.

The following results are related to the second question of this research project and determined if by maximising L2 in the classroom there was a development in learning English as well as in learners' speaking skill:

2. Is it possible to reduce the use of the mother tongue and maximise L2 as the main language?

3.3.3. Audio Recording Excerpts

The following excerpts were related to three oral tasks done in the observation phase of this research project presented in Appendix E. As mentioned previously, learners who affirmed to be insecure in speaking English in the pre-study questionnaire were deliberately chosen as leaders.

3.3.3.1. Audio Recording Excerpt 1

This dialogue was recorded during oral task 2. In pairs, learners chose one classroom object mini card and asked each other "Have you got a...?". Rinoceronte was the insecure learner. However, Homem de aranha, who had fewer difficulties in learning, was chosen as leader first so Rinoceronte started the task comfortable with using L2.

- 1 Homem de aranha – Have you got?
- 2 Rinoceronte – Huh?
- 3 Homem de aranha – Have you got?
- 4 Rinoceronte – A... Have you got a... *Diz!* [Say it!] *Pergunta-me a mim agora.* [Ask
- 5 me now]. Have you got a...
- 6 Homem de aranha – Have you got?
- 7 Rinoceronte (turning to the teacher and pointing to the mini cards) – *Ele não disse*
- 8 *nenhuma dali!* [He didn't say any of those!]
- 9 Teacher – Help. Help, Gonçalo.
- 10 Rinoceronte – *Mas ele é que é o leader.* [But he is the leader].
- 11 Teacher – You are the leader.

- 12 Rinoceronte - *Então... Tu tens de dizer...* [So... You have to say...] Have...
- 13 Homem de aranha – Have...
- 14 Rinoceronte – You...
- 15 Homem de aranha – You... Got...
- 16 Rinoceronte – Got a... *Agora tens de dizer uma dali!* [Now you have to say one of
17 those!]
- 18 Homem de aranha – Ruler!
- 19 Rinoceronte – No, I haven't.

Even though Homem de aranha had fewer difficulties in learning and Rinoceronte was the insecure learner, Rinoceronte assumed the leading role from the beginning of the task. It was possible to check that Rinoceronte was getting frustrated at not being successful in explaining the task. However, he kept on making an effort to explain the message and, most importantly, he did not use L1 to do so. Rather than relying on the mother tongue, Rinoceronte used the target language from line twelve with the intention of helping Homem de aranha by modelling what his partner had to say and by repeating the missing information so that Homem de aranha asked the question.

As a result, it may be possible to affirm Rinoceronte was able to overcome his own self-confidence issues and find strategies to solve a breakdown in communication using L2. The fact that Rinoceronte was assigned as leader half way through the activity may have encouraged him in speaking English as he made an effort to help his partner and felt responsible for making sure the task was completed.

3.3.3.2. Audio Recording Excerpt 2

This dialogue was transcribed from oral task 3 when learners recreated a dialogue by replacing classroom objects and prepositions vocabulary. Joana Mendes was chosen as leader.

- 1 Joana Mendes – Where is your book?
- 2 Víbora – *É book ou qualquer coisa. É book, ruler, rubber...* [It is book or something 3 else. It is book, ruler, rubber...]
- 4 Joana Mendes – Where is your ruler?

- 5 Víbora – My...
- 6 Joana Mendes – Floor *é chão*, table *é mesa*. [Floor is floor, table is table.]
- 7 Víbora – *Não é isso!* [That is not what I mean!]
- 8 Joana Mendes – *O que escolheste?* [What did you choose?] In, under ou on?
- 9 Víbora – In... *Mas eu não me lembro!* [But I cannot remember!]
- 10 Joana Mendes – In the pencil case... *O que tu quiseses!* [Whatever you choose!]
- 11 Víbora – *Não é isso. Eu quero dizer aquilo... A mochila!* [Not that. I want to say
- 12 that... schoolbag.]
- 13 Joana Mendes – Schoolbag.
- 14 Víbora – My ruler... is... in the school bag.

While listening to the recording, it was possible to check that when Víbora had difficulties in explaining the message in line seven his voice tone changed. As Víbora did not remember a word in English, he felt the need to start using L1. As a result, one possible reason why Víbora relied on the mother tongue to convey the meaning may be due to frustration. Even though Joana Mendes was insecure of speaking English, she tried to find solutions to help her partner and overcome communication problems. In order to facilitate Víbora's language production, Joana Mendes rephrased the question in line four by using the vocabulary Víbora had said in line two. Likewise, L2 was used with the purpose of helping the partner when Joana Mendes prompted missing structures to complete Víbora's dialogue as, for instance, in line ten by saying "in the pencil case" and also in line thirteen by translating "schoolbag".

This oral task could have been influenced by Víbora's frustration at not being able to convey the message or affected by Joana Mendes' self-confidence issues in speaking L2. However, Joana Mendes remained calm and confident in using the target language and encouraged her partner in using L2 as well.

3.3.3.3. Audio Recording Excerpt 3

The following dialogue was recorded during oral task 5. Learners were engaged in groups and played with a fortune teller. S1 was the leader, however Fada Mimi was also insecure in using L2.

- 1 Víbora – Choose one... (mispronunciation)

- 2 S1 – Choose.
- 3 Dinossauro – Choose one colour.
- 4 Víbora – Choose one colour.
- 5 Dinossauro – Blue.
- 6 Víbora – Choose one number.
- 7 Dinossauro – Five.
- 8 Víbora – Five. Five. Five.
- 9 S1 – *Estás a passar-te ou quê?* [What is wrong with you?]
- 10 Víbora – Are... you hungry? (mispronunciation)
- 11 S1 – *Han? Não percebi nada.* [What? I did not understand.]
- 12 Dinossauro – *Nem eu.* [Me neither.]
- 13 Fada Mimi – *Acho que ele disse* are you angry. [I think he said are you angry.]
- 14 Víbora – Are you hungry?
- 15 S1 – *Deixa ver.* [Let me see.]
- 16 Fada Mimi – *Ou é* angry? [Or is it angry?]
- 17 S1 – *Posso ver?* [Can I see it?]
- 18 Víbora – Angry.
- 19 Dinossauro – Angry.
- 20 Fada Mimi – *Estás zangado?* [Are you angry?]
- 21 Dinossauro – *E eu* yes ou no. [And I say yes or no.]
- 22 Víbora – Are you angry?
- 23 Dinossauro – No.
- 24 Víbora – Your... turn. (mispronunciation)
- 25 Group – Turn!

Although S1 used L2 to correct Víbora's pronunciation, he got distracted from the leading role and influenced some members in using L1. Nevertheless, Fada Mimi, who was as insecure a learner as S1, used the target language in line thirteen to help Víbora convey the meaning. Another strategy that Fada Mimi used was to draw upon Víbora's attention to the similarity between the words "hungry" and "angry" using L2.

It may be possible that Fada Mimi became aware of communication problems during the dialogue and felt encouraged to solve them so the group completed the task. In addition, she was able to overcome her own self-confidence issues and felt motivated to correct her partner's use of L2 as the leader was supposed to. As a result, Fada Mimi

may have influenced the group to focus again on using English as learners used L2 to correct VÍbora's pronunciation in line twenty-five.

The excerpts were presented in chronological order with the intention of confirming that learners who were insecure before in using the target language were gradually becoming more comfortable in speaking L2 in class. Throughout the dialogues it was possible to see that insecure learners felt comfortable being responsible for others speaking English as they made an effort and tried to find strategies to help their partners.

As can be seen in the previous excerpts, learners had communication problems or difficulties in learning using English during oral tasks which sometimes lead them to use L1 to convey the message. However, when they were helped by leaders, they felt confident in using the target language. Choosing insecure learners to be responsible for others using L2 may have encouraged other learners to overcome self-confidence issues as well. "As Fada Mimi felt motivated by the group leader, she said the sentence by herself and she kept on playing more confident." (Teacher's journal, 07/11/2016).

Overall, the analysis of these audio recordings may suggest learners felt insecure in using L2 due to difficulties in learning rather than to insecurity or shyness. In addition, it may be possible to affirm that engaging learners in pair and group work activities had a positive impact on encouraging learners in using more L2 and developing their speaking skill. According to my teacher's journal, "Although learners have difficulties in learning, those who did not speak English before because they were afraid of their partners teasing them are now speaking more English, especially when they are encouraged by the leaders." (Teacher's journal, 05/12/2016).

3.3.4. Teacher's Journal

During the first weeks, learners were very receptive and motivated to speaking English in open class oral work while doing activities with the teacher. As long as learners did class oral work the target language was used frequently, therefore the focus was on pair and group work speaking activities as learners were more insecure in using L2.

Setting up a card with flags of Portugal and of the United Kingdom may have made learners aware they had to speak L2 in class and may have helped them

acknowledge the expression “Speak English”. For instance, Homem de aranha said “Teacher, *a bandeira!* Speak English!” [Teacher, the flag! Speak English!] to remind me to switch the flag at the beginning of the lesson (Teacher’s journal, 17/11/2016). The behaviour board race was one of the classroom strategies that may have encouraged learners not only in speaking English but also in being a behaviour reference for the class. “Most surprisingly, Víbora is always the last one leaving the room as he wants to know how many spots he will go ahead. Besides having improved his behaviour, he is now much more active in speaking in lessons.” (Teacher’s journal, 10/11/2016).

Additionally, it may be possible to affirm that leader roles gave learners responsibility and motivation to help each other. Likewise, learners with self-confidence issues may have benefited the most by being able to build confidence in using L2. As mentioned previously in audio recordings results, self-confidence issues may be a consequence of difficulties in learning. By choosing learners who said they were insecure of speaking L2 in the pre-study questionnaire to be leaders it was possible to check a progression of the English use over time. “Conversely to the previous activity, the student is now much more confident and encourages the group in using L2 correctly.” (Teacher’s journal, 05/12/2016)

The puppets may also have functioned as a tool to build self-confidence as they helped learners interact with each other and overcome insecurity in speaking English. Learners felt encouraged to speak L2 through puppets and, as learners were having fun while practicing the language, they were not aware of mistakes. “Once again learners were motivated to use the puppets and almost all of them raised their fingers to participate, even Fada Mimi and Rinoceronte who are shy.” (Teacher’s journal, 28/11/2016). One positive note on the English word box was that the vocabulary found by learners was useful to set up activities in the classroom and it became meaningful to them: “learners acknowledged the words found by them in the English box and used them to rebuild the dialogue.” (28/11/2016). In addition, in audio recording excerpt 2, it was possible to check the leader acknowledged and used two words “floor” and “table” that were introduced in lessons through the word box.

3.4 Discussion and conclusion

The following section will discuss the results obtained throughout this research project that aimed to gather information related to the two topics on which this study is based.

3.4.1. Understanding the use of L1

Nation (2003) argues learners use L1 to help them build rapport within the class and address problems associated with their limited L2 knowledge. As can be seen in pre-study questionnaire results, learners justified their use of L1 in the classroom by saying they had difficulties in learning and they were shy or embarrassed of making mistakes in front of their colleagues. By the time the mid-study questionnaire was applied, learners were possibly changing their opinions towards the use of L1 as results for question four showed. However, they were using L1 for the same reasons as in the pre-study questionnaire. This may be due to the short time between both questionnaires. The mid-study questionnaire was used about a month later which may not have been enough for me to notice a considerable difference at reducing L1 in class and raising learners' awareness in using L2.

According to Nation (2003), L1 can be used as a tool to discuss activity management and it also plays a social function by creating a sense of group cohesion thus reducing learners' anxiety. The audio recordings' analysis showed that in pair and group work learners used L1 with the purpose of helping the partner and giving instructions to solve communication problems.

One issue related to this study was whether the use of L1 in the classroom interferes with L2 learning process or is beneficial to learners. Although learners used L1 to solve miscommunication during oral tasks, it is important to highlight that allowing learners to use the mother tongue frequently in class may provide a sense of security in learners that is not beneficial for them. It will not only deprive them of experiencing communicating in L2 but it will also make them over-dependent on L1 (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). The teacher's role is to keep reinforcing the use of the target language in the classroom by creating meaningful activities and strategies to appeal to learners' interests and motivate them to speak English.

3.4.2. Maximising the use of L2

In open class oral work, learners felt a sense of group cohesion working with the teacher. Therefore, they felt more secure in using the target language and did not switch frequently to the mother tongue. “When engaged as a whole or working with the teacher, learners feel comfortable using L2.” (Teacher’s journal, 13/10/2016).

By establishing routines in the classroom, the teacher is able to maintain a happy learning environment where learners enjoy being engaged in speaking activities and behave well (Read, 2005). Assigning leader roles and introducing puppets were the classroom strategies that may have encouraged learners to speak L2 the most as both functioned as a support to overcome learners’ insecurity. Giving responsibility to learners not only may have reinforced learners’ participation in class but it may also have strengthened learners’ social relationships. Likewise, puppets may have contributed to create opportunities to practice the language in a child friendly context that was meaningful to learners and which they related to. As Toledo and Hoit (2016) affirm, children feel more relaxed and motivated speaking through puppets as the “affective filter” is reduced. “Once again, learners were very motivated to use the puppets and all of them wanted to go to the board, even insecure learners as Fada Mimi and Rodrigo.” (Teacher’s journal, 24/11/2016). Additionally, puppets may stimulate learners’ learning and enhance their communicative skills as they feel encouraged to try to speak more English in the classroom. (Brezigar, as cited in Toledo and Hoit, 2016). As it was possible to check in the teacher’s journal, learners developed confidence in using the target language by speaking through puppets as they were not afraid of making mistakes in front of the class. “When I gave students the puppets, I noticed that the class in general felt more relaxed to speak through them.” (Teacher’s journal, 12/12/2016).

One question that emerged during the observation phase of this research project was whether self-confidence issues were related to difficulties in learning. Although learners may also have shyness or self-confidence issues when communicating in L2, their anxiety mainly arises due to limited linguistic resources. In audio recordings, it was possible to notice learners had communication problems or difficulties in learning which sometimes lead them to use L1. However, when leaders used L2 to help their partners, learners felt encouraged to speak English. Therefore, learners may feel

insecure of speaking English due to difficulties in learning and, if encouraged and helped in order to overcome learning gaps, they may reduce the use of L1 over time.

Philp, Adams and Iwashita (2014) argue learners avoid the use of the mother tongue when they feel accustomed to engaging activities. As can be seen in audio recordings, as the target language used in oral tasks was simple and clear to learners, they became comfortable using it and, as a result, they tried to speak more L2 in class. “Rinoceronte interrupted Armalina using L2 as classroom language to correct her by saying wrong.” (Teacher’s journal, 05/12/2016). According to Ellis and Shintani (2014), when learners feel encouraged to use more L2 they gradually become more competent in finding strategies to communicate in English. The fact that results on audio recordings showed learners used L2 just as frequently as L1 to help the partner may suggest learners were making an effort to try to speak more English in class. “L2 to help is used quite often by almost all pairs and groups to assist partners in repeating words or sentences.” (Teacher’s journal, 28/11/2016).

3.4.3. Limitations and suggestions for further research

Due to reduced time, one possible limitation of this study was that the work done was not enough to help learners become aware of their progress in L2 use. According to Ellis and Ibrahim (2015), the teacher has a crucial role in developing learners’ knowledge and self-awareness of their own learning process. By being able to do that, “gradually the teacher leads the children to a conscious development of their own learning strategies and awareness of how they learn, so they can become more effective and independent language learners.” (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2015: 9). The behaviour race board presented in Appendix G functioned as a self-assessment tool as learners reflected on their own behaviour as well as if they spoke L2 at the end of lessons. However, it was the only self-assessment tool used throughout this research project, therefore it was not sufficient on its own to develop learners’ awareness on their L2 progress.

One strategy that could have been introduced was repeating the mid-study questionnaire before the observation phase was completed. Additionally, learners could have self-assessed themselves after oral tasks not only to make them reflect if they spoke English but also to enhance their language learning awareness. Brewster, Ellis and Girard (2002) argue the more learners are encouraged to be responsible for their own learning and assessment, the more they will understand language learning aims and

objectives. By introducing self-assessment tasks, learners could have become more aware of their own weaknesses and strengths. Therefore, they would feel proud of what they had accomplished thus improving their language motivation.

One data collection tool that could have been advantageous to this research project was interviews. Burns (2010) defines structured interviews as controlled conversations where the researcher wants to get specific information from each person. By interviewing learners who affirmed to be insecure of speaking L2 in the pre-study questionnaire individually, it would have been possible to get a more definite idea of what those children's needs were. As a result, my focus would be on fostering these learners' awareness in learning L2 and possibly their growing confidence in using the target language would be reflected on the whole class.

As a teacher trainee, my observation and results on audio recordings and on the teacher's journal clarified my doubts as whether it was possible to maximise the use of L2 in class and reduce the mother tongue. Introducing classroom strategies and setting regular pair and group work speaking activities may have encouraged learners in trying to speak more English rather than relying frequently on L1. However, it is also essential that teachers use assessment tools to reinforce language learning aims and objectives over time, otherwise learners may not be completely aware of their L2 learning progress.

As the results suggested that learners benefited from being engaged in a pair and group work speaking environment, the school could develop a similar project to see how the English language in a 4th grade class could be maximised. Young learners have a short attention span and they can get distracted easily, thus one of the difficulties that arose during speaking activities management, especially in group work, was to reduce the use of L1 when off task and to keep learners focused on speaking more English. Nevertheless, it surprised me that this class created a strong cohesive environment while doing oral tasks, as learners tried to find many strategies in order to solve communication problems and to help partners when aware of mistakes using L2. Although it is not possible to generalize such findings, as this project took place in a specific context and each learner is unique, it would be interesting to check differences between a 3rd and a 4th grade class.

The findings in this research project suggest that learners' insecurity in speaking L2 may emerge from learning gaps. One further idea therefore related to this study

could be to determine the relationship between insecurity and difficulties in learning in oral communication in the young learner classroom.

As a teacher and as a researcher, it was quite exciting and motivating to me to realize that I was able to collect interesting results with the work I did. Speaking had always been an unexplored skill in the class involved in this study. However, it was possible to check learners were benefiting from promoting communication in the classroom over time. Learners were not only making efforts to speak more English in class but they were also feeling encouraged to do so by being engaged in pair and group work activities. Most importantly, this research project allowed me to understand the importance of developing learners' communicative skills when learning a second language. Teachers should encourage learners in producing the target language as it gives them the possibility to share knowledge and they learn the language by learning to speak.

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Appendix A, Parents Letter of Consent

Pedido de autorização aos Encarregados de Educação

Caros pais e encarregados de educação,

O meu nome é Carla Sofia Beito da Cunha e é com muito gosto que irei estar com o seu educando a estagiar durante o 1º período deste ano letivo.

Estou a fazer um Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês no 1º Ciclo na Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas na Universidade Nova, Lisboa, e o mestrado implica que durante o estágio faça um pequeno projeto de investigação. Este projeto será incluído no meu relatório final. O meu trabalho intitula-se *Oral Communication in YL Classroom: Understanding the use of L1 and maximising the use of L2* (Comunicação Oral no Ensino Precoce: compreender o uso da Língua Portuguesa e maximizar o uso da Língua Inglesa).

Venho, por este meio, solicitar a vossa autorização para poder incluir o seu educando neste projeto que vai decorrer entre setembro e dezembro de 2016 durante o meu estágio.

Depois de pedir autorização ao seu educando para a/o incluir no meu estudo a recolha de dados será efetuada mediante a realização de atividades que promovam a comunicação oral em contexto de sala de aula, a fim de compreender em que situações os alunos tendem a recorrer ao uso da Língua Portuguesa e de que forma poderão ser aplicadas estratégias para promover a Língua Inglesa como língua predominante.

Durante as atividades acima referidas, os resultados obtidos para o projeto de investigação serão recolhidos através de questionários individuais aos alunos, grelhas de observação e de gravação somente em áudio.

A qualquer momento o seu educando pode escolher não participar. As informações obtidas serão referidas no meu relatório final de mestrado e eventualmente em artigos académicos e conferências.

A instituição e todos os seus funcionários e as crianças permanecerão anónimas em qualquer circunstância.

Se tiver questões a colocar agradeço que me contacte pessoalmente através da Coordenadora da Escola.

Agradeço que dê autorização para que o seu educando possa participar no meu projeto de estudo. Peço que entregue esta autorização assinada até ao dia 30/09/2016.

Dra. Carla Cunha

Prof. Dra. Carolyn Leslie
Orientadora de Estágio
FCSH, Universidade Nova Lisboa



Eu,

encarregado de educação de

declaro que fui informado(a) dos objetivos do projeto intitulado *Oral Communication in YL Classroom: Understanding the use of L1 and maximising the use of L2* (Comunicação Oral no Ensino Precoce: compreender o uso da Língua Portuguesa e maximizar o uso da Língua Inglesa) da Prof. Carla Cunha e autorizo que o meu educando participe.

Data: _____

Assinatura:

Appendix B, Students Letter of Consent



Querido(a) aluno(a),

O meu nome é Carla Cunha e escolhi a tua turma para participar num projeto muito importante que estou a fazer na faculdade para me tornar Prof. de Inglês de 3º e 4º ano. Durante o 1º período vou ser a tua professora de Inglês, mas tudo isto conta para a minha nota de avaliação e eu gostava muito de poder contar contigo e que me ajudasses a ter uma boa nota!

E o que é que terás de fazer? É muito simples! O que vamos fazer nestes 3 meses é:

- responder a pequenos questionários;
- participar em atividades a pares ou em grupos onde vamos praticar e falar em Inglês.



E como é que isto te vai ajudar? Vais aprender a falar melhor Inglês e também vais sentir-te muito mais à vontade em falar em Inglês com os colegas na sala de aula, na rua, ou até em casa com os pais.

No final, vou analisar todos os questionários, os meus relatórios e as minhas tabelas, que vou fazer durante as atividades, como se fossem um “jornal” da turma e incluí-los no meu projeto final.

Também vamos fazer muitas atividades, muitos jogos, ouvir músicas, ler histórias porque eu quero que todos se divirtam MUITO! 😊

Não te preocupes que o teu nome não vai aparecer no meu projeto. Se quiseres, até podes inventar um nome para ti ao teu gosto de um herói, um animal ou de uma princesa! Depois não te esqueças de me dizer qual é!

Gostava muito que aceitasses em participar! Os teus pais também já sabem do meu projeto e a qualquer momento podes decidir que não queres participar, não há qualquer problema.

Se tiveres alguma dúvida podes vir falar comigo que estarei sempre disponível para ti.

Carla Cunha



Quero participar no projeto de estudo da Prof. Carla Cunha

Não quero participar no projeto de estudo da Prof. Carla Cunha
(Pinta a cara correta)



I ♥ English

Data: _____

Assinatura:

Appendix C, Pre-study Questionnaire

Pre-study Questionnaire



Answer the questions and colour the correct face:

Responde às seguintes perguntas e pinta a cara correta:

yes sometimes no

sim às vezes não

Do you like speaking English? <i>Gostas de falar em Inglês?</i>			
Do you understand what the teacher says during the lessons? <i>Percebes o que a professora diz durante as aulas?</i>			
Do you think the teacher needs to speak Portuguese in class? <i>Achas que a professora precisa de falar em Português nas aulas?</i>			
Why? <i>Porquê?</i>			
Do you speak Portuguese in English lessons? <i>Tu falas em Português nas aulas de Inglês?</i>			
When? <i>Quando?</i>			
Do you feel more comfortable if you speak Portuguese in class? <i>Sentes-te mais confortável se falares em Português nas aulas?</i>			
Why? <i>Porquê?</i>			
Do you think you can speak more English in class? <i>Achas que conseguias falar mais em Inglês nas aulas?</i>			
Who do you speak English outside the classroom with? <i>Com quem é que falas Inglês fora das aulas?</i>			

Thank you! ☺

Appendix D, Mid-study Questionnaire

Pre-study Questionnaire 2



Answer the questions and colour the correct face: yes sometimes no
 Responde às seguintes perguntas e pinta a cara correta: sim às vezes não

Are you having more fun in speaking English in class? <i>Tens te divertido mais nas aulas em falar Inglês?</i>			
Do you understand what the teacher says during the lessons? <i>Percebes o que a professora diz durante as aulas?</i>			
Do you think the teacher needs to speak Portuguese in class? <i>Achas que a professora precisa de falar em Português nas aulas?</i>			
Why? <i>Porquê?</i>			
Do you speak Portuguese in English lessons? <i>Tu falas em Português nas aulas de Inglês?</i>			
When? <i>Quando?</i>			
Do you feel more comfortable if you speak Portuguese in class? <i>Sentes-te mais confortável se falares em Português nas aulas?</i>			
Why? <i>Porquê?</i>			
Are you trying to speak more English in the classroom? <i>Tens tentado falar mais Inglês nas aulas?</i>			
Who do you speak English outside the classroom with? What was it about? <i>Com quem é que falas Inglês fora das aulas? E falaram sobre o quê?</i>			

Thank you! ☺

Appendix E, Oral Tasks

Oral Task 1 (07/11/2016) - “Dice game on feelings” Group work speaking activity

The teacher sets up the class in groups of four and gives each learner a piece of paper. The teacher explains the first part of the game by miming the feelings and writing them on the board:

1 – I am happy

2 – I am good

3 – I am tired

4 – I am sad

5 – I am wonderful

6 – I am angry

Each learner throws the dice one at a time and partners must ask “How are you?” Learners answer according to the number on the dice and another member plays. The game stops when every learner has played once. The teacher explains the second part of the game and changes the order of the feelings. The teacher chooses one group to model an example of the task in front of the class:

1 – I am angry

2 – I am tired

3 – I am good

4 – I am sad

5 – I am wonderful

6 – I am happy

Each learner throws the dice one at a time and this time partners must ask “Are you...?” eg. (number 1 – “Are you angry?”). Learners answer according to how they are feeling at the moment: “Yes, I am/ No, I am not” and switch turns. The teacher reinforces the use of classroom language in English by asking learners what do “your turn”, “play” mean and by writing the vocabulary on the board.

Oral Task 2 (17/11/2016) - “Classroom objects guessing game” Pair work speaking activity using mini flashcards

The teacher sets up the class in pairs and asks learners to cut eight classroom objects mini flashcards. The teacher explains the guessing game by choosing one pair to model

one example in front of the class: learners hold their deck of cards facing down. Learner A picks one flashcard without showing it and learner B must ask “Have you got a... (e.g. pen)?”. Learner A must answer “Yes, I have” or “No, I haven’t” according to the flashcard he or she picked and reveals it. Learners get one point for each classroom object guessed and the game is over when all flashcards are facing up. Extra game for early finishers: learner A shows learner B one flashcard and asks “What’s this?”. Learner B must answer accordingly and ask in return. The teacher reinforces the use of classroom language in English by asking learners what does “your turn”, “play” mean and by writing the vocabulary on the board.

Oral Task 3 (28/11/2016) - “Dialogue Building” Pair work speaking activity

The teacher sets up the class in pairs. The teacher points to the cards on the board and asks the class to repeat the sentences related to each card:

- 1 – Good afternoon
- 2 – Good afternoon
- 3 – How are you?
- 4 – I’m great. How are you?
- 5 – I’m wonderful. Where is your book?
- 6 – My book is on the table. Where is your ruler?
- 7 – My ruler is in the pencil case. What colour is your book?
- 8 – It’s blue. What colour is your ruler?
- 9 – It’s green. See you on Monday.
- 10 – See you on Monday.

The teacher writes a number next to each card and asks class to rebuild the dialogue in pairs by replacing vocabulary in each sentence. The teacher chooses one or two pairs to come to the front of the class to role-play the dialogue. The teacher reinforces the use of classroom language in English by asking learners what do “your turn”, “play” mean and by writing the vocabulary on the board.

Oral Task 4 (05/12/2016) - “What’s this?” Role-play game in pair work using mini flashcards

The teacher sets up the class in pairs. The teacher asks learners to get their classroom object mini flashcards and to colour them. The teacher asks learners to write the title “What’s this?” on their notebooks, glue the mini flashcards and write down one sentence “This is my blue pencil (e.g.)” below each flashcard. In pairs, learners point to one classroom object of their partners and ask “What’s this?” Learners answer accordingly and repeat the task until all classroom objects are done. The teacher reinforces the use of classroom language in English by asking learners what do “your turn”, “play” mean and by writing the vocabulary on the board.

Oral Task 5 (05/12/2016) - “Fortune Teller” Group work speaking activity using fortune tellers

The teacher sets the class in groups of four. The teacher gives one fortune teller to each group and chooses one group to explain the game in front of the class. The player who starts asks one member of the group to choose a colour and a number but all members can answer the question. The learner who answers correctly plays next. The teacher reinforces the use of classroom language in English by asking learners what do “your turn”, “play” mean and by writing the vocabulary on the board.

Learner A – Choose a colour.

Learner B – Blue.

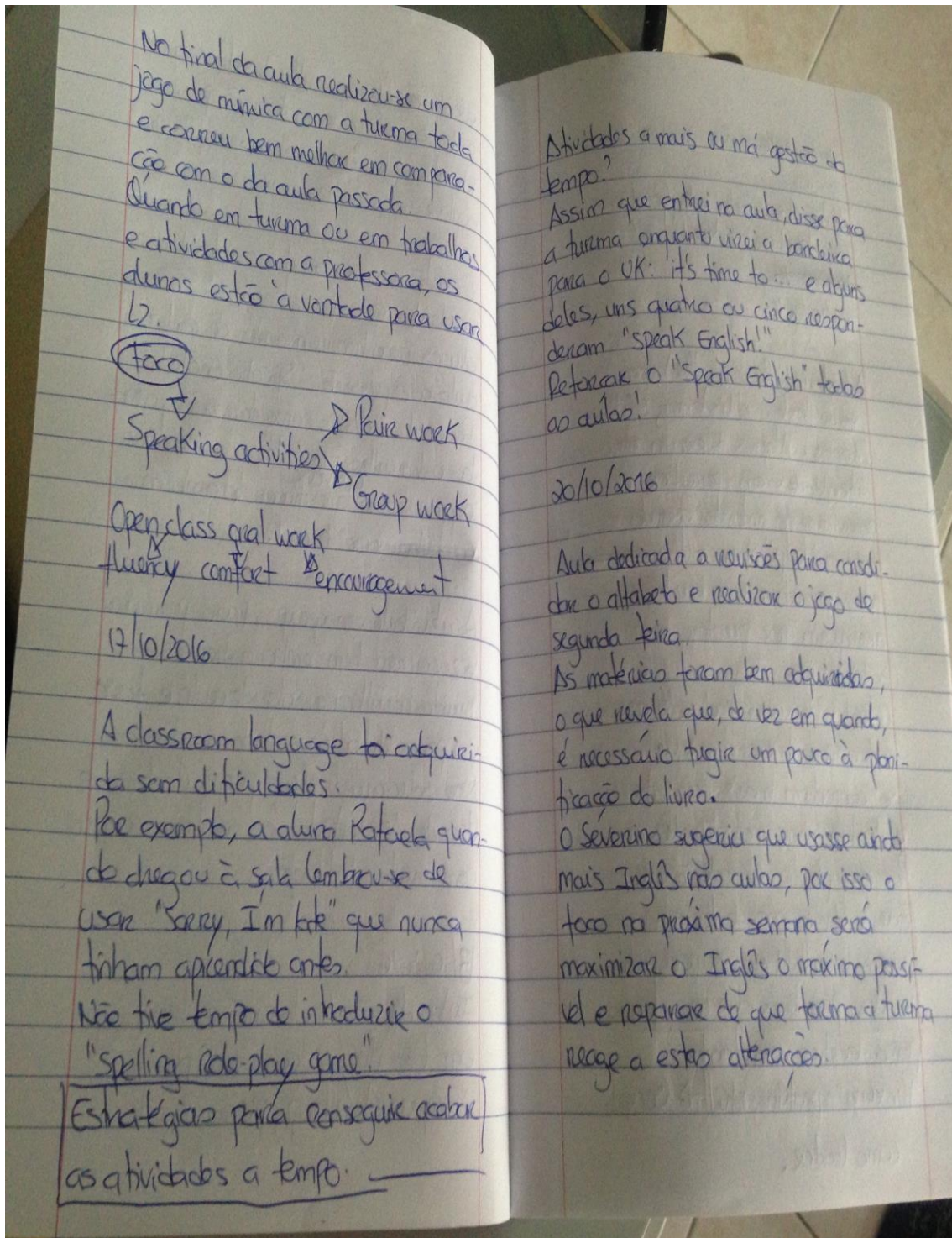
Learner A – B-L-U-E (learners spell the words while moving the fortune teller with their fingers). Choose a number.

Learner B – Eight.

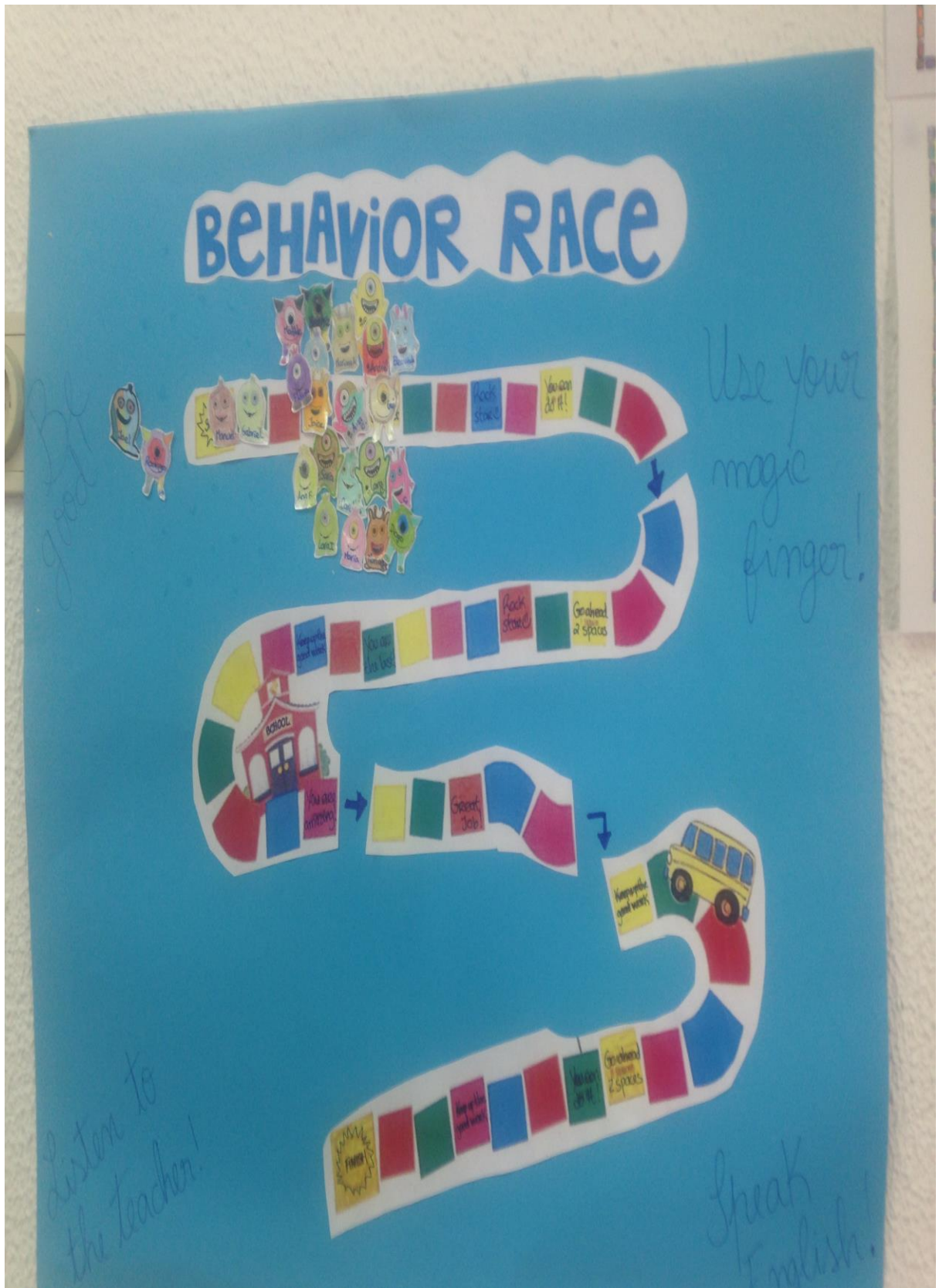
Learner A – Eight. What’s your name?

Learner C – My name is...

Appendix F, Teacher's Journal



Appendix G, Behaviour Race Board



Appendix H, English Word Box



Appendix I, Puppets



Appendix J, Card with flags of Portugal and The United Kingdom

