

**Enhancing Language Learning through Extramural English:
Integrating E-Portfolios and Popular Culture Media in Secondary EFL**

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Abstract

The increasing presence of English across global popular culture media has expanded secondary students' exposure to the language beyond formal schooling, prompting interest in how such extramural English (EE) practices can be pedagogically integrated to enhance language learning. This action research project, conducted with a 10th-grade class in a Portuguese secondary school, investigates how EE can be connected to the official syllabus to leverage student motivation, communicative competence, and writing development. Drawing on research in second language acquisition, multimodality, and digital portfolio assessment, the study addresses four sub-questions: the types of EE students engage with; their attitudes toward bringing these materials into class; the role of e-portfolios in supporting and assessing EE; and the impact of e-portfolios on writing proficiency.

Data was collected through pre- and post-intervention surveys, classroom observations, a teaching journal, focus group interviews, and student writing artefacts compiled in individual e-portfolios. Findings indicated that students primarily experienced English through music, streaming series, films, and videogames, resulting in stronger oral skills compared to reading and writing. EE-based lessons, using songs, videos, poetry, and film excerpts, elicited high engagement, increased oral participation, and reinforced perceptions of English as relevant to students' daily lives. E-portfolios provided a structured space for reflection, revision, and sustained writing practice, with lower-proficiency learners demonstrating the most notable improvement in coherence, organization, and clarity.

Although limited by the sample size and reliance on qualitative measures, the study shows that intentional alignment between EE materials and syllabus goals can enrich classroom practice. Integrating EE alongside e-portfolio-based formative assessment fosters autonomy, bridges informal and formal learning, and supports holistic language development. These findings underscore the pedagogical potential of EE for secondary education.

Keywords: Extramural English, E-Portfolios, Popular Culture Media, Language Learning, Secondary Education, Action Research

Resumo

A crescente presença da língua inglesa nos media da cultura popular global tem ampliado a exposição dos alunos do ensino secundário ao idioma para além do contexto escolar, despertando interesse em compreender como as práticas de inglês extramural (IE) podem ser pedagogicamente integradas para potenciar a aprendizagem. Este projeto de investigação-ação, desenvolvido com uma turma do 10.º ano numa escola secundária portuguesa, analisa de que modo o IE pode ser articulado com o programa escolar, promovendo a motivação, competência comunicativa e desenvolvimento da escrita. Sustentado por investigação em aquisição de segunda língua, multimodalidade e avaliação por portefólios digitais, o estudo explora quatro dimensões: os tipos de IE experienciados pelos alunos, as suas atitudes perante a integração desses materiais, o papel dos e-portefólios e o seu impacto na proficiência escrita.

A recolha de dados incluiu questionários pré e pós-intervenção, observações, diário de prática pedagógica, entrevistas de grupo focal e textos reunidos em e-portefólios. Os resultados revelaram que os alunos contactavam sobretudo com inglês através de música, séries, filmes e videojogos, apresentando competências orais mais desenvolvidas do que as de leitura e escrita. As aulas baseadas em IE, com músicas, vídeos, poesia e excertos de filmes, promoveram elevado envolvimento, maior participação oral e reforçaram a perceção da relevância do inglês no quotidiano. Os e-portefólios proporcionaram um espaço estruturado para reflexão, revisão e prática contínua da escrita, com os alunos de menor proficiência a evidenciar progressos significativos em coerência, organização e clareza.

Apesar das limitações relacionadas com a dimensão da amostra e a predominância de dados qualitativos, o estudo demonstra que a integração intencional da IE com os objetivos programáticos enriquece a prática letiva. A combinação entre IE e avaliação formativa por e-portefólios promove autonomia, aproxima a aprendizagem informal da formal e sustenta um desenvolvimento linguístico mais abrangente, evidenciando o potencial pedagógico da IE no ensino secundário.

Palavras-chave: Inglês Extramural, Portefólios Digitais, Meios de Cultura Popular, Aprendizagem de Línguas, Ensino Secundário, Investigação-ação

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AR - Action Research

EFL - English Foreign Language

ELF - English as a *Lingua Franca*

EE - Extramural English

ESL - English Second Language

FLL - Foreign Language Learning

RQ – Research Question

SLA - Second Language Acquisition

SQ - Sub Question

STP - Supervised Teaching Practice

Introduction

With the increase of globalization and media access expansion shaping the world we live in, more teenage students are being exposed to another language, most often English, through their engagement in certain pastimes, i.e., watching movies or series, listening to music, playing video games, among others. Statistics show that English, according to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics Fact Sheet (2013), is the most common language in worldwide cinema production. English-speaking streaming series are the most viewed in the most subscribed platforms, these being - Netflix (283 million subscribers) and Amazon Prime Video (230 million subscribers). As reported by *The Economist* (2022), on the music platform Spotify, with 640 million users, 47 of the 50 most globally streamed songs were in English. Adding to this, English is considered the global standard language for videogames, with approximately 33% of users in platforms such as Steam selecting English as their main language for playing in 2024 (Logrus IT, 2024). These numbers reflect the rise of English as a *lingua franca* (ELF) as the principal global language, “with billions of users of English as a second or additional language and the number of ‘non-native’ users of the language greatly outnumbering ‘native’ speakers” (Baker & Ishikawa, 2021, p. xi).

Assuming, as Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) argue, that English, today, lacks standardized rules, a central authority, or privileged normative status, this study considers learner engagement regarding different popular culture media in English.

Under the statistics and notions mentioned above, one can hypothesize that a considerable number of high school students partake in pastimes in English, from movies to streaming series, music, video games, texts and social media, among others, therefore being exposed to popular culture media in English, outside of the school environment. This phenomenon led to Pia Sundqvist’s coining of the term ‘extramural English’ (EE), which is defined as “the English that learners come in contact with or are involved in outside the walls of the classroom... both intentional and incidental informal learning of English through learner-initiated activities that can take place either online or in real life” (Sundqvist, 2009, p. 24). Furthermore, it is argued that in some contexts, EE has replaced classroom activities as the beginning and basis of English learning, considering that the acquisition of abilities and content knowledge has been shown to increase with exposure to specific EE activities (Sundqvist, 2024).

Despite being from an older generation than my students, my first exposure to English occurred through popular culture media at a tender age, mostly through the viewing of cartoons and movies in English, as well as by playing videogames. I consider the experience I had as a gateway towards English learning, and a means of improving my fluency and success in the school subject, sparking the curiosity which led me to research whether exposure to popular culture media could enhance language proficiency. Upon encountering Sundqvist's concept of extramural English, I understood there was scientific literature which supported my hypothesis; thus, I sought to investigate whether introducing EE elements, chosen by my students, into the classroom setting, would alter their attitudes and performance regarding the English subject.

As such, derived from my interest in this field of applied linguistics, the focal research purpose of this paper is 'How do I connect extramural English with the 10th grade English syllabus and leverage learning'. Subsequent questions are 'Which popular culture media my students experience in English?'; 'What are their attitudes in regard to bringing these elements into the classroom?'; 'How can e-portfolios support the integration and assessment of extramural English?'; and 'How can e-portfolios impact writing?'.

Chapter 1 - Literature review

This chapter establishes the theoretical framework underpinning the action research methodology employed in this study, which centers on the interconnected domains of language, popular culture media, extramural English, and digital portfolios. Each area contributes to a comprehensive understanding of how contemporary language acquisition occurs beyond traditional classroom boundaries.

The chapter begins with an examination of fundamental concepts in language (1.1), laying the foundation for the subsequent discussions. Subsequently, it proceeds to a revision on foreign language learning (FLL) and second language acquisition (SLA) (1.2). This is followed by an exploration of different definitions and interpretations of culture and popular culture (1.3), preceded by an observation of how these social phenomena intersect with language acquisition processes (1.4). The chapter then introduces the notion of extramural English (1.5), a pivotal concept for this research, examining its relevance in contemporary language learning environments. Finally, the chapter considers digital portfolios (1.6) and their role as reflective and evaluative tools in educational settings, considering their potential to document and enhance the extramural learning experience.

Together, these theoretical components provide the conceptual scaffolding necessary to understand how popular culture media can be systematically integrated into language learning through digital portfolio methodologies, ultimately supporting more authentic and engaging approaches to second language acquisition.

1.1 – Language

To establish the conceptual foundations of this study, it is essential to begin by reflecting on the notion of language. Given the diversity of perspectives across disciplines and historical periods, the following discussion presents a selection of chronological influential definitions of language, highlighting both convergences and divergences in their conceptualizations.

From a philosophical standpoint, Locke (1690) characterized language as being the great instrument of society and its common tie, underscoring its central role in social cohesion and mutual understanding, thus emphasizing the societal function of language. In contrast, Humboldt (1836) advanced a more cognitive and generative perspective, describing language

as the organ that forms thought, thereby asserting that thought and language are indissociable, with language actively shaping human cognition and perception. While both authors recognize language as vital to human interaction, Humboldt moves beyond Locke's social-functional lens by positioning language as constitutive of consciousness itself.

Transitioning into the linguistic tradition, Saussure (1916) offered a structuralist view by defining language as the most important system of signs for expressing ideas, asserting that meaning emerges not from direct referential relationships between words and objects, but rather from the differences between signs. This perspective contrasts with earlier views, highlighting the unpredictability and relational nature of linguistic meaning. Complementarily, Sapir (1921, p.3) defined language as “a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols”. Sapir aligned with Saussure’s recognition of language as symbolic but added an anthropological dimension, emphasizing its non-instinctive, voluntary, and emotive components, therefore deeply connecting language with human culture and intentionality.

Chomsky (1957) diverged sharply from both Saussure and Sapir by focusing on the formal properties of language. He described it as an aggregate of finite or infinite sentences, with each being finite in length and built out of a finite aggregation of elements, presenting a syntactic and rule-governed model of language. His later work (Chomsky, 1986) further elaborated this view by considering language as an innate biological faculty, part of human genetics. This nativist perspective was echoed by Pinker (1994), who conceptualized language as:

... a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction, is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic, is qualitatively the same in every individual, and is distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently.

(Pinker, 1994, p. 4-5)

Both Chomsky and Pinker regard language as an instinctive mental capacity, though Pinker frames it in more accessible cognitive-developmental terms.

Contrasting with Chomsky’s and Pinker’s biologically oriented accounts, Halliday (1978) presented a social-functional approach, asserting that language is a tool to create meaning, placing emphasis on the contextual and interpersonal roles of language in fulfilling

communicative needs within social systems. While Chomsky emphasized the internal, universal grammar underpinning language, Halliday focused on its external, socially embedded functions, representing a fundamental theoretical divergence between formalist and functional paradigms in linguistics. Thus, one can assume that Halliday's perspective aligns with Locke's notion that language is the principal means for society to exist.

Crystal (2003) synthesized several earlier perspectives by defining language as a social function used in human society for communication and self-expression, involving the systematic and conventional use of signs, sounds, and symbols. His view integrates structural, cognitive, and social components, offering a comprehensive and pragmatic perspective on language use in real-world contexts.

In a recent contribution, Norbury (2021) defined language as "a rule-based representational system of arbitrary symbols (spoken, written, or signed) used to communicate within a community" (p. 1). This definition reflects a contemporary synthesis of structuralist, cognitive, and functional elements, acknowledging the symbolic, conventional, and community-based nature of language while maintaining its rule-governed character.

In sum, the conceptualizations of language presented across these authors reflect shifting paradigms: from early philosophical and social interpretations (Locke, 1690; Humboldt, 1836), to structuralist and anthropological views (Saussure, 1916; Sapir, 1921), to formal and nativist frameworks (Chomsky, 1986; Pinker, 1994), and finally to functionalist and integrative perspectives (Halliday, 1978; Crystal, 2003; Norbury, 2021). These differing definitions not only reveal the multifaceted nature of language but also underscore its central role in mediating thought, communication, and social interaction.

1.2 – Foreign language learning and second language acquisition

Having examined the evolution of core concepts related to language, which constitutes the cornerstone of this paper, it is now essential to explore two key areas in the field of applied linguistics: foreign language learning (FLL) and second language acquisition (SLA). While these terms are often treated as distinct in linguistic discourse, they are inherently interconnected. In fact, much of the academic literature blurs the boundaries between the two. As Jenkins (2015, p. 31) notes, "with the spread of English as a global language, the traditional distinctions between English foreign language (EFL), English second language (ESL), and English as an International Language are becoming blurred." Accordingly, this section presents central ideas

related to both processes, under the notion that using the term SLA “does not differentiate among learning situations” (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 521); while EFL, according to Cogo (2015, p. 2) is “any use of English among speakers of different first languages and linguacultural backgrounds”, thus rendering SLA as an umbrella term.

From a statistical standpoint, Crystal (2003) estimated that 75–80% of English learners are in EFL contexts. This is corroborated by the British Council (2013), which estimated over 1.5 billion English learners worldwide, with the vast majority classified as EFL learners. Among these, Wei and Su (2012) highlight that over 400 million are in China, where English has been a compulsory subject since primary school. The European Union remains the region where EFL is most studied: in 2023, approximately 96.5% of upper secondary students studied English. According to the Education First English Proficiency Index (2024), which evaluated 2.1 million adults in 116 countries, Portugal ranked sixth globally, while the top positions were held by the Netherlands, Norway, and Singapore, the only non-European country in the top nine. In Portugal, following the decree nº 176/2014 (Diário da República, 2014), EFL is taught as a compulsory school subject from the 3rd to the 11th grade since 2015/2016. In addition, Portugal does not have a tradition of dubbing movies, but rather subtitling them, allowing for a stronger presence of English in popular culture media than in other European countries such as Spain or France. These factors potentiate the learning and proficiency of Portuguese students regarding English, thus, arguably justifying the country’s ranking in the aforementioned worldwide study.

Gass and Selinker (2008) define foreign language learning as:

the learning of a nonnative language in the environment of one’s native language (e.g., French speakers learning English in France or Spanish speakers learning French in Spain, Argentina, or Mexico). This is most commonly done within the context of the classroom.

(Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 7)

This perspective is reinforced by Richards and Schmidt (2010), who note that in EFL contexts, learners typically have limited exposure to the target language outside the classroom, with English taught mainly as a school subject. From a sociolinguistic lens, the EFL context is shaped by restricted access to authentic English usage outside formal educational

settings. This limitation influences learners' input, motivation, and strategy development. Brown (2007, p. 117) supports this view, stating that "in EFL contexts, learners are less likely to have contact with native speakers and must rely more heavily on instructional materials and formal teaching." Harmer (2015) further explains that the scarcity of real communicative opportunities in EFL environments affects both pedagogical practices and learning outcomes. In contrast, SLA is rooted in a more learner-centered and pragmatic approach to language learning. Its primary focus lies in understanding how individuals acquire and use a second language. Borelli (2018, p. 2) defines SLA as "how people learn and use a second language," while Gass and Selinker (2008, p. 1) describe it as "the study of how second languages are learned. In other words, it is the study of the acquisition of a non-primary language; that is, the acquisition of a language beyond the native language".

Although the areas of FLL and SLA are often treated as being distinct, their boundaries are increasingly fluid in today's globalized linguistic landscape, with the former being generally context-bound, with a strong reliance on formal instruction and limited exposure to the target language, especially in EFL settings. In contrast, SLA encompasses a broader, more universal approach, often abstracting from specific contexts to focus on the internal processes of acquisition across different learning environments.

Whereas, on the one hand, FLL emphasizes practical pedagogical concerns and is often shaped by institutional settings and sociocultural constraints, SLA, on the other hand, prioritizes the learner's internal mechanisms and developmental trajectories, often drawing on interdisciplinary structures to explain how language is acquired beyond first language competence.

Both frameworks are essential to understanding language learning in contemporary contexts, for FLL provides insights into the structural and environmental challenges learners face, especially in formal education, while SLA offers a theoretical foundation for understanding the processes that underline language development across diverse learning situations. One can conclude that a comprehensive understanding of language education requires an integrative approach that draws on the strengths of both paradigms.

1.3 – Culture and popular culture

Williams (1983, p. 90) suggests three definitions of culture: “a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development”; “a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group” and ultimately, “the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity”. For this study, the latter definition will be considered. To describe the notion of popular, Williams (1983, p. 237) provides four meanings: “well-liked by many people, inferior kinds of work, work deliberately setting out to win favor with the people, culture actually made by the people for themselves”. Popular culture thus becomes a conjugation of the two concepts, which themselves present different layers, combinations and complex meanings. On one hand, popular culture can be referred to as mass culture, dubbed as an utterly commercial culture which is mass produced for a mass of non-discriminating consumers (Storey, 2009, p. 8). On the other hand, it can be viewed as culture which derives from the people and is for the people, demonstrating authenticity. Maltby (1989, p. 14) claims that popular culture allows for “escapism that is not an escape from or to anywhere, but an escape of our utopian selves”.

To understand popular culture, Storey (2009, p.5), suggests that “an obvious starting point in any attempt to define popular culture is to say that popular culture is simply culture that is widely favored or well-liked by many people”. The author adds that, as popular culture is constantly outlined in contrast to other conceptual categories, e.g. folk culture, mass culture, working-class culture, among others, it is a difficult task to provide a sole definition. In fact, Bennett (1980, p.18), remarks that “the concept of popular culture is virtually useless, a melting pot of confused and contradictory meanings capable of misdirecting inquiry up any number of theoretical blind alleys”.

As discussed, English is the most spoken language globally, whether as a first, second or foreign language; this is due to economic, political, sociocultural, and technological reasons, Harmer (2015). Harmer also affirms the following, which validates the pertinence of my study:

in the western world, at least, English is dominating language in popular culture. Pop music in English saturates the planet’s airwaves. Thus many people who are not English speakers can sing words from their favourite English medium songs. Many people who are regular cinemagoers (or TV viewers) frequently hear English in subtitled films coming out of the USA.

(Harmer, 2015, p. 15)

The multifaceted nature of popular culture, as outlined by theorists such as Williams (1983), Storey (2009), and Maltby (1989), reveals a complex interplay between cultural production, social identity, and mass appeal. By adopting Williams' third definition of culture, focused on intellectual and artistic practices, this study situates popular culture within a framework that highlights both its creative and communal dimensions. The conceptual ambiguity surrounding the term, as noted by Bennett (1980), does not diminish its relevance but rather underscores the need for critical engagement with its diverse meanings and implications. Furthermore, the pervasive role of English in the global dissemination of popular culture, as Harmer (2015) emphasizes, reinforces the significance of examining how language and cultural content intersect. Within this context, popular culture emerges not only as a site of entertainment but also as a vehicle for language exposure and sociocultural exchange, justifying its centrality in my research.

1.4 – Language and culture

Previous literature shows us that “human language is always embedded in culture” (Risager, 2007, p.12), making language and culture concomitant. Baker (2015) further elaborates that culture and language can be considered systems within systems, that co-evolve through influence and adaptation to one another, clouding the limits between them. Connecting this with English as a *lingua franca* (ELF), Baker and Ishikawa (2021, p. 155), defend that “English can only function successfully as a global lingua franca if it can be adapted to a wide variety of cultural settings and practices,” being that specific languages are not constrained to particular cultures, in other words, English is not limited to British or American culture (ibid).

This dynamic relationship between language and culture has long been emphasized in the fields of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics. Kramsch (1998) argued that language expresses, embodies, and symbolizes cultural reality, positioning it as a central medium for cultural transmission and negotiation. In the context of ELF, this interconnection takes on new dimensions. As English is increasingly used among speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, it inevitably becomes decoupled from its traditional native-speaker norms (Seidlhofer, 2011). Consequently, ELF serves not merely as a tool of communication but as a space for intercultural negotiation and meaning making across multiple cultural references (Jenkins, 2015).

The inclusion of global popular culture such as music, films, online content, and digital media originating from various countries into language education, particularly in ELF contexts, is therefore justified and even necessary. As Sung (2016) notes, learners engaging with English through media from different cultural backgrounds often develop more nuanced and pluralistic perspectives on both language and culture, supporting the notion that English functions as a culturally adaptive resource rather than a fixed cultural product, a perspective highlighted by Risager (2007) and Baker (2015), who reinforce the legitimacy of viewing English as a culturally fluid and context-sensitive *lingua franca*.

1.5 – Extramural English

Extramural English (EE), defined as being a typically voluntary and informal learner-initiated use of English outside the classroom (Sundqvist, 2009; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016), has witnessed a sharp increase in engagement among teenage learners across Europe (De Wilde et al. 2020; Hannibal Jensen, 2019; Lee & Sylvén, 2021; Peters, 2018; Sundqvist, 2019). The main reason for the spike of EE is the multitude of online services available to teenagers, where Isbell (2018) claims, students use their authentic English, especially with technology, in extramural-informal contexts.

Understanding how digital experiences outside the classroom contribute to language development, and how they connect with students' formal learning, is essential for fostering a productive integration between the two (Lai & Sundqvist, 2008). Over the past decade, a growing body of research has explored the language learning opportunities afforded by learners' self-initiated and self-directed use of digital tools for both intentional and incidental learning beyond the classroom. This trend is reflected in several recent comprehensive reviews (Guo & Lee, 2023; Soyoof et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2021). These studies have documented learners' engagement with a broad range of out-of-class digital activities, spanning everyday technologies such as audiovisual content (e.g., TV shows, movies, songs, short videos), gaming, and social media (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, online chats, forums), as well as online reading (e.g., news, blogs) and tools specifically designed for educational purposes, like YouTube language channels and applications such as Duolingo (e.g., De Wilde et al., 2021; Lai, 2015). Research has established links between these digital practices and gains in vocabulary (e.g., De Wilde et al., 2022; Puimège & Peters, 2019), reading (e.g., Brevik, 2019), writing (Kaatari et al., 2023), speaking (e.g., De Wilde et al., 2021), and listening skills

(e.g., Tsang & Lam, 2024). Furthermore, informal digital engagement has been associated with increased learner agency and digital literacy (e.g., Soyoo et al., 2023), enhanced self-efficacy and identity formation (e.g., Liu & Darwin, 2024), and greater willingness to communicate (e.g., Zadorozhnyy & Lee, 2023).

In a study carried out in Austria by Schwarz (2020), it is reported that 40 percent of children aged 13 to 14 watch movies and series in English multiple times a month, while 15 and 16-year-old students interacted with extramural English for at least four hours per day. In Finland, Terhemaa (2018), registered that 72 percent of 16 to 19-year-old students spend at least one hour daily on English-mediated activities outside school. Also, in a study with Finnish students aged 13 and 16, which compared the impact of extramural reading and L2 English vocabulary, 59% of students reported reading monthly or daily in English, and “scored significantly higher on receptive and productive vocabulary than did non-readers” (Pietilä & Merikivi, 2014, p. 30).

Forsman (2004), suggests that involving students’ interests brings benefits to the language classroom, as do Schurz and Sundqvist (2022), stating that language learning can integrate outside-of-school material brought in by learners. Henry et al. (2018, p. 255), argue that teachers who combine English instruction with learners’ extramural English “tend to develop and offer lesson tasks characterized by the use of authentic materials and digital technologies – tasks that encourage students to be very creative”. These theories go in hand with Thorne and Reinhardt’s (2008) idea of raising students’ language awareness through language activities with the help of student-selected texts from outside the school.

In conclusion, the growing body of research underscores the increasing prevalence and pedagogical significance of Extramural English (EE) in adolescent language development across Europe. The widespread accessibility of digital technologies has enabled learners to engage voluntarily and informally with English outside the classroom, creating authentic opportunities for both incidental and intentional learning. Empirical studies from various national contexts, including Austria and Finland, report high levels of student involvement in EE activities, which correlate positively with gains in vocabulary, overall language proficiency, and the development of learner autonomy, digital literacy, and communicative confidence. These findings emphasize the value of strategically integrating EE practices into formal education. Pedagogical approaches that draw on students’ extramural experiences, through authentic materials, student-selected texts, and digital tools, not only enhance engagement

and language awareness but also foster creativity and deeper learning. Thus, EE should be viewed not merely as a complementary activity, but as an essential bridge between informal digital engagement and structured classroom instruction in today's multilingual and technologically mediated societies

1.6 – E-portfolios

As for e-portfolios, Khodashenas and Rakhshi (2017), state they can increase responsibility and motivation when commonly undertaken extramurally; and regarding content, similarly to traditional portfolios, they are a collection of learners' knowledge processes (Thomas & Reinders, 2010). E-portfolios, when compared to traditional portfolios, facilitate the artifact handling of texts, and also harness a more inclusive picture of all that students can do in foreign language communication (Richards, 2006); they are generally concerned with the process of learning, instead of the learning product as opposed to traditional portfolios, providing a more learner-centered approach (Darwanto, et al., 2020).

In line with Green, et al. (2014), portfolio assessment can aid in monitoring individual progress, highlight self-perceived competence, and encourage responsibility for professional development, while providing evidence of students' learning process; factors which potentiate the development of students' learning skills and language production (Darwanto, et al., 2020). Hinkel (2011), adds that the reflective-evaluative component of a portfolio is pivotal, by providing evidence of student and peer dynamic learning progress assessment. Darwanto, et al. (2020), theorize that e-portfolios can encourage learners to reflect on their own, and their peers' production, building better self-awareness of what should be improved concerning the learning process by monitoring their language output.

To conclude, the use of e-portfolios presents a valuable, learner-centered tool that supports the development of language skills through reflection, self-assessment, and the continuous documentation of learning artifacts. These portfolios emphasize process over product, enabling students to engage meaningfully with their language learning journey. When considering this approach in light of Extramural English (EE), the connections seem evident, as both e-portfolios and EE foster autonomous learning outside the traditional classroom setting, driven by learners' own interests and motivations. The reflective and student-driven nature of e-portfolios aligns with the informal, self-initiated characteristics of EE, providing a structured means to capture, assess, and enhance language experiences that

occur extramurally. As such, e-portfolios can serve as a bridge between in-school instruction and out-of-school English engagement, promoting continuity, accountability, and deeper learning.

1.7 Summary

In sum, this chapter considered the chronological evolution of language definitions, allowing to observe the multifaceted nature of language as a mediator of knowledge, communication and social interaction. It is also understood how the relationship between FLL and SLA is fluid, and that in order to understand language education successfully, juxtaposing both concepts is necessary. Additionally, this section addressed how popular culture serves as a vehicle for language exposure and proficiency development, a notion validated by several EE studies, and the importance of e-portfolios as learner-centered assessment tools which can potentiate learner engagement.

Chapter 2 - Methodology

This section outlines the methodological framework employed to address the primary research question (RQ) and its sub-questions (SQs). It first observes the relationship between action research (AR) and teacher education, highlighting the need to promote critical self-reflection during early-stage teacher education. It then describes the data collection tools used to explore and respond to the questions, followed by an outline of the classroom activities developed.

2.1 – Action research

As per Quivy and Campenhoudt (2005), the best way of initiating an action research project in social sciences is to generate a starting question; similarly, Cabaroglu (2014) defends that this methodological process commences by identifying a specific issue, followed by investigations and an implementation of interventions, architected to answer said concern.

Chronologically, past literature demonstrates that AR serves as an effective professional development instrument, facilitating active participation, reflective practice, and the development of problem-solving competencies essential for pedagogical transformation (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993, p. 2) assert that this *modus*, constitutes “a different knowledge base; one that is not designed so that teachers function simply as objects of study but also as architects of study and generators of knowledge”. It is argued that, the fundamental relevance of AR, lies in its ability to produce personally significant and meaningful knowledge for practitioners (Kennedy, 1997); additionally, teacher candidates who integrate research into their instruction and cultivate reflective practices, effectively foster professional growth (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

In more recent times, Darling-Hammond (2006) suggested that teacher candidates, as reflective practitioners through research engagement, assume the role of active knowledge builders whilst tackling challenges to accommodate student needs, through practical experience; in consensus, under the prism of Pereira and Vieira (2017), through the AR process, it is expected of novice teachers to develop their identity as proactive educators, recommending this approach as a pathway to connect theory and *praxis*, foster professional autonomy and enhance reflective teaching (Raya & Vieira, 2021).

2.2 – Data collection tools

Prior to applying the data collection tools which are described below, I proceeded to ask both students and their guardians for informed consent ([Appendix 1](#)). The class in its entirety agreed to participate in the research.

2.2.1 – Pre- and post-intervention surveys

Vilelas (2009, p. 133) asserts that “if we want to understand people’s behavior, the best, most direct and simplest way, is to directly ask them”, as such, I began my AR study by applying a pre-intervention survey ([Appendix 2](#)) on the first lesson of the second semester. The questionnaire focused on collecting information related to the students’ English-language popular culture media preferences, and frequency of exposure, divided by categories (movies, streaming shows, music, videogames, books, and social media). Additionally, student self-assessment relating EE, and self-perceived performance in the English school subject were addressed.

This questionnaire, featuring a combination of open and closed questions, intended to allow students’ interests and EE experiences to influence lesson input, with the objective of increasing engagement and productivity, fostering a more learner-centered approach, serving as the basis for the material to be used on the succeeding lessons of the second semester. Moreover, it was created with the intention of being a starting point that would provide a comparison with the post-intervention survey; consequently, allowing me to identify if, in fact, the implementation of EE showcased alterations in the students’ learning experience.

The post-intervention survey ([Appendix 3](#)) took place on the last day of school, and sought to understand how students reflected on the experience of using EE in class, creating an e-portfolio, and their self-perception of how it allowed them to enhance their learning and success in the English subject. Furthermore, the students were asked to provide lesson and teacher feedback, thus providing an opportunity for my own self-reflection and improvement as a future teacher.

2.2.2 – Textbook analysis

Following the preliminary identification of students' exposure to English-language popular culture media, the subsequent phase involved integrating these media preferences into the curriculum. This procedure entailed cataloguing the content featured in the adopted textbook *Engaging 10* (Esteves et al., 2025), and choosing which media materials, enunciated by the students, could be adapted and used, aligning them with the prescribed themes through teacher-mediated selection and modification in the classroom.

Forsman (2004), suggests that involving students' interests brings benefits to the language classroom, as do Schurz and Sundqvist (2022), stating that language learning can integrate outside-of-school material brought in by learners.

2.2.3 – E-portfolios

Throughout my lessons in the second semester, I asked the class to produce texts, such as short essays and stories, poems and argumentative texts. These artifacts later allowed for the development of individual e-portfolios, being that their content was discussed and curated with the students during focus group interviews (detailed in the following sub section), and assessed formatively throughout the year by myself and my cooperating teacher.

Besides mirroring student performance, a compilation of the best texts originating from the individual e-portfolios was compiled into a *Class Collection* ([Appendix 4](#)). Importantly, the texts included were selected by the students themselves, thereby reinforcing learner autonomy and encouraging critical evaluation of their own work. The final collection was published and made available to students and guardians, seeking to showcase and share the written material produced throughout the project.

2.2.4 – Focus group interviews

On the last week of my supervised teaching practice (STP), I set up three focus group interviews, consisting of groups of three students of different performance levels (i.e. poor, average, and higher scoring), with the purpose of having a good representativity when undertaking the queries. These interviews were conducted in Portuguese so students would feel more at ease, and provide more elaborate answers. To facilitate the natural flow of the interviews, students were chosen to create a harmonious trio, combining shyer students with

more talkative ones. In order to analyze the interviews, I recorded the audio of the conversations using a mobile phone, transcribed them and proceeded afterwards to compare the obtained information with previously collected data. The focus group student composition and interviews can be found in [Appendix 5](#) and [Appendix 6](#), respectively.

The aim of these interviews was to understand which texts students would like present in their individual and class portfolios, while also serving as a means of cross-checking the information gathered through the final post-intervention survey, and obtaining feedback in a more casual, whilst detailed, manner than the questionnaires, as argued by Dörnyei (2007). This qualitative research method provided me with insight into how my students felt about their learning, teaching materials, and favored teaching strategies carried out through the second semester. By stimulating spontaneity and interaction, between myself and the students as peers, I was able to generate valuable data based on open discussion (Gass & Mackey, 2015); this knowledge aided me with identifying successful pedagogical approaches from the students' perspectives (Nunan & Bailey, 2009), and supported my process of reflective teaching (Burns, 2009); culminating into an invaluable tool for my self-learning, and self-improvement as a future educator.

2.2.5 – Teaching journal

During the STP's observational phase, which occurred in the first semester and will be detailed in the subsequent chapter, I was able to monitor student performance and understand which methods seemed to suit and stimulate them most regarding their learning. This first phase relied on the use of a teacher's journal to comprehend pedagogical methods put into practice by the cooperating teacher. I observed that students demonstrated more interest in lessons which relied on the use of audiovisual media and were more communication driven, rendering them more participative and engaged, thus, I implemented this approach during my teaching period.

In addition to providing a register of lesson content, the teaching log allowed me to reflect on both the lessons I observed, and those I taught throughout the second semester. I took notes at the end of every lesson, and updated the journal weekly; based on my own notes and my cooperating teacher's feedback, I would then proceed to analyze, and reflect on how I had performed, seeking to improve my less developed aspects, and understanding my strong

points, so that the subsequent lessons would be carried out in a more successful manner than the latter ones.

This process allowed me to foster self-awareness and critical analysis regarding my teaching, providing me with an important tool to grow as an educator. It also helped to identify patterns in both myself and my students, which caused me to comprehend which teaching strategies I should use. Ultimately, it served as a way of linking theory and practice, combining both into better pedagogical experiences (Farrel, 2016).

2.3 – Activities

From the responses collected in the survey, music figured as the most frequent English-language popular culture media my students were exposed to; this prompted me to research which songs could be brought into the lesson plans, in accordance with the 10th grade syllabus. The thought of music as a valid means of teaching a language is supported by Burns and Martinez (2016), who view it as an alternative knowledge base that helps to socially illustrate the relevant theoretical concepts, and stimulate the sociological imagination of students.

Also, according to the first survey, 66% of my students mentioned Hip-Hop artists as their favorite, a musical style intrinsically connected to poetry; this form of literature has been proven to promote language learners' interaction, motivation, creativity, and self-expression in a study conducted by Gonen (2018) who implemented lessons under a poetry-teaching framework.

In addition to music, I also introduced movies, series and YouTube videos into the lessons based on the students' favorite genres; regarded as authentic material, and a type of media which consists of, and presents, multimodality, as it is composed of visual, audio and written texts (Edgar et al., 2015).

Apart from culture, I focused on lessons with a strong communicative component, as I registered during the observation phase that students were more driven to participate and show engagement through this method of teaching. Oral interaction is fundamental in language learning, by providing cognitive development, promoting real-time language processing skills and rendering more automaticity in responses (Swain, 2000). Furthermore, interacting verbally improves pronunciation, fluency and pragmatic competence, while also requiring one to produce language under time pressure, which imparts authenticity in communication contexts (Long, 1996).

Chapter 3 – Practicum

This chapter begins with a contextualization of the environment under which the practicum was conducted (3.1), proceeding to a description of the observation phase (3.2), and continues to a characterization of the class I taught (3.3). Next, it considers the action research's intervention cycles while addressing the RQs and data (3.4).

3.1 – School context

The practicum occurred in a non-clustered public secondary school located in the Odivelas region, in a predominantly middle-class populated area. The school's construction began in 1980, in a site mainly consisting of farming grounds. A mill from 1884 remains as a trace of the location's *Salóio* heritage. The school has since been progressively modernized and expanded, and presently includes 1380 students of which 111 are not originally from Portugal, and 120 teachers.

In terms of cultural dynamics and projects, the school is inserted in the *Plano Nacional de Leitura*, *Plano Nacional de Cinema* and *Rede de Bibliotecas Escolares*. It also features diverse extracurricular clubs, including science, mathematics, arts and crafts, cinema, theater and European clubs. Additionally, it participates in ERASMUS+ programs and won the *Prémio Escola Amiga da Criança* in 2023 and 2024.

The classrooms were equipped with a projector, computer and internet connection; however, both the computer and internet would often have issues, requiring the use of a personal laptop and mobile data.

3.2 – Observation phase

3.2.1 – Class comparison

I had the opportunity to observe my cooperating teacher with four different classes, two of which belonged to the 10th grade, and the other two to the 11th grade. In addition, I partially observed a ninth-grade class, taught by another teacher, so I could experience third cycle classes. Class dynamics were significantly different between the five groups of students, which will be labeled as 9A, 10A, 10B, 11A and 11B, to preserve anonymity.

A characterization of the observed classes is presented below:

- The 9A class, part of the third cycle, displayed significant heterogeneity in language proficiency, with most students performing poorly and only a small subset exhibiting better knowledge of English. This class was the most challenging to manage due to frequent off-topic interruptions that disrupted lesson flow.
- In contrast, class 11A demonstrated strong linguistic abilities, engagement, and productivity, supported by a well-established rapport with the teacher and a cohesive classroom environment.
- Class 11B, however, showed lower confidence and minimal participation, despite having moderate language proficiency; the lack of prior social bonds and familiarity with the teacher contributed to frequent silence and tension.
- Similarly, class 10B, composed mostly of male students with occasional behavioral issues, required a more assertive teaching approach, limiting opportunities for informal interaction.
- Opposingly, class 10A, characterized by good manners, and existing social cohesion, exhibited medium language proficiency, active participation, and notable maturity for their age.

During my practicum I taught class 10A throughout the second semester, and class 9A for two weeks.

3.2.2 – 10A class observation

My cooperating teacher allowed me to start observing the classes in October 2024, and, as such, I missed the first weeks of school, which entailed student introductions and diagnostic tests. Despite these circumstances, I was well received by the students into their classrooms, with most of them showing curiosity regarding my role as a teacher trainee.

In the beginning of the observation phase, I would sit at the back of the classroom and register student-teacher interaction, peer interaction, and take notes regarding student attitudes and interventions. I used a t-chart ([Appendix 7](#)) to monitor student and teacher utterances, and an observation web chart ([Appendix 8](#)), based on Millrood (2003), to verify the different aspects on which the lessons focused.

The t-chart showed that, on average, there was a ratio of 3:1 utterances made by the teacher in relation to the students in the secondary-grade classes; whereas in the ninth-grade

class, teacher utterances outweighed students' in a 4:1 proportion, evidencing lower student participation. This discrepancy suggests that younger learners may require more structured guidance, which can naturally increase teacher talk. However, it may also indicate reduced student confidence or fewer opportunities for interaction, particularly in activities that demand spontaneous language production, as these students also showed a lower level of English. The contrast between the groups highlights how classroom dynamics and proficiency levels can influence participation patterns, reinforcing the need for differentiated instructional strategies that encourage more balanced learner involvement.

During the first semester, while observing my cooperating teacher, by applying an observation web chart to the secondary grade class, I registered a bigger focus on pragmatic activities (37%), which consisted of student presentations, role-plays and writing tasks; cognitive (28%) and informative (21%) activities followed, while the linguistic aspects, i.e. grammar, were less featured (14%). Cognitive tasks were mainly based on reading comprehension, as well as class debates on social issues. In terms of informative activities, students would occasionally watch TED talks and read news from online newspapers which would be printed on worksheets or projected; a focus on grammatical components was seldom evident and consisted mainly of teacher explanations and worksheets. Lessons were mostly interactive and student-centered, relying on pair work as opposed to individual work.

The observation period offered valuable insight into the pedagogical priorities and classroom dynamics of the secondary-level English lessons. The predominance of pragmatic activities highlighted a clear emphasis on communicative competence and active student participation, while cognitive and informative tasks supported the development of critical thinking and engagement with authentic materials. The reduced focus on explicit linguistic instruction suggests an approach that privileges meaningful use of language over form-focused teaching, although grammar was still addressed through brief explanations and targeted practice. The consistent use of interactive, student-centered strategies, particularly pair work, further reinforced an environment that encouraged collaboration, autonomy, and real-world language application. Altogether, these observations contributed to a deeper understanding of how varied task types and classroom organization could shape learners' engagement and linguistic development.

Throughout the observation phase, as I built rapport among the students, they began to greet me outside the classroom setting. Eventually, I stopped being a passive observer, only

taking notes, and became more involved in the lessons, walking around the classroom and clarifying student doubts.

My interaction with the different groups of students proved to be very important, as towards the end of January 2025, when I finished the observation phase, I was given the choice of which class I would like to work with. I chose class 10A, as I had developed a closer relationship with its students, and saw a bigger potential to develop my action research with them, based on their levels of participation and eagerness to learn.

3.3 – 10A class composition

During my STP, I observed and taught class 10A, which belonged to the languages and humanities study area; the group began with 18 students and finished with 19 at the end of the school year. Four students were from Portuguese speaking African countries; furthermore, five were part of the *Medidas Universais* educational strategies, implying specific differentiated pedagogy materials such as adapted tests. A table featuring the list of students, gender, age, language ability and learning difficulties can be found on [Appendix 9](#).

The class consisted of 12 female students and 7 male students, with ages ranging from 15 to 16. As some of the students already knew each other from previous years, or had been peers in past classes, group dynamics were harmonious and teamwork was visible throughout the school year; mutual help occurred frequently, and peers did not judge one another despite having different performance abilities and assessment criteria. There was some disparity in terms of skill level, as the final average grade of the class was 13,6, being that five students scored 15 or higher, and seven had negative results.

Regarding classroom management, lessons occurred mostly without disruption, with students showing engagement and a good work ethic throughout both semesters. The class understood my position as a teacher trainee and was very cooperative when asked to participate in the different data collection methods.

English lessons had the duration of 50 minutes and were taught on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. The Tuesday period took place after the lunch break, causing students to be slightly less dynamic at times as they felt tired towards the end of the school day. The two remaining periods were taught between other subjects, in the morning, and the class demonstrated better productivity.

3.4 – Intervention cycles

As per Burns' (2010) notion of action research in language education, the first cycle of intervention is based on determining a problem for improvement in teaching and learning, i.e. a research question, which, in this study, it was, 'How to connect extramural English with the 10th grade English syllabus and leverage learning?'.

From formulating this question, the sub-questions ensued:

1. 'Which popular culture media did my students experience in English?';
2. 'What were their attitudes in regard to bringing these elements into the classroom?';
3. 'How could e-portfolios support the integration and assessment of extramural English?';
4. 'How could e-portfolios impact writing?'.

These questions originated from my own experience and reflection as a language learner, stemming, particularly, from my curiosity regarding the relationship between popular culture and its impact on language teaching and learning.

3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey

After identifying the RQs, I proceeded to formulate an intervention plan seeking to answer them, which began with the elaboration and application of a pre-experience survey ([Appendix 2](#)), as mentioned in the methodology section. This anonymous survey was written in Portuguese, so that students could better understand it, and thus, provide more accurate results, containing closed and open-ended questions. This phase, served as the basis for understanding student exposure and preferences regarding EE, as well as self-perception of its impact on the English subject, consequently shaping the outcome of future lessons. Before applying the survey, I explained the concept of EE, in a general manner, to the students, who seemed very interested and curious.

Results showed that all 18 students considered EE influenced their listening comprehension component, followed by pronunciation and speaking production/interaction, with grammar figuring as the least influenced component ([Appendix 10](#)).

This data is further supported by the fact that all students expressed they were more frequently or very frequently exposed to English orally through music (26% and 74% respectively); streaming shows (42% and 53% respectively); movies (32% and 47%); and videogames (16% and 42%). The graphs pertaining to these results can be found in [Appendices 11 through 14](#).

From these results, I was able to understand which popular culture media my students were most exposed to, even though I had expected music to be the main type of entertainment, prior to applying the survey. However, exposure to literature ([Appendix 15](#)) scored very low, which reflected on the class's superior abilities in speaking and listening, as opposed to reading, writing and grammar. It is also important to highlight that students' self-perception, concerning how EE affected their knowledge of English, per language component ([Appendix 10](#)), was accurate and corresponded to the assessments they were subject to in the first semester.

In addition to inquiring about students' frequency of exposure to EE, and self-awareness in terms of its influence in language components, I also asked them which music artists, movie and streaming series genres, videogames and literature they preferred. As mentioned earlier, hip-hop artists were the most prevalent; the movie category showed an equal mix of drama and action; streaming series featured teen dramas and gangster series; and role-playing action-adventure videogames scored higher. There were no favorite books, and nine students claimed they had never read books in English, whereas three indicated they did not read for pleasure.

Regarding the self-perception of performance in the English subject based on EE exposure, pre-intervention results indicated that seven students considered EE to provide a substantial improvement, and eight answered it granted a considerable improvement as featured on [Appendix 16](#).

Students were also asked to reflect on how EE influenced their English proficiency beyond the school context. Their reflections highlighted the strong impact of extracurricular exposure through media consumption, online interactions, and entertainment on language learning and classroom performance. Most students reported that engaging with English-language films, series, music, social media, and games enhanced vocabulary, listening comprehension, and pronunciation, while also increasing motivation, confidence, and interest in the subject. Overall, the responses emphasize the pedagogical value of integrating authentic, real-world linguistic input alongside formal instruction to promote fluency and engagement.

3.4.2 Extramural English Lessons

Throughout the second semester, as outlined in the methodology section, students were exposed to nine lessons grounded in EE materials, progressing through themes related to media, personal expression, and youth culture. These lessons, structured around a range of texts, audiovisual resources, and classroom tasks, are summarized in Table 3 and detailed below.

Table 3: Extramural English lessons

Lesson no.	Date	Theme	EE Materials	Writing
1	Feb 5 th 2025	The invention of the press. Types of print.	- YouTube video – <i>The invention of the printing press</i> ; - Presentation containing different types of print media, with content based on student survey.	Writing a news article in pairs
2	Feb 7 th 2025	The press and social media.	- YouTube video - <i>Social media manipulation campaigns now target users with video content: report.</i>	-
3	Feb 11 th 2025	Valentine's Day	- Poem - <i>Love is Not All</i> by Edna Millay - Song - <i>Road Trippin'</i> by Red Hot Chili Peppers	-
4	Feb 14 th 2025	Youth activists vs. influencers	- YouTube video - <i>Want to be a youth activist? Here are some tips</i> / CBC Kids News	Writing an opinion article
5	Feb 19 th 2025	Conditionals	- YouTube music video - <i>21 Questions (Clean Version)</i> by 50 Cent	-
6	Mar 14 th 2025	Elaborating a for and against essay	- YouTube video - <i>Look Up</i> / Gary Turk	Writing a for and against essay
7	April 9 th 2025	Relative clauses	- Movie – <i>The Wild Robot</i> (2024) excerpt	Writing a creative text
8	May 2 nd 2025	Mother's Day	- YouTube video – <i>2Pac – Dear Mama (Acapella)</i> - YouTube music video – <i>Dear Mama</i> by Tupac Shakur	Writing personal reflections
9	May 13 th 2025	Used to, get used to, be used to; Reported speech.	- YouTube music video – <i>Somebody That I Used to Know</i> by Gotye	-

EE lesson one

The first lesson in early February introduced the students to the origins and development of the press, with EE materials including the viewing of a short documentary on the invention of the printing press serving as an entry point into the topic; followed by a presentation illustrating different forms of print media, featuring examples collected from the first student survey. The students interacted actively with the material and engaged in pair work activities that involved completing a worksheet and collaboratively producing a short article. The overall dynamic of the class was characterized by curiosity and frequent participation.

I registered on my teaching journal that, “some students commented on the fact that their favorite artist or actress was featured on the cover of the studied materials” (05/02/25).

EE lesson two

The following lesson continued the thematic focus on media by addressing social media and its influence on public perception. The EE material consisted of a news segment on manipulation campaigns, with the class engaging afterwards in a discussion that drew on examples from both national and international contexts. Students expressed their perspectives openly, referring to cases which involved politics and the spread of misinformation. The lesson concluded with a set of activities on the future tense, which the students incorporated into the ongoing theme of media and its potential developments.

My teaching journal entry mentioned, “the students were active and involved throughout the lesson, providing insightful comments regarding the use of social media and news. In addition, students gave examples of social media manipulation related to politics in Portugal and in the United States” (07/02/25).

EE lesson three

During the week of Valentine’s Day, the first class began with vocabulary building related to feelings and affection, followed by the introduction of Edna Millay’s poem *Love Is Not All* and the song *Road Trippin’*, as EE materials. Although unfamiliar with the poem, students responded positively to the musical element and engaged in comparing both texts, particularly in relation to their expression of emotion. The lesson culminated in a short

discussion on AI-generated poetry, which students approached with interest and curiosity. In the next lesson, students worked in groups to create a Valentine's Day poem, which was read and broadcasted on the school radio. I wrote the following in my teaching journal:

Despite being afraid, at first, that students could possibly show a lack of interest given the lesson's theme, I was surprised with the attention and participation the class demonstrated. Although the students did not recognize the poem, or the author, a few students knew the song's band, and the class expressed positive feedback when I asked for their opinion regarding the song choice. (Teaching journal, 11/02/25)

EE lesson four

The following topic of the lessons was the role of youth activists and influencers, where students explored the concept of youth activism with EE through a YouTube video, and identified activists and the causes they stood for. The role-play activity that followed introduced an interactive component in which students reenacted scenarios involving influencers and their followers. After the lesson, I wrote on my teaching journal that:

Two students stated that the video was relatable, as they had taken part in an animal rights march and volunteer work. The class responded very positively to the role-play activity, which promoted learning in a more informal, fun, and interactive way. (Teaching journal, 14/02/25)

EE lesson five

To introduce students to the third conditional, the class listened to the song *21 Questions*, as an EE material, and completed a lyric-based gap-filling activity focusing on conditional structures. The students' familiarity with the artist supported engagement, and the explanation of the song's meaning prompted several interactions between students. The class maintained a dynamic pace throughout, particularly during the subsequent worksheet activities.

EE lesson six

The March lesson, where EE was used as I introduced spoken word poetry through the video *Look Up*. The students watched the video attentively, and many reacted to its portrayal of phone dependency and digital habits. The viewing led to the production of a for-and-against essay on teenagers' relationship with social media. Students referred to specific moments from the video when selecting arguments and demonstrated a link between the audiovisual input and their written work. My teaching journal references that, "some students reflected on the video and claimed they spent too much time on their phone" (14/03/25).

EE lesson seven

The lesson in April, focused on defining and non-defining relative clauses and incorporated an excerpt from the film *The Wild Robot*, as an EE material. The familiarity of the movie among some students contributed to a positive response when the excerpt was shown. The distinction between the two types of relative clauses required additional clarification, and the class proceeded to complete the initial stages of a creative writing assignment based on the motion picture, later completed during the Easter break.

EE lesson eight

In May, the Mother's Day lesson used EE via Tupac Shakur's song 'Dear Mama' as the central text. The class began with a brainstorm on the roles of mothers, generating a wide range of contributions. Students listened to an acapella version of the song without prior knowledge of the artist, which prompted speculation and curiosity. The subsequent revelation of the artist's identity and the viewing of the official music video elicited strong reactions, and students later produced reflective writing based on both the theme and the lyrics. My journal entry reflection consisted of the following:

Upon listening to the acapella version of the song, none of the students recognized it, however they showed curiosity and listened attentively. When I revealed who the author was, only a few students did not know him, with the majority expressing that they enjoyed his songs. (Teaching journal, 02/05/25)

EE lesson nine

The last lesson I taught was dedicated to the structures *used to*, *be used to*, and *get used to*, as well as reported speech. The students worked collaboratively in groups to complete tasks integrating the three structures, followed by a listening activity based on the song *Somebody That I Used to Know*, as an EE material. The lesson ended with a reported-speech worksheet completed in pairs, during which students exchanged ideas and clarified the transformations required. I wrote on my journal that, “despite not knowing the song or artist, students showed positive feedback regarding the song and said to have enjoyed it, and learning through it” (13/05/25).

EE lessons observations

Across the semester, the lessons followed a structured progression that integrated multiple types of resources and balanced opportunities for both oral and written language use. Student engagement with the themes and materials was generally consistent, and classroom interactions often reflected an attentive and cooperative working atmosphere. While levels of participation varied across activities, the overall environment supported the implementation of the teaching sequence and facilitated the completion of the proposed tasks.

From these nine EE lessons, five of them featured writing activities, being that other writing tasks for the e-portfolios were developed on separate lessons, and mainly as preparation for assessments. Plagiarism and the use of artificial intelligence occurred, especially with some of the first texts, which led to the development of writing activities during class time.

3.4.3 E-portfolios

Regarding the e-portfolios, students who had less writing prowess showcased greater improvements at the end of the second semester, while average and higher performance students demonstrated progression although to a lesser degree. These results sustain the notion that, by practicing writing frequently, maintaining a record of the produced material, and revising their texts with the aid of the teacher, students can enhance their writing ability.

Furthermore, student responsibility and competition when developing the e-portfolios, proved to be factors which led to learner autonomy, effort and creativity.

A selected comparison of unedited texts by a low-level (Falcon), an intermediate-level (Cherry), and an upper-level (Plum) student, who were chosen given as they were good representatives of the class, at the beginning and middle of the experience, is featured in Appendix 17. The evolution of these students, contrasting the given artifacts, is analyzed below.

The comparison between Falcon's, the lower-level student, two texts show that they made progress in organization and clarity, being that in the first text, the ideas were repeated and placed together in long sentences, making the argument harder to follow. Despite expressing an opinion, the writing lacked structure and used limited vocabulary, which led to a less coherent overall text.

In the second text, however, the student showed better control of ideas and a stronger sense of flow. The narrative was clearer, with events presented in a more logical sequence and with more varied and descriptive language. Although some grammatical mistakes persisted, the writing demonstrated greater creativity. Overall, one can consider that the latter text reflects noticeable growth in the student's ability to structure a text and communicate meaning more effectively.

Across the intermediate-level, student Cherry's two text examples demonstrated a generally consistent ability to express personal viewpoints clearly, though the first text showed stronger control of structure and cohesion. In the opinion paragraph, the student organized ideas logically, beginning with a clear preference and supporting it with reasons related to self-expression and comfort. The writing displayed coherent progression and an awareness of contrasting perspectives, as seen in the acknowledgement of activists' importance. Although some sentences were lengthy, the overall argument was easy to follow, and the student managed to balance personal reflection with broader commentary.

In the creative writing piece, the student attempted a more complex narrative structure, introducing conflict, dialogue, and character development. The text was rich in detail and showed engagement with the story world, but faced issues regarding sentence length, punctuation, and clarity. Several events were presented in long, continuous sentences, which at times made the narrative harder to follow. Nonetheless, the writing reflected creativity and an expanded willingness to experiment with descriptive elements and

emotional depth. While the overall quality varies due to structural and grammatical challenges, the text showed the student's growing ability to sustain a longer narrative and build a coherent storyline.

Across the two texts, the upper-level student Plum demonstrated clarity in expressing personal opinions, with the first example showing a straightforward and enthusiastic explanation of their preference. The writing was organized around the central idea of becoming an influencer, and the student supported this choice with concrete and relatable reasons. Although the text included long sentences and some repetition, the ideas remained coherent and connected, revealing a comfortable ability to communicate personal motivations and acknowledge alternative perspectives, such as the value of activism.

In the creative writing task, Plum attempted to construct a short narrative with dialogue, character interaction, and a sense of progression. The story was generally clear and included some descriptive elements, showing an effort to build a relationship between the robot and the bear. While the narrative was simpler and less developed than the previous student examples, it still maintained a logical sequence of events and conveyed the main idea effectively. Some grammatical errors and sudden transitions appeared throughout, but the student demonstrated growing ability in storytelling by presenting a beginning, development, and conclusion.

In sum, the comparative analysis of the three students' work highlights distinct stages of writing development, with each learner demonstrating progress aligned with their proficiency level. Falcon showed notable improvements in coherence and sequencing, moving from repetitive, loosely structured writing to clearer and more purposeful narrative organization. Cherry displayed consistent control in argumentative writing and growing skill in creative expression, even if structural and grammatical issues occasionally interrupted clarity. Plum, the most advanced of the three, maintained coherent and well-supported ideas across both tasks, demonstrating strong communicative ability while continuing to improve narrative complexity. Together, these examples illustrate the varied yet steady development of written competence across proficiency levels within the group.

The *Class Collection*, which aggregates written material during the second semester, curated by the students themselves, is present in [Appendix 4](#).

3.4.4 Post-intervention survey

The post-intervention survey, applied on the last day of the school year, also written in Portuguese to facilitate student comprehension; aimed to provide a reflective overview of the experience, along with an evaluation of the lessons, and myself as a teacher, through the lens of the students.

The class was asked to provide comparisons prior to the intervention and after, concerning their self-perceived oral participation ([Appendix 18](#)), writing proficiency ([Appendix 19](#)), and performance in the English subject ([Appendix 20](#)). To preserve anonymity, students have been attributed pseudonyms. The collected data is presented below, followed by an analysis.

As [per Appendix 18](#), in regard to oral participation before and after the experience, 11 out of 16 students responded they had improved, with one student (Orange) answering they had increased their skill in this component from two to four (on a scale of one to five). The other five students responded they had maintained the same oral participation quality.

The fact that most lessons were based on a communicative approach, can be regarded as one of the reasons for oral participation improvement; during my STP, I tried to involve the whole class in the lessons' activities, including shy students, asking them to participate, trying to make them feel included and reassuring them when they made mistakes.

Additionally, students participated in group roleplays with peers that had heterogeneous skill levels; these tasks had the function of integrating class members, enhancing cooperation and providing spontaneous responses, whilst contributing to the development of oral comprehension, production and interaction skills.

According to [Appendix 19](#), eight out of 16 students claimed their writing proficiency had become better, with one student (Orange) going up two levels, from two to four. Eagle answered their writing proficiency had decreased one level, from four to three; and the remaining seven students answered that their writing ability was not changed.

Emphasis on writing activities, both in the classroom setting and as homework, which were subsequently mutually revised, by myself and the students, allowed for a substantial amount of writing practice, thus enhancing this skill. Moreover, I sought to instill a taste for writing among the students, who were less receptive concerning the e-portfolios at the beginning of the semester, however, as time passed, the class embraced the e-portfolio project and demonstrated effort into writing creative and quality texts. Adding to this, tests

based on writing exercises also scored higher towards the end of the semester, allowing to argue that students benefited from the e-portfolio and continuous writing assignments.

Concerning the self-perceived performance on the English subject, prior and after the experience ([Appendix 20](#)), nine out of 16 students stated they had increased their ability. It is important to note that, from this sample, five students who had negative scores considered they went from level two to three, thus attaining an average performance. The remaining seven students stated their performance had stayed the same.

Orange, a student who arrived after the Easter break, responded they had increased two levels, from poor to good. Panther, a student who had finished the first semester with a score of 19 points, answered that their performance had become very good, whereas before the experience it was considered good; this student finished the school year with a score of 20 points.

The data mentioned above, was corroborated with the grades attributed to the students based on their individual assessments. The table in [Appendix 21](#) compares students' first semester grades, which refer to the observation and pre-experience phase, with the second semester, during which I taught. Only the 16 students who completed the final survey are contemplated in the table.

The data revealed a modest but consistent improvement in overall performance, with the class average increasing from 11.93 in the first semester to 12.63 in the second semester, representing approximately 5.9% growth. This upward trend suggests that pedagogical interventions implemented during the year might have been effective in supporting student learning, though the data also reveals considerable heterogeneity within the sample, with first semester performance ranging from a minimum of 7 to a maximum of 19 points.

Individual performance patterns demonstrated diverse trajectories across the student population. High achievers such as Panther, Rose, and Strawberry not only maintained strong performance above 15 points but continued to show growth, with Panther achieving the maximum possible score of 20 in the second semester. Meanwhile, several students exhibited notable improvement between evaluation periods, including Strawberry, Cherry, and Plum, each gaining two points, which may reflect a successful adaptation to the course's requirements or effective response to instructional feedback. In contrast, some students maintained stable grades across both semesters, while a small subset consistently scored at or below 8 points.

3.4.5 Focus group interviews

As mentioned prior in the methodology section, on the last week of school I conducted focus group interviews with the students ([Appendix 5](#); [Appendix 6](#)), to better understand how they felt about their overall learning experience, which EE materials they liked best, and what were their preferred learning methods during the second semester.

The following analysis is based on the data obtained from these interviews.

Across the three groups, several consistent trends emerge regarding students' perceptions of learning, materials, and teaching methods. Overall, students highlighted the value of varied activity types, emphasizing that shifting between videos, texts, group work, and practical tasks increased engagement and supported comprehension. Five students (Panther, Wolf, Strawberry, Bamboo and Kiwi) mentioned that the combination of EE resources helped maintain attention and facilitated better understanding, particularly for listening and vocabulary development. A recurring theme in all groups was the appreciation for immediate or accessible feedback, whether through digital tasks or opportunities to revisit materials at home, which students perceived as aiding self-correction and reinforcing learning.

In terms of teaching materials, videos were the most positively referenced resource across groups, consistently described as helpful because they present real situations, real conversations, or authentic language use. Audio exercises were also valued, especially by students who initially struggled with listening skills but noticed improvement over time. Group two showed a particular preference for interactive presentations, while group three uniquely highlighted digital activities and the personal relevance of portfolio work, which one student (Orange) described as a meaningful way of remembering the school year.

Regarding teaching methods, students frequently attributed their learning progress to immediate practice following explanations, group work, and class discussions, which they viewed as opportunities to use English more naturally and with reduced pressure. Four students (Panther, Plum, Strawberry and Bamboo) connected collaborative tasks with increased confidence and spontaneous language use. Project-based learning appeared especially relevant for group three, where students noted that longer, creative tasks, such as presentations or research-based assignments, supported deeper understanding and skill development.

Suggestions for improvement of future teaching materials and practices, also revealed notable patterns. Students in all groups requested more authentic or real-world materials,

such as videos, music, and scenarios drawn from everyday life. Six students (Plum, Orchid, Wolf, Strawberry, Kiwi and Bamboo) recommended increasing the amount of group work and practical activities, reinforcing the perception that communicative and interactive tasks were particularly effective. Less common suggestions included introducing field trips (Panther), using video games for language learning (Kiwi), and providing easier tests (Orchid). These comments, although not repeated between groups, highlight underlying needs such as experiential learning, personalized engagement, and possible assessment-related anxiety.

Overall, the students' feedback indicated that lessons combining structured guidance with varied, authentic, and interactive methods were perceived as the most effective. The comments collectively support the continued integration of EE resources, communicative activities, and opportunities for creative autonomy, while also pointing to areas for further development in assessment design and differentiated task options.

Chapter 4 – Discussion

This chapter discusses how the practicum's findings answer the research questions and situates those results within the relevant literature. It highlights which data and sections directly inform each sub-question, analyzes what the results mean for classroom practice, and draws implications for integrating EE with the 10th grade syllabus through the use of e-portfolios.

SQ1 — Which popular culture media did my students experience in English?

The pre-intervention survey offered the clearest and most direct evidence regarding the types of popular culture media students encountered in English outside the school context. Students consistently identified oral exposure as particularly influential, with music emerging as the most frequent source of English input, followed by streaming series, films, and videogames. In contrast, exposure to literature was minimal, as several students reported never having read books in English or engaging in leisure reading. These findings align with the modality patterns observed during the observation phase, in which lessons placed greater emphasis on pragmatic and audiovisual activities, frequently incorporating TED talks and news segments. Focus group interviews further corroborated the survey data, as students repeatedly highlighted videos and audio materials as authentic input that supported listening comprehension and vocabulary development.

Henry et al. (2018), argued that teachers who combine English instruction with learners' EE allow for the development of lesson tasks that use authentic materials and digital technologies, encouraging students' creativity.

Rizka et al. (2023), observed that because pop culture is connected to students' lives, it serves as a stimulus for eliciting ideas, knowledge, inspiration and interest in listening comprehension. The pattern of heavy reliance on music, streaming series and films in my cohort aligns with these claims about authentic, student-selected materials fostering creativity and language awareness. The assertion by Rizka et al. (2023) that pop culture stimulates listening comprehension is reflected in students' self-reports that EE most strongly influenced listening and pronunciation, and the low exposure to literature helps explain the relatively stronger speaking and listening skills versus weaker reading and writing performance observed in the classroom data.

SQ2 — What were the students’ attitudes in regard to bringing these elements into the classroom?

Students’ attitudes toward integrating EE into lessons were broadly positive and grew more favorable after experiencing the EE lessons. Pre-intervention reflections indicated curiosity and a perception that EE influenced listening and speaking. During the EE lessons, my journal entries noted active engagement, curiosity and positive feedback even towards unfamiliar authors or texts. The focus group interviews showed that students appreciated variety, immediate feedback and authenticity; videos and audio were repeatedly mentioned as the most valued resources. The post-intervention survey found that several students reported improved oral participation and valued the variety of materials and tasks used.

Taken together, these results indicated that initial receptivity was reinforced by concrete classroom experience, as students encountered EE materials in scaffolded and pedagogically purposeful ways, they associated those materials with increased motivation, relevance and improved listening skills.

As van Leeuwen (2017) examined, multimodal literacy demands comprehension of semiotic and textual components, being that they involve aesthetic and critical dimensions, while increasing creativity and interest in learners. The students’ endorsement of video, audio and interactive tasks supports this multimodal perspective.

Under the same notions, Ellis (2003) verified that learners who engaged in regular oral interaction achieved higher proficiency levels than those who solely focused on written skills; further, in more recent studies, it is stated that this system of teaching contributes to reduce language anxiety, by building confidence and negotiating meaning, thus, facilitating language acquisition (MacIntyre, 2007; Gass & Mackey, 2015).

SQ3 — How could e-portfolios support the integration and assessment of extramural English?

The e-portfolio component was designed to document, support and assess the integration of EE in classroom practice. These e-portfolios aggregated students’ written work, evidenced growth particularly among lower-proficiency students, and stimulated learner responsibility, autonomy and creativity. The Class Collection in [Appendix 4](#) and the comparative texts in [Appendix 17](#) provide artefactual support for these claims.

At the same time, answering this question precisely proved difficult for several methodological reasons. The e-portfolio intervention took place within a single semester and with a single class rather than in a controlled comparison design, so isolating the e-portfolio's unique contribution from the general impact of the EE lessons is challenging. The measures used were mostly formative, qualitative and self-reported, and a systematic, rubric-driven longitudinal measurement of portfolio content was not consistently applied to all the texts.

Despite these limitations, the available evidence suggests that e-portfolios supported the integration and assessment of EE in several ways; they functioned as a centralized repository where EE materials and classroom tasks converged, enabling both myself and students to trace connections between extracurricular input and classroom products. E-portfolios provided a means for ongoing formative assessment, as iterative writing, teacher feedback and peer reflection were captured and could be reviewed over time. These fostered learner autonomy and responsibility, with elements of competition and creativity motivating students to curate and improve their work.

The assertion by Khodashenas and Rakhshi (2017), that e-portfolios strengthen motivation and responsibility when undertaken extramurally, is implied by this data; as well as the conceptualizations of self-expression and intrinsic motivation by Kumaravadivelu (2006) and Dörnyei (2001).

SQ4 — How could e-portfolios impact writing?

The impact of e-portfolios on writing shows that less proficient writers made observable gains in organization, clarity and flow, while intermediate and higher-level writers displayed steady progress and greater willingness to experiment with narrative complexity. Appendix 17 contains comparative artefacts that demonstrate these qualitative improvements. The post-intervention survey in Appendix 19 complements these artefacts, where eight out of sixteen respondents reported improved writing proficiency, one reported a decline and seven reported no change.

Regular writing tasks and revision cycles within the portfolio structure provided repeated opportunities for composition and feedback. In addition, the capacity to revisit earlier drafts encouraged reflection and targeted revision, which improved coherence and organization. The motivational dimension of portfolios, as students took ownership of selected work, increased effort and care in production.

RQ1 - How to connect extramural English with the 10th grade English syllabus and leverage learning?

The collected data suggests that connecting extramural English (EE) with the 10th grade English syllabus, is most effectively achieved through a pedagogical approach that aligns students' out-of-school linguistic practices with curricular aims, thereby reinforcing engagement, language development and learner autonomy.

The findings from the surveys, classroom observations, student artefacts and focus group interviews converge to demonstrate that EE constitutes a rich reservoir of authentic linguistic input that can be harnessed within formal instruction to promote communicative competence. As evidenced throughout the intervention, the integration of EE materials stimulated student participation, improved motivation and strengthened both listening and speaking performance; suggesting that the permeability between classroom learning and real-world language encounters can be pedagogically advantageous when managed with intention and structure.

The predominance of music, streaming series and films among students' extramural practices helps explain their comparatively stronger oral skills at the start of the study, as well as their responsiveness to multimodal lesson stimuli. These media contributed to the development of listening comprehension, pronunciation and spontaneous interaction, confirming students' own perceptions that oral competencies were the most influenced by EE. This modality disparity highlights, however, an important implication for syllabus design, being that if learners' exposure outside school tilted naturally toward oral forms, then the formal curriculum must intervene where EE cannot, namely in the development of reading comprehension, grammatical awareness and extended writing.

The 10th grade syllabus can be leveraged by EE through the integration of its strengths into listening and speaking activities, while simultaneously compensating for the limited extramural exposure to print literacy. In this way, EE does not replace the curriculum but rather acts as a complementary dimension that reinforces its communicative orientation, while identifying areas requiring targeted instructional scaffolding.

E-portfolios functioned as a crucial mechanism through which this integration was operationalized. By gathering writing tasks inspired by EE materials, students were able to engage in repeated cycles of drafting, reflection and revision that supported the development of coherence, clarity and narrative control; being that lower-proficiency students benefited

especially from this structured continuity, demonstrating noticeable growth in organization and argumentation. The e-portfolio also fostered learner autonomy through ownership of written work and the motivational aspect of curating a body of personal texts. Although these findings indicate that e-portfolios can be a valuable tool for leveraging EE within the syllabus, it must be acknowledged that methodological constraints, such as the absence of a control group, prevent definitive conclusions about causality. Their impact, while promising, should therefore be interpreted as part of a wider spectrum of EE-informed pedagogical practices rather than as an isolated factor.

Nonetheless, the overall results illustrate that the connection between EE and the syllabus is strengthened when teachers intentionally bridge the gap between students' personal linguistic environments and the curricular goals of the classroom. EE materials offer authenticity, immediacy and cultural relevance that can deepen learners' affective engagement with English, while structured pedagogical tools such as e-portfolios ensure that these encounters translate into measurable linguistic development. The act of drawing on students' media preferences created cognitive and emotional entry points that made syllabus content more meaningful and relatable.

Through this alignment, the action research shows that learning can be leveraged by EE not only to support communicative ability, but also to cultivate learner identity, motivation and reflective awareness, all of which contribute to sustainable language learning beyond the classroom.

Professional development and impact on students

The research project contributed substantially to my development as a teacher trainee by deepening my capacity for reflective practice, sharpening my skills in lesson design using authentic multimodal materials, and strengthening my formative assessment practices.

Keeping a teaching journal and continuously adapting lessons in response to observed student engagement, led me to employ Schön's (1983) notion of reflection-on-action, and to apply reflection-in-action during lessons, which improved my real-time decision making. The process of designing EE-based lessons taught me to align extracurricular stimuli with specific syllabus goals and to organize tasks so that authentic input became usable for targeted grammar or writing aims.

Implementing e-portfolios prompted me to develop clearer formative feedback routines and to experiment with strategies for encouraging learner autonomy and revision processes.

Confronting technological constraints enhanced my contingency planning and reinforced the need to design both digital and low-tech alternatives.

For students, the research project had observable effects; engagement visibly increased when lessons incorporated materials that resonated with students' out-of-school lives; this engagement translated into higher rates of oral participation, in comparison to what I had observed on the first semester, and, for a subset of learners, improved assessment outcomes.

The writing artefacts collected in the portfolios showed that frequent practice, coupled with teacher feedback could produce measurable qualitative gains in organization and clarity, particularly for lower-proficiency students. Portfolios also nurtured learner responsibility and motivation, as students curated and revised their work. At the same time, the project revealed persistent heterogeneity in achievement: while some learners made notable gains, others maintained stable or low performance, indicating that portfolios and EE-based lessons are beneficial but need to be complemented by targeted support for students who continue to struggle with foundational skills.

Limitations and final reflections

This action research offers practical and pedagogical insight, albeit evidencing some methodological limitations, being that it consisted of a single-class sample, a one-semester intervention, and the reliance on self-reported measures alongside qualitative artefacts.

Answering how e-portfolios uniquely contributed to outcomes was particularly difficult, because their effects are entangled with the broader instructional changes and because a systematic, rubric-based longitudinal evaluation of portfolio content was not fully implemented for all texts.

Despite these limitations, converging evidence from surveys, lesson journals, portfolios and focus group interviews indicates a coherent conclusion, I believe. Integrating EE into 10th grade lessons enhances listening and speaking, supports writing growth through repeated practice and reflection, and benefits from e-portfolio practices that document learning trajectories and foster learner autonomy.

These findings align with literature on authentic materials, multimodal literacy and portfolio pedagogy, while offering pragmatic directions for teachers seeking to make classroom English more relevant to students' lives.

Conclusion

Bridging extramural English with the 10th grade English syllabus requires a considered and systematic pedagogical approach that acknowledges the linguistic realities of contemporary learners while remaining aligned with curricular expectations. This study demonstrated that effective integration depends on deliberate curricular mapping, in which learners' out-of-school linguistic experiences are thoughtfully incorporated into classroom tasks in ways that enhanced, rather than replace, formal learning objectives. By drawing on authentic materials rooted in students' daily media consumption, teachers can design multimodal tasks that activate prior knowledge, foster engagement and support meaningful language use. The findings revealed that when EE functions as the stimulus for structured activities, whether through listening comprehension work, discussions, creative writing or grammar-focused tasks, it not only enriches the learning environment but also supports the development of communicative competence in ways that traditional textbook-driven approaches may not always achieve.

The research further indicates that the success of this integration is closely tied to the pedagogical frameworks that support it. E-portfolios proved to be particularly valuable as a formative tool that encourages frequent writing practice, self-reflection and progressive refinement of ideas. Their use helped anchor EE-inspired tasks within a coherent developmental trajectory, allowing students to revisit earlier drafts, recognize their growth and develop a stronger sense of ownership over their learning. This process was especially impactful for lower-proficiency learners, whose improvement in clarity, organization and overall writing control illustrates how continuous practice combined with reflective mechanisms can elevate performance over time.

Equally significant is the motivational dimension that emerged from this experience. Students consistently reported feeling more engaged, confident and connected to lesson content when EE materials were employed. Their responses in surveys, written reflections and interviews demonstrate that the integration of media they already consumed had a direct influence on their willingness to participate orally and on the quality of their written

production. This affective component is essential, as learners who perceive classroom activities as relevant to their identities and interests are more likely to assume active roles in their learning processes. Thus, the strategic use of EE has the potential not only to reinforce linguistic competence but also to nurture more positive attitudes toward English as a subject and as a communicative practice.

At the same time, this study highlights the need for careful attention to areas where EE exposure alone is insufficient. The relatively low engagement with literature and written texts outside school, underscores the importance of providing explicit structures for reading comprehension, grammar and extended writing within the formal curriculum. A balanced approach therefore entails leveraging EE-based strengths in listening and speaking, while simultaneously designing lessons that address literacy components that do not naturally emerge from students' extramural experiences. This evenness allows for richer, more comprehensive language development and reduces discrepancies between components.

Looking ahead, several considerations arise for future implementations. Clearer assessment rubrics for e-portfolios would enhance transparency and consistency, enabling both teachers and students to better understand evaluation criteria and track progress more systematically. Furthermore, incorporating comparison groups or adopting longitudinal research designs would enable a more rigorous evaluation of portfolio effects and help comprehend their contribution from that of the EE-based instructional sequence.

In summary, this action research provides evidence that extramural English can be a powerful pedagogical resource when integrated in intentional ways that align with curricular goals and respond to student needs. EE-informed multimodal tasks and reflective portfolio work can boost motivation, improve oral participation and enhance writing proficiency, while fostering autonomy and engagement. With continued refinement, clearer assessment structures and extended research, the integration of EE has the potential to enrich language learning not only in the 10th grade syllabus but across secondary education more broadly.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Informed consent letter

Figure 1: Informed consent letter

(return to: [2.2 – Data collection tools](#))

Carta de Consentimento aos Encarregados(as) de Educação

Assunto: Pedido de autorização para realização de estudo no âmbito do Relatório Final de Estágio

Caro(a), Encarregado(a) de Educação,

O meu nome é Raul Barbosa, e no âmbito do Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês no 3º Ciclo do Ensino Básico e Secundário da Universidade Nova de Lisboa, estou neste momento a desenvolver a investigação conducente à realização do relatório final de estágio intitulado “Melhorar a Aprendizagem de Línguas através do Inglês Extramural: Integrando Portefólios Digitais e Meios de Cultura Popular no Ensino de Inglês como Língua Estrangeira no Ensino Secundário” no decorrer do presente ano letivo, na Escola [REDACTED], e sob a supervisão pedagógica da professora cooperante [REDACTED].

Este projeto de investigação visa explorar como conectar as experiências dos alunos com o inglês fora da sala de aula, denominado inglês extramural, através de meios de comunicação populares como (filmes, séries, música, videojogos), com o programa curricular de inglês do 10º ano, potenciando assim a aprendizagem. A metodologia do projeto divide-se nos seguintes ciclos:

(1) Aplicação de um questionário inicial para identificar as experiências de inglês extramural dos alunos; (2) seleção dos elementos culturais mais referidos e sua integração com o programa curricular; (3) desenvolvimento de portefólios digitais pelos alunos; (4) aplicação de um questionário final e realização de entrevistas ou grupos focais (a decidir); (5) criação de uma Coleção de Turma com os textos selecionados que será disponibilizada aos encarregados de educação e alunos.

A recolha de informação será realizada através de inquéritos (via Google Forms), portefólios digitais, e realização de entrevistas ou grupos focais (a decidir).

Venho por este meio solicitar a vossa autorização para desenvolver o supracitado projeto com o/a vosso/a educando/a, sendo que, igualmente, solicitarei autorização aos alunos.

É ainda importante realçar que a participação neste projeto será anónima, no que toca à instituição assim como aos participantes, atendendo à proteção da identidade e de dados pessoais. Salientar por fim, que toda a informação recolhida ao longo do projeto constituirá e será mencionada no meu relatório final de estágio e, eventualmente, em publicações no âmbito académico, sendo o tratamento de dados utilizado exclusivamente para este fim. Por último, informar igualmente que foi obtida autorização para realização deste projeto de investigação por parte do respetivo Diretor da Escola [REDACTED].

Em caso de dúvidas ou necessidade de mais esclarecimentos, podem contactar-me através do email [REDACTED]. Agradeço, desde já, a vossa disponibilidade, atenção e apoio prestados, sendo que deverão manifestar-se apenas caso não estejam de acordo com a participação do/a vosso/a educando/a neste projeto.

Raul Barbosa

Eu, _____, Encarregado(a) de Educação, do aluno(a) _____ que frequenta a Escola [REDACTED], declaro que fui informado(a) dos objetivos do projeto de investigação intitulado “Melhorar a Aprendizagem de Línguas através do Inglês Extramural: Integrando Portefólios Digitais e Meios de Cultura Popular no Ensino de Inglês como Língua Estrangeira no Ensino Secundário” e não autorizo a proceder à recolha de informação que será recolhida no âmbito do referido estudo e utilizada para fins exclusivos de tratamento académico.

Data: _____

Assinatura: _____

(return to: [2.2 – Data collection tools](#))

Appendix 2 - Pre-intervention survey

Figure 2: Pre-intervention survey

(return to: [2.2.1 – Pre- and post-intervention surveys](#); [3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey](#))

26/10/25, 21:55

Inquérito - Cultura Popular em Inglês

Inquérito - Cultura Popular em Inglês

Este breve inquérito tem como objetivo compreender quais são as tuas preferências a nível de elementos culturais/artísticos de expressão inglesa (lembra-te que a língua inglesa é falada não só nos EUA e Reino Unido, mas também em outros países como a Austrália, África do Sul, Índia, etc.).

Estão incluídos elementos traduzidos/dobrados em inglês (por exemplo *animes* ou *manga*).

Os resultados deste inquérito serão utilizados para o meu relatório final de Mestrado.

Muito obrigado pela tua participação :)

*Indicates required question

1. Com que frequência vês filmes em Inglês? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Muito ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Muito Frequentemente

2. Quais são alguns dos teus filmes favoritos em Inglês? (escreve até 3) *

3. Com que frequência vês séries (podem ser de animação) em Inglês? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Muito ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Muito Frequentemente

4. Quais as tuas séries preferidas em Inglês? (escreve até 3) *

5. Com que frequência ouves música em Inglês? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Mui: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Muito Frequentemente

6. Quais os artistas musicais que se expressam em inglês de que mais gostas? *
(escreve até 3)

7. Com que frequência jogas videojogos em Inglês? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Mui: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Muito Frequentemente

8. Quais são alguns dos teus videojogos preferidos? (escreve até 3) *

9. Com que frequência lêes livros em Inglês? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Mui: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Muito Frequentemente

10. Quais os livros em Inglês que mais gostaste de ler? (escreve até 3) *

11. Com que frequência assistes a YouTubers ou influencers que se expressam em Inglês? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Muito ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Muito Frequentemente

12. Quais são alguns dos teus YouTubers ou influencers favoritos? (escreve até 3) *

13. Sentes que o facto de consumires cultura em Inglês fora das aulas melhora o teu desempenho na disciplina? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Não ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Melhora Bastante

14. Escreve um parágrafo a explicar como sentes que o Inglês a que és exposto fora das aulas influencia o teu desempenho na disciplina. *

15. Consideras que o Inglês a que estás exposto fora das aulas influencia mais a *
componente de:

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Compreensão Oral (Listening)
- ☐ Leitura
- ☐ Escrita (Produção/Interação)
- ☐ Gramática
- ☐ Oralidade (Produção/Interação)
- ☐ Pronúncia

16. Gostarias de destacar mais algum elemento de expressão Inglesa que consumas? (resposta livre)

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Appendix 3 - Post-intervention survey

Figure 3: Post-intervention survey

(return to: [2.2.1 – Pre- and post-intervention surveys](#))

26/10/25, 21:56

Inquérito Final - Cultura Popular em Inglês

Inquérito Final - Cultura Popular em Inglês

Este breve inquérito tem como objetivo compreender a tua evolução na disciplina de Inglês ao longo do segundo semestre. A tua opinião é muito importante para obter *feedback* e perceber como a utilização de elementos culturais de língua inglesa nas aulas contribuiu para o teu aproveitamento.

Os resultados deste inquérito serão utilizados para o meu relatório final de Mestrado.

O teu nome não será utilizado no estudo final, serve apenas para fins de tratamento de dados.

Muito obrigado pela tua participação :)

* Indicates required question

1. Email *

2. Nome *

3. A tua participação oral nas aulas no início do segundo semestre era: *

1 2 3 4 5

☆☆☆☆☆

4. A tua participação oral no final do segundo semestre foi: *

1	2	3	4	5
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

5. A tua capacidade de escrita no início do segundo semestre era: *

1	2	3	4	5
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

6. A tua capacidade de escrita no final do segundo semestre foi: *

1	2	3	4	5
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

7. O teu aproveitamento no início do segundo semestre era: *

1	2	3	4	5
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

8. O teu aproveitamento no final do segundo semestre foi: *

1	2	3	4	5
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

9. Sentes que o professor utilizou elementos culturais Ingleses interessantes nas aulas? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Disc ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Concordo totalmente

10. Tens sugestões de elementos culturais que gostavas que o professor tivesse explorado? *

11. Gostaste dos elementos culturais e da forma como foram abordados em sala de aula? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Disc ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Concordo totalmente

12. Destaca alguns dos elementos culturais que mais gostaste de abordar em sala de aula: *

13. Sentes que a exposição aos elementos de cultura Inglesa utilizados pelo professor melhorou o teu desempenho na disciplina? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Não ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Melhorou bastante

14. Escreve um parágrafo a explicar como sentes que os elementos culturais que o professor lecionou influenciaram o teu desempenho na disciplina durante o segundo semestre: *

15. Como sentes que foram as aulas durante o segundo semestre? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Mui ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Muito entusiasmantes

16. Consideras que os elementos culturais Ingleses que o professor expôs influenciaram mais a componente de: *

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Compreensão Oral (Listening)
☐ Leitura
☐ Escrita (Produção/Interação)
☐ Gramática
☐ Oralidade (Produção/Interação)
☐ Pronúncia

17. Gostarias de destacar mais algum aspecto das aulas de Inglês durante o segundo semestre? (resposta livre)

18. Como classificas o desempenho do professor no segundo semestre? *

1 2 3 4 5



This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

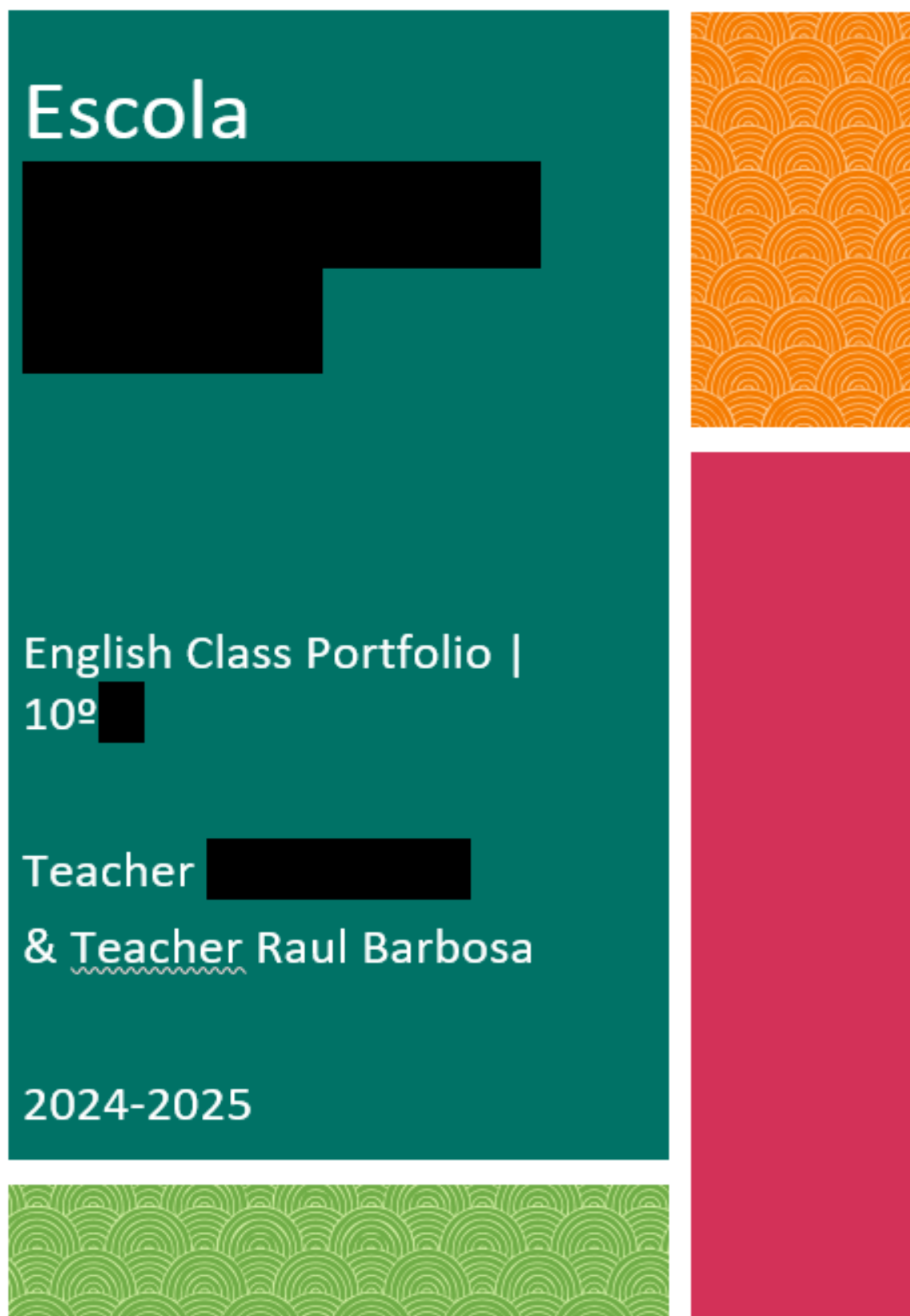
Google Forms

Appendix 4 - Class collection

Figure 4: Class collection

(return to: [2.2.3 – E-portfolios](#); [3.4.3 – E-portfolios](#); [3.4.3 E-portfolios – end section](#);

[SQ3 – How could e-portfolios support the integration and assessment of extramural English?](#))



Introduction

This digital portfolio was developed at Escola [REDACTED] in collaboration with the 10^º [REDACTED] English class during the 2024/2025 school year.

It is the result of a shared learning journey, highlighting the students' best written work, carefully selected by the students themselves under the guidance and support of their English teacher. Each text represents not only their linguistic progress but also their personal voices, perspectives, and creativity.

The collection process began in the second semester of the school year and took place as part of teacher Raul Barbosa's supervised teaching practice. Throughout this period, students were encouraged to express themselves on a wide range of topics, from personal reflections to creative writing and socially relevant issues. The diversity of themes explored reflects the dynamic and student-centered approach adopted in the classroom.

This portfolio serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it documents the development of key language skills, especially in writing, through authentic and meaningful tasks. Secondly, it offers insight into each student's growth in confidence, fluency, and ability to communicate ideas effectively in English. Lastly, it acts as a personal and academic keepsake — a tangible reminder of their achievements and the experiences they shared together throughout the year.

We hope this compilation inspires pride in the authors and offers a glimpse into the learning that took place beyond textbooks, grounded in real voices and genuine effort.

Opinion article: would you rather be an influencer or an activist?

Lynx

I would rather be an influencer than an activist, because I believe that with the internet and social media nowadays we can reach everyone all over the world and present different causes in which we believe we could make a change.

If I were an influencer I'd like to raise awareness about clothing and fashion brands, because it's something I'm very passionate about. I think that by making videos or content online about this matter, I could have a direct impact on making people more conscious about what they buy: if it's from environmentally friendly companies or not, if the companies use animal testing, if the workers are fairly paid and have rights, and many other issues.

Lastly, I believe that there are many ways to have a positive influence in the world whether it is in person or through social media.

Kiwi

Today's world is a place where both activists and influencers can affect change. Activists campaign for matters close to their heart, influencers promote and raise relevant issues on social media. I would personally be an influencer because they can reach a large audience and inspire people in different ways.

Influencers are able to discuss and deal with issues such as mental health, climate change, and social issues. Through social media, they can do this and motivate people to get involved. They also get the chance to collaborate with brands and organizations that work to help create a better world, promoting good messages while developing a career.

While activists are a powerful force, influencers can also create change, for example through social media, they are able to motivate millions and make a significant impact on people.

Tiger

According to brightedge.com, an influencer is a person who is seen as an expert within their particular field that also has a decent amount of following. People trust their opinions and relate to their point of view.

My job as an influencer is to talk about what I'm most passionate about. In my case, as a religious influencer, my goal is to have others join my journey of reading the Bible from beginning to end (you can also say – "from start to finish").

Being an influencer takes a long-term dedication, that's why I emphasize the word "passion", but at the same time, I wouldn't mind being an activist, as I think it's beautiful to have the privilege.

The difference between an activist and an influencer is that one fights for a change, not just in their life but for everyone else's, while the other influences anything and everything.

In the video shown in class, one of the interviewees answered that to be an activist you need to be selfless but at the same time fighting for something you want as much as the next person.

In conclusion, I could be both but I chose to be one, an influencer.

Coconut

The world changers can be both activists and influencers. Activists fight for important causes, and influencers share ideas through social media. I would rather be an influencer since this helps reach many people and spread important messages.

Influencers discuss mental health, the environment, and social issues. They share information via social media, inspire others and collaborate with brands or organizations that are working for a good cause. This enables them to contribute to society while pursuing a career.

Activists do perform the action of making things happen, but so do influencers. By using social networks, they can show millions of people and spread awareness on pertinent issues. This is why I would choose to be an influencer.

Oak

I would prefer to be an influencer. An influencer is someone who influences something or someone. There are many people who work as influencers in different sectors or areas, such as fashion, tourism, food, among others.

Influencers are seen around the world by several followers and share content with people interested in different areas. Influencers show their lifestyle, give their opinions and lots of recommendations. They also use social networks, such as Instagram, Tiktok, among others.

Being very active on these same networks helps any brand to spread its product around the world, and an influencer's job is about giving their audience a genuine connection. Transparency in the promotion of each influencer's products is also essential to maintain credibility.

My conclusion when it comes to being an influencer is that, more than having fame or even followers, it is about demonstrating impact and relevance in this digital world.

Plum

I would rather be an influencer because it is my dream job.

My whole family says that I'm very good at being an influencer, because I'm always making Tik Toks or posting photos on Instagram, also, I'm very addicted to social media in general.

Becoming an influencer is my dream job because it's something that interests me a lot and that I spend most of my time on. I've always liked recording videos, for example, putting on my makeup, "get ready with me", trying and offering advice on products, dancing, etc.

Being an influencer has several advantages such as making many friends, receiving different products, working with brands, even your favorite ones, having followers who love you, meeting famous people or even your idols and much more, adding to this, you still get money doing what you like, that's why my dream job is to become an influencer.

I never thought about being an activist because I don't like crowds, but I like to see that there are people who strive to make the world a better place and who express what they believe in.

Orchid

In my opinion, I would prefer to be an activist. I think that most of the activists in our generation have a strong opinion and a huge impact on our society. On the other hand, I also believe that influencers can have some impact.

For example, most of the influencers have to collaborate and impress several brands so they can continue having money and visibility, whereas activists are only focused on the cause of their protests. I also think that activists defend and protest about something they believe in and they think that it will change the world, while influencers can feel “forced” sometimes to follow the same path as activists do to feel relevant in society.

In general, I think both can make a difference in our world.

Panther

If given the choice to pick between being an influencer or an activist, I would certainly pick being an activist.

Firstly, I think being an influencer puts you more in the spotlight, which makes you more prone to receiving criticism. In the last couple of years, at least from what I’ve seen, a lot of people began using social media more often, some even turned it into their primary source of entertainment. Anything you post on social media stays there and anyone can see it, which certainly would make me very nervous if I were an influencer. For example, I can imagine myself wanting to post a video speaking about something I’m passionate about, but then overthinking the potential critiques/criticism and giving up on trying to post it. Additionally, from my experience people online tend to be harsher with criticism and with the things they say, because they’re behind a screen. If I were an activist and didn’t use social media, I wouldn’t have this problem and I believe it would be easier to deal with those who didn’t like my viewpoints or disagreed with me.

Secondly, a lot of people don’t trust influencers totally, including me. I’ve seen a lot of influencers lie about their viewpoints, so as to not lose followers, or to lie about a certain product they’re reviewing just to not lose a sponsorship. For example, just last year, a very famous makeup influencer on TikTok did a review on mascara. She applied it on her eyes, only to cut her video there and to appear with fake eyelashes next, claiming that they were her real lashes and that the mascara had done that effect, when it hadn't. Later on, some of her followers found out she only lied about the results due to a partnership she had with the

brand. This is only a case, but there have been more of other influencers who did similar things to this one, which makes people a bit more skeptical or distrustful of influencers. If not even I trust them fully, I wouldn't want to be something I don't trust in, would I?

Furthermore, I think activism appeals more to me, that it is more challenging and difficult, but all the more rewarding. For example, you might have a rough time gathering people who think like you at the start, but as you go on your journey and keep progressing, you'll look back and see all the hardships you've overcome, all the people you've changed and that have also changed you (for the better, of course) and most importantly, you might see that you made an impact on the world, no matter how big or how small. Personally, I think that's one of the most rewarding things one could have, hence why it appeals so much to me.

In conclusion, I would rather be an activist given that it feels more fulfilling and more challenging to me than being an influencer, and also, because in my opinion, influencers are more prone to harsh criticism and to not being completely honest with their public.

Rose

In a world where social media is the main source of information, is it better to speak from the screens or the streets?

In my opinion, if I had to make the decision I would choose to be an activist. Nowadays, there is a strong pattern within the social media community, and that is misinformation. From my perspective, the word activism stands for a person that fights for what they think is right, and for that you have to research and not rely on news that appear suddenly on your page. Influencers in the modern day are becoming more and more people that just speak what they see and not what they believe in.

I believe that not all influencers are misinformed, there are solid sources in social media, but the biggest problem is that those do not get as much attention as the ones that are making a huge scene about everything. I believe that this happens because the real influencers are speaking the truth about what is going on and not simplifying everything for the watcher.

In addition, to solidify my reasoning for the decision of being an activist, it seems that nowadays activists are not listened to and seen more as crazy or "being too much". However, this could be turned around; to make people see is to make people listen, I would want to

make a mark, to speak my mind and show the world on the news and on the tv screens that the world we are living in now is not as magical as some people think it is.

To conclude, I can see that influencers are misinformed, even though some are good sources of information, but I would choose to be an activist, if I had to make such a decision, because I think passing messages physically and on a stand is more powerful than behind a screen.

Bamboo

In my opinion, I would prefer to be an influencer and I will explain why.

I would prefer to be an influencer because it is much easier to express oneself and what makes sense to us, also, nowadays, it's easier to communicate online than on the streets.

We can even inspire other influencers, and thus, they can help us spread the word by reaching more people.

However, when you think about it, activists can do the same thing but they don't use the internet as much. And if social media is used a lot, it can lead to the news depending on what it is.

And that's why I'd rather be an influencer than an activist.

Wolf

In this article I'm going to address the topic of whether I would be an influencer or an activist, and I chose influencer.

In my personal opinion, I would be an influencer as I could project spread my message more easily and with more impact, being that as I would be able to project it to people that follow me for what I do so they would most probably have the same opinion as me in the situation that I would be addressing.

Also, because influencers usually have big followings, it would facilitate the reach of my message, and because of how big social media is it would allow other people that don't follow me to do so, because my message would be about something relevant and people would get it recommended in their feed's feeds whatever the app, is making it more impactful being and more probable of making a difference.

Closing in on the topic, I think influencers can make a bigger impact nowadays because of the internet.

Strawberry

An influencer is someone who influences others to follow a specific lifestyle, buy a product or change opinions. Most influencers have strong opinions that almost everyone agrees with.

I think that I would prefer to be an influencer rather than a social activist, because for me it's way easier to speak through a phone screen rather than speak to a room full of people.

My opinions are strong and I think that if I were an influencer it would be easy to make people change their minds with some good arguments on popular topics.

These days it's also way easier to grow as an influencer because of all the social media we have such as TikTok, Instagram or X, and since it's easier to speak through a phone screen rather than in front of many people, at least for me, as I hate doing oral presentations in class, I can't really imagine myself giving any kind of speeches in front of lots of people.

That's why I would prefer to be an influencer if I had to choose.

Short story based off the movie *The Wild Robot*

Cherry

After almost being thrown off a cliff by a large, frightening bear, Roz looked around, desperately searching for an escape before the bear could get any closer. There was nothing she could do; her system was failing, and various parts of her body were broken or falling apart. Weak and malfunctioning, Roz tried to think of a way out, but the bear kept approaching.

Just when all hope seemed lost, Roz remembered something—she could communicate with him. It would be difficult to get such a big and intimidating creature to understand her intentions, but it was her last chance, and she was desperate. She began speaking, trying to explain that she meant no harm and that she was friendly.

To her surprise, the bear stopped and looked at her, confused. Somehow, he understood her.

From afar, the other animals in the forest watched the scene unfold, curious and anxious to see what the bear would do. Roz continued talking, explaining her purpose and how she wanted to help all the animals in the forest. Just as she was speaking, the bear suddenly interrupted her—only to offer her a hand to help her up.

Everyone, including Roz, was shocked. They had all expected the bear to remain cruel and throw her off the cliff without a second thought. But instead, he helped her. Roz gratefully accepted his hand and was even more surprised when the bear began to open up to her. He told her that he didn't have any friends because the other animals found him intimidating and were too scared to get to know him.

Roz was touched by the bear's words. Despite how different they were, she could relate to him. Like the bear, she too had struggled to be understood and accepted.

As they continued talking, they realized they had more in common than they ever imagined.

Meanwhile, the forest animals stood nearby, watching them in silence. They seemed to regret not making more of an effort to understand either Roz or the bear. Though no one said anything at first—perhaps still afraid—finally, a small bird stepped forward and apologized for never trying to get to know them. The other animals nodded in agreement.

Roz accepted their apologies, and although the bear was hesitant, she gently encouraged him to forgive them too. She explained that if they forgave the others, they could finally have the friends they had always wanted.

A few months later, Roz had become a valuable part of the forest community. She developed strong relationships with each of the animals and remained close friends with the bear.

Eventually, the factory that created Roz discovered her location and attempted to retrieve her from the island. But Roz refused to leave—and so did the animals. Having grown used to her presence and kindness, they stood by her and wouldn't let her be taken away.

Realizing there was nothing they could do, the creators decided to share her story with the world. Roz became internationally famous as the first robot to communicate with animals and survive in the wild without human assistance.

Falcon

The robot woke up in the middle of a quiet clearing. He still hoped he could help someone—or that someone would want his help without being afraid of him. He scanned the area, still searching for signs of human life, but all he found was the whisper of the wind and the watchful eyes of animals hidden among the trees.

The factories had gone silent. The cities were destroyed. Nature had taken over.

So, he made a choice: to protect what remained—wildlife and the animals around him. He built shelters from fallen trees, cleaned lakes with his mechanical arms, and even invented a way to translate animal sounds into words so he could understand them. He felt lonely and longed for friendship. But to make friends, he needed to communicate.

Still, the animals ran away whenever he got close. To them, he was just a strange creature made of metal—an outsider.

Tired of the silence, the robot decided to change.

He wanted to become someone the animals wouldn't fear. So he tried to change himself in every way possible—doing everything he could to fit in. The animals watched him from a distance, curious. At first, they thought it was funny—the robot trying to act like them.

Kiwi

When Roz lost her balance near the cliff, she assumed she was going to die. A forest creature with big eyes and heavy breathing was moving closer. Part of Roz's body had been damaged in the fall. She tried to move her severed leg, but it was stuck. Using her only functioning arm, she attempted to pull herself through the leaves and dirt, away from her pursuer.

A few small animals arrived to help—badgers, foxes, and even a small squirrel. Their actions clearly showed kindness. In fact, they built barriers out of branches and leaves to hide her. When the large creature came, it couldn't find Roz and eventually went away.

The animals stayed near her over the next few days, bringing her fruit and leaves—not because she needed them, but as a gesture of concern. Roz began to notice the forest and its inhabitants more deeply. She realized that her presence wasn't meant to impose control over everything. Instead, she had been given an invitation—to explore, to learn, and to connect.

With broken parts from her ship and the sticks provided by the animals, Roz began to repair herself and look more presentable. The animals did everything they could to help her. During those days, Roz did nothing but watch and listen—and that was enough to begin her transformation.

The fallen automaton was no longer just a robot. She had become a part of the forest. She had new friends—and a new home.

Tiger

ROZZUM Unit 7134 found herself stumbling down a cliff after being chased by a bear. In that moment, she realized that life in the wild was extremely challenging.

Determined to take action the next day, she looked down the cliff and saw there was no possible path forward. So, she climbed back up the wall, crab-style, and reattached the GPS stick to her head.

She journeyed all the way to a road, where she encountered a man who agreed to help her. He brought her back to the company. Once there, Roz explained what had happened and how she had ended up on an unknown island.

The company's owner thanked her for returning, and also thanked the man, rewarding him for his honesty—knowing he could have easily sold Roz instead.

The owner then reset Roz's destination, and she was finally able to fulfill her original mission: to help a young boy with a disability. Since the boy used a wheelchair and his parents were rarely home, they had chosen to trust a robot over a human babysitter. Through a camera connected to Roz's programming, the parents could monitor everything remotely.

Roz got along well with the boy, and he quickly became fond of her.

Coconut

Roz woke up all by herself on a tiny island. She didn't know what to do, so she began to look around. There were tall trees and strange sounds, but slowly, she started to see animals in the distance. They were afraid of her—but they didn't hurt her.

Roz began to learn. She moved silently and helped the animals whenever they needed it. One day, she climbed a high hill and looked out across the island. The sight of the ocean far away made her feel something she couldn't quite understand. Maybe, just maybe, this was home.

Then, one day, machines appeared in the sky. Roz guessed they were looking for her. She didn't know why, but she felt the island was special—and she didn't want to leave it.

The animals, who had once kept their distance, now came closer. Roz took a deep breath and decided to stay. She would become part of the island—not just a robot with a job.

Now, Roz and the animals live together in peace, building a new world where nature and machines can live happily side by side.

Oak

Roz fell, and the world spun as rocks scraped her metal body. When everything stopped, she lay among thorns and stones, her systems damaged and her frame scratched. Her sensors tried to recalibrate. She was alone.

For hours, she stayed still, listening to the wind and the distant sounds of animals. No one came. She tried to rise—her arms worked, but one leg was trapped. With effort, she freed herself and began to crawl, each movement a test of strength.

As she moved across the forest floor, she noticed signs of life: deer tracks, feathers, broken branches. The island was still alive—and so was she. In the shadows, she found an injured squirrel trapped beneath a branch. Roz, though broken, helped. A small act, but significant—for the squirrel and for herself.

That night, she took shelter under a fallen log, shielded from the rain. Her systems shifted into low power mode. She watched the trees sway.

She wasn't just a machine. She was a protector, a friend, and a mother. The fall hadn't ended her story—it had revealed it.

A new purpose.

A new path.

And somewhere, deep inside, something new had begun: hope.

Panther

After ending up on that cliff, the robot's system shut down for a few hours to restore power. When it came back to life, the sun was already high in the sky, its rays shining against the robot's metal face. He stayed still for a moment, enjoying the warmth of the sun and the tranquility of the waves crashing in the distance. All this peace sharply contrasted with his recent days—full of conflict, problems, and misunderstandings.

After a few moments, he decided it was time to get up. He sat up first and analyzed his surroundings, checking for any potential dangers, before standing. The robot wandered through places he had previously visited, hoping to find animals to talk to, trying to figure out where exactly he was. But word of the robot's presence had spread across the island, and the things spoken about him were far from kind. Every animal he tried to speak with ran away.

Still, he didn't give up until a few hours had passed. By the time the sun began to set, he found himself sitting on the beach, staring into the horizon where the glowing sun seemed

to melt into the sea. The sky was painted in shades of purple and orange. Despite the picturesque scene, it did nothing to cheer the robot up. He was upset by all the failed attempts at communicating. It was strange — a robot, who wasn't supposed to feel anything, was indeed feeling something, even if faintly. For now, he couldn't decide what bothered him more: the inability to talk to others, or the fact that he was upset about it.

Quiet footsteps approached, pulling the robot out of his thoughts. He turned his head. It was a fox.

The robot looked back toward the horizon and didn't move an inch. He made no effort to speak. He was tired of failure after failure and figured that even if he tried, this too would lead nowhere—just like every other attempt that day.

The fox kept walking until he reached the robot's side. He sat down next to him. For a few seconds, he watched the robot in silence. Then he asked something no one had ever asked before.

— Are you alright?

Despite all the knowledge the robot had—about, essentially, everything—he was left speechless. He didn't know what, or even how, to respond to such a simple question. It was almost funny: this robot could answer the most difficult of questions, and yet this one, seemingly simple, left him stuck.

— I apologize. The word 'alright' is not registered in my database. I fear I do not know how to answer that question.

That response left the fox puzzled. This robot—a creature unlike any he'd ever seen, let alone spoken to—didn't know what alright meant?

— You don't know what alright means?

— I do not.

— Well... alright is when... — the fox paused, thinking carefully about how to explain something so abstract — it's when you feel normal. I mean, maybe that's not the best explanation. Perhaps... it's easier to say that being alright means being happy, and being sad means you're not alright?

— Sadness and happiness are both foreign concepts to me. I do not experience them like you animals and humans do.

The fox blinked, surprised.

— You can learn the language of animals in a matter of hours, and yet you can't understand emotions, which are so simple? How does that work?

— I am a machine. I'm made to learn in order to help others to the best of my ability. I was not designed for what you call feelings. I know the definitions of happiness and sadness, but I do not experience them, and therefore, I cannot understand how they work.

And that sparked a conversation of its own. They sat and talked until the sun disappeared and the stars blanketed the sky. It was the longest conversation the robot had ever had with anyone—and it left him feeling something he had never felt before. The fox was incredibly understanding and non-judgmental, even going as far as to invite the robot to stay with him and his family. Things were getting better, and it had only been a few hours.

A few weeks passed, and the robot who had once felt out of place now felt more at home than ever. The fox—whose name he now knew was Phill—had a warm and welcoming family, who helped the robot in more ways than he could have asked for. Despite the criticism they initially received from other animals for helping a robot, they never gave up on him. They never left. It was thanks to Phill's family that the robot—who once knew nothing about emotions—was now beginning to learn what compassion, empathy, and even happiness were.

The other animals eventually came to regret their actions. One by one, they apologized personally to the robot. They explained that their aggression had stemmed from fear—they thought he might have come to harm them. That reconciliation with the rest of the community was all the robot needed to truly feel at home. He and the animals actually made a great team in tasks like gathering food or building shelters: he brought knowledge and experience, and they brought connection and trust.

Though at first he had felt disconnected from everyone—not just physically, but mentally—he now felt like one of them. He was beginning to feel more human, rather than just a machine. Sure, maybe he still struggled with the meaning of alright. Maybe he still couldn't clearly identify what he felt—whether it was happiness, sadness, or something else entirely. But he couldn't deny how his eyes softened whenever he helped someone, or whenever he made another laugh. (After all, they say the eyes are the mirror of the soul.)

He had all the support in the world—from Phill, his family, and the other animals. He had found somewhere he belonged.

So yes, maybe he still didn't fully understand what being alright meant, or how he felt.

But whatever it was— He was closer than ever.

Rose

As the robot awoke, it scanned the quiet forest —once wild and terrifying. Searching for the bear that had attacked it, but found nothing. The bear was gone. At once it realized that it had fallen and was now stranded along the island's coast.

Broken and isolated, with no way to return home, it made another attempt to walk back toward the forest. While on the way it observed everything around it—plants, eggs, insects, and small animals—creatures that were still wary of its presence. It was night and the animals were slowly falling asleep, and as moonlight filtered through the trees, the animals began to retreat into their shelters, scared that the robot would cause them harm.

— “Where are you from?”

A baby chipmunk asked the disoriented robot. As it asked, the chipmunk's mother came rushing toward it.

— “Come inside the tree. This beast cannot be trusted. It will hurt you.”

The machine heard her warning and, guided by its programming, delivered its standard message—designed to reassure and cause no alarm.

— “Mom, I don't think the beast is evil. Maybe we should try to understand it.”

The young chipmunk insisted. And because her child's will was stronger than her fear, the mother hesitated. She heard it, and so she turned to the strange, unfamiliar machine.

— “You seem very hurt. Where do you come from?”

The robot responded again with its flat and mechanical voice. The mother chipmunk stepped back, startled—but her child remained.

As time passed and they continued to speak, more animals came to surround the robot, drawn by curiosity. With the machine answering all of the animals' questions and even answering some they had about their own forest, it started to realize something unexpected—something that it hadn't known was possible for the system to understand: It didn't belong.

As the days turned to nights and back again, the truth settled in. It did not make part of the forest, and as so, it could not stay.

With this realization, the robot resolved to return home. It set off once more through the forest—but this time, something had changed. Even if it was a technology not comprehended by the forest, it walked unthreatened. Even if it didn't belong, they still could coexist. Mutual respect and the willingness to understand each other had made that possible.

As the robot reached the edge of the forest and stepped onto the road, it said goodbye to each animal that had asked it questions and talked with it.

— “Will we ever see you again?” — asked the baby chipmunk who had once been so curious. The machine did not answer, unable to decide whether it would return to the forest one day or remain in the place it once called home. A short answer was said:

— “My code does not allow me to predict future events such as the one you have asked about.”

Without a clear answer, the baby chipmunk went back to its family, and the robot walked away, down the road, back toward where it had come from.

Wolf

After learning the languages of the animals in the forest, the Wild Robot —Roz— will try to appear friendly rather than threatening to the animals. She will fail many times, but through small acts of help and kindness, she will begin to earn the animals’ trust. Slowly, they will start to like her and accept her as part of the forest.

Because of the way she was programmed, all she can really do is help them with the daily tasks of the creatures in that biome, but at one point she will outgrow her objective as a robot and start to do more. She will form bonds with the animals, building genuine connections and eventually becoming part of their community—living among them like just another forest creature.

Because she is a robot, Roz will live for a long time, helping generation after generation. But after five years, the factory personnel from where she came from will arrive on the island and try to retrieve Roz. After days of searching, they will finally find Roz living peacefully with the animals.

Fearing capture, Roz will flee and hide in a cave where she had once built a shelter. After a few days she will leave the cave, but they will find her again and capture her, after which they will shut her down, take her back to the factory, and disassemble her for research.

Strawberry

After learning all the animal languages, the Robot was able to make a friend, even though the other animals still ran away in fear. She was a very friendly weasel named Ellie, who was not afraid of the Robot after he tried to communicate with the animals. Ellie’s father

had once told her that one day a robot would come to help the animals on that island, to ease their lifestyle.

One day, Ellie and the Robot went searching for food for Ellie. Since Ellie was a vegetarian, she wouldn't eat other animals, but berries like raspberries and strawberries were part of her diet, so they accidentally wandered into the tiger's territory. The tigers didn't really enjoy that visit and tried to attack Ellie and the Robot. However, it was unsuccessful because the Robot stepped in to defend Ellie. They didn't get the berries they were looking for, but at least Ellie was safe. She wished the other animals could see how good the Robot was.

Little did she know, a beaver had seen the whole scene, and he thought it was so heroic that he felt the need to tell everyone how good the Robot truly was.

After that, the animals started to see the Robot as one of them and included him in their daily lives, asking him for help gathering food, building shelters, and in return treating him like family.

Now, the Robot lives a happy life with the animals on the island.

Mother's Day appreciation letters

Cherry

Dear mother, you know everything about me. The things I like, the things I don't like, my flaws, my fears, my every feeling. The only thing you don't know is how much I love and appreciate you, because my love is so strong I couldn't possibly describe it using only words.

Falcon

On this special day, I want to thank you. I know everything you went through to bring me into this world. I could tell our story a hundred times. We live a life with some disagreements, but love always comes above all. I hope you know that you can count on me.

If my mother were a flower, she would be a sunflower—because it's my favorite flower, and she always brightens my day.

If she were a color, she would be purple, because she is respectful, calm, and very creative in everything she does—and of course, she does it all with love.

If my mother were an animal, she would be a panda, because she reminds me of a panda mom—always trying to protect me, and of course, my brothers too.

If she were a place in the house, she would be the basement, because she loves to keep things others might consider useless.

If she were a piece of clothing, she would be a pair of giant animal-shaped earrings.

If she were a school subject, she would be German, because she lived in Germany for two years.

If she were a book, she would be the Bible, because we are a religious family.

If she were a movie, she would be WALL·E—it's her favorite movie, and we're always watching it together.

Rose

My dear Mother, this is your day, Mother's Day. On this day I want to write my appreciation to you. When I was younger I was afraid, I had bad days more often than I had good ones, and you stood by my side and made me the person I am today. Nowadays I am grateful for my existence and that's because you were there, when I cried, when I laughed, when I talked and when I stayed silent.

I will always love you unconditionally until the end of time, and be there for you as you were for me back in the bad days.

Things that my mother would be if she was:

- A flower: Crocus/Carnation
- A colour: Green
- A place in the house: Bedroom
- A piece of clothing/accessory: Ring
- A school subject: Math
- A topic of a book: Mother's love/Understanding
- A song: Pica do 7 by António Zambujo
- A movie: The beauty and the Beast
- A sport/activity: Dancing

Life as a teenager in the 2000-2010's

Plum

Dear Diary,

Today was such a fun day! I got up from my bed, put on my baggy jeans with a t-shirt and my Jordans, put my makeup on and fixed my hairstyle. I ate my breakfast and put on my headphones and started listening to Eminem.

At 10 a.m. I called my best friend with my flip phone and asked her to pick me up to go to school together. When we arrived, everyone was talking about the new Britney Spears song which I love.

During lunch break, we took some silly photos with my digital camera, and when I got home I uploaded them to my page.

I really love being a teenager in the 2000s.

Orchid, Strawberry and Cherry

Dear diary,

Today I went to school at 8 am, I wore low rise bootcut jeans with a white tank top and a velvet bright pink jacket.

I had math class and it was hard, but at least at the end of the day a girl complimented my outfit. Then I walked home while listening to Linkin Park on my mp3.

When I got home, I studied chemistry for about two hours, then after dinner I talked to my friends through Windows Messenger.

That was my day.

The Most Important Value of Journalism

Plum

One of the most important values is impartiality because it ensures fair decisions based on facts, without being influenced by personal preferences or interests. It allows everyone to be treated equally and builds trust in institutions and human relationships, promoting mutual respect and trust.

In a world where information can be easily manipulated, impartiality becomes essential for a clear and objective view of reality, whether in journalism, justice, or interpersonal relationships.

(return to: [2.2.3 – E-portfolios](#); [3.4.3 – E-portfolios](#); [3.4.3 E-portfolios – end section](#);

[SQ3 — How could e-portfolios support the integration and assessment of extramural English?](#))

Appendix 5 – Focus group student composition

Table 1: Focus group student composition

(return to: [2.2.4 – Focus group interviews](#); [3.4.5 Focus group interviews](#))

Student	Oak	Plum	Panther	Strawberry	Wolf	Orchid	Bamboo	Kiwi	Orange
Group	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
Skill levels	A2	B1	B2	B1	A2	B1	A1	B1	B2

Appendix 6 – Focus group interviews

Group 1

Introduction:

TEACHER: Obrigado por estarem aqui. Gostava de ouvir a vossa opinião sobre as aulas, os materiais que usámos e o que funcionou melhor para vocês. Sintam-se à vontade para falar.

1. Learning

TEACHER: O que acharam das aulas no geral?

OAK: Eu gostei porque podia rever as coisas em casa quando não percebia. Isso ajudou muito.

PANTHER: Eu acho que aprendi mais este semestre, principalmente porque misturámos várias formas de trabalhar. Quando vemos vídeos, fazemos atividades práticas e discutimos os temas, acaba por ser mais fácil perceber e lembrar o conteúdo.

PLUM: Para mim, as aulas ajudaram porque consegui perceber a matéria de forma mais clara. As explicações eram simples e depois podíamos experimentar logo com atividades, o que me ajudou a aprender.

2. Teaching materials

TEACHER: E os materiais que usámos? De quais gostaram mais?

PLUM: Eu prefiro os vídeos, mostram situações verdadeiras.

OAK: Os áudios foram importantes. No início era difícil perceber, mas fui melhorando.

PANTHER: Os vídeos foram muito úteis, principalmente os que mostravam conversas. Ajudaram-me a perceber diferentes formas de falar e palavras novas.

3. Teaching methods

TEACHER: E as atividades? O que ajudou mais a aprender?

OAK: As atividades logo depois da explicação, e as músicas também.

PLUM: Gostei do projeto do portfolio. Gosto de escrever e ajudou-me a praticar.

PANTHER: Acho que as discussões em turma e os trabalhos de grupo foram muito importantes. Permitem-nos praticar o inglês de forma mais espontânea, sem a pressão de estar sempre "correto".

4. Suggestions

TEACHER: Têm sugestões para melhorar?

PLUM: Podíamos ter mais atividades em grupos, acho que ajudam a pensar mais.

PANTHER: Acho que seria interessante termos mais contacto com materiais autênticos, e irmos a mais visitas de estudo.

OAK: Mais opções nas tarefas, tipo escolher entre escrever ou gravar áudio.

Ending

TEACHER: Muito obrigado pelas vossas ideias. Estiveram todos muito bem.

Group 2

Introduction

TEACHER: Obrigado por estarem aqui. Gostava de ouvir a vossa opinião sobre as aulas, os materiais que usámos e o que funcionou melhor para vocês. Sintam-se à vontade para falar.

1. Learning

WOLF: Sim, os diferentes tipos de atividades ajudaram. Não era sempre a mesma coisa e isso fazia-me prestar mais atenção.

ORCHID: Eu acho que o ritmo das aulas ajudou bastante. Não era demasiado rápido e deu para acompanhar. E quando não percebia algo podia voltar ao material, o que foi útil.

STRAWBERRY: Senti que aprendi melhor porque tivemos muitos tipos diferentes de atividades. Quando mudamos entre vídeos e textos, fico mais focado e percebo melhor o conteúdo.

2. Teaching materials

TEACHER: E os materiais que usámos? Quais foram os vossos preferidos?

ORCHID: Para mim, os áudios e exercícios de listening foram os mais importantes. No início custava, mas depois com prática aprendi a distinguir pronúncias.

STRAWBERRY: Gostei muito das apresentações interativas. Tornavam os temas mais visuais e ajudavam a organizar as ideias.

WOLF: Eu gostei das músicas, porque davam para aprender de forma mais fácil.

3. Teaching methods

TEACHER: E as atividades? O que ajudou mais a aprender?

ORCHID: Gosto quando fazemos tarefas mais práticas logo depois da explicação. Assim percebo logo se entendi ou não, e dá para tirar as dúvidas.

WOLF: Os projetos. Ajuda a usar vocabulário de forma mais natural.

STRAWBERRY: Eu aprendo melhor quando temos discussões em turma. Mesmo conversas rápidas ajudam-me a praticar e ganhar confiança.

4. Suggestions

TEACHER: Têm sugestões para melhorar?

WOLF: Mais coisas práticas como as músicas e filmes.

ORCHID: Talvez testes mais fáceis.

STRAWBERRY: Acho que seria bom termos mais atividades em que usamos inglês de forma mais natural, como pequenos diálogos ou simulações.

Ending

TEACHER: Muito obrigado pelas vossas ideias. Estiveram todos muito bem.

Group 3

Introduction

TEACHER: Obrigado por estarem aqui. Gostava de ouvir a vossa opinião sobre as aulas, os materiais que usámos e o que funcionou melhor para vocês. Sintam-se à vontade para falar.

1. Learning

ORANGE: O que mais me ajudou foi poder refletir sobre os erros. Nas atividades digitais recebemos feedback rápido, e isso permitiu-me corrigir e melhorar ao longo das aulas. Acho que o meu listening e vocabulário cresceram bastante.

BAMBOO: Acho que aprendi melhor por causa dos vídeos e das atividades digitais. Ajudaram a perceber mais rápido.

KIWI: Para mim, o que fez diferença foi perceber como aplicar a matéria em situações reais. Quando trabalhámos com exemplos do dia a dia ou temas atuais.

2. Teaching materials

TEACHER: E os materiais que usámos? Quais gostaram mais?

KIWI: Eu gostei principalmente das atividades interativas, porque nos mantinham envolvidos.

ORANGE: Gostei de trabalhar no portfolio, vou poder lembrar-me do 10º ano no futuro assim.

BAMBOO: Os vídeos. Mostram situações reais e fica mais fácil entender.

3. Teaching methods

TEACHER: E as atividades? O que ajudou mais a aprender?

KIWI: Eu prefiro projetos, porque dão tempo para pesquisar e desenvolver ideias. Sinto que aprendo mais quando tenho de criar algo — uma apresentação, um texto mais elaborado.

BAMBOO: Trabalhar em grupo. Dá para falar mais inglês.

ORANGE: Quando aplicava logo o que aprendia, o conteúdo ficava mais claro. Também gostei das atividades de revisão no final de cada módulo.

4. Suggestions

TEACHER: Têm alguma sugestão para melhorar as aulas?

ORANGE: Talvez fazermos mais atividades com música.

KIWI: Gostava de ter usado videojogos nas aulas para aprender inglês.

BAMBOO: Mais vídeos e coisas do dia a dia.

Ending

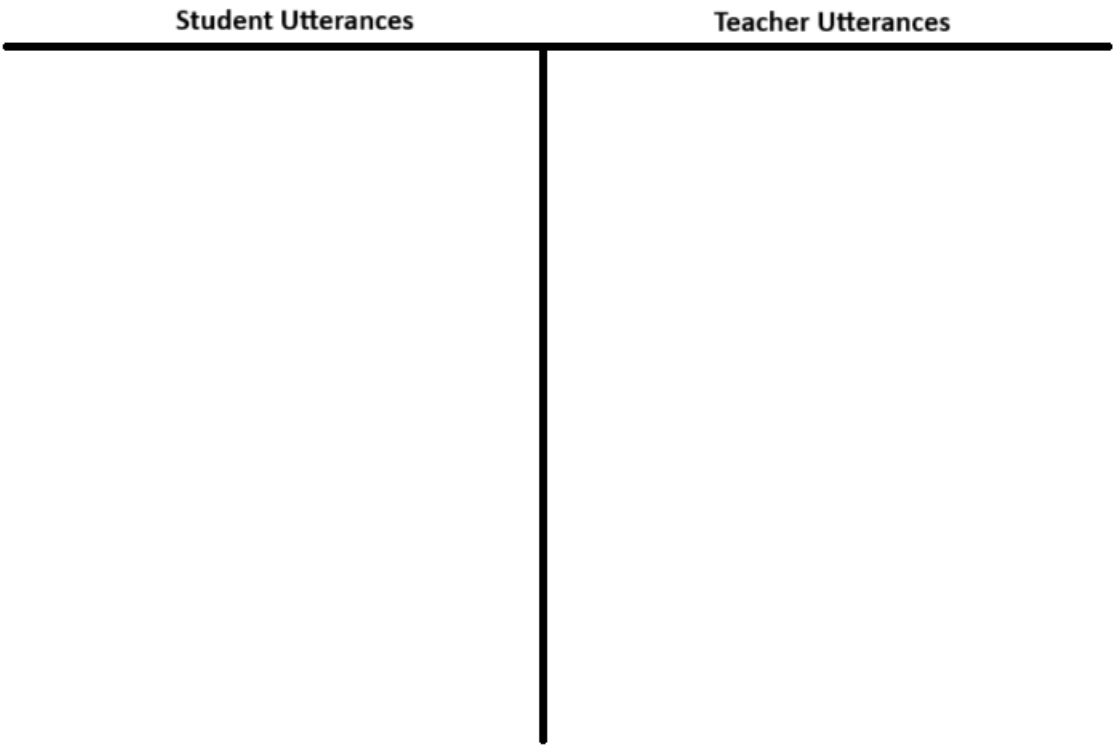
TEACHER: Muito obrigado pelas vossas ideias. Estiveram todos muito bem.

(return to: [2.2.4 – Focus group interviews](#); [3.4.5 Focus group interviews](#))

Appendix 7 - T-Chart

Figure 5: T-chart

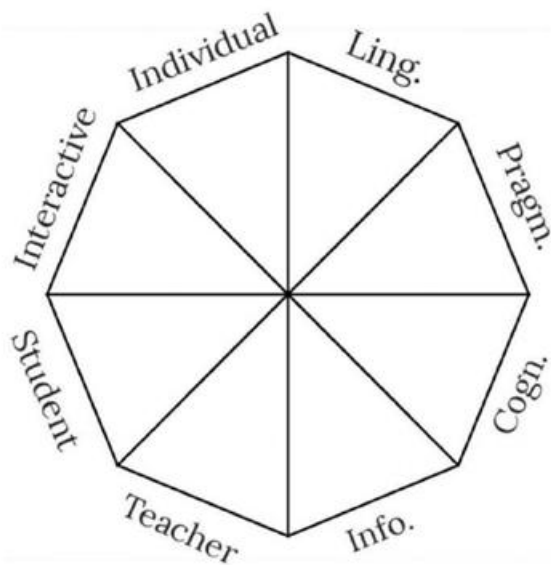
(return to: [3.2.2 - 10A class observation](#))



Appendix 8 – Millrood (2003) observation web chart (adapted)

Figure 6: Millrood (2003) observation web chart

(return to: [3.2.2 - 10A class observation](#))



Appendix 9 – 10A class composition

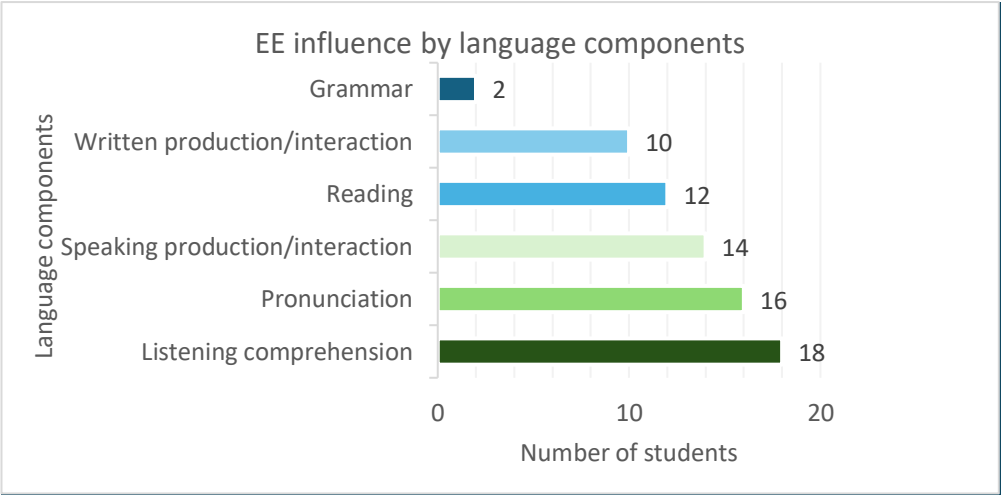
Table 2: 10A class composition

(return to: [3.3 – 10A class composition](#))

Pseudonyms	Gender	Age	Language Ability	Learning Difficulties
Falcon	Female	15	A2	-----
Oak	Male	15	A1	<i>Medidas Universais</i>
Strawberry	Female	15	B2	-----
Panther	Female	15	B2	-----
Eagle	Male	15	B1	-----
Mango	Male	15	A2	-----
Lynx	Female	15	A1	<i>Medidas Universais</i>
Orchid	Female	15	B1	-----
Kiwi	Female	15	A2	-----
Wolf	Male	16	B1	-----
Rose	Female	15	B2	-----
Cherry	Female	15	B1	-----
Bamboo	Male	15	A1	<i>Medidas Universais</i>
Orange	Male	16	A2	-----
Plum	Female	15	B1	-----
Coconut	Female	15	A1	-----
Tiger	Female	16	B2	-----
Python	Male	16	A1	<i>Medidas Universais</i>
Swan	Female	15	A1	<i>Medidas Universais</i>

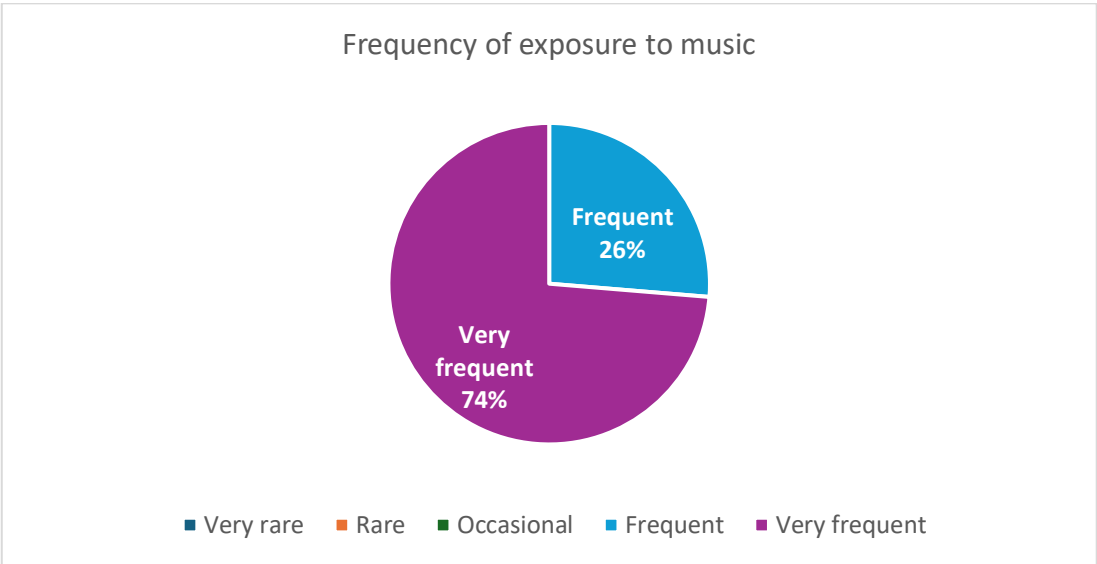
Appendix 10 – EE influence by language components

Graph 1: EE influence by language components
(return to: [3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey](#))



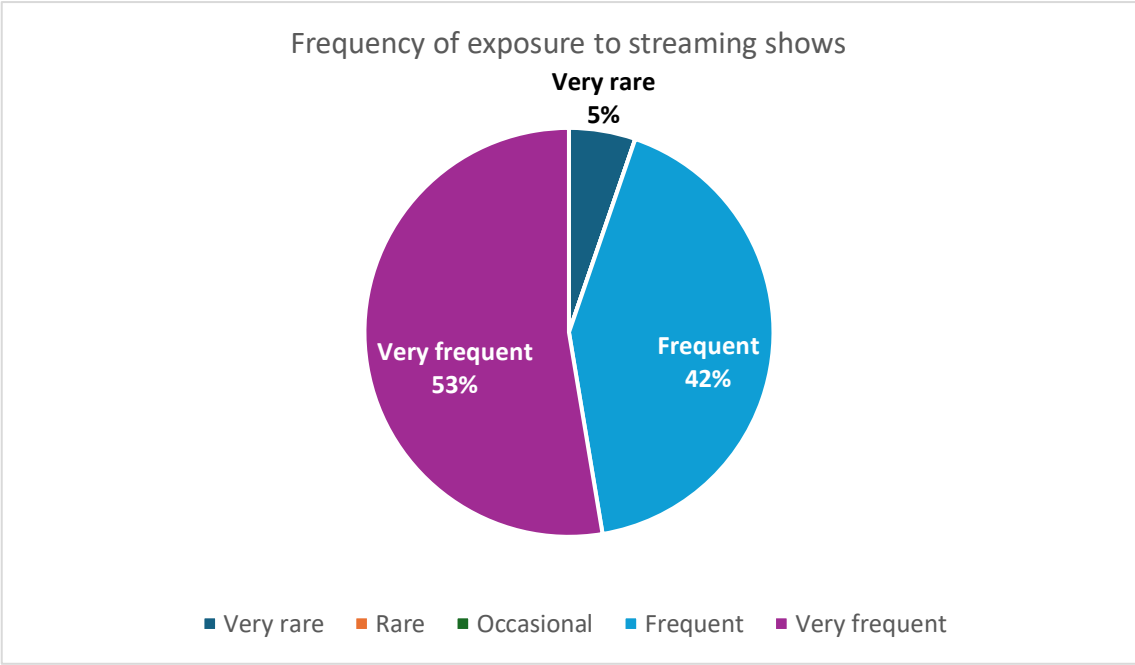
Appendix 11 – Frequency of exposure to music

Graph 2: Frequency of exposure to music
(return to: [3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey](#))



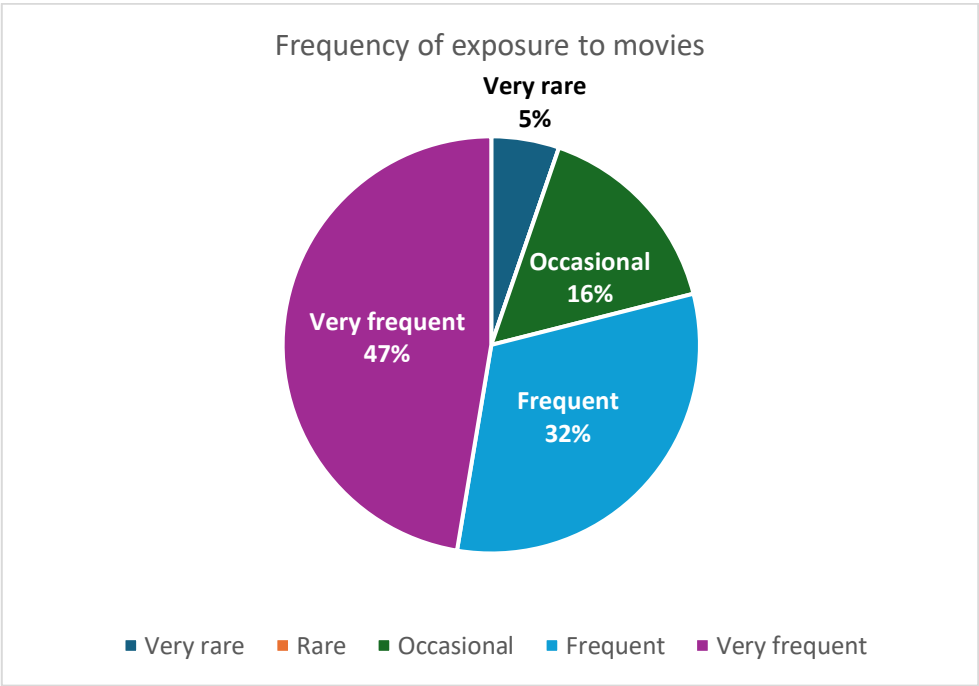
Appendix 12 - Frequency of exposure to streaming shows

Graph 3: Frequency of exposure to streaming shows
(return to: [3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey](#))



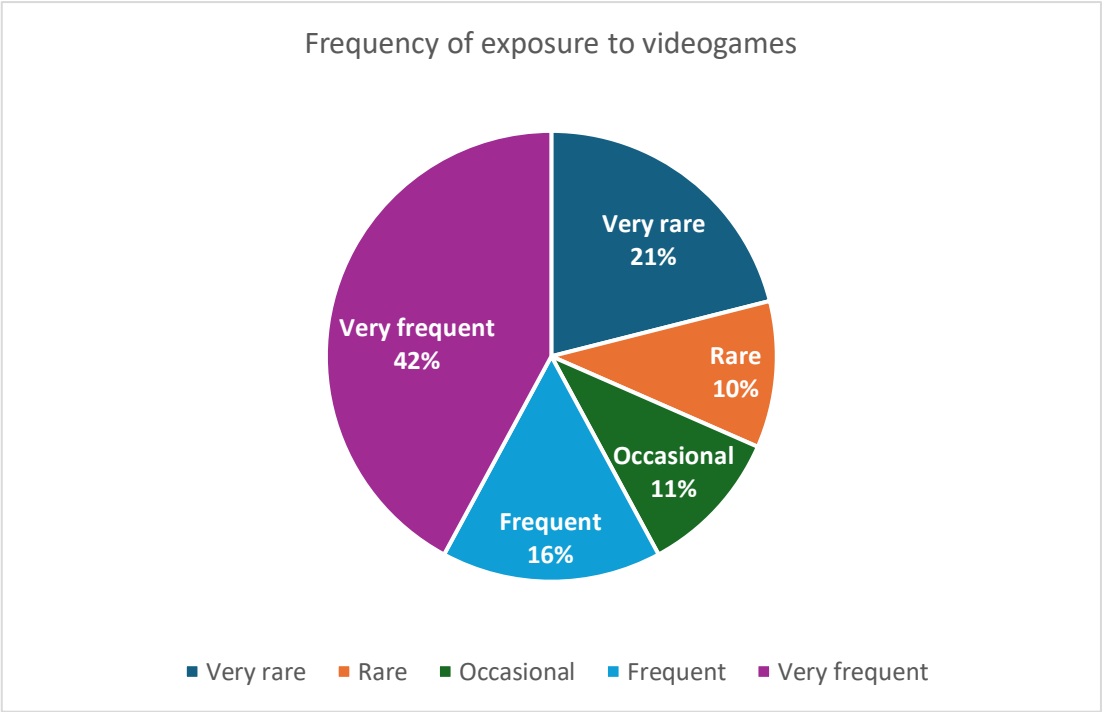
Appendix 13 – Frequency of exposure to movies

Graph 4: Frequency of exposure to movies
(return to: [3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey](#))



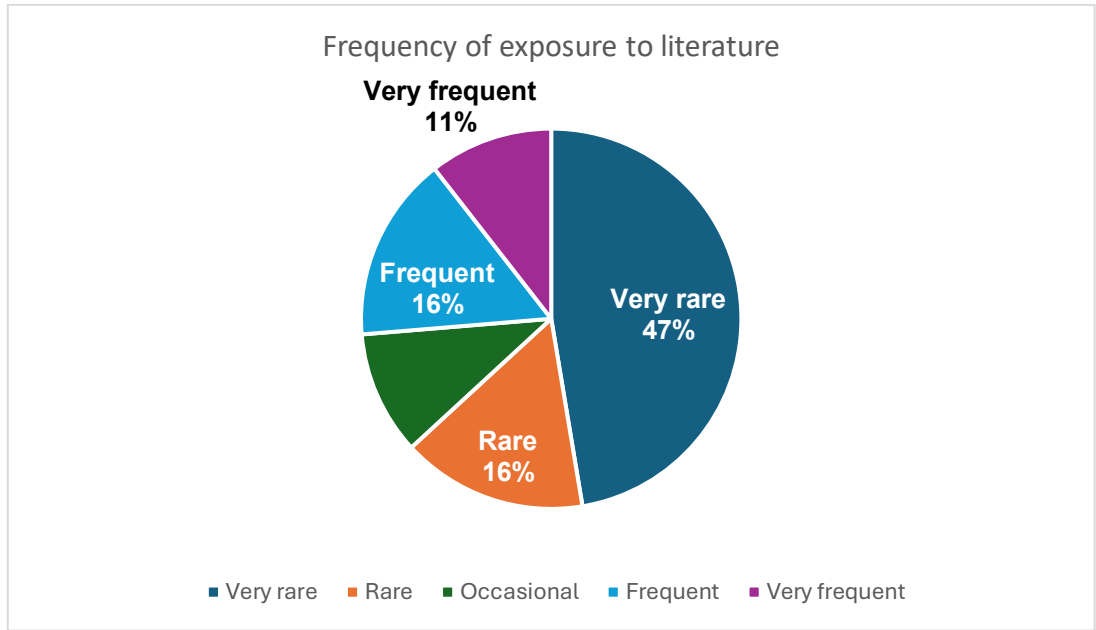
Appendix 14 - Frequency of exposure to videogames

Graph 5: Frequency of exposure to videogames
(return to: [3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey](#))



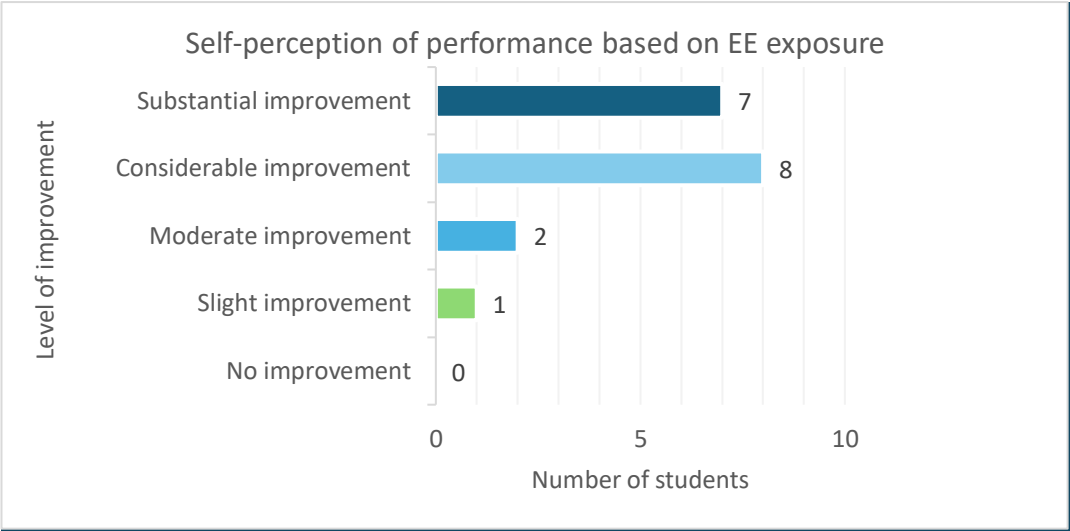
Appendix 15 - Frequency of exposure to literature

Graph 6: Frequency of exposure to literature
(return to: [3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey](#))



Appendix 16 – Self-perception of performance based on EE exposure

Graph 7: Self-perception of performance based on EE exposure
(return to: [3.4.1 Pre-intervention survey](#))



Appendix 17 – Unedited text comparison and evolution

(return to: [3.4.3 E-portfolios](#); [SQ3 — How could e-portfolios support the integration and assessment of extramural English?](#); [SQ4 — How could e-portfolios impact writing?](#))

Low-level student (Falcon)

Being an Influencer or Activist (February 14th, 2025)

If I had to choose between being an activist or an influencer I would choose to be both¹.

In my opinion, I would like to be both¹ an activist and an influencer, besides being an influencer I would be able to better promote my "campaign" or the reason that led me to defend my objective.² I imagine myself as an activist fighting against what I believe in³, that is, being an activist is an idea that never crossed my mind, but I find street protests interesting, I think it's beautiful when someone fights for what they believe in^{3,2} equally⁴ like being an influencer, having a goal.

Therefore, I would like to be both¹, so I can fight against the cause I believe in³, participate in protests and spread my message through projects and being an influencer.

Observations:

¹ – Repetition of the same idea; ² – long sentence/incorrect sentence structure; ³ – misconception of the term "fighting for a belief"; ⁴ – not using a capital letter in the beginning of the sentence.

In terms of structure, the text demonstrates several cases of repetition and long sentences throughout. Vocabulary variety is scarce and the arguments are difficult to understand clearly.

The Wild Robot – Creative writing assignment (April 22nd, 2025)

The robot has awoke¹ in the middle of a quiet clearing. We was¹ still hoping he could help someone...or² that someone would want his help without being scared of him he was still scanning for maybe trying to find some human life, but all he found was the whisper of wind³ and the watchful eyes of animals hidden among the trees⁴. The factories had gone silent, the cities were now all destroyed³, and nature had taken all. So², he chose to protect what remained: wild life and those animals. He built shelters from fallen trees, cleaned lakes with his mechanical arms, and invented ways to translate animal sounds into word³ that he could

understand because he was feeling **some kind of alone**⁵ and he wanted to make friends but **for him having friends he has to communicate**¹. But the animals ran all the time. To them, **he was a creature of metal**⁵, an intruder.

Tired of that silence the robot decides to change.

He wanted to be someone that those animals **wont be scared**¹, so he tried to change himself, in every way possible, trying to fit in.

Those animals were **always with the eyes on him**⁵, **seeing what he is doing**¹, and they **started to this**⁵ that it was funny, it was funny that the robot was now trying to act like them.

Eventually they started to feel less scared about **His presente**⁵ and they were no more **scared about him**⁵. The robot wasn't just a machine now, he was a friend. He was now a part of the world. A spirit of the old future, walking among trees and stars, finally understood.

Observations:

¹ – Misuse of verb; ² – misuse of punctuation; ³ – misspelling word; ⁴ – long sentence; ⁵ – incorrect use/order of words.

In this text, in comparison to the first one, the student evidences better control of punctuation (2 mistakes), and less repetition of ideas. Text structure and organization have improved with shorter sentences, having only one instance of a very long sentence. Although there are more grammatical mistakes and incorrect use of words, this might be attributed to the text being longer and more descriptive. The text shows improved creativity, vocabulary and ideas than the first one.

Intermediate-level student (Cherry)

Being an Influencer or Activist (February 14th, 2025)

If I had to choose between being an activist or an influencer I would prefer being an influencer. In my opinion, **being an influencer is easier**¹ for me because the internet and social media would help me reach more people with the same opinions as me but also understand other points of view and maybe change other people's minds². Besides that, I feel like **being an influencer is easier for me**¹ because, through my social media, **I can express**³ myself more freely and without being terrified of being judged by other people.

Although preferring to be an influencer over an activist⁴ I recognize how important activists are, especially young activists, and the impact activism has nowadays.⁴ As well as the

way activism can change minds⁴ and the power young activism has on the political and economic decisions made by the government. I think that, maybe, if I was a little bold to express myself and defend my ideas without being scared of being judged I could consider being an activist.

Observations:

¹ – Repetition of the same idea; ² – long sentence; ³ – misuse of verb; ⁴ – lack/misuse of punctuation.

The text showcases consistency when expressing viewpoints, good structure and cohesion. The student uses examples to support their opinions and uses them logically. Although having two instances where the same idea is repeated, and some misuse of punctuation, the thoughts expressed on the text are clear and easily understood.

The Wild Robot – Creative writing assignment (April 22nd, 2025)

After almost being thrown off the cliff by a scary big bear¹, Roz looked around, trying to find some escape¹ before the bear could get any closer. There was nothing Roz could do to get out of this situation; Roz was already weak with various parts falling apart or broken. Roz tried to find some way to escape, but the bear kept getting closer, and Roz's system was not fully working anymore. She was hopeless, but as the bear approached her, she remembered that she could communicate with him. It would be hard to try and get the big, scary bear to understand her and her purpose, but that was the last option, and Roz was desperate. She started talking, trying to get the bear to understand that she was friendly. As Roz talked, the bear stopped and looked at her, confused. He understood her, somehow. The other animals in the forest were watching all this happening from afar, all types of animals curious to see what would the big bear¹ do. Roz kept going on and on about her purpose and how she could help all the animals in the forest untold¹ the bear interrupted her and offered a hand so she could get up. Both Roz and the animals were surprised by the bear's actions. Everyone, including Roz, thought the bear was going to keep his cruel attitude and carelessly throw Roz off the cliff, but instead of that the bear offered to help her. She quickly accepted his help and got even more surprised^{1;2} when the bear started opening up to her. He told her how he didn't have any friends because every animal in the forest thought he was intimidating, therefore,

they didn't want to be friends with him. Roz was **even more surprised**² after hearing the bear's words and how she could relate to the bear, even if the bear and her were so different.

After talking for a while, they noticed they had more things in common than they ever thought they would have, they also noticed the other animals waiting for them to finish talking. They seemed sorry for not trying hard enough to understand the bear and Roz, but none of them said anything, probably still **scared of the bear**¹. The forest animals were silently staring at Roz and the bear, but finally, a little bird decided to step up and apologised for never trying to understand them. The other animals all nodded their heads in agreement. Roz accepted their apologies, although the bear was hesitant at first, Roz told him that it would be good to accept their apologies because they could finally have friends.

A couple of months later, Roz turned out to be really useful for the forest animals, starting an amazing relationship with **every and each one of them**¹. She kept being friends with the bear.

And³ when the factory that made her finally discovered where she was, they tried to get her out of the big island, but she refused to leave, and so did the animals. The animals that were already used to her didn't let her go away.

The people who created Roz, seeing that there was nothing they could do to get her off the island, decided to make her famous.

She became famous internationally as the first ever robot to communicate with animals and survive in the wild without the help of humans.

Observations:

¹ – Incorrect word order/use; ² – idea repetition; ³ – incorrect sentence structure.

There is a lack of use of paragraphs to structure the text, two instances of idea repetition and several cases (7) of incorrect word order usage. Nevertheless, the narrative showcases conflict situations, detailed descriptions, and character development. Creativity and engagement are present throughout the text.

Upper-level student (Plum)

Being an Influencer or Activist (February 14th, 2025)

I would rather **be an influencer**¹ because it is my dream job, my whole family says that I'm very good at **being an influencer**¹, because I'm always making Tik Tok or posting photos on Instagram and also I'm very addicted to social media in general.²

Becoming an influencer¹ is my dream job because it's something that interests me a lot and that I spend most of my time on. I've always liked recording videos, for example, putting on my makeup, get ready with me, trying and offering advice on products, dancing, **etc...**³ **Being an influencer**¹ has several advantages such as making many friends, receiving different products, working with brands, even your favorite ones, having followers who love you, meeting famous people or even your idols and much more, with all this, you still get money doing what you like, that's why my dream job is **become an influencer**^{1, 2}.

I never thought about being an activist because I don't like crowds but I like to see that there are people who strive to make the world a better place and who express what they believe in.

Observations:

¹ – Idea repetition; ² – long sentence; ³ – misuse of punctuation

Despite displaying repetition and long sentences, the student was able to create a well-structured text with good arguments and examples. The ideas are well bridged and show coherence, also, there are no grammatical errors excluding one misuse of punctuation.

The Wild Robot – Creative writing assignment (April 22nd, 2025)

The robot, after the fall, when trying to escape from the scary bear, remained paralysed. While the huge bear roared, showing anger at being disturbed, by the robot who invaded his cave.¹

A few moments later, instead of running away, the robot started talking to the bear, because one of his abilities **is**² talking to animals. The bear was confused because no human had ever spoken to him, not without fear, but he didn't know that he wasn't a human but a robot,³ the robot **begins**² by saying his name (Bob) and that he was at his disposal to help the bear in any situation.¹ Bob **starts**² by offering him some fruit that was on the tree as an apology

and loyalty, the bear sniffed, confused but ended up eating. Over time, the bear became his unlikely friend,³ Bob thought of new ways to survive in the forest like finding food, building shelters, making friends and having fun. Both created a very strong bond, even the fearsome bear learned how important it **is**² to have a friend.

With Bob's incredible intelligence, he began to be like a leader in the forest, a great **valuable**⁴, a friend to everyone with the ability to help anyone, becoming an important part of the forest.

Observations:

¹ – Incorrect sentence structure; ² – incorrect verb tense; ³ – misuse of punctuation; ⁴ – misuse of word

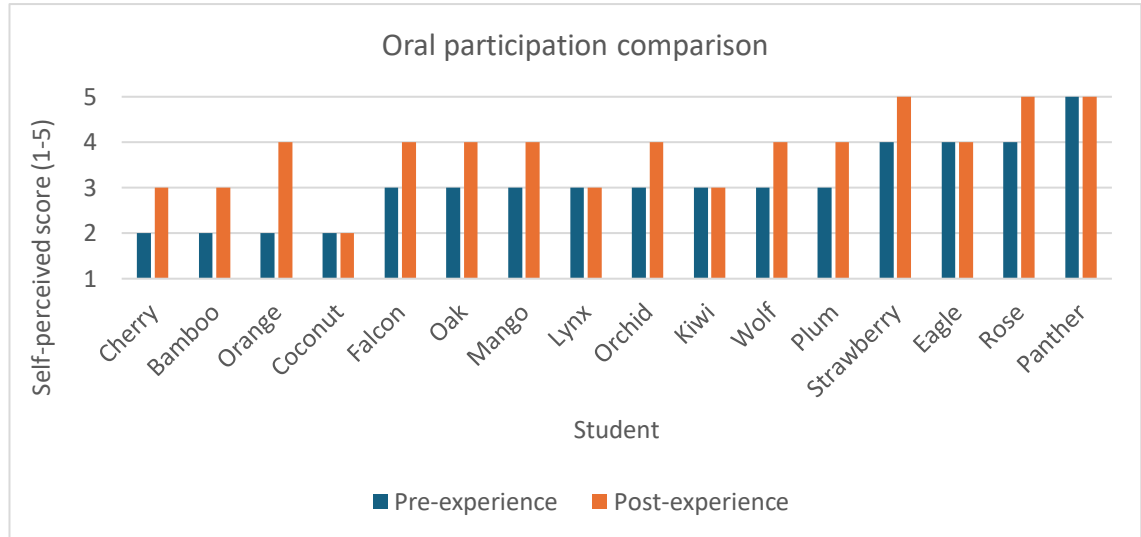
The text shows some inconsistency regarding the use of verb tenses, as well as instances where sentence structure is incorrect. Nonetheless, the narrative follows a logical flow by evidencing a beginning, development and conclusion. The student used descriptive elements, adding to character development and interaction.

(return to: [3.4.3 E-portfolios](#); [SQ3 — How could e-portfolios support the integration and assessment of extramural English?](#))

Appendix 18 – Individual pre- and post-experience oral participation comparison

Graph 8: Individual pre- and post-experience oral participation comparison

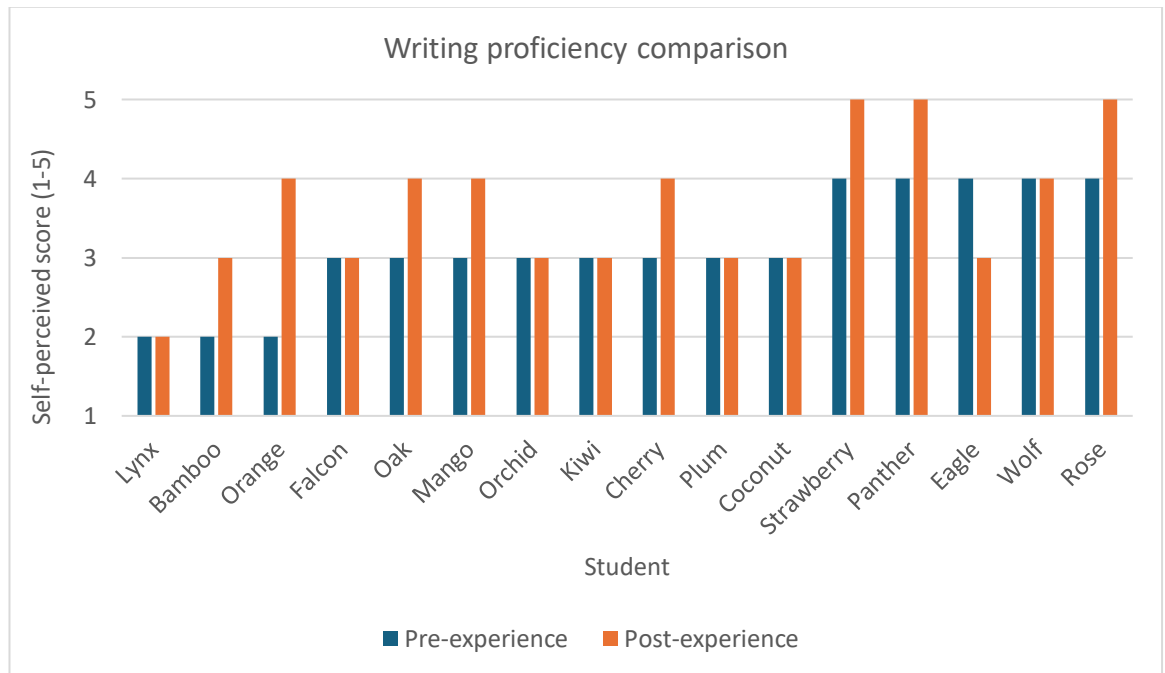
(return to: [3.4.4 Post-intervention survey](#))



Appendix 19 – Individual pre- and post-experience writing proficiency comparison

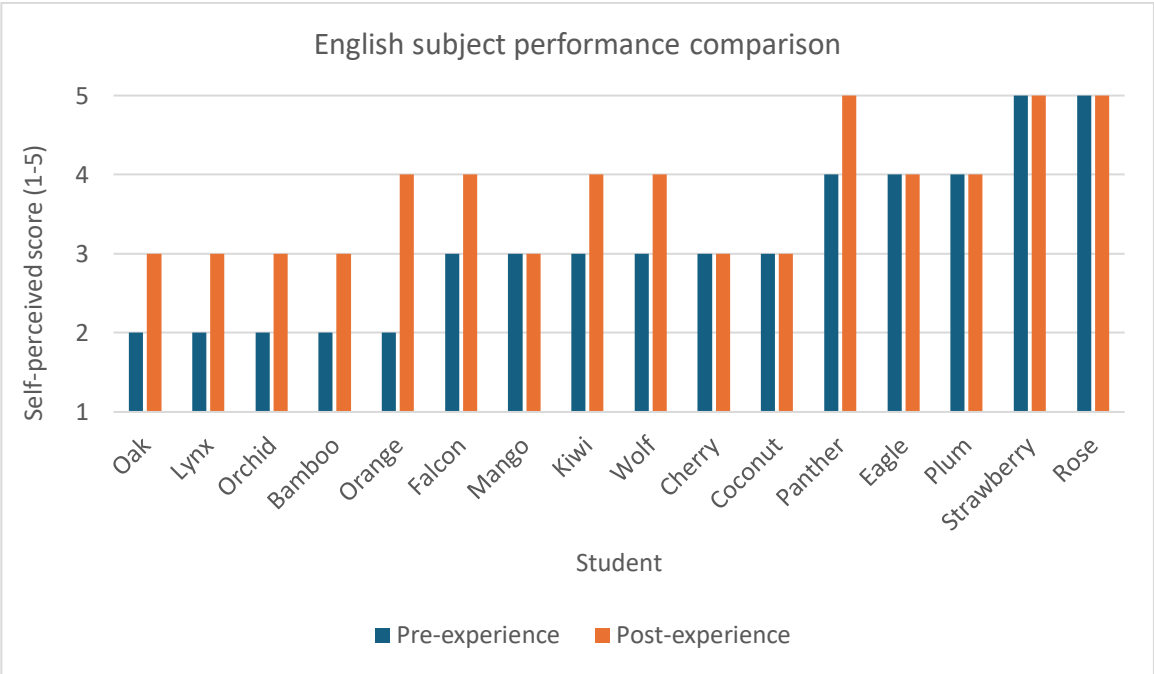
Graph 9: Individual pre- and post-experience writing proficiency comparison

(return to: [3.4.4 Post-intervention survey](#); [SQ4 — How could e-portfolios impact writing?](#))



Appendix 20 – Individual pre- and post-experience English subject performance comparison

Graph 10: Individual pre- and post-experience English subject performance comparison
(return to: [3.4.4 Post-intervention survey](#))



Appendix 21 – First and second semester grade comparison

In order to facilitate reading the students' score progression, the following color key is used – **light blue** to register improvement, **yellow** when no changes were verified, and **orange** if there was a decrease regarding scores.

Table 4: First and second semester grade comparison

(return to: [3.4.4 Post-intervention survey](#))

Student	First semester grades	Second semester grades
Panther	19	20
Rose	17	18
Strawberry	15	17
Cherry	14	16
Eagle	14	15
Plum	12	14
Falcon	13	13
Orchid	12	13
Mango	10	12
Wolf	10	12
Kiwi	12	11
Oak	8	9
Coconut	8	8
Lynx	8	8
Oak	7	8
Orange	(absent on first semester)	8
Average	11,93	12,63

(return to: [3.4.4 Post-intervention survey](#))